

**Kuradawe & Waraz (IQ030)**

Sulaimani – 35.840833°N 45.499444°E

Area: 7272 ha - Altitude: 894-2173 m

Ecoregion: **Zagros Mountains Forest****Steppe (PA0446)**Status: **Unprotected**

©2009 S ABDULRAHMAN/NI

**Site Description:** Waraz is a valley surrounded by mountains and villages, including Kanarwe, Ballikhy, and Betwate. To the south the Kanarwe River flows from the Penjween Area (including waters from IQ032) towards Kuna Masi River (also called Chami Chwarta River), a tributary of the Lesser Zab. The main habitat types were oak woodlands and mountain riverine forest. The site is located in the Zagros Range, where the geology is basic igneous rock, radiolarian chert, siliceous and calcareous shale, and metamorphic schist and limestone of unknown age. The soil type is often serpentine and in fact this site is one of the most important serpentine areas in the Kurdistan region. *Platanus orientalis* and walnut trees dominate most of the valley but agricultural fields cover parts

as well and there is also gravel mining that affects the area in and around the rivers. The area is also popular for picnicking.

Further northwest is the forested mountainous area known as Kuradawe (named for the largest village in the area). Kuna Masi stream flows north to the west of the site and there are other streams that flow to join it through the area. This part of the site is surrounded by the villages of Amaden, Dashty Tile and Pirahmad, Bewre, Gomle, Basne, and Saraw and extends less than 1 km north of Kuradawe Village. There are farmlands, orchards, and vineyards, which mainly produce grapes, walnuts, pears and almonds. Two sub-sites visited here.

Important Bird Area Criteria	Observations made in 2009.	
A1. Globally threatened species	Breeding	Wintering/ Passage
Egyptian Vulture <i>Neophron percnopterus</i> (Summer visitor)	1 pair	
Important Plant Area Criteria		
B1. Site is a particularly species-rich example of defined habitat type		
Mountain Forest-Mountain Riverine Forest habitat type and Mountain Forest Vegetation-Oak Forest-Lowest and Medium Sub-zones habitat type.		

**Additional Important Bird Observations:** A total of 40 species was seen. Breeding populations of four Irano-Turanian, three Mediterranean, one Eurasian High-Montane and one

Sahara-Sindian Desert biome-restricted species were found but did not trigger inclusion under criterion A3. No other significant observations were made for non-avian fauna.

**Conservation Issues:** Livestock production and grazing as well as farming and human intrusion related to picnicking activities particularly near Kuradawe village were considered very high threats at this site. Garbage dumped, mostly related to the latter activity, in and around the streams is a moderate threat. Hunting pressure is high in the area. Gravel mines are impacting the stream and the land around it but are somewhat limited in scope. Road construction and residential

development are under way (especially close to the villages), which were judged as medium threats but may become more urgent if not controlled properly.

**Recommendations:** As with other sites, this area will benefit from increased and improved natural resource management planning. The focus should be on agricultural practices, but hunting, general development, recreational uses, and sanitary services should not be overlooked. This site is close to several other KBA sites including the Mawat Area (IQ029) and Sharbazher area (IQ031) so integrated planning to protect all of these sites is recommended.

