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Survey of possible Lesser White-fronted Goose (*Anser erythropus*) wintering sites in the Syrian Arab Republic

14-24 February 2010

by Toni Eskelin & Sami Timonen

AEWA Lesser White-fronted Goose International Working Group

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Compiled by: Toni Eskelin and Sami Timonen

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Picture on the cover: Lake Rawda © Toni Eskelin

Picture on the inner cover: Three Lesser White-fronted Geese in a flock of White-fronted Geese at Lake Jabbul © Sami Timonen

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Introduction

A survey of possible wintering areas of the Lesser White-fronted Goose (subsequently referred to as LWfG) in the Syrian Arab Republic was undertaken in 2010 with the aim to reveal the status (abundance and distribution) of the LWfG population wintering in the country. Syria is in the southern or southwestern edge of the wintering range of the Western main (western Russian) population of LWfG. A notable recent observation of the species in the country was a Russian satellite-tagged individual found in eastern Syria, near the Iraqi border, during the winter of 2006/2007 (http://gis-lab.info/projects/piskulka-eng.html). Subsequently some additional observations have been made suggesting that the importance of the Syrian wetlands is possibly high for LWfG.

The expedition was organized by the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat in co-operation with the Syrian Society for the Conservation of Wildlife (subsequently referred to as SSCW), the General Commission for Badia Management and Development (subsequently referred to as GCB), the BirdLife International Middle East division and WWF Finland. The main funder of the expedition was the Norwegian Directorate of Nature Management, with some additional funds made available by the Finnish Ministry of the Environment for the printing of information materials on the LWfG in Arabic. The expedition was conducted as part of the implementation of the AEWA International Single Species Action Plan for the LWfG (Jones et. al. 2008).

The participants of the expedition were Mr. Toni Eskelin and Mr. Sami Timonen (LWfG Working Group of WWF Finland), Mr. Walid Attar (SSCW), Mr. Ahmed Abdullah (GCB) and Mr. Saifeden Hamoud (GCB).

The expedition was carried out on 14-24 February 2010. The initial plan was to cover the main wetland areas most suitable for geese in their late wintering period. The original itinerary was, however, modified according to the information given by local experts due to the recent observations of geese. All the sites of known earlier LWfG occurrence were visited. The full species list of the survey and observed species and their numbers in each visited place are presented in appendixes I and II.

Itinerary

14.2.2010 Timonen and Eskelin arrived in Damascus, where they were met by SSCW. Overnight stay at a guesthouse in Damascus.

15.2.2010 6.30 am - 20.00 pm. In the morning a meeting with other participants of the expedition at the office of the SSCW in Damascus. The aims of the expedition and places to visit were discussed. At noon departure to the village of Jabbul, where arrival in the dusk. Overnight stay at a private house in the village.

16.2.2010 4.30 am - 20.00 pm. The first day in the field with local hunters. Exploration of the eastern and southern side of Sabkhat al-Jabbul with several stops. In the afternoon a visit to the Fishing Inspectors House and the finding of the first Lesser White-fronted Geese in the vicinity. Rest of the afternoon was spent studying the geese. A drive back in the evening along the western side of Sabkhat al-Jabbul to the village, where overnight stay at a private house.

17.2.2010 4.30 am - 20.00 pm. In the morning a drive to the area, where LWfG were located yesterday. Because of mist and poor visibility the morning observations were done in the vicinity of the Fishing Inspectors House. After the mist had cleared checking of the fields close by, where LWfG were again found. In the afternoon the team split into two; Timonen stayed and video taped the geese in the fields and Eskelin checked the evening flight at the Fishing Inspectors House. Overnight stay again in the village of Al Jabbul at the same private house.

18.2.2010 5.00 am - 19.00 pm. The morning was spent checking the northern part of the Sabkhat al-Jabbul close to the village. At noon departure towards Raqqa, with a visit to the Nature Reserve of Lake Assad. Overnight stay in a village near Raqqa.

19.2.2010 5.00 am – 20.00 pm. Morning was spent at the northern side of the Lake Assad opposite the Nature Reserve of Lake Assad. The Castle of Jabar was visited before a drive to Hasaka. Checking the newly discovered staging sites of Sociable Lapwing in Eiwa and Ruweira were non-productive. In the evening meeting with the local officials of the Regional GCP and overnight stay in Hasaka.

20.2.2010 4.15 am - 20.00 pm. In the morning a drive to the Lake Khatuniya joined by the Director of the Regional GCP in Hasaka. In the afternoon a visit to the Lake Basil, where White-fronted Geese were located and studied. In the evening a drive to Deir ez-Zor where overnight stay at a guesthouse.

21.2.2010 4.30 am - 20.00 pm. In the morning a drive to the Lake Rawda where the northern and eastern sides of the lake were investigated with the help of local Bedouin people. In the afternoon a local Bedouin family served dinner and the situation of the lake was discussed. Overnight stay in Deir ez-Zor.

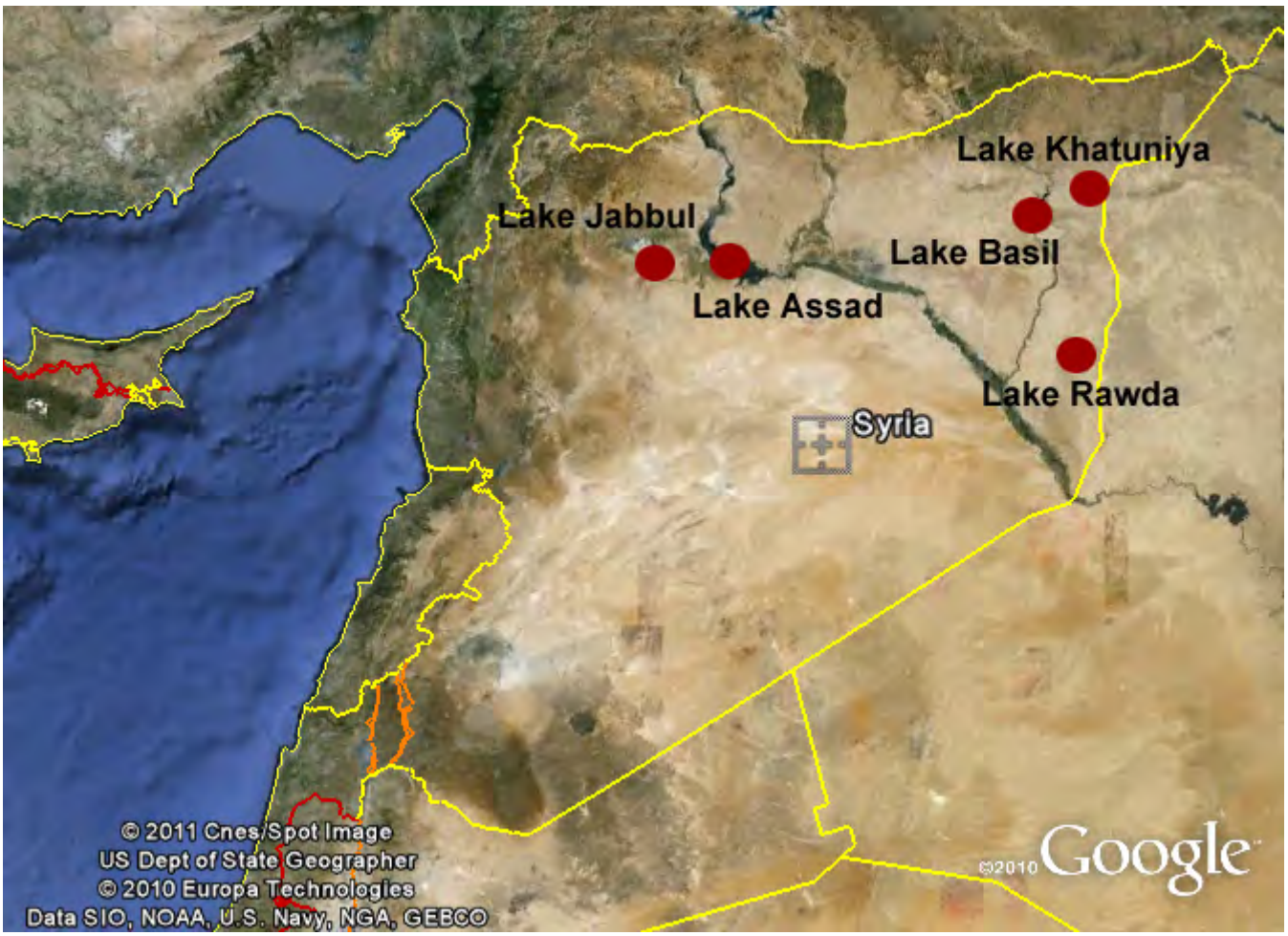
22.2.2010 5.00 am -20.00 pm. Morning was spent in Deir ez-Zor with the weather deteriorating. Oncoming sandstorm made it impossible to stay outside and during a short visit to Lake Mheimideh birdwatching was impossible. In the afternoon a drive to Palmyra, where arrival late in the evening. Discussions of the results of the expedition with the Directors of the GCB and overnight stay at the Guesthouse.

23.2.2010 8.00 am - 20.00 pm. Morning excursion in the surroundings of Palmyra and a visit to Talila Nature Reserve where joined by the personnel of the GCB. The work and future plans to promote nature conservation and ecotourism and raising public awareness of the nature in the area were presented and discussed. In the evening a drive to Damascus where overnight stay.

24.2.2010 Departure from Damascus

Main Sites Visited

The main sites visited during the mission were Lake Jabbul (Sabkhat al-Jabbul), Lake Assad, Lake Khatuniya (Hawl Lake), Lake Basil (Buhayrat al-Basil, Lower Khabur reservoir) and Lake Rawda (Sabkhat al-Rawda), the locations of which are roughly indicated in the map below, followed by brief descriptions of the sites.



Lake Jabbul (37° 29.00'E, 36° 3.00'N**)**

A large waterbody (maximum water surface 270 km^2) with fresh and salt water parts. The lake shore is partially surrounded by reed beds and it has nine islands. It consists of three partly separate water bodies (NW lake, central lake and SE lake) whose salinity and water levels fluctuate independently (Serra et al 2006). The lake is surrounded by farming communities and plains with are cultivated with varied intensity. It is an IBA area (SY006) (BirdLife International 2010a) and a Ramsar site.

Lake Assad (38° 7.00'E, 36° 0.00'N)

Lake Assad is a reservoir of 63,000 ha. The shores are steep and rocky and the water is oligotrophic (clear). Much of the area surrounding the lake is dry and stony - almost devoid of vegetation - but in the north it is surrounded by extensive barley fields. It is an IBA area (SY007) (BirdLife International 2010b).

Lake Assad © Toni Eskelin

Lake Khatuniya (Hawl Lake) (41°13.00'E, 36°23.00'N)

A mesotrophic, spring-fed, natural lake (its area is variously quoted as being from 50 ha to c.800 ha). Surrounding area is dry with little vegetation (*Tamarix* bushes are frequent). It is an IBA area (SY005) (BirdLife International 2010c).

Lake Khatuniya © Toni Eskelin

Lake Basil (Lower Khabur reservoir) (36°19'44.99"N 40°46'46.67"E)

A large reservoir about twenty km long and estimated to vary in width between 5-8 km. It was formed by damming the Khabur River, halfway between the cities of Al Hassake and Ashadada.

Lake Basil © Toni Eskelin

Lake Rawda (35°15'43.28"N 41°4'37.72"E)

A large (c. 5 x 10 km) and very shallow lake near the border of Iraq. It is a seldom visited place. A lake was totally dry during visit in February 2007 but indications showed that it had recently been full of water (Kullberg 2007). In 2010 the lake was full of water. The lake has been considered a seasonal salt lake but the locals explained that the lake is supported with fresh water from numerous brooks and rivers originating from the Iraqi mountain area. The surrounding area consists of barren, dry land and wide open grassy steppe areas. No permanent human settlements exist in the area; there are only some nomadic people.

Lake Rawda © Toni Eskelin

Geese Observations

Below are listed all daily goose observations made during the expedition.

Greater White-fronted Goose (*Anser albifrons*)

Lake Jabbul

16.2.2010 Observation point (36° 00´ 05,1´´ N , 37º 41´ 34,7´´ E): 220 individuals arrived from the lake and landed together with 40 Greylag Geese to a nearby barley field and left later to the NE.
Observation point (36º 01´ 14,4´´ N , 37º 44´ 00,1´´ E): 75 individuals in the field and 110 individuals in flight from NE to the lake.
Observation point (35º 55´ 13,5´´ N, 37º 43´ 45,3´´ E): 4 individuals landed to the lake.
Observation point (35º 51´ 23,2´´, 37º 39´ 42,9´´ E): 700 individuals were studied for several hours in a barley field before they left to the lake. Later two flocks (11 and 58 individuals) were seen in flight possibly returning to the lake.

17.2.2010 Observation point (35º 52´ 20,7´´ N, 37º 39´ 53,3´´ E): 2 solitary and 22 individuals in a flock on the northern side of the road.
Observation point (35º 50´ 52,4´´ N, 37º 40´ 08,3´´ E): 63 individuals in the fields and leaving to the lake.

Lake Basil

20.2.2010 Observation point (36 º 17´ 23,0 ´´ N, 40º 48´ 34,8´´ E): At the lake about 600 individuals of which 152 were seen grazing in the immediate vicinity and 450 individuals, about 5 km from the lake to NW (36º 10´ 37,4´´ N, 40º 52´ 34,8´´ E).

Lake Rawda

21.2.2010 Observation point (35º 18´ 51,5´´ N, 41º 06´ 12,2´´ E): 64 and 30 individuals came to the lake, where 410 and 18 individuals were resting. In the steppe 7 individuals were grazing.

Lesser White-fronted Goose (*Anser erythropus*)

Lake Jabbul

16.2.2010 Observation point (35º 51´ 23,2´´, 37º 39´ 42,9´´ E): 72 individuals together with 700 Greater White-fronted Geese in a barley field, later leaving to the lake.

17.2.2010 Observation point (35º 50´ 52,4´´ N, 37º 40´ 08,3´´ E): 8 individuals together with Greater White-fronted geese and left.

Greater/Lesser White-fronted Goose (*Anser albifrons/erythropus*)

Lake Jabbul

17.2.2010 Observation point: 9 individuals in flight to the lake between the lake and the fields.
Observation point (35º 52´ 20,7´´ N, 37º 39´ 53,3´´ E): 72 and 37 individuals in flight to the lake.
Observation point (35º 52´ 20,7´´ N, 37º 39´ 53,3´´ E): At the lake 308 individuals and 600 individuals in flight returning from the fields (most probably including geese seen earlier in the field).

18.2.2010 Observation point (northern part of the lake): 7 and 8 individuals in flight to NW.

Greylag Goose (*Anser anser*)

Lake Jabbul

16.2.2010 Observation point (36° 00´ 05,1´´ N , 37º 41´ 34,7´´ E): 40 individuals in a flock of 220 Greater White-fronted Geese arrived from the lake and later left with them to NE.

Observation point (36º 01´ 14,4´´ N , 37º 44´ 00,1´´ E): 20 individuals in a flock of 110 Greater White-fronted Geese from NE to the lake.

Lake Rawda

21.2.2010 Observation point (35º 20´ 35,2´´ N, 41º 01´ 26,0´´ E): 7 individuals in the northeastern part of the lake.

Red-breasted Goose (*Branta ruficollis*)

Lake Jabbul

16.2.2010 Observation point (35º 51´ 23,2´´, 37º 39´ 42,9´´ E): 2 individuals together with Lesser White-fronted and Greater White-fronted Geese.

17.2.2010 Observation point (35º 52´ 20,7´´ N, 37º 39´ 53,3´´ E): 1 individual in a flock of Greater White-fronted Geese in flight to the lake. This was most probably one of the birds seen on 16 February.

Field with LWfG at Lake Jabbul © Toni Eskelin

Evaluation of the Field Work

The field work had fairly good coverage in terms of the commonly visited and well-known wetlands known to be suitable for geese. These areas are known to host geese populations according to previous bird research expeditions (Murdoch et al 2004, Hofland & Keijl 2008), bird watching trip reports and local experts. Some sites on the original expedition itinerary were left out and instead Lake Rawda was visited. This was due to the up-to-date information received from local people about the distribution and movements of the geese.

The timing of the expedition was probably a bit too late since the spring had been very early for the season and according to the locals the warm weather had affected the movements of geese - possibly already inducing early spring migration away from Syria. It is probable that earlier timing for surveying geese would give a better coverage of the numbers of wintering Lesser White-fronted Geese and other geese. Due to the extensiveness of some of the places visited, difficult terrain (esp. Lake Rawda), difficulties in observation (e.g. heat haze during daytime) and limited time spent on each site the coverage could have been better at some sites. At Lake Jabbul, Lake Assad and Lake Basil the percentage of identified birds was quite high, whereas in Lake Rawda it was quite low.

The logistics in the expedition were good in terms of transportation and food. The possibility to access the lakes near the Iraqi border was also important for the results of the expedition.

Historical and Present Occurrence of Lesser White-fronted Geese in the Syrian Arab Republic

All the known records of LWfG in Syria till winter 2006/2007 have been listed by Baumgart (1995) and Murdoch & Betton (2008). Additional recent records have been published in several expedition trip reports. Until February 2010, there have been altogether approximately 10 records of LWfG in Syria, which are all listed below:

Records from the 20th century are:
-11.-12.11.1945 2 ind. in Tall Tamir (Goodbody 1946)
-Kinzelbach had seen a stuffed bird in 1982 in Damascus without indication of provenance (Baumgart 1995)
-in March 1983 a stuffed bird was offered for sale in Damascus with its provenance described as ´from the Euphrates´ (Baumgart 1995)
-stuffed individual shot N of Palmyra 1994 (Serra et al 2006)

Records made in the 2000´s are:
-one probable individual at Sabkhat al-Jabbul 11.2.2004 (Murdoch et al 2005)
-in December and January 2007 a satellite-tracked individual visited eastern Syria (http://gis-lab.info/projects/piskulka-eng.html)
During 15 – 30 November this individual spent its time in NE Iran, near the area of borders of Iran, Armenia and Turkey. From there it flew to Syria where the next location was received presumably when bird was at its active migration flight on 3 December near the city of Hasaka, at the area between Lake Hawl and Lake Basil.
From there it flew to the area of Lake Rawda, where it spent a period of almost 2 months (3 December-28 January). The next movement was across the border of Iraq where it arrived on 4 February at Tigris valley near the city of Samarra.
-11.2. 2007 8 individuals at Lake Basil (Kullberg 2007)
-20.2. 2007 35 individuals on the southern side of Lake Jabbul and 21.2. 2007 20 individuals on the southeastern side of Lake Jabbul (Hofland & Keijl 2008).
-20.1. 2010 6 individuals on Lake Jabbul (Pete Ellis, email 26.1. 2010).

According to Murdoch and Betton (2008) the LWfG is a regular wintering species in substantial numbers in Syria. The observations made in the 2000´s suggest that LWfG may indeed be more numerous than is previously known. However, the occurrence and abundance of LWfG in the country is rather unclear because of the general scarcity of birdwatching activity and more specifically the lack of searching for LWfG among the White-fronted Goose flocks. The scarcity of LWfG observations is certainly partly also due to the difficulties of identifying LWfG.

The LWfG wintering in Syria are likely to be connected to the population wintering in the neighboring countries, especially in Iraq, where satellite-tagged individuals have been located. However, revealing the real status of LWfG in these countries requires more extensive and continuous field work.

The Importance of the Syrian Wetlands for the LWfG and Other Endangered Waterbird Species

Lake Jabbul seems to be regular wintering site for LWfG based on the many observations made in the 2000´s. The highest count ever detected in Syria (made during this expedition) stresses the high importance of the area for LWfG. The extensive lake is ideal for roosting and nearby fields offer plenty of cereal for feeding. Most observations are made on the southern part of the lake, probably due to the natural conditions: freshwater (Serra et al 2006), large fields and less human disturbance compared with the northern part of the lake. During the expedition hunting of low intensity with approximately 5-10 gunshots heard per morning was detected. Human disturbance in the fields where geese were feeding seemed to be low, and the geese were mainly undisturbed during the observation periods.

Lake Jabbul © Toni Eskelin

A very notable fact was that on Lake Jabbul we met several local people who were interested in birds and in the conservation of the area. Their participation in the conservation work and raising awareness among local people and the community would be important.

One of the most valuable bird observations of the expedition was the large number of White-headed Ducks (*Oxyura leucocephala*) counted at Lake Jabbul on 17-18 February. Altogether 2406 individuals

were observed, of which 126 were seen close to the Fishing Inspectors House and 2280 on the northern part of the lake close to the Jabbul village. The number is to our knowledge the highest count in the world at one site. It approximately equals 25% of the most recent published estimate of the world population of this endangered species (BirdLife International 2010d, Hughes et al. 2006). The counted numbers have varied in different years in Lake Jabbul (Murdoch et al 2005, Porter & Scott 2005, Serra et al 2006). This fluctuation could be due to real changes of the wintering population at the site or alternatively only due to variable counting intensity.

At Lake Assad no geese were seen, but earlier observations (Hofland & Keijl 2008) suggest that it might be an important area for geese. It seemed to be ´atypical´ as a roosting site of geese compared with other lakes and wetlands being deep and having clear water.

At Lake Khatuniya no geese were seen and its importance for geese seems to be low also based on other observations (Murdoch et al 2005, Kullberg 2007).

Lake Basil hosted some hundreds of geese, and it is likely to be an important area for geese - also LWfG have been observed in February 2007 (Kullberg 2007).

At Lake Rawda hundreds of geese were present at the time of expedition. Although no LWfG were detected the observation circumstances were difficult and there could have been also LWfG present. Also the satellite follow-up of the individual from Russia in the winter of 2006/2007 suggests the importance of the area. It seems that Lake Rawda and nearby located Lake Quasir dry up in some years (Kullberg 2007, A. Kullberg, pers. comm.), so the importance of the lake system probably varies from year to year. The lakes are probably important for geese when there is enough water in the lake basins. Regular monitoring is needed to confirm the pattern of natural conditions of this ´lake system´ and the changes in the bird populations under the changing conditions.

One of the highlights and most important observations of the trip was a huge concentration of Ruddy Shelducks (*Tadorna ferruginea*) at Lake Rawda; at least 25 000 ind. were estimated. This is, as far as we know, most likely the largest count of Ruddy Shelducks at a single site in the Middle East region and in the Iraqi and Iranian IBA-areas (BirdLife International 2010e).

It must be stressed that monitoring has not been thorough in many potentially important sites and that LWfG could possibly go undetected in many circumstances. More field work is needed to clarify the real status of LWfG in Syria. The monitoring should cover all relevant sites and expand through the whole wintering period in order to detect the movements of geese and minimize the observation biases.

Suggestions and Recommendations for the Monitoring and Conservation of LWfG in the Syrian Arab Republic

The international goals and measures for the LWfG conservation work are outlined in theInternational Single Species Action Plan adopted at the AEWA Meeting of the Parties in Madagascar in 2008. The main goal is to restore the Lesser White-fronted Goose to a favourable conservation status within the AEWA Agreement Area. The results required for this goal are applicable in different Range States according to their possibilities.

The following results of the conservation action are applicable in Syria:
1. **Mortality Rates Are Reduced**
2. **Further Habitat Loss and Degradation Are Prevented**
3. **Key Knowledge Gaps Are Filled**

These results are discussed below with more detail. Regarding all measures it must be stressed that *all the key sites for LWfG should have appropriate protected area status at national and international levels*.Many of the area-specific conservation measures of LWfG should be considered in detail under *the site management plans, which should be compiled for all the protected areas where LWfG winter*. The management plans should coordinate the conservation measures with other human activity. The plans should be updated regularly and the possible actions should be targeted according to the accumulating information of the natural conditions, possible threats etc. The effectiveness of all the management measures should be evaluated and monitored regularly.

1. Mortality Rates Are Reduced

There are several measures to reduce mortality rates.

The Hunting Law in Syria gives at present a legal protection to all bird species (Attar 2005), but hunting is practiced commonly (Murdoch et al 2005), and hunting control measures do not exist in practice. The hunting legislation of Syria should enforced more efficiently to ensure protection of LWfG also in the future. In Syria there is no Red Data Book of endangered species (Jones et al. 2008). The LWfG should be listed according to the IUCN criteria relevant to the occurrence in the country and the wintering population should be managed according to these criteria.

Organizations responsible for hunting control should be established and adequate human and financial resources should be given for the practical hunting control work made in the field. The hunting disturbance towards LWfG and possible hunting kills of LWfG should be investigated. The hunting activity should be followed in conservation areas and in other areas where LWfG are present.

Because of the major difficulty to separate and identify GWfG and LWfG in the field the only really effective measure to protect LWfG from hunting and accidental shooting is to ban hunting of all geese in the areas where LWfG are supposed to occur.

In order to target hunting control measures and establish hunting bans the main key wintering sites of LWfG in Syria should be located, the habitat use by LWfG in the areas should be investigated and the borders of these sites should be determined. At the already known wintering sites of LWfG (Lake al-Jabbul, Lake Rawda, Lake Basil) it would already be possible to define and implement hunting control measures based on the present knowledge.

The conservation measures of Lake Rawda should include at least effective hunting control. During the expedition some shot Ruddy Shelducks were found. According to local authorities there have been promises to improve the situation in terms of hunting control and official conservation status of the lake.

Awareness campaigns and common information delivery to the hunters is important for the success of the conservation measures.

2. Further Habitat Loss and Degradation is Prevented

The LWfG should have appropriate disturbance-free areas for roosting and feeding to fulfill the habitat requirements of the species. The quality and quantity of the required habitat for LWfG should be monitored. If needed (e.g. in cases of severe habitat degradation) the roosting and feeding habitats should be restored.

3. Key Knowledge Gaps Are Filled

There are still many unanswered basic questions regarding the status of LWfG in Syria.

Satellite-tracking and field surveys should be used in combination to reveal the occurrence of LWfG. The available information is at present too limited and sporadic. There are probably more wintering sites which have not been found yet.

The goose counts should be extensive and made during several years in a coordinated manner (see also Tolvanen et al 1999) preferably along with similarly conducted counts in other neighboring wintering countries (Iraq, Iran, Turkey). This may reveal the total wintering number of LWfG in different countries, possible turnover of individuals and population trends. The migration phenology throughout the wintering cycle (arrival and departure times) of LWfG should be studied.

The spatial pattern of how the LWfG use the sites should be investigated at sites where hunting, other human disturbance and/or habitat degradation are known to threaten the LWfG. The hunting pressure towards LWfG at the key sites should be investigated and monitored.

Public Awareness

During the expedition several people with obvious interest in bird conservation work were met. In all LWfG conservation measures, raising public awareness and delivering information is probably of vital importance. A good example of this is the Arabic poster published in spring 2010 about the conservation of LWfG. These possible public awareness measures include at least:

-training of hunting organizations, hunters, nature conservationists, field ornithologists and national authorities
-distributing leaflets, brochures, posters etc, and the use of mass media (TV, radio)
-building educational nature tourism centers and e.g. bird watching towers in wetlands to raise ecological awareness and promote nature tourism

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The expedition team (from left): Yaseen Mujawer, Ahmed Abdallah, Toni Eskelin, Sami Timonen, Saifeden Hamoud, Walid Attar

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Appendix I - Numbers of Waterbirds Sighted During the Expedition

(+) = seen but not counted/estimated. x = 1-10, xx = 10-100, xxx = 101-1000, xxxx = 1001-10000 individuals seen etc.

	16.2.		**17.2.**	**18.2.**	**18.2.**	**18.2.**	**19.2.**	**19.2.**	**20.2.**	**20.2.**	**21.2.**
Name	***Lake Jabbul***		***Lake Jabbul***	***Lake Jabbul***	***Drive Lake Jabbul - Al Raqqa***	***Lake Assad Reserve***	***Lake Assad- Jabar Castle***	***Drive Al Raqqa– Al Hassaken***	***Lake Khatuniah***	***Lake Basil***	***Lake Rawda***
	Southern part	***Central part***	***Central part***	***Northern part***							
Greater White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons*	409	769	850							600	541
Lesser White-fronted Goose *Anser erythropus*		72	8								
Greater/Lesser White-fronted Goose				15							
Greylag Goose *Anser anser*	60										7
Red-breasted Goose *Branta ruficollis*		2	1								
Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea*	2		28							10	25000
Common Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*	148		40	1470							
Eurasian Wigeon *Anas penelope*		(+)	(+)	xx						(+)	(+)
Gadwall *Anas strepera*	300	(+)	(+)	xx		(+)				(+)	(+)
Eurasian Teal *Anas crecca*	1000	(+)	(+)	xxx		(+)			23	(+)	xxxx
Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*	150	(+)	(+)	xx		(+)				(+)	(+)
Northern Pintail *Anas acuta*	100	x	(+)	xx		(+)				(+)	(+)
Garganey *Anas querquedula*			1	2					2		
Northern Shoveler *Anas clypeata*	4200	(+)	(+)	2500		(+)				(+)	(+)
Dabbling Duck *Anas sp.*	2000	xxxx	xxx								
Red-crested Pochard *Netta rufina*		150	50	40						300	
Common Pochard *Aythya ferina*		xxxx	8500	3000		(+)					
Ferruginous Duck *Aythya nyroca*		150	46	35							
Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*		15	4			300					
Smew *Mergus albellus*		4								90	

	16.2.		**17.2.**	**18.2.**	**18.2.**	**18.2.**	**19.2.**	**19.2.**	**20.2.**	**20.2.**	**21.2.**
Name	***Lake Jabbul***		***Lake Jabbul***	***Lake Jabbul***	***Drive Lake Jabbul - Al Raqqa***	***Lake Assad Reserve***	***Lake Assad- Jabar Castle***	***Drive Al Raqqa– Al Hassaken***	***Lake Khatuniah***	***Lake Basil***	***Lake Rawda***
White-headed Duck *Oxyura leucocephala*		86	126	2280							
Waterfowl	3500			45000		25000	500		300	3000	30 000
Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*		100	150			5			10		
Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*		150	300			150			5		
Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*		20	40			700	8		3		
Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*	1	2		13		170	40			400	
Pygmy Cormorant *Phalacrocorax pygmeus*						3				130	
Great White Pelican *Pelecanus onocrotalus*	20										
Eurasian Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*			1	3							
Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*	1		1	3						16	
Great Egret *Casmerodius albus*	127	15	53	215						160	
Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*	15	20	76	70					8	170	
Eurasian Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*	26			112							
Greater Flamingo *Phoenicopterus roseus*	860	200	40	5200							542
Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*			8						3		
Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*	5	10	15	50							
Purple Swamp-Hen *Porphyrio porphyrio*	(+)	(+)	2	3							
Eurasian Coot *Fulica atra*	1400	xxxx	xxxx(x)	4000		10000	2000		4000	1000	
Common Crane *Grus grus*								1			7
Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*	2									2	15
Pied Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*	39			60						1	4
Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*											
Common Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*	12										

	16.2.		17.2.	18.2.	18.2.	18.2.	19.2.	19.2.	20.2.	20.2.	21.2.
Name	***Lake Jabbul***		***Lake Jabbul***	***Lake Jabbul***	***Drive Lake Jabbul - Al Raqqa***	***Lake Assad Reserve***	***Lake Assad- Jabar Castle***	***Drive Al Raqqa– Al Hassaken***	***Lake Khatuniah***	***Lake Basil***	***Lake Rawda***
Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus*											200
Red-wattled Lapwing *Vanellus indicus*									2		
Sociable Lapwing *Vanellus gregarius*			5								
White-tailed Lapwing *Vanellus leucurus*									1		
Northern Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*	106		3								
Little Stint *Calidris minuta*	140			30						5	30
Dunlin *Calidris alpina*	27			4						5	30
Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*	10		1	10						5	160
Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*			6								
Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata*	131										
Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*	32		1	30						10	
Common Redshank *Tringa totanus*	10		1	15						10	30
Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis*	26			2							
Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*	10		3	15						10	15
Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*			1	2	1						
Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*											
Small Wader species	4100 uta/alp										
Pallas's Gull *Larus ichthyaetus*						3	2			15	
Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus*	1		4	150		10					
Slender-billed Gull *Larus genei*	300	100	50	20						600 gen/rid	10
Mew Gull *Larus canus*										30	
Caspian Gull *Larus cachinnans*	1	10		20							

Survey of Possible Lesser White-fronted Goose Wintering Sites in the Syrian Arab Republic 14-24 February 2010

	16.2.		**17.2.**	**18.2.**	**18.2.**	**18.2.**	**19.2.**	**19.2.**	**20.2.**	**20.2.**	**21.2.**
Name	***Lake Jabbul***		***Lake Jabbul***	***Lake Jabbul***	***Drive Lake Jabbul - Al Raqqa***	***Lake Assad Reserve***	***Lake Assad- Jabar Castle***	***Drive Al Raqqa– Al Hassaken***	***Lake Khatuniah***	***Lake Basil***	***Lake Rawda***
Armenian Gull *Larus armenicus*	36	50	6	4		20	5			150 arm/cac	10
Gull-billed Tern *Gelochelidon nilotica*											33
Caspian Tern *Sterna caspia*				1							
Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybrida*	5	100	40	150							
White-winged Tern *Chlidonias leucopterus*			20	5							

Appendix II - All Bird Species Recorded During the Expedition

Greater White-fronted Goose (*Anser albifrons*): See main text and appendix I.
Lesser White-fronted Goose (*Anser erythropus*): See main text and appendix I.
Greylag Goose (*Anser anser*): See main text and appendix I.
Red-breasted Goose (*Branta ruficollis*): See main text and appendix I. Two individuals were seen together with other geese at Lake Jabbul on 16 February. One of these was seen again in flight on 17 February. This constituted only the second observation of the species in Syria and the first birds to be seen alive.
Ruddy Shelduck (*Tadorna ferruginea*): See appendix I. 30 individuals at Lake Jabbul on 16-18 February and 10 individuals at Lake Basil on 20 February. At Lake Rawda a huge concentration of a minimum of 25 000 individuals was counted on 21 February. In addition at least 30 000 individuals of unidentified waterfowl species were seen. Probably many of them were also Ruddy Shelducks.
Common Shelduck (*Tadorna tadorna*): See appendix I. More than 1500 individuals at Lake Jabbul on 16-18 February.
Eurasian Wigeon (*Anas penelope*): See appendix I.
Gadwall (*Anas strepera*): See appendix I.
Eurasian Teal (*Anas crecca*): See appendix I.
Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*): See appendix I.
Northern Pintail (*Anas acuta*): See appendix I.
Garganey (*Anas querquedula*): See appendix I. Three individuals at Lake Jabbul on 17-18 February and two individuals at Lake Khatunya on 20 February.
Northern Shoveler (*Anas clypeata*): See appendix I. The most numerous dabbling duck species. Numbers e.g. at Lake Jabbul exceeded over 10000 individuals.
Dabbling Duck Species (*Anas sp.*): See appendix I.
Red-breasted Pochard (*Netta rufina*): See appendix I. At least 200 individuals at Lake Jabbul on 16-18 February and 300 individuals at Lake Basil on 20 February.
Common Pochard (*Aythya ferina*): See appendix I. The most numerous duck species. At Lake Jabbul the biggest flock included 8500 individuals.
Ferruginous Duck (*Aythya nyroca*): See appendix I. About 200 individuals at Lake Jabbul on 16-18 February.
Tufted Duck (*Aythya fuligula*): See appendix I. 19 individuals at Lake Jabbul on 16-17 February and about 300 individuals at Lake Assad Reserve on 18 February.
Smew (*Mergellus albellus*): See appendix I. Four individuals at Lake Jabbul on 16 February and a flock of 90 individuals at Lake Basil on 20 February.
White-headed Duck (*Oxyura leucocephala*): Altogether at least 2406 individuals at Lake Jabbul, of which 126 individuals on 17 February in the central part and a flock of 2280 individuals on 18 February in the northern part of the lake. The birds favoured sheltered areas surrounded by tall reeds. The figure counted is one of the highest number from one place.
Waterfowl: See appendix I. Numbers include waterfowl, which were not identified to the species level (including Eurasian Coot).
Little Grebe (*Tachybaptus ruficollis*): See appendix I. About 200 individuals at Lake Jabbul between 17-18 February, five individuals at Lake Assad Reserve on 18 February and 10 individuals at Lake Khatunya on 20 February.
Great Crested Grebe (*Podiceps cristatus*): See appendix I. At least 300 individuals at Lake Jabbul on 16-18 February, 150 individuals at Lake Assad Reserve on 18 February and five individuals at Lake Khatunya on 20 February.
Black-necked Grebe (*Podiceps nigricollis*): See appendix I. About 80 individuals at Lake Jabbul on 16-18 February, 700 individuals at Lake Assad Reserve on 18 February and eight individuals at Lake Assad on 19 February. At Lake Khatunya three individuals were seen on 20 February.
Great Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*): See appendix I. Highest counts were 170 individuals at Lake Assad Reserve (a breeding colony close by) on 18 February and 400 individuals at Lake Basil on 20 February.

Pygmy Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax pygmeus*): See appendix I. Three individuals at Lake Assad Reserve on 18 February and 130 individuals at Lake Basil on 20 February.
Great White Pelican (*Pelecanus onocrotalus*): 20 individuals were seen circling on migration at Lake Jabbul on 16 February.
Eurasian Bittern (*Botaurus stellaris*): See appendix I. Observed only at Lake Jabbul, where one individual was heard on 17 February and three individuals were heard/seen on 18 February.
Little Egret (*Egretta garzetta*): See appendix I. Altogether five individuals at Lake Jabbul between 16-18 February and 16 individuals at Lake Basil on 20 February.
Great Egret (*Casmerodius albus*): See appendix I. At least 400 individuals at Lake Jabbul on 16-18 February and 160 individuals at Lake Basil on 20 February.
Grey Heron (*Ardea cinerea*): See appendix I. At least 200 individuals at Lake Jabbul on 16-18 February, eight individuals at Lake Khatunya and 170 individuals at Lake Basil on 20 February.
Eurasian Spoonbill (*Platalea leucorodia*): See appendix I. Altogether 138 individuals at Lake Jabbul.
Greater Flamingo (*Phoenicopterus roseus*): See appendix I. About 6000 individuals at Lake Jabbul on 16-18 February and 542 individuals at Lake Rawda on 21 February.
Black Kite (*Milvus migrans*): One individual at Lake Jabbul on 16 February, 13 individuals between Al Raqqa and Al Hassaken and 35 individuals in Deir ez-Zor on 22 February.
Western Marsh Harrier (*Circus aeruginosus*): Approximately 80 individuals around Lake Jabbul during 16-18 February. Three individuals at Lake Khatunya and two individuals at Lake Basil on 20 February.
Hen Harrier (*Circus cyaneus*): Eight individuals on 16 February and one individual on 17 February at Lake Jabbul. One individual between Al Raqqa and Al Hassaken on 19 February and one individual at Lake Hassaken on 20 February.
Pallid Harrier (*Circus macrourus*): One male at Lake Jabbul on 16 February and another male at Lake Khatunya on 20 February.
Eurasian Sparrowhawk (*Accipiter nisus*): One individual at Lake Khatunya on 20 February.
Common Buzzard (*Buteo buteo*): Altogether seven individuals.
Long-legged Buzzard (*Buteo rufinus*): Two solitary individuals at Lake Jabbul on 16-17 February and two individuals at Lake Khatunya and Lake Basil on 20 February.
Steppe Eagle (*Aquila nipalensis*): Two individuals at Lake Jabbul on 16 February and one individual on 17 February.
Common Kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*). One individual at Lake Jabbul on 16 February and six individuals during a drive from Al Raqqa to Al Hassaken on 19 February.
Merlin (*Falco columbarius*): Three individuals at Lake Jabbul on 16 February and one individual in Palmyra on 23 February.
Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*): One individual on 19 February between Al Raqqa and Al Hasaken.
Water Rail (*Rallus aquaticus*): See appendix I. Heard at Lake Jabbul in various places between 16-18 February.
Common Moorhen (*Gallinula chloropus*): See appendix I. Common at Lake Jabbul, where e.g. more than 50 individuals were seen on 18 February.
Purple Swamphen (*Porphyrio porhyrio*): See appendix I. Seen (and more often heard) at Lake Jabbul.
Eurasian Coot (*Fulica atra*): See appendix I. Very common, numbers exceeding tens of thousands at least at Lake Jabbul and at Lake Assad Reserve. Note: unidentified waterfowl numbers include Eurasian Coots.
Common Crane (*Grus grus*): See appendix I. One individual between Al Raqqa and Al Hasaken on 19 February and seven individuals at Lake Rawda on 21 February.
Black-winged Stilt (*Himantopus himantopus*): See appendix I. Two individuals at Lake Jabbul on 16 February, two individuals at Lake Basil on 20 February and 15 individuals at Lake Rawda on 21 February.
Pied Avocet (*Recurvirostra avosetta*): See appendix I. About 100 individuals at Lake Jabbul between 16-18 February, one individual at Lake Basil on 20 February and four individuals at Lake Rawda on 21 February.

Common Ringed Plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*): See appendix I. 12 individuals at Lake Jabbul on 16 February.
Kentish Plover (*Charadrius alexandrinus*): See appendix I. 200 individuals at Lake Rawda on 20 February.
Red-wattled Lapwing (*Vanellus indicus*): See appendix I. Two individuals at Lake Khatunya on 20 February.
Sociable Plover (*Vanellus gregarius*): See appendix I. Five individuals of this endangered species were seen resting at Lake Jabbul on 17 February.
White-tailed Lapwing (*Vanellus leucurus*): See appendix I. One individual at Lake Khatunya on 20 February.
Northern Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*): See appendix I. About 110 individuals at Lake Jabbul on 16-17 February.
Little Stint (*Calidris minuta*): See appendix I. About 170 individuals at Lake Jabbul on 16-18 February, five individuals at Lake Khatunya and 30 individuals at Lake Basil on 20 February. In addition the majority of 4000 individuals of small wader species seen at Lake Jabbul on 16 February were Little Stints.
Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*): See appendix. About 30 individuals at Lake Jabbul on 16-18 February, five individuals at Lake Khatunya and 30 individuals at Lake Basil on 20 February. In addition a minority of 4000 individuals of small wader species seen at Lake Jabbul on 16 February were Dunlins.
Ruff (*Philomachus pugnax*): See appendix I. About 20 individuals at Lake Jabbul on 16-18 February, five individuals at Lake Basil on 20 February and 160 individuals at Lake Rawda on 21 February.
Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*): See appendix I. Six individuals at Lake Jabbul on 17 February and 13 individuals on 18 February.
Eurasian Curlew (*Numenius arquata*): See appendix I. 131 individuals at Lake Jabbul on 16 February.
Spotted Redshank (*Tringa erythropus*): See appendix I. Seen at Lake Jabbul with daily maximum of about 30 individuals and at Lake Basil with 10 individuals on 20 February.
Common Redshank (*Tringa totanus*): See appendix I. Seen at Lake Jabbul, Lake Khatunya and Lake Basil with daily maximums of 10-30 individuals.
Marsh Sandpiper (*Tringa stagnatilis*): See appendix I. Seen only at Lake Jabbul, where daily maximum numbers of 25 individuals.
Common Greenshank (*Tringa nebularia*): See appendix I. Seen at Lake Jabbul, Lake Khatunya and Lake Basil with daily maximums of 10-15 individuals.
Green Sandpiper (*Tringa ochropus*): See appendix I. Altogether four individuals.
Wader Species (*Calidris sp.*): See appendix I. A flock of 4000 individuals at Lake Jabbul on 16 February included Little Stints (majority) and Dunlins (minority).
Pallas´s Gull (*Larus ichthyaetus*): See appendix I. Three individuals at Lake Assad Reserve on 18 February, two individuals at Lake Assad on 19 February and 15 individuals at Lake Basil on 20 February.
Black-headed Gull (*Larus ridibundus*): See appendix I. Less numerous than Slender-billed Gull. A maximum of 150 individuals at Lake Jabbul on 18 February.
Slender-billed Gull (*Larus genei*): See appendix I. More common than Black-headed Gull. At Lake Jabbul more than 400 individuals were seen.
Mew Gull (*Larus canus*): See appendix I. 30 individuals at Lake Basil on 20 February.
Caspian Gull (*Larus cachinnans*): See appendix I. About 30 individuals at Lake Jabbul on 16-18 February. See also Armenian Gull.
Armenian Gill (*Larus armenicus*): See appendix I. Seen at all lakes except at Lake Khatunya. Maximum numbers of 150 individuals of large gull species (including Caspian Gulls) at Lake Basil on 20 February.
Gull-billed Tern (*Gelochelidon nilotica*): See appendix I. A flock of 33 individuals at Lake Rawda on 23 February.
Caspian Tern (*Hydroprogne caspia*): See appendix I. One individual at Lake Jabbul on 18 February.
Whiskered Tern (*Chlidonias hybrida*): See appendix I. About 300 individuals were seen at Lake Jabbul on 16-18 February.

White-winged Tern (*Chlidonias leucopterus*): See appendix I. About 25 individuals were seen at Lake Jabbul on 16-18 February.
Pin-tailed Sandgrouse (*Pterocles alchata*): Five individuals were seen in flight on 21 February at Lake Rawda.
Common Pigeon (*Columba livia*): In towns and villages.
Eurasian Collared Dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*): In towns and villages. Daily numbers some tens of individuals.
Laughing Dove (*Streptopelia senegalensis*): Common in towns and villages.
Little Owl (*Athene noctua*): One individual at Lake Jabbul on 16 February and another on 18 February.
Pallid Swift (*Apus pallidus*): About five individuals in old town of Damascus on 15 February.
Alpine Swift (*Apus melba*): One individual on 23 February in Palmyra.
White-throated Kingfisher (*Halcyon smyrnensis*): Two individuals at Lake Jabbul and one individual at Lake Assad Reserve on 18 February.
Common Kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*): Four individuals at Lake Jabbul on 18 February,
Pied Kingfisher (*Ceryle rudis*): Seven individuals at Lake Jabbul and one individual at Lake Assad Reserve on 18 February.
Desert Lark (*Ammomanes deserti*): One individual in Palmyra area on 23 February.
Greater Hoopoe-Lark (*Alaemon alaudipes*): Three individuals on route to Lake Rawda on 21 February.
Calandra Lark (*Melanocorypha calandra*): Maximum numbers at Lake Jabbul were 60 individuals on 16 February and circa 300 individuals on 17 February involving both singing and migrating birds. In the east numbers were considerably lower.
Lesser Short-toed Lark (*Calandrella rufescens*): Two individuals at Lake Jabbul on 17 February. More common in the east, where several dozens seen daily.
Crested Lark (*Galerida cristata*): Common, several tens to hundreds seen every day.
Eurasian Skylark (*Alauda arvensis*): Very common, seen every day with maximum daily counts of thousands of individuals.
Temminck´s Lark (*Eremophila bilopha*): Three individuals in Palmyra area on 23 February.
Barn Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*): 25 individuals at Lake Jabbul on 17 February and nine individuals at Lake Khatunya on 20 February.
Common House Martin (*Delichon urbicum*): One individual in Palmyra on 23 February.
Meadow Pipit (*Anthus pratensis*): Altogether 11 individuals were seen.
Water Pipit (*Anthus spinoletta*): 27 individuals at Lake Jabbul on 16-18 February and at Lake Khatunya seven individuals and at Lake Basil two individuals on 20 February.
Yellow Wagtail (*Motacilla flava*): Three individuals at Lake Jabbul on 18 February and one individual at Lake Rawda on 21 February.
Citrine Wagtail (*Motacilla citreola*): One individual at Lake Jabbul on 18 February.
White Wagtail (*Motacilla alba*): Seen on most days with maximum numbers at Lake Jabbul of 200 individuals on 16 February and 60 individuals on 18 February. At Lake Basil 30 individuals were seen on 20 February.
White-cheeked Bulbul (*Pycnonotus leucogenys*): About five individuals near Suspension Bridge in Deir ez-Zor on 22 February.
European Robin (*Erithacus rubecula*): One individual on 17 February and three individuals on 18 February at Lake Jabbul. Two individuals on 19 February at Jabar Castle.
Bluethroat (*Luscinia svecica*): Two individuals on 17 February and three individuals on 18 February at Lake Jabbul.
Black Redstart (*Phoenicurus ochruros*): One individual at Jabar Castle on 19 February and another individual at Lake Basil on 20 February.
Common Redstart (*Phoenicurus phoenicurus*): One individual at Lake Jabbul on 18 February.
Common Stonechat (*Saxicola torquatus*): One individual at Lake Jabbul on 18 February.
Isabelline Wheatear (*Oenanthe isabellina*): Two individuals at Lake Jabbul on 17-18 February, one individual at Lake Rawda on 21 February and two individuals in Palmyra on 23 February.
Northern Wheatear (*Oenanthe oenanthe*): Four individuals in Palmyra on 23 February.
Pied Wheatear (*Oenanthe pleschanka*): One female at Lake Jabbul on 16 February.

Finsch´s Wheatear (*Oenanthe finschii*): One female at Lake Assad and two individuals between Al Raqqa and Al Hassaken on 19 February. Five individuals in Palmyra on 23 February.
Cetti´s Warbler (*Cettia cetti*): Fairly common around Lake Jabbul, where daily counts of more than 50 individuals. Four individuals noted also in Deir ez-Zor on 22 February.
Zitting Cisticola (*Cisticola juncidis*): Three individuals at Lake Khatunya on 20 February.
Moustached Warbler (*Acrocephalus melanopogon*): Fairly common around Lake Jabbul, where daily counts of more than 30 individuals. Noted also at Lake Assad Reserve on 18 February.
Common Chiffchaff (*Phylloscopus collybita*): One individual at Lake Jabbul and three individuals at Lake Assad Reserve on 18 February. In Deir ez-Zor about 10 individuals on 22 February.
Bearded Reedling (*Panurus biarmicus*): Seen/heard only at Lake Jabbul, where on 16 February four and on 18 February 15 individuals.
Iraq Babbler (*Turdoides altirostris*): About 30 individuals at Lake Jabbul and three individuals at Lake Assad Reserve on 18 February. In Deir ez-Zor about five individuals on 22 February.
Eurasian Penduline Tit (*Remiz pendulinus*): Four individuals at Lake Jabbul on 17 and 18 February concerned different individuals.
Isabelline Shrike (*Lanius isabellinus sensu lato*): At Lake Jabbul two solitary individuals were seen on 17 and 18 February. In both cases the (sub)species was not determined.
Common Magpie (*Pica pica*): Two individuals at Lake Jabbul on 18 February. More common in the east, especially along the Euphrates River where a daily maximum of some dozens were seen.
Red-billed Chough (*Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*): Three birds were seen in Palmyra on 23 February close to the traditional Bald Ibis site.
Hooded Crow (*Corvus cornix*): Noted along the Euphrates River where a daily maximum of some dozens were seen.
Brown-necked Raven (*Corvus ruficollis*): Two birds were seen in Palmyra on 23 February close to traditional Bald Ibis site.
Northern Raven (*Corvus corax*): Two birds were seen in Palmyra on 23 February close to traditional Bald Ibis site.
Common Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*): Noted on most days with a maximum of 1000 individuals at Lake Jabbul on 17 February.
House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*): Common in villages and towns.
Spanish Sparrow (*Passer hispaniolensis*): Noted on most days with a maximum of 2000 individuals at Lake Jabbul on 17 February.
Dead Sea Sparrow (*Passer moabiticus*): At Lake Jabbul 200 individuals on 17 February and a minimum of 1500 roosting individuals on 18 February.
Eurasian Tree Sparrow (*Passer montanus*): Two birds were seen and photographed near some houses at the northern part of Lake Al Jabbul on 18 February.
Common Chaffinch (*Fringilla coelebs*): Five individuals on the way to Al Raqqa on 18 February, seven individuals at Jabar Castle on 19 February and four individuals in Deir ez-Zor on 22 February.
Brambling (*Fringilla montifringilla*): One individual was heard at Lake Jabbul on 17 February.
European Greenfinch (*Carduelis chloris*): Three individuals in Deir ez-Zor on 22 February.
Eurasian Siskin (*Carduelis spinus*): About 15 individuals at Jabar Castle on 19 February and two individuals in Deir ez-Zor on 22 February.
Common Linnet (*Carduelis cannabina*): Three individuals on 16 February and six individuals on 17 February at Lake Jabbul.
Desert Finch (*Rhodospiza obsoleta*): A pair at Lake Jabbul on 17 February.
Yellowhammer (*Emberiza citrinella*): Two individuals at Lake Khatunya on 20 February.
Common Reed Bunting (*Emberiza schoeniclus*): Five individuals at Lake Jabbul on 18 February.
Corn Bunting (*Emberiza calandra*): Some dozen were seen at Lake Jabbul on 16-17 February. Noted also elsewhere with a maximum of 100 individuals at Lake Khatunya on 20 February.

UNEP/AEWA Secretariat
UN Campus
Hermann-Ehlers-Str. 10
53113 Bonn
Germany
Tel.: +49 (0) 228 815 2413
Fax: +49 (0) 228 815 2450
aewa@unep.de
www.unep-aewa.org