



الإمارات العربية المتحدة  
حكومة الفجيرة  
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES  
GOVERNMENT OF FUJAIRAH

الفجيرة للآثار  
FUJAIRAH ADVENTURES

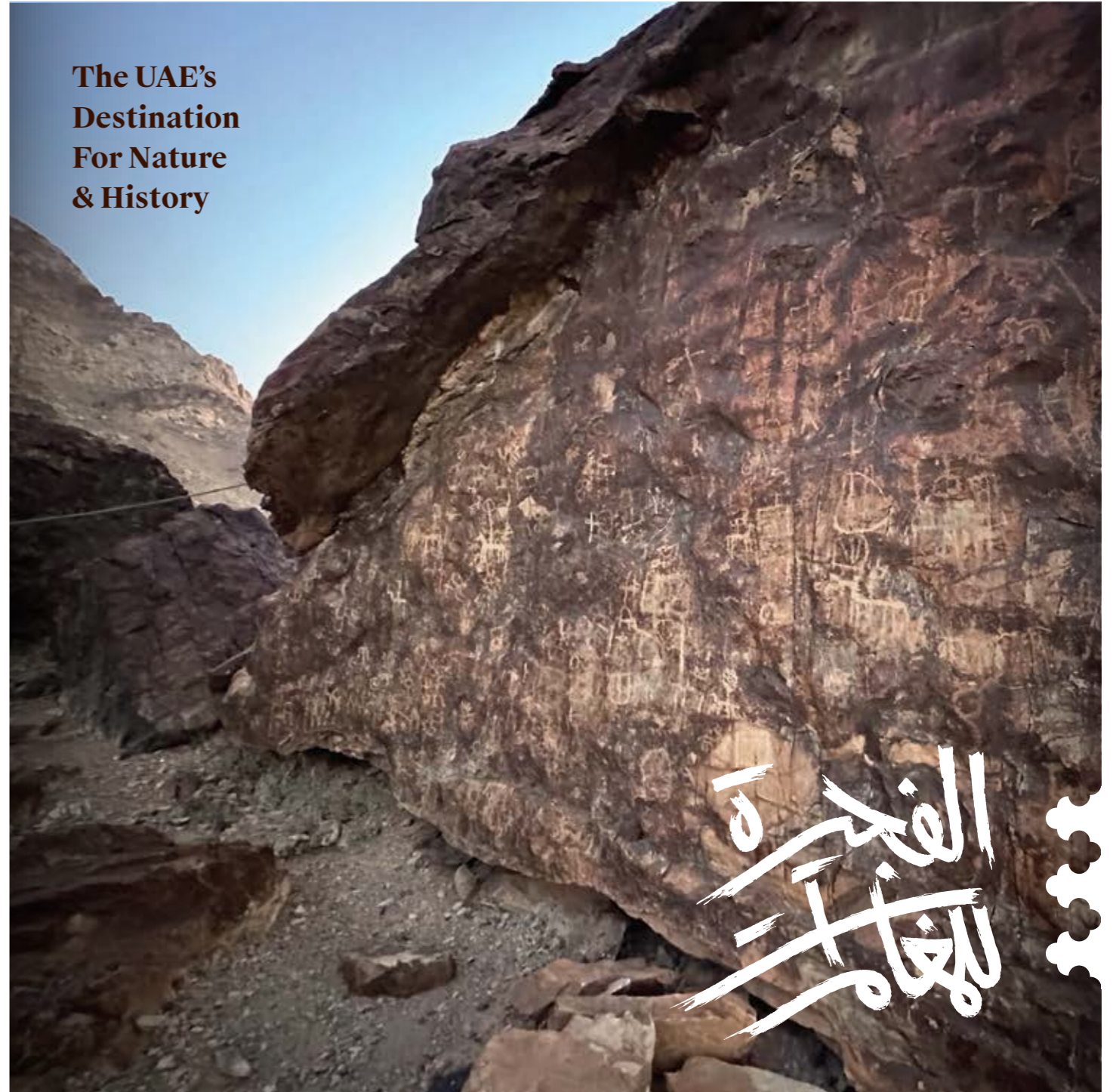
Welcome to the Official  
Adventure Guide of the  
Emirate of Fujairah, The  
UAE's Destination  
For Nature & History.

The guide provides  
visitors with Information,  
History, Itinerary Options,  
Detailed Maps and  
Highlights to make the  
most out of your trip in  
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# petroglyphs of fujairah

The UAE's  
Destination  
For Nature  
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# petroglyph overview

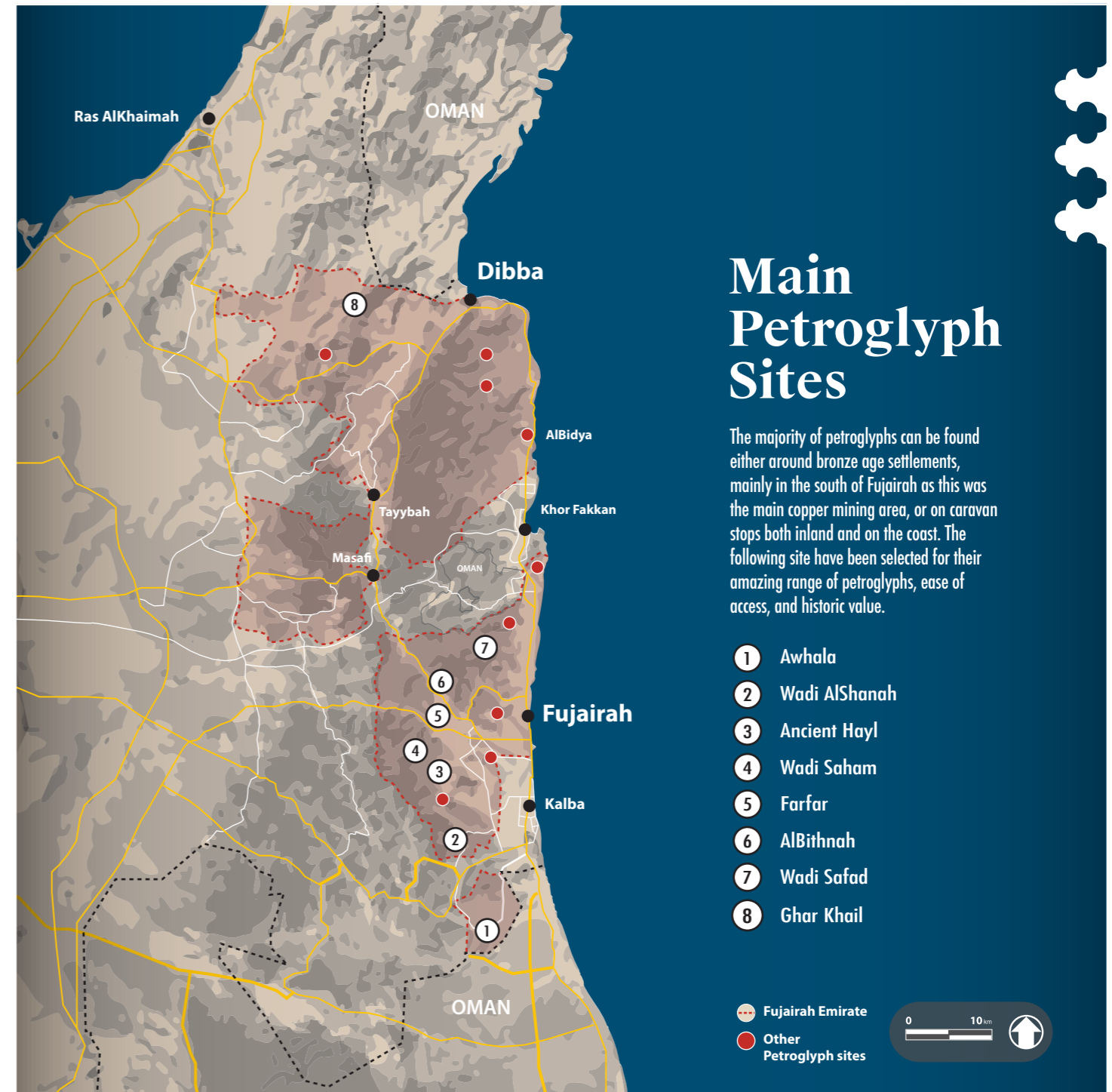


The Emirate of Fujairah is one of the seven emirates (principalities) that make up the United Arab Emirates. It is the only one of the seven with a coastline solely on the Gulf of Oman. The Emirate covers approximately 1,166 km<sup>2</sup> and is the fifth-largest emirate in the country. The Emirate's capital is the city of Fujairah which is located on an ancient trade route that follows Wadi Ham and flourished in the Bronze Age (3200-1300 BCE). Archaeological finds in the Emirate of Fujairah point to a history of human occupation and trading links stretching back at least 5,300 years.

Fujairah is rich in cultural heritage and is home to a remarkable collection of petroglyphs. These ancient rock carvings provide fascinating insights into the beliefs and practices of the early inhabitants of the area and can be shapes such as circles, ovals, capital Is and cruciforms, human figures, rider and horse, and animals such as camels, leopards, and snakes as well as tribal markings called Wusum in Arabic and can denote territorial areas. This guide was developed to help you explore these fascinating remains that are only a short drive away from the tourist center of Dubai.

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## Main Petroglyph Sites

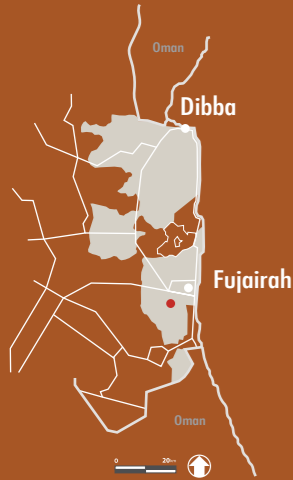
The majority of petroglyphs can be found either around bronze age settlements, mainly in the south of Fujairah as this was the main copper mining area, or on caravan stops both inland and on the coast. The following site have been selected for their amazing range of petroglyphs, ease of access, and historic value.

- 1 Awhala
- 2 Wadi AlShanah
- 3 Ancient Hayl
- 4 Wadi Saham
- 5 Farfar
- 6 AlBithnah
- 7 Wadi Safad
- 8 Ghar Khail

Fujairah Emirate  
 Other  
Petroglyph sites







# alhayl petroglyphs



There is nothing more interesting than seeing a drawing from thousands of years ago. Rock art known as petroglyphs have been studied in the UAE for decades with many being lost to urban sprawl and quarrying. While many sites have been identified in Fujairah including Wadi Saham, Hassat al-Risoom, Wadi ah-Shanah, and Ain Sheria, Wadi al-Hayl has by far the most in the Emirate with 65 recorded petroglyphs of shapes such as circles, ovals, capital Is and cruciforms, human figures, rider and horse, and animals such as camels, leopards, and snakes that possibly go back to the Bronze (3200-1300 BCE) and iron Age (1200-300 BCE) as well as tribal markings called Wusum in Arabic and can denote territorial areas.

The site itself is easily accessible by a regular car on a dirt road and starts at the beginning of the farms after the dam, where you will see the fenced first petroglyph. As you head towards the fort complex you will see various building ruins, walls, and farming terraces on your right as well as restored ruins near the AlHayl Fort and watchtower. As you pass them, the road will slope down where you will have a bird's eye view for the Wadi, farms, ruined watchtower, and the abandoned settlement/village with clear enclosures and walls. Certain areas of the site are fenced but you can still walk around and see the petroglyphs. The map on your left highlights the main petroglyphs that you can easily see. Across the wadi on hills above the small farm are other petroglyphs that are not fenced and are also close to an early bronze mining area. We recommend just walking around and exploring. If you have more time visit the spring with its little brook or climb up to the ruined watchtower above the farms.

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Reference:  
Zielkowski, M. C. "A Study of the Petroglyphs from Wadi Al-Hayl, Fujairah, United Arab Emirates."  
Arabian Archaeology and Epigraphy 9.1 (1998): 13-89.





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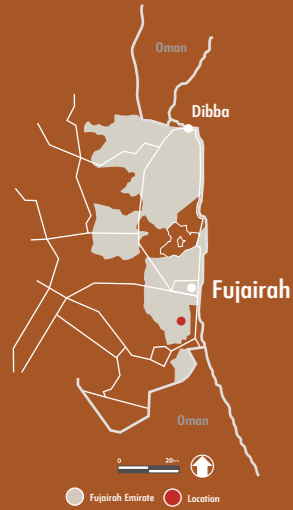
# ghar khail ain alsheria



The petroglyphs of Ghar Khail encompass a diverse range of types and depicts various subjects. One prevalent motif is a horse and rider as opposed to camels that are found in sites near trade routes. Another common theme is the depiction of human figures engaged in different activities. Other interesting carvings are geometric patterns and symbols. In Ghar Khail this includes multiple sun crosses surrounded by rays of light, which is a cross on circle and has links to ancient Sumerian religions in the bronze age and could symbolize deities such as Tammuz and Ishtar, and the Sun God Shamash/Utu. The petroglyphs of Fujairah provide a tangible link to the past, allowing us to glimpse the beliefs, activities, and cultural practices of the early inhabitants. Preserving and studying these petroglyphs is vital for unraveling the mysteries of Fujairah's ancient past and enhancing our understanding of the region's rich cultural tapestry.

Reference:  
Ziolkowski, M. C. "A Study of the Petroglyphs from Wadi Al-Hayl, Fujairah, United Arab Emirates." *Arabian Archaeology and Epigraphy* 9.1 (1998): 13–89.





# wadi alshannah



Human Figures



Human Figure  
(Demon?)



Settlement  
& Structures

Ancient farm  
terraces

Farms



Circle and dot  
(Sun God?)



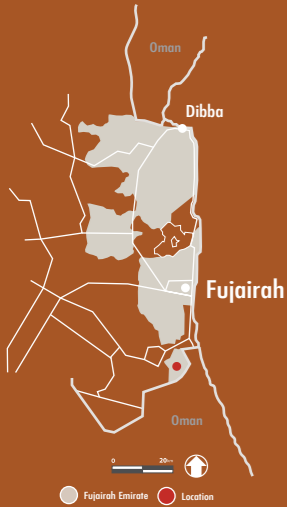
Wadi Al-Shanah is an amazing location that isn't well known although it is very close to Fujairah near Kalba or the village of Ihfarah that also contains an ancient Aflaj water system. The site hosts the remains of an untouched bronze age farming settlement in a beautiful lush wadi with petroglyphs. It is also close to a paved road so is accessible to everyone, just park off the track that takes you into the wadi. The petroglyphs are located on boulders and rocks throughout the wadi around the settlement so it is exciting to explore and see what you can find. The first petroglyph location (24.993500,56.271306) can be found as you pass the existing farms on your right and mainly contain circles with dots, a typical motif in the area and could denote the Sun God. Other elements include human figures and geometric shapes.

Reference:  
Three petroglyphs from the Emirate of Fujairah, United Arab Emirates  
M.C. Zielkowski and Salah Ali M. Hassan

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footprint



Human Figure/Leopard



Animal/Goat?

# historic awhala



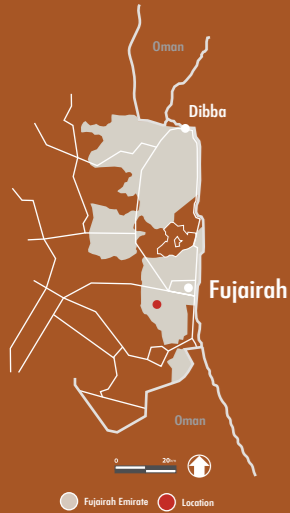
Awhala dates back to the bronze age at least, with clear remains of an iron age fort (800 BCE), copper mining, and petroglyphs. As the area has seen continuous settlement and farming for thousands of years, little remains of structures and graves from past eras. That said, the area across the wadi from the town remains undeveloped and hosts a fenced area with burial mounds and other ruins with a animal carving (24.906611,56.311000). Petroglyphs such as the human figure and a leopard (24.906333,56.306528), the remnants of small mines, and interesting green rock formations can also be found nearby. To the west of the town you can find slag, the byproduct of the copper smelting process, scattered around the plateau, and a nearby petroglyph of a footprint (24.908944,56.291611). It is definitely worth a look if you are in the area to visit the fort or the larger copper mines nearby.

Reference:  
Rock on art: petroglyph sites in the United Arab Emirates  
M.C. Zielkowski

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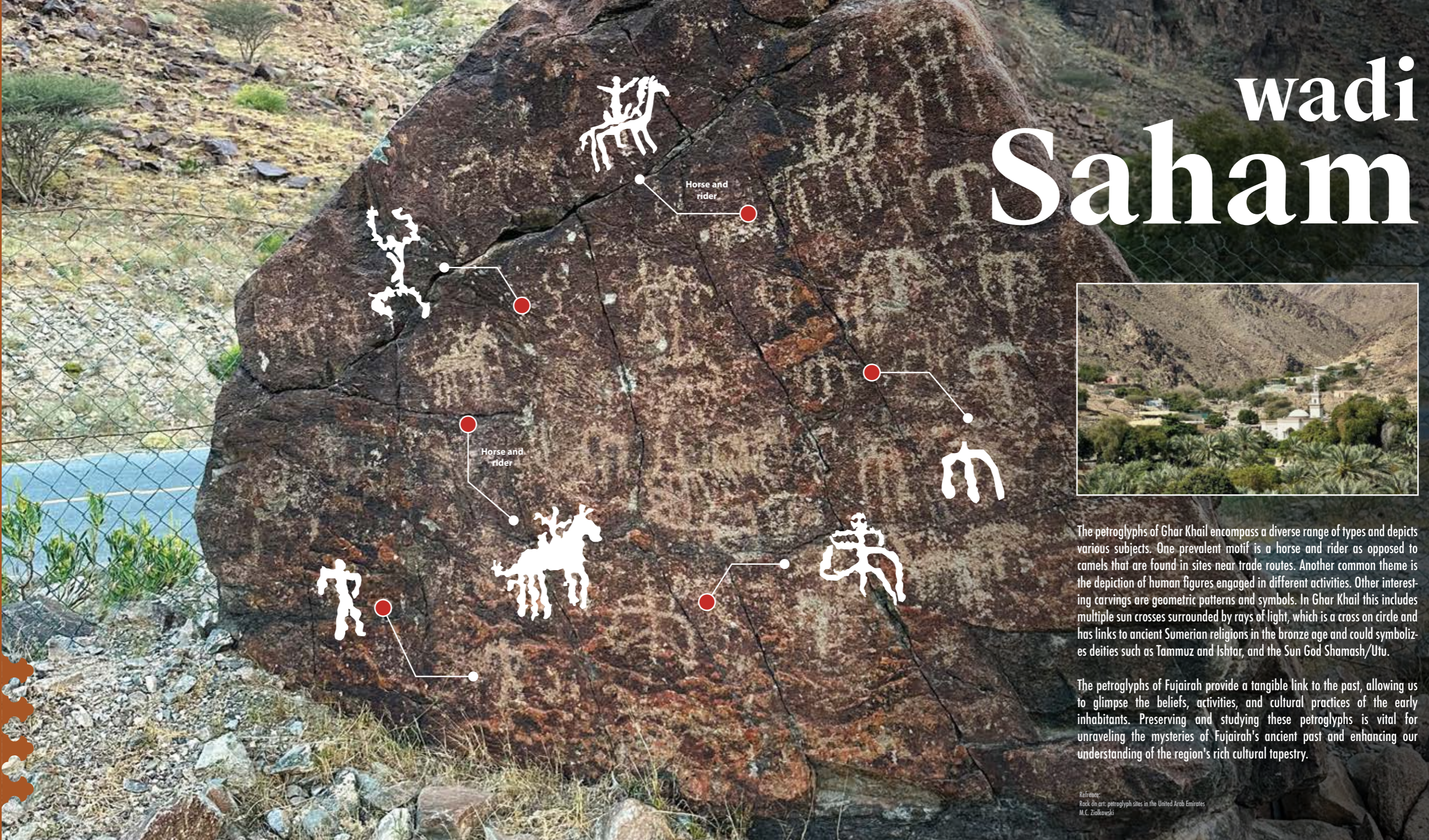


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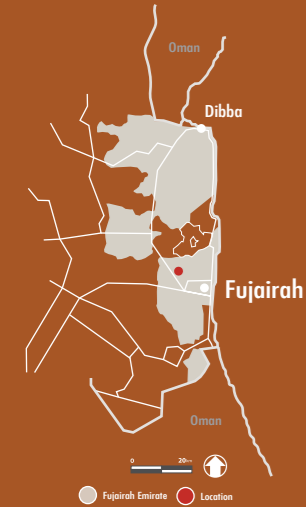
# wadi Saham



The petroglyphs of Ghar Khail encompass a diverse range of types and depicts various subjects. One prevalent motif is a horse and rider as opposed to camels that are found in sites near trade routes. Another common theme is the depiction of human figures engaged in different activities. Other interesting carvings are geometric patterns and symbols. In Ghar Khail this includes multiple sun crosses surrounded by rays of light, which is a cross on circle and has links to ancient Sumerian religions in the bronze age and could symbolize deities such as Tammuz and Ishtar, and the Sun God Shamash/Utu.

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Geometric Shape



Gorge/Wadi



Mining settlement



Watchtower

Watchtower



# historic alBithnah

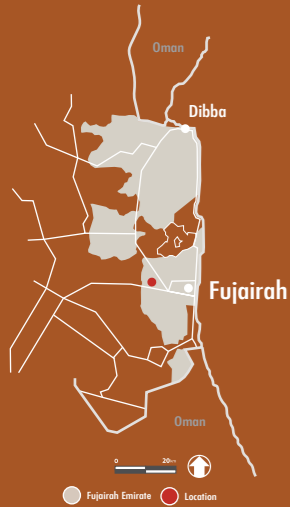
Located between Fujairah and Masafi, the village of AlBithnah links to a 3,000-year-old trade route along Wadi Ham through the Hajar Mountains to both the north and the Arabian Gulf. The Bithnah area contains a number of sites, including tombs, settlements, mines, and petroglyphs. The iconic Bithnah Fort was built in the 17th century on the site of a megalithic iron age tomb dating between 2000 to 1600 BC. Similar to other continuously inhabited areas such as Fujairah and Awhala, development has destroyed remnants of older settlement. That said, a short walk from the Bithnah watchtower (25.189377, 56.238655), lies a small Islamic area settlement near an old mining area. While there is only one petroglyph at the site (25.191917, 56.242917) and another in the town (25.183194, 56.234750), it is worth the visit to feel how life was back in the day.

Reference:  
Rock art: petroglyph sites in the United Arab Emirates  
M.C. Zielkowski

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# the ruins of Farfar



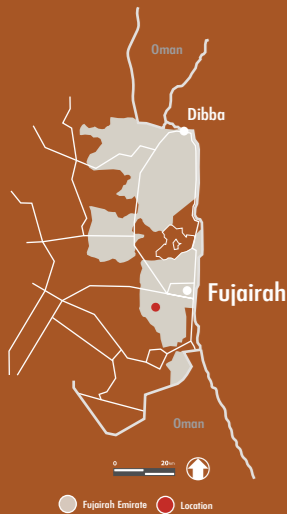
AlFarfar is a historic area just outside AlFujairah on the road to Sharjah/Dubai. The old town has historic farms, an Aflaj, and canals that are mainly intact as the modern village was relocated further down the road. The main historic area is to your right at the first farm (25.139517, 56.234988). The area can be segmented into different areas. First area is the farms on the road, then a low plateau with storage silos and parallel walls that are probably a horse hitch. The site then rises into a low hill with a fenced cemetery with a few petroglyphs on a boulder nearby (25.138000, 56.236250). Next is a slope with the remains of a settlement and finally a higher area with a fort. The area is interesting to explore as it is right off the Fujairah/Sharjah Road and shows how life was in the past.

Reference:  
Rock on art: petroglyph sites in the United Arab Emirates  
M.C. Zielkowski

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# wadi Safad



Located in the mountains north of Fujairah city, and inland from the coastal town of AlQurayyah. The wadi has many remains of buildings, graves and water systems. The main remaining structure is the late Islamic period (16th/17th century) hilltop Fort which is past the town of Safad but before the dam to your left (25.218887, 56.307019). The site also includes the remains of a historic mosque to the southwest of the hill and a graveyard on the southern slope. The Arabic Quranic inscription is one of the few that have been found in Fujairah with others at Hassat al-Risoom and Wadi Ghaf. To reach the fort and the inscription, use the northwest slope near the near the road and the two parallel walls that could be a place to Hitch horses as it contains rings on the wall and follow the track up to the fort. Inside the fort you will find a large panel with a Quranic inscription, a clear part states "There is no God but Allah. Muhamad is the messenger of Allah....may Allah bless him and give him peace"

Reference:  
Rock on art: petroglyph sites in the United Arab Emirates, M. C. Ziolkowski  
A Preliminary Survey of the Archaeology of the Wadi Safad, Fujairah, United Arab Emirates, 13-15th April, 1995. G. King and H. Maren-Griesebach

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