

FIELD OBSERVATIONS ON BIRDS OF “KIRMASHIYAH” WETLANDS, 29 MAR. 04

By : Mudhafar A. Salim

Kirmashiyah wetlands is newly-flooded marsh, that holds most, if not all, of characteristics of typical marsh. Generally, it is slowly expanding as it receives more water. It's area may reach more than 50 km², that contains considerable variety of plant-cover and various water deeps ranges from open mud-flats, which is very excellent for Waders, to around 2m. deep suitable for Grebes. Kirmashiyah wetlands was classified as IBA as a part of Al-Hammar Lake (Evans 1995).

Considerable bird-list was gained after observations, which was held quickly, represents significant numbers. Apparently, most, if not all, bird species are breeding birds.

Some kinds of low-scale threats facing avifauna in Kirmashiyah wetlands were spotted roughly; like habitat destroying represented by reed-cutting (reed mat making), disturbing during breeding season and errs and chicks taking especially concerning *Marmaronitta angustirostris* and large Herons as a tempt to hatching these by a hen where they live.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Recordings were held by direct observation method; doubtful and unclear recordings were excluded. The main embankment-way and canoes were used as fixed and mobile observation sites. Far species were used to be identified by 12x binocular. Sites and stopping points were located by 1:100000 –scale maps. Collins Bird-guide was consulted when necessity. Breeding state was stated when positive nest, eggs, or chicks were observed, otherwise, observation of bird with full breeding-plumage.

RESULTS

Few stops, deep tours were made in multiple locations to make preliminary covering, to survey most the area as much as possible. Kirmashiyah wetland has well plant cover, mostly *Phragmites* and *Typha*; expectably, reed may get longer and denser during the next period, as it's length ranges within 2 m during visit time. Intensive reedbeds are distributed over the marsh, which, undoubtedly, harbors great numbers of various nests providing excellent breeding habitat.

Many natives reported that great number of various species are used to breed at Kirmashiyah wetlands, (the matter that illustrates great efforts of investigation which are to be held!); they listed more than **20** breeding bird, describing its nests and eggs accurately.

Inspecting the following birdlist of Kirmashiyah marsh, we will find that this site has more than one reason to be classified as IBA: Iraq Babbler existed in wet areas where reed and *Acacia* are, Marbled Teal is commonly breeder; in addition, the expected threatened visitors, or the common migrants of more than 1% of Middle East population.

The following abbreviations were used to describe the observed birds, which are:

- B. = breeder (the birds that absolutely seen in breeding plumage)
- F. = recorded for few times (i.e. within 1-5 times)
- M.= median state (i.e.6-10 times)
- A .= abundant, which was seen everywhere (more than 10 recording times)
- ? = represents the unsure state (concerning breeding)

LIST OF BIRD SPECIES OBSERVED IN KIRMASHIYAH WETLANDS,
AT 29,MAR.03

BIRD SPECIES			STATE
1.	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	Little Grebe	A.B.
2.	<i>Ardeola purpurea</i>	Purple Heron	A.B.
3.	<i>Egretta grazetta</i>	Little Egret	MB.
4.	<i>Ardeola ralloides</i>	Squacco Heron	A .B.
5.	<i>Bulbulcus ibis</i>	Cattle Egret	AB.
6.	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>	Night Heron	F.?
7.	<i>Loxbrychus minutus</i>	Little Bittern	A.B.
8.	<i>Marmaronetta anrusterostris</i>	Marbled Teal	M.B.
9.	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	Common Moorhen	M.?
10.	<i>Himantopus nimantopus</i>	Black-winged Stilt	A.B.
11.	<i>Glareola pratincola</i>	Black-winged Pratincole	M.B.
12.	<i>Vanellus indicus</i>	Red-wattled Plover	A.?
13.	<i>Vanillus spinosus</i>	Spur-winged Plover	F.?
14.	<i>Vanellus leucurus</i>	White-tailed Plover	A.B.
15.	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	Common Ringed Plover	F.?
16.	<i>Charadrius asiaticus</i>	Caspian Plover	F.?
17.	<i>Tringa totanus</i>	Redshank	F.?
18.	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	Common Sandpiper	F.?
19.	<i>Larus ridibundus</i>	Black-headed Gull	F.?
20.	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	Herring Gull	M.?
21.	<i>Sterna albiforns</i>	Little Tern	A.?
22.	<i>Chlidonias leucopterus</i>	White-winged Tern	M.?
23.	<i>Sterna anaethetus</i>	Bridled Tern	A.?
24.	<i>Sterna nilotica</i>	Gull-belled Tern	F.?
25.	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>	Common Tern	A.?
26.	<i>Ceryle rudis</i>	Pied Kingfisher	A.B.
27.	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>	Fan-tailed Warbler	F.B.
28.	<i>Prinia gracilis</i>	Graceful Warbler	A.B.
29.	<i>Acrocephalus arundianaceus</i>	Great Reed Warbler	A.B.
30.	<i>Acrocephalus scripaceus</i>	Eurasian Reed Warbler	M.B.
31.	<i>Turdoides altirostris</i>	Iraq Babbler	M.?

In edition to the waterfowl and the water-close species, some land-birds were observed at the dry areas of the small islandlets within the marsh, or were recorded around but close to the shore, which are: (attaching with the above list)

**LIST OF LAND BIRD-SPECIES OBSERVED IN AND AROUND
KIRMASHIYAH WETLANDS, AT 29, MAR. 04**

32.	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	Collared Dove	M.?
33.	<i>Francolinus francolinus</i>	Black Francolin	M.B.
34.	<i>Merops superciliosus</i>	Blue-checked Bee-eater	F.?
35.	<i>Halcyon smyrnsis</i>	White-breasted Kingfisher	F.?
36.	<i>Pycnonotus leucotis</i>	White-checked Bulbul	M.?
37.	<i>Herundo rustica</i>	Common Swallow	M.B.
38.	<i>Riparia repara</i>	Sand Marten	A.?
39.	<i>Lluscinia megarhynchos</i>	Eurasian Nightingale	F.?
40.	<i>Galerida cristata</i>	Crested Lark	M.?
41.	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	House Sparrow	A.?