

The Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature

The Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature is an independent national organization devoted to the conservation of Jordan's natural resources. RSCN was established in 1966 with His Majesty the late King Hussein as Honorary President. RSCN has the mission of protecting and managing the natural resources of Jordan, for it is responsible for protecting wildlife and wild places. Thus, it is one of the few national organizations in the Middle East with such a public service mandate.

Wild Jordan

Wild Jordan is a registered trademark for The Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature.

Wild Jordan's revenues contribute to the sustainability of RSCN's protected areas and supports the socioeconomic development of local communities.

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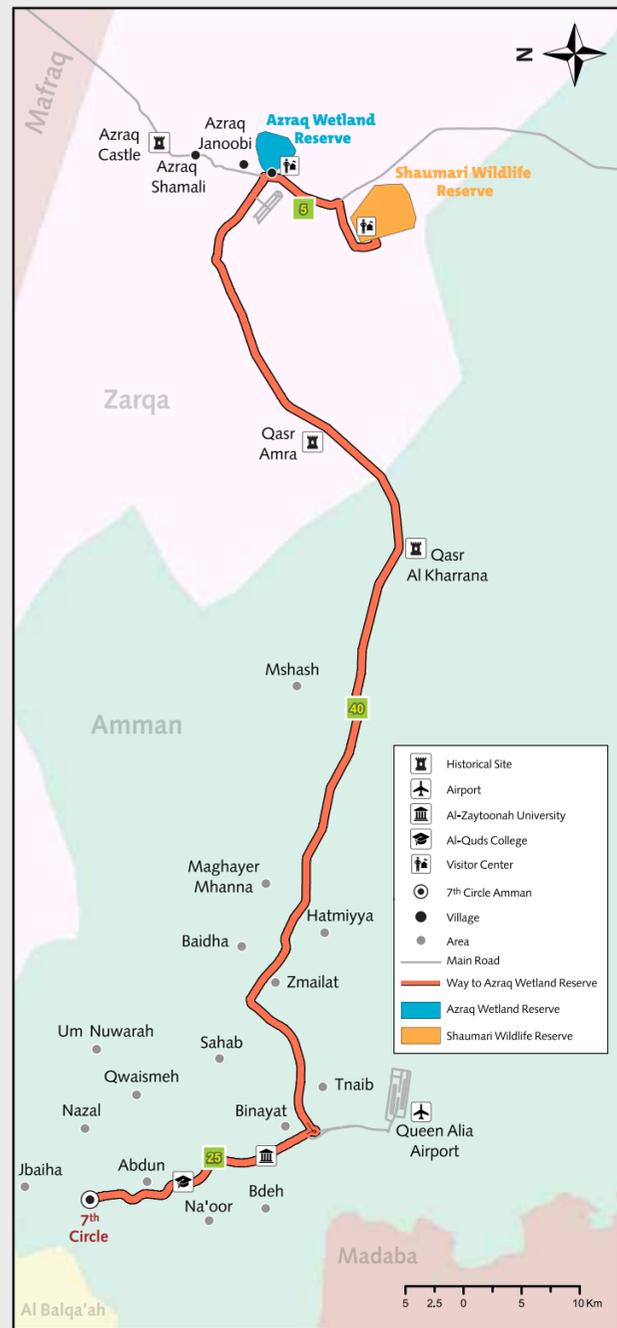
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Staying in Azraq Lodge



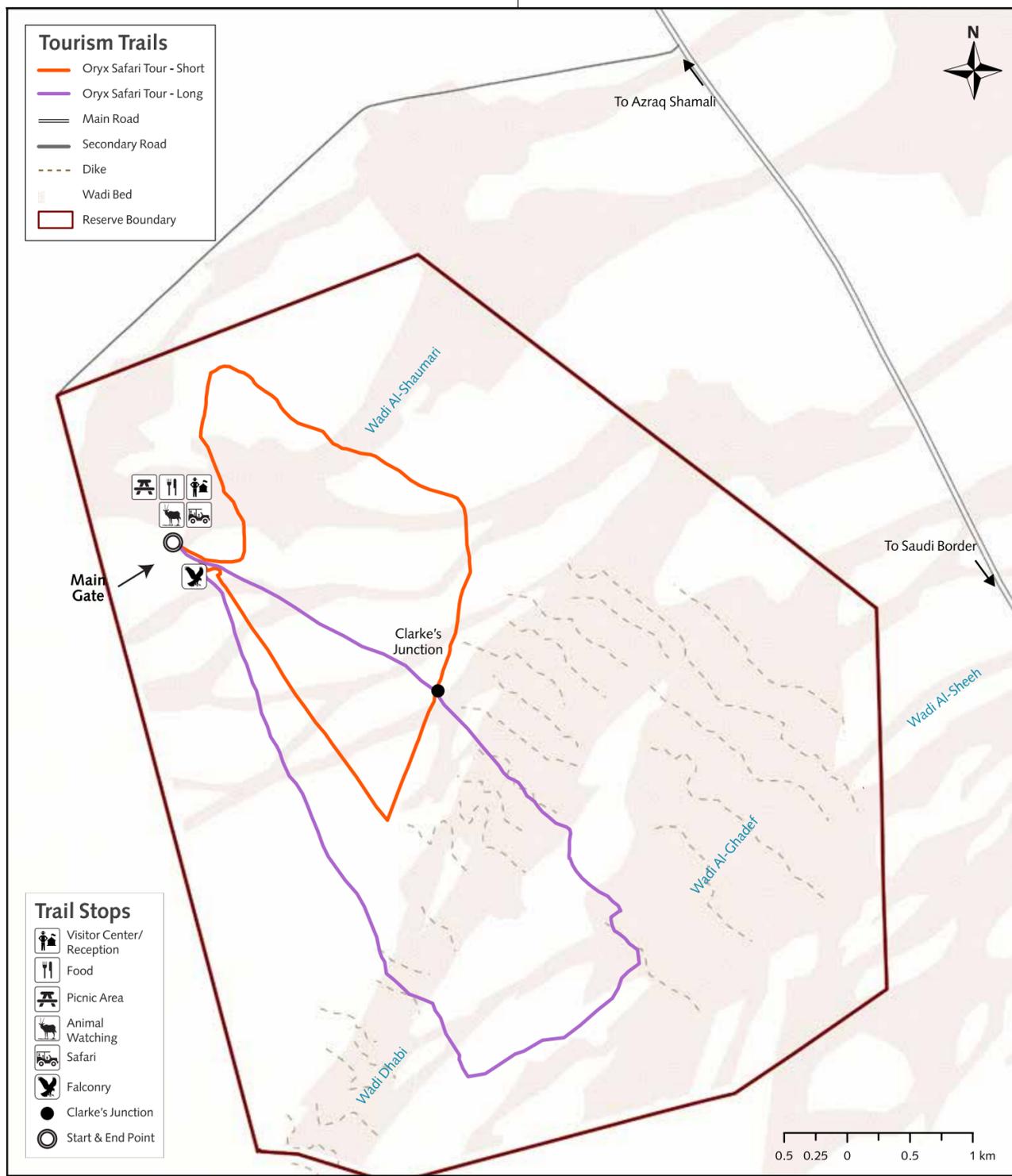
Azraq lodge is located in a short distance from Shaumari Wildlife Reserve. Welcoming visitors throughout the year, the lodge's design combines both modernity and originality.

After serving as a British military field hospital in the 1940s, it is now a wonderful lodge that contains 16 comfortable rooms, and offers traditional meals prepared by women from the local community.



The distance from Amman to Shaumari Wildlife Reserve is about 125 km from the Seventh Circle, taking the Desert Highway/Airport Road south of Amman.

20.8 km from the Seventh Circle take the Amman Development Corridor Exit and continue for 14 km, then turn right at the exit to Al Azraq City (Street 40), heading straight toward the desert palaces for a distance of 75 km until you reach the roundabout. At the roundabout, turn right until you reach the Azraq traffic light and turn right, after that follow the signs to the reserve.



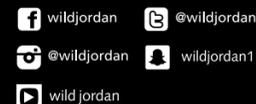
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The Eastern Desert Experience

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Shaumari Wildlife Reserve

The Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature established Shaumari Wildlife Reserve in 1975. Shaumari is Jordan's first dry desert climate reserve covering a 22 km² area, and serves as a model for the reintroduction of endangered or extinct wildlife, providing a learning ground for the practical application of methods to establish and manage other reserves around the kingdom.

Shaumari Wildlife Reserve is a great place to learn about exceptional desert habitats, and has become one of the world's most important reserves for safeguarding and rebuilding the populations of the Middle East's endangered animals.

The reserve contains many endemic wild species: Arabian Oryx, Persian Wild Onagers, and Gazelles. Through its breeding program and by providing the appropriate conditions for the animals to thrive and multiply, the reserve protects them from all dangers, natural hazards, and illegal hunting.

The Story of the Arabian Oryx



The Arabian Oryx, an elegant white antelope, is one of the few mammals indigenous to the Arabian Peninsula and Levant. It became extinct in Jordan around the 1965s, as a result of the increased hunting for its meat, coat, and horns. The last known Wild Arabian Oryx in the region was killed by hunters in Oman in 1972.

Fortunately, previous to this incident, in 1962, the Flora and Fauna Preservation Society and the World Wildlife fund for nature had lunched an international rescue effort known as Operation Oryx.

In 1978, Eleven Arabian Oryx were relocated to Shaumari. Operation Oryx has been so successful that there are now over 45 Arabian Oryx at Shaumari.

Biodiversity of the Reserve



Shaumari Wildlife Reserve is home to herds of the Middle East's rare and endangered animals (Arabian Oryx, Reem Gazel, Onagers (Persian Wild Onagers), and houbara bustards). RSCN has made great efforts to breed these animals and ensure their survival within the reserve's borders, providing a suitable environment away from environmental threats and illegal hunting.

Six species of predators have been recorded through field studies in the reserve, including the Red Fox, Wolf, Striped Hyena, Jackal, and Caracal. As they roam freely throughout the entire reserve, it cannot be guaranteed that they will be spotted during safari tours. Shaumari Wildlife Reserve is located on a major bird migration flyway between the two continents of Europe and Africa, which passes through the Jordan Badia. The reserve is a safe haven for migrating birds that stop over for rest, nourishment, and during breeding season.

Shaumari is an ideal location for many migratory and resident birds, such as the Falcons. More than 90 species of birds have been recorded in the area. During safari trips, visitors can experience the unique horizon of the Eastern desert, and the subtle colors of its wide variety of aromatic and medicinal plants.

Visitor Center



Shaumari Wildlife Reserve is a great place to learn about desert habitats. The Visitor Center has been set up to provide visitors with information about wildlife, nature and to experience live observation of wildlife in the reserve.

Here you can observe the Arabian Oryx, Houbara bustards, Reem Gazelles and Persian Wild Onagers in fenced enclosures, as well as a variety of wild plants and geographic systems native to the region.

The site also offers a restaurant, Kids area, picnic and barbeque area, and a birdwatching tower.

Activities



Oryx Safari Tour

Guided only
Time: 1.5 – 2 hours
Starting time: 8:30 a.m - 3:00 pm.
Group size: 14 persons (7 persons per car)

Trail Description

During the tour, enjoy observing one of the most magnificent and rare wild animals in the region.

The safari tour starts at Shaumari Visitor Center in a safari vehicles that are specially equipped for these tours. Visitors will be accompanied by a local guide who will explain to you the history of the reserve. While getting close to the endangered wild animals you will learn about the basic principles of animal tracking and practice reading tracks. Your guide will also provide an overview of the reserve's vegetation, pointing out different kinds of native plants and herbs and their uses.

During your tour you will know more about the two main geographical systems in the reserve: desert valleys and Al Hammad areas. Desert valleys make up around 65% of the reserve's total area. The most well-known valley is Wadi Shaumari, which cuts straight through the heart of the site, giving the reserve its name. Al Hammad areas occupy the remaining 35% that is covered with a layer of black flint or black granite.



Nearby Sites-Attraction Points

Azraq Wetland Reserve

Azraq Reserve is a unique wetland, located in the heart of the arid Eastern Desert, which takes its name from the Arabic word for 'blue'. A migratory stopover for birds from three continents, Azraq is becoming increasingly popular for bird-watching. From the walkways and hides, visitors get the chance to observe birds close at hand, including local, migratory and occasional rare species.



Azraq Castle

This black basalt fort has been in continuous use since Late Roman times. During the Great Arab Revolt, it served as the headquarters for T.E. Lawrence (Lawrence of Arabia) and Sharif Hussein Bin Ali, his Arab counterpart and the current King Abdullah's great, great-grandfather.



Wadi Al Dahik

Wadi Al Dahik is a significant geological formations with stunning surrounding landscape, this white chalk cliffs face the Saudi Arabian border and it has two very different habitats. To the east is a vast expanse of hamad, or stony desert. To the west sweeps the black Hammad Al-Sham, a moonscape of black basalt rocks ranging in size from a few centimeters to a meter or more across.

