

Short trip Report - Southern Israel (Negev Desert) – 15-20 August 2020

This is a last minute booked family trip as a replacement for a South Africa Trip (Hluhluwe Imfolozi, Marrick Safari and Kgalagadi TP) after the last one once cancelled (along 2 other) due to the Covid 2019 pandemic.

I have booked a hotel for 3 nights in Mitzpe Ramon 2 days ahead to minimize the risk of costly cancellations (after sustaining heavy losses from three cancelled International trips this year) and later extended by 2 nights in the Be'er Milka area (near Nitzana) in a nice cost effective AirBnB

AUG 15 – Was spent driving to Mitzpe Ramon.

At night we drove to road 171 and saw herds of **Onager**, my wife spotted some unidentified rodent and my kids something described as either as fox or a jackel. This is a great road as it leads to nowhere and has very little traffic even in the busy August holidays.



AUG 16 – during noon a family of **Nubian Ibex** was spotted on the road leading to our hotel. At night we went to an organized star gazing activity in the crater area but due to the number of people involved nothing obviously was seen...



AUG 17 – drove at night to the Mitzpe Ramon observatory, on the way back we spotted what looked like a **Red Fox**. Then drove to Ben Gurion's grave at Sde Boker and did some spotlighting in the Zin valley but alas saw nothing...

AUG 18 – went to the Mitzpe Ramon visitor center where again where a group of **Nubian Ibex** were easily spotted. At night we relocated to the Be'er Milka area which is a much quieter area in terms of the number of tourists. Driving at night road 211 yielded nothing as this road was too busy with traffic but the road from Nitzana to Ezuz yielded **Lesser Egyptian Jerboa (*Jaculus jaculus*)** and **Cape Hare (*Lepus capensis*)**.



Lesser Egyptin Jerboa



Capre Hare

AUG 19 – Repeat the drive from previous night but due to a number of aggressive tailgating drivers on the road to Ezuz nothing could be seen on this road except few small rodents passing the road. On the way back drove into the Kadesh Barne'a road and spotted what looked like a **Red Fox**.

AUG 20 – drive back home...

Elad Nachman
etraveller@walla.co.il