

‘EGYPT – BIRDS AND HISTORY

‘At the beginning of our tour of Egypt, our day in the Delta gave us sustained and uninterrupted views of Greater Painted-snipe in the open, plus a profusion of White-breasted Kingfishers, Senegal Thick-knees, Spotted Crake, Glossy Ibis, and Marsh Sandpipers. This year we explored the area down to the administrative border with the Sudan at Shalatein which proved useful as we saw two species from the Vagrants section of the Collins Bird Guide (Swift Tern and Pink-headed Dove). On the second we enjoyed best-ever views of Lappet-faced Vulture and Hume’s Owl – plus Cretzschmar’s Bunting, Siberian Stonechat, and Masked and Isabelline Shrikes in the hotel gardens.

It must be said that the authorities everywhere were as helpful and obliging as their bureaucracy would permit and, thanks to the efficiency and hard work of our local guide and the rest of our excellent ground agent’s team, we did manage to travel everywhere we wanted with a minimum of hassle and inconvenience. We were even given permission for a boat trip on Lake Nassar which gave us close views of African Pied Wagtail, Senegal Thick-knee, and Egyptian Goose, plus White Pelicans and Yellow-billed and White Storks and Blue-cheeked Bee-eaters and Kittlitz’s Plovers from the shore.

The birds too were, in general, obliging and courteous – with a meet-and-greet and goodbye/have-a-nice-day policy which was particularly noticeable at Zaafarana where Cream-coloured Courser, Woodchat Shrike, Hoopoe, Black-eared and Isabelline Wheatears, and Short-toed Larks were all gathered right outside the reception of our hotel and Egyptian Vulture and Sand Partridge welcomed us to St Paul’s monastery down the road. Similarly Scrub Warbler, Desert Lark, and Tristram’s Grackle awaited us at St Catherine’s; Yellow-vented Bulbul and the spectacular violet, blue, and green Palestine Sunbird at Wadi Feran; Nile Valley Sunbird and Black-winged Kite on Crocodile Island; Purple Gallinule and seven species of heron at Aswan; Mourning and White-crowned Black Wheatears, Blue Rock Thrush, Red-rumped Swallow, and Trumpeter Finch in a magic wadi en route to Suez; and White-eyed and Sooty Gulls on the Red Sea islands.

And notwithstanding this wealth of special birds we experienced even more of Egypt’s history than the average tourist: not only the star attractions of the Stepped Pyramid, the Great Pyramids, and the Sphinx, the tombs in the Valley of the Kings and the Valley of the Queens, and the magnificent temples of Karnack, Luxor, and Abu Simbel but also the equally important temples at Edfu, Kom Ombo, and Philae and the early Christian sites of St Catherine’s and St Paul’s, plus a whole morning in the Egyptian Museum at Cairo with the luxury of having the treasures of Tutankhamen almost to ourselves.

It would be difficult to see more of Egypt’s birds and history in just fifteen days.’ – *Bryan Bland*

Bird List:

Column A = Number of tours on which this species has been recorded
Column B = Number of days this species was seen on the last tour
Column C = Maximum daily count for this species on the last tour

A		B	C	
4	Little Grebe			<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>
3	Great Crested Grebe	1	1	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>
6	Black-necked Grebe			<i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>
5	Brown Booby			<i>Sula leucogaster</i>
8	Continental Cormorant	3	8	<i>Phalacrocorax (carbo) sinensis</i>

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1	Long-tailed Cormorant			<i>Phalacrocorax africanus</i>
9	White Pelican	1	2	<i>Pelecanus onocrotalus</i>
2	Dalmatian Pelican			<i>Pelecanus crispus</i>
7	Pink-backed Pelican			<i>Pelecanus rufescens</i>
9	Little Bittern			<i>Ixobrychus minutus</i>
11	Night Heron	5	10	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>
11	Striated Heron	6	1	<i>Butorides striatus brevipes</i>
11	Squacco Heron	10	40	<i>Ardeola ralloides</i>
11	Cattle Egret	10	100	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>
11	Western Reef Egret	3	8	<i>Egretta gularis</i>
11	Little Egret	13	80	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>
9	Great Egret	2	1	<i>Egretta alba</i>
11	Grey Heron	8	50	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>
11	Purple Heron	3	10	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>
8	Yellow-billed Stork	1	5	<i>Mycteria ibis</i>
4	Black Stork			<i>Ciconia nigra</i>
11	White Stork	4	501	<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>
6	Glossy Ibis	2	59	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>
11	Spoonbill	3	10	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>
6	Greater Flamingo			<i>Phoenicopterus ruber</i>
11	Egyptian Goose	2	60	<i>Alopochen aegyptiacus</i>
4	Wigeon			<i>Anas penelope</i>
4	Teal			<i>Anas crecca</i>
6	Mallard	1	2	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>
4	Pintail			<i>Anas acuta</i>
8	Garganey	1	60	<i>Anas querquedula</i>
10	Shoveler	3	200	<i>Anas clypeata</i>
3	Pochard			<i>Aythya ferina</i>
3	Ferruginous Duck			<i>Aythya nyroca</i>
8	Tufted Duck	1	16	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>
1	Goldeneye			<i>Bucephala clangula</i>
1	Honey Buzzard			<i>Pernis apivorus</i>
11	Black-winged Kite	3	2	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>
11	Black Kite	13	40	<i>Milvus migrans</i>
3	Black-eared Kite	1	1	<i>Milvus lineatus</i>
2	Griffon Vulture	1	1	<i>Gyps fulvus</i>
2	Lappet-faced Vulture	1	6	<i>Torgos tracheliotus</i>
11	Egyptian Vulture	1	2	<i>Neophron percnopterus</i>
11	Short-toed Eagle	2	6	<i>Circaetus gallicus</i>
9	Marsh Harrier	5	3	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>
3	Pallid Harrier			<i>Circus macrourus</i>
8	Montagu's Harrier			<i>Circus pygargus</i>
9	Sparrowhawk	1	1	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>
3	Levant Sparrowhawk			<i>Accipiter brevipes</i>
11	Steppe Buzzard	7	'00s	<i>Buteo buteo vulpinus</i>
9	Long-legged Buzzard			<i>Buteo rufinus</i>
7	Lesser Spotted Eagle			<i>Aquila pomarina</i>
6	Spotted Eagle	2	1	<i>Aquila clanga</i>
11	Steppe Eagle	3	10	<i>Aquila nipalensis</i>
3	Tawny Eagle			<i>Aquila rapax</i>
8	Imperial Eagle	1	1	<i>Aquila heliaca</i>
8	Booted Eagle			<i>Hieraaetus pennatus</i>
3	Bonelli's Eagle			<i>Hieraaetus fasciatus</i>
11	Osprey	4	10	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>
5	Lesser Kestrel	1	1	<i>Falco naumanni</i>

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11	Kestrel	15	5	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>
3	Sooty Falcon			<i>Falco concolor</i>
5	Lanner	2	1	<i>Falco biarmicus</i>
1	Saker			<i>Falco cherrug</i>
1	Peregrine			<i>Falco peregrinus</i>
2	Barbary Falcon			<i>Falco pelegrinoides</i>
6	Chukar			<i>Alectoris chukar</i>
7	Sand Partridge	1	2	<i>Ammoperdix heyi</i>
9	Quail			<i>Coturnix coturnix</i>
2	Spotted Crake	1	1	<i>Porzana porzana</i>
11	Moorhen	5	20	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>
11	Purple Swamp-hen	2	7	<i>Porphyrio porphyrio</i>
5	Coot			<i>Fulica atra</i>
5	Common Crane	1	40	<i>Grus grus</i>
7	Painted Snipe	1	2	<i>Rostratula benghalensis</i>
8	Oystercatcher			<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>
11	Black-winged Stilt	3	15	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>
3	Avocet			<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>
1	Stone-curlew			<i>Burhinus oedicnemus</i>
11	Senegal Thick-knee	3	5	<i>Burhinus senegalensis</i>
7	Cream-coloured Courser	1	1	<i>Cursorius cursor</i>
5	Collared Pratincole			<i>Glareola pratincola</i>
10	Little Ringed Plover			<i>Charadrius dubius</i>
11	Ringed Plover	5	23	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>
8	Kittlitz's Plover	1	2	<i>Charadrius pecuarius</i>
10	Kentish Plover			<i>Charadrius alexandrinus</i>
3	Greater Sand Plover			<i>Charadrius leschenaultii</i>
1	Caspian Plover			<i>Charadrius asiaticus</i>
11	Grey Plover	2	6	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>
11	Spur-winged Lapwing	6	100	<i>Vanellus spinosus</i>
1	White-tailed Lapwing			<i>Vanellus leucurus</i>
1	Knot			<i>Calidris canutus</i>
2	Sanderling			<i>Calidris alba</i>
11	Little Stint	2	00s	<i>Calidris minuta</i>
6	Temminck's Stint	1	1	<i>Calidris temminckii</i>
9	Curlew Sandpiper	1	1	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>
11	Dunlin	1	1	<i>Calidris alpina</i>
11	Ruff	2	1000	<i>Philomachus pugnax</i>
1	Jack Snipe			<i>Lymnocyptes minimus</i>
10	Common Snipe	2	5	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>
7	Black-tailed Godwit			<i>Limosa limosa</i>
7	Bar-tailed Godwit	1	1	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>
9	Whimbrel	1	2	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>
11	Curlew	5	10	<i>Numenius arquata</i>
11	Spotted Redshank	2	20	<i>Tringa erythropus</i>
10	Redshank	3	10	<i>Tringa totanus</i>
11	Marsh Sandpiper	2	25	<i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>
11	Greenshank	4	15	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>
11	Green Sandpiper	2	7	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>
11	Wood Sandpiper	2	10	<i>Tringa glareola</i>
4	Terek Sandpiper			<i>Xenus cinercus</i>
11	Common Sandpiper	2	2	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>
6	Turnstone			<i>Arenaria interpres</i>
3	Arctic Skua			<i>Stercorarius parasiticus</i>
11	Sooty Gull	3	8	<i>Larus hemprichii</i>

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11	White-eyed Gull	1	'00s	<i>Larus leucophthalmus</i>
3	Great Black-headed Gull			<i>Larus ichthyaetus</i>
11	Black-headed Gull	7	30	<i>Larus ridibundus</i>
11	Slender-billed Gull	6	150	<i>Larus genei</i>
11	Lesser Black-backed (Baltic) Gull	5	51	<i>Larus fuscus</i>
10	Caspian Gull	3	20	<i>Larus (cachinnans) cachinnans</i>
5	Armenian Gull			<i>Larus armenicus</i>
11	Gull-billed Tern	3	5	<i>Gelochelidon nilotica</i>
11	Caspian Tern	5	9	<i>Sterna caspia</i>
8	Sandwich Tern			<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>
9	Common Tern			<i>Sterna hirundo</i>
9	Little Tern	1	2	<i>Sterna albifrons</i>
8	Crested Tern	1	1	<i>Sterna bergii</i>
4	Lesser Crested Tern	1	2	<i>Sterna bengalensis</i>
8	White-cheeked Tern	2	3	<i>Sterna repressa</i>
11	Whiskered Tern	4	50	<i>Childonias hybrida</i>
4	Black Tern			<i>Childonias niger</i>
6	White-winged Black Tern			<i>Childonias leucopterus</i>
3	African Skimmer			<i>Rynchops flavirostris</i>
6	Lichtenstein's Sandgrouse			<i>Pterocles lichtensteinii</i>
10	Crowned Sandgrouse	1	14	<i>Pterocles coronatus</i>
9	Spotted Sandgrouse	3	50	<i>Pterocles senegallus</i>
11	Rock Dove/Feral Pigeon	15	50	<i>Columba livia</i>
5	African Collared Dove	2	3	<i>Streptopelia roseogrisea</i>
11	Collared Dove	5	6	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>
11	Turtle Dove	6	5	<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>
11	Laughing Dove	15	100	<i>Streptopelia senegalensis</i>
1	Namaqua Dove	1	21	<i>Oena capensis</i>
1	Great Spotted Cuckoo			<i>Clamator glandarius</i>
2	Cuckoo			<i>Cuculus canorus</i>
9	Senegal Coucal			<i>Centropus senegalensis</i>
8	Barn Owl			<i>Tyto alba</i>
7	Pharaoh Eagle Owl			<i>Bubo ascalaphus</i>
7	Little Owl			<i>Athene noctua</i>
5	Hume's Tawny Owl	1	1	<i>Strix butleri</i>
4	Egyptian Nightjar			<i>Caprimulgus aegyptius</i>
2	Alpine Swift			<i>Tachymarptis melba</i>
11	Common Swift	1	4	<i>Apus apus</i>
11	Pallid Swift	2	50	<i>Apus pallidus</i>
11	White-breasted Kingfisher	2	20	<i>Halcyon smyrnensis</i>
8	Kingfisher	3	3	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>
11	Pied Kingfisher	8	50	<i>Ceryle rudis</i>
11	Little Green Bee-eater	5	5	<i>Merops orientalis</i>
11	Blue-cheeked Bee-eater	1	5	<i>Merops superciliosus</i>
9	European Bee-eater	1	5	<i>Merops orientalis</i>
3	European Roller			<i>Coracias garrulus</i>
11	Hoopoe	12	4	<i>Upupa epops</i>
1	Rose-ringed Parakeet (I)			<i>Psittacula krameri</i>
1	Alexandrine Parakeet (I)			<i>Psittacula eupatria</i>
10	Wryneck	2	1	<i>Jynx torquilla</i>
5	Bar-tailed Desert Lark	1	4	<i>Ammomanes cincturus</i>
11	Desert Lark	2	3	<i>Ammomanes deserti</i>
9	Hoopoe Lark			<i>Alaemon alaudipes</i>
2	Bimaculated Lark			<i>Melanocorypha bimaculata</i>
11	Short-toed Lark	6	40	<i>Calandrella brachydactyla</i>

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1	Lesser Short-toed Lark			<i>Calandrella rufescens</i>
11	Crested Lark	6	10	<i>Galerida cristata</i>
11	Sand Martin	4	2	<i>Riparia riparia</i>
11	Rock Martin	7	15	<i>Ptyonoprogne fuligula</i>
5	Crag Martin			<i>Ptyonoprogne rupestris</i>
11	Swallow	15	30	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>
11	Mosque (Egyptian) Swallow	3	5	<i>Hirundo rustica savignii</i>
11	Red-rumped Swallow	6	8	<i>Hirundo daurica</i>
11	House Martin	2	1	<i>Delichon urbica</i>
3	Richard's Pipit			<i>Anthus novaeseelandiae</i>
11	Tawny Pipit	1	5	<i>Anthus campestris</i>
1	Buff-bellied Pipit			<i>Anthus rubescens</i>
11	Tree Pipit	5	10	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>
10	Meadow Pipit	1	1	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>
11	Red-throated Pipit	2	3	<i>Anthus cervinus</i>
3	Water Pipit			<i>Anthus spinoletta</i>
11	Yellow Wagtail	9	60	<i>Motacilla flava</i>
7	Black-headed Wagtail	7	7	<i>Motacilla feldegg</i>
2	Grey Wagtail			<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>
2	Citrine Wagtail			<i>Motacilla citreola</i>
11	White Wagtail	14	5	<i>Motacilla alba</i>
8	African Pied Wagtail	1	5	<i>Motacilla aguimp</i>
9	Yellow-vented Bulbul	1	15	<i>Pycnonotus xanthopygos</i>
11	Common Bulbul	8	7	<i>Pycnonotus barbatus</i>
8	Rufous Bush Robin			<i>Cercotrichas galactotes</i>
2	Robin			<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>
3	Thrush Nightingale			<i>Luscinia luscinia</i>
9	Nightingale			<i>Luscinia megarhynchos</i>
7	Bluethroat	4	8	<i>Luscinia svecica</i>
4	Black Redstart	1	1	<i>Phoenicurus cinerea</i>
10	Redstart	2	1	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>
6	Blackstart			<i>Cercomela melanura</i>
6	Whinchat	3	1	<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>
2	Stonechat	1	1	<i>Saxicola torquata</i>
1	Siberian Stonechat	3	2	<i>Saxicola maura variegata</i>
10	Isabelline Wheatear	2	1	<i>Oenanthe isabellina</i>
11	Northern Wheatear	7	8	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>
6	Pied Wheatear			<i>Oenanthe pleschanka</i>
3	Cyprus Pied Wheatear			<i>Oenanthe cypriaca</i>
11	Black-eared Wheatear	3	1	<i>Oenanthe hispanica</i>
7	Desert Wheatear	1	4	<i>Oenanthe deserti</i>
10	Mourning Wheatear	1	10	<i>Oenanthe lugens</i>
5	Hooded Wheatear			<i>Oenanthe monacha</i>
11	White-crowned Wheatear	6	8	<i>Oenanthe leucopyga</i>
2	Persian Wheatear			<i>Oenanthe xanthopyrna</i>
4	Rock Thrush			<i>Monticola saxatilis</i>
9	Blue Rock Thrush	2	2	<i>Monticola solitarius</i>
10	Blackbird	1	1	<i>Turdus merula</i>
11	Fan-tailed Warbler	3	6	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>
11	Graceful Warbler	4	10	<i>Prinia gracilis</i>
7	Scrub Warbler	1	2	<i>Scotocerca inquieta</i>
2	Savi's Warbler			<i>Locustella luscinioides</i>
3	Moustached Warbler			<i>Acrocephalus melanopogon</i>
11	Sedge Warbler	5	10	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>
5	Marsh Warbler			<i>Acrocephalus palustris</i>

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11	Reed Warbler	2	4	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>
10	Clamorous Reed Warbler	3	2	<i>Acrocephalus stentoreus</i>
4	Great Reed Warbler			<i>Acrocephalus arundinaceus</i>
11	Olivaceous Warbler	6	4	<i>Hippolais pallida</i>
4	Icterine Warbler			<i>Hippolais icterina</i>
8	Subalpine Warbler	1	3	<i>Sylvia cantillans</i>
1	Ménétries's Warbler			<i>Sylvia mystacea</i>
4	Sardinian Warbler			<i>Sylvia melanocephala</i>
8	Rüppell's Warbler			<i>Sylvia rueppelli</i>
11	Lesser Whitethroat	14	100	<i>Sylvia curruca</i>
8	Whitethroat	2	1	<i>Sylvia communis</i>
8	Blackcap	1	1	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>
11	Eastern Bonelli's Warbler	1	4	<i>Phylloscopus orientalis</i>
5	Wood Warbler			<i>Phylloscopus sibilatrix</i>
11	Chiffchaff	12	150	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>
2	Willow Warbler			<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>
3	Spotted Flycatcher			<i>Muscicapa striata</i>
6	Semi-collared Flycatcher			<i>Ficedula semitorquata</i>
5	Collared Flycatcher			<i>Ficedula albicollis</i>
4	Pied Flycatcher			<i>Ficedula hypoleuca</i>
11	Nile Valley Sunbird	3	15	<i>Anthreptes metallicus</i>
8	Palestine Sunbird	1	6	<i>Nectarinia osea</i>
1	Golden Oriole			<i>Oriolus oriolus</i>
4	Isabelline Shrike	1	1	<i>Lanius isabellinus</i>
10	Southern Grey Shrike			<i>Lanius meridionalis</i>
11	Woodchat Shrike	3	2	<i>Lanius senator</i>
11	Masked Shrike	3	6	<i>Lanius nubicus</i>
11	House Crow	3	100	<i>Corvus splendens</i>
11	Hooded Crow	14	100	<i>Corvus cornix</i>
11	Brown-necked Raven	10	12	<i>Corvus ruficollis</i>
9	Tristram's Grackle	1	24	<i>Pnychognathus tristramii</i>
10	House Sparrow	15	25	<i>Passer domesticus</i>
7	Spanish Sparrow	5	6	<i>Passer hispaniolensis</i>
1	Tree Sparrow			<i>Passer montanus</i>
1	Pale Rock Sparrow			<i>Carpospiza brachydactyla</i>
3	Streaked Weaver (I)			<i>Ploceus manyar</i>
4	Red Avadavat (I)			<i>Amandava amandava</i>
1	Chaffinch			<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>
1	Serin			<i>Serinus serinus</i>
1	Tristram's Serin			<i>Serinus syriacus</i>
2	Greenfinch			<i>Carduelis chloris</i>
9	Goldfinch	1	1	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>
1	Siskin			<i>Carduelis spinus</i>
1	Linnet			<i>Carduelis cannabina</i>
10	Trumpeter Finch	3	15	<i>Bucanetes githagineus</i>
8	Sinai Rosefinch			<i>Carpodacus synoicus</i>
4	Ortolan Bunting			<i>Emberiza hortulana</i>
2	Cretzschmar's Bunting	2	1	<i>Emberiza buchanani</i>