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Introduction

The Sound Approach series have inspired me a great deal. The goosebump stories and recordings in Undiscovered Owls of course made me want to hear the enigmatic Turkish Fish Owl, but their approach also greatly influenced my interest in mammals and specifically squirrels. Squirrel sounds are often of great importance, but do not receive that much attention. So besides the Fish Owl, seeing and hearing the endemic Taurus Ground Squirrel was high on my wishlist. Southwestern Turkey has many more attractive specialties, such as the last remaining original population of Fallow Deer, and so my girlfriend and I decided to go on holiday to Lykia and the Taurus. Southeastern Turkey has many extra species, but we purposely restricted ourselves to a relatively small region to get to know a wide array of wildlife, but also culture and general exploring. We recorded everything on Observation.org, where you can find GPS coordinates as well, but in this report, extra information is given.

Itinerary

We flew from Amsterdam to Antalya and arrived in the very early morning of the 25th of May and after a short night at a hotel, we went west to Geyikbayırı.

25 May. Arrival, travel to Geyikbayırı

26. Geyikbayırı

27. Travel along the southern coast, ended up at Kapaklı.

28. Geyikbayırı

29. Geyikbayırı

30. Akseki

31. Akseki

1 June Akseki

2. Travel through the mountains and along the coastline, ended up in Antalya

3. Antalya

4 June. Flight back to Amsterdam in the very early morning

Locations (see map)

1. Kaş: place for Mediterranean Monk Seal
2. Düzlerçamı: place for the Fallow Deer
3. Termessos: ancient ruin city just north of the Fallow Deer place with good chance on Bezoar Goat (not seen here due to approaching thunderstorm)
4. Antalya: hip city with Egyptian Fruit Bats
5. Side: city of obnoxious resorts, but with a nice birding spot at the Manavgat River mouth. We were there a bit too late for migration, but it must be great in April and first half of May.
6. Akseki: nice mountains and hills with many Anatolian specialties. See map for further detail.



Travel

Plane from Amsterdam to Antalya and back. We hired a rental car. It is advisable to hire a small car as they are light and easy to manoeuvre on narrow gravel paths in the mountains. Driving in Turkey is a bit more challenging than in Western Europe, as there are quite some things done differently, but is certainly not as chaotic as in Africa, and you get the hang of it quite quickly. The Turks are a very friendly people, but they drive a bit crazy. For navigation by car we used Google Maps (downloaded the offline maps of the region), while for navigation on foot, Maps.me worked very well, with many footpaths that were known. We brought cameras, lenses, binoculars and thermal scope in hand luggage and recorder and spotlight in checked luggage, and we had no problems whatsoever with that on the airports of Amsterdam or Antalya.



Close-up of area 5 and 6 at the Manavgat delta (5) and Akseki (6)

Accommodation

We had two main bases from which we made our tours. The first 5 days (except for one night) were spent at a rented little house via airbnb at Geyikbayırı, which was beautifully situated near an area popular for climbing. Rivers and brooks flowed between the cliffs providing wonderful dragonfly life, while on the slopes Eastern Rock Mice were abundant during the night. There also was a good cave in the vicinity that provides lots of interesting life. We spent one night in the Stone House/Istlada Taş of Yusuf at Kapaklı, from which we had a beautiful view over the sea (albeit a bit too far to be able to identify the pod of dolphins we saw without a telescope). Near Akseki we stayed at Ali Paşa Konağı, which was a conveniently situated hotel with Olive-tree Warblers nearby and short drives to the other hotspots. The owner recently had some small houses constructed which were not open yet, but might be more suitable as you have a little more freedom for early morning trips.

Food and Drinks

Food in Turkey is very nice. We enjoyed it a lot and the trick is to get it where the local people get it (and not at the touristy places). Top lunch/dinner/snacks are gözleme, börek, tost, pide, köfte, balık and anything in a bread (kebab). Nice food can be acquired at many places and these are almost always accompanied with delicious salads and fruits. Prices are currently very low due to inflation. We wanted to recommend some places we enjoyed extra: Vites burnu on the road to Demre from Finike (excellent stop when you drive along the coast), Mola café just before Akseki (where we got salads and fruits on the side that came directly from the garden next to the café, presented with so much love and pride by the employee who grew them) and the local Alabalık fish restaurant at Geyikbayırı (we had to climb down a very steep slope through the middle of nowhere and ended up at a very busy restaurant enjoyed by locals and Antalyan tourists). Tap water was usually drinkable but slightly chlorinated, so we preferred bottled water mostly. Small grocery stores (bakkal in Turkish) were common and had all the essentials, including water (su), yoğurt, bread (ekmek), cheese (peynir), fruit and vegetables and a wide array of tasty chocolate bars.

Weather

The weather was good. It was already quite hot, so at the lower areas a siesta is recommended, as wildlife is barely active then (and you need to sleep at some point when you combine birds, mammals and herps). Light breezes made life pleasant, especially near sea. We had one or two non-serious thunderstorms in some afternoons, which were not very inconvenient. I felt a very light earthquake one night which was mainly unpleasant because the dogs went berserk for a while. Best time of year is June (for mammals such as hibernating squirrels), april-may (for bird migration), or beginning of april (for Fish Owl, but see below).

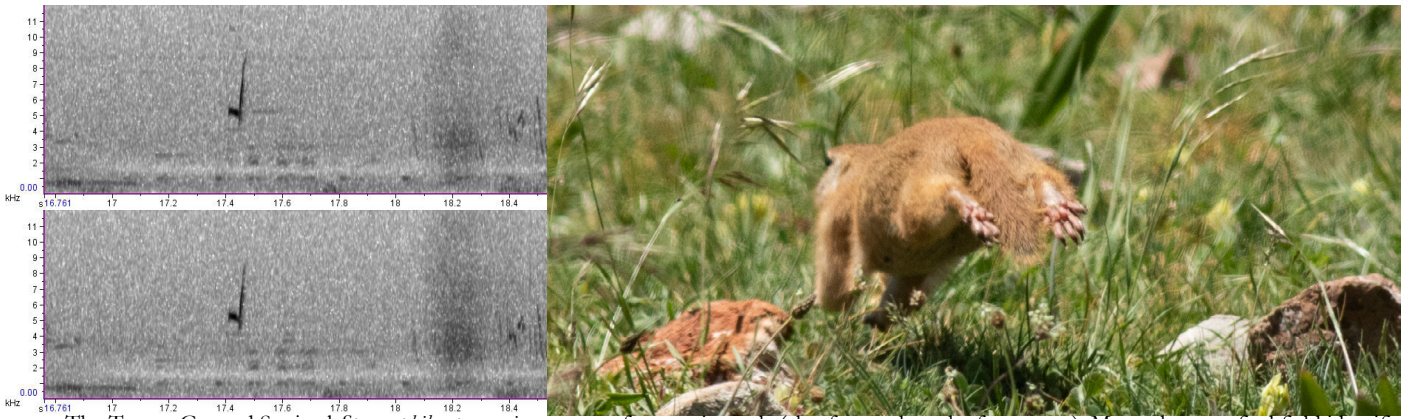
Targets

Accounts of my most wanted species are written here below. You can also find them in the tables on p. 7-10

Anatolia has quite a few **Squirrel** attractions. The handsome Persian or **Caucasian Squirrel** is widespread and quite common and we could observe it especially well from our verandah at Geyikbayırı, where I could also record its call when it was alarming to something on the ground (probably a snake). There are also two Ground Squirrels, both endemic to Anatolia. They were split in 2007 when it turned out that the population in the Taurus mountains was genetically distinct from the rest of the Anatolian Ground Squirrel and more closely related to European Souslik. There are also morphological differences in skull and pelage, but the pelage differences are very small. I wanted to observe the **Taurus Ground Squirrel** to get acquainted with its appearance, its behaviour and its sounds so that I could compare it with the Anatolian Ground Squirrel later (we did not have time to go and see the latter species, but I intend to look for it when I visit Eastern Turkey one day). The ranges of the two species do not overlap to current knowledge, but they have been found within 14 km from each other, so there it is crucial to have identification features, which I hope to be able to give in the Squirrel field guide I'm working on. At first I wanted to visit Turkey at the end of April, but we postponed our visit on advice of Prof. Islam Gündüz, one of the describers of the Taurus Ground Squirrel. The best spot of the species is quite high up the Akseki Plateau where they often awake only mid-May from their hibernation. We had a great time watching them on the Akseki plateau that can be reached by a dirt road from Çimiköy. The plateau and slopes hold many other Anatolian goodies that prefer the higher mountains. The squirrels produced Hawfinch-like squeaks when they were agitated or alarmed, but we only heard them produce it when they were close to another squirrel.



Caucasian Squirrel *Sciurus anomalus* is actually rare in the Caucasus, but common and widespread in the rest of Anatolia. We had 13 observations, and I even could [record one specimen's alarm call!](#)



The Taurus Ground Squirrel *Spermophilus taurensis* was one of my main goals (also featured on the front page), My goal was to find field identification points that could separate it from *S. xanthopyrmus* that lives further east in Anatolia. [We managed to record its social calls](#) and I am very interested how that call compares to *S. citellus* and *S. xanthopyrmus*, so if you hear either of those, don't hesitate to make a recording (with your phone e.g) and send it to me. Another character would be the black base of the hairs at the tail tip, often not well visible as it turned out.

Fallow Deer are spread across the world as they have been introduced or escaped from parks from Europe to New Zealand, even becoming invasive pest species here and there (including in our predator free dunes in Holland). On the other side, the species has become increasingly rare in its native range in South-eastern Europe and Anatolia due to hunting and habitat loss. The only original population of Fallow Deer is found in Termessos NP near the town of Düzlerçamı (the population on Rhodos might be original too, but there is debate whether it may be introduced there by *Homo sapiens* in Neolithic times), see Masseti et al. (2008). Even here, the species is under threat of illegal hunting, and it is estimated that only a little more than 100 individuals remain in the wild (Ünal & Çulhacı 2018). I asked researcher Prof. Yasin Ünal if the nature reserve was accessible, and he told me a permit was needed for the breeding center, but that it also can be seen in the natural area from the road after sunset or early in the morning. This breeding centre had me worried a bit, as I dreaded the thought of seeing it in an enclosure, but this worry turned out to be unnecessary. We drove up and down the gravel road at dusk up to the bridge across the river without any luck until it was fully dark. Back near the main road Liselotte suddenly saw a deer in thermal scope! We were not able to find it in the spotlight as it had entered thick undergrowth, but we drove a little bit further and found a second individual in the spotlight. Exactly as you would hope to see this species we briefly saw it freely, showing its beautiful reddish brown summer coat with characteristic white spots, but soon she moved into the undergrowth where we could follow her for a few more minutes with the thermal, but only saw glimpses in the spotlight. I managed to take a few pictures, but they are very unclear due to the vegetation and should only be regarded as an illustration of the situation.



Detailed map of where to search for the only wild, original Fallow Deer *Dama dama* of the world.

The **Wild Goat** or Bezoar Ibex is a similar story to the Fallow Deer, as its domesticated descendants are omnipresent all around the world, while the wild species has become increasingly rare. However, its distribution is still wide and it can be found in quite some nature reserves from Turkey eastward. There are areas around Kaş and in the Termessos mountains where they can be found (good to combine with Monk Seal and Fallow Deer respectively), but we saw them near Üzümdere at the spot of the Fish Owl on the steep slopes on both sides of the river. Their eyes reflect in the spotlight and if they are within range of the thermal scope they can be found like that as well.



Wild Goat or Bezoar Ibex *Capra aegagrus* at Üzümdere. This is the ancestral species of the domestic goat, but treated as Near Threatened in the wild by IUCN.

The **Brown Fish Owl** has a scattered distribution from Turkey to India and Sri Lanka and Thailand, but it turned out that the hoots of the **Turkish** taxon sound very different from the East-Asian populations. For more information, have a read and a listen to the chapter in [Undiscovered Owls](#). In Turkey, the species is very rare and was only recently rediscovered. In the 2010's it was twitchable with tourist boats on the Oymapınar reservoir, but a forest fire in 2021 made this place less suitable (but apparently they are still there). However, they were also found along the Üzümdere/Manavgat River further upstream. They are usually seen with a guide, but this man decided to cancel on us five minutes before we were supposed to leave. I found this situation quite upsetting and it was two nights later we went on a full try ourselves. The owner of our hotel brought us into contact with Dilek, a wildlife researcher at the National Park, who was willing to help us in our search. Dilek barely spoke any English, but she knew scientific names, so we mainly communicated in Latin, which was good fun. The three of us spent the evening spotlighting and thermal scoping at promising spots, helped by the local people of the fish restaurants who are well acquainted with the owls (ask for Balık Baykuş or simply Baykuş). It was a good night with lots of scorpions, freshwater crabs and best of all several Bezoar Goats. No fish owls however, and I was beginning to accept my loss while we returned towards the car. I heard something rustle in the bushes next to me, so I warned the others so we could find its source, which I hoped to be a snake or small mammal. While we were standing still I suddenly heard a muffled booming rising above the roar of the river. At first I thought I misheard or that it might be a loose log in the river or something, but then I heard it again! The Turkish Fish Owl! Dilek and Liselotte by now heard it too, what a relief! And what a sound! The “[booboboo](#)” came from across the river, but we were not able to get it in the torchlight or thermal scope. An awesome observation nonetheless, and a very unexpected one, as they are not known to hoot in June, and searches by other birders in the weeks before were unsuccessful.

We ended our trip with a full day in the city of Antalya, to which I agreed suspiciously eager, as I knew **Egyptian Fruit Bats** were sometimes seen in the city. This only Western Palearctic species of fruit bat always grabbed my attention in field guides. So we spent the day walking through the remarkably pleasant and hip city while I was scanning the trees for fruits. A park east of the old harbour seemed suitable, so after dinner we casually walked towards it while suddenly Liselotte saw a huge light bat flying over. A little later we found that an outgoing stream passed the street lanterns flying southeast. It was amusing to observe them flying over the relaxing local youth at the cliff boulevard. Later on we found a foraging group a little further along the park.



The only Western-Palearctic species of fruit bat can be found in the city center of Antalya, the Egyptian Fruit Bat *Rousettus aegyptiacus*.

Things we missed

We had a brief try for Mediterranean Monk Seal at the harbour of Kaş when we did a trip to the southern coast. They are sometimes but rarely seen there and the yacht harbour people know them (Turkish name is Fok, think of the Greek Phoca or French Phoque). For a moment, I thought we hit the jackpot when I saw a flipper and a head with some splashing and turmoil in the water, but it turned out to be the terrible coincidental occurrence of an energetic tuna-like fish (causing the turmoil) and a turtle (producing the flipper and the head). Both tuna and turtle turned out to be common in the harbour, so be careful. A boat trip might increase your chances, so check Jon's report but instead contact Dragoman, as Jon's contact has passed away in 2014.

We also did not find the endemic Jackass Shrew nor the Woolly Dormouse in the Akseki mountains. I'm not sure if the dormouse occurs this far west though. Nehring's Mole Rat co-occurs with Taurus Ground Squirrel on the Akseki plateau. We saw their tubeless burrows and surface tubes between the burrows of the squirrels, but we did not have something to dig with for the "entrance restoration technique". Birdwise we missed Red-fronted Serin and Lilford's White-backed Woodpecker

We skipped on the Eastern steppes and mountains, where you could find many more attractive species such as Asia Minor Ground Squirrel, Woolly Dormouse, Jackass Shrew, Asia Minor Spiny Mouse, several voles, Uppcher's Warbler, Iraq Babbler, Bimaculated Lark, Caspian Snowcock, Black Francolin, See-see Partridge, Anatolian Sand Plover, Raddes' Accentor, Kurdish Wheatear, Ménétries's Warbler, Eastern Rock Nuthatch, Yellow-throated Sparrow, Pale Rock Sparrow

If we would have gone the opposite way towards the West (so the Eastern Aegean) we would have gotten a chance for Cinereous Bunting, which would have been nice. Other possibilities include Levant Sparrowhawk and maybe an extra spot for Mediterranean Monk Seal. North of Kaş is the Çıgılıkara nature reserve where the Jackass Shrew is found. Might be worth a visit! Who knows you will find Roach's Mouse-tailed Dormouse on the west coast, but you'll need a very decent plan I guess...

Species lists

Mammals

My main targets were mostly mammalian. We saw 11 species plus an unidentified pod of dolphins, 7 of which were new for me. The literature I had with me consisted only of the WP field guide of Aulagnier et al. (2009). In preparation I consulted Gündüz et al. (2007) for the Taurus Ground Squirrel and Masseti et al. (2008) for the Fallow Deer. Techniques to find mammals involve patience much more than for birds, especially at night you best can sit still with the thermal and listen carefully for mice, which produced very nice **Eastern Rock Mouse** for example. This might perhaps also work for the endemic Woolly Dormouse and Jackass Shrew, which we didn't really try. [Species list](#) and [observations](#) can be found on Observation.org, including future updates and exact gps locations.

scientific name	English name	notes
<i>Lepus europaeus</i>	European Hare	widespread, seen near Akseki and Düzlerçamı
<i>Apodemus mystacinus</i>	Eastern Rock Mouse	common at night around Geyikbayırı, probably elsewhere too
<i>Sciurus anomalus</i>	Caucasian Squirrel	common and widespread, very nice. Turkish name is sincap ("sindzjap")
<i>Spermophilus taurensis</i>	Taurus Ground Squirrel	seen on the plateau of Cimiköy near Akseki, 36.9885, 31.9414, endemic to W-Taurus
<i>Erinaceus concolor</i>	Southern White-breasted Hedgehog	found one with the thermal at Emiraşıklar, 37.0343, 31.7340
<i>Rousettus aegyptiacus</i>	Egyptian Fruit Bat	look for fruiting trees in Antalya (depending on season) and wait at this spot for the flight after dusk: 36.8803, 30.7039
<i>Eptesicus serotinus</i>	Serotine	several were hunting and resting in this interesting cave at Geyikbayırı: 36.8755, 30.4747
<i>Canis aureus</i>	Golden Jackal	not heard, but one crossed the road here before dusk: 36.2323, 29.7500
<i>Sus scrofa</i>	Wild Boar	at night at Geyikbayırı
<i>Dama dama</i>	Fallow Deer	only at Düzlerçamı, we saw one at 36.9819, 30.5509. Turkish name is Ala Geyik
<i>Capra aegagrus</i>	Wild Goat	locally at Termessos, Kaş and Üzümdere (37.1480, 31.7182)
	Dolphin sp.	a small pod seen from Kapaklı, but too far away without telescope
<i>not seen:</i>		
<i>Crocidura arispa</i>	Jackass Shrew	try for it at Çığlıkara near Kaş or in the east near Niğde/ Çamlıyayla
<i>Dryomys laniger</i>	Woolly Dormouse	Jan Ebr saw it in the east near Çamlıyayla: 37.2757, 34.6686
<i>Monachus monachus</i>	Mediterranean Monk Seal	Kaş
<i>Felidae</i>	Cats (Jungle Cat, Caracal, Lynx, Panther)	Spotlight more in remote places and steppes



The Eastern Rock Mice *Apodemus mystacinus* were common on the rocky slopes at Geyikbayırı. They were strictly nocturnal and easy to find with the thermal. To get decent views and photos, patience was needed and a good technique was to sit still when you heard it rustling nearby.

Birds

We did not bird hardcore style, which was not very necessary as I only could see around 12 new species and most of them could be seen in other areas that I plan to visit too. Most effort was put into Turkish Fish Owl, Olive-tree Warbler, White-throated Robin and the species of the Akseki mountains. We also searched a few hours for Lilford's White-backed Woodpecker, but that was in vein. We saw 103 species, 9 to 11 were new, depending on the taxonomy. The only literature we needed was the Collins Bird Guide (in app-form, Svensson et al. 2020), but it is very nice to read Undiscovered Owls first (Robb et al. 2015). [Species list](#) and [observations](#) can be found on Observation.org, including future updates and exact GPS locations.

scientific name	English name	notes
<i>Alectoris chukar</i>	Chukar Partridge	
<i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>	European Nightjar	
<i>Tachymarptis melba</i>	Alpine Swift	
<i>Apus apus</i>	Common Swift	
<i>Apus pallidus</i>	Pallid Swift	
<i>Clamator glandarius</i>	Great Spotted Cuckoo	
<i>Cuculus canorus</i>	Common Cuckoo	
<i>Columba livia</i>	Rock Dove	
<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>	European Turtle Dove	
<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	Eurasian Collared Dove	
<i>Spilopelia senegalensis</i>	Laughing Dove	
<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	Common Moorhen	
<i>Fulica atra</i>	Eurasian Coot	
<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>	Black-winged Stilt	
<i>Charadrius dubius</i>	Little Ringed Plover	
<i>Ichthyaeus audouinii</i>	Audouin's Gull	Nice flyby at Vites Burnu
<i>Larus michahellis</i>	Yellow-legged Gull	
<i>Ciconia nigra</i>	Black Stork	
<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>	White Stork	
<i>Ixobrychus minutus</i>	Little Bittern	
<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>	Black-crowned Night Heron	
<i>Ardeola ralloides</i>	Squacco Heron	
<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>	Western Cattle Egret	
<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	Grey Heron	
<i>Ardea purpurea</i>	Purple Heron	
<i>Circaetus gallicus</i>	Short-toed Snake Eagle	
<i>Hieraaetus pennatus</i>	Booted Eagle	
<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	Eurasian Sparrowhawk	
<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>	Northern Goshawk	
<i>Buteo buteo vulpinus</i>	Steppe Buzzard	
<i>Otus scops</i>	Eurasian Scops Owl	
<i>Ketupa zeylonensis semenowi</i>	Turkish Fish Owl	Hooting across the river north of Üzümdere
<i>Strix aluco</i>	Tawny Owl	
<i>Upupa epops</i>	Eurasian Hoopoe	
<i>Coracias garrulus</i>	European Roller	
<i>Merops apiaster</i>	European Bee-eater	
<i>Dendrocoptes medius anatoliae</i>	Middle Spotted Woodpecker ssp anatoliae	
<i>Dryobates minor</i>	Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	
<i>Picus viridis</i>	European Green Woodpecker	
<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	Common Kestrel	
<i>Falco eleonorae</i>	Eleonora's Falcon	Nice flyby in Antalya
<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	Peregrine Falcon	
<i>Lanius collurio</i>	Red-backed Shrike	
<i>Lanius senator</i>	Woodchat Shrike	
<i>Lanius nubicus</i>	Masked Shrike	common away from the coast
<i>Garrulus glandarius anatoliae</i>	Eurasian Jay ssp anatoliae	
<i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i>	Red-billed Chough	
<i>Pyrrhocorax graculus</i>	Alpine Chough	
<i>Corvus cornix</i>	Hooded Crow	
<i>Corvus corax</i>	Northern Raven	
<i>Periparus ater</i>	Coal Tit	
<i>Poecile lugubris</i>	Sombre Tit	Road towards the plateau

The very quick *Platyceps najadum* showed itself nicely.



<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	Eurasian Blue Tit	
<i>Parus major</i>	Great Tit	
<i>Galerida cristata</i>	Crested Lark	
<i>Eremophila alpestris penicillata</i>	Caucasian Horned Lark	Common on the plateau
<i>Calandrella brachydactyla</i>	Greater Short-toed Lark	
<i>Pycnonotus xanthopygos</i>	White-spectacled Bulbul	
<i>Riparia riparia</i>	Sand Martin	
<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	Barn Swallow	
<i>Delichon urbicum</i>	Common House Martin	
<i>Cecropis daurica</i>	Red-rumped Swallow	
<i>Cettia cetti</i>	Cetti's Warbler	
<i>Aegithalos caudatus tephronotus</i>	Asian Minor Long-tailed Tit	
<i>Phylloscopus orientalis</i>	Eastern Bonelli's Warbler	
<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>	Eurasian Reed Warbler	
<i>Iduna pallida</i>	Eastern Olivaceous Warbler	
<i>Hippolais olivetorum</i>	Olive-tree Warbler	Easier than expected in copses around Akseki, e.g. 37.0310, 31.7350 Split from Levantine taxon. Manavgat delta
<i>Prinia lepida akyildizi</i>	Delicate Prinia ssp akyildizi	
<i>Curruca crassirostris</i>	Eastern Orphean Warbler	
<i>Curruca ruppeli</i>	Rüppell's Warbler	Common and widespread
<i>Regulus regulus</i>	Goldcrest	
<i>Sitta krueperi</i>	Krüper's Nuthatch	Common in pine forests
<i>Sitta neumayer</i>	Western Rock Nuthatch	
<i>Certhia brachydactyla</i>	Short-toed Treecreeper	
<i>Turdus merula</i>	Common Blackbird	
<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	Mistle Thrush	
<i>Cercotrichas galactotes syriaca</i>	Eastern Rufous-tailed Scrub Robin	Common at Manavgat delta
<i>Luscinia megarhynchos</i>	Common Nightingale	
<i>Irania gutturalis</i>	White-throated Robin	Road towards the plateau 37.0029, 31.9361
<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>	Black Redstart	
<i>Monticola saxatilis</i>	Common Rock Thrush	
<i>Monticola solitarius</i>	Blue Rock Thrush	
<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	Northern Wheatear	
<i>Oenanthe isabellina</i>	Isabelline Wheatear	
<i>Oenanthe melanoleuca</i>	Eastern Black-eared Wheatear	
<i>Oenanthe finschii</i>	Finsch's Wheatear	
<i>Cinclus cinclus</i>	White-throated Dipper	
<i>Passer domesticus</i>	House Sparrow	
<i>Motacilla flava feldegg</i>	Black-headed Wagtail	
<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	Grey Wagtail	
<i>Motacilla alba</i>	White Wagtail	
<i>Anthus campestris</i>	Tawny Pipit	
<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	Common Chaffinch	
<i>Rhodopechys sanguineus</i>	Asian Crimson-winged Finch	Road towards the plateau
<i>Chloris chloris</i>	European Greenfinch	
<i>Linaria cannabina</i>	Common Linnet	
<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	European Goldfinch	
<i>Serinus serinus</i>	European Serin	
<i>Emberiza calandra</i>	Corn Bunting	
<i>Emberiza caesia</i>	Cretzschmar's Bunting	Road towards the plateau
<i>Emberiza melanocephala</i>	Black-headed Bunting	



Bird highlights were the White-throated Robin *Irania gutturalis* on the road from Cimiköy towards the plateau, and the common and widespread Rüppell's Warbler *Curruca ruppeli*.

Herpetofauna

The reptile and amphibian fauna of Turkey is very diverse. We did not go look for herps specifically except for an African Soft-shelled Turtle a friend of mine had found a few weeks earlier on a herping trip. He asked me not to share the location any further as reptiles often are disturbed and even collected. Therefore I will not give any locations of any herp in this report and only give a list of species we observed. [Species list](#) and [observations](#) can be found on Observation.org, including future updates. We saw around 18 species, 13 new.

Scientific name	English name	notes
<i>Testudo graeca</i>	Greek Tortoise	
<i>Trionyx triunguis</i>	African Soft-shelled Turtle	
<i>Caretta caretta</i>	Loggerhead	Kaş
<i>Chelonia mydas</i>	Green Turtle	Several individuals seen in river estuaries
<i>Laudakia stellio</i>	Rough-tailed Rock Agama	
<i>Hemidactylus turcicus</i>	Mediterranean House Gecko	
<i>Mediodactylus kotschy</i>	Kotschy's Gecko	
<i>Anatololacerta finikensis</i>		see Karakasi et al. 2021
<i>Anatololacerta ibrahimi</i>		see Karakasi et al. 2021
<i>Ophisops elegans</i>	Snake-eyed lizard	
<i>Ablepharus anatolicus</i>	Lykian Snake-eyed Skink	
<i>Heremites auratus</i>	Levant Skink	
<i>Pseudopus apodus</i>	European Glass Lizard	
<i>Platyceps najadum</i>	Dahl's Whipsnake	
<i>Montivipera xanthina</i>	Ottoman Viper	
<i>Bufo bufo</i>	Common Toad	
<i>Bufo viridis</i>	Green Toad	Status of <i>B. variabilis</i> unknown to me
<i>Pelophylax cf. bedriagae</i>		



Some nice herpetofauna of SW Anatolia: the South-coast endemic *Ablepharus anatolicus*, *Anatololacerta finikensis*, the Ottoman Viper *Montivipera xanthina* and the Green Turtle *Chelonia mydas*, that we could observe several times from vantage points in river estuaries, an amazing sight!

Insects

The most striking, elegant and colourful insects of Turkey are not the butterflies, they are not even the dragonflies! They belong to a group of insects that in NW Europe are mostly represented by lacewings (Neuroptera). Especially the owlflies (Ascalaphidae) and the extremely colourful and elegant *Nemoptera sinuata*. Total [species list](#) and [observations](#) can be found on Observation.org, including future updates.



We saw 10 species of dragonfly and a still to be identified number of species in other insect groups. Non-insects were the freshwater crabs *Potamon potamios* and many scorpions and milipedes.



Some insect highlights: a still to be identified mayfly of the genus *Electrogena*, the damselfly Odalisque *Epalagne fatime*, the very endemic snakefly *Phaeostigma knappi*, the water bug *Velia affinis filippii* and the Oriental Hornet *Vespa orientalis*.

Acknowledgements

Dilek, Beate, Uğur and Evren, Prof. Islam Gündüz, Prof. Yasin Ünal, Rick Middelbos and Diedert Koppenol are all thanked very much for their support

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All photos, sound recordings and observations can be found on Observation.org via these links:

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Cover page: spectrogram of the hooting Turkish Fish Owl *Ketupa (zeylonensis) semenowi* on June 1st, the endemic Taurus Ground Squirrel *Spermophilus taurensis* at Akseki and the conspicuous Neuropteran *Nemoptera sinuata*, recognisable by their four black bands on the fore wing.

Last page: us, Southern White-breasted Hedgehog *Erinaceus concolor*, Masked Shrike *Lanius nubicus* and the Owlfly *Libelloides lacteus*.