

# Some Travel Sites in the Region of Sharm El Sheikh in Southern Sinai

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## Abstract

The region of Sharm El Sheikh is located near the southern tip of the Sinai Peninsula, in Egypt. The southern mountains of the massif of southern Sinai are combined by granite and also by metamorphic rocks. The large wadi which crosses that region is Wadi Cid, which in its alluvial fan, are also located the mangroves of Nabeq. Some of the southern mountains of southern Sinai are also drained by Wadi El Hashabi, which includes some beautiful canyons dug in sandstones or in soft limestone. In the southern tip of Sinai, are also located some of the most beautiful diving sites in the world.

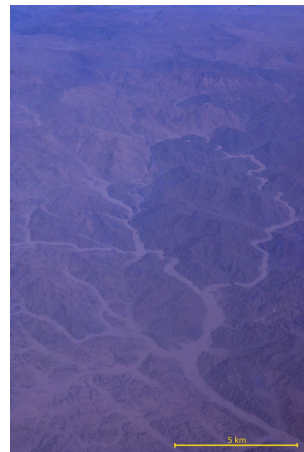
## Keywords

Diving Sites, Granite, Mangroves, Sandstones, Sharm El Sheikh, Sinai

## 1. Introduction

The mountains of eastern Sinai are drained towards the east, to the Gulf of Eilat, by 3 large wadies, which their drainage basins begin in the high mountain region of southern Sinai. The northern of those wadies is Wadi Watir. Wadi Watir reaches the seashore near Nuweiba ([1], pp. 113-115; [2], pp. 196-200). The middle of those wadies is Wadi Dahab, which its main big tributary is Wadi Natseb—Wadi Zrara. Wadi Dahab reaches the seashore near Dahab ([1], pp. 131-133; [2], pp. 203-205, pp. 211-213). The southern of those wadies is Wadi Cid. Wadi Cid reaches the seashore near Nabeq. The length of the main route of Wadi Cid is about 50km.

The mountains in the drainage basin of Wadi Cid, are combined mainly of metamorphic rocks (**Figure 1**) ([1], p. 34; [2], p. 124). The middle part of Wadi Cid includes also an oasis, which is dug, in a pluton of red granite, which is surrounded also by metamorphic rocks ([1], p. 34; [2], p. 124). Wadi Cid crosses, through a region of a very dry desert. Therefore, the vegetation in its drainage basin is almost



**Figure 1.** An aerial photograph of part of the basin of Wadi Cid. Photographed from an airplane in August 1983. Edited by Itamar Givon in May 2026.

limited to its main wadi bed, and also to the wadi beds of its tributaries ([1], pp. 151-154; [2], p. 208).

The mountains in the southern tip of Sinai are combined mainly of granite rocks. In the southern part of that region some of the rocks are also volcanic rocks. The transition area between those mountains and also the coast in that region includes also sandstones ([1], p. 40; [2], pp. 131-133).

The aim of the work presented here, is to document some of the data which was collected during travels to the southern tip of Sinai, as well as some data from the literature, especially for the coming generations.

## 2. Methods

During a tour to the region of Sharm El Sheikh in January 1979, I photographed some sites in that region. In the year of 2025 some of those photos were scanned. Of the figures presented here, 2 are aerial photographs, that were photographed by me from an airplane, when I flew from Nairobi, Kenya to Tel-Aviv, in August 1983. The descriptions of travel sites in that region were collected mainly from the literature. The data about the locations of those travel sites, were collected from the literature, and also from maps that were produced during the 1970's. In some times during the years of 2025 - 2026, I matched between the coordinates of those sites in that region from those maps, to the global coordinates of Google Maps.

The coordinates of sites that I bring hereby, are accurate coordinates, which point to precise locations, unless it is mentioned that certain coordinates are central coordinates. The coordinates presented here are in global coordinates of Google Maps. The drawings in the aerial photographs presented here, were done by Itamar Givon, in April 2026 - May 2026.

## 3. Results and Discussion

### *Nabeq*

Nabeq is located in the opening of Wadi Cid to the Gulf of Eilat ([2], p.226). In

the alluvial fans of Wadi Cid, and also of Wadi Um Adawi, which are located in Nabeq, grow also many bushes of *Salvadora persica*—סלודורה פרסית (**Figure 2**), and also bushes of *Pulicaria incisa*—פרעושית גלונית (**Figure 3**). *P. incisa* are used by the Bedouins as herbs for tea. That tea, has also a flavor of peach. Stems or leaves of *P. incisa* are used by the Bedouins also as a food for their camels or for their goats in that region ([2], p. 226).

Nabeq also includes shrubs of mangroves, which are trees that grow in the sea-shore dipped in the sea water. Trees of mangroves, are adapted to the salinity of the sea water and also have air roots ([3], pp. 125-132; [4]). The northern mangroves shrub of Nabeq is called “Shurat El Manqata”, which is located in the northern part of the alluvial fan of Wadi Cid (central coordinates: 28.200°N; 34.425°E). The southern mangroves shrub of Nabeq is called “Shurat El Arqana”, which is located in the seashore, about 10 km south of ‘Shurat El Manqata’, in the southern part of the alluvial fan of Wadi Cid (central coordinates: 28.110°N; 34.441°E) ([2], p. 192-193). The main species of mangroves trees which grow in Nabeq is of: *Avicennia marina*—אביצניה ימית (**Figure 4**) ([2], pp. 192-193; [3], pp. 125-132; [4]).

According to [5], the mangroves in Nabeq grow on hard fossil carbon bottom, without any influence of estuarine sedimentation. According to other internet resources, which also cite [6], some of the mangroves in Nabeq, grow also in the alluvium that was brought through Wadi Cid from the mountains, which are located in its drainage basin. In the seashore of Nabeq there are also mounds of alluvium, upon which grow shrubs of *Nitraria retusa*—ימלוח פגום (**Figure 5**), *Zygophyllum album*—זוגן לבן (**Figure 6**), *Zygophyllum coccineum*—זוגן אדום (**Figure 6**) (Nabeq—Wikipedia.org).



**Figure 2.** *Salvadora persica*. Photographed in the birdwatching park in Eilat by Noam Givon, in November 2021.



**Figure 3.** *Pulicaria incisa*. Photographed in Wadi Hiwani, by Noam Givon, in January 2020.



**Figure 4.** *Avicennia marina*. Photographed near Takwa, Kenya, in August 1983.



**Figure 5.** *Zygophyllum album*. Photographed in the Evrona saltmarsh by Noam Givon, in December 2018.



**Figure 6.** *Zygophyllum coccineum*. Photographed in Eilat by Noam Givon, in May 2023.

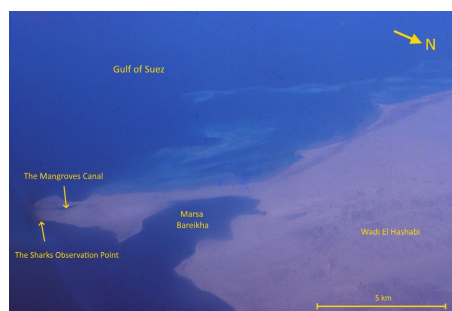
#### *Wadi El Hashabi*

Wadi El Hashabi begins from a valley which is located between Jebel Hadamiya and also Jebel Hashabi ([1], pp. 143-146; [2], pp. 229-230) (**Figure 7**). The peak of Jebel Hadamiya—Elevation Point (E.P.) 587 m ASL, is located at coordinates of: 27.869°N; 34.197°E. The peak of Jebel Hashabi—E.P. 302 m ASL, is located at co-

ordinates of: 27.819°N; 34.197°E. Wadi El Hashabi descends towards south, and also afterwards bends towards the SE direction, along about 5 km, until it reaches the seashore of the Red Sea in the bay of Marsa Bareika, at coordinates of: 27.796°N; 34.215°E.

The upper part of Wadi El Hashabi is located between Jebel Hadamiya, and also the Sharm El Sheikh—E Tur road (**Figure 8**). That part of Wadi El Hashabi, includes a small canyon which is also called: The Labyrinth Gorge, which is located at coordinates of: 27.860°N; 34.188°E (**Figure 9**). According to [1], pp. 143-146, the Labyrinth Gorge is dug in white sandstones. According to [2], pp. 229-230, the Labyrinth Gorge is dug in soft limestone. Probably the rocks in some parts of that Labyrinth Gorge are white sandstones, while the rocks in other parts of that canyon are soft limestone.

Near the intersection between the Sharm El Sheikh—E Tur road, with also Wadi El Hashabi, grow also bushes of: *Leptadenia pyrotechnica*—מעלה עשן מדברי ([1], p. 144). According to [2], p. 231, lines 1-2, plants of *L. pyrotechnica* grow also in the wadi beds of the tributaries of Wadi El Hashabi. In Wadi El Hashabi grow also Acacia trees, plants of: *Aerva javanica*—לובד המדבר (**Figure 10**), *Bassia arabica*—בסיה ערבית, and also *Fagonia mollis*—פגוניה רכה (**Figure 11**) ([2], pp. 229-231 - line 2).



**Figure 7.** An aerial photograph of the region of Sharm El Sheikh. Photographed from an airplane in August 1983, edited by Itamar Givon, in April 2026 - May 2026.



**Figure 8.** In the canyon of Wadi El Hashabi. Photographed in January 1979.



**Figure 9.** The labyrinth gorge in Wadi El Hashabi. Photographed in January 1979.



**Figure 10.** *Aerva javanica*. Photographed in the Botanical Gardens of the Technion—Technological Institute in Haifa, in February 2026.



**Figure 11.** *Fagonia mollis*. Photographed in Wadi Raman, by Noam Givon, in February 2026.

### *Sites in the southern tip of the Sinai Peninsula*

The southern tip of the Sinai Peninsula is a very famous touristic area because of its most beautiful diving sites. The coral reefs in that area are among the most beautiful and also unique coral reefs in the world ([7]). The reefs in Ras Muhammad, at coordinates of about 27.728°N; 34.258°E, and also the reefs in Ras Um Sid, at coordinates of 27.848°N; 34.315°E, were considered during the 1970s - 1980s as the most beautiful coral reefs in Sinai.

The sites in that area also include some terrestrial sites (Figure 7). Marsa Bareikha, which is also spelled as Marsa Bareika, is a bay of deep water, which is located in the southern tip of the Sinai Peninsula. Marsa Bareikha is encircled from its southern side by a spur of land which goes into the Red Sea in a straight line, from the NW direction to the SE direction, from coordinates of: 27.785°N; 34.200°E, to coordinates of: 27.723°N; 34.247°E. The SE point of that spur of land is called Ras Muhammad. That spur of Ras Muhammad is combined of fossilized coral reefs ([2], pp. 236-237).

The Mangroves Canal is a canal which penetrates the land from the sea from the SE direction, along about 1 km. The Mangroves Canal is located between coordinates of 27.731°N; 34.243°E - 27.724°N; 34.251°E. The water in that mangroves canal are sea water. In that habitat grow also mangroves of *A. marina* upon those sea water (Figure 12) ([2], pp. 236-237).

Near that mangroves canal is also located the so called "The crack" (Figure 13). That crack appeared in the ground because of an earthquake that was in that region in the year of 1968. The depth of that crack is about 20m, and that crack contains also sea water which reach it through subsurface passages ([2], pp. 236-237).

The Sharks observation point (Figure 14), is a rocky hill, which is also located at coordinates of about 27.728°N; 34.258°E. That Sharks observation point is possibly a fossilized coral reef (Figure 14). In January 1979, I observed at that point hammer sharks, together with also enormous amounts of many kinds of fishes. That view of those huge schools of fishes at that point was, when I traveled to that region, also a fantastic beautiful view. It seems that such huge schools of fishes there, also can be observed today.



**Figure 12.** The mangrove canal on the shore of Ras Muhammad. Photographed in January 1979.



**Figure 13.** The “crack” in the coral reef of Ras Muhammad. Photographed in January 1979.



**Figure 14.** The Sharks observation point in the shore of Ras Muhammad. Photographed in January 1979.

#### **4. Conclusion**

The region of Sharm El Sheikh is composed of diverse habitats. Those habitats include the following: 1. Unique geological formations, mainly in the southern mountains of the massif of southern Sinai. 2. Unique vegetation, which is also typical to hot deserts in the Middle East, and also mangroves in the seashore of Nabeq. 3. Very special diving sites in the coral reefs in the southern tip of Sinai, which also include some of the most beautiful diving sites in the world.

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## Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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