

TRIBULUS



Bulletin of the Emirates Natural History Group

Vol. 6.1

APRIL 1996



Legislation. IUCN Environmental Policy and Law Paper. No. 16.

Richardson, C, Aspinall, S.J. & Hellyer, P. 1994. Important Bird Areas in the United Arab Emirates. In: Evans (comp.) Important Bird Areas of the Middle East. BirdLife International.

What sites have been missed or overlooked? Part of the Jiri plain is one candidate which will receive consideration. Can readers suggest additional areas?

RED LIST OF BIRDS BREEDING OR VISITING THE UAE

Selection of species based on criteria drawn up and followed by IUCN and BirdLife International.

SPECIES BREEDING IN THE UAE

Globally threatened species

None

Regionally threatened species or subspecies

Red-billed Tropicbird	<i>Phaethon aethereus indicus</i>
Socotra Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax nigrogularis</i>
Egyptian Vulture	<i>Neophron percnopterus</i>
Lappet-faced Vulture	<i>Torgus tracheliotus</i>
Sooty Falcon	<i>Falco concolor</i>
Houbara	<i>Chlamydotis undulata macqueenii</i>
White-collared Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon (Todirhamphus) chloris kalbaensis</i>

Species occurring in UAE at greater than 1% level of breeding population of the Middle East and considered at risk (populations known to be declining, population small or restricted to few sites).

Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>
Crab Plover	<i>Dromas ardeola</i>
Sooty Gull	<i>Larus hemprichii</i>
Swift Tern	<i>Sterna bergii</i>
Lesser Crested Tern	<i>Sterna bengalensis</i>
Saunders' Little Tern	<i>Sterna saundersi</i>
Booted Warbler (Arabia)	<i>Hippolais (caligata) rama</i>

SPECIES VISITING THE UAE

Globally threatened species

Lesser Kestrel *Falco naumanni*

Threatened or declining species

Greater Spotted Eagle *Aquila clanga*

Species occurring in numbers greater than 10% of the biogeographical population

Broad-billed Sandpiper *Limicola falcinellus*

(For status of mammals, amphibians and reptiles, see separate papers by Dr. Richard Hornby in this issue, Pages 9-14)

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A Checklist of Amphibians and Reptiles of the UAE

by Richard Hornby

There are no popular identification guides to amphibians and reptiles of the UAE and no checklist is available. This makes it relatively difficult for the amateur to develop expertise in the subject and to record species in a reliable and useful manner. Further difficulties are caused by changes in nomenclature and inconsistencies in the use of English names. This paper is offered in the hope that it will assist standardisation in the use of names and encourage the study of herpetology in UAE.

The most authoritative and comprehensive accounts of reptiles of Arabia are by E.N. Arnold (1986), which deals only with lizards, and Levison et al. (1992), which deals with all groups. These works both provide identification keys and systematic lists, and indicate whether species have been recorded in the United Arab Emirates (or, earlier, in the Trucial States). Neither of these works are readily available to the amateur, and neither are up to date.

The most active herpetologist in UAE was the late JNB 'Bish' Brown, who collected a lot of information about

هذه الورقة تقدم أول قائمة علمية للبرمائيات والزواحف يتم رصدها في دولة الامارات الى جانب الأوضاع الحالية لهذه الأنواع. وتم اعداد هذه القائمة بناء على عمليات مسح أجريت مؤخراً بالإضافة الى عمليات الرصد التي تمت خلال السنوات القليلة الماضية.

the status and distribution of species. Sadly, his only publications on this subject, before his untimely death in 1995, were a few brief items under the title 'Recorders' Reports', in Tribulus (Brown, 1991 and 1992). Fortunately, however many of his notes are held in the Library of the Emirates Natural History Group, and have proved very useful in the production of this checklist.

Information on the status of desert reptiles was greatly improved by the survey carried out for the National Avian Research Centre in Abu Dhabi Emirate, over the

winter of 1991/92. The main purpose of the survey was to locate **Houbara Bustards** (*Chlamydotis undulata*), but the opportunity **was** taken to find and identify all vertebrate and plant species throughout the desert of **Abu Dhabi**. Much of the work on reptiles was done by **Sherif Baha el Din** who already had a lot of expertise on reptiles of the Middle East. Animals were found both in systematic **transect** walks and in night-time searches. The results of the survey have just been published (El Din, 1996). This **includes** information from some useful **follow-up studies** by **Patrick Osborne** of NARC, some details of which have already appeared in **Tribulus** (Osborne, 1993 and 1994).

The NARC survey increased the number of species recorded in the UAE and vastly expanded the number of records and the known distribution of many terrestrial species it was restricted. however, to the Emirate of **Abu Dhabi** and **was** virtually **confined** to **desert** habitats. The main exception was the **foothills** of **Jebel Hafit**, south of **Al Ain**, where a few additional species were found.

Bish Brown's notes in the ENHG Library contain useful **records** of sea snakes and turtles. **Aspinall (1995)** confirmed the UAE status of species in these groups. Both **Aspinall and Baldwin (1995)** believed that the **Olive Ridley Turtle** was a rare visitor to UAE waters. at least in the Gulf of Oman, but there were no **positive** records until **April 1996**, when an **adult** brought in by fishermen from **Dubai** waters (in the **Arabian Gulf**) was identified by **Mohammed Reza Khan**, **Director** of **Dubai Zoo**. This timely **occurrence** has allowed me to include the

species in this new list.

The **checklist** contains 87 species, of which 20 are **endemic** to **Arable**. Two of the species are toads, 5 are turtles. 39 species are lizards, 13 are **terrestrial** snakes and 8 are aea-snakes.

Annotations have been added to give an approximate **indication** of status within the UAE, using only the crude scale - 'abundant, frequent, occasional, rare.' with 'locally' where **appropriate**. Habitat preference is also indicated in very general terms.

Our knowledge of desert reptiles has been boosted considerably by the NARC survey of **Abu Dhabi** Emirate. Unfortunately, however, there is a **marked** dearth of **herpetologists** in the UAE at present, and very little fresh information is **appearing**. There is a **particular** need to improve our knowledge of the **herpetofauna** of the mountains, mountain **wadis** and foothills. The list indicates that no fewer than 21 species of lizard and snake are **associated** with mountains, rocks, wadis or stony **deserts**. This excludes the species associated with wails, buildings and **cultivations**. There is, therefore, an important element of the fauna of the UAE about which **rather** little is known and much less has been published. It will be very **difficult** to arrange protection for the species and their habitats until this has been **rectified**.

in the **checklist** which follows synonyms have been included not as an attempt at taxonomic comprehensiveness but rather to assist the **beginner** in the avoidance of **nomenclatural** pitfalls.



Spiny-tailed agamid, *Uromastix microlepis*, or 'dhub.' — S James

Table 1. Checklist of the Amphibians and Reptiles of UAE

	English Name	Habitat	Status in UAE	Nocturnal /Diurnal	Recorded by NARC in Abu Dhabi survey	Remarks/synonyms
Class Arnpibia (Amphibians)						
Bufidae (Toads)						
	Arabian Toad	Wadis	o		No	This was previously included within <i>Bufo orientalis</i>
	Bufo arabicus					
	Bufo dhofarensis	Dhofar Toad	Wadis, plains, plantations	r	D/N N	No
Cheloniidae and Dermocheloniidae (Sea Turtles)						
	Chelonia mydas	Green Turtle	Seagrass beds	lf		No
	Eretmochelys imbricata	Hawksbill Turtle	Pelagic	r		No
	Caretta caretta	Loggerhead Turtle	Pelagic	r		No
	Lepidochelys olivacea	Olive Ridley Turtle	Pelagic	r		No
	Dermochelys coriacea	Leatherback Turtle	Pelagic	r		No
Agamidae (Agamidlizards)						
	Agama flavimaculata	Jayakar's Agamid	Stony desert/ foothills	f	D	Yes
	Agama sinaita	Blue Rock Agamid	Mountains	o	D	Yes
	Phrynocephalus arabicus	Yellow Toad-head	Soft sand	f	D	Yes
	Phrynocephalus maculatus	Banded Toad-head	Gravel plains	r	D	Yes
	Uromastyx microlepis	Spiny-tailed Agamid	Gravel plains, Scrubby desert	lf	D	Yes
Gekkonidae (Geckoes)						
	*Asaccus gallagheri	Dwarf Gecko	Mountains	r	?	No
	Phyllodactylus elisae		Rocks, caves, houses	r	?	No
	*Bunopus spatularis		Mountains	r	?	No
	Bunopus tuberculatus	Stone Gecko	Desert, coast	a	N	Yes
	Cyrtodactylus scaber	Wall Gecko	Rocks, walls	lf	N	No
	Hemidactylus flaviviridis	Yellow-bellied House Gecko	Houses	lf	N	No
	Hemidactylus persicus	Persian Gecko	Mountains*	r	N	No
	Hemidactylus turcicus	Turkish Gecko	Rocks, trees, walls	lf	N	Yes
	*Pristurus celerrimus		Mountains	r	?	No
	'Pristurus minimus		Sandy desert	r	D/N	Yes
	Pristurus rupestris	Dwarf Rock Gecko	Trees/rocks/walls	f	D	Yes
	Ptyodactylus hasselquistii	Fan-footed Gecko	Mountains/walls	lf	N	Yes
	Stenodactylus arabicus		Soft sand	r	N	Yes
	*Stenodactylus doriae	Desert Gecko	Soft sand	o	N	Yes
	*Stenodactylus khobarensis	Khobar Gecko	Coastal	r	N	Yes
	*Stenodactylus leptocosymbotes	Big-headed Gecko	Stony desert	o	N	Yes
	'Stenodactylus slevini	Big-headed Gecko	Stony desert	lf	N	Yes
	Teratoscincus scincus	Scaly Gecko	Grassy dunes	r		Yes
Lacertidae (Lacertid lizards)						
	Acanthodactylus boskianus	Striped Sand Lizard	Desert, wadis , coast *	r	D	No
	*Acanthodactylus gongorhynchatus	Fringe-toed Lacertid	Sandy desert	f	D	Yes
	*Acanthodactylus haasi	Haas's Spiny-footed Lizard	Sandy desert	r	D	Yes
	'Acanthodactylus opheodurus	Spiny-footed Lizard	Gravel plains	r	D	Yes
	*Acanthodactylus schmidtii	White-spotted Lizard	Soft sand,	a	D	Yes
* - endemic to Arabia, a - abundant, f - frequent, o - occasional, r - rare, l - locally						

* - endemic to Arabia, a - abundant, f - frequent, o - occasional, r - rare, l - locally

	English Name	Habitat	Status in UAE	Recorded by Nocturnal /Diurnal	NARC in Abu Dhabi survey	Remarks/synonyms
'Lacerta cyanura	Bluetailed Lizard	Mountains	r	D	No	
'Lacerta jayakari	Jayakar's Lacertid	Mountains	r	D	No	Oman Lizard
*Meselina adramitana	Desert Racerunner	Sand, gravel	o	D	Yes	= <i>Eremias adramitana</i>
*Meselina brevirostris	Short-nosed Desert Lizard	Gravel, coast	o/r	D	Yes	
Skinks						
Ablepharus pannonicus	Snake-eyed Skink	Mountains	r	?	No	
Chalcides ocellatus	Ocellated Skink	Coastal, cultivations,	o	D	Yes	
Mabuya tessellata		Mountain foothills	r	?	No	Shady places
*Scincus mitranus	Eastern Sand Skink	Soft sand	f	D	Yes	
*Scincus scincus conirostris	Sandfish	Sandy desert	r	D	Yes	= <i>S. conirostris</i>
Varanidae (Monitor Lizards)						
Varanus griseus	Grey Desert Monitor	Gravel plains, scrub, foothills	o	D	Yes	= <i>Tupinambis griseus</i>
Amphisbaenidae (Amphisbaenians)						
Diplometopon zarudnyi	Arabian Worm lizard	Sandy desert	lf	N	Yes	
Serpentes (Snakes).						
Typhlopidae and Leptotyphlopidae (Thread Snakes)						
Ramphotyphlops braminus	Blind Snake	Cultivation	r	N	No	Probably introduced with pot plants from India and Pakistan
Leptotyphlops macrorhynchus	Thread Snake	Stony desert	r	N	Yes	= <i>Stenostoma macrorhynchum</i>
Boidae (Boas)						
Eryx jayakari	Sand Boa	Sandy desert	o	N	Yes	
Colubridae. (Colubrids)						
Coluber ventromaculatus	Hardwicke's Rat Snake (Whip Snake)	Coastal	r	D/N	No	..
Coluber rhodorhachis rhodorhachis	Wadi Racer	Wadis with water	lf	D	No	
Lytrochilus diadema	Leaf-nosed Snake	Sand etc	o	N	Yes	
Malpolon moilensis	Arabian Rear-fanged	Gravel plains	lf	D	Yes	= <i>Coluber moilensis</i>
Psammophis schokari schokari	Variable (Hissing) Sand Snake	Desert, wadis, trees	lf	D	Yes	= <i>Coluber schokari</i>
Spalerosophis diadema cliffordii	Clifford's Snake	Oases, cultivations	r	D/N	No	= Heterodon <i>diadema</i> Diadem Snake
Viperidae (Vipers)						
Cerastes cerastes gasperetti	Sand (Homed) Viper	Sandy desert	f	N	Yes	Comes in two forms - homed and hornless
Pseudocerastes persicus	False Homed Viper	Sandy desert	r	N	No	
Echis carinatus sochureki	Saw-scaled Viper	Rocks, scrubby desert	lf	N	Yes	
Echis coloratus	Carpet Viper	Mountains	lf	N	No	
Hydrophiidae (Sea Snakes)						
Hydrophis omatus	Reef Sea-snake	Pelagic?	r		No	
Hydrophis cyanocinctus	Annulated Sea-snake	Shallow water	o		No	Can be up to 1.8 metres long
Hydrophis lapemoides	Arabian Gulf Sea-snake	Shallow water	o		No	
Hydrophis gracilis	Graceful Sea-snake	Shallow water	r		No	
Hydrophis spiralis	Yellow Sea-snake	Prefers deeper water	r		No	Can be more than 2 metres long.
Pelamis platurus	Yellow-bellied Sea-snake	Pelagic	o		No	
Lapenis curtus	Shaw's Sea-snake	Shallow water	o		No	
Enhydrina schistosa	Hook-nosed Sea-snake	Shallow water	r		No	

* - endemic to Arabia, a - abundant, f - frequent, o - occasional, r - rare, l - locally

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Acknowledgements

I am very grateful to Dr Reza Khan for his comments on a draft of this paper, particularly on status and habitat preferences, about which he knows far more than I do.

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A Red List of Mammals for the United Arab Emirates

Richard Hornby

One of the first tasks of the new UAE Biodiversity Conservation Committee was to review the conservation status of the country's mammals. This list is the result of their deliberations and includes all the mammal species, which in the opinion of the Committee, have definitely occurred within the area of the United Arab Emirates since the year 1900. The most authoritative work on the status of mammals in Arabia is Harrison and Bates (1991), which has proved an invaluable reference.

The species have been allocated to the IUCN Red List Categories (IUCN 1994), which are defined below. There are further qualifying criteria based on population size, distribution and rates of decline, on which to base the allocation to categories. For most species the lack of reliable data in UAE precluded rigidly objective application of the criteria. The list of species and allocation to categories reflects the views of members of the UAE Biodiversity Conservation Committee but final responsibility rests with the author.

The Red List Categories are intended primarily for application at the global level but IUCN are keen to see them applied nationally and they have prepared Draft Guidelines for Applying the IUCN Red List Categories at the National Level. This document was used in the consideration of mammals of UAE.

Within each category the species are listed in taxonomic order, following the Checklist of the Mammals of Arabia (Nader 1990).

هذه الدراسة تحتوي على قائمة بالثدييات التي تم رصدها في دولة الامارات الى جانب وضعها الحالي بما في ذلك الأنواع المنقرضة أو تلك التي تستدعي جمع المزيد من المعلومات حولها. وتتوافق هذه القائمة مع الأصناف التي تم رصدها في القائمة الحمراء الصادرة عن الاتحاد العالمي للحماية.

Extinct

A taxon is extinct if there is no reasonable doubt that the last individual has died.

None

Extinct in the Wild

A taxon is Extinct in the Wild when it is known only to survive in captivity or as a naturalised population well outside the past range.

Wolf

Canis lupus arabs

Striped Hyaena

Hyaena hyaena

Arabian Oryx

Oryx leucoryx

Wild Goat

Capra aegagrus

Nubian Ibex

Capra ibex

Critically Endangered

A taxon is Critically Endangered when it is facing an extremely high risk of extinction in the wild in the