

Checklist of the Birds of Palestine

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23 pages, free for those who are interested



Checklist of the Birds of Palestine is the first of its kind and the outcome of an innovative 17-year effort that applied scientific methods to environmental research in Palestine. It presents a remarkable record of bird-related conservation efforts and extensive listings of birds that can be observed in Palestine. To carry out this research, the Environmental Education Center (EEC) obtained special licenses in 1998 for the setup of monitoring and ringing stations in study areas at Talitha Kumi near Bethlehem (permanent), Jericho, and later in Tulkarem (both seasonal) that had been selected as representative places with high-density bird populations within the state of

Palestine. They serve as resources for ornithologists and students in addition to a wide range of interested local and international visitors. Research methods have included observation and ringing data, monitoring the presence and behavior of birds, and studying skin specimens. EEC studies have been carried out in cooperation and partnership with international organizations and institutes that include the SE European Bird Migration Network (SEEN), the European Union for Bird Ringing (EURING), the Ornithological Society of the Middle East (OSME), Birdlife International, and the IUCN International Union for Conservation of Nature.

Two-thirds of the *Checklist* reveals the results obtained from direct scientific fieldwork in various locations. The first three chapters present the results obtained from the data of the ringing activity of 120 species (20 of them portrayed in images), information obtained from the examination of skin specimens of 28 birds taken from the collection of the EEC's Natural History Museum, and the results of general monitoring activities (with 15 species shown in photographs). Later chapters present a short literature review that includes historical accounts since 1860, a map of the most important birding areas in Palestine, and finally the actual checklist that identifies 373 bird species according to their order, family, subfamily, English and Latin names, and current status (identifying 22 orders, 64 families, 30 subfamilies, 186 genera, and 373 species).

Birds are listed according to a number of categories, such as resident breeder, passage migrant, winter visitor, vagrant, and summer visitor (breeding and non-breeding). Other categories include birds that are endangered and birds that are considered invasive. For example, the booklet presents four birds that are considered extinct or extinct-breeder species: the Ostrich (*struthio camelus*), the Brown Fish Owl (*Bubo zeylonensis*), and another two species that no longer breed in Palestine, namely the Lammergeier (*Gypaetus barbatus*) and the Lappet-faced Vulture (*Torgos tracheliotus*).

The publication ends with recommendations to the Palestinian Authority on measures that should be implemented at the national level in order to protect the treasures of nature in Palestine.



The Little Green Bee-eater is resident in Jericho and Dead Sea Area.



The Common Kingfisher is strongly migratory and uncommon winter visitor.



The European Bee-eater is strongly migratory and summer breeder.



The carnivorous Red-backed Shrike is strongly migratory species.



The Red-breasted Flycatcher is a rare migratory species.



The Eurasian Hoopoe raises its crest when excited.