This report is about unfinished business from trips in 1992/3 - Caspian Snowcock and Radde's Accentor - the recently re-discovered - Brown Fish Owl and a new species for Turkey - Iraq Babbler.

Turkey has changed quite a bit since 1992 and the new motorways and roads make travelling much easier. The great food and hospitality of the people is of course still the same :-)

Ken, Hans and I flew directly from Bremen to Antalya with Hamburg Airways. We eventually picked up our pre-booked hire car - a Fiat Doblo and then with the help of the car dealer checked into the Mostar hotel in Antalya. We spent the first two days birding between Antalya and Elmali. Holger flew in on Monday the 5th from Münster. We picked him up at 23:30 in Antalya and that is when our adventure really started.

Brown Fish Owl Bubo zeylonensis, Oymapinar Dam 6th May 2014

The trip to the Fish Owls was pre-booked (info@vigotour.com). We had arranged to meet at the Total petrol station in Side at 05:00 which is an hours drive from Antalya. The station is on the D 400 main coastal road heading east.

There we met the other three members of our group of 7 - Peter Scheithe, Guido Rastig and Twan, we drove in a convoy of 5 cars to the lake. We then boarded one of the two ferries docked there. All together there were 15 birders on two ferries. The cost of hiring one ferry was 500 € with a maximum of 8 persons per ferry. We were then shown two different sites where we saw a total of 3 Owls. We had fantastic and long views of a pair at a nest site and a single bird roosting. We were finished by 10:00. Many thanks to Peter Scheithe for organising this trip :-).
Iraq Babbler *Turdoides altirostris*, Birecik 6th - 7th May 2014

With the first target bird in the bag we then made our way non-stop to Birecik and stayed at the Mirakem hotel which is on the right next to the petrol station just after you cross the bridge into Birecik. We left the hotel at 06:00. To get to the gravel pits take the first right turning after the Petrol station and park where the pylons cross. If you do not pass a cemetery on your left then you have the wrong track! The Babblers were very quiet and it took us a while to find them. We eventually located single birds and then saw small flocks of two or three. Well worth the wait!

We left Birecik after a nice lunch and car wash at the restaurant near our hotel and headed for Demirkazik.

Caspian Snowcock *Tetraogallus caspius* and Raddes Accentor *Prunella ocularis*

We arrived at Demirkazik in the evening and checked into the first hotel we saw - the Demirkazik family Pensyon. We attracted a certain amount of attention and quickly found a driver to take us up the mountain the next morning. We arranged to meet Jemil who lives opposite the hotel at 05:00 with his tractor and trailer. The trailer turned out to be a loading board and the hour drive up the mountain was not comfortable but all part of the adventure! There was a group of birders at the mountain site when we arrived and the Snowcocks were already calling and displaying, so for us the work had been done and we were all able to get good views of the birds. To see the Radde's Accentors we had to walk a bit further up the mountain to the larger rocks but there we saw them well. Thanks to Jemil and his two wives for a wonderful Breakfast at base camp!

The tractor at the Snowcock site and a well shaken but happy team back at the hotel car park!

I did not mention all the birds we saw, there are much better and more detailed reports available for that. However we did see a total of around 150 species. Oh yeah, I also did not mention that it rained every day but one!

Good birding,

Graeme Pegram