

WATER HOLE INFLUENCE ON DISTRIBUTION AND BEHAVIOUR OF LARKS IN KUWAIT FOR SPECIES COMPOSITION AND ABUNDANCE

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ABSTRACT

Water holes attract many avian species, particularly in semi-desert areas. We studied avifauna richness around a water hole in winter and summer. Desert resident species were not attracted to water holes in winter, when temperature is low. The water hole was almost found vacant in winter, even at midday. They spend most the day far away from water holes. As birds attracted to the water hole to drink and rest they may spend some times looking for food. During spring, we found herons chasing small passerines from tree to another to feed on them as a sign of food deficiency. Raptors (harriers, falcons, hawks, eagles) forage on prey in or around the water hole, such as small fishes, passerines, rodents or lizards. During summer, local birds such as crested larks were attracted to the water hole, especially at midday. Crested larks gathered in flocks of 5-65 individuals seeking shade under implanted tall trees during midday 1-30m away from the water hole. As the temperature rises the individual numbers increase around the water hole and their distance from the water body is reduced. In June-August, they usually start shading around the water hole at 8am and continue until 3pm.

KEYWORDS: Crested Lark, Water Hole, Winter, Summer, Farness, Shade and Predation