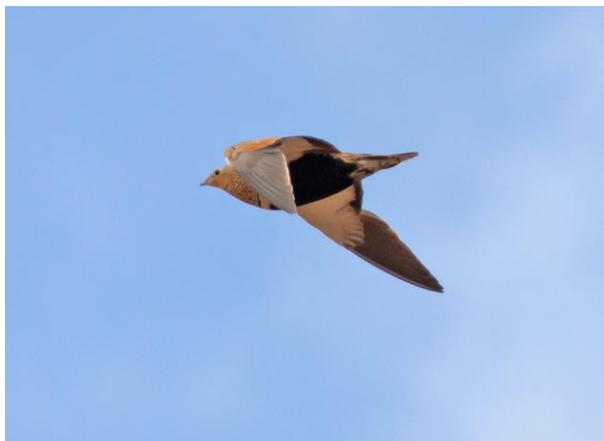


# CANARY ISLANDS

Fuerteventura in Autumn    Mon 4th – Sun 10th November 2019

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**Trip photos** (clockwise, from top left): ace Dwarf Bittern in Barranco Rio Cabras • Canary Islands Stonechat with spider on bill • Cream-coloured Courser in late afternoon sun at Tindaya • female Black-bellied Sandgrouse flies out to plains • African Blue Tit at Betancuria • male Spectacled Warbler at La Oliva © Brian Small, Limosa

**Report compiled by tour leader: Brian Small**

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**CANARY ISLANDS | Fuerteventura**

*One of our four fine Houbara Bustards on the plains at Tindaya © Brian Small*

**Tour Leader: Brian Small**

*with Peter & Kathy Blackmore, Lesley Coley, Mabel Rennie, Cheryl Stratton, Teresa Stratton and Jenni Tubbs*

What a week! Leaving aside the slightly inclement weather – notably the strong winds that whipped up the dust (and a few showers) – we really enjoyed ourselves, gaining some excellent views of all the key Fuerteventuran specialities.

High on the list of most-wanted species were Houbara Bustard, Cream-coloured Courser, Canary Islands Chat, Black-bellied Sandgrouse and Plain Swift, as well as Stone-curlew, Berthelot's Pipit, Trumpeter Finch, Atlantic Canary and African Blue Tit. It is safe to say we saw these brilliantly well, with ace views of Houbara, Canary Islands Chat, Cream-coloured Courser, plus incredibly close views of Stone-curlew. However, maybe the true highlight of the tour was the small, pale indigo Dwarf Bittern at the bottom of the Barranco Rio Cabras that will ultimately be remembered as the bird of the trip.

The evening meals were a delight and we were spoilt by the ever-attentive Adrian and fine cooking at La Villa. The wine was much enjoyed, too...

**Daily Diary****Day 1 – Monday 4th November**

With a following wind we arrived promptly at Fuerteventura airport, just south of Puerto del Rosario, but the same could be said about the service at and departure from the Hertz desk... Having finally collected the minibus we travelled northeast to our hotel at La Oliva, our base for the week.

Having checked in, we walked up the hill for an excellent meal at a local restaurant.

**Day 2 - Tuesday 5th November**

At 07:00am we left the hotel for a pre-breakfast, crossed the road and walked towards a group of houses. Laughing Doves sat in a palm tree and Berthelot's Pipits called from the hillside as the sun rose above the hills to the east. About the houses we found a couple of Hoopoes – one of which showed well – and also watched a Desert Grey Shrike as it sang from the wires – the first of three this morning. A richly coloured local male Kestrel and several Ravens flew over the hills. As we returned to the hotel, a small warbler was found in some dwarf palms and eventually settled to preen, showing itself to be a nice male Spectacled Warbler. All these birds would become our staple birding diet of the morning walks.

Post breakfast we headed south to Tindaya and the plains to the west of town. Navigating ourselves through the village, we found ourselves by a small stony field in which 12 Stone-curlew sat. These offered brilliant views and we were mesmerised by their striking appearance and how close they let us get; in the goat pens nearby, we saw Spanish Sparrows and more Berthelot's Pipits. We spent the rest of the morning on the plains getting good views of a roving flock of Cream-coloured Coursers: as they tracked towards us, then crossed the road, we soaked up the experience of these very elegant birds. The search was on for bustards, but try as we might, with plenty of stops and walks to check, we drew a blank: we did see several Common Buzzards of the local race and four Egyptian Vultures, one of which flew overhead, as well as a small flock of Lesser Short-toed Larks, but no bustards.

One final check as we headed towards town finally produced a male sat by a bush – or initially just its head. Driving off track we got close enough to see the whole bird and to appreciate its plumage. It stood preening before eventually wandering off down the slope. The views were a little distant and hazy, but we were happy and relieved...

From Tindaya we headed south along the main road then west again out towards the coast at Los Molinos. Here the incised *barranco* that meanders southeast inland emerges into the sea, creating a small stony beach and one or two interesting pools along the rocky, dried-up riverbed. We sat and had lunch – surrounded by Barbary Ground Squirrels, who enjoyed lunch too – then walked about watching the many Berthelot's Pipits, a Great Grey Shrike, tame Muscovy Ducks and several dragonflies – Long Skimmer, Broad Scarlets, Red-veined Darters and diminutive Sahara Bluetails. A Little Egret flew upriver and a single Common Sandpiper did likewise – both new for the tour.

Boarding the van, we headed off along the main road, following the *barranco* towards the Molinos reservoir. Turing off the main road, we passed where the old goat field once stood – now flattened – and continued along the track. Reaching the dam, it was by now very windy and we walked down into the *barranco* to see if that would be more sheltered. It was not! However, we did see our first pair of Canary Islands Stonechats high up the cliff. Back on the reservoir were plenty of Ruddy Shelduck and Coots, Black-winged Stilts and a few Common Greenshank. A couple of Spoonbills swept through the shallows and along the shore we found Wood and Common Sandpipers and two Little Ringed Plovers.

As we headed back to the hotel, again Kathy pulled the rabbit from the hat, with a close male Houbara close to the road. Sadly limping a little, it was still a fine sight and certainly better than the earlier bird.

### Day 3 - Wednesday 6th November



*The stunning Dwarf Bittern as it crept into the tamarisk and was seen for the last time © Brian Small*

Overnight rain was a surprise – in fact it rained a little throughout the day – but as it got light we drove to a new spot east of La Oliva where we had super views of both Spectacled Warblers and at least six Canary Island Chats. At 9:00 we left the hotel, driving to Puerto del Rosario, then out on a track to the local tip – not perhaps the most picturesque of locations and it was odd that even though we had a

tour of the grounds, nobody wanted to get out and photograph it...

Eventually we found where we wanted to be, so having parked and walked to the lip of the Barranco Rio Cabras, we looked down into the pools and dams along the valley bottom. Four Spoonbills and several stilts fed on the dam, before flying off; African Blue Tits picked about the tamarisk, nervous Green Sandpipers fed and flew about, and more chats were picked out, too. After c. 90 minutes of watching and wandering and on the point of leaving, we gave it just 5 more minutes: Kathy found two Hoopoes feeding on a flat area and with eyes concentrating on that point she brilliantly found the star of the show! A fine adult Dwarf Bittern – present now for over two years – crept across the streambed and caught frogs in the pools. It was what we had come for and was well worth the wait.

To the west, we rose up to the col at Morro Velosa, where it was clear just how windy it was, then down into the valley that heads to Betancuria. Parking to the south of the town, we walked into town stopping for Sardinian Warblers and African Blue Tits above us. Betancuria is the ancient capital of the Canary Islands, but ornithologically is interesting for its sheltered and lush gardens... and café's!



*Desert Grey Shrike near the convent at Betancuria © Brian Small*

Close to the café we watched African Blue Tits and Geranium Bronze in the flowers, before enjoying a drink and (for some) cheesecake, then walked up towards the old convent. We found another singing shrike then four small finches flew up, two bright yellow below and with bright yellow rumps: Atlantic Canaries! Perching briefly, we never really got great views before they flew off. Strolling back through town, we ate lunch near the van then headed back north.

It was still windy and largely cloudy, but we stopped at the col for views to the northerly tip of the island, watching the light play across the landscape. Just as we reached La Oliva, we turned left (west) out towards the town of El Cotillo for the end of the day. The lighthouse at Faro de Toston was a great way to finish and we watched the waves breaking on the black rocks, as over 400 Cory's Shearwaters swept past in feeding flocks – the largest being 180+ - plus two Sandwich Terns. On the rocks, Kentish Plovers were the most common species, but we also found Ringed Plover, Turnstones, Whimbrel and Common Sandpiper.

Heading back in the minibus, chatter was about what a great day we had enjoyed, but all was not over as a falcon glimpsed on a wire caused a U-turn and its identity revealed to be a hunting male Barbary Falcon. Through the 'scopes, we watched as it gripped the wire against the strong breeze and made a number of forays during one of which it swept up then dived at exhilarating speed. Now that is the way to end a day!

#### **Day 4 - Thursday 7th November**

Yet another windy day – in fact the wind was getting stronger – with early cloud burning off leaving a sunny day. We took the same pre-breakfast drive to the east of La Oliva, this time exploring the tamarisk patch in search of migrants. There were none, but as the sun rose we watched Linnets and Spanish Sparrows catching the early warmth, plus three Desert Grey Shrikes – one without a tail.

After breakfast we again took the road south to Puerto del Rosario, past the golf course at Caleta de Fuste to the Salinas del Carmen. The salt museum here is interesting and can attract waders and terns at times. Parking up above the pans, we then walked down along the shore, picking up views of Yellow-legged Gulls in the bay and 25+ Ringed Plovers on the rocks, joined by two Whimbrels and Common Sands. At the museum we watched a distant group of Cory's Shearwaters on the sea, used the facilities and some bought a few souvenirs, then walked back the way we had come to the van.

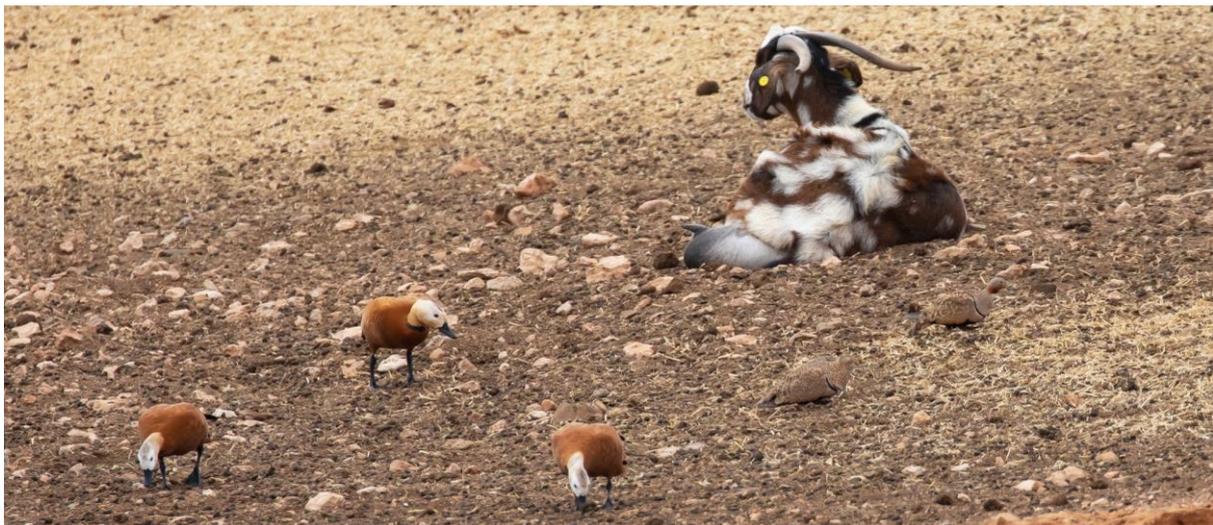
Further south, we drove to the agricultural lands near Tesejerague, south of Tuineje, where there are often patches of water used for irrigation. One pool here held Black-winged Stilt, Coot and Moorhen, but the two Common Stonechats were more of a surprise. Both Blue and Vagrant Emperors hawked the pool while many Painted Ladies and a couple of Southern Blues rested on the mud.

Heading towards Tuineje, where we hoped to have lunch, we stopped by some goat pens in search of Black-bellied Sandgrouse, but in the windy and sandy conditions it was not to be. This was a disappointment, but so too was the fact that the restaurant was closed! As was the next at Antigua, but serendipitously the next (found with the helping hand of google) was perfect... a quiet spot in Valles de Ortega, off the beaten track, where the food was freshly made and delicious.

We took our time eating and talking and it was mid afternoon by the time we left. Detouring via the Tindaya Plains, we hoped for more Houbara and sandgrouse, but despite careful searching had to be content with close views of Cream-coloured Coursers right by the track.

#### **Day 5 - Friday 8th November**

Another very windy (and dusty) day, with light intermittent rain early, but it was sunny in the afternoon. Before breakfast we walked round the back of the hotel to the lava fields, seeing Spanish Sparrows and Spectacled Warbler, but it seemed as if in the wind birds were keeping their heads down. As we returned to the hotel, a Black Redstart popped up in gardens then just as quickly popped off again, but the star was a female Barbary Falcon. She swept in really low over the hotel, circled round giving more amazing views, before half-heartedly having a go at a Rock Dove on the hillside then settling briefly on a pylon on the hill. Stunning and as close as you would ever want to get – especially if you were the dove...



*A couple of Black-bellied Sandgrouse (below the goat) and friends at La Florida © Brian Small*

With a sandgrouse-sized gap on our lists and the winds on our back, we headed south this morning back to La Florida. We parked up by the road on the edge of the white stony desert, opened the windows and were immediately covered in dust, but once again Kathy found the bird! A flying male Black-bellied Sandgrouse, hovering in the wind and almost courser-like in flight, which dragged us out the van. Though we lost him, upon turning around four birds were seen feeding in amongst the goats. For the next 30 minutes we watched these as they wove their way about the goats and 30+ Ruddy Shelducks, getting fairly close at times. White Wagtails joined them as did at least two African Collared Doves – pale rosy pink beneath.

Next stop was Costa Calma and the strip of woodland that runs through the town. Parking near the southern end, we immediately picked up two Cattle Egrets, Greenfinches, a couple of Canaries, Linnets, but also one of the rarest birds of the week... Brambling! Two in fact - a female and male - feeding in the trees about the path, whilst an elusive Blackcap fed on flowers nearby. Three Chiffchaffs also fed on the flowers of a low shrub - one notably grey - and several Hoopoes gave excellent views as they fed in the light soil. A Song Thrush called, whilst a Robin ticked from the trees and showed only briefly, but as we left another surprise came in the form of a Woodcock, which hulked past at low level, like a flying brown rugby ball.

It was time for lunch at our newly found favourite restaurant, so we headed back north, stopping again at the goat pens - this time over 30 sandgrouse were around!

Following lunch, and with the wind still strong, we decided to seek shelter in the east-west aligned barranco at Rio Cabras, which turned out to be a good plan as not only was it indeed relatively sheltered, but we had brilliant views of Canary Island Stonechats, Egyptian Vultures (maybe 15 birds in total), Song Thrush, a couple of African Blue Tits, but again, at the time we were about to depart, the Dwarf Bittern.

#### **Day 6 - Saturday 9th November**

Another very breezy day dawned and we drove out to the southerly La Oliva fields, getting great views of Hoopoes on a wire fence, yet more Spectacled Warblers and a female Barbary Falcon atop a pylon, nonchalantly plucking a small bird, the feathers flying off horizontally in the wind.



*So close you could see them breathing, amazing views of Stone-curlew today © Brian Small*

Though we had seen Houbara Bustard fairly well, it was felt we wanted more and so headed out to Tindaya plains again after breakfast. Taking a slight detour to see the Stone-curlews, we found them right by the road - you could see your reflection in their eyes. Not daring to get out the van, we watched in wonder at these amazing birds - oddly fierce but vulnerable looking at the same time. I have never had such views as these and you couldn't get any better, barring actually reaching out and stroking them...

Moving on, but not far, we almost immediately picked up two Houbara walking in tandem, angling towards the track. Waiting, they slowly came closer then veered off a little, so we took a side track, getting super views before we lost one as it headed back on itself. Reversing, we looked out for it, but couldn't see it until Teresa suddenly found it right by the vehicle (it had crossed the road behind us), and again we had some great views of the golden-buff back and coverts marked with intricate wavy lines - and even the grey on the neck had fine darker vermiculations.

Eventually, we moved on down to the coast, flushing five Barbary Partridges. A rapid exit of the vehicle and we watched as they ran off down a gully: this was the last of the key targets and a big relief. We had a check of the sea (totally empty of birds), watched four Ravens closely, then headed

back to Tindaya, finding two more cooperative Houbaras as we went.

A super morning was over and we retraced our route back to La Oliva, picking lunch up in El Cotillo, then up to the Faro del Toston. Here we ate our food in the shelter of the glass panels as waves crashed onto the beach and just a handful of Cory's Shearwaters passed by. Afterwards, a quick check of the rocky wave-cut platform found us a Whimbrel and a mixed sheltering flock of Kentish and Ringed Plovers – amongst the former were one or two rusty capped males.

By now the sun was out, so we took the civilized decision to have a coffee in a sheltered café, talked over the morning and watched the world go by in the warmth of the sun. The local beach harboured (amongst the barely clad beach dwellers) several Sanderling, Turnstones, Yellow-legged Gulls and our only Lesser Black-backed of the tour.

Our last port of call for the day was at Majanicho, which we drove to via a rather circuitous route, but it was well worth it. Finding a spot out of the wind was imperative, and we had a very enjoyable 90 minutes sifting through the shorebirds and taking in the scene of black rocks, white coral sand and surf and glacier-blue seas. The waders were largely Turnstones and Dunlin (our first), one of which bore a yellow ring that has been traced to a ringing scheme in mid Wales, where it had been trapped as a migrant this autumn – judging by its bill length it was from well to the north and east. Common Sandpipers, many Kentish and Ringed Plovers, a single Sanderling, several Whimbrel and three Grey Plover later, we departed back to the hotel to pack and prepare for our final meal up at La Villa, which was very much enjoyed. It was sad to say farewell to such kind hosts.

#### Day 7 - Sunday 10th November

After breakfast we said our farewells to the Berthelot's Pipits (now reaching a total of nine), Jenni (who was staying on), and hotel staff, loaded the minibus then headed off towards the coast. Stopping for fuel provided us with a final chance of Plain Swift, and we were pleased to find two hawking by a shelter belt of tamarisk.

Then it was south past Puerto del Rosario and on to the airport. Arriving in good time, we returned the minibus, checked in and come mid afternoon were somewhere off the coast of Morocco.

I would like to thank you all for your great company, many laughs and birding skills. I hope you all enjoyed the amazing birds of Fuerte as much as I did!

### Systematic List of Birds Recorded

(n=65)

#### **Ruddy Shelduck** *Tadorna ferruginea*

Very common and seen each day; over 30 at both Los Molinos and the goat pens near Tuineje

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

A male at Los Molinos, 5/11

#### **Barbary Partridge** *Alectoris barbara koenigi*

Brief views of five on the Tindaya plains, flushed from the roadside, 9/11

#### **Cory's Shearwater** *Calonectris diomedea*

Large sweeping feeding flocks off the Faro del Toston, 6/11, totalling at least 400; eight at Salinas del Carmen, 7/11; then just a handful off the lighthouse, 9/11

#### **White Stork** *Ciconia ciconia*

One at the rubbish tip near Puerto del Rosario, 6/11

#### **Eurasian Spoonbill** *Platalea leucorodia*

Two immatures were on Los Molinos res., 5/11; four were seen at Baranco Rio Cabras, 6/11

#### **Dwarf Bittern** *Ixobrychus sturmii*

One of the birds of the trip and very much enjoyed. After a 90-minute wait on 6/11, the 'just-give-it-five-more-minutes' trick did the job when Kathy found it creeping out onto a small pool, where it proceeded to catch frogs. Now in full breeding plumage, we went back for seconds on 8/11 – again seeing it just as we planned to leave

#### **Western Cattle Egret** *Bubulcus ibis*

Now well established on Fuerte, we saw these at Costa Calma, two on 8/11, and at La Oliva, one on 9/11 – they all looked a little grubby on the dusty environment

**Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea*

Low numbers on three dates, with the highest total being eight on 5/11

**Little Egret** *Egretta garzeta*

Noted daily in low numbers, mostly about small pools along riverbeds or rocky shores

**Egyptian Vulture** *Neophron percnopterus majorensis*

Seemingly increasing in number, with both adults and immatures seen on four dates; easily the highest total was on 8/11, when we had up to 15 over the Barranco Rio Cabras – near the tip...

**Common Buzzard** *Buteo [buteo] 'lanzarotae'*

Seen daily in variable numbers. We had some good views and noted that they appear to differ from nominate *buteo* in both their rufous plumage (notably tail and pale upper primary patches) and structure, and in many respects looking closer to North African Long-legged Buzzard *B. 'rufinus' cirtensis* – one perched bird at the Barranco Rio Cabras, 6/11, was very rufous and looked very similar to Long-legged Buzzard. (ref: *British Birds* 110: April 2017; pp.222–232)

**Houbara Bustard** *Chlamydotis undulata fuerteventurae*

After a good deal of searching on the Tindaya Plains, 5/11, we eventually found one close to town – a relief! Then sharp-eyed Kathy saw a closer male near Los Molinos later that day. However, the views gained of four back at Tindaya on 9/11 were spectacular and very much enjoyed as they came right up to the track!

**Common Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus*

Four on two dates at pools south of Tuineje

**Eurasian Coot** *Fulicra atra*

Over 20 at Los Molinos reservoir, 5/11, then three at the same pools at the Moorhens

**Eurasian Stone-curlew** *Burhinus oedicnemus insularum*

You could not have got better views of those we saw at Tindaya on a couple of days! Sat in a stony field, with up to 12 right by the road, so close you could seemingly touch them – we very much enjoyed them and seeing them so well was another highlight of the tour

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

Over 30 at Los Molinos, 5/11, is a high count for Fuerte, but we had more typical numbers elsewhere on small pools, e.g., Rio Cabras

**Grey Plover** *Pluvialis squatarola*

Three (an adult and two juveniles) were found at Playa Majanicho, picking or flying about the rocky shore, 9/11

**Common Ringed Plover** *Charadrius hiaticula*

Found at Faro del Toston on a couple of dates, Salinas del Carmen, and at Majanicho – up to 100 in total for the tour is higher than normal

**Little Ringed Plover** *Charadrius dubius*

Found firstly at the southern end of Los Molinos, two on 5/11, then two at the Rio Cabras the next day and on 8/11

**Kentish Plover** *Charadrius alexandrinus*

Like Ringed Plover, we had higher than normal totals, with up to 10 at the faro, 6/11, but over 25 there on 9/11 and another 25 at Majanicho the same day

**Whimbrel** *Numenius phaeopus*

Seen on coasts on four dates: the first at Los Molinos, 5/1; two at Faro del Toston, 6/11; four at the Salinas, 7/11; finally, six on 9/11, with most at Majanicho

**Ruddy Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres*

Up to ten at Faro del Toston, 6/11, three at the Salinas, 7/11, but over 20 spread between El Cutillo and Majanicho, 9/11

**Sanderling** *Calidris alba*

Two at Faro de Toston, 6/11, were leader-only, but the six at El Cutillo and single at Majanicho were enjoyed by all as their brilliant white plumage contrasted with the black lava beaches

**Dunlin** *Calidris alpina*

Scarce on Fuerteventura, but to just see five at Majanicho was typical. Less so was the colour-ringed bird (6UO on yellow) that had been as a juvenile at Ynyslas, on the Dyfi estuary north of Aberystwyth, on 17th August 2019 – though presumably a migrant from a long-billed northern population. This is only the second recorded movement of a BTO-ringed Dunlin to the Canary Islands...

**Eurasian Woodcock** *Scolopax rusticola*

One of the surprises of the week, but blink and you missed it – as one flew through the trees at Costa Calma, 8/11

**Common Sandpiper** *Acticus hypoleucos*

Seen on five dates mostly in ones or twos, but three at Salinas del Carmen on 7/11

**Green Sandpiper** *Tringa ochropus*

A maximum of four at Rio Cabras on our two visits

**Wood Sandpiper** *Tringa glareola*

One at the southern end of Los Molinos, 5/11

**Common Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia*

Five at Los Molinos, 5/11 and one at Majanicho, 9/11



**Cream-coloured Courser** *Cursorius cursor*

We were lucky with the coursers this year as they roamed about the plains, with at least 10 found on the Tindaya Plains, 5/11, that showed very well; on 7/11 we were back and had superb views in the late afternoon light as we returned to Tindaya

**Yellow-legged Gull** *Larus michaellis atlantis*

Common and seen every day. Local birds are treated as *atlantis* (Atlantic Yellow-legged Gull), but perhaps are actually intermediate between nominate and 'true' *atlantis* on the Cape Verde Islands; 100s at the Rio Cabras tip on our brief tour...

**Lesser Black-backed Gull** *Larus fuscus*

Just the single adult at El Cutillo, 9/11

**Sandwich Tern** *Thalasseus sandvicensis*

A grand total of three: two off Faro del Toston, 6/11, and one at the Salinas, 7/11

**Black-bellied Sandgrouse** *Pterocles orientalis*

Following two leader-onlys at Tindaya on 5/11, then an unsuccessful attempt on 7/11, we were pleased to gain splendid views in the goat pens near Tuineje on 8/11. A total of at least 30 were seen both in the pens, on the plains nearby and in flight

**Rock Dove** *Columba livia*

Seen daily, with apparently non-feral birds on several occasions about the cliffs – it is likely these are Rock Doves, but who knows...

**Eurasian Collared Dove** *Streptopelia decaocto*

Common and noted each day

**African Collared Dove** *Streptopelia roseogrisea*

Finally, we found two of these rosaceous doves near Tuineje in the south, 8/11 – smaller and shorter tailed than Eurasian Collared with dark trailing edge to underwing

**Laughing Dove** *Streptopelia senegalensis*

Good views of up to six at La Oliva on various dates, plus two at Betancuria, 6/11

**Plain Swift** *Apus unicolor*

One of the tougher local species to catch up with, so we were lucky to see one roadside bird near Puerto del Rosario on 7/11 – though not all caught up with it. On our last morning we tried the same spot again, and in strong winds saw two scooting about a windbreak of trees

**Eurasian Hoopoe** *Upupa epops*

Seen on five dates in low numbers but some super views, notably on our early morning walks near La Oliva and at Costa Calma

**Common Kestrel** *Falco tinnunculus dacotiae*

Fairly common and noted on five dates – the richly coloured form *dacotiae* exists on the eastern Canary Islands

**Barbary Falcon** *Falco peregrinus pelegrinoides*

Now 'demoted' to just a subspecies of Peregrine Falcon, we were nevertheless delighted to see our first – a male hawking from, roadside wires in strong winds near El Cotillo, 6/11. On the early morning walk of 7/11 a female swept in over the hotel just before breakfast giving amazing views, whilst 8/11 we saw a (presumably the same) female on a pylon plucking a bird and giving good views through the 'scope – Lesley saw two in the afternoon at Rio Cabras

**Desert (Great) Grey Shrike** *Lanius excubitor koenigi*

Very nice views at various localities on six dates, with singing heard at several locations. Taxonomically the grey shrikes of North Africa and the Canary Islands are 'lumped' into Great Grey Shrike, with Iberian between the two. This 'holding stage' is an unhappy state of affairs...

**Northern Raven** *Corvus corax canariensis*

Commoner this year than ever and it was interesting to hear the odd barking call as we travelled about. Sometimes treated as *tingitanus* with North African Ravens, but here they are 'browner' (?) leading IOC to treat them as separate subspecies *canariensis*

**African Blue Tit** *Parus teneriffae degener*

We (well nearly everyone...) had excellent views at Betancuria and also in the Barranco Rio Cabras on two dates

**Lesser Short-toed Lark** *Alaudala rufescens polatzeki*

Noted on three dates, but generally elusive this year; the largest flock was near Tindaya on 5/11

**Common Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus collybita*

Up to three seen at various spots notably at the hotel on most days

**Eurasian Blackcap** *Sylvia atricapilla*

Only seen at Costa Calma on 8/11



**Spectacled Warbler** *Sylvia conspicillata orbitalis*

One of the delights of our pre-breakfast walks was seeing these super secretive *Sylvias* in low

scrubby bushes often a close range. The island race is greyer on the mantle than other subspecies

**Sardinian Warbler** *Sylvia melanocephala*

Seen on our visit to Betancuria, 6/11

**Song Thrush** *Turdus philomelos*

Recorded on just one day: one heard at Costa Calma and then one seen at Rio Cabras, 8/11

**European Robin** *Erithacus rubecula*

One heard and seen briefly at Costa Calma

**Black Redstart** *Phoenicurus ochruros*

A female or young male was seen on three dates about the hotel



**Canary Islands Stonechat** *Saxicola dacotiae*

Cracking views were had of many 'Fuerteventura Chats' as they appeared more numerous this year than ever – up to eight birds were seen at three locations. Our best views were on a pre-breakfast walk at La Oliva, 6/11, and also brilliantly at Rio Cabras, 9/11

**European Stonechat** *Saxicola rubicola*

A male and female at a pool near Tesejerague on 6/11

**Spanish Sparrow** *Passer hispaniolensis*

Common and seen daily

**Grey Wagtail** *Motacilla cinerea*

One seen near the hotel on 5/11

**White Wagtail** *Motacilla alba*

Noted on five dates, with good views at the Tuineje goat farm

**Berthelot's Pipit** *Anthus berthelotii*

'Berties' were seen commonly and well

**Brambling** *Fringilla montifringilla*

A rare sighting was two, a male and female, in the trees at Costa Calma, 8/11

**Trumpeter Finch** *Bucanetes githagineus amantum*

Noted on three dates, with good flocks at Los Molinos, 5/11, and Barranco Rio Cabras the next day, but smaller numbers elsewhere

**European Greenfinch** *Chloris chloris*

Several were seen at Costa Calma on 8/11 and one at Tindaya, 9/11

**Linnet** *Linaria cannabina harterti*

Seen in low numbers on four dates scattered about the island

**Atlantic Canary** *Serinus canaria*

Four were seen near the convent at Betancuria, 6/11, and two at Costa Calma, 8/11

**Butterflies**

**Large White** *Pieris brassicae*

**Small White** *Artogeia rapae*

**Southern Blue** *Polyommatus celina*

**Monarch** *Danaus plexippus*

**Geranium Bronze** *Cacyreus marshalli*

**Canary Island Red Admiral** *Vanessa vulcania*

**Painted Lady** *Vanessa cardui*

**Dragonflies**

**Sahara Bluetail** *Ischnura saharensis*

**Vagrant Emperor** *Anax ephippiger*

**Blue Emperor** *Anax imperator*

**Broad Scarlet** *Crocothemis erythraea*

**Long Skimmer** *Orthetrum trinacria*

**Red-veined Darter** *Sympetrum fonscolombii*

**Mammals**

**Algerian Hedgehog** *Atelerix algirus* (Road-kill)

**Barbary Ground Squirrel** *Atlantoxerus getulus*

**Amphibians & Reptiles**

**East Canary Islands Skink** *Chalcides simonyi*



The view north from the col at Morro Velosa, with El Cotillo in the very far distance © Brian Small