

## Bird records from Egypt 2002-2006

### *Introduction*

I worked as a tour guide in Egypt, based in the Red Sea resort village El Gouna just north of Hurghada, during four winter seasons (generally October - April) from 2002 to 2006. Some periods I was occupied six days a week so little time for bird watching whereas other periods I had days/weeks to spend in the field. I lead many group trips, both for birders and general culture/history, so I got to see a lot of the Nile valley, Luxor, Aswan, Abu Simbel, Cairo as well as up and down the Red Sea coast.

The periods were as follows:

8 October 2002 - 8 April 2003.

6 October - 30 November 2003

12 October 2004 - 7 April 2005.

6 October 2005 - 6 June 2006.

I was based all this time in the small man-made Red Sea resort village called El Gouna. It is situated some 20 km north of Hurghada and about 430 km southeast of Cairo. With its golf course, lagoons, lush gardens and just a few kilometers inland are the foothills of the Red Sea Mountains, it is a migration hot spot. Both Cairo to the north, Luxor in the Nile Valley and the southern Red Sea coast are reached within 4-5 hours driving.

### List of species

*This list contains only my own observations and impressions of birds during 2002-2006. On some of the more interesting species I have added a line or two below with more information so to better indicate the species status.*

*The text was written in 2006 and based on taxonomy at that time.*

*All record photos by me unless stated otherwise. All photos taken in Egypt 2005-2006.*

#### **White-fronted Goose/Bläsgås/*Anser albifrons***

One record: two 2cy birds were at the bird-rich marshland along the Nile north of Esna on January 19<sup>th</sup> 2003.

*Very few records exist from Egypt of this species.*

#### **Egyptian Goose/Nilgås/*Alopochen aegyptiaca***

Fairly commonly seen around Aswan and Abu Simbel, rarer north towards Luxor. High numbers at Aswan in winter, up to 250 birds. Several pairs with chicks seen

at Abu Simbel from January onwards. During the winter 2002/2003 up to 80 were on a sandbank at Dendera north of Luxor.



*Egyptian Goose*



*Pintail*

### **Shelduck/Gravand/*Tadorna tadorna***

One record: one bird was along the Nile between Edfu and Kom Ombo on January 16<sup>th</sup> 2003.

### **Wigeon/Bläsand/*Anas penelope***

Very common in the mixed flocks of ducks on the Nile during the winter months. The highest numbers usually between Esna and Edfu and sometimes also further south towards Aswan. Perhaps as many as 10.000 are estimated to be present here in January, the largest single flock I have seen was around 1.000.

### **Gadwall/Snatterand/*Anas strepera***

Uncommon and in low numbers on the Nile during the winter. About 45 were counted between Kom Ombo and Esna in both January 2003 and 2006.

### **Teal/Kricka/*Anas crecca***

Common and widespread along the Nile during the winter months. Flocks of up to 300-400 seen in wetlands and lagoons along the river, high numbers also at Crocodile Island near Luxor. Some records also of smaller flocks along the Red Sea coast in October and March.

### **Mallard/Gräsand/*Anas platyrhynchos***

I have only seen this species a few times during my time here. This has been singles or smaller flocks along the Nile.

### **Pintail/Stjärtand/*Anas acuta***

Fairly common among the ducks on the Nile but never in high numbers. Usually together with Wigeons and Shovelers, highest count is about 100 in one small area. Some records also from the coastline in migration times, like the 28 flying south at El Gouna on October 9<sup>th</sup> 2005.

### **Garganey/Årta/*Anas querquedula***

Rare and in low numbers among the other ducks on the river, but in their winter plumage easy to miss in the huge flocks. 5-10 birds can be revealed by scanning through a large flock of Teals and Wigeons. The 100 birds seen just north of Edfu on October 23<sup>rd</sup> 2004 might be a late flock from the autumn migration.

*Of the extreme numbers (tens of thousands) said to migrate through the country I have seen nothing. Possibly this takes before and then after my periods, October to April.*

**Shoveler/Skedand/*Anas clypeata***

The most common duck on the Nile and present in high numbers in winter time. Usually reaches the highest number in January when possibly more than 10.000 are between Luxor and Aswan. Several times an estimated 5.000 have been seen between Esna and Edfu. Some spring time records from the coastline, often a small flock at Hurghada rubbish tip.

**Pochard/Brunand/*Aythya ferina***

Usually restricted to the duck flocks on the Nile in winter time, but there it can be quite numerous. Especially between Esna and Edfu where numbers can reach 600-700, often then with Tufted Ducks.

**Ferruginous Duck/Vitögd dykand/*Aythya nyroca***

Present in the duck flocks on the Nile in low numbers during the winter months, the highest numbers usually counted in mid-winter. 480 in January 2003 and at least 400 in January 2005 are good counts, but more often you find less than 100 as the cruise ship passes the flocks. The 200 seen behind Philae temple (between the dams) in Aswan on January 22<sup>nd</sup> 2006 are probably additional birds. A male bird was still here as late as April 9<sup>th</sup> the same year.

**Tufted Duck/Vigg/*Aythya fuligula***

A few large flocks winters on the Nile, usually close to Esna. The highest count, a gathering just before dusk, reached 1.750 and was in December 2005.

**Quail/Vaktel/*Coturnix coturnix***

Common during spring migration (mid-February until May) when birds can turn up at the most unexpected place. A small patch of green seems all that is needed. Some places have had up to seven-eight birds at one visit, usually Hurghada rubbish tip or El Gouna golf course.



*Quail, El Gouna, April 2006. Photo by Stefan Magnusson*

**Little Grebe/Smådopping/*Tachybaptus ruficollis***

Only one record: one bird in summer plumage at Abu Simbel on January 17<sup>th</sup> 2003.

**Black-necked Grebe/Svarthalsad dopping/*Podiceps nigricollis***

Wintering birds seen on the Nile with the highest counts among the ducks south of Esna. They usually gather all at the same place, and 85 is the highest number here (December 2005). Also behind Philae Temple (between the dams) at Aswan were five seen in December 2005 and the same number at Hurghada rubbish tip on March 2<sup>nd</sup> 2003.

**Brown Booby/Brunsula/*Sula leucogaster***

Seen regularly from boat trips off El Gouna and Hurghada, mostly single birds. Three were seen on October 24<sup>th</sup> 2002. I saw the species on about 30% of the trips. Three records from land: Hamata and Wadi Lahami on April 8<sup>th</sup> 2006 (possibly the same bird) and El Gouna on May 9<sup>th</sup> 2006 (in strong NE wind).

**Northern Cormorant/Storskarv/*Phalacrocorax carbo***

Common wintering bird in the Nile Valley and large numbers can be seen on Lake Nasser at Abu Simbel. Thousands can be seen on one evening, flying south towards the lake in November-December. Parties of at least 1.500 has been seen at Abu Simbel in January. A few records of single birds exist from the Red Sea coastline.

**White Pelican/Vit pelikan/*Pelecanus onocrotalus***

Some flocks of 20-400 flying south along the Nile were seen every year in October-early December. About 400 were over Luxor both on November 10<sup>th</sup> 2002 and on October 18<sup>th</sup> 2003. 370 roosted on the Nile north of Edfu on December 1<sup>st</sup> 2005. They winter on Lake Nasser (also a few singles along the Nile) and small numbers are seen at Abu Simbel (up to 75) at least until May. Spring migration has been seen in March-April with smaller flocks flying north.

**Pink-backed Pelican/Rosaryggad pelikan/*Pelecanus rufescens***

One record: two birds were at Abu Simbel on April 11<sup>th</sup> 2006.

*Due to the increased coverage from birders, several records are now being done every year at this site, mostly from April to September.*



*Pink-backed Pelican, Abu Simbel, April 2006.  
Photo by Stefan Magnusson*



*White Pelican*

### **Bittern/Rördrom/*Botaurus stellaris***

Uncommon and seldom seen winter visitor to the reeds along the Nile. I have made less than ten records. Usually a single bird flying over the reeds or being flushed by a fisherman, but on December 22<sup>nd</sup> 2002, three birds were seen at the same time north of Esna. Of these, two were in an aerial fight, probably over a winter territory.

### **Little Bittern/Dvärgrördrom/*Ixobrychus minutus***

Fairly common in the Nile Valley and around Cairo, both in canals and ponds and along the river itself. Because of its “hide-and-seek” behaviour, you see only a few unless you focus on the edge of reed beds and small ditches and ponds. Up to ten have been counted on a day of cruising. Sites like Crocodile Island and Abbassa fish ponds NE Cairo often has around five birds. A bird on migration was at Wadi Lahami on April 8<sup>th</sup> 2006.



*Little Bittern and Cattle Egret, Crocodile Island, December 2004. Photos by Mattias Rudenvall*

### **Night Heron/Natthäger/*Nycticorax nycticorax***

Common but often in low numbers in the Nile Valley and around Cairo, and also regularly on migration along the coast. Some sites can have 10-15 birds, otherwise mostly singles or a few. Breeding colonies at Abbassa had about 100 in



April 2006. Flocks of around 25 were seen in El Gouna in March 2003 and in October 2004 and 2005

**Striated Heron/Mangrovehäger/*Butorides striata***

Uncommon and scattered along the Red Sea and in the Nile Valley, but not that hard to find. Several birds are around the lagoon in El Gouna where it probably breeds (a pair was seen with this behaviour in May 2006). Crocodile Island has had up to five birds at one visit and with low water in mid-winter, they feed more in the open along canals and lagoons. Five were along the canal between Luxor and Qena on January 21<sup>st</sup> 2003.



*Striated Heron, Crocodile Island, April 2006. Photo by Stefan Magnusson*

**Cattle Egret/Kohäger/*Bubulcus ibis***

Very common and widespread, the dominating bird in some areas. 1000's breed in and around Cairo and also north of Luxor are colonies with over 1000 birds. Evening roosts along the Nile have been seen with over 1000 birds, for example south of Esna on December 4<sup>th</sup> 2005. 30 were at El Gouna golf course in May 2006 which is a high number from the Red Sea.

**Squacco Heron/Rallhäger/*Ardeola ralloides***

Very common in the Nile Valley and around Cairo, regularly seen along the Red Sea in migration times. Highest numbers in the winter months, for example the 1.000 being counted from the Luxor bridge to Kom Ombo on December 1<sup>st</sup> 2005. 350 were north of Luxor on March 31<sup>st</sup> 2003. Many birds, mostly singles, seen around El Gouna in March-April.

**Western Reef Heron/Revhäger/*Egretta gularis***

Fairly common but in low numbers (higher along the southern part) along the Red Sea. Up to three birds are using the lagoon in El Gouna. Often seen around the islands off Hurghada with several birds. Further south, around Hamata and Wadi Lahami mangroves, a day can produce as much as 20 birds.

**Little Egret/Silkeshäger/*Egretta garzetta***

Very common in the Nile Valley and around Cairo, also this species increases with the wintering birds. One of the dominating birds on a Nile cruise, and several 1000 are seen between Luxor and Aswan. 1.300 were counted only from Edfu to Esna on November 21<sup>st</sup> 2004. Breeding colonies with Cattle Egrets and Night Herons at Abbassa fish ponds in April 2006.

**Great White Egret/Ägretthäger/*Egretta alba***

The rarest of the herons where a few spend the winter along the Nile and on the shores of Lake Nasser. A three-day cruise from Luxor to Aswan usually produces only five or six birds. Singles widespread among other herons and egrets, but sometimes there are three or four roosting on a sand bank. In the winter 2005/2006 up to 20 were seen behind Philae Temple (between the dams) at Aswan, a bit surprisingly.

**Grey Heron/Gråhäger/*Ardea cinerea***

Common wintering bird in the Nile Valley and around Cairo. A typical day of cruising can give around 100 birds, but flocks up to 80 have been seen. 115 were counted from Edfu to Kom Ombo on January 16<sup>th</sup> 2003 and 60 were at Crocodile Island on January 18<sup>th</sup> 2006. Singles and small parties can be seen along the Red Sea in migration times. Around El Gouna there is usually up to ten birds resident.

**Purple Heron/Purpurhäger/*Ardea purpurea***

Fairly common but in low numbers along the Nile and a few around Cairo, also seen regularly along the coast in migration times. A good day of cruising in winter time can give 25 birds and the 45 counted from Kom Ombo to Esna on January 27<sup>th</sup> 2005 is the highest from this period. Migrants seen along the coast in March-April, like the six birds flying north during raptor watch at Ain Sukhna on April 25<sup>th</sup> 2006.



*Purple Herons*

**Goliath Heron/Goliathäger/*Ardea goliath***

One record: one bird at Wadi Lahami mangroves on March 20<sup>th</sup> 2005.

*This site, and nearby Hamata, is THE place in Egypt (and the Western Palearctic) for this species. Here it has been seen regularly the last years, and obviously bred in 2006.*

**Yellow-billed Stork/Afrikansk ibisstork/*Mycteria ibis***

One record: eleven birds were at Abu Simbel on April 10<sup>th</sup> 2006 and one younger bird the day after.

*Like the Pink-backed Pelican, you stand a good chance of finding this exclusive species at Abu Simbel on a visit between April and October.*



*Yellow-billed Storks, Abu Simbel, April 2006. Photos by Stefan Magusson*

**Black Stork/Svart stork/*Ciconia nigra***

Small numbers are passing by on migration in September-October and in March-May. More often seen in spring time, usually 20-50 birds flying north, sometimes with White Storks. 180 flying north at El Gouna on March 10<sup>th</sup> 2006 is the highest spring number and the same number was flying south there on October 9<sup>th</sup> 2002. One 2cy bird flying south at Kom Ombo on January 27<sup>th</sup> 2005 and six birds at Aswan in January 2006 are rare winter records.

**White stork/Vit stork/*Ciconia ciconia***

A great spectacle is the spring migration of White Storks going north over the Red Sea mountains in March-April. 2003 had 4.000 passing over El Gouna on March 20<sup>th</sup> and several flocks of around 1.000. In the second half of March 2005, about 6.000 were seen in five flocks. From mid-March to mid-April 2006 nearly 10.000 passed north with a huge flock of 3.500 over El Gouna on March 10<sup>th</sup>. Singles and small numbers wintering along the Nile and around Abu Simbel, where there is usually a small gang at the rubbish tip. 60 lingered outside El Gouna in the end of May 2006.

**Glossy Ibis/Bronsibis/*Plegadis falcinellus***

Wintering flocks spread out along the Nile, fairly common in some places. This is noted especially during low water in December-January, when flocks can reach several hundred. 400 at Crocodile Island in January 2005 and the same number north of Luxor on January 3<sup>rd</sup> 2003 are the highest counts, more often flocks are on less than a hundred birds. 200 were behind Philae Temple (between the dams) on April 9<sup>th</sup> 2006, possibly a flock on migration.





*Glossy Ibises, Aswan, April 2006. Photo by Klas Rådberg*

### **Spoonbill/Skedstork/*Platalea leucordia***

Like the Glossy Ibis a common winter visitor along the Nile and passage migrant. Flock sizes usually small, the 50 birds roosting on a sandbank south of Dendera in December 2002 was a high count. 20 flying south at El Gouna on October 10<sup>th</sup> 2005 and 40 flying north at Kom Ombo on April 9<sup>th</sup> 2006 are flocks on migration. Singles and small parties often seen along the Red Sea mangrove areas

### **Greater Flamingo/Större flamingo/*Phoenicopterus roseus***

Uncommon visitor with some singles and migrating flocks seen. 20 flying south at Abu Simbel on November 19<sup>th</sup> 2004, 45 flying north on March 7<sup>th</sup> 2005, and 15 here on April 10<sup>th</sup> 2006. Up to three younger birds stayed at the lagoon in El Gouna from December to March 2005/2006.

### **Honey Buzzard/Bivråk/*Pernis apivorus***

Common passage migrant but where the bulk usually passes before and after my periods in the country. Four 1cy birds flying south at El Gouna golf course on October 9<sup>th</sup> 2005 is one of the few autumn records. In spring 2006, when I stayed longer, at least 700 passed north during May 2<sup>nd</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>.

### **Black-shouldered Kite/Svartvingad glada/*Elanus caeruleus***

Common along the Nile Valley and around Cairo. The 2.5-hour drive in from Luxor to Aswan can result in 15-20 birds and a cruise day should give around ten. Sites like Crocodile Island and Abbassa fish ponds always has three or four of this elegant raptor.

### **Black Kite/Brun glada/*Milvus migrans***

Common, locally very common, at towns and villages in the Nile Valley and around Cairo. About 100 have been seen both north of Cairo and at Aswan (usually over the rubbish tip) and 210 were counted at Abu Simbel at dusk on January 17<sup>th</sup> 2003. Quite numerous on spring migration along the northern Red Sea coast with

good day counts like 150 at El Gouna on March 20<sup>th</sup> 2003 and 141 at Ain Sukhna on April 25<sup>th</sup> 2006.



*Black Kite*

**Egyptian Vulture/Smutsgam/*Nephron percnopterus***

Uncommon and seen in migration times, mostly in spring. Singles seen along the Red Sea and at Abu Simbel in from mid-March to May. Down in Shalatein five were seen in March 2005 and ten in April 2006. Visits at the raptor site at Ain Sukhna in March-April 2006 resulted in 62 being counted on four separate days.



*Egyptian Vulture*

**Griffon Vulture/Gåsgam/*Gyps fulvus***

Three records, all from raptor count at Ain Sukhna in spring 2006: one flying north each on March 13<sup>th</sup>, April 5<sup>th</sup> and April 25<sup>th</sup>.

### **Lappet-faced Vulture/Örongam/*Torgos tracheliotus***

Records only from two visits to Shalatein on the southern Red Sea coast. In March 2005 at least eight birds were present and in April 2006 they were at least 15. That day were also six more birds seen on three different stops between Shalatein and Berenice, at stretch of about 100 km.

*Shalatein seems like a sure bet to see them, but reports are also from Abu Simbel and south of Aswan.*



*Lappet-faced Vulture, Berenice, April 2006. Photos by Klas Rådborg*

### **Short-toed Eagle/Ormörn/*Circaetus gallicus***

Regularly seen on spring migration along the Red Sea mountains, starting from the beginning of March. Singles are seen over El Gouna but by far the best site is Ain Sukhna where they can be numerous in March-April. In 2006 we had a massive day on March 13<sup>th</sup> with at least 290 passing north. 13, 18 and 65 on three days in April seems little, but more normal.

### **Marsh Harrier/Brun kärrhök/*Circus aeruginosus***

Common over the reed beds and marsh lands in the Nile Valley, and migration seen along the Red Sea in autumn and spring. A day of cruising in winter can have ten birds hunting along the river. Springtime often has several birds at Hurghada rubbish tip and raptor count at Ain Sukhna in 2006 had nine birds on April 25<sup>th</sup>. Many singles passing El Gouna in March-April.

### **Hen Harrier/Blå kärrhök/*Circus cyaneus***

Two records: one male southeast of Luxor on November 23rd 2004 and one female flying north behind Philae Temple at Aswan on April 9<sup>th</sup> 2006.

### **Pallid Harrier/Stäpphök/*Circus macrourus***

Uncommon but regularly seen migrant in autumn and spring. Both along the Red Sea and in the Nile Valley, and sometimes two together, they are always spectacular to see. During October 7-16<sup>th</sup> 2003 in El Gouna, three males and five unidentified Pallid/Montagues (of which most seemed like Pallid) were seen flying south. Two adult males flew north, 200 m between them, 40 km north of Quesir on April 7<sup>th</sup> 2006. One 2cy bird was at Abbassa fish ponds on January 22<sup>nd</sup> 2005, a rare winter record.

*A report from the southern Red Sea in September 2004 indicated a strong passage with over 50 birds during a four-day period!*



*Pallid Harrier, Quesir, April 2006. Photo by Klas Rådberg*

### **Montagu`s Harrier/Ängshök/*Circus pygargus***

Status similar to Pallid Harrier with a low numbers of birds passing on migration. A difference is that I have seen none in the autumn, they probably pass earlier. They also pass late (from the beginning of April) in spring, so only in 2006 I have seen more then one or two. That year in El Gouna, from mid-April, they were often seen, with several each day around May 1<sup>st</sup>. Also two flying north at Abu Simbel on April 11<sup>th</sup> and two at Ain Sukhna on April 25<sup>th</sup>.

### **Northern Goshawk/Duvhök/*Accipiter gentilis***

One record: one 1cy female at El Gouna golf course on October 18<sup>th</sup> 2005.

### **Sparrowhawk/Sparvhök/*Accipiter nisus***

Uncommon and in low numbers seen during the winter months, often a single bird passing by during a day in the field. More numerous during migration in March-April with many seen along the Red Sea, in 2006 the top days were 25 at El Gouna on April 18<sup>th</sup> and 30 at Ain Sukhna on April 25<sup>th</sup>.

### **Levant Sparrowhawk/Balkanhök/*Accipiter brevipes***

Records of this late-arriving migrant only from spring 2006. Quite stunningly a flock of about 450 soared and flew north over El Gouna on April 18<sup>th</sup>. Two males flew north at Ain Sukhna on April 25<sup>th</sup> and single birds were seen in Hurghada on May 2<sup>nd</sup> and in El Gouna on May 3<sup>rd</sup>.

### **Common Buzzard/Ormvråk/*Buteo buteo***

The “Steppe Buzzard”, subspecies *vulpinus*, is seen in the autumn with a few birds coming in from the sea and very numerous in spring, when tens of thousands are passing north along the Red Sea mountains. A day in October-beginning of November can have about ten birds flying south while the spring migration sees several days with a thousand or more. Many top days unfortunately goes unnoticed far over the mountains. My top day was on April 25<sup>th</sup> 2006 with at least



2.000 flying north at Ain Sukhna. Also 1.000 over El Gouna on March 20<sup>th</sup> 2003 indicates a strong movement some days even along the coastline.

*Raptor counts at the famous site in Ain Sukhna in recent years had several days with over 10.000 Steppe Buzzards passing.*

#### **Long-legged Buzzard/Örnvråk/*Buteo rufinus***

Only four records: one at Kom Ombo on January 16<sup>th</sup> 2003, one at El Gouna golf course on April 2<sup>nd</sup> 2003, one or two at Crocodile Island on November 17<sup>th</sup> 2003 and two flying north at Ain Sukhna on April 25<sup>th</sup> 2006.

#### **Lesser Spotted Eagle/Mindre skrikörn/*Aquila pomarina***

Fairly common during spring migration (mid-March to mid-May) but as with many other raptors, seen mostly close to the Red Sea mountains and one of the best sites is Ain Sukhna. A good raptor day at El Gouna might have a few Lesser's among Steppe Eagles and buzzards but Ain Sukhna is the place for the higher counts. During the visits in April 2006, nearly 300 were seen in three separate days. One bird also along the Nile north of Kom Ombo on November 22<sup>nd</sup> 2003.

*Top days at Ain Sukhna has included over 1.000 Lesser Spotted Eagles.*

#### **Greater Spotted Eagle/Större skrikörn/*Aquila clanga***

Five records of which four are winter records of younger birds along the Nile: north of Kom Ombo on November 22<sup>nd</sup> 2003, north of Edfu on November 21<sup>st</sup> 2004 and the same area on January 27<sup>th</sup> 2005 and behind Philae Temple at Aswan on January 22<sup>nd</sup> 2006. One bird also passed Ain Sukhna on April 6<sup>th</sup> 2006.



*Greater Spotted Eagle*

#### **Steppe Eagle/Stäppörn/*Aquila nipalensis***

Common during spring migration along the Red Sea mountains but also seen regularly elsewhere. Singles have been seen in the desert between Hurghada and Luxor in the winter months. 420 were counted during four days in spring 2006 at

Ain Sukhna. Days in El Gouna with storks and raptors close to the sea have had up to 40-50 passing north.



*Steppe Eagle harassed by Brown-necked Raven, Marsa Alam, April 2006.  
Photo by Stefan Magnusson*

### **Booted Eagle/Dvärgörn/*Hieraaetus pennatus***

Seen during migration in autumn (rare) and in spring (more common) when again Ain Sukhna is the place to be. Single birds in El Gouna on October 9<sup>th</sup> 2002 and over Dendera on October 18<sup>th</sup> 2002 as well as over Crocodile Island on November 24<sup>th</sup> 2004 are the autumn records. Three birds surprisingly flew south along the Nile north of Kom Ombo on January 27<sup>th</sup> 2005. 98 were counted at Ain Sukhna during three days in April 2006. Singles are seen at El Gouna with four on May 9<sup>th</sup> 2006.

### **Osprey/Fiskgjuse/*Pandion haliaetus***

Common breeding bird along the Red Sea coast where they nest on the ground. Often seen along the shorelines with up to four together in El Gouna. A few records from the Nile during the winter months.

### **Lesser Kestrel/Rödfalk/*Falco naumanni***

One record: one at Deir el-Bahri, Luxor on October 27<sup>th</sup> 2004.

### **Kestrel/Tornfalk/*Falco tinnunculus***

Common in most habitats and very often seen along roads in the Nile Valley. Dominating raptor in El Gouna with several pairs breeding. Additional birds seen during spring migration.

### **Merlin/Stenfalk/*Falco columbarius***

Two records: one south of Hurghada on October 18<sup>th</sup> 2005 and one flying north at Sakkara, Cairo on April 5<sup>th</sup> 2006.

### **Sooty Falcon/Sotfalk/*Falco concolor***

Fairly few records of this summer visitor, I have seen them in October and again from the end of April. Three October records from El Gouna, one adult south of

Luxor on October 22<sup>nd</sup> 2004. A pair was at Abu Minghar Island off Hurghada on April 26<sup>th</sup> 2006 and one bird was at El Gouna on May 9<sup>th</sup>.

*On the wanted-list of every visiting birder but they don't arrive before the end of April. A boat trip to the islands off Hurghada OR Hamata is the best way to see them but also around Wadi Gemal.*

### **Lanner/Slagfalk/*Falco biarmicus***

Fairly common in the desert areas along the Red Sea coast, more so in the southern parts. Here up to seven-eight birds can be seen during a whole day in the field. Three birds were seen together over Shams Alam Resort on April 7<sup>th</sup> 2006. Also seen in the Nile Valley but more rare, even though a pair is seen from time to time around Crocodile Island/Luxor.



*Lanners, Quesir, November 2005. Photo by Istvan Moldovan*

### **Peregrine/Pilgrimsfalk/*Falco peregrinus***

Two positively identified records: one adult at Hurghada rubbish tip on February 26<sup>th</sup> and March 6<sup>th</sup> 2006 and one adult at Hamata on April 8<sup>th</sup> 2006.

### **Barbary Falcon/Berberfalk/*Falco pelegrinoides***

Local resident but not common in the desert areas along the Red Sea. Also breeds around Abu Simbel, where it has been seen several times. One bird was found with a nest at Shalatein on April 8<sup>th</sup> 2006. I have seen it only a few times around El Gouna/Hurghada.

### **Little Crake/Mindre sumphöna/*Porzana parva***

The handful of records that exists from this period is probably not giving the true picture of this secretive species. Four winter records (end-November to end-January) of five birds along the Nile between Esna and Edfu. They were discovered by close scanning of the edge of the reeds and small openings, the same areas where Little Bitterns appear. Two females were at Hurghada rubbish tip on March 15<sup>th</sup> 2006.

### **Moorhen/Rörhöna/*Gallinula chloropus***

Very common among floating water vegetation on the Nile and on canals leading from it. Several times gatherings of around 100 birds have been seen.

### **Purple Gallinule/Purpurhöna/*Porphyrio porphyrio***

Common, in some areas very common, on the Nile and often in the same areas as Moorhens. Crocodile Island is an easy place to see them (up to 50), but the high concentrations are further up the river. Sometimes up to 100 have been counted on a short stretch and at least 500 were between Edfu and Kom Ombo on December 1<sup>st</sup> 2005.

**Coot/Sothöna/*Fulica atra***

Wintering in high numbers along the Nile and in Lake Nasser. The ones on the river are usually concentrated to a few large flocks, often close to Esna together with the ducks and grebes. Here were 1.750 counted in December 2005. Rare along the Red Sea but 50 were at Hurghada rubbish tip on March 2<sup>nd</sup> 2003.

**Crane/Trana/*Grus grus***

Migrates through in the autumn (October) and in spring. Some stragglers are seen away from this pattern, but otherwise it is usually some high-soaring flocks against the blue African sky that are seen. At least 400 moved south outside Hurghada on October 9<sup>th</sup> 2005. On March 13<sup>th</sup> 2005, amidst migrating storks, 500 were counted over El Gouna. 350 were over El Gouna on March 10<sup>th</sup> 2006.

**Painted Snipe/Rallbeckasin/*Rostrathula benghalensis***

Seen a few times each at the well-known sites Crocodile Island and Abbassa fish ponds outside Cairo. The first had the snipe on November 23<sup>rd</sup> 2003, January 29<sup>th</sup> 2005 and a pair on April 12<sup>th</sup> 2006. The latter was the scene on November 25<sup>th</sup> 2004 and on April 6<sup>th</sup> 2006. I also saw single snipes along the Nile south of Luxor on December 15<sup>th</sup> 2002 and north of Luxor on January 3<sup>rd</sup> 2003.

*Not rare but in low numbers, elusive and needs just the right habitat.*



*Male and female Painted Snipe, Crocodile Island, April 2006. Photos by Stefan Magnusson*

**Oystercatcher/Strandskata/*Haematopus ostralegus***

Rare this far south in Egypt. Three winter records from the coast around El Gouna and three birds on Abu Minghar Island on April 13<sup>th</sup> 2006.

**Black-winged Stilt/Styltlöpare/*Himantopus himantopus***

Very common along the Nile with the highest number during low water in December-January. Hundreds are seen on a cruise day with the record count of 1.000 from Edfu to Kom Ombo on December 1<sup>st</sup> 2005. Singles and small parties seen along the Red Sea in migration times, but the 21 flying over El Gouna golf course on April 29<sup>th</sup> 2006 looked disorientated.





*Black-winged Stilt and Purple Swampphen (with Teals)*

**Avocet/Skärfläcka/*Recurvirostra avosetta***

Two winter records: one south of Luxor on January 1<sup>st</sup> and one at Aswan on January 18<sup>th</sup>, both 2003.

**Stone Curlew/Tjockfot/*Burhinus oedichnemus***

Only a few records of this migrant that can be easily mistaken for the next species. Five were at Wadi Gemal both in March 2005 and in April 2006. One in El Gouna on March 14<sup>th</sup> 2005 and also two more records here of unidentified Stone Curlews/Senegal Thick-knees.

**Senegal Thick-knee/Senegaltjockfot/*Burhinus senegalensis***

Fairly common and widespread along the Nile Valley and around Cairo. Often detected on its loud call at dusk or when flushed. Groups of up to 12-15 can be seen on roofs and along roads around Cairo. Always heard from the cruise ships in the evenings, can be seen roosting under trees and bushes. 25 were at Abu Simbel on November 21<sup>st</sup> 2003, a high count.



*Senegal Thick-knee*

### **Cream-coloured Courser/Ökenlöpare/*Cursorius cursor***

Few and far between, these are the records: two at El Gouna golf course on March 14<sup>th</sup> 2005, totally three between Wadi Gemal and Shalatein on March 19-20<sup>th</sup> 2005, one north of Shalatein on April 8<sup>th</sup> 2006 and one at El Gouna golf course on May 5<sup>th</sup> 2006. Two migrating flocks (both in rough weather) with ten at Hurghada rubbish tip on March 18<sup>th</sup> 2003 and 13 flying north at El Gouna on March 10<sup>th</sup> 2006.



*Cream-coloured Courser*

### **Collared Pratincole/Rödvingad vadarsvala/*Glareola pratincola***

Only spring records of this migrant, with singles or small numbers seen along the Red Sea from end-March to May. El Gouna golf course seems like the favourite place with up to 25 in the end of April 2006.



*Collared Pratincole, Hurghada, April 2006. Photo by Stefan Magnusson*

### **Black-winged Pratincole/Svartvingad vadarsvala/*Glareola nordmanni***

One record: one flew north at Ain Sukhna on April 25<sup>th</sup> 2006.

**Little Ringed Plover/Mindre strandpipare/*Charadrius dubius***

Low numbers wintering on the mud banks along the Nile. Crocodile Island has had up to six birds and also Abbassa fish ponds can show this number. Ten were behind Philae Temple on December 3<sup>rd</sup> 2005. A pair showed breeding behaviour at El Gouna golf course in April/May 2006.

**Ringed Plover/Större strandpipare/*Charadrius hiaticula***

Common and widespread along the Red Sea coast and quite a few in the wader areas along the Nile. The lagoon in El Gouna has had up to 45 and Hurghada rubbish tip 15-20 in spring 2006. Mainly a wintering bird and the number drop down in spring.

**Kittlitz 's Plover/Kittlitzpipare/*Charadrius pecuarius***

Four records: 30 at Abbassa fish ponds on November 25<sup>th</sup> 2004, seven-eight here on January 22<sup>nd</sup> 2005, two along the Nile between Kom Ombo and Edfu on January 27<sup>th</sup> 2005 and three along the Nile just north of Aswan on January 22<sup>nd</sup> 2006.

*Wadi Natrun outside Cairo is the famous place for this bird, but also at Abu Simbel it has bred the last years. In addition, do scan the plover areas along the Nile in winter as well!*

**Three-banded Plover/Trebandad pipare/*Charadrius tricollaris***

One record: one bird at El Gouna golf course on March 13<sup>th</sup> 2003.

*This should be the fourth or fifth record in the country as well as in the Western Palearctic.*

**Kentish Plover/Svartbent strandpipare/*Charadrius alexandrinus***

Common mainly along the Red Sea but also many along the Nile, although no larger gatherings seen. Breeding and numerous at the lagoon in El Gouna with 35 here on October 15<sup>th</sup> 2004 and 16 flying north on March 14<sup>th</sup> 2005.

**Greater Sand Plover/Ökenpipare/*Charadrius leschenaultii***

Fairly common along the Red Sea where it winters in low numbers, usually only a few birds left in mid-April. The lagoon in El Gouna has its flock wintering, often around ten seen. In October-November they can be up to 25, and on February 15<sup>th</sup> 2003, 35 were seen just north of here. Some birds are seen in summer plumage by then.

*Higher numbers of over 100 are reported from the southern coastline.*



*Greater Sand Plover, southern Red Sea, April 2006. Photos by Stefan Magnusson*

### **Caspian Plover/Kaspisk pipare/*Charadrius asiaticus***

Two records, both at exactly the same spot: one male at El Gouna golf course on March 14<sup>th</sup> 2005 and a female there on April 3<sup>rd</sup> 2005.



*Male and female Caspian Plover*

### **Golden Plover/Ljungpipare/*Pluvialis apricaria***

One record: one along the Nile on January 15<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> 2003.

### **Grey Plover/Kustpipare/*Pluvialis squatarola***

Common along the Red Sea coastline with many seen at mangroves and mud flats. Low numbers and well spread out, the lagoon in El Gouna rarely has more than ten. A migrating flock of 25 at Abu Minghar Island on April 13<sup>th</sup> 2006 is a good number. Two records from the Nile, one each south of Edfu on December 1<sup>st</sup> 2005 and at Crocodile Island on January 18<sup>th</sup> 2006.

### **Spur-winged Lapwing/Sporrvipa/*Vanellus spinosus***

Very common and can be the dominating bird in some areas in the Nile Valley and around Cairo, loud and obvious. Some single pairs have been seen in El Gouna and around Hurghada. Local large gatherings occur during the winter along the Nile, extreme was the flock of at least 410 south of Luxor on January 19<sup>th</sup> 2003, also 250 here in Janaury 2005. More normal would be around 100.



### **White-tailed Lapwing/Sumpvipa/*Vanellus leucurus***

One of the highlights on a Nile cruise is to count the tens of White-tailed Lapwings wintering along the river. The first arrives in end-October but they seem to disappear already in February with the rising waters flooding the mud banks. At least 100 are estimated to be present between Luxor and Aswan in mid-winter. The 62 counted from Edfu to Kom Ombo on December 1<sup>st</sup> 2005 is the best day count. 39 from Kom Ombo to Esna on January 27<sup>th</sup> 2005 is another good number. Several gatherings of around ten have been seen, eleven were at Crocodile Island on December 6<sup>th</sup> 2004.



*White-tailed Lapwings, Crocodile Island. Photos by Istvan Moldovan and Mattias Rudenvall.*

### **Northern Lapwing/Tofsvipa/*Vanellus vanellus***

Winter visitor with low numbers seen along the Nile and some scattered records along the Red Sea. More common in the north around Cairo. Up to 50 were seen in 2002/2003 at a grassland north of Esna. Singles at sites like Crocodile Island and smaller flocks seen around Cairo.

### **Little Stint/Småsnäppa/*Calidris minuta***

The most common small wader wintering along the Nile and also along the Red Sea but there in much smaller numbers. A cruise day in mid-winter will see hundreds in the mixed wader flocks on the muddy shorelines. Well spread out and the flocks rarely exceed 150. Small flocks seen around El Gouna during migration, up to 30 at Hurghada rubbish tip in March 2003 and 2006.

### **Temminck's Stint/Mosnäppa/*Calidris temminckii***

Uncommon but possibly overlooked among the other small waders. Singles and small flocks are found along the Nile in winter. Crocodile Island is good place to get close to them and up to ten have been seen here. Ten were also behind Philae Temple on April 9<sup>th</sup> 2006. A few records of single birds during migration in El Gouna.

### **Curlew Sandpiper/Spovsnäppa/*Calidris ferruginea***

Only two records: one 1cy at El Gouna golf course on October 9<sup>th</sup> 2005 and two along the Nile just north of Aswan on January 22<sup>nd</sup> 2006.

**Dunlin/Kärrensäppa/*Calidris alpina***

Fairly common wintering bird but in low numbers along the Nile and on migration along the Red Sea. Often small flocks (rarely more than ten) together with Little Stints or Ruffs. Hurghada rubbish tip seems like a safe bet in spring where up to 50 were seen in March 2006.

**Ruff/Brushane/*Philomachus pugnax***

Very common along the Nile in winter and often the most numerous wader during a cruise day. Like most other waders, the highest counts are being done during low water in December-January. Nearly 800 were between Edfu and Kom Ombo on December 1<sup>st</sup> 2005. 300 at Crocodile Island both in January 2003, December 2004 and January 2006. 400 at Aswan on December 3<sup>rd</sup> 2005.

**Jack Snipe/Dvärgbeckasin/*Lymnocyrtus minimus***

Six records during mid-winter low water, all along the Nile except one at Abu Simbel on January 24<sup>th</sup> 2005. Three just north of Aswan on January 24<sup>th</sup> 2005 is the only record of more than one bird.



*Jack Snipe with Dunlin and Little Stint*

**Common Snipe/Enkelbeckasin/*Gallinago gallinago***

Common along the Nile where they often feed in the open with other waders. At least 100 between Esna and Edfu on January 20<sup>th</sup> 2006 is a high count. Flocks of 40 were seen both at Kom Ombo on January 16<sup>th</sup> 2003 and north of Aswan in the winter 2004/2005.

**Black-tailed Godwit/Rödspov/*Limosa limosa***

Fairly common wintering bird along the Nile, often in small flocks in the better wader areas. The sandbank at Aswan is a good site with 38 on November 20<sup>th</sup> 2004 and 75 on December 3<sup>rd</sup> 2005. At least 150 were counted between Edfu and Kom Ombo on December 1<sup>st</sup> 2006. A bird was on migration at the lagoon in El Gouna on April 17<sup>th</sup> 2006.

**Whimbrel/Småspov/*Numenius phaeopus***

Uncommon visitor with scattered records along the Red Sea. Single birds have been seen at El Gouna golf course in late autumn/winter and better numbers

further south. Small numbers were along the mangroves of Hamata and Wadi Lahami in April 2006 and four at Abu Minghar Island on April 13<sup>th</sup> 2006.

**Curlew/Storspov/*Numenius arquata***

Common wintering bird but in low numbers along the Red Sea. The lagoon in El Gouna always has a flock of up to 20, this is the highest number I have noted anywhere along the coast.

**Spotted Redshank/Svartsnäppa/*Tringa erythropus***

Common along the Nile in wader areas with a little deeper water, just like the rich area north of Edfu. Here were 100 on November 14<sup>th</sup> 2002 which is one of the top counts. About 150 were between Edfu and Kom Ombo on December 1<sup>st</sup> 2005. Several flocks of 30-40 have been seen, often in areas with many Black-tailed Godwits.

**Redshank/Rödbena/*Tringa totanus***

Fairly common along the shores of the Red Sea, mostly in winter. The lagoon in El Gouna has up to seven birds in winter and in March about the same number can be seen at Hurghada rubbish tip. The mangrove areas in the south are better with 15 at Wadi Lahami in March 2005.

**Marsh Sandpiper/Dammsnäppa/*Tringa stagnatilis***

Good id training for a Western birder is this species that winters along the Nile. During a cruise day tens of birds can be picked out among the other waders. 80 were counted from Edfu to Kom Ombo on December 1<sup>st</sup> 2005 which is the highest day count. 30 were on just a short stretch north of Edfu on October 23<sup>rd</sup> 2004. Flocks of ten-fifteen have been seen several times. Regularly seen along the Red Sea during spring migration, with many records of up to three birds around El Gouna/Hurghada.



*Marsh Sandpiper, Hurghada, April 2006. Photo by Stefan Magnusson*

**Greenshank/Gluttsnäppa/*Tringa nebularia***

Winters both along the Nile and at the coast with low numbers scattered among the other waders. Usually singles (but loud enough) and rarely more than five at one spot. Hurghada rubbish tip always has a few during spring migration.

**Green Sandpiper/Skogssnäppa/*Tringa ochropus***

Also this *Tringa* is usually seen with singles or pairs, but never common. As it prefers a somewhat different habitat than most waders, it is rarely seen on good wader days. Hurghada rubbish tip in March often holds two-three birds and migrants are seen passing El Gouna as well. Only a few records from along the Nile.

**Wood Sandpiper/Grönbena/*Tringa glareola***

Winters in small numbers in the Nile Valley and seen along the Red Sea mostly in migration times. Sites like Crocodile Island and Abbassa fish ponds often has several birds and up to five have been seen on the golf course in El Gouna.

**Common Sandpiper/Drillsnäppa/*Actitis hypoleucos***

Seen in small numbers along the Red Sea beaches and a few also on suitable places along the Nile. In Egypt they are often few and far between, I have never seen more than three together.

**Terek Sandpiper/Tereksnäppa/*Xenus cinereus***

Recorded only in spring 2006 when one to four birds were seen at the lagoon in El Gouna from April 17<sup>th</sup> to May 3<sup>rd</sup> with four seen on May 1<sup>st</sup>.

*Seems to be a rare wintering bird along the southern shores of the Red Sea with low numbers at mangrove mud flats like Hamata and Wadi Lahami.*



*Terek Sandpipers*

**Turnstone/Roskarl/*Arenaria interpres***

Seems to be wintering in small numbers far south along the Red Sea, I have never seen them around Hurghada/El Gouna. Visits at the southern areas of Shalatein, Wadi Lahami and Hamata has given up to ten at each place.



**Arctic Skua/Kustlabb/*Stercorarius parasiticus***

Records only from April 2006 when six migrants heading north were seen. Two flying north each at Shams Alam Resort on April 7<sup>th</sup>, Abu Minghar Island on April 13<sup>th</sup> and Hurghada/Abu Minghar Island on 26<sup>th</sup>.

**Sooty Gull/Sotmåsar/*Larus hemprichii***

Fairly common but in low numbers along the Red Sea, breeding on small islands and islets. Much rarer than White-eyed Gull around Hurghada/El Gouna, and not always easy to find. A boat trip is a good bet and there are always 15-20 birds hanging around Shellgada Harbour in Hurghada. Further south though it is more common and here it sometimes even outnumbers its usually more numerous cousin.



Sooty and White-eyed Gulls, Hurghada, April 2006. Photo by Stefan Magnusson.

**White-eyed Gull/Vitögd måsar/*Larus leucophthalmus***

Endemic to the Red Sea and very common along its shorelines. Breeds numerous on islands off Hurghada and high numbers frequent the rubbish tip and other areas around the town. A one-hour visit to a beach café in the evening can see up to 1000 passing to their night roost.

**Great Black-headed Gull/Svarthuvad trut/*Larus ichthyaetus***

Uncommon spring migrant with nine records during this period, seven of which are from mid-February to mid-April. One bird on the Nile north of Kom Ombo on November 22<sup>nd</sup> 2003 is the only record in autumn and away from the Red Sea coast. Two at El Gouna on December 26<sup>th</sup> 2002 indicates wintering birds along the coast. Four flying north at El Gouna on March 15<sup>th</sup> 2005 and eight in a mixed gull flock north of Ras Gharib on March 13<sup>th</sup> 2006 are only records of more than two birds.



*Great Black-headed Gulls*

### **Little Gull/Dvärgmåsar/*Larus minutus***

One record: one 2cy at Abbassa fish ponds on January 22<sup>nd</sup> 2005.

### **Black-headed Gull/Skrattmåsar/*Larus ridibundus***

Common along the Nile, where large wintering flocks can be seen, and less so along the coast. Evening roosts on the river can be huge, about 1.700 gathered south of Esna on January 27<sup>th</sup> 2005. At Aswan flocks of 400-500 are regularly seen, mostly at dusk. Along the Red Sea seen regularly, but mostly small parties.

### **Slender-billed Gull/Långnäbbad måsar/*Larus genei***

Winters around El Gouna and probably also elsewhere along the Red Sea. Often seen at the lagoon with a highest count on March 14<sup>th</sup> 2005 with 85 birds. Singles were still here in the end of April 2006. Two records from the Nile, both at Aswan: one on the sandbank on November 20<sup>th</sup> 2004 and one behind Philae Temple on April 9<sup>th</sup> 2006.

### **Lesser Black-backed Gull/Silltrut/*Larus fuscus***

Numerous in flocks on spring migration, mainly around mid-March, flying north along the Red Sea. Top days can have hundreds passing El Gouna, like the 300 on March 15<sup>th</sup> 2005. Singles recorded along the Nile and at Abu Simbel. Rare outside this period.

### **Caspian Gull/Kaspisk trut/*Larus cachinnans***

Fairly common this period along the Red Sea and some also seen along the Nile and at Abu Simbel. One gathering of around 200 birds is often seen around Hurghada rubbish tip.

### **Gull-billed Tern/Sandtärna/*Sterna nilotica***

Common winterer along the Nile, especially in the southern parts like Aswan and at Abu Simbel. Flocks often gather on sandbanks during low water and seems locally very common here and around the High Dam. 75 at Aswan on October 22<sup>nd</sup> 2005 and a total of 240 passing at dusk here on January 26<sup>th</sup> 2005 are great counts. 150 flying north at Abu Simbel on April 11<sup>th</sup> 2006 were obviously on migration. Singles and small parties seen several times during spring migration at El Gouna.

**Caspian Tern/Skräntärna/*Sterna caspia***

Common along the Red Sea and during wintertime the dominating tern along the shorelines. Pairs and small colonies breed on several places around Hurghada/El Gouna. The lagoon always has roosting terns, highest count here is 22 on December 5<sup>th</sup> 2002. A small colony of about 20 birds were at Abu Minghar Island in spring 2006.

**Crested Tern/Tofstärna/*Sterna bergii***

Fairly common, though in low numbers, along the Red Sea but always a bit off shore. Up to six-seven birds are often seen foraging off El Gouna and during diving trips to reefs, and around the islands off Hurghada. Rarely any higher numbers, but a sandbank at El Gouna has had up to 15 birds. Seen throughout the winter.

**Lesser Crested Tern/Iltärna/*Sterna bengalensis***

Local breeder but absent from its nesting islands (at least those near El Gouna) from end-October until mid-April. Often seen closer to shore than Crested Tern. I have seen them in El Gouna in October (25 on the sandbank at Möwenpick on October 12<sup>th</sup> 2005) and a pair here in April-May 2006. Also seen around the islands off Hamata in May 2006.

**Common Tern/Fisktärna/*Sterna hirundo***

Common migrant with hundreds seen along the Red Sea from mid-April 2006. 300 moving north at Abu Minghar Island on April 13<sup>th</sup> and hundreds off El Gouna in rough weather on May 9<sup>th</sup>. No positive autumn records.

**White-cheeked Tern/Vitkindad tärna/*Sterna repressa***

Common, locally very common, along the Red Sea but absent from mid-November until March (but most arrive later, beginning of April). The sandbank at Möwenpick and a floating platform at sea off El Gouna always has them, up to 75 in October and even more in spring. Over 100 were at Abu Minghar Island on June 4<sup>th</sup> 2006.

*The larger colonies are on islands at islets further out from El Gouna/Hurghada. Also at the islands off Wadi Gemal/Hamata are hundreds of terns present during the summer months.*



*White-cheeked Terns*

### **Bridled Tern/Tygeltärna/*Sterna anaethetus***

Only seen in late spring 2006 with two records: many (at least 60) at sea southeast off Hamata on May 20-21<sup>st</sup>, seemed common. Also five at Abu Minghar Island, Hurghada on June 4<sup>th</sup>.

*Breeds in unknown numbers on islands along the Red Sea and present in the summer months.*

### **Little Tern/Småtärna/*Sterna albifrons***

Seen only during spring migration in 2006. Three at Abu Simbel on April 11<sup>th</sup>, about 40 around Abu Minghar Island on April 13<sup>th</sup> and several at El Gouna in April-May with 25 at sea on May 9<sup>th</sup>.

### **Whiskered Tern/Skäggtärna/*Chlidonias hybridus***

Very common wintering bird along the Nile and fairly common on the coast during migration times, mostly in spring. Large flocks around sandbanks and shallow areas, especially down towards Aswan. Often mixed flocks with White-winged Black Terns, but much more common than this species. Mixed numbers easily reaches 1.000 during a cruise from Luxor to Aswan. On November 1<sup>st</sup> 2004, one mixed gathering at dusk north of Aswan was about 1.000. Often seen in El Gouna from mid-March, 35 flying north over the lagoon on April 17<sup>th</sup> 2006 is a good count.

### **Black Tern/Svarttärna/*Chlidonias niger***

Some single birds have been picked out in the swirling flocks of *Chlidonias* terns on the Nile but only just a few.

### **White-winged Black Tern/Vitvingad tärna/*Chlidonias leucopterus***

Common wintering bird on the Nile and often as a smaller number in the flocks with Whiskered Terns. Much less numerous, but 200-300 should be counted on a cruise from Luxor to Aswan. The difficulty of separating the species in the large flocks often results in a note like "*Chlidonias* sp 250". 50 behind Philae Temple on April 9<sup>th</sup> 2006 were mostly in summer plumage as were the seven at Luxor on April 22<sup>nd</sup> 2006. A single bird was at El Gouna golf course in April-May 2006.



*One might wonder where the amazing flocks of many thousands that are seen in Eilat in May are coming from. Are we missing something here in Egypt?*

**African Skimmer/Afrikansk saxnäbb/*Rynchops flavirostris***

One record: one bird was at the sandbank in Aswan in the evening of December 3<sup>rd</sup> 2005.

*This much sought-after species has recently been seen during boat trips (summer months) in Lake Nasser from Abu Simbel and with a few recent winter records on the Upper Nile as well.*



*African Skimmer*

**Crowned Sandgrouse/Kronflyghöna/*Pterocles coronatus***

Much-wanted sandgrouse but easily missed unless a reliable water hole is known. Still it seems to be fairly common in the desert areas along the southern Red Sea and less so further north. I have seen flocks of around 20 between Wadi Lahami and Berenice a few times in March 2005 and April 2006.



*Crowned Sandgrouses*

**Spotted Sandgrouse/Ökenflyghöna/*Pterocles senegallus***

Common and often seen along the roads through the Eastern desert, particularly north of El Gouna towards Ras Gharib and from Safaga to Qena. Flock sizes vary from a few to 25, rarely over 50 during a drive. From Aswan to Abu Simbel there can be either none or, like on November 19<sup>th</sup> 2004, 250 in many small flocks! Regularly seen around Hurghada rubbish tip and surrounding roads, up to 40. Possibly somewhat replaced further south by the Crowned Sandgrouse.

**Collared Dove/Turkduva/*Streptopelia decaocto***

Five-six birds seen in March 2006 around Hurghada rubbish tip is the only positive record from this period. The difficulty of separating it from its African cousin during a glimpse has resulted in a few unidentified birds as well.

**African Collared Dove/Afrikansk turkduva/*Streptopelia roseogrisea***

Two records from the same place, Shams Alam Resort/Wadi Gemal: five on March 20<sup>th</sup> 2005 and at least four on April 7-8<sup>th</sup> 2006.

*Many records during the last years from settlements along the southern Red Sea coastline as well as from Abu Simbel. Expanding its breeding area?*

**Turtle Dove/Turturduva/*Streptopelia turtur***

Common during spring migration (some from the beginning of March but mainly in April) but otherwise absent, possibly they leave early in the autumn. One in El Gouna on January 9<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> 2003 and one on Crocodile Island on November 17<sup>th</sup> 2004 are the few winter records. Very common around Abu Simbel in spring and many flocks moving north at El Gouna in end-April 2006.

**Laughing Dove/Palmduva/*Streptopelia senegalensis***

One of the most common and widespread birds in the country, anywhere there is a building basically! Most common in villages and towns, but can be seen flying by or perching on a small shed almost everywhere except extreme deserts.

**Namaqua Dove/Långstjärtsduva/*Oena capensis***

Rare and elusive and with records widespread, often only as one bird flying by. I have done ten records during this period. Three of these are from a known site in Luxor with a record count of 15 on November 23<sup>rd</sup> 2004. One seen at the same place in Qena on April 1<sup>st</sup> 2003 and on November 17<sup>th</sup> 2004 is also interesting. Four flew past Kom Ombo on January 27<sup>th</sup> 2005 and one at Abu Simbel on November 21<sup>st</sup> 2004. One record each also from El Gouna (October 2003) and Hurghada (April 2003).

**Senegal Coucal/Senegalsporrgök/*Centropus senegalensis***

Three records: one bird along the canal south of Cairo on November 25<sup>th</sup> 2003 and one at nearly exactly the same spot at Abbassa fish ponds on November 25<sup>th</sup> 2004 and on January 22<sup>nd</sup> 2005.

**Barn Owl/Tornuggla/*Tyto alba***

Only two records, both at the same place: one bird hunting along the cornice in Luxor on March 9<sup>th</sup> 2005 and one on November 7<sup>th</sup> 2005.

**Eagle Owl/Berguv/*Bubo bubo***

One record: one bird seen at dusk in El Gouna on January 27<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> 2006. Likely to be ssp *ascalaphus* but not seen well enough.

**Little Owl/Minervauggla/*Athene noctua***

Only one record: one bird at Kom Ombo on February 24<sup>th</sup> 2005.

*This species is said to be fairly common in the Nile Valley, but after all my time there I would not fully agree.*

**Long-eared Owl/Hornuggla/*Asio otus***

One record: one bird in El Gouna on November 5<sup>th</sup> 2004. Seen in full daylight flying over the roofs, probably coming in from the sea.

**Egyptian Nightjar/Ökennattskärre/*Caprimulgus aegyptius***

Two records, both from Abu Simbel: one hunting at dusk on November 20<sup>th</sup> 2003 and on April 10<sup>th</sup> 2006.

**Swift/Tornseglare/*Apus apus***

Fairly common in autumn and spring but absent during the winter months. Most migrant swifts along the Red Sea in spring belong to this species.

**Pallid Swift/Blek tornseglare/*Apus pallidus***

Very common, especially along the Nile Valley during the winter months. Large gatherings of over 1.000 can be seen around Luxor, for example over Crocodile Island. Breeds on the cliffs on the West Bank at easily seen at Deir el-Bahri and Valley of the Kings.

**Alpine Swift/Alpseglare/*Apus melba***

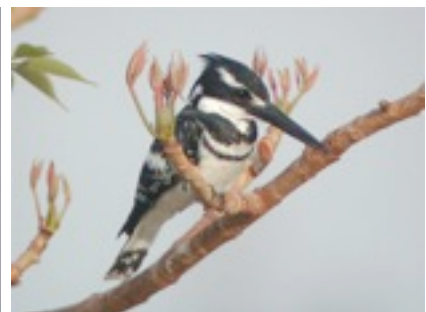
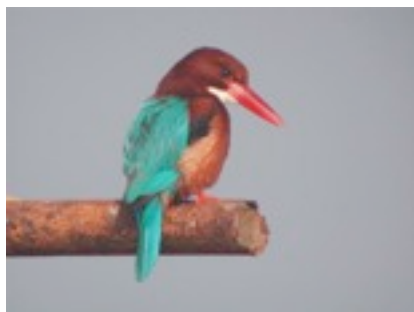
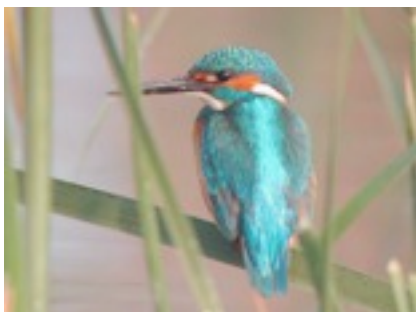
Two records of this migrant visitor: one over El Gouna on April 18<sup>th</sup> 2006 and one passing Ain Sukhna on April 25<sup>th</sup> 2006.

**White-breasted Kingfisher/Smyrnakungsfiskare/*Halcyon smyrnensis***

Winters and possibly breeds around Cairo and a highlight during a visit to Abbassa fishponds. No records south of the southern outskirts of Cairo. Several birds seen around the canal at Sakkara south of the city in November 2003, November 2004 and four here in April 2006. Up to ten have been counted between Cairo and Abbassa fish ponds and four-five birds in that area.

**Kingfisher/Kungsfiskare/*Alcedo atthis***

Common in El Gouna where singles and pairs are seen on several places, if they breed is uncertain. Another few records also along the Red Sea. Regularly, but not so often, seen along the Nile during the winter months and several at every visit at Abbassa fishponds.



kingfisher bonanza at Abbassa fish ponds, April 2006. Photos by Stefan Magnusson

**Pied Kingfisher/Gråfiskare/*Ceryle rudis***

Very common in the Nile Valley and one of the dominating birds on a cruise. Noisy and social flocks often seen, up to 20 together. Over 100 during a cruise day is not uncommon. Many in canals and ponds as well and up to 30 counted at Abbassa

fishponds. Some singles and pairs have been seen along the Red Sea and one pair is at the lagoon in El Gouna.



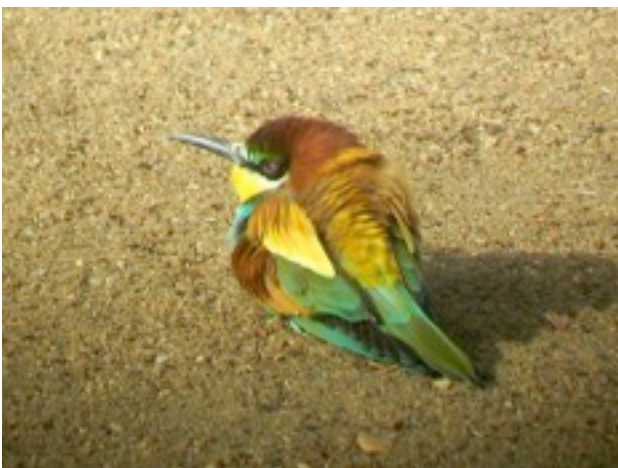
*Pied Kingfishers, Crocodile Island, December 2004. Photo by Mattias Rudenvall*

**Little Green Bee-eater/Grön dvärgbiätare/*Merops orientalis***

Common in the farmlands in the Nile Valley and easily seen on wires along the road. Often in pairs or small groups with some larger flocks of 20 having been seen. Seen around Cairo but never along the Red Sea.

**Blue-cheeked Bee-eater/Grön biätare/*Merops persicus***

Fairly common but in low numbers, seen until the beginning of November and then again from mid-March. Singles or small flocks seen on migration along the Red Sea coast as well as in the Nile Valley, most common in April-May. The 45 seen around Abu Simbel on April 10-11<sup>th</sup> 2006 is the highest count, most flocks are less than 15.



*Bee-eater and Blue-cheeked Bee-eater*

**Bee-eater/Biätare/*Merops apiaster***

Common during migration times with especially high numbers moving north in April-May. In autumn some linger throughout October and the first returns around mid-March. 420 were counted at Ain Sukhna on April 25<sup>th</sup> 2006 and at least 400 passed El Gouna on May 3<sup>rd</sup> 2006.



### **Hoopoe/Härfågel/*Upupa epops***

Common, locally very common, in the Nile Valley and much less so (mainly during spring migration) along the Red Sea. Often seen in the farmlands and fields, six-seven birds in the same small area is not uncommon. One day of birding can give up to 15-20 birds and 16 were seen on the same spot in Aswan in November 2003. In spring sites like Hurghada rubbish tip and El Gouna have had seven birds on one day.



*Hoopoe and Wryneck, El Gouna, April 2006. Photos by Klas Rådberg*

### **Wryneck/Göktyta/*Jynx torquilla***

Mainly a spring migrant (from end-February) with a few records in autumn as well. Along the Red Sea often found in gardens, small green areas and on El Gouna golf course where they feed out in the open. Most sites have one to three birds but the golf course regularly turns up with five or six.

### **Desert Lark/Stenökenlärka/*Ammomanes deserti***

Probably more common than what the records show, this due to the inaccessibility of many mountain areas. Along the roads this lark is seen regularly in singles or a few together, although many times only a glimpse is caught. The best site during my time here was Valley of the Kings in Luxor where a pair was seen, often drinking from a leaking tap by the parking place.

### **Hoopoe Lark/Härfågellärka/*Alaemon alaudipes***

Spread out in the endless deserts and not always easy to find, although it might be quite common. I have seen them only a few times each on the roads from El Gouna to Cairo, from Quesir to Shalatein and a bit east of Qena (three here on December 14<sup>th</sup> 2002) on the Qena-Safaga road. About a dozen records all together.

### **Bimaculated Lark/Asiatisk kalanderlärka/*Melanocorypha bimaculata***

Uncommon spring migrant along the Red Sea, mainly in March, and often seen together with Short-toed Larks. Small flocks along the roads in mid-March is the best bet, in 2006 the highest count was 25 at Hurghada rubbish tip on March 15<sup>th</sup>. Also seen regularly at El Gouna.



*Bimaculated Lark and Red-rumped Swallow*

### **Short-toed Lark/Kortttälärka/*Calandrella brachydactyla***

Common during migration times and tens of thousands are flying north along the Red Sea in March-April. Singles and small parties in October are seen and then the massive wave in spring passes towards the end of March. An estimated 2.000 were along the road between Hurghada and Safaga on March 29<sup>th</sup> 2003 and during the day of March 10<sup>th</sup> 2006 at least 1.000 passed El Gouna. The golf course often has 150-200 around mid-March.

### **Crested Lark/Tofslärka/*Galerida cristata***

Very common in the Nile Valley and around Cairo. Often seen roadside, on small tracks and in the edge of cultivation. Very rare along the Red Sea.

### **Skylark/Sånglärka/*Alauda arvensis***

Wintering visitor that rarely reaches as far south as El Gouna. Here six birds stayed the winter 2005/2006. Also noted on winter visits to Abbassa fish ponds.

### **Sand Martin/Backsvala/*Riparia riparia***

Common during migration times and with a smaller number wintering in the Nile Valley. The 200 at Crocodile Island on January 15<sup>th</sup> 2003 is a high winter count. High numbers pass along the Red Sea in spring, about 300 were at Hurghada rubbish tip on March 6<sup>th</sup> 2006.

### **Rock Martin/Afrikansk klippsvala/*Hirundo fuligula***

Common in the Nile Valley but not in any high numbers. Easily seen around Luxor when visiting ancient monuments like Karnak and Deir el-Bahri where they are seen at close range. Sometimes join the other swallows and martins over insect-rich marshlands.

### **Crag Martin/Klippsvala/*Hirundo rupestris***

Only one positive record: two at Shams Alam Resort on April 8<sup>th</sup> 2006.

### **Swallow/Ladusvala/*Hirundo rustica***

Very common along the Nile (highest number in winter) and along the Red Sea (during migration). In winter both *savignii* and *rustica* are seen commonly over the river. Often numerous around Crocodile Island and other marshlands along the

river, many gatherings of over 500 have been seen. Also in spring along the Red Sea several hundred can be seen together.

**Red-rumped Swallow/Rostgumpsvåla/*Hirundo daurica***

Common during spring migration and with a few winter records of single birds together with Swallows along the Nile. In March-April many are seen along the Red Sea and some good days in El Gouna have had up to 30-40 moving north. Ten outside Luxor on November 23<sup>rd</sup> 2004 was a bit surprising.

**House Martin/Hussvåla/*Delichon urbicum***

Common during migration times, most in spring, and with a small number staying the winter in the Nile Valley. Often joins in the other swallows and martins.

**Richard's Pipit/Större piplärka/*Anthus richardi***

One of the great discoveries was to find that this species probably winters at the golf course in El Gouna. Up to four birds were seen in October-December 2002, two in November 2004 and two in November 2005 and April-May 2006. Also two at Crocodile Island on January 18<sup>th</sup> 2006.



*Richards Pipits, El Gouna. Photos by Stefan Magnusson and myself respectively.*

**Tawny Pipit/Fältpiplärka/*Anthus campestris***

Migrant visitor in autumn and spring, fairly common in spring in suitable areas. The golf course in El Gouna which seems like a favourite spot can have up to 15 in a day towards the end of March. Hurghada rubbish tip also has several birds but after that they are usually single or just a few.

**Tree Pipit/Trädpiplärka/*Anthus trivialis***

Common during spring migration but fairly late, really high numbers are not reached until the first week of April. Again the golf course in El Gouna is a good place with nearly 200 on April 7<sup>th</sup> 2006.

**Meadow Pipit/Ängspiplärka/*Anthus pratensis***

Wintering visitor that I have seen only during visits to Abbassa fish ponds in November 2004 and January 2005.



**Red-throated Pipit/Rödstrupig piplärka/*Anthus cervinus***

Common during migration along the Red Sea and also fairly common wintering bird in the Nile Valley. On the fairways on the golf course they seem to be more numerous in autumn than in spring, with up to 70-80 on a day in October compared to only 20-30 in March-April. A winter visit to Crocodile Island usually gives 50-or-so birds.



*Red-throated Pipit and feldegg-Yellow Wagtails*

**Water Pipit/Vattenpiplärka/*Anthus spinoletta***

Winter visitor with records from both Abbassa fish ponds, El Gouna and Crocodile Island, indicating that it is a widespread wintering bird. Several records from the golf course in November-December with four on November 29<sup>th</sup> 2005. Three at Crocodile Island on December 6<sup>th</sup> 2004. Also seen at Hurghada rubbish tip in March 2003 and many there in March 2006.

**Yellow Wagtail/Gulärla/*Motacilla flava***

Common both as a wintering bird in the Nile Valley and as a migrant in green areas along the Red Sea. Mixed with Pied Wagtail there can be hundreds along the Nile on a day in December-January. The golf course in El Gouna can have up to 100 in April, ssp both *flava*, *thunbergi* and *feldegg*.

**Grey Wagtail/Forsärla/*Motacilla cinerea***

Four records : two at Esna on November 13<sup>th</sup> 2002, one in El Gouna on October 14<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> 2004, one outside Cairo on November 25<sup>th</sup> and one at El Gouna on November 27<sup>th</sup> 2005.

**Pied Wagtail/Sädesärla/*Motacilla alba***

Very common in most areas except deserts, highest number during the winter months. Both along the Nile and in the migrant areas along the Red Sea it is one of the dominating passerines. 100 during a day in autumn or spring on the golf course is not uncommon.

**African Pied Wagtail/Brokärla/*Motacilla aguimp***

One of the specialities in Abu Simbel and I have found it on all my birding visits, from November to April. Up to four have been seen, but they move around a lot are not always easy to find. Also one at the Nile in Aswan on October 22<sup>nd</sup> 2005.



**Common Bulbul/Trädgårdsbulbyl/*Pycnonotus barbatus***

Common in villages, gardens and plantations in the Nile Valley, also in central Cairo. Often in pairs or small gangs, discovered by their calls and obvious behaviour.

**Rufous Bush Robin/Trädnäktergal/*Cercotrichas galactotes***

Five records: one on Crocodile Island on March 29<sup>th</sup> 2003 and one along the Nile north of Esna on March 30<sup>th</sup> 2003. One on Crocodile Island on April 12<sup>th</sup> 2006 and a pair outside Luxor the same day. One in El Gouna on May 22<sup>nd</sup> 2006.



*Rufous Bush Robin*

**Nightingale/Sydnäktergal/*Luscinia megarhynchos***

Four records: one on Crocodile Island on March 29<sup>th</sup> 2003, one in El Gouna on April 7<sup>th</sup> 2003 and two at Shams Alam Resort on April 7-8<sup>th</sup> 2006.

**Bluethroat/Blåhake/*Luscinia svecica***

Common wintering bird with the highest concentrations in the reedbeds and along marshlands in the Nile Valley. A day of birding here (or cruising on the river) can reveal 15-20 birds playing hide-and-seek in small openings in reeds and ditches. Also some birds wintering in El Gouna and other places.

**Black Redstart/Svart rödstjärt/*Phoenicurus ochruros***

Four records: one on the West Bank, Luxor on January 20<sup>th</sup> 2003, one outside Luxor on November 23<sup>rd</sup> 2004, one at Shams Alam Resort on March 19<sup>th</sup> 2005 and one in El Gouna on December 8<sup>th</sup> 2005.

**Redstart/Rödstjärt/*Phoenicurus phoenicurus***

Fairly common, but in low numbers, in migration times in gardens and other green areas along the Red Sea. A day of birding in El Gouna in March-April rarely gives more than four or five.

**Whinchat/Buskskvätta/*Saxicola rubetra***

Fairly common during migration in October and then again from mid-March. Often perching one here and one there, yet again the golf course in El Gouna is a good place to look, up to five in a day here.

### **Stonechat/Svarthakad buskskvätta/*Saxicola torquatus***

Not that common actually, surprisingly few have been seen in the Nile Valley. More often seen in green areas along the Red Sea with the golf course being a safe bet. Here several pairs are more or less resident, six were seen on November 29<sup>th</sup> 2005.

Concerning the eastern races ssp. *maura* and *variegata* they have been seen several times during the winter months. At least two were positively *maura* but the rest probably all belong to *variegata*, like the four at Shams Alam Resort in March 2005.

### **Isabelline Wheatear/Isabellastenskvätta/*Oenanthe isabellina***

Common during migration times with a few scattered winter records. In October-November a small number is seen along roads and in green areas along the Red Sea, but it is really common from mid-February onwards. In March they can be everywhere with tens of birds on El Gouna golf course and many also around Hurghada rubbish tip.



*Isabelline Wheatear*

### **Northern Wheatear/Stenskvätta/*Oenanthe oenanthe***

Fairly common in migration times, much more in spring (from end-February) than in autumn. Never as numerous as Isabelline Wheatear and the highest number from El Gouna golf course is about ten during a day.

### **Pied Wheatear/Nunnestenskvätta/*Oenanthe pleschanka***

Three positive records: one male at Hurghada airport on April 9<sup>th</sup> 2003, one female at El Gouna on October 15<sup>th</sup> 2004 and one male at Berenice on March 20<sup>th</sup> 2005. In addition to these a handful of birds, most at Abu Simbel, have been left unidentified.

### **Cyprus Pied Wheatear/Cypernstenskvätta/*Oenanthe cypriaca***

One record: one male at Abu Simbel on January 18<sup>th</sup> 2003.

**Black-eared Wheatear/Medelhavsstenskvätta/*Oenanthe hispanica***

Fairly common during spring migration and with a few autumn and winter records, the latter at Abu Simbel in the deep south. From mid-February and on often seen along roads and in green areas, gardens etc. along the Red Sea. Many spots have several birds but never more than four or five.

**Desert Wheatear/Ökenstenskvätta/*Oenanthe deserti***

Mainly a bird for the winter months of the year, and not as common as might be expected from a desert country like Egypt. Usually in the outskirts of green areas and villages, rarely in actual deserts. Up to five spend the winter at El Gouna golf course and it can be fairly common during a day at Abu Simbel. Otherwise few and scattered, several records are from Nile cruise ships passing dry fields along the river.

**Kurdish Wheatear/Kurdstenskvätta/*Oenanthe xanthopyrna***

Two records: one male at Giza pyramids, Cairo on February 13<sup>th</sup> 2003 and one male southeast of Aswan on December 2<sup>nd</sup> 2005.



*Kurdish Wheatear*

**Mourning Wheatear/Sorgstenskvätta/*Oenanthe lugens***

Regularly seen during drives through mountainous deserts, but never really common. The road from Safaga to Qena through the Red Sea mountains often has two or three. Another area is the West Bank at Luxor where single birds are often seen at the ancient monuments.

**Hooded Wheatear/Munkstenskvätta/*Oenanthe monacha***

Uncommon in the deserts, usually in or near mountains and the most desolate areas. The ancient monuments at the West Bank, Luxor had most records during this period, with one to two males seen. The drive from Safaga to Qena also had several records and one male was north of Quesir on February 20<sup>th</sup> 2006.

**White-crowned Black Wheatear/Vitkronad stenskvätta/*Oenanthe leucopyga***

The most common “desert” wheatear and often seen on drives through these areas. Again it seems to be the mountains attracting most birds. A three-hour drive can give up to ten birds and this number can also be seen in Abu Simbel. Easily seen at Aswan and singing birds were noted at Ain Sukhna during raptor watch in spring 2006.

**Rock Thrush/Stentrast/*Monticola saxatilis***

Two records, both from the same trip in April 2006: one male south of Wadi Lahami on April 8<sup>th</sup> and two at Abu Simbel on April 11<sup>th</sup>.



*Rock Thrush, Abu Simbel, April 2006. Photo by Stefan Magnusson*

**Blue Rock Thrush/Blåtrast/*Monticola solitarius***

A low number spend the winter in suitable, rocky areas and most of my records are from the ancient monuments around Luxor. Here they can be seen perching on temple roofs and columns. The Valley of the Kings had two birds in the winter 2002/ 2003. Four records from migration, all in 2006: one male at El Gouna on March 3<sup>rd</sup>, two at Ain Sukhna on March 13<sup>th</sup>, one there on April 5<sup>th</sup> and one at Makadi Bay on April 2<sup>nd</sup>.

**Song Thrush/Taltrast/*Turdus philomelos***

One record: one at Abu Simbel on November 19<sup>th</sup> 2004.

**Fan-tailed Warbler/Grässångare/*Cisticola juncidis***

Common, locally very common, in the Nile Valley and around Cairo. Easily found by its “zitting” song (which can be heard even from a passing tour bus!) and often seen along tracks and ditches in the farmlands. Curious and not at all shy, can be approached down to one meter at sites like Crocodile Island.

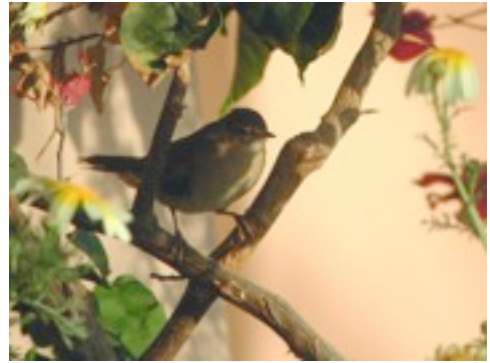
**Graceful Warbler/Streckad prinia/*Prinia gracilis***

Also this tiny and vocal species is common and often seen in the Nile Valley and around Cairo. Likes tall vegetation like reed and sugar cane and its different calls is a characteristic part of a day in the Nile Valley.

**Savi´s Warbler/Vassångare/*Locustella luscinioides***

Found during migration (mainly spring from end-February) in gardens, reed patches and other green areas along the Red Sea. Shy and hides like a mouse close to the ground in hotel gardens and bushes. Several can be found by carefully searching these areas in March/mid-April. Three or four were at Shams Alam Resort on April 7-8<sup>th</sup> 2006. Up to three singing at Hurghada rubbish tip in March 2006.





*Savi's Warbler*

**Sedge Warbler/Sävsångare/*Acrocephalus schoenobaenus***

Fairly common and low numbers are seen during migration and with a few winter records. In spring a few are found at migrant areas along the Red Sea, for example in the reeds at Hurghada rubbish tip. Winter records mainly from the south like at Abu Simbel.

**Reed Warbler/Rörsångare/*Acrocephalus scirpaeus***

Appearance much like Sedge Warbler but more common. Several at Abu Simbel in January 2003 indicates that they winter at least in the far south of the country. Numerous in the reeds at Hurghada rubbish tip in spring, which is basically the only larger patch of reeds along the entire Red Sea coastline.

**Clamorous Reed Warbler/Papyrussångare/*Acrocephalus stentoreus***

Fairly common in the reeds along the Nile and also around Cairo. Silent and less easy to find in winter but the singing birds are many in spring at sites like Crocodile Island and Abbassa fish ponds. Singles have been found in scrubs and reeds at Abu Simbel during winter visits.



*Clamorous Reed Warbler, Abbassa fish ponds, April 2006.  
Photo by Stefan Magnusson*

**Eastern Olivaceous Warbler/Eksångare/*Hippolais pallida***

Fairly common during spring migration and with a few records from autumn and winter. Specially Abu Simbel seems to attract many, and the area was crawling with them during visits in March 2005 and April 2006. Here were also birds seen in

January 2005. Otherwise it is usually just a few in hotel gardens along the Red Sea.

**Subalpine Warbler/Rödstrupig sångare/*Sylvia cantillans***

Uncommon and low numbers seen in hotel gardens and other green areas along the Red Sea in March-April. Five birds in one hotel garden in El Gouna on April 2<sup>nd</sup> 2003 is the highest day count, usually they are one or two. Several also at Wadi Gemal on March 20-21<sup>th</sup> 2005.

**Ménétriés Warbler/Östlig sammetsnäbb/*Sylvia mystacea***

One record: one female at El Gouna golf course on October 19<sup>th</sup> 2004.

**Sardinian Warbler/Sammetsnäbb/*Sylvia melanocephala***

Common and one of the dominating warblers, both on the coast and in the Nile Valley. A low number winters around El Gouna but more commonly so further south. On migration common in bush lands a gardens.

**Rüppells Warbler/Svarthakad sångare/*Sylvia rueppelli***

Surprisingly few with only four records, all from March: one male at El Gouna on March 20<sup>th</sup> and one female there on March 27<sup>th</sup> 2003, two males at El Gouna on March 15<sup>th</sup> 2005 and one male at Wadi Gemal on March 21<sup>st</sup> 2005.

**Eastern Orphean Warbler/Mästersångare/*Sylvia crassirostris***

Two records: two at El Gouna on April 6<sup>th</sup> 2003 and one behind Philae Temple, Aswan on April 9<sup>th</sup> 2006.

**Barred Warbler/Höksångare/*Sylvia nisoria***

One record: one 1cy at El Gouna golf course on October 19<sup>th</sup> 2004.

**Lesser Whitethroat/Ärtsångare/*Sylvia curruca***

Common during migration times and with a few staying for the winter, mainly in the south. Can be numerous and dominating in the gardens and scrubs along the Red Sea in March-April, up to 10-15 in one garden. Also in October there can be quite a few at El Gouna, unlike many other warblers.

**Common Whitethroat/Törnsångare/*Sylvia communis***

A low number is seen during migration time, but seems to arrive late in spring, mainly in April. Singles seen at typical warbler sites along the Red Sea, but always just one or two.

**Eastern Bonelli´s Warbler/Balkansångare/*Phylloscopus orientalis***

Only four records is less than expected: one at Crocodile Island on January 15<sup>th</sup> 2003, one at Hurghada rubbish tip on March 6<sup>th</sup> 2006, one at Abu Simbel on March 27<sup>th</sup> 2006 and one south of Safaga on April 7<sup>th</sup> 2006.



*Eastern Bonelli's Warbler, Safaga, April 2006. Photo by Klas Rådberg*

**Chiffchaff/Gransångare/*Phylloscopus collybita***

The most common warbler both during winter and migration times. Highest numbers during migration but can be numerous far south even in winter. Days with 50 in a small area of insect-rich bushes and scrubs is not uncommon during spring.

**Willow Warbler/Lövsångare/*Phylloscopus trochilus***

Fairly common during migration but arrives later, mostly in April. Often found as singles or a few by searching through scrubs with Chiffchaffs. Probably overlooked.

**Spotted Flycatcher/Grå flugsnappare/*Muscicapa striata***

Only records from late spring 2006 of this early-leaving and late-arriving migrant. In the end of April they arrived and in May they were some days very common around El Gouna with birds perching anywhere they could.

**Red-breasted Flycatcher/Mindre flugsnappare/*Ficedula parva***

One record: one female at El Gouna on October 7<sup>th</sup> 2003.

**Semi-collared Flycatcher/Balkanflugsnappare/*Ficedula semitorquata***

One record: one male at Sakkara on April 5<sup>th</sup> 2006.



*Semi-collared Flycatcher, Sakkara, April 2006. Photo by Stefan Magnusson*

### **Nile Valley Sunbird/Nilsolfågel/*Anthreptes metallicus***

One of the target species of visiting birders and an exotic-looking bird indeed. Males in breeding plumage from mid-February onwards. Fairly common in suitable habitat (must have trees and bushes in blossom) in the Nile Valley and some also around Cairo. Easily seen around Luxor and Aswan in hotel grounds and botanical gardens. Visits to Crocodile Island has resulted in 30-40 birds some days.



*Nile Valley Sunbird, Aswan, April 2006. Photo by Stefan Magnusson*

### **Golden Oriole/Sommargylling/*Oriolus oriolus***

Six records of single birds spread over the migration periods. Three around mid-October (Red Sea hotel gardens and Luxor) and three in spring, March 15<sup>th</sup>, April 28<sup>th</sup> and May 3<sup>rd</sup> (all from Hurghada/El Gouna).

### **Isabelline Shrike/Isabellatörnskata/*Lanius isabellinus***

Two or possibly three records: one adult at El Gouna golf course on March 2<sup>nd</sup> 2003, one 2cy at Crocodile Island on January 29<sup>th</sup> 2005 and possibly that bird seen here again, now as an adult, on January 18<sup>th</sup> 2006.

Very interesting (not to say extremely frustrating) is also the record of an unidentified Isabelline/Brown Shrike in a hotel garden in El Gouna on April 6-7<sup>th</sup>



2003. Short glimpses during work were given of this bird and it was not found again during extensive search.



*Isabelline Shrike*

**Red-backed Shrike/Törnskata/*Lanius collurio***

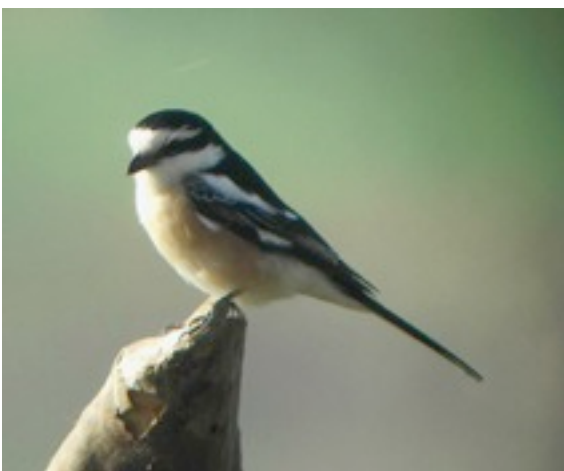
One record: one 1cy at El Gouna golf course on October 19<sup>th</sup> 2004.

**Southern Grey Shrike/Ökenvarfågel/*Lanius meridionalis***

Seven records during this period, well spread from Cairo to Abu Simbel and from end-November to March which indicates wintering birds. Four of these (five birds) have been done along the southern Red Sea coastline from Safaga to Wadi Gemal, so this seems to be the area in which to look for them.

**Woodchat Shrike/Rödhuvad törnskata/*Lanius senator***

Only seen during spring migration from this period, the first arriving in end-February and then fairly common throughout the spring. Most are found in Red Sea hotel gardens, El Gouna golf course and in scrubs along the road, but also many in the Nile Valley. Many sites have had five-six birds during a visit and around ten were at Abu Simbel on April 10-11<sup>th</sup> 2006.



*Masked and Woodchat Shrike*

**Masked Shrike/Masktörnskata/*Lanius nubicus***

This handsome shrike is also fairly common during spring migration which starts in mid-February. Prefers more vegetation than Woodchat Shrike and most are seen in the Nile Valley and a smaller number along the Red Sea. A visit to Crocodile Island or during a cruise day in end-March up to ten can be seen. Also two mid-October records from El Gouna.

**House Crow/Huskråka/*Corvus splendens***

Common in some ports and towns along the Red Sea, mainly Suez, Ras Gharib and Safaga and with a smaller number in Hurghada. Easily seen in these places on roofs and noisily searching for food in rubbish bins and street corners. Highest numbers in Suez and up to 30 having been seen in Safaga.

**Carrion Crow/Kråka/*Corvus corone***

One of the most common and widespread birds in the country. Present in most areas except vast desert areas but otherwise they feed and live off basically everything. Often seen snapping at floating objects on the Nile like gulls and hitching a ride on cruise ships.

**Brown-necked Raven/Ökenkorp/*Corvus ruficollis***

Common in desert areas but also around settlements and villages here. Numerous at dumps and rubbish tips and often seen mobbing Black Kites or migrating raptors over these areas. Up to 100 have been seen at the rubbish tips at Shalatein and Abu Simbel.



*Brown-necked Raven, Shams Alam, April 2006. Photo by Stefan Magnusson*

**Starling/Stare/*Sturnus vulgaris***

A few winter records exist from this species that winters in the north of the country. Several flocks seen around Cairo in November 2003 and in winter 2004/2005.

**House Sparrow/Gråsparv/*Passer domesticus***

VERY common.

**Spanish Sparrow/Spansk sparv/*Passer hispaniolensis***

Fairly common and widespread, both in hotel grounds along the Red Sea and in villages in the Nile Valley. Often separated from the House Sparrows, mostly feeding in fields and in the outskirts of settlements rather than among houses and cars. Several flocks of around 100 have been seen.



*Spanish Sparrow and Trumpeter Finch. Photos by Stefan Magnusson and Istvan Moldovan respectively.*

**Streaked Weaver/Streckad vävare/*Ploceus maynar***

One record at the known site Abbassa fishponds: one male on April 6<sup>th</sup> 2006.

**Red avadavat/Tigerfink/*Amandava amandava***

I have recorded this species at one site, Crocodile Island. Here they seem common and small flocks of around 15 birds are often seen. Males in beautiful breeding plumage from late winter.

**Goldfinch/Steglits/*Carduelis carduelis***

One record: two at Crocodile Island on January 20<sup>th</sup> 2003. This species is kept in cages at some places in the country so the origins of these birds can not be certain.

**Trumpeter Finch/Ökentrumptare/*Bucanetes githagineus***

Possibly common but I have seen them only at some places along the desert edge in the Nile Valley. The Valley of the Kings near Luxor is a safe bet that always holds of flock of up to 80 birds. Here they are very tame and can be fed by hand! Southeast of Aswan was a flock of 40 in December 2005 and flocks have also been seen outside Luxor in such areas as mentioned above.

**Ortolan Bunting/Ortolansparv/*Emberiza hortulana***

Only one record: one male at El Gouna golf course on April 7<sup>th</sup> 2006.

**Cretzschmar's Bunting/Rostsparv/*Emberiza caesia***

Also of this, presumed more common, species there is only one record: one male west of El Gouna on March 2<sup>nd</sup> 2003.

*Since both this and the previous species are so numerous in nearby Eilat in spring, one might wonder why there are so few seen here.*