

# The Influence of Steppes on Lifestyle

For years, people came to shape the natural environment in which they lived, but at the same time, climate, geographical factors and vegetation also affected human communities, their lifestyles, and cultures.

In a geographical setting with such a long history and where human settlement dates back to very old times, the influence of steppes can be seen in every area of life from music to literature, from traditional handicrafts to architecture. In folk music, for example, "Sıra Gecesi" (a traditional gathering called Sıra Night) serves to preserve "uzun hava" (long melody), "gazel" and "ağıt" (laments), which are some of the various Turkish folk music forms on subjects such as love, valor, gallantry, separation, being away from home, and longing for home.



Soğmatar Ancient City

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## Conservation and Sustainable Management of Turkey's Steppe Ecosystems Project

Conservation and Sustainable Management of Turkey's Steppe Ecosystems Project is implemented by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry General Directorate of Nature Conservation and National Parks (GDNCNP), General Directorate of Plant Production (GDPP), and General Directorate of Forestry (GDF) with the financial support of Global Environment Facility (GEF). The works within the scope of enabling environment established for the effective conservation of steppe biodiversity across large landscapes are carried out by the Nature Conservation Centre (DKM).



## "Conservation and Sustainable Management of Turkey's Steppe Ecosystems Project"

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# ARCHEOLOGY WHERE THE HEART OF THE PAST BEATS

This brochure was prepared within the scope of Conservation and Sustainable Management of Turkey's Steppe Ecosystems Project by Nature Conservation Centre.

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Şuayip Şehri

Soğmatar Ancient City

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Şanlıurfa province is one of the first places to come to mind when steppes of Turkey are considered. With its vast plains, semi-arid climate, and plain topography, steppes make up most of the natural vegetation in Şanlıurfa.

Steppes have met the basic needs of the local people for thousands of years and shaped their culture. The steppe culture shows itself in the life of the local people, in their songs, handicrafts and architecture.

## Twelve Thousand-Year-Old City

The region where Şanlıurfa is located serves as a bridge connecting the Middle East to Asia Minor. The city, which is approximately 12,000 years old, has been home to many civilizations. Accordingly, life here presents traces of how human history, society and culture emerged and changed.



View of Bildim-Çaykuyu road fountain from the south

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## Archaeological Past of Şanlıurfa

Şanlıurfa is a city that has hosted many civilizations due to its geopolitical location, historical background, cultural history, and religious importance. Its historical past reveals that Şanlıurfa has a traditional structure in many ways. When archaeology of Şanlıurfa is considered, one of the first things that come to mind is the Balıklıgöl Statue. This statue is the world's first life-size sculpture from the hunter-gatherer period.



Göbeklitepe Archeological Site

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Known as the oldest temple in the world, Göbeklitepe is one of the most important archaeological richness of the region. The area with many important settlements, mounds and ruins stands out with continuous human settlements throughout the history and original civil architecture due to its location on important trade and military routes, such as the Silk Road, and due to having productive soil and water resources through the Euphrates and Tigris rivers.

A flint spearhead excavated from Kayaaltı shelter in Karahisar Ulban Region

Senemağara

Şanlıurfa is also located at the northern end of the Fertile Crescent, the region where hunter-gatherer communities started to settle first and began farming. Nevalı Çori, Akarçay Tepe, Hassek, Gre Virike and Lidar mounds, which are the backbones of the Fertile Crescent Region, constitute the cornerstones of the history of civilizations. Findings here include the most advanced artistic and religious works of the era that marked their period in terms of sculpture, architecture and mosaic.

View of Şuayip Şehri from the east

The city center with a history of 3,000 years is surrounded by city walls. These walls disconnect the city from the outside, separate it from the rural areas and also serve the purpose of defense. There are usually temples, palaces and bazaars at the city center, and this center of ceremonies and trade is sometimes protected by a secondary inner wall. The City is the focal point of science, art, and a cosmopolitan culture.



Map of Fertile Crescent

Senemağara

Tek Tek Mountains National Park

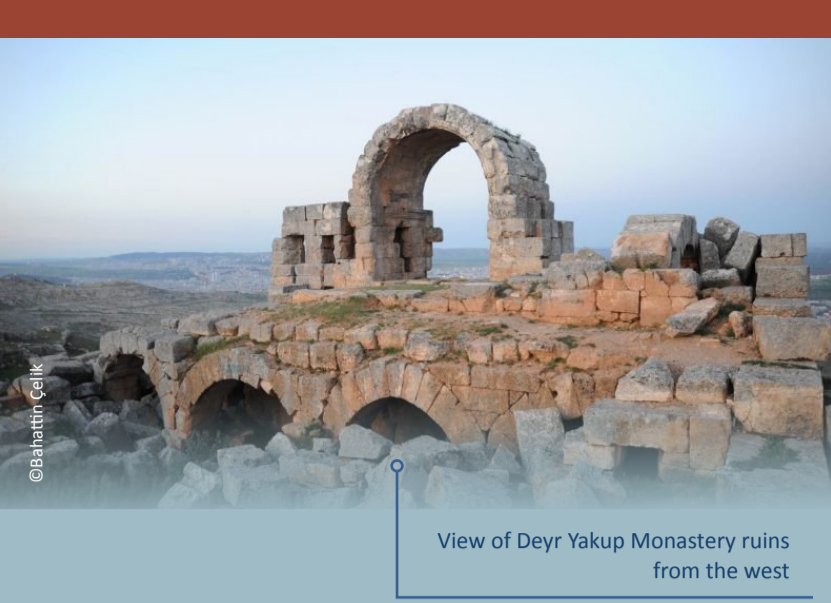
Soğmatar Ancient City

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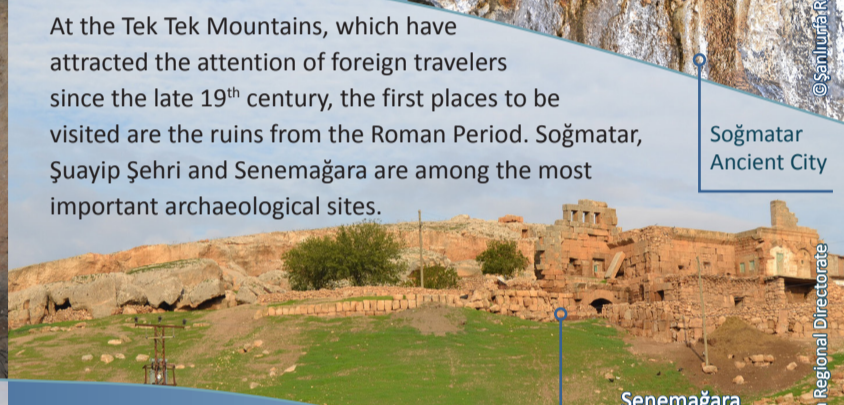
View of Deyr Yakup Monastery ruins from the west

## History and Cultural Heritage of Tek Tek Mountains National Park

The Tek Tek Mountains National Park area is a region with mostly plateaus and fewer agricultural lands. In this region, there are only agricultural lands in the vicinity of Yağmurlu (Soğmatar), Şuayip Şehri, Akmağara and Sarıtaş, along the dried-up riverbeds.



Şuayip Şehri

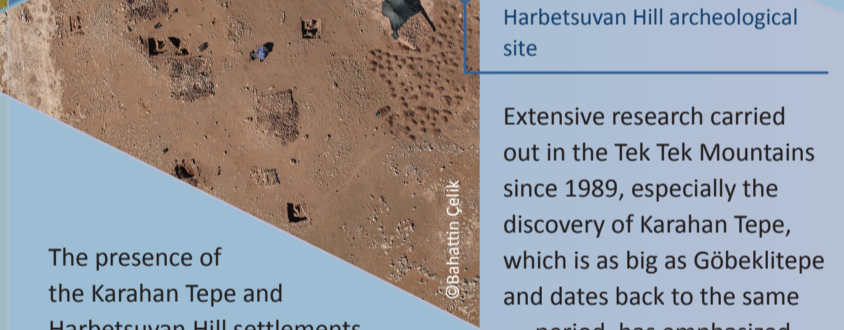


At the Tek Tek Mountains, which have attracted the attention of foreign travelers since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the first places to be visited are the ruins from the Roman Period. Soğmatar, Şuayip Şehri and Senemağara are among the most important archaeological sites.

Soğmatar Ancient City

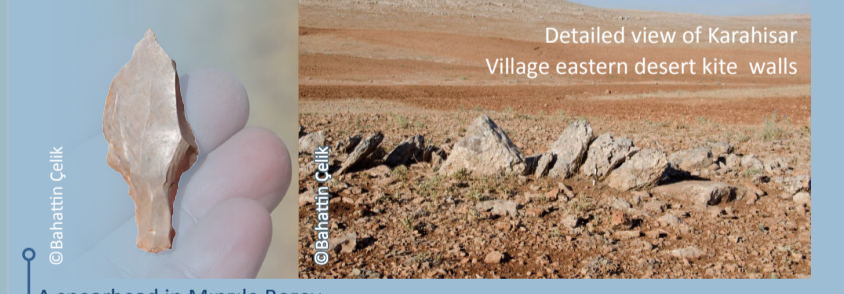


Senemağara archaeological site



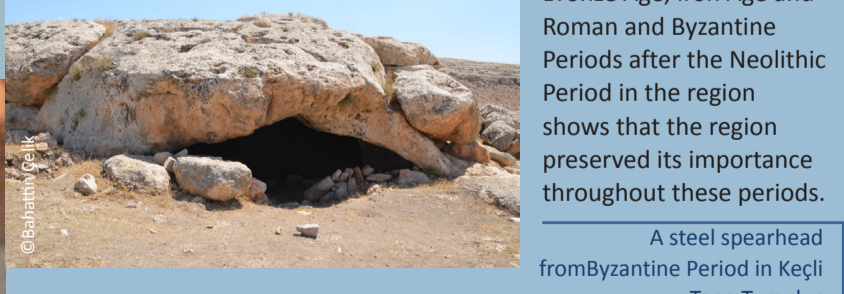
Aerial view of excavated Harbetsuvan Hill archaeological site

The presence of the Karahan Tepe and Harbetsuvan Hill settlements and trap areas dating back to the Neolithic Period (10,000-8,000 BC), and archaeological excavations leading to findings related to hares, gazelles and wild asses show that hunting and gathering had been performed since the Neolithic Period in this region. Traces of the animals of the region from 11,000 years ago are seen especially in some findings unearthed in Karahan Tepe cult area.



A spearhead in Minzile Bozey settlement, Karahisar Village

A rock shelter around the west of Karahisar Harbetsuvan Hill



A steel spearhead from Byzantine Period in Keçli Tepe Tumulus

Settlements in the region from the Byzantine (Eastern Roman) Period (400-900 AD), and especially the abundance of trees, reveal that terebinth had been gathered by the people.



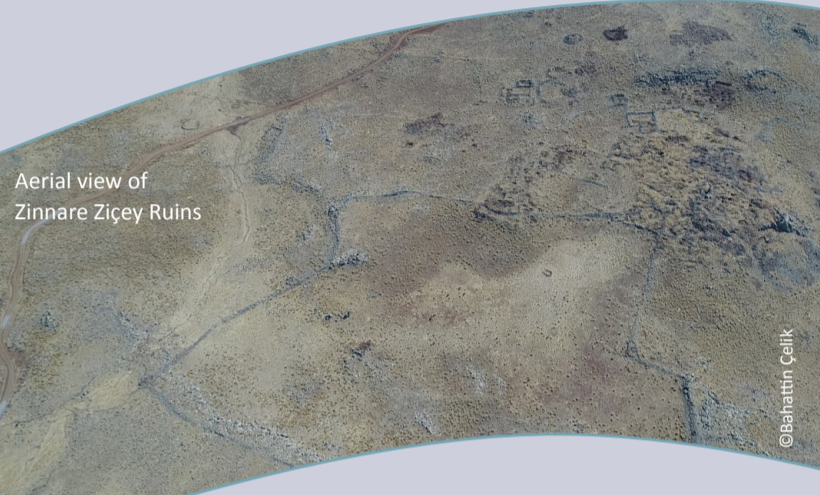
A painted ceramic fragment from Byzantine Period in Keçli Tepe Built cave front



General view of İbrahim Pasha plateau at the summit of Karacadağ

## History and Cultural Heritage of Karacadağ Steppes

The summit of Karacadağ is not very suitable for permanent settlement with a 1,981-meter-tall extinct volcano. Permanent settlements are on the slopes of the mountain, in the lower parts. It is known that lava erupted while active, filled the area between Şanlıurfa and Diyarbakır, causing black basalt rocks to form in the region. These basalt stones were used as building materials in numerous historical buildings in Şanlıurfa, Diyarbakır and Siverek.



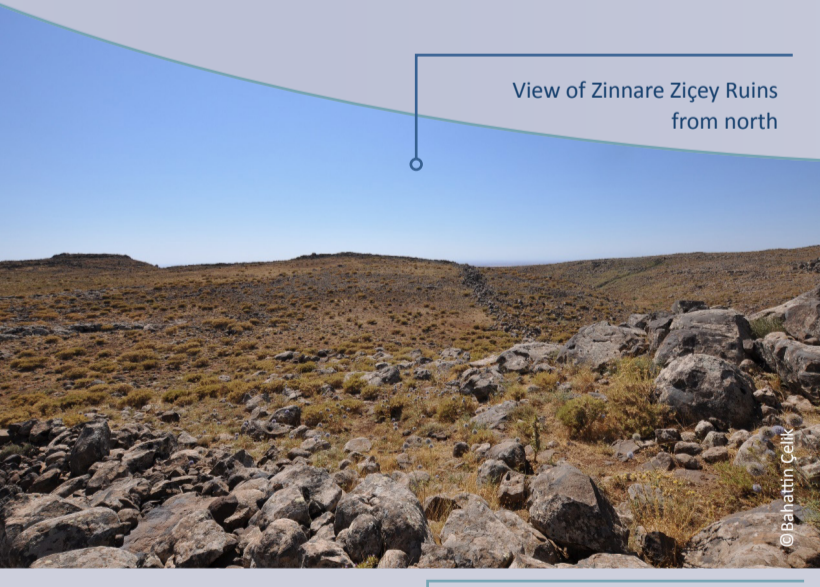
Aerial view of Zinnare Çiçey Ruins



A ceramic pot fragment from the Chalcolithic Period, Zinnare Çiçey

A lunated stel representing the moon goddess found in Karacadağ Zinnare Çiçey Temple

Archaeological sites such as Zinare Zer Ruins, Kamer Sekü Mevkii Ruins, Acem Hill, Selamün Aleyküm Hill Tumulus, Mendel Ruins, Zinnare Çiçey Ruins and Zinnare Çiçey Temple Area were identified in the region. Accordingly, it is inferred that settlements in the region date back to the Chalcolithic Age (7,000 BC).



View of Zinnare Çiçey Ruins from north



A broken tombstone in the shape of a lion from the Islamic Period

## History and Cultural Heritage of Kızılkuyu Wildlife Reserve

The research at the Kızılkuyu Wildlife Reserve shows that the first communities that came to the region thousands of years ago established temporary campsites at this area. Additionally, under almost every village in the region or in rural areas, there are settlements from the Early Byzantine Period and towers, which have the characteristics of more recent inns, dating back to the Roman and Byzantine Periods.



View of Altınbaşak-Hacı Bedir Burcu stable structure from the south



Internal view of the stone bastion in Ulak-Burcukevitan village

Detailed view of Güzelkuyu rock-cut tombs

General view of Altınbaşak-Hacı Bedir Burcu village rock-cut tombs

Hamzan Tepe, located within the boundaries of İkizce Village, 10 km to the south of Şanlıurfa city center, is the oldest settlement in the region. There are open pools carved into the bedrock inside the settlement.

A circular planned architectural structure exposed to illicit diggings in Hamzan Tepe Ruins



Flint layers that surfaced to the south of the settlement are significant. There are temporary camping sites, approximately 1 km to the south of Hamzan Tepe, where spearheads made of flint from the Middle Paleolithic Age were discovered.

A spearhead from Middle Paleolithic Age

