

Showbak dolmens

Although back in 1898 Vincent mentioned a single dolmen on the road somewhere between Showbak and Ma'an, no evidence of dolmens was found south of Kerak until a few years ago. The two sites of Umm Tuwayrat, even though only about 1 km south of the town of Showbak, were only surveyed in 2002. A report on the sites was published in 2004. On one site 11 and on the other 10 dolmens were recognized during that survey.

The two sites, about 1 km from each other, are remarkable not only because of the absence (as known so far) of any other dolmen fields in the region, but also because of their architecture. The top slabs are amongst the biggest in the country, whereas the side slabs are relatively low. Furthermore, they are sometimes composed of two or even three rows of relatively small stones, with a fill of cobbles in between. This led the surveyors to call this new type G in the Zohar typology. However, it is questionable whether this should really be considered as a separate type.



Tara Steimer (right) with the author, by a large Showbak dolmen

In one dolmen (#7, site 1) Early Bronze I–II pottery was found, as well as a globular form flint core and two human bones. Further excavation of site 2, which looks somewhat more promising, should give some more data.

How to get there

Umm Tuwayrat 1

N 30°30'48.6"

E 035°32'47.0"

Umm Tuwayrat 2

N 30°30'20.9"

E 035°32'45.1"

The dolmen fields are just south of the town of Showbak, but you need a four-wheel-drive to get there, or to walk quite a bit.

References:

Dubis, E., M. Marahleh, and S. Nawafleh. 2004. Two New Dolmen Fields in the Ash-Shawbak Area. *ADAJ* 48: 15–24.



Gold digging at Rawdah in 2005