Dohuk Lake (D9)

Surveyed in winter and summer 2007 and 2008.
Admin Area: Dohuk
Coordinates: N 36° 53’ 09” E 43° 00’ 27”
Area: 419 ha
Altitude: 603 m

IBA Criteria: A1
Status: Unprotected
Ecoregion: Zagros Mountains Forest Steppe (PA0446)

Directional information: this site is located about 2 km northeast of Dohuk City.
Site Description: This is a small lake fed by springs from the surrounding rocky hills and mountains. These mountains, Garmawa and Bajlur, have a moderate plant cover of dry grasses, with a high number of herbs, shrubs and trees such as *Vitis* sp., *Pyrus communis*, *Quercus* sp., *Ficus* sp., *Prunus amygdalus*, and *Orobanche* sp. The lake is actually a reservoir created by an earth-fill embankment dam on the Dohuk River just north of the city of Dohuk. The dam was completed in 1988 with the primary purpose of providing water for irrigation and for the city of Dohuk. The dam is 50 m high, can hold 52 million m$^3$ of water and has a maximum discharge of 81 m$^3$. At normal operation level the reservoir is about 4 km long and 1.7 km wide. The area to be irrigated from this reservoir is about 46 km$^2$ (Iraq & United States Army Corps of Engineers, 2003). The report also shows that there is no immediate or long-term action for Dohuk dam, except some short-term measures such as collection of data for evaluating trends and making some repairs. Human activity was low and fishing was not noted, but below the dam (outside of the delineated KBA site), the Dohuk River is an important center for recreational activities.

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<td>A1. Globally threatened species</td>
<td>Breeding</td>
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<tr>
<td>Egyptian Vulture <em>Neophron percnopterus</em> (Summer visitor)</td>
<td>1 pair</td>
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Additional Important Bird Observations: During the surveys, a total of 17 species was recorded. The European Roller *Coracias garrulus* (Near Threatened) was observed in the breeding season.

Other Important Fauna
*Mammals, Reptiles, and other Fauna*: No survey was conducted for mammals or reptiles.

*Fish*: Data were collected in 2007 and 2008, during which eight species were reported. According to Coad’s (2010) criteria, the following species found are economically important and of conservation concern: *Barbus luteus* and *Tor grypus*. Other economically important species were: *Alburnus mossulensis*, *Carassius auratus*, *Cyprinodon macrostomum*, and *Garra rufa*. Also documented were *Alburnus caeruleus* and *Capoeta damascina* that have no economic importance but whose conservation status in Iraq is unknown.
Plants & Habitats: No plant data were collected.

Conservation Issues: The highest threat facing Dohuk Lake is the dam that was built to provide water to the city. An Iraq and US Army Corps of Engineer 2003 report noted some maintenance issues with the dam and recommended that it be monitored for “signs of dam movement.” This site was less impacted by human activities and the only threat given a medium score was agriculture and grazing, but the level of the threat they pose was not determined to be significant.

Recommendations: The dam should be regularly monitored and maintained to ensure its safety. Agriculture and grazing should also be monitored and managed so that the native habitat and vegetation is protected.

References