

Yemen & Socotra 18th October to 2nd November 2009

Participants (all from Sweden)

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Itinerary

Day 0 – Sat 17 Oct 2009: Departure from Sweden.

Day 1 – Sun 18 Oct 2009: Early arrival at 00:50 Meet, greet and transfer to Arabia Felix Hotel, a group of traditional houses in the old city of Sana'a.

Later part of the morning drive to Hammam Gearref for bird watching in the Wadi. Shining Sunbird, Arabian Babbler, Black Bush Robin, Palm Doves, Dusky Turtle Dove, African Silver Bill, Arabian Waxbill, Lichtenstein's Sandgrouse and migrating Eagles and Step Eagles, etc..... Around 16:00 drive back to Sana'a to try the Hume's Tawny Owl. Dinner and overnight at the Arabia Felix Hotel.

Day 2 – Mon 19 Oct 2009: Early drive to Kawkaban for the Philby's and Arabian Partridges followed by the Blanford's Lark, the Serins, Yemen Linnet, Red Breasted wheatear, Brown Woodland Warbler, Yemen Warbler, Palestinian Warbler, etc... on to Al Ahjur for the Arabian Woodpecker and maybe the Arabian Golden Winged Grosbeak, White Throated White Eye and Yemen Trush, Fan Tailed Raven and Brown Necked Raven. Continue to Al Mahweet for dinner and overnight at Al Mahweet (***) Hotel.

Day 3 – Tue 20 Oct 2009: Al Mahweet and Surrounding. We will try for Cinereous Bunting. Visit the colony of the Griffon Vultures, Stonechat, Long-billed Pipit, Tristram's Straling, Spotted (African) Eagle Owl and many other mountain birds that we have missed to see as Al Mahweet is the central to a number of good sites of many good birds. Lunch dinner and overnight at Al Mahweet Hotel.

Day 4 – Wed 21 Oct 2009: Al Mahweet - Wadi Sarie – Wadi Surdoud – Bajil – Bura'a Protectorate Area – Al Mansouriah - Al Hodeidah. Target birds: White-browed Coucal, Shining Sunbird, Arabian Partridge, Southern Grey Shrike, Isabelline Shrike, Abyssinian Roller, Cattle Egret, Hammerkop, Arabian Golden Sparrow, etc. O/n Taj Shamsan (***) Hotel in Al Hodeidah.

Day 5 – Thu 22 Oct 2009: Al Hodeidah – Al Kaden – Al Luhiyah – Al Hodeidah
Target birds: Arabian Bastard, Dark Chanting Goshawk, Arabian Golden Sparrow. Dinner and overnight at Taj Awsan Hotel in Al Hodeidah.

Day 6 – Fri 23 Oct 2009: Al Hodeidah Wetland – Al Urj – Al Hodeidah Sewage Ponds – Overnight in Al Hodeidah. Today we shall see sea birds and Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse, Hoopoe Lark, Black Crowned Finch Lark, Singing Bush Lark etc.. At 16:30 drive south of Al Hodeidah to look for Nubian Night Jar. Drive back to the hotel. Dinner in a traditional restaurant for sea food; overnight at Taj Awsan Hotel in Al Hodeidah.

Day 7 – Sat 24 Oct 2009: Al Hodeidah – drive south to Al Khowkah fishing village – Mokka – Taiz. In Taiz the Yemen Accentor is common. O/n Taj Shamsan (****) Hotel.
Target Birds: Crab Plover, White-eyed Gull, Western Reef Heron etc... Yemen Accentor, Yemen Trush.

Day 8 – Sun 25 Oct 2009: Taiz – Aden, birding in the Aden marsh.

In Wadi Dhabab we will look for the Red-eyed Dove, Zebra Waxbill, Arabian Waxbill, Bush Petronia then we will drive to Aden to bird at the Hiswa Protectorate Area in Aden for the sea birds. Dinner and overnight at Mercure Aden (*****) Hotel.

Day 9 – Mon 26 Oct 2009: Fly Aden to Socotra by Felix Airways flight # FO250D departure at 08:40 arr. at 11:10. Meet greet and transfer to Taj Socotra Hotel to check in and freshen up. After lunch start birding in Denghen, in mid afternoon we go to Hawlaf for seawatching. Back to the hotel for dinner and overnight.

Day 10 – Tue 27 Oct 2009:

This day we will drive to the protected area of Ayhaft where we will see the Socotra Golden Winged Grosbeak (the National bird), the Socotra House Sparrow, the Socotra Buzzard etc.... Back to the hotel for dinner and overnight at Taj Socotra Hotel.

Day 11 – Wed 28 Oct 2009:

This day we will drive east then sail by a fishing boat to the island of J. Sabuniah for a full pelagic trip. Back to Hadibo for dinner and overnight at Taj Socotra Hotel.

Day 12 – Thu 29 Oct 2009:

Today we will drive up to the mountains of Dixum where we will see one of the rare birds which is the Socotra Bunting. We will also see the Socotra Starling. We will for sure notice the wonderful landscape and the forest of the famous Dragons Blood Trees.

Day 13 – Fri 30 Oct 2009:

This day we make a loop around the island by driving to the Nawjid, the southern part of the island via Di Fa'erho for birding and enjoying the landscape as well as we will see a forest of Frankincense trees and a huge amazing cave that can take 50 4WD Vehicles. Drive back to Hadibo via Dixum for dinner and overnight.

Day 14 – Sat 31 Oct 2009:

By now we should have seen all of the endemic birds of Socotra, so drive to Hala east of the island for seawatching, on to Dihamri, a protectorate area for snorkling and back to Hadibo for dinner and overnight.

Day 15 – Sun 1 Nov 2009:

To day we drive west to Qalancia followed by Ditwah protectorate area for sea-watching and swimming in it great beach. Back to Hadibo for dinner and overnight.

Day 16 – Mon 02 Nov 2009: Fly Socotra – Sana'a by Felix Airways flight # FO251B via Aden dep at 11:40 arr. Sana'a at 15:20. P.M. Free for a walking tour in the Old City of Sana'a. Late afternoon try again the Hume's T. Owl if not seen. Farewell dinner at Funduk Dawood in the Old City of Sana'a. Late transfer to the Airport for departure.