

El Gouna (Red Sea Coast) 02 to 10.10.2010 and 11 to 18.10.2008

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These two stays at El Gouna give an idea of what can be seen there at this season. Only an idea because this year, on the last morning I had still some new species and meeting by chance another birdwatcher (Edwin Winkel) I was informed that he have seen other species which have not been recorded by myself.

In 2008, three different excursions where done on sea (13, 14 and 15.10) from Hurghada and also two visits at the golf of El Gouna of which a quarter of the surface was prospected.

In 2010, one brief excursion on sea the 05.10 and regular visits to the golf with 1/3 prospected.

The sand bank before the hotel Mövenpick was scanned each day, so as the gardens and the beach until the Club Med. Active migration was mostly observed from the coast and the birds where mostly coming between 10h30 and 13h30. But in fact it is perhaps more valuable to stay on the golf from where with a scope large migratory can also been seen along the mountains. For this reason, except contrary mention, all migrants raptors, storks and cranes where seen coming from sea, generally not before 10h30.

The last two years with hard wind or rain in northern countries was not favourable for the migration.

- White Pelican - *Pelecanus onochrotalus* : 1 ex. on the sea along the coast 03.10. 10.
- Night heron - *Nycticorax nycticorax* : 2 ex. (1 ad. et 1 imm.) in the bushes of the island Villa Hills 09.10.10.
- Striated heron – *Butorides striatus* : present in the bushes of the island Villa Hills. From there, sometimes present (max. 3 ex.) on the sand bank or on the beach.
- Cattle egret – *Bubulcus ibis* : always 2 or 3 on the golf and sometimes in the garden of the hotel.
- Little egret – *Egretta garzetta* : 1 ex. flying 07.10.10.
- Western reef heron – *Egretta gularis* : 2 different ex. on 16 and 17.10.2008 ; 1 very familiar on the beach and one on the golf the 08.10.10. All white form.



- Grey heron – *Ardea cinerea* : 1 ex. 05 and 08.10.10.
- White stork – *Ciconia ciconia* : All on migration in 2010. Usually few with the groups of black storks (20 with 182 blacks on the 03 ; 05 with 65 blacks on the 05 (at Hurghada) and 02 with 28 blacks 06.10. One alone 04.10. A flock of approximately 700 whites follow the mountains 08.10.
- Black stork – *Ciconia nigra* : some groups on migration, flying very low, on 2010: 182 on the 03 ; 65 on the 05 ; 28 on the 06 ; also one group on the 07 (Edwin Winkel, pers. com.). An other group of 39 on the 09 migrate along the mountains.
- Osprey – *Pandion haliaëtus* : On 2008, 1 to 3 regularly on the sand bank but not this year probably because water sports. On 2010 1 ex. present on the golf. A nest on a large buoy exist just out the marina of El Gouna ! Following an inhabitant the pair had with success nested there this year. Indeed, the pair, with at least 1 juvenile, can be seen in the surrounds. Sometimes a bird posed is observed with the scope from Mövenpick hotel on the buoy with the nest.



- Steppe eagle – *Aquila nipalensis* : 1 imm. migrator very low on the 04.10.10.
- Booted eagle – *Aquila pennata* : 1 ex. brown phase on the golf on 08.10.10.
- Black kite – *Milvus migrans* : 2 ad. european form on 02.10.10.
- Marsh harrier – *Circus aeruginosus* : On 16.10 2008 1 on an island not far from Hurghada. This year, 1 fem. ad. on the 08 and 1 juv. on the 09.
- Pallid harrier – *Circus macrourus* : 1 m. ad. at Hurghada 16.10.2008. For 2010, 3 on migration: 1 fem. ad. 03.10, 1 fem. 04.10 ; 1 m. ad. 05. 10.
- Steppe buzzard – *Buteo buteo vulpinus* : few specimens in migration. For 2008 at Hurghada 1 ex. on 14.10 and 5 on 16.10 and at El Gouna 1 ex. on 15 and 17.10. This year, 1 ex. 03 and 04.10.
- Honey buzzard – *Pernis apivorus* : 5 ex. on the Hurghada airport 02.10.10 and 4 in migration at El Gouna 08.10.10.
- Sparrowhawk – *Accipiter nisus* : single on 03, 04 and. 08.10.10.
- Kestrel – *Falco tinnunculus* : hunt regularly in the parks of the hotels and a lot stays on the golf.
- Red - footed falcon – *Falco vespertinus* : 1 ad. male, on the 10.10.10. Perhaps the same bird had been seen on the same place the previous day (Edwin Winkel, *pers.com*).
- Sooty falcon – *Falco concolor* : In 2008 3 excursions on sea from Hurghada give 2 observations: 1 m. ad. 13.10 and 1 juv. 16.10. In 2010 the only brief excursion permitted observation of 1 m. ad. in the port of Hurghada. Total 3 observations for 4 excursions!
- Peregrine – *Falco peregrinus* : migration of 1 ad. on 08.10.10.
- Lanner – *Falco biarmicus* : 1 ad. hunt on the golf all the day on 08.10.10.
- Crane - *Grus grus* : important migration on 13 and 14.10.08 at Hurghada. It concerned at least 40 groups and a total of minimum 3000 birds.
- Black-winged pratincole – *Glareola nordmanni* : 1 juv. on the sand bank of El Gouna on 25.10.08 and an other juv. all the morning of the 09.10.10 on the golf, flying and on

the ground. Considering others birdwatchers had also in the past meld the species in this locality, El Gouna seems to be a potential place to see this rare bird.

- Ringed plover – *Charadrius hiaticula* : regularly until 6 on the beach and 40 on the golf.
- Kentish plover – *Charadrius alexandrinus* : until 9 ex. on the beach.
- Greater sand plover – *Charadrius leschenaultii* : sometimes 1 on the sand bank and regularly until 3 on the beach.
- Grey plover – *Pluvialis squatarola* : 1 on the beach 06.10.10 and regularly until 3 on the golf on 2010.
- Spur-winged plover – *Vanellus spinosus* : until 6 ex. On the le golf.
- Dunlin – *Calidris alpina* : 6 ex. on the golf on 09.10.10.
- Common sandpiper – *Actitis hypoleucos* : until 2 on the golf and 3 on the sand bank.
- Redshank – *Tringa totanus* : until 4 ex. on the beach and the sand bank.
- Greenshank – *Tringa nebularia* : 1 ex. 03 and 06.10 on the beach.
- Marsh sandpiper – *Tringa stagnatilis*: 3 ex. on 15.10.08.
- Curlew – *Numenius arquata* : 2 until 4 ex. on the sand bank or beach and sometimes 1 on the golf.
- Common snipe – *Gallinago gallinago* : 1 ex. on the island Villas Hills on 18.10.08.
- Black-headed gull – *Larus ridibundus* : very few at El Gouna. 1 ex. on 17.10.08 and 1 on 09.10.10.
- Slender-billed gull – *Larus genei* : 1 or 2 on the sand bank and the beach. On 09.10.10 a flock of 18 ex. at the golf flying to a sleeping place.
- Sooty gull – *Larus hemprichii* : regularly in the harbour of Hurghada. Only one time on the sand bank of El Gouna, 12 ex. on 17.10.08.
- White-eyed gull – *Larus leucophthalmus* : The most abundant gull. The maxima noticed on the sand bank where 163 ex. on 03.10.10 and 254 on 04.10.10.
- Caspian tern – *Sterna caspia* : 1 or 2 ex. regularly on the sand bank and the beach. The maximum was 10 ex. on 15.10.08, including a young who was feed. Also a group of 8 ex. on 05.10.10 moving to a sleeping place.
- Lesser crested tern – *Sterna bengalensis* : Always present on the sand bank. On 2008, maximum 37 ex. on 12.10 and minimum 1 on 18.10. On 2010 maximum 78 ex. on 04.10.
- Crested tern – *Sterna bergii* : In 2008, usually present on the sand banks and beach with increasing numbers : 2 on 12.10 , 10 on 15.10, 18 on 17.10 and 15 on 18.10. In 2010 the first appeared on 09.10 and was still present the following day.
- White-cheeked – *Sterna repressa* : Absent in 2008. On 2010, present all days at the sand bank with a minimum of 80 ex. and a maximum of 229 on 04.10.
- Collared dove - *Streptopelia decaocto* : On 2008 a sleeping place was established in the bushes of the island Villas Hill, with a minimum of 31 ex. On 2010 the birds had disappeared, only 1 ex. flying on 10.10.
- Laughing dove – *Streptopelia senegalensis* : present in all parks with trees.

- Kingfisher – *Alcedo atthis* : present in little number in the laguna of the golf and sometimes on the beach.
- Pied kingfisher – *Ceryle rudis* : on 2008 1 ex on 14 and 15.10 along the beach.
- Bee-eater – *Merops apiaster* : 4 or 5 on the golf.
- Short toed lark – *Calendrella brachydactyla* : on 2010 a group of 17 ex. always at the golf course.
- Sand martin – *Riparia riparia* : 1 or 2 ex. regularly on the golf.

- Swallow – *Hirundo rustica* : some tens, all of the nominate “*rustica*” form..
- House martin – *Delichon urbicum* : on 2010 some on the golf.
- Tawny pipit – *Anthus campestris*: 3 ex. on the golf on 08 and 09.10.10.
- Red-throated pipit – *Anthus cervinus* : until around 40 on the golf. Sometimes heard in migration or staying in the parks of hotels.
- Pied wagtail – *Motacilla alba* : sometimes in the parks of hotels and always present on the golf with a maximum on 2008 37 ex. on 12.10 and on 2010 no more than 1 or 2 ex.
- Yellow wagtail – *Motacilla flava* : usually less than 10 ex. on the golf, principally *thunbergi* followed by *beema* and *flava*.
- Nothern wheatear – *Oenanthe oenanthe* : 1 ex. on the beach on 06.10.10.
- Isabelline wheatear – *Oenanthe isabellina* : 5 ex. on the golf on 12.10.08 and 1 ex. on 09.10.10.
- Winchat – *Saxicola rubetra* : 1 ex. on the golf on 17.10.08 and 1 on 06.10.10.
- Lesser whitethroat – *Sylvia curruca* : everywhere in the parks and on the golf.
- Sedge warbler – *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus* : 1 ex. In the park of the hotel on 12.10.08.
- Reed warbler – *Acrocephalus scirpaceus* : 1 ex. scirpaceus in the park of the hotel on 05.10.10.
- Willow warbler – *Phylloscopus trochilus* : more common in early October than latter. Everywhere in bushes.
- Eastern Bonelli’s warbler – *Phylloscopus orientalis* : 1 ex. on 10.10.10 close to the hotel.
- Chiffchaff – *Phylloscopus collybita* : Increasing in numbers in October. Some are typically of the subspecies *tristis*.
- Spotted flycatcher – *Muscicapa striata* : 1 ex. in the park of the hotel on 02.10.10 and 1 ex. On the golf on 06.10.10.
- Red-backed shrike – *Lanius collurio* : 1 fem. ad. on the beach on 06.10.10.
- Carrion crow – *Corvus cornix* : numerous at El Gouna and on the golf.
- Brown-necked raven – *Corvus rufficollis* : 1 ex. flying on the golf on 08.10.10. Also 2 seen at the hotel Mövenpick, fighting with carrion crows (Edwin Winkel, pers. com.).
- House crow – *Corvus splendens* : Not seen on 2008. On 2010 a pair with 3 recently fledged, at the hotel Mövenpick where they had probably nested. They are seen only at the hotel or not far.



- House sparrow – *Passer domesticus* : on 2008 the species was common on El Gouna and an important sleeping place was established in a tree at the entrance of the downtown. On 2010 they had disappeared and only a group of few tens was seen in the bushes of the island Villas Hills on 09.10.
- Spanish sparrow – *Passer hispaniolensis* : on 2008 around 300 ex. on the sleeping place at the entrance of the downtown. The house sparrow were sleeping at the exterior part of the tree, the Spanish at the interior part. The species was no more seen in 2010.

Reptiles :

A very little population of the Bean skink – *Trachylepis quinquetaeniata* exist in the park of the hotel Mövenpick and others. This population can not increase because the daily complete cleaning of the gardens.