

Hawraman Area (IQ043)

Sulaimani – 35.215833°N 46.186111°E

KBA Criteria: **V**

IBA Criteria: **A3**

IPA Criteria: **A4 and B1**

Area: **4463 ha** - Altitude: **1500-1925 m**

Ecoregion: **Zagros Mountains Forest Steppe (PA0446)**

Status: **Unprotected**



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Site Description: This site consists of a valley surrounded by foothills and highlands within the Zagros Range. Many springs are present and the habitats here are mountain forest vegetation with riverine forest and oak woodland vegetation. Vineyards cover most of the mountainsides and hills between Biyara and Awesar and the common cultivated species is *Vitis vinifera*. There are also a large number of aged walnut, mulberry, and fig trees as well as stands of poplars. The geology is basic igneous rocks, radiolarian chert, siliceous and

calcareous shale, and metamorphic schist and limestone of unknown age, and the soil type is sandy clay.

In the area close to the town of Tawela much of the land is used for agriculture. Well-digging and newly constructed homes and roads were observed. The site also contains popular tourist areas during spring and summer. The border with Iran is close by and there is a border crossing but smuggling of fuel and other items across the border is also a common practice.

Key Biodiversity Area Criteria	Notes	
V. Vulnerability Criteria: Presence of Critically Endangered and Endangered species – presence of a single individual or Vulnerable species – 30 individuals or 10 pairs.		
<i>Capra aegagrus</i>	Reported by locals. No direct observations were made.	
<i>Neurergus derjugini</i>	From direct observations.	
Important Bird Area Criteria	Observations made 2007-2010.	
A2. Restricted-range species		
Mediterranean biome	Breeding	Wintering/ Passage
Masked Shrike <i>Lanius nubicus</i> (Summer visitor)	2 pairs (count 2010)	
Sombre Tit <i>Poecile lugubris</i> (Resident)	2 pairs (count 2009)	
See-see Partridge <i>Ammoperdix griseogularis</i>	8 pairs (count 2010)	
Western Rock Nuthatch <i>Sitta neumayer</i> (Resident)	1 pair (count 2009)	
Eastern Black-eared Wheatear <i>Oenanthe melanoleuca</i> (Summer visitor)	1 pair (count 2007)	
Black-headed Bunting <i>Emberiza melanocephala</i> (Summer visitor)	8 pairs (2008-2009)	
Important Plant Area Criteria		
A4. Site contains national endemic, near endemic, regional endemic and/or regional range-restricted species or infraspecific taxa		
Note: *historically recorded		
Endemics at the site include: * <i>Alyssum penjwinense</i> , <i>Astragalus sarae</i> , * <i>Bunium avromanum</i> , <i>Cousinia inflata</i> , * <i>Delphinium micranthum</i> , * <i>Erysimum boissieri</i> , <i>Onosma albo-roseum</i> var. <i>macrocalycinum</i> , <i>O. hawramanensis</i> , * <i>Scrophularia kurdica</i> subsp. <i>kurdica</i> , <i>Scrophularia sulaimanica</i> , * <i>Turgenia lisaeoides</i> , and <i>Vitis hissarica</i> subsp. <i>Rechingeri</i>		

KEY BIODIVERSITY AREAS OF IRAQ

Near endemics at the site include: *Astragalus carduchorum*, *A. caryolobus*, **A. dolius*, *A. globiflorus*, *A. gudrunensis*, *A. octopus*, **Astracantha crenophila* **Bunium cornigerum*, **Centaurea imperialis*, **C. koeieana*, **Cousinia inflata*, **C. leptolepis*, **Echinops inermis*, **Hymenocrater longiflorus*, *Ferulago bracteata*, **Malabaila secacul* subsp. *aucheri*, ***Onosma cardiostegium*, **Picris strigosa* subsp. *kurdica*, **Tragopogon bornmuelleri*, **Verbascum phyllostachyum*, **Veronica macrostachya* var. *schizostegia*, **Ziziphora clinopodioides* subsp. *kurdica*, and **Zoegea crinita* subsp. *crinita*

Nationally rare species observed were: *Astragalus tawilicus*, *Buffonia calycina*, *Delphinium pallidiflorum*, *Fibigia suffruticosa*, *Galium kurdicum*, *Hesperis novakii*, *Hymenocrater longiflorus*, *Iris germanica*, *Minuartia sublineata*, *Orchis collina*, *O. tridentata*, *Phlomis kurdica*, *Silene araratica*, *S. avramana*, *Stachys kurdica*, *Stipa kurdistanica*, and *Teucrium melissoides*

B1. Site is a particularly species-rich example of defined habitat type

Mountain Forest Vegetation-Mountain Riverine Forest habitat type and Mountain Forest Vegetation-Oak Forests (medium and high) habitat type

Additional Important Bird Observations: During the survey 67 species were seen. Also breeding at the site but in sub-IBA threshold numbers were: European Roller *Coracias garrulus* and Eastern Cinereous Bunting *Emberiza semenowi* (both Near Threatened); in addition the site held breeding populations of four Irano-Turanian biome-restricted species, but these did not trigger inclusion under criterion A3.

Other Important Fauna: Mammal data were collected in 2007 and 2010 only. According to local reports, Wild Goats *Capra aegagrus* (Vulnerable) are present in the mountains in the border area. Residents state that the globally Near Threatened Eurasian Otter *Lutra lutra* is likely present. Grey Wolves *Canis lupus* were also reported. The Near Eastern fire salamander *Salamandra infraimmaculata* (Near Threatened) was also observed. No fish surveys were carried out because of the small size of the streams.

Additional Plant & Habitat Information: This site contains pistachio *Pistacia eurycarpa* as well as *Diosphyros kaki*, *Morus alba*, and *M. nigra*, which are economically and culturally important. Riverine Forest habitats commonly found alongside mountain valleys in Hawraman, especially between Biyara and Tawela and are dominated by *Juglans regia*.

Conservation Issues: The primary threat comes from residential and tourism development. The local government has recently begun expanding a road to ease access for tourism and border crossing traffic and smuggling also have impacts. The streams near villages and popular picnicking areas are affected by sewage and garbage and the stream near Tawela has also been impacted due to modifications and clearing for irrigation purposes. Ecological conditions are noticeably healthier on the surrounding mountain slopes. This is in part because minefields restricts access to these areas.

Recommendations: Tourism areas and villages such as Tawela should be the targets for environmental education initiatives. This is a mountainous area and development and road expansion causes significant erosion and habitat destruction that requires better planning and mitigation activities. Stream modifications must be restricted to prevent damage to in-stream habitat and riparian areas. It is important that mines are cleared to allow further study of the biodiversity and ensure the security of people, but with a recognition that plans to sustainably manage the local natural resources should be active once areas are opened up to human access.

