

Abraham's Well

An Oasis for Wildlife!



Hoopoe



Spanish sparrow



Mesopotamian hooded crow



Little egret



Moorhen



Little crane



Common babbler

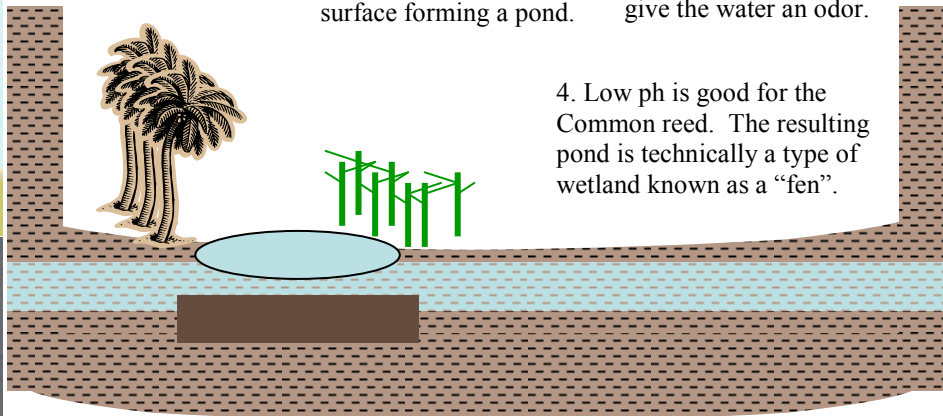
Al Asad sits in a large wadi (valley) carved by eons of seasonal rains cutting through soft sandstone on it's way to the Euphrates River. A wide variety of vegetation, both permanent and seasonal wetlands, and even the surrounding dry desert scrub provide a home for animals and birds, and an important migration stop for many visiting birds. Some of these species are **near-threatened** (the Jungle cat and Striped hyena), and others are even **critically endangered** (Sociable plover). Some are **endemic**, found only in this region (Mesopotamian hooded crow, Iraqi babbler, Iraq little grebe). Over 120 species of birds have been recorded at Al Asad!

1. Erosion cuts a valley to near the water table.

2. Ground water hits a layer of clay or broken rock and is forced to the surface forming a pond.

3. Due to underlying limestone and clay, the water has a slightly low ph, and sulfur deposits give the water an odor.

4. Low ph is good for the Common reed. The resulting pond is technically a type of wetland known as a "fen".



Honey badger



Indian crested porcupine



Striped hyena



Sand fox



Jungle cat



Golden jackal

The rocky ridge, heavily vegetated ditch (a marsh area and seasonal wetland) along the north side of camp, the planted palm grove, and the oasis pond combine to provide critical feeding areas, cover, and water for native mammals. None of these animals will bother a human unless provoked and cornered. Rabies is rare in Iraq, but possible.



Caspian turtle



Marsh frog



Bluethroat



Little bittern



Wood pigeon



Barn swallow



Willow warbler



Woodchat shrike



White-cheeked bulbul