

# CYPRUS

Spring Migration on Aphrodite's Isle Sat 23rd-Sat 30th March 2019

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Photos: A cracking portrait of an adult male Eastern Black-eared Wheatear © Gary Elton • Likewise, a Wryneck poses for the group at Paphos © Gary Elton • The super-blue endemic Paphos Blue at Paphos © tour participant John Sykes

**Report compiled by tour leader:  
Gary Elton**

**CYPRUS | Spring Migration on Aphrodite's Isle****Tour Leader: Gary Elton**

Limosa's long-overdue return to Cyprus this spring was as exciting as we could have wished for. With the country ideally positioned to receive birds moving from Africa into Eastern Europe, we went with high expectations and weren't disappointed.

From day one we were impressed by the sheer number of birds! Our base just north of Paphos Headland was the ideal starting point to the day. On our morning jaunts along the coastal path, we revelled in the sound of singing Corn Buntings and Nightingales and enjoyed the large daily flocks of smart black-headed *feldegg* Yellow Wagtails and Red-throated Pipits. As usual here, birds were seen arriving "in-off" the sea: Purple and Grey Herons, several flocks of Black-crowned Night Herons, Glossy Ibis with Gull-billed Terns and Pallas's Gulls all adding to the excitement.

Of the hoped-for endemic birds, Cyprus Wheatear and Cyprus Warbler were both seen well, but the Cyprus Scops Owl was a 'heard-only'. The Troodos Mountains supplied us with the island versions of Eurasian Jay, Short-toed Treecreeper, Coal Tit and Crossbill. Warblers featured strongly, with the much-admired Rüppell's Warbler seemingly everywhere, repeat views were had of Eastern Bonelli's and Subalpine throughout the trip, and a pair of Spectacled Warblers showed well for us in typical habitat. Raptors included four Pallid Harriers on one day, three of which were ghostly males, up to five Long-legged Buzzards, Hen Harrier and a Bonelli's Eagle. Smart Masked and Woodchat Shrikes put in an appearance as did regular Hoopoes, Wrynecks, Isabelline and Eastern Black-eared Wheatears and other notable species included Great Spotted Cuckoos, Marsh Sandpipers, Spur-winged Plovers and Black Francolin.

As ever during migration surprises always turn up and this spring it was a female Hooded Wheatear at the headland and two stunning Caspian Stonechats - the first of these a find for the group at Phassouri Reedbed. Our last morning at Paphos headland very much summed up the quality of Cyprus birding: a Wood Warbler was found in the company of a stunning male Collared Flycatcher and a Wryneck, which was followed by a Short-eared Owl we disturbed on the walk back to the hotel.

**Day 1 - 23 March**

After a straightforward flight, we arrived on time and were met at the airport by Deborah, our local agent. We then transferred by minibus to our base for the week, the Kefalos Village Hotel, ideally positioned close to Paphos Headland. Dinner followed, giving us a chance to get to know each other and discuss the week's plans.

**Day 2 – 24 March**

After our journey yesterday we opted for an easier start to the day with no pre-breakfast walk. Our plan was very much to stay local and spend the morning walking along the footpath that runs around the nearby headland and having lunch in a harbour-side restaurant.

The walk proved very productive and a great start to the trip. A Kingfisher on the rocks as we started our walk was to become almost a daily feature, as was the nearby Whimbrel. Looking into the fenced off Mosaic's site we obtained nice views of Black-eared Wheatear, Hoopoe, Rüppell's Warbler, Woodchat Shrike and vocal Corn Buntings could be seen on various song posts. A large of flock of Yellow Wagtails feeding in the grass were identified as mainly Black-headed, *feldegg*-types - a stunning bird and some would say well deserving its own species status. Nice close views of Red-throated and Tawny Pipits were enjoyed on the seaward side of the path as we approached the harbour, so was a 'text book' male Isabelline Wheatear.

Arriving at the harbour we spent the next ten minutes looking for our restaurant, the name we were given was the 'Delicious Castle', this name seemingly lost in translation somewhere and turned out to be the 'Sail at Castle'!? All that said, we enjoyed a good lunch after which we bought tickets and spent the afternoon in the nearby Mosaics site. The afternoon consisted of a combination of looking at the mosaics and birding around the site. A perched Night Heron in some trees by the entrance was almost the first bird seen, with a further seven appearing out of the nearby trees as we stood looking. This first area of trees proved productive, with Rüppell's and Subalpine Warblers, Common Redstart and Wryneck also found.

We walked on, finding more Redstarts, a Hoopoe and an approachable Woodlark by the main path. A small flock of Red-rumped Swallows flew over and a Blue Rock Thrush appeared on a nearby rock face. The weather during our visit had been slowly deteriorating and as the first spots of rain were felt we decided enough was enough. Unfortunately, the first spots turned into more spots...then heavy rain...then hail! We quickly headed back down the path, finding a wooden hut to shelter in, but with no immediate sign of the hail/rain stopping we eventually decided to risk it, so headed back to dry off in our rooms.

### Day 3 - 25 March

Our day today took the form it was largely to take throughout the remainder of the trip, starting with a pre-breakfast walk along the headland path. A similar range of species as the previous day was seen, the exception being a pair of vocal Skylarks that flew over us. After breakfast we headed off to our destination for the day, Akrotiri Salt Lake and Phassouri Reedbeds. A stop en route to look for Griffon Vulture proved unsuccessful, though distant Alpine Swifts and at least one Mediterranean Shag were seen.

Arriving at our first stop we walked onto an elevated hide, which looked out over a large expanse of reed bed. From the hide there were few wetland areas visible, so the species seen and heard were much as could be expected: mainly Reed and Cetti's Warblers, Little Grebe, several fly-by Grey Herons and Marsh Harriers. Our next stop was far more productive: a flooded area of marsh on the edge of the reedbed viewed from the roadside. Here we enjoyed views of species such as Cattle and Little Egrets, Glossy Ibis, Spur-winged Lapwing, Wood and Green Sandpipers, Ruff, Short-toed Lark and Peregrine. The star bird here though was a rather smart male Caspian Stonechat (a Siberian Stonechat of the race *hemprichii* – a change from being called *variegatus* due to taxonomic precedence rules...), it showed its 'white-based, wheatear-like tail pattern which is the main clinching feature to its identification. A further stop at a nearby pool gave us a pair of Garganey, Little Ringed Plovers and a Marsh Sandpiper.



A change of scenery for lunch, a small church with a picnic area nearby. A male Redstart entertained us throughout and a brief exploration of the area after lunch revealed another Rüppell's Warbler and a flock of Spanish Sparrows. A short drive next took us to the edge of the large salt lake where 100s of Greater Flamingos could be seen fuelling up for the next part of their journey.

Our next stop was a coastal one, at a spot called Lady's Mile, a selection of pools running parallel with the sea. A combination of traffic, as it was a Bank Holiday, and high water levels meant the pools were devoid of birds. We stopped briefly to check several tracks nearby, though the wind had picked up considerably at this stage which meant viewing was difficult. That said we did manage nice views of a Wryneck, several Tawny Pipits, Hoopoes, Short-toed Larks and another Isabelline Wheatear.

A return visit to look for Griffon Vulture again proved fruitless with a Peregrine and a flock of 30 Cormorants some consolation at least. A pair of roadside Chukar Partridges were the first of the trip as we then headed back to the hotel for showers and our evening meal.

**Day 4 – 26 March**

Our pre-breakfast walk today gave us nice views of the Kingfisher on the rocks, with another noteworthy bird being a smart Subalpine Warbler watched singing from the Mosaics site fence.

A mix of destinations and habitats for us today, starting with a short walk along the coast at Mandria, which was a brief stop en route to the Aspokremnos Dam. Several Laughing Doves were a new addition for us here, a species seemingly slowly colonising from further south. Another walk at our next destination - the dam - gave us several Common Buzzards, a Sparrowhawk, Serin, Chukars and three Green Sandpipers, after which we searched the nearby habitat for warblers. Sardinians were very obvious, both vocally and visually, as were several more Rüppell's, but eventually a male Cyprus Warbler was found singing from a hillside bush. Eventually, he did the decent thing and allowed us all a 'scope view. We returned to bus driving onto the dam to check the reservoir itself, which was largely bird-less other than a small group of Yellow-legged Gulls. As we drove off the dam two birds flitted across, a better view of them revealing they were in fact Black Redstarts.

Our next destination was the Troodos Mountains in search of several interesting subspecies that reside there. Our drive up produced views of another Cyprus endemic, Cyprus Wheatear, three in total, with everyone in the group seeing them other than Robin, who fortunately caught up on the journey back down! A picnic lunch again today was taken in Pano Platres town square, which was followed by the remainder of the journey to the Troodos itself.

As we climbed, snow patches started to appear at the roadside and conditions worsened and, as we entered the car park, the slopes were covered in thick mist! Climbing from the bus, the first of our target species, Jay, was found by Mac in a nearby tree, an encouraging start! We set off after the others and a half hour or so walk produced nice views of the next two, Coal Tit and Short-toed Treecreeper, both notably different in appearance and vocally. Only the Crossbill to find, but with the group seemingly suffering to a degree with the cold there was only one thing to do...find a coffee shop! This proved straightforward and we were soon warming ourselves with coffee next to the 'flame heater' in the covered outside area.

At this point the fog started to clear, complete with blue sky and the sun bursting through! Re-enthused we set off, with only ten minutes left of the day the pressure was on to a degree! With literally minutes to go the familiar 'chip chip' call of a Crossbill was heard and we traced the call to a nearby tree and found a group of around six Crossbills! We then boarded the bus and headed back down the mountain, stopping for 'Robin's Wheatear' and a further stop for a pair of roadside Cretzschmar's Buntings.

**Day 5 – 27 March**

By means of a change, our pre-breakfast walk took us the opposite direction this morning, north towards the Tomb of the Kings. Like the previous day, things were relatively quiet, the highlights being six Short-toed Larks, Eastern Black-eared and Northern Wheatears and a high-flying Marsh Harrier.

Our first main destination today was a small valley just outside the village of Arodes. Here we visited two areas, the first stop a track alongside a small field was surprisingly productive with a Rüppell's Warbler noted in amongst the more numerous Lesser Whitethroats, a vocal Zitting Cisticola, Tree Pipit, Eastern Black-eared and Cyprus Wheatear, Common Redstart and Eastern Bonelli's Warbler. Our next stop was even better, a Hen Harrier, seemingly an immature male, both Great Spotted and Common Cuckoos and our first Long-legged Buzzard, which was ironically followed by two more as we left the site.

Having stayed much longer than we had planned we made our way to our next site, the Baths of Aphrodite, with a nearby caravan park the 'site of ornithological interest'. Positioned on the coast with a selection of small trees and bushes the area is a well-known spot for migrant birds. Things got underway quickly with Cyprus Wheatear, Eastern Bonelli's and Subalpine Warblers and Serin all found. Then a bird hopped up onto a tree in front of us, a stunning male Masked Shrike! We enjoyed prolonged views of the bird before switching our attention to the rock face nearby and it wasn't long before we had found a Little Owl perched on one of the lower rocks. Another owl, Cyprus Scops Owl called a couple of times nearby, but we were unfortunately unable to pinpoint the bird.

With the day ticking by, lunch was the next priority and we headed to the nearby Minas Chapel where again there was a small picnic site to set up and have lunch. On arrival a noisy pair of Great Spotted Cuckoos greeted us, giving nice views as they sat in the nearby trees. Serin and a noisy Siskin were also noted here though seemingly there was little else of note. After lunch we headed to our next and final stop of the day, Evretou Reservoir, noting several Cyprus Wheatears on the way. We made two stops here, the first

produced more Cyprus Wheatears and a spectacular aerial display by a Long-legged Buzzard presumably marking its territory, with a nest appearing to be present on a suitable nearby ledge. On our second stop we disembarked from the bus and immediately we could hear two Black Francolins calling. We searched the nearby fields, but the birds frustratingly could not be found – our views largely hampered by the length of the crops. We walked down to view the reservoir adding two new birds Little Grebe and Mallard to the trip list, and that concluded another day in the field.

### Day 6 – 28 March



*Female Hooded Wheatear on our walk at Paphos Headland © tour participant John Sykes*

Our pre-breakfast stroll this morning produced one of the surprises of the trip, a female Hooded Wheatear, a rare vagrant to the island and a stunning find, plus our only Sand Martin of the trip.

The destination today after breakfast was to the east of the island and a fairly long drive, but a change in habitat was hopefully going to give us some new birds. Our first stop was a small reservoir called Kiti Dam, where on parking the bus we walked up the steps to view the reservoir. A small flock of ducks, seven Garganey and two Shoveler, were immediately obvious and around 25 Coot could be seen dotted around the reservoir. At least one Little Grebe was also present plus two Marsh Harriers, and a group of waders flying over the opposite bank turned out to be six Marsh Sandpipers and two Greenshanks, with at least one of each picked up on the reservoir bank later on. We walked back to the bus spending time looking through the small wooded area nearby. This proved a good move with both Eastern Bonelli's and Willow Warbler, Common Redstart, Nightingale, Great Spotted Cuckoo and Robin all seen. A Black Francolin could also be heard calling, but as previously could not be seen.

We boarded the bus and headed onto our main destination, the saltpans and surrounding areas near Larnaca. A roadside stop as we approached the pans to view some close flamingos proved fortuitous as we added a Great Egret to our list as well. Our next stop was a raised hide overlooking one of the smaller pools, and although the birds were a bit distant we gained satisfactory views of several Spur-winged Lapwings, three Tufted Ducks and a Black-necked Grebe. We walked back to the bus enjoying good views of two Spectacled Warblers, with the male showing particularly well. Our next stop was Spiros Pool, a large pool by the side of the road close to the beach, enabling us to look at both areas at once. At least four Slender-billed and three Little Gulls, a Little Tern, two Spotted Redshank, four Little Stints and 16 Kentish Plover were amongst the new birds seen here.

Lunch was taken in picnic fashion, at a stop a short drive further along the road. Two Baltic Gulls were watched out over the sea as we ate, and a Hoopoe was also seen flying in over the waves and making landfall. One more stop followed after lunch, at another pool called Oroklini Marsh, once again equipped with two hides. We visited both with the birding highlights included 50 full breeding-plumaged Cattle Egrets, around 80 Shoveler, eight Ferruginous Ducks, four Red-crested Pochard, two Black-tailed Godwits and a male Pintail. We concluded our day here and headed back to the hotel stopping en route again at the Griffon Vulture site, and this time we were lucky in finding one bird sat on a nest.

**Day 7 – 29 March**

A wet start to the day as predicted, meant a somewhat depleted group met for our pre-breakfast walk. Though as can happen the birding gods were clearly sympathetic as the rain eased and largely stopped as we started our walk. We passed the usual Kingfisher sat on the rocks as we walked along the path towards the headland. There had clearly been a fall of sorts as several Nightingales were seen and the Yellow Wagtail flock was now several hundred birds strong. A flock of around ten Short-toed Larks were on the seaward side of the path and a Subalpine Warbler was again along the fence line. Then it all seemingly happened at once, three Gull-billed Terns flew past followed by four Pallas's Gulls, one sporting a black hood, which were followed in turn by two Avocets! We returned towards the hotel noting a flock of 11 Night Herons, two Grey Herons and a Marsh Harrier; some would say a successful pre-breakfast stroll!

With more rain forecast we dressed accordingly and headed along the coast after breakfast to Cape Drepanum. We walked along the shoreline here noting the Yellow-legged Gulls on nearby Yeronissos Island along with several Shags on the lower rocks. Another group of Night Herons appeared, this time 14 in number, with one straying a bit too close to the gulls who weren't slow in voicing their disapproval! Another flock of 12 Short-toed Larks, at least six Northern Wheatears, a pair of Stonechats and a Whinchat were on the path and bushes in front of us, and as we looked through them they were joined by a rather smart Wryneck (well, they always are aren't they?!) The weather was now getting worse and a few of the group returned to the bus, but a hardy few soldiered on, rewarded by four Stone-curlews disturbed from several areas as we circumnavigated the rocks. As we returned to the bus, the rain started to fall heavily so we headed off towards our next stop, hoping it would have eased by the time we arrived there.

Unfortunately, the rain kept falling, so a plan B was called for: coffee! Great plan, but in Cyprus in March, not so good! We drove around stopping at several restaurants to find them closed before finding a small café, which was clearly a converted part of a private house. We went in to a warm welcome but little English, which is where Debbie, our driver, took over and quickly and efficiently organised teas and coffees for everyone. We spent the next hour watching the rain through the window eventually convincing ourselves it was easing. We said our goodbyes and headed off to our next stop, Anarita Park.

With some rain still in the air the group split again with the slightly more adventurous dressing accordingly and heading out. This proved a good move, with an enjoyable and productive hour or so's birding as a reward. A Little Owl on a nearby rock face was almost the first bird seen and we followed it by adding Blue Rock Thrush, Great Spotted Cuckoo (three in total), Cyprus and Eastern Black-eared Wheatears, four Tawny Pipits, up to five Cretzschmar's Bunting, Redstart and Nightingale all before lunch! Lunch was taken as it had been for the rest of the week, *al fresco* - fortunately now in the dry!

After lunch the birds continued to appear with two rather smart adult male Pallid Harriers and a confiding Wryneck, plus a couple of Hoopoes and Chukars noted as we left the site. The drive to our next spot produced a frustratingly brief Bonelli's Eagle, which flew over the vehicle and quickly out of sight! A view from the road bridge below Nata, that spanned the river in the valley below us, revealed three well-hidden Stone-curlews hunkered down between the numerous rocks and boulders. Noisy Levant Water Frogs could also be heard, and with some careful searching we found several in the nearby shallow area of water.

Our last stop for the day was a ford near Agia Varvara which was disappointingly quiet bird-wise - though a combination of wet muddy tracks and a degree of uncertainty as to which track we were to take, contributed to this. That said vocal Nightingale and Cetti's Warblers sang around us and another male and a female type Pallid Harrier was a well-appreciated end to the day.

**Day 8 – 30 March**

Our last day; where had the week gone? With a slightly later start to the morning we walked around the headland and into the Mosaics site. The rain had clearly had an effect on the number of birds, with two Purple Herons flying along the coast, an encouraging early sign. The Hooded Wheatear was back on the beach and showed very nicely for us, also nearby were a Turnstone and two Isabelline Wheatears. Two Tree Pipits were noted with the other expected pipits and wagtails as we walked round to the site entrance.

What followed next was arguably one of the best mornings' birding of the trip, with a couple of hours producing Eastern Subalpine, Rüppell's, Eastern Bonelli's, Wood and Willow Warblers, Masked and Woodchat Shrikes, Wryneck, Spur-winged Lapwing, Common Cuckoo and a rather smart male Collared Flycatcher! Leaving the site, we thought it was all over, but a Short eared Owl rising out the grass in front of us was a nice bonus, followed as we joined the coastal path by another Caspian Stonechat (this bird being found a day after ours), a flock of 18 Glossy Ibis and a fly-by a Stone-curlew!

Returning to the hotel, we finished packing then enjoyed a last meal together at the hotel before loading cases and making our way to the airport. A couple more stops on the way, the first at Mandria, saw us finally adding Black Francolin as a 'seen' to the trip list, plus a selection of nice last views of birds we'd seen throughout the week, such as Tawny and Red-throated Pipits, Short-toed Larks and of course Rüppell's Warbler! Our last stop at Timi Beach, where the heavy rain had flooded a large area, produced a selection of shorebirds including Black-winged Stilt, Little Ringed Plovers, Ruff and two Spur-winged Lapwings.

Then it was on to the airport and after a straightforward check in we boarded the plane and arrived back in the UK slightly ahead of schedule. Luggage collection and goodbyes followed as we all started our own respective journeys home.

### **Systematic List of Birds**

**[n=144]**



*Hoopoes were seen daily and quite commonly, with a maximum of seven in a flock near Nata © Gary Elton*

#### **Garganey *Spatula querquedula***

A pair at Phassouri Marsh, seven at Kiti Dam and two at Oroklini Marsh.

#### **Northern Shoveler *Spatula clypeata***

A pair at Kiti Dam and around 80 at Oroklini Marsh.

#### **Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos***

A male at Evretov Reservoir with larger numbers noted at Kiti Dam and Larnaca Salt pans.

#### **Northern Pintail *Anas acuta***

A single male at Oroklini Marsh

#### **Eurasian Teal *Anas crecca***

Around 20 at Oroklini Marsh

#### **Red-crested Pochard *Netta rufina***

Two pairs seen from the first hide we visited at Oroklini Marsh.

#### **Ferruginous Duck *Aythya nyroca***

Eight at Oroklini Marsh

#### **Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula***

Three females at the water treatment works reservoir at Larnaca.

#### **Chukar Partridge *Alectoris chukar***

Heard and seen on five dates at various locations.

#### **Black Francolin *Francolinus francolinus***

Calling at Phassouri reedbeds (two), Lady's Mile, Evretou Reservoir (two), Kiti Dam and Larnaca. Great views were finally had on our last day of a male calling from a large rock at Mandria.

#### **Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis***

A pair at Phassouri Reedbeds, one at Evretou, Oroklini (four) and Kiti Dam (two)

**Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis***

One on the Water treatment works reservoir at Larnaca.

**Greater Flamingo *Phoenicopterus roseus***

Large numbers seen at Akrotiri and Larnaca Salt Lakes.

**Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus***

18 at Phassouri Reedbed and 18 over Paphos headland on our last day.

**Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax***

At Paphos head we noted nine on 24th, 12 on 28th and 11 on 29th. Also seen at Kensington Cliffs (two) and Cape Drepanum (14)

**Western Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis***

10 at Phassouri reedbeds and around 50, many in full breeding plumage, at Oroklini Marsh.

**Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea***

Noted on our early morning visits to the headland on 24th, 29th (two), 30th (11). Two more were also seen at Phassouri Reedbed.

**Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea***

A distant bird at Lady's Mile and two highflying birds over the headland on 30th.

**Great Egret *Ardea alba***

One at Larnaca.

**Little Egret *Egretta garzetta***

A group of six from the headland on 24th, 12 at Phassouri Reedbed and a single with the Cattle Egrets at Oroklini Marsh.

**European Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis***

Noted on our visits to Kensington Cliffs, with five offshore from the Tomb of Kings on 27th, one offshore from the hotel on 29th and two offshore at Cape Drepanum.

**Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo***

A high-flying flock of 30 over Kensington Cliffs on 25th.

**Griffon Vulture *Gyps fulvus***

A case of third time lucky, with a bird eventually found sat on a nest at Kensington Cliffs.

**Bonelli's Eagle *Aquila fasciata***

Unfortunately, only a very brief view for some of the group, as a bird flew over the bus as we travelled from our lunch spot at Anarita Park.

**Eurasian Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus***

One seen by Mac at Aspokremmos Dam.

**Western Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus***

Up to two birds seen on five dates at various sites.

**Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus***

A seemingly immature male at the Arodes Valley.

**Pallid Harrier *Circus macrourus***

Two males at Anarita Park and a male and a ringtail at Agia Varvara.

**Long-legged Buzzard *Buteo rufinus***

Three on our visit to the Arodes Valley, with two more seen at Evretou Reservoir.

**Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo***

Two at Aspokremmos Dam, one at the Arodes Valley and a single the following day en route to Larnaca.

**Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus***

One at Phassouri Reedbed and two at Oroklini Marsh.

**Eurasian Coot *Fulica atra***

Two at Kiti Dam and at least 20 at Oroklini Marsh.

**Eurasian Stone-curlew *Burhinus oedicephalus***

Four at Cape Drepanum, three at Nata Ford and a single over the headland on 30th.

**Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus***

Seen at Spiros Pool (eight), Oroklini Marsh (20) and a single at Timi Beach pools.

**Pied Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta***

Two were seen flying along the headland on the morning of 29th

**Spur-winged Lapwing *Vanellus spinosus***

Recorded at Phassouri Reedbed (five), Larnaca Water treatment works (six), Spiros Pools (four), Oroklini Marsh (six), a single Paphos Headland (30th) and two Timi Beach.

**Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius***

A single at Paphos headland 25th, with three on 29th. Others were four at Phassouri Reedbed and six on the pools at Timi Beach.

**Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus***

At least 20 on Spiros beach.

**Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus***

One seen virtually daily on the rocks offshore by our hotel.

**Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata***

Two sightings of probably the same bird at Phassouri Reedbed.

**Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa***

Two wading up to their waists in water at Oroklini Marsh – the nominate subspecies here, *limosa*.

**Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres***

A single bird on the rocks along Paphos beach on 24th, 28th and 30th.

**Ruff *Calidris pugnax***

15 at Phassouri Reedbed, 20 at Spiros Pools and two at Timi Beach.

**Dunlin *Calidris alpina***

One noted on the rocks just outside our hotel on five dates during the trip.

**Little Stint *Calidris minuta***

At least four at Spiros Pools.

**Common Snipe *Gallinago Gallinago***

One at Phassouri Reedbed.

**Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos***

Up to three noted daily on the rocks outside our hotel.

**Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus***

Up to four birds, on four dates at seven different sites.

**Common Redshank *Tringa tetanus***

A single bird at Spiros Pools.

**Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis***

Singles at Phassouri Reedbed and Spiros Pools and six in flight at Kiti Dam.

**Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola***

Ten at Phassouri Reedbed and two at Timi Beach.

**Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus***

Two at Spiros Pools.

**Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia***

Two at Phassouri Reedbed and Kiti Dam and at least ten at Spiros Pools.

**Slender-billed Gull *Chroicocephalus genei***

Four at Spiros Pools.

**Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus***

Two offshore at Paphos Headland on 25<sup>th</sup> and a single on 30<sup>th</sup>, two also seen at Oroklini Marsh.

**Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus***

Three at Spiros Pools.

**Yellow-legged Gull *Larus michahellis***

Noted daily.

**Baltic [Lesser Black-backed] Gull *Larus fuscus fuscus***

Two offshore at Spiros Beach with another offshore from Paphos Headland on 30<sup>th</sup>.

**Pallas's Gull *Larus ichthyaetus***

A small group of four past the headland on 29<sup>th</sup>, with one clearly showing a black head.

**Little Tern *Sternula albifrons***

One on Spiros beach stood next to a Little Gull, certainly lived up to its name!

**Gull-billed Tern *Gelochelidon nilotica***

One seen by Mac, was followed by three more on our pre-breakfast walk at Paphos Headland on 29<sup>th</sup>.

**Rock Dove *Columba livia***

Noted daily largely as feral pigeons though some good-looking candidates for purer birds noted at Cape Drepanum.

**Common Wood Pigeon *Columba palumbus***

Common, noted daily.

**Eurasian Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto***

Common, noted daily.

**Laughing Dove *Spilopelia senegalensis***

Two roadside birds on the outskirts of Mandria, with a third seen a short while later.

**Great Spotted Cuckoo *Clamator glandarius***

We did well for this species, with our first, a single at Arodes Valley, followed by two at Agios Minas Church, a single at Kiti Dam and three at Anarita Park.

**Common Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus***

Singles at Arodes Valley and Paphos Mosaics site on 30<sup>th</sup>.

**Cyprus Scops Owl *Otus cypricus***

Two heard during the day, en route to the Troodos on 26<sup>th</sup> and at Baths of Aphrodite caravan site on 27<sup>th</sup>.

**Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus***

Virtually the last species seen as we left the confines of the Paphos Mosaic site, flushing it from the grass on the walk to the gate.

**Little Owl *Athene noctua lilith***

Singles at the Baths of Aphrodite's Caravan Site and Anarita Park. The eastern subspecies *lilith* is sometimes treated as a separate species – oddly called 'Cucumiau' due to its call.

**Alpine Swift *Tachymarptis melba***

At least six noted on our visits to Kensington Cliffs.

**Common Swift *Apus apus***

Noted daily at various sites.

**Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis***

A regular on the rocks outside the hotel and seen most mornings.

**Eurasian Hoopoe *Upupa epops***

Common, seen daily with a flock of seven noteworthy as we drove through the village of Nata on 29<sup>th</sup>.

**Eurasian Wryneck *Jynx torquilla***

Five all singles, at Paphos Headland 24<sup>th</sup>, Lady's Mile, Cape Drepanum, Anarita Park and Paphos Headland again on 30<sup>th</sup>.

**Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus***

Noted daily at various sites during the trip.

**Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus***

Singles seen at Phassouri Reedbed, Lady's Mile and Agia Varvara.

**Woodchat Shrike *Lanius senator niloticus***

Up to two birds on four mornings at Paphos Headland and a single at Asprokremnos Dam on 26<sup>th</sup>.

**Masked Shrike *Lanius nubicus***

A male at Baths of Aphrodites caravan site and two males at Paphos Headland on 30<sup>th</sup>.

**Eurasian Jay *Garrulus glandarius glaszneri***

Two seen on our visit to the Troodos Mountains.

**Eurasian Magpie *Pica pica***

Easily seen as we travelled around, seen on five dates.

**Western Jackdaw *Coloeus monedula soemmerringii***

As above a similar number of dates and easily seen.

**Hooded Crow *Corvus cornix sharpii***

Common, noted daily.

**Common Starling *Sturnus vulgaris***

Singles at the headland on 24<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>, with one also seen at Phassouri Reedbed.

**Coal Tit *Periparus ater cypriones***

Around ten seen or heard on our visit to the Troodos.

**Great Tit *Parus major aphrodite***

Common, noted daily.

**Woodlark *Lullula arborea***

One on the path at the Paphos Mosaics site showed well for us and was the only one seen.

**Eurasian Skylark *Alauda arvensis***

Two over-flying calling birds outside our hotel early morning of 25<sup>th</sup>.

**Crested Lark *Galerida cristata cypriaca***

Common, easily seen.

**Greater Short-toed Lark *Calandrella brachydactyla***

Small numbers noted on the headland on several dates, with others noted at Lady's Mile (seven), Cape Drepanum (ten) and Mandria (15).

**Sand Martin *Riparia riparia***

A single with other hirundines over the headland on 28<sup>th</sup>.

**Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica***

Common, easily seen.

**Common House Martin *Delichon urbicum***

Seen daily around the headland.

**Red-rumped Swallow *Cecropis daurica***

Noted on all but our last day in small numbers.

**Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti orientalis***

Heard and occasionally seen throughout our week, invariably around wetland areas or around the various valleys.

**Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix***

One rather smart individual seen on our last morning at the Mosaics site.

**Eastern Bonelli's Warbler *Phylloscopus orientalis***

Singles were seen at Asprokremnos Dam, Kiti Dam and Paphos Headland (30<sup>th</sup>) with others at Arodes Valley (two), Baths of Aphrodite caravan site (two).

**Willow Warbler**

Surprisingly scarce with birds only seen at Kiti Dam, Anarita Park and Paphos Headland (30<sup>th</sup>).

**Common Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita***

Easily seen throughout the trip at numerous sites.

**Eurasian Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus***

Several heard singing at Phassouri Reedbed with one seen from Zakaki Marsh hide along Lady's Mile.

**Savi's Warbler *Locustella luscinioides***

A reeling bird was heard by Robin at Evretou Reservoir.

**Zitting Cisticola *Cisticola juncidis***

A regular sight and sound as we travelled around the countryside.

**Eurasian Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla***

Seen daily, various sites, maximum count at least six around the headland on 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca***

Common is probably an understatement! Easily seen and numerous.

**Common Whitethroat *Sylvia communis***

Up to two noted daily at various sites; a maximum count of six at Paphos Headland on our first day.

**Spectacled Warbler *Sylvia conspicillata***

A pair seen well, especially the male, on our visit to Larnaca.

**Subalpine Warbler *Sylvia cantillans albistriata***

This smart *Sylvia* was seen daily, most numerous at the headland on our first (six) and last day (four).

**Sardinian Warbler *Sylvia melanocephala***

Common, seen and heard at numerous sites.

**Rüppell's Warbler *Sylvia ruppeli***

Surprisingly easy to see, noted on five dates at eight sites, the majority stunning males – as above.

**Cyprus Warbler *Sylvia melanothorax***

Surprisingly scarce; only seen at the base of the Asprokremnos Dam, with a second bird heard there too.

**Short-toed Treecreeper *Certhia brachydactyla dorotheae***

At least two seen well on our visit to the Troodos.

**Common Blackbird *Turdus merula***

At least two heard on our visit to the Troodos.

**Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos***

One seen at the Arodes Valley.

**European Robin *Erithacus rubecula***

One seen by Mac at Kiti Dam.

**Common Nightingale *Luscinia megarhynchos***

Seen and heard throughout the trip. Seemingly most numerous on 24<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> at the headland with birds also seen in bushes around the hotel.

**Collared Flycatcher *Ficedula albicollis***

A welcome addition to our list with a smart male seen at Paphos Mosaics site on our last day.

**Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros***

Two birds on the top of the Aspokremnos Dam wall.

**Common Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus***

Seen daily at a variety of sites, highest number, four at the headland area on our first day.

**Blue Rock Thrush *Monticola solitarius***

A female type was seen on three dates on the rocks by the lighthouse with another seen at Anarita Park.

**Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra***

Two at the headland on 24<sup>th</sup>, with another at Cape Drepanum on 29<sup>th</sup>.

**European Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola***

Four at the headland on 24<sup>th</sup>, three at Phassouri Reedbed on 25<sup>th</sup> and a pair at Cape Drepanum.

**Caspian (Siberian) Stonechat *Saxicola maurus hemprichii***

A smart male of this striking form seen at Phassouri Reedbed and another at the headland on our last day.

**Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe***

Seen daily in varying numbers at various sites. Seemingly most numerous at Anarita Park and Cape Drepanum.

**Isabelline Wheatear *Oenanthe isabellina***

Up to two seen most days on the pre-breakfast walks with others seen at Lady's Mile, Mandria and Spiros Pools.

**Eastern Black-eared Wheatear *Oenanthe [hispanica] melanoleuca***

Seen daily, again at a selection of sites and such a smart wheatear!! A recent study (Schweizer *et al*, 2018) strongly indicates that Eastern Black-eared Wheatear should be treated as a full species.

**Cyprus Wheatear *Oenanthe cyprica***

Noted on both our journey up to and from the Troodos with at least five individuals involved. Seen at three sites on 27<sup>th</sup> at Arodes Valley, Baths of Aphrodite caravan site and Evretou Reservoir. A single was also present at Anarita Park.

**Hooded Wheatear *Oenanthe monacha***

A female on the beach at Paphos near our hotel was arguably bird of the week. Seen on 28<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>.

**House Sparrow *Passer domesticus***

Common, seen daily.

**Spanish Sparrow *Passer hispaniolensis***

Seen daily near the hotel, with a noteworthy flock of several hundred birds seen at Cape Drepanum.

**Western Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava***

Easily seen daily in good numbers, with a 100+ on several dates around the headland. Birds were typically mainly Black-headed *feldegg* race with Blue-headed *flava* less common; the two inter-racial hybrids '*dombrowskii*' and '*superciliaris*' were noted too.

**White Wagtail *Motacilla alba***

Common and noted daily.

**Tawny Pipit *Anthus campestris***

Noted on four dates: at the headland on 24<sup>th</sup>, Lady's Mile (two), Arodes Valley, Anarita Park (four) and Mandria (ten) on 30<sup>th</sup>.

**Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis***

Noted daily, primarily on our pre-breakfast walks.

**Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis***

Singles at Paphos Headland on 24<sup>th</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> (two). Others seen at Arodes Valley and Anarita Park (two).

**Red-throated Pipit *Anthus cervinus***

Noted daily, again largely on our pre-breakfast walks. Several nice 'red-throated' individuals noted.

**Common Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs syriaca***

Birds seen at the Troodos and Baths of Aphrodite Caravan site.

**European Greenfinch *Chloris chloris muehleii***

Noted daily, again largely around the hotel and headland area.

**Common Linnet *Linaria cannabina bella***

As above, with some smart 'cherry chested' males seen.

**Red Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra guillemardi***

After some effort we were finally rewarded with a small flock of six birds in the treetops at the Troodos.

**European Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis niediecki***

Noted daily.

**European Serin *Serinus serinus***

Noted at Aspokremnos Dam, Baths of Aphrodite caravan Site and Minas Chapel.

**Eurasian Siskin *Spinus spinus***

One flying around us calling throughout our lunch break at Minas Chapel.

**Corn Bunting *Emberiza calandra***

Common and appreciated from a British perspective.

**Cretzschmar's Bunting *Emberiza caesia***

Great views of a confiding roadside pair as we returned from the Troodos, with around five also seen at Anarita Park.

**Butterflies**

Swallowtail *Papilio machaon*

Eastern Festoon *Zerynthia cerisy*

Large White *Pieris brassicae*

Small White *Pieris rapae*

Clouded Yellow *Colias crocea*

Paphos Blue *Glaucopsyche paphos*

Common Blue *Polyommatus icarus*

Red Admiral *Vanessa atalanta*

Painted Lady *Vanessa cardui*

**Reptiles and Amphibians**

Levant Water Frog *Pelophylax bedriagae*

Starred Agama *Stellagama stellio*

Troodos Rock Lizard *Phoenicolacerta troodica*

**Orchids**

*Ophrys flavomarginta*

*Ophrys umbilicata*

*Ophrys mammosa*

*Ophrys transhyrcana*

*Ophrys italica*

*Serapias laxiflora*

*Anacamptis pyramidalis*

*Barlia robertiana*



*Ophrys transhyrcana* © Gary Elton, Limosa