

Socotra

A Greentours Trip Report

February 2024

Led by Ian Green



Day 1 February 13th Arrival

Our flight from Abu Dhabi took us over the spectacular landforms of Oman before crossing the waters of the Arabian Sea. Suddenly a mountainous island rose in front of us out of the sea. The approach to Socotra is spectacular with the crenulated parapets of the Hajhir Mountains rising not far inland of the airport.

The arrivals procedure was straightforward. It took a while to get everyone through though. We met Salem, our minder and guide for the next week and then headed outside. Now we met our drivers and our 4wds which were to be our steeds for the week. We headed off to the capital and soon saw evidence of just how amazing the flora is on this island. Between the airport and the town a mountain reaches the sea and the slopes of this, right by the road, were covered in all sorts of botanical wonders! Our first Desert Roses were a spectacular sight and there were some lovely tree euphorbias, *Euphorbia arbuscula*.

Then it was into the capital. In contrast to the lovely slopes we'd been passing the town was pretty grim! However the absolute mess with rubbish everywhere had changed since last year – they were clearly trying to clean the place up. Nonetheless the traditional local garbage collectors – Egyptian Vultures – had not lost their jobs! These wandered like chickens around the town, and we would become used to them walking around us and even hopping onto the backs of chairs to see what was on the table! We had an excellent fish (very tasty king fish) lunch with rice and flatbread in a pleasant little restaurant and sorted out a few practicalities.

Then it was along the coast, our eyes devouring the amazing habitats we were driving through, but we were also tired from a short night and the heat. A wadi with water gave us a few common waterbirds including Red-knobbed Coot – we were a bit surprised later to discover that this is a vagrant to the island. We spotted Black-winged Stilts, Western Reef Heron and two Glossy Ibis. There were Turnstones, Little Stint and Temminck's Stint too.. Driving across the Croton plains Black-crowned Finch Larks were numerous and Somali Starlings were frequent. Salem stopped because he'd spotted a Peregrine and then he spotted some non-flowering *Monolluma socotranum* too. Then it was up onto the Homhil Plateau via a twisting bumpy track – the drivers did well. Our team



Exacum affine & Cucumber Tree

was ahead of us and had the camp set up with those lovely 'Arab'-style tents looking a picture in the imposing landscape.

Once we'd settled into our rather beautiful tents we set off down a water course where the smooth-worn rocks allowed fairly easy walking. There were little pools and some running water. The delightful little gentian relative *Exacum affine* was common in damp spots. Two or three Socotra Buzzards sailed overhead. The walk took us eventually to a beautiful



'infinity' pool about 10m across and full of cool water. The lip looked all the way down to the sea and there were cliffs and steep slopes either side. Socotra Sparrows were common. The flora was extraordinary. Our first Dragon Trees were scattered across the slope opposite and some not far from the camp. The old man whose land we were camping on had in the past told us that when he was a child the Dragon Trees here were so close together he could clamber from the top of one to the top of another. Not anymore! But still to us they were

impressive. Scattered amongst them were Frankincense Trees. Mostly *Boswellia elongata* with long leaves but also a few *Boswellia socotrana* too. We saw the impressive skipper *Coeliades anchioses* with its striking red and orange marked body. We found some *Kalanchoe robusta*. There were a number of common little *Acanthaceae* such as *Dicliptera effusa* and *Hypoestes pubescens*. Little mounds of



Socotran Chameleon

Oldenlandia pulvinata were a delight, this is a very pretty little *Rubiaceae*. There were also *Indogiferas* flowering. *Asphodelus tenuifolius* surprised us by being native! The little lizard *Pristurus socotranus* was common. We had a very pleasant swim in the infinity pool!

As the sun disappeared behind the big ridge we were back at the camp, the cooks hard at work making the evening meal. A goat they had bought from the village – tastily finished over the open camp fire, served with rice and some nice potatoes and vegetables.

A little night walk gave us a glimpse of life after dark along the water course. Freshwater crabs were very active. We found a rather feisty Socotran Chamaeleon in the *Ficus cordata* and spent a happy half an hour with him, perhaps happier for us than him! On the way back we found *Pergularia tomentosa* in nice flower.

Day 2 February 14th Homhil, Arher and Irasel Camp

Breakfast was flat lavaş-style breads with honey and cheese and eggs and some very nice beans in a tomato sauce.

This morning's walk was up the ridge opposite. It was quite a tough hike, the land rocky and steep, and it took us two hours to reach the top, with many stops. People dropped out at regular intervals and walked back down to take a cooling dip in the infinity pool. We found a rich assortment of rare and fantastical flora. There were wonderful patches of *Kalanchoe farinacea*, only the highest in good flower, and *Aloe perryi* had spikes of orange flowers some of them being visited by the endemic Socotra Sunbird.

We found some amazing specimens of the Cucumber Tree *Dendrosicyos socotrana*. This strange cucurbit has taken water conservation to an extreme having a trunk that looks like a baobab and with a little head of curving leafy branches poking out the top! It was nice to see a cute little baby one only 20cm high. The long-tubed white blooms of *Tamridea capsulifera* grew amongst the rocks early in our walk. On the cliffs we found the extraordinary 'rock' Frankincense *Boswellia nana*. It really just resembles a chunky little rock with leaves coming out. Its squat little trunk is squeezed into cracks in the low cliffs here never deigning to emerge more than a few centimetres. A totally weird tree! There



Croton pachycladus



Dorstenia socotrana



Kalanchoe farinosa

were another two *Boswellias* up here – *elongata*, and *socotrana* with tiny leaflets. On the top of the cliffs was a low scrub of the lovely 'daphne' *Gnidia socotrana* the bright yellow flowers only in bud, orange *Ballochia amoena*, yellow *Barleria tetraantha* and the blue pea *Zygocarpum caeruleum*. Another herbaceous pea with larger violet flowers, *Tephrosia odorata*, was commoner. There were innumerable small beauties



Boswellia nana

such as the weird violet relative *Hybanthus enneaspermus*, yellow *Portulaca quadrifida*, and both delicate *Oldenlandia balfourii* and *Oldenlandia bicornuta*. Unexpected finds included the yellow bulb *Hypoxis angustifolia* and *Dorstenia socotrana*. This latter is truly a botanical gem. It is certainly not beautiful, the umbilicus-like somewhat fleshy leaves were tucked into just a few of the highest crevices and a couple of the weird little greenish flowers poked out. But it's a fig! Only a few centimetre high and extremely rare. The shrub *Anisotes diversifolius* had long-lipped curved orange and yellow flowers. Another shrub was the prostrate *Ruellia dioscoridis* with nice white blooms.

Hill-topping butterflies included the Joker, many *Acraea neobule*, and several of the fast-flying *Charaxes velox*. The nicely marked lizard *Pristurus socotranus* was common and we saw the Socotra Brown Skink and a new gecko was lurking in the limestone crevices right on top of the ridge.

Socotra Sparrows were common and so too the Somali Starlings but we saw few birds other than a pair of Socotra Buzzards and some Long-billed pipits.

Another strange tree grew right on the highest spot on the ridge. This was *Croton pachycladus*. Its current status is not clear as apparently it was thought that it might just be a form of *Croton socotranus* but it is very clearly different- we even compared them on the way down! It is known only from this ridge and there's probably less than a hundred trees of this species in the entire world!

Fully exercised and by now rather warm we devoured a fine lunch of pasta and salad. Our tents were soon packed and were off to the next camp. Driving across the plateau we stopped in a grove of Frankincense Trees. These were the most widespread species – *Boswellia elongata*. *Boswellias* are a very important genus on the island, not least for their commercial worth which in former times was considerable. They are still harvested for the 'frankincense' even today. The essential oils have a strong and very pleasant perfume. These particular ones showed signs of the harvesting.

We dropped down to the north coast and headed east along an increasingly impressive coastline. We stopped at a little museum in a village – Frankincense trees in the courtyard. Inside were a range of local artefacts that intrigued us including a variety of water carriers and a boat. Salem delighted in showing us how various items would have been used. It was a fascinating visit. The bones of a large *Balaenoptera* whale were in the courtyard too.

Just inland of the coastal strip rose a cliff that got higher and higher as we drove. Huge sand dunes had been blown up against the cliff. The white sand pristine for hundreds of metres up to the cliff. This is traditionally the camping spot for groups but with other groups here and mosquitoes around the fresh water spring we just made a brief stop to look at a mixed flock of Sooty Gulls, Crested Terns and Heuglin's Gulls on the beach. Much lovely *Heliotropeum sokotranum* with white and yellow flowers and *Heliotropium pterocarpum* with white flowers and a greenish-yellow centre were on the sand by the road.

Then we continued east almost to the farthest tip of the island at Irasel. What an amazing spot! Apart from the two little buildings which housed a couple of fishing families a kilometre from us we had the whole place to ourselves. The views back to the dunes and cliffs of Arher were amazing. We soon found that this beach was a marvellous spot for shells. Tiger Cowries and Arabian False Cowries were frequent and there was a big range of other shells too including some vast conches. Sooty Gulls flew past. In the low dunes where we met both *Limonium paulayanum* and *Limonium sokotranum* and lots of *Zygophyllum simplex*.

Dinner under the stars on the beach was sublime!

Day 3

February 8th

Irasel Camp & Dihamry



Dawn was a great time to experience the pristine beach. Grey Plover, Sanderling and Kentish Plover moved on ahead of us and Swift Terns caroused past just offshore. There were Brown Boobies and Western Reef Heron too. At 'the point' there were large conch shells and some fine coral rocks. These made great foregrounds of scenic pictures along the beach towards the camp and the rocky promontory beyond with the sun rising behind. In the other direction across the sea were the giant

dunes and escarpments of Arher behind.



Breakfast was much enjoyed on the beach and as we ate a pod of at least fifty Spinner Dolphins came in and did a circuit of the bay. Then it was time to head for Dihamry. En route we spotted perhaps the same group of Spinner Dolphins and another pod of around 15 Bottle-nosed Dolphins. Nearing Dihmary Salem spotted a pair of Lichtenstein's Sandgrouse who posed beautifully for us on the track.

Much of the day was spent snorkelling in the waters offshore of Dihmary. This was truly superb. Fishlife was most evident and in places it was

absolutely crazy how many fish there were. There were stunning yellow and blue Yellowtail Tang in the shallows but only a few metres on around a coral head were all sorts of fish. There were swarms of Sweepers. There were large groups of Sohail Surgeonfish and Lined Surgeonfish, sometimes the two species together – hybrids are apparently known from Socotran waters. Butterflyfishes are a delight and there were many species here – Madagascar Butterflyfish, Threadfin Butterflyfish, Red Sea Raccoon Butterflyfish, Vagabond Butterflyfish, Red-tailed Butterflyfish, the widespread Raccoon Butterflyfish, Rip Butterflyfish, Lined Butterflyfish, and the lovely *Arabian Butterflyfish*. We enjoyed a large shoal of Silver Batfish that didn't like to be separated. We saw several Black-spotted Morays, one of them must have been close to a metre and half. I surprised an Octopus. It changed from a general camo to star-shine white in an instant and sped sideways. But I saw where it had gone. Diving down I saw it emerge, this time a deep angry red! Then it insinuated itself into a rocky crevice and again went for camo. The next few moments were a comedy of colour change and whenever I

took my eye off the octopus a sudden relocation. Of course I eventually lost it during one of those. A moment's breath and a shark was swimming by. A Lemon Shark, it didn't hang around and was followed by quite a crowd of fish. There was a Bigeye Barracuda, Eystripe Surgeonfish, Bird Wrasse, and lots of Trevallies, including Orange-spotted Trevally, Black Trevally, and the blue-edged Bluefin Trevally. Back near the 'get-in' the coral heads had White-tipped Soldierfish, Pinecone Soldierfish, Crown Squirrelfish and hanging under them. With these were various Cardinalfish and a snakeblenny. Brilliant blue and yellow Blue-yellow Damsels held court and Yellowfin Goatfish hung in the water. Longbarbel Goatfish fossicked on the sandy bottoms with occasional Picasso Triggerfish and its cousin the Arabian Picassofish. Gorgeous Crowned Tobies hovered about coral heads and Starry Pufferfish floated past. A Hawksbill Turtle came to see what we were doing. In places the water was thick with mixed shoals of black and white Indian Triggerfish, Convict Surgeonfish and Circle-Spine Surgeonfish. There were some impressively large and improbably bright-coloured parrotfishes nibbling away at the reef. Bicolor Parrotfish, Heavybeak Parrotfish, Bullethead Parrotfish and Rusty Parrotfish among them and probably others – I always find parrotfish ID a bit of a challenge! There seemed endless variety of wrasse species – those identified were Barred Thicklip Wrasse, Blackeye Thicklip Wrasse, Brokenline Wrasse, Zigzag Wrasse, Goldbar Wrasse, Moon Wrasse, and the distinctive juvenile forms of Indian Sand Wrasse or Queen Coris. There were shoals of Trevallies most of them seemed to be Black Trevally. Pairs of Moorish Idols sailed serenely around and we also saw Yellowtail Triggerfish, Orangespine Unicornfish and Yellowfin Emperor.

Lunch was much needed after such an excellent snorkelling session. During it a group of around 35-40 Bottle-nosed Dolphins were spotted circling round and round near to the shore.



After lunch we wandered over to the two red mountains – an outcrop of the Precambrian basement rock and therefore some of the oldest rocks on the island. I was particularly keen to see what feathers the falcon had left me. The previous year it had left Common Cuckoo and what was probably Lesser Cuckoo (DNA analysis is currently ongoing...), a new bird record for Socotra. So this year? Yes, lots of Common Cuckoos, and once again a new bird for the island, a Barn Owl! Actually it has been recorded recently but only from fossilized pellet evidence so feathers is a whole lot more recent! Interesting that this particular falcon clearly prefers cuckoos. *Capparis cartilaginea*, *Indogifera argentea*, *Heliotropium* and *Aizoon canariense* grew on the rocky outcrops.

We again took to Dihamry's waters with our snorkels. As in the morning the fish were simply outstanding and other marine life too. More Black-spotted Morays were seen very well and there was also a smaller Moray. New fish included Titan Triggerfish, Blue Triggerfish and the lovely Solander's Toby. At least three turtles were seen this afternoon – Tania went for a leisurely swim with a Green Turtle and we both saw a couple of Hawksbill Turtle too. A Scribbled Filefish cruised past and there were Unicorn Fish too – in fact several species with White-margined, Bluespine, Humpback, Humpnose and Horseface Unicornfish all present. Remarkably, these names really do describe them all accurately! Puffers were more noticeable this afternoon with several Stellate Pufferfish, one of them of the brilliant yellow variant, and there was also Masked Pufferfish and the impressive Starry Pufferfish. A huge Long-spined Porcupinefish lay under a rocky ledge. A

Broadbarred Firefish was a spectacular sight. Yellowbar and Emperor Angelfish are seriously impressive fish and they were joined by Red Sea Damsels and Lemon Angelfish. There were also Sixbar Wrasse, Pale-lipped Surgeonfish, Circled Spine Surgeonfish, Red Sea Sailfin Tang, Peacock Grouper, Coral Hind, Blacktip Grouper and Valentin's Toby

By the end of the day we had identified 110 species of fish, and there were quite a few that we had not been able to put a name to!

Then it was back to our fabulous camp at Irasel, the journey back as the sun set was sublime. And dinner under the stars on the beach again special.

Day 4 February 16th Hoq Cave & to Zahek dunes

Morning saw a few Brown Boobies off-shore of our beautiful camp.



After breakfast on the beach we drove along the coast stopping briefly when two Risso's Dolphins were spotted cruising slowly along close to the shore. Then it was time to head for our morning rendezvous with Hoq Cave. At the trailhead we got ourselves ready for the walk. It's not hugely long, but it is uphill and at times steep and would take us about two hours to complete. It was already very warm! We ascended gently at first through rather monotonous Croton 'woodland' but soon 'escarpment' diversity kicked in and we admired various trees alongside the path. Some

of the *Sterculia africana* were really big, some of the largest trees on the island. They had the large beetle *Mallodon arabicum* hiding underneath loose plates of bark. There were also a number of *Boswellia elongata* and a little further up we saw *Boswellia dioscorides*. This species has waxy blue-green leaves and is always growing out of rock. Which can make it difficult to get close to. We also saw *Commiphora parvifolia*, *Commiphora ornifolia*, *Commiphora planifrons*, *Acacia pennivenia*, *Dirichletia* (was *Carphalea*) *obovata* and the pendulous *Muhaea angolensis*. A lone *Lannea transulta* stood overlooking the blue and turquoise sea below. There was a huge *Euphorbia socotrana* the best part of 5m high and a nice leguminous tree with singled yellow pea flowers was *Chapmannia gracilis*. Socotra Sunbirds and Socotra Sparrows were the main birds. The skipper *Coeliades anchioses* was common as was the Common Joker and we saw a few of the rare endemic *Charaxes balfouri*. Little *Hypoestes pubescens* was common and as we got higher we found the blue form of *Anagallis arvensis*, the delicate pink flowered *Peristrophe paniculata* and lots of *Helichrysum gracilipes* in flower. We saw both blue *Trichodesma microcalyx* and white *Trichodesma laxiflora*. The shiny brown skink *Trachylepis socotranus* was common.

The cave entrance is huge and cascades of *Adiantum balfouri* hung there with abundant *Exacum affine*. Once inside the cave we were transported into a different world. Stalactites and stalagmites vied for our attention, mostly keeping a discreet distance from each other but occasionally un-covid-like

proximity was noted, two fine examples actually almost touching. There were sheets and drapes on the walls, minarets and organs on the floor. We wandered deep into the cave – we were in there over an hour. At the farthest point there were pools which reflected the speleological architecture to wonderful affect. As Salem and Tania came out of the cave they spotted a Golden-winged Grosbeak.



Meanwhile Jamie and I were outside exploring an area of cliff. Here was *Aerva microphylla*, the strange umbellifer *Rughidia milleri*, and a highlight – the twisted *Boswellia popoviana*. The vine *Dioscorea lanata* trailed through various bushes and trees including the lovely yellow-flowered *Ballochia atro-virgata* and the fig *Ficus vasta* with improbably large bright green leaves. *Lavandula ninmoi* was in flower and we found a couple of nice flowering trees – *Dyerophytum socotranum* with panicles of pale flowers emerging from orange-ish calyxes, and the delicate green and white flowered . A pair of Socotra Warblers was a nice find. A family of Socotra White-eyes were seen and the ‘ringlet’ *Ypthima asterope* was common.

We returned to the carpark hot and in need of a cold drink. Lunch was in the shelter there then we headed south across the island passing the vast Croton plains before heading uphill to rockier terrain dominated by *Adenium obesum*. We stopped to look at some *Monolluma* which didn’t have any flowers! Also here was *Barleria tetracantha* and lovely *Oldenlandia pulverulenta*. Moving on we passed fabulous hillsides covered in the *Adeniums* and *Boswellia elongata*. We stopped for a swim in pools in the river deep into Wadi Jo’ob. In the water were pretty little *Aphaniops dispar* fish.



Eventually we emerged at sea level on the southern side of the island. This was a different landscape with the arid flatlands interrupted by the occasional village and date palms. Soon we found ourselves in an amazing dune scape. Pure white sand stretching to the coast. It was beautiful. Tania and Derek both took camel rides! Our camp lay just five hundred metres off the dunes...

Day 5 February 10th Dagub Cave and to Dixaim & Firmihin

The sun rose from behind a long line of white dunes. I walked a while in the *Indogifera pseudointricata* scrub that covered the flat plain behind the camp. Desert Wheatears and Isabelline Wheatears were rarest plants – here we could see two of them – *Exacum socotranum* and *Scaviola socotraensis*. There were some fine large shrubs of the sea-lavender *Limonium paulayanum* growing on the cliff and quite a few *Boswellia popoviana*. Inside the cave three Lesser Mouse-tailed Bat hung from the roof.

Then it was up on the limestone plateau and along to Dixaim crossing a largely bare landscape.



Lesser Mouse-tailed Bat

We made a brief stop on said plateau which allowed us to see a rare endemic - a pomegranate! . There were a number of shiny waxy orange-red blooms. It even had diminutive fruits. The seemingly



Punica protopunica



Hibiscus dirrifran

barren landscape had an unusual assemblage of plants growing in the canyons one being a large tree of *Ficus vasta*. This and *Ficus cordata* would seem to have their names applied wrongly somehow as it is *vasta* that has the large very cordate leaves. The little fern *Negripteris sciona* was already drying up in the cracks of the limestone. There was a fine tree of *Boswellia ameero* and on some low cliffs the woody *Dyerophytum socotrana*, *Secamone socotrana*, *Vernonia cockburniana*

which is a small tree with purple centaurea-like flowers, and the ultra-rare *Pulicaria aromatica*. There was some nice flowering *Kalanchoe farinosa* and the lovely *Hibiscus dirrifran* with large bright yellow flowers.

At Dixaim we decided to head straight to the main Dragon Tree forests at Firmihin and our camp there, descending a spectacular and rough road through the canyon and up the other side. We passed *Ochradenus arabica*, a strange broom-like mignonette, and the yellow-flowered composite *Euryops arabica* en route. A spectacular find was a large clump of *Monolluma socotrana* with no less than 25 blooms on it – truly gorgeous. There was some debate though about the smell which should



Dragon Tree in flower!



Monolluma socotrana

have been seriously unpleasant but more than one of the group found the smell to be rather nice! Two Bruce's Green Pigeons sat in a tree.

Dragon Trees soon appeared and it wasn't long before we were in quite a forest of these amazing trees. One of the very first we saw was in very good flower and had abundant butterflies and other insects visiting the blooms. These included Dark Blue Pansy. Ecologically the Dragon Trees are a

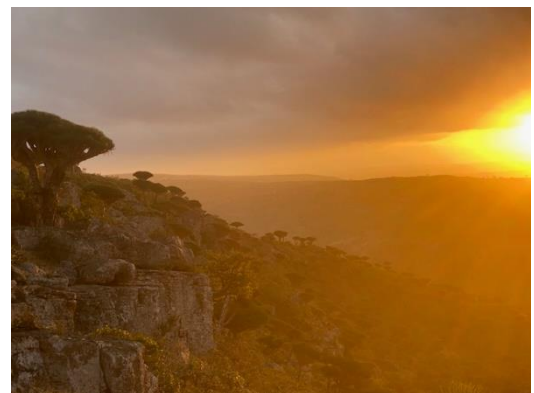


mist-forest denizen, gaining a significant proportion of their water from the moisture on their leaves each morning. They have a form like an umbrella. They were spread across the hillsides and slopes making a surreal landscape. Salem had promised us a camp site with a view and my what a spot he had chosen looking out over the Dragon Tree forest with the Hajhir Mountains for a backdrop – breathtaking. We took lunch and sat and admired the view as the kitchen staff (aka Egyptian Vultures) helped clear up anything we didn't eat.

In the afternoon we met Suliyeman who is the local village headman. My what an entertaining character he is. Firstly we visited his house. Or more exactly his garden. Suliyeman is growing Dragon Trees from seed. He has many in a little 'nursery', the tiniest were just one year old and he had some that were 26 years old and they really weren't so big. It clearly takes a while for a Dragon tree to reach full size. He had many other nice plants too including a *Monolluma socotranum* with nice large flowers and an *Edithcolea grandis* without flowers. There was also *Paracalyx balfouri* and *Ruta chalepensis*. He was also growing *Boswellias* and *Punicas*. We took tea with his wife and sons in the courtyard and Tania did some incense and incense pot shopping.

Then it was off for a walk through the Dragon Trees with Suliyeman. He stopped often and regaled us with information about the plants particularly what they were used for. We were fascinated to find that the little fern was very important in treating wounds. Cissus for Camel bites. But the most entertaining story came when Suliyeman passed the village's ceremonial circumcision stone. He graphically (with a little cutting help from Salem) re-enacted his own circumcision on the stone complete with some very impressive jumps of pain – and he was pretty old! There were as usual Somali Starlings. Scattered amongst the Dragon Trees were frankincense trees, these *Boswellia ameero* – or were they? Miller maintains that the trees that resemble *ameero* at Firmihin are not that species. However he states that they are in the rock-dwelling side of the *Boswellia* family however we noted them growing out of the ground as well as rocks.

Suliyeman showed us how the dragon's blood was harvested and took us to a mightily impressive viewpoint. The views over the canyon were amazing. Young Dragon Tree and *Euphorbia arbuscula* grew out from the giant rocks, which was good to see. The cloud that had kept temperatures pleasant in the afternoon suddenly parted as the sun headed for the horizon and the light bathing the canyon and Dragon Tree forests was amazing.



The team made a great campfire whilst we ate a delicious dinner. A great way to enjoy the fabulous night sky where the stars shone so brightly with no discernible light pollution. Socotra Scops Owls called from the Dragon Trees close to the tents and were seen just before dinner.

Day 6 February 18th Dirhor Canyon and to Qalansiyah

Several of us wandered the surrounding Dragon Tree forest pre-dawn trying to find the right spot to capture the rising sun through the geometric trees. It was a clear morning and I reckon a great many photos were obtained!



After a tasty and much appreciated breakfast we were off driving back down through the forest. We stopped first to look for



Edithcolea which we didn't find (though Suliyeman had turned up with three little seedlings he'd 'lifted' that morning to plant in his garden). However there were some fabulous *Monolluma socotrana* about, at least five plants, each with double figures of gorgeous blooms on and more than that number of plants without flowers. Two African Rock Martins flew over and a pair of Brown-necked Ravens. Again cliffs proved

productive with *Reseda viridis*, *Lindenbergia*, *Hypericum* and *Pluchea obovata*.

Then it was down into the Dirhor Canyon that separates Firmihin from Dixaim. This has water in it much of the year and there were plenty of pools. Several of us took a dip in the cool waters. There were a few Bruce's Green Pigeons around and a couple of parties of Socotra White-eyes. Common Sandpiper and Grey Wagtail too. The flora was interesting with some fine plants. *Cryptolepis socotrana* formed small trees on the gorge walls. We were searching for something else though. The Bottle Fig. Superficially similar to the widespread Desert Rose. We observed Desert Rose after Desert Rose until finally they were spotted growing high on the cliff above us. The very first one found was actually in flower. *Pulicaria vieraoides* was the chasmophytic yellow *Asteraceae* on the gorge walls and *Gaillonia puberula* cascaded with tony white flowers.

Driving up the far side of the gorge we passed much of the strange mignonette relative *Ochradenus socotranus*.

Now we descended from the highlands to the north coast.

Then it was along to Qalansiyah. This is the Socotra's second largest settlement which is to say, a big-ish village. By the village is a hill. And behind it... a stunning landscape of white sands, lagoon and cliffs. What a setting. The camp was placed at the back of the lagoon which was almost a kilometre across. Great expanses of white sand spread around and behind it, the eastern edge a high cliff/mountain. We enjoyed a late lunch and spent the afternoon exploring the area. The lagoon had plenty of Western Reef Egrets as well as Grey Herons. There were Curlews and Whimbrels, the latter in some numbers. There were Crested Terns and three Caspian Terns. Slender-billed Gulls too. Offshore were many Brown Boobies. *Boswellia bullata*, *Camptoloma lyperiifolium* and *Aloe jawiyon* all grew on the steep slopes to the east of the lagoon. *Heliotropium socotranum* with yellow flowers, *Heliotropium riebeckii* with white flowers, the small tree *Withania riebeckii*, and the lovely *Acridocarpus socotranus* with racemes of yellow flowers, were all noted. Sunset over the lagoon was dreamy.



Dinner tonight was an amazing affair with a delicious crab, curried squid, fried squid, a tasty and most succulent grouper – what a feast!

After dinner I had a quick wade about in the shallows of the lagoon which was fascinating. I saw two Dark-spotted Stingrays and was careful to keep my distance. There were some small 'dogfish'-like sharks and a few lovely Valenciennes Halfbeaks, all shimmering blue and silver.



Day 7

February 19th

Shoab & Wadi Ayaft

Just after dawn there were at four Slender-billed Gulls on the lagoon below the tents. After an early breakfast we headed straight to Qalansiyah village to catch our boat to Shoab. There were many little boats lined up on the shore and chaotic crowd of fishermen and children welcomed us. However we were soon in our boats and motoring smoothly out into the bay. It didn't take long to spot the first dolphins! This was a large



Spinner Dolphins

pod of Spinner Dolphins. They coursed through the water right by the boat at times and at others launched themselves into their trademark aerial spins. Our boatman was very good at getting us close to them. The problem was to try and catch that in your camera. Some managed... After playing with them for a little we headed west towards

Shoab along a spectacular stretch of coast. The mountains inland reaching right to the sea in some impressive cliffs. We stopped by a small colony of Brown Boobies. Then as we rounded a little headland there was a bunch of perhaps twenty Bottle-nosed Dolphins right in front of us. They dove deep and we saw them come up again far away. A little further on and there was a group of Socotra Cormorants on the cliffs and as we watched these first another group of Bottle-nosed Dolphins passed by, then a turtle, almost certainly a Loggerhead. We found Red-billed Tropicbirds sailing high over the water here. There were at least twenty-five of them favouring one particular high and rugged cliff. It looked like they were probably nesting on the almost vertical mountainsides. It was a beautiful sight seeing them sailing above us – some of them even seemed to have a turquoise hue to their white undersides presumably reflecting the colour of the water?

A few Socotra Cormorants perched on several tiny islets that had abundant Lesser Crested Terns and Sooty Gulls. One had a single Crested Tern too. One rock in the sea had bonsai-ed plants of the Frankincense *Boswellia bullata*. The inland cliffs which were largely bare did have some impressive Cucumber Trees.



Eventually we landed at Shoab. A spectacular location with a lovely beach backed by a little mangrove and behind those mountains and more mountains. Shoab lies right at the western tip of Socotra. There was an interesting flora in the sand areas by the mangroves with lots of *Chenopodiaceae* such as *Atriplex stocksii*, *Anthrocnemum macrostachyum* and the spikey *Cornulaca ehrenbergii*. There was also the local endemic *Heliotropium shoabense* and a truly tough Acacia – *Vachellia oerfota*. Most took a swim and did a little beach combing. I went

snorkelling. Interestingly the fish here were almost universally different from Dihamry. The most exciting find was perhaps the Raggy Scorpionfish which lay quietly on the sand between two rocks

in very shallow water. There were lots of Sergeant Majors and Dusky Sergeant Majors and there were many baby ones so tiny yet so perfect. In fact there were huge numbers of baby fish generally. The baby Emperor Angelfish were a mass of white swirls and patterns on a blue background. There were lots of Masked Pufferfish. Five-lined and Orange-lined Cardinalfish were seen, in fact Cardinalfish were rather diverse with also Golden-striped and the lovely Twobelt Cardinalfish too. Wrasse... Black-tailed Snapper, several juvenile Coris (both African and Queen were seen), blennies, sweepers, Small-spotted Dart, Black-tail Emperor. Cryptic Nebulous Wrasse were harder to spot than the striking purple, pink and green Surge Wrasse! There were some lovely little demoiselles – notably the bright yellow Sulphur Damsel, as well as Tiger Damsel and the elegant Peter's Toby was much enjoyed.

The other main snorkelling highlight though was undoubtedly a Round Fantail Stingray.

Our boat journey back also saw us meeting more Bottle-nosed Dolphins. Brown Boobies flew past regularly. We saw a disturbance in the water and headed over to find a 'bait-ball' of little fish. This is when marauding larger fish have caused them to mass together in a tight ball – quite a sight. We briefly glimpsed the attackers but they were soon ff. Later as we headed across the open bay a (Yellowfin?) Tuna came right out of the water across our bows!

Then it was back for an early lunch by the lagoon.

In the early afternoon we headed back to close to the airport and Wadi Ayaft. This is one of the most diverse botanical sites on the island and there seemed to be a different tree every corner we turned. The wadi is also exceptionally beautiful with cliffs on high and the slopes below with giant tumbled boulder sheltering all sorts of goodies. And all the time, the jagged peaks of the Hajhir at the end of the valley. It was noisy with Laughing Doves and Socotra Sparrows, and we saw no end of Socotra Golden-winged Grosbeaks and a goodly few Socotra Sunbirds too. There were some truly large



Campylanthus spinosus

Sterculia africana and also fine trees of *Lanaea trisulca*. Rocks had much *Boswellia popoviana* and we also saw the *socotrana* form of *Boswellia socotrana* and *Boswellia elongata* too! *Commiphoras* were represented by *ornifolia*, *parviflora* and *socotrana*. *Cordia obtusa*, a *Boraginacean* tree was in orange fruit. On the big rocks we started to find many bottle-figs *Dorsteinia gigas*, indeed the high cliffs above had huge numbers of these strange plants. There were little ferns like *Actiniopteris semiflabellata* and *Negripteris sciona* and on a damp flush we found *Nephrolepis undulata*. A *Resedacean* had us scratching our heads. *Cissus paniculata* trailed over *Cissus subaphylla* showing just how different two plants of the same genus could look. We found an area covered in the little grey subshrubs of *Campylanthus spinosus*, a lovely thing with pretty pink flowers. There was also the tree *Placoda virgata* with white

'bedstraw' flowers covered in hairs. We also noted butterflies such as the Joker, Plain Tiger and the skipper *Coeliades Anchises*. We swam in a beautiful large and very deep pool in the wadi before heading back down as the sun sank in the western sky lighting the granite peaks above. Dragonflies and damselflies were particularly varied here.

We returned to our campsite which after a whole of week of stunning campsites really took the biscuit with an all round panorama of the Wadi and the mountains above.

I popped out for a short night walk and saw two Socotran Chameleons and a rat!

Day 8 February 13th Departure

We had time for a relaxed breakfast enjoying the sun rise over the peaks of the Hajhir Mountains. Then it was down the wadi which reached the sea close to the airport. There was time for a brief altercation with a water pipe which delayed one of the vehicles by a few minutes, but we were far too early anyway....

The airport check-in was perhaps less chaotic that we might have imagined and we were soon on our way over the Arabian Sea....

Systematic List Number 1

Flora

A big thankyou to Jame Compton for his contributions to the following list. Species in [square brackets] not seen in 2024.

<i>[Angkalanthus oligophylla]</i>	<i>Acanthaceae</i>	Dirhor Canyon. Beautiful species with hanging orange and yellow pea flowers. Rare]
<i>Anisotes diversifolius</i>	<i>Acanthaceae</i>	Homhil
<i>Asystasia gangetica</i>	<i>Acanthaceae</i>	Hoq Cave
<i>Avicennia marina</i>	<i>Acanthaceae</i>	behind Shoab beach
<i>Ballochhia amoena</i>	<i>Acanthaceae</i>	widespread
<i>Ballochhia atrovirgata</i>	<i>Acanthaceae</i>	widespread
<i>Ballochhia rotundifolia</i>	<i>Acanthaceae</i>	Homhil, Firmihin and Wadi Ayaft
<i>[Barleria aculeata]</i>	<i>Acanthaceae</i>	gorgeous purple flowers. Homhil]
<i>Barleria tetracantha</i>	<i>Acanthaceae</i>	scattered throughout
<i>Dicliptera effusa</i>	<i>Acanthaceae</i>	widespread
<i>[Dicliptera paniculata]</i>	<i>Acanthaceae</i>	Hoq Cave]
<i>Hypoestes pubescens</i>	<i>Acanthaceae</i>	widespread
<i>Justicia rigida</i>	<i>Acanthaceae</i>	Dihamry
<i>[Neuracanthus aculeatus]</i>	<i>Acanthaceae</i>	Dihamry]
<i>Peristrophe paniculata</i>	<i>Acanthaceae</i>	Hoq Cave
<i>Rhinacanthus scoparius</i>	<i>Acanthaceae</i>	widespread
<i>Ruellia dioscoridis</i>	<i>Acanthaceae</i>	scattered throughout
<i>[Ruellia insignis]</i>	<i>Acanthaceae</i>	Dirhor Canyon, Wadi Ayaft]
<i>Ruellia patula</i>	<i>Acanthaceae</i>	scattered throughout
<i>Ruellia paulayana</i>	<i>Acanthaceae</i>	Jo'oh
<i>Trichocalyx obovatus</i>	<i>Acanthaceae</i>	Homhil and Wadi Ayaft
<i>Trichocalyx orbiculatus</i>	<i>Acanthaceae</i>	central hills
<i>Actinopterys semiflabellata</i>	<i>Actinopterydaceae</i>	Firmihin , Wadi Ayaft
<i>Adiantum balfourii</i>	<i>Adiantaceae</i>	widespread
<i>Adiantum capillus-veneris</i>	<i>Adiantaceae</i>	Hoq Cave and Dirhor
<i>[Negripteris sciona]</i>	<i>Adiantaceae</i>	Dirhor]
<i>Aizoon canariense</i>	<i>Aizoaceae</i>	Dihamry? Firmihin
<i>Aloe jawiyon</i>	<i>Aloaceae</i>	cliffs inland of Qalansiyah
<i>Aloe perryi</i>	<i>Aloaceae</i>	widespread – in good flower
<i>Achyranthes aspera</i>	<i>Amaranthaceae</i>	Homhil, Hoq Cave
<i>Aerva javanica</i>	<i>Amaranthaceae</i>	throughout
<i>Aerva lanata</i>	<i>Amaranthaceae</i>	Homhil
<i>Aerva microphylla</i>	<i>Amaranthaceae</i>	cliffs – Homhil, Hoq Cave etc
<i>[Arthrocaulon macrostachyum]</i>	<i>Amaranthaceae</i>	Shoab]
<i>[Psilotrichum aphyllum]</i>	<i>Amaranthaceae</i>	Dagub cave]
<i>[Ledebouria grandiflora]</i>	<i>Amaryllidaceae</i>	Wadi Ayaft]
<i>Lannea transulta</i>	<i>Anacardiaceae</i>	throughout
<i>Searsia thyrsofolia</i>	<i>Anacardiaceae</i>	Homhil, Firmihin etc
<i>Rughidia milleri</i>	<i>Apiaceae</i>	Hoq Cave, Firmihin
<i>Trachyspermum pimpinelloides</i>	<i>Apiaceae</i>	frequent in the north

<i>Adenium obesum</i>	<i>Apocynaceae</i>	Desert Rose. Widespread and sometimes dominant. Some reach exceptional proportions not seen in the East African populations
<i>Calotropis procera</i>	<i>Apocynaceae</i>	coastal areas
<i>Monolluma socotrana</i>	<i>Apocynaceae</i>	reasonably frequent in leaf and with many in superb flower in Firmihin and other areas in the hills
[<i>Cryptolepis macrophylla</i>	<i>Apocynaceae</i>	Dirhor]
<i>Cryptolepis socotrana</i>	<i>Apocynaceae</i>	Hoq Cave and Firmihin
[<i>Cryptolepis volubilis</i>	<i>Apocynaceae</i>	Wadi Ayaft]
<i>Edithcolea grandis</i>	<i>Apocynaceae</i>	plants seen at Firmihin but none in flower this year
<i>Pergularia tomentosa</i>	<i>Apocynaceae</i>	Homhil, Hoq Cave etc
[<i>Secamone cuneifolia</i>	<i>Apocynaceae</i>	south of Dihamry]
<i>Secamone socotranus</i>	<i>Apocynaceae</i>	Homhil, Burkatin, Wadi Ayaft
<i>Vincetoxicum linifolium</i>	<i>Apocynaceae</i>	Wadi Ayaft
<i>Asparagus africanus</i>	<i>Asparagaceae</i>	widespread
[<i>Dipcadi balfourii</i>	<i>Asparagaceae</i>	Hoq Cave entrance]
<i>Dracaena cinnabari</i>	<i>Asparagaceae</i>	scattered throughout the interior above about 400m but locally dominant in areas, especially at Firmihin
[<i>Ledebouria grandiflora</i>	<i>Asparagaceae</i>	Wadi Ayaft]
<i>Asphodelus tenuifolius</i>	<i>Asphodelaceae</i>	widespread
<i>Ageratum conyzoides</i>	<i>Asteraceae</i>	widespread
<i>Bidens biternata</i>	<i>Asteraceae</i>	scattered
<i>Euryops arabicus</i>	<i>Asteraceae</i>	Dixaim, Firmihin, Qalansiyah
[<i>Helichrysum arachnoides</i>	<i>Asteraceae</i>	Hoq Cave]
[<i>Helichrysum balfourii</i>	<i>Asteraceae</i>	Omeq]
<i>Helichrysum</i> sp B	<i>Asteraceae</i>	Hoq Cave. B as shown in the ethnoflora!
<i>Launaea crepoides</i>	<i>Asteraceae</i>	campsite at Firmihin
[<i>Launaea massauensis</i>	<i>Asteraceae</i>	Dihamry]
<i>Libinhania gracilipes</i>	<i>Asteraceae</i>	widespread in the north
<i>Pluchea obovata</i>	<i>Asteraceae</i>	Dirhor Canyon
<i>Pulicaria aromatica</i>	<i>Asteraceae</i>	near Dixaim
<i>Pulicaria diversifolia</i>	<i>Asteraceae</i>	widespread
[<i>Pulicaria elegans</i>	<i>Asteraceae</i>	Dirhor Canyon]
<i>Pulicaria stephanocarpa</i>	<i>Asteraceae</i>	coastal plains in the north
<i>Pulicaria vieraioides</i>	<i>Asteraceae</i>	Dirhor Canyon
<i>Reichardia tingitana</i>	<i>Asteraceae</i>	scattered
<i>Sonchus oleraceus</i>	<i>Asteraceae</i>	scattered
<i>Vernonia cockburniana</i>	<i>Asteraceae</i>	near Dixaim, Firmihin, Wadi Ayaft
<i>Vernonia unicata</i>	<i>Asteraceae</i>	near Dixaim, Wadi Ayaft
[<i>Volutaria lippii</i>	<i>Asteraceae</i>	Wadi Ayaft]
<i>Cordia obtusa</i>	<i>Boraginaceae</i>	Wadi Ayaft, etc
<i>Cystostemon socotranus</i>	<i>Boraginaceae</i>	Homhil

<i>Heliotropium aegyptiacum</i>	<i>Boraginaceae</i>	Hoq Cave
<i>Heliotropium balfourii</i>	<i>Boraginaceae</i>	scattered
[<i>Heliotropium ovalifolium</i>	<i>Boraginaceae</i>	Hoq Cave]
<i>Heliotropium nigricans</i>	<i>Boraginaceae</i>	Firmihin
<i>Heliotropium pterocarpum</i>	<i>Boraginaceae</i>	Arher
<i>Heliotropium riebeckii</i>	<i>Boraginaceae</i>	Qalansiyah
<i>Heliotropium shoabense</i>	<i>Boraginaceae</i>	Shoab!
<i>Heliotropium sokotranum</i>	<i>Boraginaceae</i>	Arher & Irasel, also Qalansiyah lagoon area
<i>Heliotropium strigosum</i>	<i>Boraginaceae</i>	Omeq
<i>Trichodesma laxiflorum</i>	<i>Boraginaceae</i>	Homhil, Dixaim Plateau
<i>Trichodesma microcalyx</i>	<i>Boraginaceae</i>	Hoq Cave
[<i>Diceratella incana</i>	<i>Brassicaceae</i>	Homhil]
[<i>Erucastrum rostratum</i>	<i>Brassicaceae</i>	scattered in the hills]
<i>Farsetia longisiliqua</i>	<i>Brassicaceae</i>	?Dirhor Canyon
<i>Farsetia socotrana</i>	<i>Brassicaceae</i>	Homhil
<i>Lachnocapsa spathulata</i>	<i>Brassicaceae</i>	slopes behind Qalansiyah lagoon
<i>Boswellia ameero</i>	<i>Burseraceae</i>	Dixaim and Firmihin
<i>Boswellia bullata</i>	<i>Burseraceae</i>	Qalansiyah and Shoab
<i>Boswellia dioscoridis</i>	<i>Burseraceae</i>	widespread in centre and northeast
<i>Boswellia elongata</i>	<i>Burseraceae</i>	widespread
<i>Boswellia nana</i>	<i>Burseraceae</i>	only found on cliffs above Homhil
<i>Boswellia popoviana</i>	<i>Burseraceae</i>	Hoq Cave, Firmihin and Wadi Ayaft
<i>Boswellia socotrana</i>	<i>Burseraceae</i>	subspecies <i>socotrana</i> with green leaves at Homhil and Hoq Cave, subspecies <i>aspleniifolia</i> in the plains by the coast west of Qalansiyah
<i>Commiphora kua</i>	<i>Burseraceae</i>	dwarf contorted shrubs high ground at Homhil
<i>Commiphora ornifolia</i>	<i>Burseraceae</i>	scattered throughout
<i>Commiphora parvifolia</i>	<i>Burseraceae</i>	mainly in the north
<i>Commiphora planifrons</i>	<i>Burseraceae</i>	Homhil, Hoq Cave
<i>Commiphora socotrana</i>	<i>Burseraceae</i>	Homhil, Wadi Ayaft
<i>Buxus hildebrandtii</i>	<i>Buxaceae</i>	widespread and locally abundant
[<i>Campanula balfouri</i>	<i>Campanulaceae</i>	Wadi Ayaft]
<i>Capparis cartilaginea</i>	<i>Capparaceae</i>	widespread
<i>Cleome brachycarpa</i>	<i>Capparaceae</i>	Homhil, Arher
<i>Cleome</i> sp	<i>Capparaceae</i>	scattered – didn't ID to species
<i>Maerua angolensis</i>	<i>Capparaceae</i>	frequent along northeast part of the Island
[<i>Haya obovata</i>	<i>Caryophyllaceae</i>	scattered]
[<i>Polycarpaea balfourii</i>	<i>Caryophyllaceae</i>	Wadi Ayaft]
[<i>Polycarpaea caespitosa</i>	<i>Caryophyllaceae</i>	Wadi Ayaft]
<i>Polycarpaea kuriensis</i>	<i>Caryophyllaceae</i>	Qalansiyah
<i>Polycarpaea paulayana</i>	<i>Caryophyllaceae</i>	Hoq Cave entrance
[<i>Polycarpaea spicata</i>	<i>Caryophyllaceae</i>	Qalansiyah]
<i>Anthrocnemum macrostachyum</i>	<i>Chenopodiaceae</i>	behind Shoab beach
<i>Atriplex farinosa</i>	<i>Chenopodiaceae</i>	Homhil

<i>Atriplex stocksii</i>	<i>Chenopodiaceae</i>	behind Shoab beach
<i>Chenopodium murale</i>	<i>Chenopodiaceae</i>	Hoq Cave
<i>Cornulaca ehrenbergii</i>	<i>Chenopodiaceae</i>	behind Shoab beach
<i>Salsola spinescens</i>	<i>Chenopodiaceae</i>	Dihamry
<i>Suaeda monoica</i>	<i>Chenopodiaceae</i>	behind Shoab beach
<i>Commelina albescens</i>	<i>Commelinaceae</i>	Homhil
<i>Commelina forskaleii</i>	<i>Commelinaceae</i>	scattered
<i>Convolvulus agrestis</i>	<i>Convolvulaceae</i>	Jo'oh
<i>Convolvulus glomeratus</i>	<i>Convolvulaceae</i>	Homhil
<i>Convolvulus grantii</i>	<i>Convolvulaceae</i>	Homhil, Firmihin campsite
<i>Convolvulus hildebrandtii</i>	<i>Convolvulaceae</i>	Firmihin campsite
<i>Convolvulus rhyniospermus</i>	<i>Convolvulaceae</i>	Homhil
[<i>Convolvulus sarmentosus</i>	<i>Convolvulaceae</i>	scattered]
[<i>Convolvulus sicutus</i>	<i>Convolvulaceae</i>	scattered]
[<i>Dichondra repens</i>	<i>Convolvulaceae</i>	Homhil]
[<i>Evolvulus alsinoides</i>	<i>Convolvulaceae</i>	Dixaim Plateau]
<i>Ipomoea sinensis</i>	<i>Convolvulaceae</i>	Homhil
<i>Kalanchoe farinacea</i>	<i>Crassulaceae</i>	scattered throughout in hills
<i>Kalanchoe robusta</i>	<i>Crassulaceae</i>	Homhil
<i>Citrullus colocynthis</i>	<i>Cucurbitaceae</i>	scattered
<i>Citrullus prophetarum</i>	<i>Cucurbitaceae</i>	Homhil, Firmihin etc
<i>Cucumis dipsaceus</i>	<i>Cucurbitaceae</i>	Homhil
<i>Dendrosicyos socotrana</i>	<i>Cucurbitaceae</i>	scattered throughout
[<i>Eureiandra balfourii</i>	<i>Cucurbitaceae</i>	Firmihin, Wadi Ayaft]
<i>Cuscuta</i> sp	<i>Cuscutaceae</i>	scattered – chinensis or kuriensis?
<i>Cuscuta planiflora</i>	<i>Cuscutaceae</i>	widespread
[<i>Eleocharis caduca</i>	<i>Cyperaceae</i>	Homhil]
<i>Dioscorea lanata</i>	<i>Dioscoraceae</i>	Hoq Cave
[<i>Euclea divinorum</i>	<i>Ebenaceae</i>	Hoq Cave and central hills]
<i>Erythroxylum socotranum</i>	<i>Erythroxylaceae</i>	Extreme rarity. On seeps on cliffs by Dagub Cave
[<i>Acalypha indica</i>	<i>Euphorbiaceae</i>	Hoq Cave]
[<i>Cephalocroton socotranus</i>	<i>Euphorbiaceae</i>	Homhil]
<i>Croton pachycladus</i>	<i>Euphorbiaceae</i>	ridge above Homhil. If as seems likely it's a good species then one of the rarest trees in the World!
[<i>Croton sarocarpus</i>	<i>Euphorbiaceae</i>	Dixaim Plateau]
<i>Croton socotranus</i>	<i>Euphorbiaceae</i>	widespread
<i>Croton sulcifructus</i>	<i>Euphorbiaceae</i>	Firmihin and Dirhor
<i>Euphorbia arbuscula</i>	<i>Euphorbiaceae</i>	locally frequent
<i>Euphorbia schimperii</i>	<i>Euphorbiaceae</i>	locally frequent
<i>Euphorbia schweinfurthii</i>	<i>Euphorbiaceae</i>	locally frequent
<i>Euphorbia socotrana</i>	<i>Euphorbiaceae</i>	stunning tree with rather beautiful flowers. Homhil, Hoq Cave and Wadi Ayaft
<i>Euphorbia spiralis</i>	<i>Euphorbiaceae</i>	locally frequent
<i>Jatropha uncostata</i>	<i>Euphorbiaceae</i>	locally dominant
<i>Tragia balfourii</i>	<i>Euphorbiaceae</i>	ridge above Homhil, Firmihin

<i>Acacia pennivenia</i>	<i>Fabaceae</i>	scattered throughout
<i>Chapmannia gracilis</i>	<i>Fabaceae</i>	Hoq Cave
<i>Crotalaria strigulosa</i>	<i>Fabaceae</i>	Homhil
<i>Dichrostachys dehiscentis</i>	<i>Fabaceae</i>	Wadi Ayaft
<i>Indigofera argentea</i>	<i>Fabaceae</i>	frequent in the north
<i>Indogifera articulata</i>	<i>Fabaceae</i>	Firmihin
<i>Indogifera coerulea</i>	<i>Fabaceae</i>	Wadi Ayaft
[<i>Indigofera oblongifolia</i>	<i>Fabaceae</i>	Firmihin]
[<i>Indigofera nephrocarpa</i>	<i>Fabaceae</i>	inland hills]
<i>Indigofera pseudointricata</i>	<i>Fabaceae</i>	scattered
[<i>Indigofera sokotrana</i>	<i>Fabaceae</i>	Hoq Cave]
<i>Indogifera spiniflora</i>	<i>Fabaceae</i>	scattered
<i>Indigofera tinctoria</i>	<i>Fabaceae</i>	widespread
<i>Lotus mollis</i>	<i>Fabaceae</i>	inland hills
<i>Lotus ononopsis</i>	<i>Fabaceae</i>	widespread
[<i>Lotus schimperi</i>	<i>Fabaceae</i>	Qalansiyah, Shoab]
<i>Paracalyx balfourii</i>	<i>Fabaceae</i>	Hoq Cave, and Suliyeman's garden at Firmihin
<i>Prosopis juliflora</i>	<i>Fabaceae</i>	Dagub Canyon - origin?
[<i>Senna alexandrina</i>	<i>Fabaceae</i>	Homhil]
<i>Senna holoserica</i>	<i>Fabaceae</i>	Homhil, Dihamry
<i>Senna hookeriana</i>	<i>Fabaceae</i>	Burkatin
<i>Senna italica</i>	<i>Fabaceae</i>	scattered
<i>Senna obtusifolia</i>	<i>Fabaceae</i>	Homhil, Wadi Ayaft
<i>Senna socotrana</i>	<i>Fabaceae</i>	Homhil
<i>Tamarindus indica</i>	<i>Fabaceae</i>	en route to Homhil, also Wadi Ayaft
<i>Tephrosia apollinea</i>	<i>Fabaceae</i>	Homhil
<i>Tephrosia odorata</i>	<i>Fabaceae</i>	Dixaim Plateau
<i>Vachellia oerfota</i>	<i>Fabaceae</i>	Shoab
<i>Zygocarpum coeruleum</i>	<i>Fabaceae</i>	ridge above Homhil, Jo'oh
[<i>Dovyalis abyssinica</i>	<i>Flacourtiaceae</i>	Firmihin]
<i>Exacum affine</i>	<i>Gentianaceae</i>	widespread
<i>Exacum caeruleum</i>	<i>Gentianaceae</i>	Dirhor
<i>Exacum socotranum</i>	<i>Gentianaceae</i>	there was some debate whether we really saw this species. The plants in question were on the wet seeps at Dagub Cave and in the entrance to the Hoq Cave. Maybe just a form of <i>affine</i> ?
<i>Geranium biuncinatum</i>	<i>Geraniaceae</i>	Hoq Cave
<i>Scaevola socotraensis</i>	<i>Goodeniaceae</i>	Dagub Cave entrance area
<i>Hypericum balfourii</i>	<i>Guttiferae</i>	Firmihin
<i>Hypericum tortuosum</i>	<i>Guttiferae</i>	Firmihin
<i>Hypoxis angustifolia</i>	<i>Hypoxidaceae</i>	Homhil
<i>Babiana socotrana</i>	<i>Iridaceae</i>	seed pods found Hoq Cave
<i>Lavandula nimmoi</i>	<i>Lamiaceae</i>	scattered
[<i>Leucas kischenensis</i>	<i>Lamiaceae</i>	inland hills]
[<i>Leucas martinicensis</i>	<i>Lamiaceae</i>	Hoq Cave]

<i>Leucas spiculifolia</i>	Lamiaceae	Homhil, Wadi Ayaft
<i>Leucas virgata</i>	Lamiaceae	widespread
<i>Teucrium sokotranum</i>	Lamiaceae	scattered
<i>Corbichonia decumbens</i>	Lophiocarpaceae	Hasalnah- the wadi we went through to the south of the island. Looks like a fairy foxglove!
<i>Acridocarpus socotranus</i>	Malphigiaceae	Firmihin, Wadi Ayaft
<i>Corchorus depressus</i>	Malvaceae	Dihamry
<i>Corchorus erodioides</i>	Malvaceae	looks more like a dandelion than a mallow! Scattered
<i>Hibiscus diriffan</i>	Malvaceae	Dirhor Canyon, Dixaim
<i>Hibiscus micranthus</i>	Malvaceae	Homhil
[<i>Hibiscus scottii</i>	Malvaceae	Wadi Kalisan]
[<i>Hibiscus stenanthus</i>	Malvaceae	Homhil]
[<i>Turraea socotrana</i>	Meliaceae	Hoq Cave]
<i>Dorstenia gigas</i>	Moraceae	Dirhor Canyon and more frequent, Wadi Ayaft
<i>Dorstenia socotrana</i>	Moraceae	one of the finds of the trip. These tiny plants survive in deep cracks on the top of Homhil
<i>Ficus cordata</i>	Moraceae	widespread. Generally shrubby
<i>Ficus vasta</i>	Moraceae	uncommon. Hoq Cave, Dixaim. Large cordate leaves. A large tree
<i>Boerhavia diffusa</i>	Nyctaginaceae	scattered
<i>Boerhavia boissieri</i>	Nyctaginaceae	Homhil, Dixaim, Qalansiyah area
<i>Boerhavia heimerlii</i>	Nyctaginaceae	Homhil, Dixaim, Qalansiyah area
<i>Boerhavia simonyi</i>	Nyctaginaceae	Homhil
<i>Habenaria socotrana</i>	Orchidaceae	Homhil – leaves only
<i>Eulophia petersii</i>	Orchidaceae	Dirhor Canyon – leaves only
[<i>Cistanche phelypaea</i>	Orobanchaceae	Arher Dunes]
[<i>Striga gesneroides</i>	Orobanchaceae	south of Dihamry]
<i>Oxalis corniculata</i>	Oxalidaceae	scattered
<i>Phoenix dactylifera</i>	Palmae	widespread – cultivated
<i>Argemone mexicana</i>	Papaveraceae	scattered – naturalized
<i>Bacopa monnieri</i>	Plantaginaceae	Homhil, Dirhor Canyon
<i>Campylanthus spinosus</i>	Plantaginaceae	pretty lilac-pink dome. Dirhor canyon. Wadi Ayaft
<i>Lindenbergia sokotrana</i>	Plantaginaceae	scattered
[<i>Plantago amplexicaulis</i>	Plantaginaceae	Wadi Ayaft]
[<i>Plantago ovata</i>	Plantaginaceae	Hoq Cave]
[<i>Poskea socotrana</i>	Plantaginaceae	Firmihin]
<i>Dyerophytum socotrana</i>	Plumbaginaceae	Dixaim & Firmihin
<i>Limonium paulayanum</i>	Plumbaginaceae	coasts
<i>Limonium sokotranum</i>	Plumbaginaceae	coasts, and in a more woody form on inland cliffs
<i>Aristada adscensionis</i>	Poaceae	Homhil
<i>Cenchrus ciliaris</i>	Poaceae	Firmihin campsite
<i>Cenchrus pennisetiformis</i>	Poaceae	Dihamry

<i>Urochondra setulosa</i>	<i>Poaceae</i>	Dihamry
[<i>Portulaca quadrifida</i>	<i>Portulacaceae</i>	Homhil]
<i>Anagallis arvensis</i>	<i>Primulaceae</i>	blue form. Here and there...
[<i>Hemionitis cuspidata</i>	<i>Pteridaceae</i>	Dixaim Plateau]
<i>Punica protopunica</i>	<i>Punicaceae</i>	Dixaim Plateau
<i>Ochradenus socotranus</i>	<i>Resedaceae</i>	central hills
<i>Reseda viridis</i>	<i>Resedaceae</i>	A woody mignonette! Firmihin, Dirhor and Wadi Ayaft
?????	<i>Resedaceae</i>	mystery plant with 5 leaflets in Wadi Ayaft. Still wonder about this!....
<i>Ziziphus spina-christi</i>	<i>Rhamnaceae</i>	scattered
[<i>Diodia aulacosperma</i>	<i>Rubiaceae</i>	Hoq Cave path -about half way up]
<i>Dirichletia obovata</i>	<i>Rubiaceae</i>	was <i>Carphalea obovata</i> . Widespread
<i>Dirichletia virgata</i>	<i>Rubiaceae</i>	scattered
[<i>Kohautia socotrana</i>	<i>Rubiaceae</i>	Firmihin]
[<i>Kohautia subverticillata</i>	<i>Rubiaceae</i>	Dirhor]
[<i>Kraussia socotrana</i>	<i>Rubiaceae</i>	Firmihin]]
<i>Oldenlandia balfourii</i>	<i>Rubiaceae</i>	scattered throughout
<i>Oldenlandia bicornuta</i>	<i>Rubiaceae</i>	Homhil
<i>Oldenlandia pulvinata</i>	<i>Rubiaceae</i>	common in the north
<i>Plocama puberula</i>	<i>Rubiaceae</i>	on rocks, Firmihin
<i>Tamridaea capsulifera</i>	<i>Rubiaceae</i>	Homhil and Hoq Cave
<i>Ruta chalepensis</i>	<i>Rutaceae</i>	Suliyeman's garden at Firmihin
<i>Dovyalis abyssinica</i>	<i>Salicaceae</i>	Dixaim Plateau
<i>Osyris quadripartita</i>	<i>Santalaceae</i>	Wadi Ayaft
<i>Allophylus rubifolius</i>	<i>Sapindaceae</i>	Dirhor and Qalansiyah area
<i>Camptoloma lyperiiflorum</i>	<i>Scrophulariaceae</i>	little white flowers, glandular hair leaves, rock crevices Qalansiyah and Shoab
<i>Scrophularia arguta</i>	<i>Scrophulariaceae</i>	Hoq Cave
<i>Datura fastuosa</i>	<i>Solanaceae</i>	Dirhor Canyon
<i>Lycium sokotranum</i>	<i>Solanaceae</i>	Hoq Cave, inland hills
<i>Solanum incanum</i>	<i>Solanaceae</i>	widespread
<i>Solanum villosum</i>	<i>Solanaceae</i>	scattered
<i>Withania riebeckii</i>	<i>Solanaceae</i>	scattered
<i>Sterculia africana</i>	<i>Sterculiaceae</i>	scattered throughout, particularly common Homhil and Wadi Ahaft
<i>Tamarix aphylla</i>	<i>Tamaricaceae</i>	Shoab
<i>Tamarix arborea</i>	<i>Tamaricaceae</i>	Heinz records this from Arher though the ethnoflora treats records of arborea as <i>nilotica</i> ?
<i>Tamarix nilotica</i>	<i>Tamaricaceae</i>	scattered on coasts
<i>Gnidia socotrana</i>	<i>Thymelaeaceae</i>	Homhil and Wadi Ayaft
<i>Corchorus erodioides</i>	<i>Tiliaceae</i>	scattered
<i>Grewia mansouria</i>	<i>Tiliaceae</i>	Firmihin
<i>Grewia milleri</i>	<i>Tiliaceae</i>	Hoq Cave
<i>Forsskaolea viridis</i>	<i>Urticaceae</i>	Dagub Cave
<i>Clerodendrum leucophloeum</i>	<i>Verbenaceae</i>	Hoq Cave

<i>Phyla nodiflora</i>	<i>Verbenaceae</i>	Homhil
<i>Priva socotrana</i>	<i>Verbenaceae</i>	scattered
<i>Afrohybanthus ennaespermus</i>	<i>Violaceae</i>	Homhil and Hoq Cave
<i>Cissus hamaderohensis</i>	<i>Vitaceae</i>	widespread at Homhil and Dixaim
<i>Cissus paniculata</i>	<i>Vitaceae</i>	Wadi Ayaft
<i>Cissus subaphylla</i>	<i>Vitaceae</i>	widespread at low altitudes
<i>Fagonia bruguieri</i>	<i>Zygophyllaceae</i>	or <i>Fagonia paulayana</i> or both?
<i>Fagonia luntii</i>	<i>Zygophyllaceae</i>	south of Dihamry
<i>Tetraena simplex</i>	<i>Zygophyllaceae</i>	Irasel Beach and Shoab Beach
<i>[Zygophyllum qatarense</i>	<i>Zygophyllaceae</i>	Qalansiyah lagoon]

Systematic List Number 2

Birds

Forbe's-Watson Swift	<i>Apus berliozi</i>	Ayaft
Common Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>	the falcon at Dihamry had plucked at least two!
Lichtenstein's Sandgrouse	<i>Pterocles lichtensteinii</i>	2 at close range at Dihamry
Feral Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>	Qalansiyah
Laughing Dove	<i>Streptopelia senegalensis</i>	Very common and widespread
Bruce's Green Pigeon	<i>Treron waalia</i>	noted in most wooded canyons
Red-knobbed Coot	<i>Fulica cristata</i>	common just outside Haribo
Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	noted just outside Haribo
Greater Flamingo	<i>Phoenicopterus roseus</i>	1 Qalansiyah
Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>	wetlands throughout
Grey Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>	1 Irasel
Kentish Plover	<i>Charadrius alexandrinus</i>	singles both days Irasel
Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>	frequent at Qalansiyah Lagoon
Eurasian Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>	frequent at Qalansiyah Lagoon
Ruddy Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>	7 just outside Haribo
Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>	singles both days Irasel
Little Stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>	2 just outside Haribo
Temminck's Stint	<i>Calidris temminckii</i>	1 just outside Haribo
Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	Scattered along coasts and wadis
Sooty Gull	<i>Ichthyaetus hemprichii</i>	Large flocks along north coast mixing with the next species, less common on south coast
Baltic Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>	Qalansiyah Lagoon
Heuglin's Gull	<i>Larus heuglini</i>	Large flocks along sandy shores
Slender-billed Gull	<i>Larus genei</i>	c.10 at Qalansiyah Lagoon
Caspian Tern	<i>Hydroprogne caspia</i>	3 each day at Qalansiyah Lagoon
Great Crested Tern	<i>Thalasseus bergii</i>	abundant along all shores
Lesser Crested Tern	<i>Thalasseus bengalensis</i>	only noted at Shoab where common
Red-billed Tropicbird	<i>Phaethon aethereus</i>	c.30 along the cliffs between Qalansiyah and Shoab looked like they must be breeding
Brown Booby	<i>Sula leucogaster</i>	Occasional birds on all coasts
Socotra Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax nigrogularis</i>	scattered and occasionally frequent (e.g. off Qalansiyah Lagoon) along shores
Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>	2 just outside Haribo
Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	1 just outside Haribo
Western Reef Heron	<i>Egretta gularis</i>	Common and widespread around the coast
Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>	1 in Wadi Jo'ho
Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	widespread in low numbers
Egyptian Vulture	<i>Neophron percnopterus</i>	Abundant and ever present in the sky
Socotra Buzzard	<i>Buteo socotranus</i>	1 or 2 seen most days

Socotra Scops Owl	<i>Otus socotranus</i>	2 seen at the campside in Wadi Firmihin and heard Wadi Ayaft
Barn Owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>	feathers (from a dead bird) on the falcon plucking rock at Dihmary. This would constitute the first modern-day record of this species on the island
Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinunculus</i>	scattered
Peregrine	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	1 below Homhil
Socotra Grey Shrike	<i>Lanius excubitor uncinatus</i>	scattered throughout
Brown-necked Raven	<i>Corvus ruficollis</i>	scattered
Black-crowned Finch Lark	<i>Eremopterix nigriceps</i>	common in open dry areas
Pale Crag Martin	<i>Ptyonoprogne obsoleta</i>	3 in Daerhu Wadi
Socotra Warbler	<i>Incana incana</i>	2 Hoq Cave area and also noted Daerhu Wadi
Socotra Cisticola	<i>Cisticola haesitata</i>	Shoab
Socotra White-eye	<i>Zosterops abyssinica</i>	scattered throughout
Socotra Starling	<i>Onychognathus frater</i>	Daerhu Wadi. Notably shy
Somali Starling	<i>Onychognathus blythii</i>	Very common and widespread
Isabelline Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe isabellina</i>	flats by the Zahek Sand Dunes
Desert Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe deserti</i>	scattered throughout
Socotra Sunbird	<i>Nectarinia balfouri</i>	widespread
Socotra Sparrow	<i>Passer insularis</i>	abundant
Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	1 Firmihin
Long-billed Pipit	<i>Anthus similes</i>	local in dry areas
Socotra Golden-winged Grosbeak	<i>Rhynchostruthus socotranus</i>	2 Hoq Cave entrance area and several Wadi Ayaft
Cinnamon-breasted Bunting	<i>Emberiza tahapsi</i>	Homhil both days

Systematic List Number 3 Marine

The majority of the following were recorded at Dihamry. This is a composite list from the last two visits – those that we didn't see in 2024 are included in brackets. In fact I've had only time to go through half the photos at Dihamry so I am sure there's much to add....

Mammals

Spinner Dolphin	<i>Stenella longirostris</i>	a few Irasel and Dihamry, many off Qalansiyah
Bottle-nosed Dolphin	<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>	a few Irasel and Dihamry

Turtles

Green Turtle	<i>Chelonia mydas</i>	Dihamry
[Loggerhead Turtle]	<i>Caretta caretta</i>	
[Olive Ridley Turtle]	<i>Lepidochelys olivacea</i>	
Hawksbill Turtle	<i>Eretmochelys imbricata</i>	at least two at Dihamry

Acanthuridae

Eyestripe Surgeonfish	<i>Acanthurus dussumieri</i>	Dihamry
Black Surgeonfish	<i>Acanthurus gahhm</i>	Dihamry, Shoab
Pale-lipped Surgeonfish	<i>Acanthurus leucocheilos</i>	Dihamry
Lined Surgeonfish	<i>Acanthurus lineatus</i>	Dihamry
Sohail Surgeonfish	<i>Acanthurus sohal</i>	Dihamry
Circled Spine Surgeonfish	<i>Acanthurus tennentii</i>	Dihamry
Convict Surgeonfish	<i>Acanthurus triostegus</i>	Dihamry
Striped Bristletooth	<i>Ctenochaetus striatus</i>	Dihamry
Whitemargin Unicornfish	<i>Naso annulatus</i>	Dihamry
Humpback Unicornfish	<i>Naso brachycentron</i>	Dihamry
Horseface Unicornfish	<i>Naso fageni</i>	Dihamry
Orangespine Unicornfish	<i>Naso lituratus</i>	Dihamry
Humpnose Unicornfish	<i>Naso tuberosus</i>	Dihamry
Bluespine Unicornfish	<i>Naso unicornis</i>	Dihamry
Moorish Idol	<i>Zanclus cornutus</i>	Dihamry
Red Sea Sailfin Tang	<i>Zebrosoma desjardini</i>	Dihamry
Yellowtail Tang	<i>Zebrosoma xanthurum</i>	Dihamry

Antherinidae

Robust Silverside	<i>Antherinomorus lacunosus</i>	Shoab
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Apogonidae

Twobelt Cardinalfish	<i>Apogonichthyoides taeniatus</i>	Shoab
Five-lined Cardinalfish	<i>Cheilodipterus quinquelineatus</i>	Shoab
Golden-striped Cardinalfish	<i>Ostorhinchus cyanosoma</i>	Shoab
Orange-lined Cardinalfish	<i>Taeniamia fucata</i>	Shoab

Aulostomidae

Trumpetfish	<i>Aulostomus chinensis</i>	Dihamry
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Balistidae

[Clown Triggerfish	<i>Balistoides conspicillum</i>	Dihamry]
Titan Triggerfish	<i>Balistoides viridescens</i>	Dihamry
Blue Triggerfish	<i>Pseudobalistes fuscus</i>	Dihamry
Yellowtail Triggerfish	<i>Balistapus undulatus</i>	Dihamry
Indian Triggerfish	<i>Milichthys indicus</i>	Dihamry
Bluethroat Triggerfish	<i>Sufflamen albicaudatus</i>	Dihamry
Halfmoon Triggerfish	<i>Sufflamen chrysopterus</i>	Dihamry
Picasso Triggerfish	<i>Rhinecanthus aculeatus</i>	Dihamry
Arabian Picassofish	<i>Rhinecanthus assasi</i>	Dihamry

Caesionidae

Lunar Fusilier	<i>Caesio lunaris</i>	Dihamry
Multi-lined Fusilier	<i>Caesio varilineata</i>	Dihamry

Carangidae

Orange-spotted Trevally	<i>Carangoides bajad</i>	Dihamry
Black Trevally	<i>Caranx lugubris</i>	Dihamry
Bluefin Trevally	<i>Caranx melampygus</i>	Dihamry
Indian Scad	<i>Decapterus russelii</i>	Dihamry
Rainbow Runner	<i>Elagatis bipinnulata</i>	Dihamry
Small-spotted Dart	<i>Trachinotus baillonii</i>	Dihamry, Shoab

Carcharhinidae

[White-tipped Reef Shark	<i>Triaenodon obesus</i>	Dihamry]
Lemon Shark	<i>Negaprion brevirostris</i>	Dihamry

Chaetoniidae

Threadfin Butterflyfish	<i>Chaetodon auriga</i>	Dihamry
Red-tailed Butterflyfish	<i>Chaetodon collare</i>	Dihamry
[African Butterflyfish	<i>Chaetodon dolosus</i>	Dihamry]
Red Sea Raccoon Butterflyfish	<i>Chaetodon fasciatus</i>	Dihamry
Lined Butterflyfish	<i>Chaetodon lineolatus</i>	Dihamry
Raccoon Butterflyfish	<i>Chaetodon lunula</i>	Dihamry
Madagascar Butterflyfish	<i>Chaetodon madagaskariensis</i>	Dihamry
Arabian Butterflyfish	<i>Chaetodon melapterus</i>	Dihamry
Rip Butterflyfish	<i>Chaetodon trifasciatus</i>	Dihamry
Teardrop Butterflyfish	<i>Chaetodon unimaculatus</i>	Dihamry
Vagabond Butterflyfish	<i>Chaetodon vagabundus</i>	Dihamry
[Longfin Bannerfish	<i>Heniochus acuminatus</i>	Dihamry]

Dasyatidae

Dark Spotted Stingray	<i>Taeniurops meyeri</i>	Qalansiyah
Round Fantail Stingray	<i>Taeniurops grabatus</i>	Sboab

Diodontidae

Long-spined Porcupinefish
Masked Porcupinefish

Diodon holacanthus
Diodon liturosus

Shoab
Dihamry

Fistularidae

Cornetfish

Fistularia commersonii

Dihamry

Haemulidae

Blackspotted Sweetlips
Silver Sweetlips

Plectorhinchus gaterinus
Diagramma punctatum

Dihamry
Dihamry

Hemiramphidae

Valenciennes Halfbeak

Hyporamphus limbatus

Dihamry, Qalansiyah (lagoon)

Holocentridae

White-tipped Soldierfish
Pinecone Soldierfish
Crown Squirrelfish

Myripristis vittata
Myripristis murdjan
Sargocentron diadema

Dihamry
Dihamry
Dihamry

Kyphosidae

Blue Sea Chub
Lowfin Chub

Kyphosus cinerascens
Kyphosus vaigensis

Dihamry
Dihamry

Labridae

Saddleback Hogfish
[Clown Sand Wrasse
Queen Coris
African Coris
Indian Sand Wrasse (Queen Coris)
Bird Wrasse
Nebulous Wrasse
Zigzag Wrasse
Barred Thicklip Wrasse
Blackeye Thicklip Wrasse
Bicolor Cleaner Wrasse
Common Cleaner Wrasse
Brokenline Wrasse
Sixbar Wrasse
[Goldbar Wrasse
Moon Wrasse
Surge Wrasse

Bodianus bilunulatus
Coris aygula
Coris formosa
Coris cuvieri
Coris frerei
Gomphosus varius
Halichoeres nebulosus
Halichoeres scapularis
Hemigymnus fasciatus
Hemigymnus melapterus
Labroides bicolor
Labroides dimidiatus
Stethojulis interrupta
Thalassoma hardwicke
Thalassoma hebraicum
Thalassoma lunare
Thalassoma purpureum

Dihamry
Dihamry]
Shoab
Shoab
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Dihamry
Dihamry
Dihamry
Shoab

Lutjanidae

Two-spot Red Snapper
Blackspot Snapper
Blacktail Snapper

Lutjanus bohar
Lutjanus ehrenbergii
Lutjanus fulvous

Shoab
Qalansiyah lagoon
Shoab

Lethrinidae

Yellowfin Emperor

Lethrinus erythracanthus
[*Lethrinus crocineus*

Dihamry
Dihamry]

Monocanthidae

Scribbled Filefish

Aluterus scriptus

Dihamry

Monodactylidae

Silver Batfish

Monodactylus argenteus

Mugilidae

[Mullet sp

Fringelip Mullet

Mullet sp

Crenimugil pedaraki
Crenimugil crenilabis
Plicomugil labiosus

Omeq]
Dihamry
Shoab

Mullidae

Yellowfin Goatfish

Yellowsaddle Goatfish

Red Sea Goatfish

Longbarbel Goatfish

Round-spot Goatfish

Rosy Goatfish

Doublebar Goatfish

Mulloidichthys vanicolensis
Parupeneus cyclostomus
Parupeneus forsskali
Parupeneus macronema
Parupeneus pleurostigma
Parupeneus rubescens
Parupeneus trifasciatus

Dihamry
Dihamry
Dihamry
Dihamry
Dihamry
Dihamry
Dihamry

Muraenidae

Honeycomb Moray

[Geometric Moray

[Barred Moray

Gymnothorax favagineus
Gymnothorax griseus
Echidna polyzona

Dihamry
Dihamry]
Dihamry]

Nemipteridae

Arabian Spinecheek

Scolopsis ghanam

Shoab

Ostraciidae

[Cube Boxfish

Ostracion cubicus

Dihamry]

Pempheridae

Yelloweye Sweeper

Blackspot Sweeper

Cave Sweeper

Pempheris flavicylca
Pempheris oualensis
Pempheris vanicolensis

Dihamry
Dihamry
Dihamry

Pomacanthidae

Lemon Angelfish

Emperor Angelfish

Yellowbar Angelfish

[Trapeze Angelfish

Centropyge flavissima
Pomacanthus imperator
Pomacanthus maculosus
Pomacanthus rhomboides

Dihamry
Dihamry
Dihamry
Dihamry]

[Koran Angelfish *Pomacanthus semicirculatus* Dihamry]

Pomacentridae

Yellowtail Sergeant *Abudefduf notatus* Dihamry
Scissortail Sergeant *Abudefduf sexfasciatus* Dihamry
Blackspot Sergeant *Abudefduf sordidus* Shoab
Indo-Pacific Sergeant *Abudefduf vaigiensis* Dihamry
Vanderbilt's Puller *Chromis vanderbilti* Dihamry
Tiger Damsel *Chrysiptera annulata* Shoab
One-spot Damsel *Chrysiptera unimaculata* Dihamry
White-tail Dascyllus *Dascyllus aruanus* Dihamry
Red Sea Dascyllus *Dascyllus marginatus* Dihamry
Blue-yellow Damsel *Pomacentrus caeruleus* Dihamry, Shoab
Sulphur Damsel *Pomacentrus sulfureus* Shoab
Threeline Damsel *Pomacentrus trilineatus* Dihamry

Scaridae

Bicolor Parrotfish *Cetoscarus bicolor* Dihamry
Heavybeak Parrotfish *Chlorurus gibbus* Dihamry
Bullethead Parrotfish *Chlorurus sordidus* Dihamry
Rusty Parrotfish *Scarus ferrugineus* Dihamry
Swarthy Parrotfish *Scarus niger* Dihamry
[Ember Parrotfish *Scarus rubroviolaceus* Dihamry]
[Indian Parrotfish *Scarus strongylocephalus* Dihamry]

Scorpaenidae

Broadbarred Firefish *Pterois antennata* Dihamry
Raggy Scorpionfish *Scorpaenopsis venosa* Shoab – nice find!

Serranidae

Peacock Grouper *Cephalopholis argus* Dihamry
Coral Hind *Cephalopholis miniata* Dihamry
Blacktip Grouper *Epinephelus fasciatus* Dihamry
[Smooth Grouper *Dermatolepis striolatus* Dihamry]
[Redstripe Fairy Basslet *Pseudanthias fasciatus* Dihamry]

Siganidae

Streamlined Spinefoot *Siganus argenteus* Dihamry

Sparidae

Twobar Seabream *Acanthopagrus bifasciatus* Dihamry

Sphyraenidae

Bigeye Barracuda *Sphyraena forsteri* Dihamry

Tetraodontidae

Starry (Black-spotted) Pufferfish	<i>Arothron meleagris</i>	Dihamry
Stellate Pufferfish	<i>Arothron stellatus</i>	Dihamry
Crowned Toby	<i>Canthigaster coronata</i>	Dihamry
Peter's Toby	<i>Canthigaster petersi</i>	Shoab
Solander's Toby	<i>Canthigaster solandri</i>	Dihamry
Valentin's Toby	<i>Canthigaster valentina</i>	Dihamry

Systematic List Number 3 Invertebrates

Thanks to Heinz for this list of assorted invertebrates.

Snails:

Achatinellidae:

Achatelloides hadibuensis

Achatinidae:

Rieckia sokotrana (only shell)

Pomatiidae:

Socotora naticoides (only shell)

Cephalopods:

Argonautidae:

Argonauta argo (only shell)

Spiders:

Araneidae:

Argyope lobata

Gasteracantha sanguine

Crustaceans:

Chelonibiidae:

Chelonibia testudinea

Ocypodidae:

Ocypode saratan

Potamidae:

Socotrapotamon socotranus

Tetraclitidae:

Tetraclita rufotincta

Dragonflies:

Libellulidae:

Orthetron chrysosticta

Trithemis arteriosa

Locusts:

Acrididae:

Achatelloides hadibuensis

Dioscoridus depressus

Scintharista forbesii

Tettigonidae:

Pachysmopoda abbreviata

Butterflies:***Hesperidae:***

Coeliades anchises jucunda

Beetles:***Buprestidae:***

Julodis clouei

Cerambycidae:

Malloдон arabicum

Gyrinidae:

Dineutus arabicus

Ant Lions:***Myrmeleontidae:***

Myrmeleon saldaitis