

# Summary of Global Amateur Wildlife Observations since 2011 till 2023

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## Abstract

Several proposals on wildlife management and organization of wildlife tourism constructed upon building summary of amateur global wildlife observations in 40 countries performed since 2011<sup>th</sup> till 2023<sup>rd</sup> years. The article has too low quality for academic resources but I will keep it on my website because it may be interesting for some travellers like me.

## Introduction

In the period since 2011<sup>th</sup> till 2023<sup>rd</sup> year, three large round-the world trips over 40 countries were performed by me solely. The purposes of the trips were recreational, personal, migrational, sportive, and self-educational (in the fields of history, arts, anthropology, and zoology). Zoological part of the trips included a goal to understand whether it will be possible, interesting, and reasonable for me to change career path with getting Ph. D. degree in animal behavior and then working professionally in this field. That's why in addition to practical wildlife watching some professional literary materials have been read. So, besides common knowledge of popular zoology, I have knowledge of all ecological concepts, wildlife management techniques, basic veterinary, tropical and expeditional medicine, academic life, and theory of mathematics and natural sciences from official engineering studies in childhood/youth. Physically I was trained with weightlifting up to 120 kg and running up to 20 km; so, I was able to hike up to several tens kilometers of rugged terrain per day. However, the budget was very limited sometimes, and the primary purpose of trips was recreational, that's why I tried to avoid the most risky regions, routes, and activities.

Neither photo/video cameras, nor binoculars, nor looking glasses, nor drones were used in the process of wildlife watching. I have rather bad vision and use glasses almost all the time; however, these glasses do not provide 100% vision because I use them as for reading and typing at computer as for walking in streets/nature; that’s why I could miss some wildlife at large distances.

It should be strictly noted that I’m not really typical wildlife watcher or bird watcher. I hardly distinguish many species, and I never used paper/online catalogs of species in my trips. My qualification in zoology can be described in the most correct way as “novice professional ecologist” or as “experienced hiker”.

Upon completion of all these trips due to abrupt changes in the world politics and economics, I summarized some zoological notes written down by me into this research article with making different conclusions that may be interesting for professionals. Although I suppose, the most part or all is rather well known already.

## Results

Further you may see summary of observed species by type of location. The details may be found in appendixes at the end of the article. The sightings of multiple small sparrow-like birds that cannot be easily distinguished by voice, coloring or behavior are not counted (you may meet such birds almost in any location, so it does not distort presented data and does not affect conclusions much). Also sightings of large widespread urban “garbage” birds (like crows etc) are not counted (as I remember there were seen about 10 species of such birds globally, 1-3 species in every large city). Mosquitoes and insects that look typical from the point of view of person grown up in European part of Russia are not counted too. Speaking in other words, this research analyzes wildlife observations and random encounters exactly from the point of view of typical amateur searching in his travels “exotics”, abundance, and wildlife dramas. Obviously, few areas and few observations could be forgotten to be included.

<b>Type of locations and routes</b>	<b>Total (approximate)</b>	<b>Total of observed species (approximate)</b>
Protected natural areas	37	84 (however, 16 of them were observed in Queen Elizabeth national park and about 12 at Puñihuil)
Agricultural areas, unprotected natural areas, and recreational natural areas	30	26
Long-distance motorized trips via agricultural areas and unprotected natural areas	24	20 (however, 16 of them were observed in Amazon river cruise)
Urban areas	15 (total number of visited cities and villages is about 150)	70 (however, 12 of them were observed in Entebbe, about 20 in Tangier, and about 11 in Valparaíso port)

## Conclusions

Obviously, the methods of collecting data, my skills and abilities, and amount of data do not allow to apply any statistical analysis. However, the following may be bravely speculated, as I suppose:

- besides few locations that are very rich with easily noticeable species the amateur or novice professional in zoology who is not interested in risking her/his life and who cannot come to particular locations in appropriate seasons of the year may find no more than 0-3 wildlife species per location as average, and it does not matter whether it is center of the large city or remote forest/field in tropical country;
- long-distance motorized trips even in areas close to national parks or located far from urban centers are almost useless to find any easily observable wildlife, even if the routes are several hundreds kilometers length;
- at the same time, in these long-distance motorized trips it was noticed that there are large territories covered by vegetation but not used in agriculture; so, they can be easily converted to protected/hunting natural areas to support very large populations of herbivores that may attract tourists/hunters and provide additional high quality nutrition to local population;
- even large wildlife may succeed in crowded industrialized urban centers with high pollution levels; rich network of parks across the city and presence of rich feeding ground in surroundings are critical, but such conditions may be easily implemented almost anywhere in the modern world;
- public education on real chances of wildlife observation in conjunction with organization of feeding grounds and parks near urbanized areas may decrease unnecessary and resultless wildlife tourism;
- finding a natural area with rich wildlife that has not any protection status is rather difficult for an amateur or novice professional; however, I was successful in finding one such location: it may be proposed to organize protected natural area around Bulolu river gorge in Southern Kyrgyzstan to secure local rich ornitofauna;
- even well-prepared person like me may encounter some risky or unpleasant situations in the process of such travels.

## Appendixes with observations data

### Protected natural areas

Area	Year	Observations
Albania		
Valbona mountain area.	2017	None.
Argentina		
Iguazu falls.	2011	Several bird species (about 4), coati.

Area	Year	Observations
Chile		
Puñihuil area.	2011	Seals, hummingbird, more than ten species of sea birds including penguin.
Cyprus		
Trodos mountains.	2011	None.
Brazil		
Altamira de Moura area.	2021	Urubus, multiple species of butterflies eating corpse of dead horse (about 5).
Brasilia park.	2021	Burrow of armadillo, some species of burrow owl. Scream of some monkey species has been heard.
Serra do Gandarela park (highest altitude area).	2021	Multiple dead anthills, several sightings of little bird of prey, one large peculiar flying insect which could not be identified by me.
Georgia		
Borjomi and Kharagauli park.	2013	None, but I did not hike there much.
Kyrgyzstan		
Karakol park (Karakol and Altyn Arashan gorges).	2014	Several large birds of prey, several partridge-like birds, marmots; either jackal or fox ran around the tent at night; local worker told that a bear has been seen recently before my return to basecamp.
Ala Archa park.	2019, 2020	Several hares, badger.
Madagascar		
2 protected areas near Andasibe village.	2019	Several species of lemurs (about 4), one bird, one lizard, one chameleon, and one snake. Screams of lori have been heard.
Mexico		
Iztaccíhuatl - Popocatépetl park.	2017	None.
Another park in surroundings with highland lake (not sure how it was named).	2017	None.
Montenegro		
Durmitor park.	2012, 2019	Scat of some small animal on a stone near forest stream.

Area	Year	Observations
Morocco		
Dunes near Essaouira.	2013, 2020	Dead fish, several species of sea birds (about 3), possibly jerboa. Dead dolphin was seen in unprotected part of sea shore at another side of the town.
Dunes near Agadir.	2013, 2019	Several species of sea birds (about 3).
Jebel Toubkal park.	2013	Mouflons were seen in a valley in several hundreds meters distance. Monitor lizard.
Nepal		
Shivapuri Nagarjun park.	2019	Deer, ground running black cock-like bird.
Russia		
Kurshskaya kosa.	2014, 2018	None (I know that it is good location to see a lot of migratory birds, but I visited it in other seasons).
Mari Chodra.	2022	One partridge-like bird.
Orlovskoye Polesye.	2016	None (wizens were present in closed part of the park only).
South Korea		
Dobongsan park.	2014	None.
Seoraksan park.	2014	None.
Turkey		
Ala Dag area.	2017	None.
Gallipoli area.	2017	None.
Mountains near Alanya.	2016, 2017	Turtle.
Mountains near Antalya.	2016, 2021	None.
Mountains near Kushadasi.	2013	Turtle.
Mountains near Marmaris.	2013, 2018	Herd of chamois, turtle.
Uganda		

Area	Year	Observations
Queen Elizabeth park.	2019	Elephants, buffaloes, kobs, water bucks, bush buck, warthogs, hippopotamuses, crocodiles, vervet monkeys, marabu, owl, vultures, egret, bat. Screams of hyenas were heard. Carcasses of prey of lions were seen.
Rwenzori Mountains park	2019	Vervet monkeys, leeches, and biting tree ants. Intestines of some small animal/bird were found on a leaf, probably they fell from the tree top after somebody's dinner.
Ukraine		
Several mountain areas in Crimea peninsula (about 5).	2013	Hare, bat in the cave.

## Agricultural areas, unprotected natural areas, and recreational natural areas

Area	Year	Observations
Albania		
Mountains near Vlorë.	2018	None
Sea shore mountains near Durrës.	2017	Jackal, turtles, small bird of prey.
Chile		
Unprotected areas at the North of Chiloé island.	2011	None.
Brazil		
Unprotected areas around Serra do Gandarela park.	2020	Squirrel-like animal at the top of the tree, several species of little parrots (about 2).
Egypt		
Islands on Nile river near Asuan.	2022	River cormorants.
Georgia		
Mountain forests near Batumi.	2013	None.
Sea near Batumi.	2013	Dolphins. Owl travelled on ferry from Ukraine and fled to Georgia when ferry came to the shore.
India		
Areas around Ponmudi and local water reservoir.	2018	Group of macaques.

Area	Year	Observations
Kyrgyzstan		
Bulolu river area, gorge of the river, and neighbor hills.	2023	The highest population of large bird of preys (several tens birds in single location) that was ever seen by me in the world (besides urubu flocks in Brazil). Several little birds of prey and several blue/black colored birds that were not seen anywhere else in Kyrgyzstan. Possibly, bear female with cubs was seen in the gorge, but the distance was very large, so I cannot be sure.
Several mountain areas around 10-50 kilometers from Bishkek (about 5).	2021, 2023	One blue bird nesting in ravine above water. Local person told that wolves come from mountains at winter in Kegheti gorge.
Montenegro		
Daily ship cruise from Budva to Kotor fiord along the coast. Walking along Kotor fiord.	2011, 2012	None.
Ulcin long beach.	2011, 2018	None.
Morocco		
Agricultural fields near strait of Gibraltar.	2020	Egrets.
Russia		
Dombay ski resort area.	2017	None.
Mountains near Sochi.	2016	None.
4 forested areas around Nizhniy Novgorod.	2016	Several adders.
Several recreational areas in confluence of Volga and Kama rivers (about 4).	2022	Several birds of prey, egrets, ducks, swifts, larks. (In 1990's in one of forests there I have seen a lot of dead moles on the dirt road, not killed by vehicle, the reason of high mortality is unknown.)
Villages in Kaliningrad area.	2014	Storks.
Turkey		
Mountains at Marmara island.	2017	Marten.

## Long-distance motorized trips via agricultural areas and unprotected natural areas

Obviously, only those trips that were made mainly during a day are listed.

Area	Year	Observations
Albania		
Car roads from Durrës to Sarandë.	2017	None.
Argentina		
Car road from Buenos Aires to Chile.	2011	None.
Chile		
Car road from Argentinian border to Valparaíso.	2011	None.
Belarus		
Railway from mainland Russia to Kaliningrad area of Russia.	2014	None.
Brazil		
Ferry route from Manaus to Tabatinga.	2021	Up to 10 species of birds, including urubu, egret etc. Several sightings of river dolphins. Several species of insects (about 5).
Kazakhstan		
Car road from Almaty to Bishkek (in Kyrgyzstan).	2018	Driver told that fox is seen but it disappeared quickly.
Car road from Uralsk to Aktobe.	2022	None.
Railway from Moscow (Russia) to Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan).	2014	None.
Kyrgyzstan		
Car road from Bishkek to Osh and then to Tajikistan border.	2014, 2023	None.
Car road around Issyk Kul lake with small hikes near its Western and Eastern shores.	2021	Several waterfowl birds at swamp near Western shore.
Lithuania		
Car road from Latvia to Poland.	2011	None.
Madagascar		
Car road from Antananarivo to Toamasina.	2019	None.
Morocco		
Car road across Rif mountains.	2020	None.
Nepal		

Area	Year	Observations
Car road from Kathmandu to Langtang park: firstly by bus to Langtang, and then back partially by feet partially by cars.	2018	None.
Russia		
Railway from Ulan Bator (Mongolia) to Irkutsk along Baikal shore partially.	2019	None, but it was passed at winter.
Railway from Vladivostok to Kaliningrad.	2014	None; there was wildfire season in Eastern part of the country, in some locations fire up to several meters height was seen from the train.
Serbia		
Car road from Belgrade to Montenegro.	2011	None.
Railway from Belgrade to Montenegro.	2013	None.
Sri Lanka		
Car road around Southern and Central parts of the country.	2015	None.
Tajikistan		
Car road from Panjakent to Osh (in Kyrgyzstan) along Afghanistan border and via Pamir highway.	2019	Marmots.
Tunisia		
Railway across North of the country.	2017	Flock of flamingos at salt lakes.
Uganda		
Car road from Entebbe to Fort Portal.	2019	None.
Car road from Entebbe to Kigali (in Rwanda).	2019	None.
Uzbekistan		
Car road across Fergana valley from Osh (in Kyrgyzstan) to Tashkent and Khujand.	2019, 2023	None.

## Urban areas

Area	Year	Observations
Chile		
Valparaíso port.	2011	Many seals and (in foggy weather only) up to ten species of large sea birds.
Brazil		

<b>Area</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Observations</b>
Manaus	2021	River dolphins, large grasshopper, a lot of urubus.
Ethiopia		
Addis Abeba	2019	Several large birds of prey.
India		
Thiruvananthapuram	2018	One large bird of prey, one blue bird.
Kyrgyzstan		
Bishkek	2021, 2023	Little owl at night in a park in the center of the city. Wild pigeons and squirrel in the city park at the mid of the day.
Osh	2023	Bat at night in the park in center of the city.
Morocco		
Tangier	2020	Up to 20 (or so) species of local ichtyofauna in the catch of local fishermen in the port.
Russia		
Kazan	2022	Large birds of prey near park hill in the center of the city; swallows.
Nizhniy Novgorod	2016	A lot of river gulls, some large unidentified bird in the largest city park, tracks of elk in park near river bank in the city center, egret and ducks near river bank.
Rwanda		
Kigali	2019	Several birds of prey, large worm in the bathroom.
Sri Lanka		
Colombo	2015	Squirrel, egrets, some unidentified birds.
Turkey		
Istanbul	2017	Dolphins, a lot of sea birds (about 2 species).
Marmaris	2018	Large boar at night on the streets; large hedgehog at night in bushes on the street.
Uganda		
Entebbe	2019	Marabus, dead green snake, monkeys, egret, weaver birds, wild goose, large mongoose-like animal, hornbills, flocks of kiwi-like long-billed birds digging in the ground, burrow of monitor lizard. Large white owl sat at window of the hotel in the mid of the night and knocked the glass. Noise of bats living under the roof of the hotel was heard at night.
Kampala	2019	Marabu.

## Risky and unpleasant situations encountered in aforementioned locations

Location	Situation and reason
Albania: sea shore mountains near Durrës.	Attack of watchdog.
Albania: Valbona mountain area.	a) It was possible to fall from a rock while talking to other people. b) Driver who transported me there was drunk, the road passed above abyss. c) I returned back by hitchhiking, the guys who helped me turned out to be gangsters from Kosovo.
Brazil: unprotected areas around Serra do Gandarela park.	Attack of watchdogs.
Ethiopia: Addis Abeba.	Attempt of robbery.
Georgia: mountain forests near Batumi.	I was stopped and questioned by border control officers because of coming too close to Turkish border.
Kyrgyzstan: Bulolu river area, gorge of the river, and neighbor hills.	Attack of watchdogs.
Morocco: Jebel Toubkal park.	I fell from a rock and hardly came back. It was my first high altitude climbing trip and I was in the state of euphoria due to mountain sickness. Such state was not expected at this altitude in according to medical guidebooks.
Russia: 4 forested areas around Nizhniy Novgorod.	Attack of snake. I walked back by car road thinking too deeply, did not notice small snake, and almost stepped on it.
Rwanda: Kigali.	Severe sunburn caused by using doxycycline for malaria prophylaxis and misunderstanding that Kigali is located at higher altitude than previously visited areas of Uganda.
Turkey: mountains at Marmara island.	Attack of semi-wild horse. I passed between stallion and its mare and foal, stallion was too far and I misunderstood that all horses belong to the same herd.
Turkey: mountains near Alanya.	Severe dehydration but without any medical consequences. I did not check weather forecast in advance, the temperature jumped to 40°C or so.
Uganda: Entebbe.	Scratched knees several times with metallic chair constructions in city minibuses. (You should sit at front seat to avoid this.)
Uganda: Queen Elizabeth park.	Tense talk with a guide who used to American/British style of communication (I talked to him as with taxi driver).
Uganda: Rwenzori Mountains park.	I walked on fallen tree like guide did, but it turned out to be very slippery. I fell down, but fortunately without medical consequences.