

Spain

Extremadura & Andalucia

Wed 24th April – Wed 1 May 2019



Trip photos (clockwise, from top left): Whiskered Tern • Pin-tailed Sandgrouse • European Roller • Mirror Orchid • Purple Heron • Eurasian Crag Martin © Brigid Campbell/Gary Elton/Limosa Holidays

**Report compiled by tour leaders:
Gary Elton & Fernando Enrique**

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Tour leaders: Fernando Enrique & Gary Elton

with Peter & Maureen Barsby, John Boon, Keith & Margaret Butler, Thelma Caine, Brigid Campbell and Kelvyn Shantry.

As always, it's difficult to sum up the highlights of our trip this year; the birds performed admirably for us, while the more noteworthy sightings included Great and Little Bustards, Pin-tailed and Black-bellied Sandgrouse, Spanish Imperial Eagle, Black-winged Kites, Red-knobbed Coot and Marbled Duck. The sheer numbers on occasion of the 'commoner' species such as Lesser Kestrels, rollers, bee-eaters, shrikes, larks, warblers and, of course, Corn Bunting, is difficult to relate here! The breeding heron colonies were amazing; we saw hundreds of Western Swamphens and the number and views of marsh terns was a real bonus, as was the Roseate Tern we saw. Non Avian highlights included some smart butterflies, namely Spanish Marbled White, Spanish Festoon and Common Swallowtail plus a selection of orchids, though a dry spring meant they weren't as numerous as previous years. Some memorable moments as a group included a record number of coffee stops, John's rather colourful description of the weather on our first full day, plus his rather equally colourful ditty on May 1st! Brigid's roll as 'weather girl' on the evening log call and the joint exploits of Kelvyn and Maureen in insuring there was no shortage of mid-morning snacks for everyone!

Wednesday 24th April

Our flight arrived on time and after collecting our bags and organizing the minibus we set off on the first part of the trip, travelling from Madrid into Extremadura. The weather in this part of the world up until our arrival had been dry and sunny; in fact, Fernando had told us there had been no rain of any consequence for several months! Today though that all changed, with the rain already falling as we arrived - and fall it did. Torrential at times and falling for hours, in fact the remainder of the day! Unperturbed though we skirted Madrid in the early afternoon traffic, birding from the bus and enthusiastically noting the more common species as we drove along. A welcome stop for a late lunch broke our journey, then after arriving at our hotel we enjoyed our first evening meal together and a chance to discuss plans for the days ahead.

Thursday 25th April

With a degree of uncertainty as to what the following day was to hold for us weather-wise, we decided to opt for a more leisurely breakfast. We then set off to our first destination, the Santa Marta de Magasca road to view the plains. The rain had still been falling as we ate breakfast, but it had soon started to ease and then stop. Highlights during the morning included our first Southern Grey and Woodchat Shrikes, numerous larks, namely Crested, Thekla and Calandra, Bee-eaters and Hoopoes. Our first Great Bustards were followed by several Little Bustards, both entertaining us with their various forms of display; the Greats strutting majestically for the world (or the females!) to see, the male Littles leaping comically out above the tall grass and hoping they would be seen! Pin-tailed Sandgrouse were heard calling and three birds were seen in flight - not the best views, but we had at least seen them. More surprises were to come, though, with an adult Spanish Imperial Eagle soaring around a large, distant tree, with further views revealing a second bird and a nest! With the morning being surprisingly chilly, we decided coffee in nearby Santa Marta de Magasca had been earned, so this became the next priority and turned out to be the first of many coffee stops we were to make during the trip!

After our stop we took the road that headed west from the village stopping at a small river bridge, where we noted several Serins, Booted Eagle, Red and Black Kites and a Grey Wagtail. Moving on, we entered another part of the plains and headed towards an area where a nest box project had encouraged Rollers and Lesser Kestrels to breed on the roadside pylons, which enabled us to enjoy great views of both species. Continuing on, we enjoyed views of several more Great Bustards, two more (distant) Spanish Imperial Eagles and more Pin-tailed Sandgrouse, around 35 in total. Lunch was taken in the buses as the nearby hide (the planned lunch spot) was offering little protection against the now strengthened wind and occasional heavy rain shower.

After lunch we returned to Santa Marta, this time taking the road heading east from the village. We spent the afternoon making various stops to bird along the route, with highlights that included a Golden Eagle, three Montagu's Harriers, two Short-toed Eagles, an Egyptian Vulture (the third species of vulture for the day) and a Stone-curlew. The route allowed us to re-join the road back to our hotel and concluded a very successful first full day of the trip.

Friday 26th April

Our plan today was for a full day in Monfragüe National Park. The weather had taken a turn for the better, although cold to start, it quickly warmed and a bright sunny day ensued. On our drive from the hotel we noted Cuckoo and Woodchat Shrike, making our first stop at Arroyo de la Vid, a small stream and bridge, which gave us nice views of Serins and a distant singing Woodlark.

An early visit to the impressive Peña Falcon is always a wise move, as the site gets very popular, with its views out over the river and the large vulture colony there. On arrival, it was clear we had timed it perfectly as we largely had the viewpoint to ourselves. An enjoyable hour or so followed with Blue Rock Thrush, Rock and Cirl Buntings, Black Redstart, Short-toed Treecreeper, two nesting Black Storks and a Peregrine among the birds seen. The main draw here is the Vultures of course, with all three species seen, although it's more about the spectacle, with several hundred soaring over and around the cliff face then peeling off to fly over us as the morning sun produced the lift they required. We moved on through the park, with our next stop at a large bridge where hundreds of House Martins nest, the birds wheeling around above and below us in the company of Alpine Swifts. Our morning coffee stop was followed by a leg stretch along one of the marked routes near the park's visitor centre. Here, a selection of warblers was our hoped-for targets and, after some perseverance, we were rewarded with good views of Sardinian, Subalpine and Orphean and a surprise male Dartford. With the sun now out, butterflies started to appear and we noted a selection of whites, Small Copper and a rather smart Spanish Festoon. Lunch followed at a riverside picnic stop, which was proving popular today with several other groups making use of the tables there.

A short drive after lunch took us to the nearby dam and a small area of mainly coniferous woodland, where we successfully found Crested Tit, Jay and two brief flyover Golden Orioles. We carried on through the park, stopping to view an Egyptian Vulture on its nest; the distance and pose of the bird making it look very gannet-like! The Portilla del Tietar viewpoint gave us further views of Spanish Imperial Eagle with us enjoying great views of a bird perched high on the cliff slope with the skyline behind it. Several more Blue Rock Thrushes and Rock Buntings were also seen plus our first Short-toed Eagle. A short drive down the road produced our one and only Nuthatch and finally we enjoyed nice views of Iberian Magpies, a numerous but somewhat active species! By this stage, the perched Imperial Eagle had taken off from the rock face and was circling over the wood being joined by a second, clearly the resident pair known to be nesting nearby. We continued travelling through the park, making one more stop which gave us nice views of a male Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, a Booted Eagle and several Bee-eaters. We retraced our route, stopping briefly again at the visitor centre for an ice cream (it was just like being on holiday!) before we returned to the hotel.

Saturday 27th April

Another sunny start and our last full day in Extremadura so after breakfast we headed out to a site near the village of Jaraicejo in search of more warblers. Two Woodlarks perched close by on pylon wires were a welcome start to our visit and it wasn't long before the first Dartford Warblers were heard and seen in the nearby scrub, a family party with the parents and youngsters in full view. Orphean and Western Bonelli's Warblers were both heard and several larks on posts and bushes nearby proved to be Thekla Larks.

More birds followed, with Iberian Grey Shrike, Hoopoe, Short-toed Eagle and Montagu's Harrier showing up. At one stage we had Iberian Grey Shrike, Dartford Warbler and Corn Bunting all in the same scope view! Our hoped-for target species, Spectacled Warbler, then appeared, with a male singing its heart out from a nearby bush and giving us nice prolonged views. One of our hoped for stops on our first day's drive from the airport was the Embalse de Arrocampo but the weather had taken that option from us, so our second visit of today was to be to there. Arriving at the visitor centre we made use of the facilities before heading off around the reserve, stopping at two of the three available hides over-looking the bulrushes and lagoons. A productive hour or so followed with Savi's Warbler, Purple Heron, Great Egret, Western Swamphen, Little Bittern, Gull-billed Tern and a calling Water Rail all added to the species list. A drive around more open *dehesa* habitat preceded lunch and revealed another Short-toed Eagle, several Lesser Kestrels, Bee-eaters, plus Clouded Yellow and Long-tailed Blue butterflies. A planned lunch outside the visitor centre was aborted due to a large coach party having arrived so we chose a nearby park instead. With an earlier attempt at a coffee stop unsuccessful (the bar was closed) a return visit this time was both appreciated and successful, after which we again returned to view another open section of countryside.

A lone Lapwing on a farm pool was our first surprise here, then a lone raptor perched on a bare tree drew our attention - a Black-winged Kite. Very much a hoped-for species, though not always easy to see. A break from birds (to a degree!) followed next, with an orchid site proving a nice distraction. Seven different species were seen, though the dry spring had meant the majority had already gone over or hadn't appeared at all. The day for us, as usual, had slipped away so we headed back to the hotel for a well-deserved brush up and shower before the log and dinner.

Sunday 28th April

Our last morning in Extremadura and after breakfast we packed the minibus and set off to start our journey south to Coto Doñana. We had several stops planned, the first to view more steppe habitat along the road to Campo Lugar. We travelled along the road making several stops to view the 'steppe' habitat either side of the road. At least eight Great Bustards were seen and two groups of Black-bellied Sandgrouse, the smaller group of two appearing several times and even allowing scope views of them on the ground. Other species seen included Montagu's and Marsh Harriers, Gull-billed Terns (seemingly *en route* to a nearby reservoir), Short-toed Lark, Rollers, a male Whinchat and several Spanish Marbled White butterflies. As was now the norm, coffee was the next stop for the day and as we climbed out of the buses, Fernando drew our attention to a nearby tower roof. Nest boxes had been placed around it, with several pairs of Lesser Kestrels obvious around them. What was less obvious was the little Owl sat alongside one of them which, although distant, was seen nicely through the scope.

Coffee was excellent, with three Black Storks overhead an added bonus, after which we headed on towards the Alange Reservoir. The reservoir acted as both a lunch stop and a break for the journey, being approximately halfway between Monfragüe and Donana, with an added attraction of a possible new bird, Black Wheatear. Taking our lunches from the bus we sat below the nearby rock face, scanning the tops and crags above us. Blue Rock Thrush, Crag Martin and Rock Bunting were all seen, followed by a rather smart Black Wheatear! The reservoir itself was relatively quiet, with Great Crested Grebes, Great Cormorants, Black-head Gulls and Gull-billed Terns seemingly the only birds present on the water. After lunch we walked over to the dam to watch Alpine Swifts flying into their nests below, around 50 birds in total, making a rather impressive sight! We continued our journey, arriving on the edge of Coto Doñana early in the evening. Viewing our first stretches of water, Greater Flamingo, Western Swamphen, Glossy Ibis, Black-necked Grebe, Red-crested Pochard, up to six Marbled Duck, Whiskered and Black Tern and Great Reed Warbler were amongst the birds seen. We continued on to the hotel, stopping to watch an adult and a recently fledged Penduline Tit on some roadside reeds.

Monday 29th April

We started the day with a short pre-breakfast walk around the grounds of the hotel, which gave us views of the expected species such as Hoopoe, Iberian Magpie and Serin plus a brief Tree Sparrow. After breakfast we headed back to the lagoons we had viewed the night before, birding as we drove along with more notable birds seen including Melodious Warbler and a Black-winged Kite. A short detour to a pool slightly further on from the one last night revealed a drake Ferruginous Duck, which unfortunately took flight as soon as we arrived, though on the plus side everyone saw it. Viewing again the lagoon from the previous afternoon, we achieved a similar spread of species as before, though the Black Terns seemingly had disappeared but several Whiskered Terns were still visible. Red-knobbed Coot was a species we were all hoping to see and this is where Fernando's local knowledge came to the fore. Faced with several thousand coots to search through with the majority the other side of the lagoon, a daunting task faced us or so we thought! Fernando knew the area where one of the pairs were nesting, so we drove to the spot and started checking the coots... It was not long before a nearby coot was identified as the aforementioned Red Knobbed, just on the edge of the reeds, it's 'red knobs' clearly visible. Donana is largely private and well protected with general access forbidden, so groups such as ours take the route they call the 'Corredor Verde', the green corridor. This runs along the northern edge of the reserve, eventually arriving at the José Antonio Valverde visitor centre, our destination for lunch, which is named after the founder of the park. The list of birds seen *en route* was impressive with more Black-winged Kites, Short-toed and Booted Eagles, Montagu's Harriers, Pied Flycatchers and Sedge, Reed, Cetti's, Melodious and Olivaceous Warblers. The most impressive sight though was the numbers of wetland birds, primarily herons, egrets and ibises, nesting in their hundreds if not thousands in the bushes and trees approaching the centre. Western Swamphens were seemingly everywhere too, concentrated in the wetland pools lining our route. Lunch was followed by a short drive to a nearby road bridge, where dozens of Great Reed Warblers were singing in the small area of reeds that borders the road along with two Savi's Warblers. Hundreds of Whiskered and Black Terns were present feeding over the water, giving us great views as they flew over us. Purple Herons and Glossy Ibises were also very active, again flying back and forth in front of or over us. The muddy edge of one of the pools revealed several Dunlin and Ringed Plover and a large group of Griffon Vultures could be seen amassed around something that was presumably dead further out ahead of us.

We took a similar albeit somewhat faster and bumper route back to the hotel, stopping on several occasions, with the most memorable of these to view a Barn Owl. On stopping to view the bird, we initially thought we were viewing a White Stork or maybe the Spanish Sparrows nesting in its nest. It was only on closer inspection we realised there was an open-fronted nest box under the stork nest and through a scope a Barn Owl's face could be seen peering out!

Tuesday 30th April

We began slightly differently with a pre-dawn start today, with the hope of seeing or hearing Red-necked Nightjar. Unfortunately things don't always go to plan and, although it was nice to experience the day 'waking up', we had no joy with nightjars, settling instead for a calling Tawny Owl and nice views of a Common Cuckoo and Short-toed Treecreeper. After breakfast, a Tree Sparrow started the day, found in bushes in front of the hotel. We boarded the buses to head to our first destination, the salt pans at the Odiel Marshes on the outskirts of Huelva. Yellow-legged Gulls, Curlew Sandpipers, Kentish Plovers, Pied Avocets, Little Terns and Common Shelduck were amongst the more obvious birds (if you don't include the Greater Flamingos!). Swifts calling and flying around over us transpired to be mainly Pallids, with some nice views enabling the relevant ID features to be appreciated.

We parked in the nearby visitor centre, noting large numbers of smaller waders on the estuary banks nearby which included our first Ruddy Turnstones of the trip. We walked out to the main viewing area towards the centre of the pans, enjoying views of more waders, with Little Stint, Dunlin and Sanderling all feeding together and providing a particularly useful comparison for everyone. Two distant Ospreys were noted perched close to their nest site and more 'distance birding' from Fernando and Gary resulted in Grey Plover, Bar-tailed Godwit, Greenshank and Audouin's Gull being found. Walking back to the centre we headed off on the road leading down to the sea. Birding as we went along, we noted at least six more Ospreys, largely pairs near nest sites, another Montagu's Harrier and a variety of commoner waders. We had lunch in the beach car park before spending some time exploring the area of bushes and scrub nearby. This proved both fun and productive with two Turtle Doves, at least two Woodchat Shrikes, two Melodious Warblers and single Stone-curlew, Whinchat, Common Redstart, Orphean Warbler and Common Whitethroat. An Iberian Hare was another appreciated addition to the list, though the best was yet to come... We walked back to the buses just as a flock of Black and Little Terns appeared, fishing a short distance offshore from us and giving fantastic close views. As we drove back along the road we paused to enjoy a larger collection of terns on the shoreline, Black, Common and Little all sat together. At this point, a black-billed tern with a pink-flushed chest was also noted, a Roseate! An unusual bird in Spain so a great find!

Returning to the hotel slightly earlier was the plan, with thoughts of heading out again before dinner in the somewhat slender hope of seeing Iberian Lynx. With the heat of the day largely dissipated, we headed back out in search of our quarry! It was always going to be a long shot and unfortunately we met with no success other than several fresh scats! It made a nice change being out at that time of day and we enjoyed nice views of Hoopoes, Bee-eaters, Booted Eagle, a very brief Little Owl and yet another Black-winged Kite.

Wednesday 1st May

A more relaxed and slightly later start to our last day which started frustratingly, with Fernando and Gary hearing Red-necked Nightjar calling outside at dawn in the area we had searched for them unsuccessfully yesterday! Our first destination today was the 'Wild West' style town of El Rocio, with an early morning visit deemed the best, due to a forecasted hot day and an impending Bank Holiday. Parking in the square, we paid for our parking (1 euro for the day, anyone's guess how much it would have cost in the UK!) and headed over to view the nearby large lagoon. Our time here took us along the promenade adjacent to the lagoon and to the visitor centre and back (with the inevitable coffee for some along the way!)

A good selection of waterbirds was on show, including a large flock of Black and Whiskered Terns and the inevitable and impressive flamingos. A Garden Warbler burst into song in one of the nearby trees, though didn't hang around for long and a fine, summer-plumaged Grey Plover was a somewhat unexpected find in the emergent vegetation. New birds for us for the trip were Greylag Goose, Black-tailed Godwit, drake Garganey and Northern Pintail and an impressive flock of around 40 Collared Pratincoles. With the town now filling up, we headed off to our next stop, a woodland area at the nearby Palacio del Acebrón. Parking up, we walked along the raised boardwalk accompanied by the sound of numerous singing Nightingales. One was soon found and nice views were had in the scopes as it sang its heart out for us! An Iberian Chiffchaff was heard singing then seen well after a bit of searching, along with a Short-toed Treecreeper and at least two Melodious Warblers. Lunch was taken here as well, with seats, shade and singing birds all around us making for a very pleasant experience. After lunch we headed back to our first destination of this part of the trip, the Dehesa de Abajo, where we concluded our visit and reluctantly tore ourselves away to head off to the airport. The return journey to the airport was relatively straightforward and we boarded our flight on time, arriving on schedule at Gatwick. We cleared passport control, collected our bags and said our goodbyes, concluding a very successful and enjoyable trip.

Thanks to you all for your good humour, company and enthusiasm and we look forward to hopefully seeing you all again very soon.

**ANNOTATED LIST OF BIRDS RECORDED
(178 species)**

- Greylag Goose** *Anser anser*
Good numbers at El Rocio.
- Shelduck** *Tadorna tadorna*
At least 20 birds at the Odiel Marshes.
- Garganey** *Spatula querquedula*
A nice adult male at El Rocio.
- Northern Shoveler** *Spatula clypeata*
Single birds noted on three dates.
- Gadwall** *Mareca strepera*
A pair on a small pond near Santa Marta. Seen daily during our time in Doñana.
- Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos*
Common and widespread. Seen daily.
- Northern Pintail** *Anas acuta*
Two males at El Rocio.
- Marbled Teal** *Marmaronetta angustirostris*
Six birds at Dehesa de Abajo on 28th and three on 29th.
- Red-crested Pochard** *Netta rufina*
Common in Doñana and the Odiel marshes.
- Common Pochard** *Aythya ferina*
Seen daily during our time in Doñana.
- Ferruginous Duck** *Aythya nyroca*
A male on 29th and another one on the last day.
- Red-legged Partridge** *Alectoris rufa*
Three birds on the plains near Santa Marta. Heard on several dates.
- Common Quail** *Coturnix coturnix*
Several birds heard on three dates.
- Little Grebe** *Tachybaptus ruficollis*
Common on most wetlands
- Great Crested Grebe** *Podiceps cristatus*
Common and easily seen on the wetlands of Coto Doñana.
- Black-necked Grebe** *Podiceps nigricollis*
Two, six and four birds noted at Dehesa de Abajo on different dates.
- Greater Flamingo** *Phoenicopterus roseus*
Hundreds or even thousands in Doñana and the Odiel marshes.
- Black Stork** *Ciconia nigra*
Six birds at Monfragüe and three near Campo Lugar.
- White Stork** *Ciconia ciconia*
Very common, seen on most days
- Glossy Ibis** *Plegadis falcinellus*
Arguably the most common bird in Doñana. Including several thousand breeding pairs.
- Eurasian Spoonbill** *Platalea leucorodia*
Common in Coto Doñana and the Odiel Marshes.
- Little Bittern** *Ixobrychus minutus*
One male seen at Arrocampo and excellent views of several birds in Doñana.
- Black-crowned Night Heron** *Nycticorax nycticorax*
Good numbers at Dehesa de Abajo and the northern edge of Doñana National Park.
- Squacco Heron** *Ardeola ralloides*
Amazing numbers at Caño Guadiamar, where we noted 50+ birds.
- Western Cattle Egret** *Bubulcus ibis*
Very common, seen daily.
- Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea*
Seen on most wetlands and rivers.
- Purple Heron** *Ardea purpurea*
Several birds at Arrocampo and very common in Doñana.
- Great Egret** *Egretta alba*
Fairly common at Coto Doñana.
- Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta*
Common, seen on most wetlands

Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

A few birds seen at Arrocampo, Alange Reservoir and Doñana.

Western Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*

Four different breeding pairs seen at Odiel Marshes.

Black-winged Kite *Elanus caeruleus*

A recently fledged juvenile took a bit of finding at Arrocampo. Three birds were noted along the northern edge of Doñana National Park.

Egyptian Vulture *Neophron percnopterus*

Five birds at Monfragüe and two adult birds on the Santa Marta plains.

Griffon Vulture *Gyps fulvus*

Very common, seen daily in Extremadura. Huge numbers in Monfragüe

Cinereous (Black) Vulture *Aegypius monachus*

Common, seen daily in Extremadura. Good numbers in Monfragüe

Short-toed Eagle *Circaetus gallicus*

One to four birds noted on five dates.

Booted Eagle *Hieraaetus pennatus*

One of the most common raptors with several birds seen daily

Spanish Imperial Eagle *Aquila adalberti*

Two pairs on the Santa Marta plains and another pair at Portilla del Tietar in Monfragüe.

Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos*

One bird on the Santa Marta plains.

Eurasian Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

One bird at Portilla del Tietar.

Western Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

Small numbers seen daily.

Montagu's Harrier *Circus pygargus*

Scarcer than on previous years, small numbers were recorded on five dates.

Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

One to three birds noted on two dates.

Black Kite *Milvus migrans*

Common. Seen daily

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

A few birds seen on most days

Great Bustard *Otis tarda*

A dozen birds on the Santa Marta plains, including some displaying males and another 10 birds, mostly males, at Campo Lugar.

Little Bustard *Tetrax tetrax*

One of the highlights of the trip. We had great views of three displaying males on the Santa Marta plains.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

A couple of birds heard at Arrocampo.

Western Swamphen *Porphyrio porphyrio*

Several seen at Arrocampo. Unbelievable numbers at Coto Doñana where we saw hundreds or even thousands of them at Caño Guadiamar.

Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

Seen on most wetlands

Red-knobbed Coot *Fulica cristata*

One bird provided excellent views at Dehesa de Abajo.

Eurasian Coot *Fulica atra*

Seen on most wetlands

Eurasian Stone-curlew *Burhinus oedicnemus*

One of the plains near Santa Marta and one at the Odiel marshes.

Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*

Small numbers in Extremadura and very common in Coto Doñana and the Odiel Marshes.

Pied Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

Six birds at Odiel Marshes and two birds during our visit to Dehesa de Abajo in our last day.

Northern Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

A single bird at Arrocampo.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

One of the most common waders at the Odiel Marshes.

Common Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

Eight birds near Jose Antonio Valverde and very common at the Odiel Marshes.

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

One bird on 25th and two on 27th.

Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus*

Small numbers at the Odiel Marshes.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

Good numbers at the Odiel Marshes.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

Surprisingly scarce this year at the Odiel Marshes, where we saw just a few birds.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

A flock of 50+ birds at El Rocio.

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

Good numbers, some acquiring summer plumage, on the saltpans at the Odiel Marshes.

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

Common at the Odiel marshes.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

Easily seen at Odiel Marshes and a couple near Jose Antonio Valverde.

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

At least a dozen birds at Odiel Marshes.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

Single birds or small numbers noted on four dates.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Just one bird noted in Doñana.

Common Redshank *Tringa totanus*

Good numbers at Odiel Marshes.

Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

A dozen birds or so were noted in the Odiel Marshes.

Collared Pratincole *Glareola pratincola*

A nice flock of 30+ birds provided great views of this elegant wader at El Rocio.

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

Quite common in Doñana and the Odiel Marshes.

Audouin's Gull *Ichthyaetus audouinii*

A second-calendar year bird at the Odiel Marshes.

Mediterranean Gull *Ichthyaetus melanocephalus*

A single bird at Dehesa de Abajo on the last day.

Yellow-legged Gull *Larus michahellis*

Seen at the Odiel Marshes.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*

Several at the Odiel Marshes.

Gull-billed Tern *Gelochelidon nilotica*

Ten or so birds seen at Arrocampo, similar numbers around Campo Lugar and Alange and bigger numbers during our time in Doñana.

Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*

Seen at the Odiel Marshes.

Little Tern *Sternula albifrons*

Very common at the Odiel Marshes with 50+ birds.

Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii*

Totally unexpected! A bird was found roosting with other terns at the Odiel marshes. Probably the first record of the species in Spain this year.

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

At least three birds at Odiel Marshes

Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybrida*

Amazing sighting of hundreds of birds flying over the marshes in Coto Doñana.

Black Tern *Chlidonias niger*

Very common on passage this year, with flocks of 50+ birds at El Rocio.

Pin-tailed Sandgrouse *Pterocles alchata*

Several flocks, for a total of 50+ birds, on the plains between Trujillo and Caceres.

Black-bellied Sandgrouse *Pterocles orientalis*

Ten birds at Campo Lugar.

Rock Dove *Columba livia*

Seen daily

Common Wood Pigeon *Columba palumbus*

Common throughout the trip

European Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur*

Noted on the last three days of the trip. Especially common along the road to El Rocio, where we saw more than 20 birds.

Eurasian Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

Seen daily.

Common Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

Several heard and seen on various dates.

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

One bird on its nest at Coto Doñana.

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

Heard singing near Ardea Purpurea on three nights.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

Surprisingly scarce this year. Only one bird near Campo Lugar.

Red-necked Nightjar *Caprimulgus ruficollis*

One bird was heard by some members of the group on the last morning.

Alpine Swift *Tachymarptis melba*

Good numbers at Monfragüe and Alange.

Common Swift *Apus apus*

Several flocks were seen during the trip

Pallid Swift *Apus pallidus*

Several flocks were seen during the trip

European Roller *Coracias garrulous*

Up to 10 birds seen between Trujillo and Cáceres and a two more near Campo Lugar.

European Bee-eater *Merops apiaster*

Very common. Seen and heard daily

Eurasian Hoopoe *Upupa epops*

Common. Seen and heard daily

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker *Dryobates minor*

Great views of one male in Monfragüe.

Lesser Kestrel *Falco naumanni*

Very common in Extremadura and Doñana.

Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Common, seen almost daily

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

One bird at Peña Falcon, Monfragüe.

Iberian Grey Shrike *Lanius meridionalis*

Small numbers seen daily in Extremadura

Woodchat Shrike *Lanius senator*

Very common, seen daily.

Eurasian Golden Oriole *Oriolus oriolus*

Heard on four dates but seen only a couple of times in flight.

Eurasian Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Small numbers seen in Monfragüe.

Iberian Magpie *Cyanopica cooki*

Great views of one of the most iconic birds in the region and particularly numerous in Extremadura.

Eurasian Magpie *Pica pica*

Very common. Seen daily

Western Jackdaw *Coloeus monedula*

Common, seen almost daily

Northern Raven *Corvus corax*

Small numbers seen daily.

European Crested Tit *Lophophanes cristatus*

One bird seen well at Monfragüe.

Eurasian Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

Seen or heard daily.

Great Tit *Parus major*

Seen or heard daily.

Eurasian Penduline Tit *Remiz pendulinus*

We had great views of an adult feeding a youngster during our first day in Doñana. Heard frequently there.

Woodlark *Lullula arborea*

Several heard along the Santa Marta road, one seen in front of the hotel and we had excellent views of several birds near Jaraicejo.

Thekla Lark *Galerida theklae*

Small numbers noted on three dates in Extremadura.

Crested Lark *Galerida cristata*

Common, seen daily.

Greater Short-toed Lark *Calandrella brachydactyla*

A single bird was seen and several heard at Campo Lugar. Common along the northern edge of Doñana National Park.

Calandra Lark *Melanocorypha calandra*

Very common in Extremadura with smaller number in the Doñana area.

Lesser Short-toed Lark *Calandrella rufescens*

One seen well at Coto Doñana and several heard.

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

Very common. Seen daily

Eurasian Crag Martin *Ptyonoprogne rupestris*

Seen daily in Extremadura, numerous in Monfragüe.

House Martin *Delichon urbicum*

Seen daily. Especially common at Monfragüe, where several thousand were noted.

Red-rumped Swallow *Cecropis daurica*

Small numbers seen daily.

Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti*

Heard almost daily with a few birds seen

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

Seen at Monfragüe and heard at Palacio del Acebrón.

Western Bonelli's Warbler *Phylloscopus bonelli*

A couple seen along the northern edge of Doñana NP. Heard on two more dates.

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Scarcer than on previous visits. A few birds seen along the northern edge of Doñana NP.

Iberian Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus ibericus*

Two or three birds seen very well at Palacio del Acebrón.

Great Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus arundinaceus*

Very common and vocal at Coto Doñana, some of them providing great views.

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

A couple of birds noted on the way to JA Valverde Visitor Centre.

Eurasian Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

Several seen and heard at Arrocampo and Doñana.

Western Olivaceous Warbler *Iduna opaca*

Several birds heard and at least two seen around Dehesa de Abajo.

Melodious Warbler *Hippolais polyglotta*

Relatively common on the last three days of the trip, with several birds noted each day.

Savi's Warbler *Locustella luscinioides*

Two birds seen and one more heard at Arrocampo and another two seen at Coto Doñana.

Zitting Cisticola *Cisticola juncidis*

Seen daily

Eurasian Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

Small numbers heard or seen on three dates.

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*

One bird briefly seen at El Rocio.

Western Orphean Warbler *Sylvia hortensis*

Three birds seen along the "Yellow Trail" in Monfragüe and another one seen at the Odiel marshes.

Common Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*

Single birds noted on two dates in Doñana.

Dartford Warbler *Sylva undata*

One male at Monfragüe and several, including a family party, near Jaraicejo.

Spectacled Warbler *Sylvia conspicillata*

A cooperative male near Jaraicejo and another bird along the northern edge of Doñana NP.

Subalpine Warbler *Sylvia cantillans*

At least three different males were seen at Monfragüe.

- Sardinian Warbler** *Sylvia melanocephala*
Small numbers seen or heard daily.
- Eurasian Wren** *Troglodytes troglodytes*
Heard and seen on most days in Extremadura.
- Eurasian Nuthatch** *Sitta europaea*
A single bird noted at Monfragüe.
- Short-toed Treecreeper** *Certhia brachydactyla*
Heard and seen at Monfragüe, Palacio del Acebrón and in front of our hotel in Doñana.
- Spotless Starling** *Sturnus unicolor*
Very common, seen daily
- Common Blackbird** *Turdus merula*
Common, seen daily.
- Spotted Flycatcher** *Muscicapa striata*
One bird along the northern edge of Doñana NP.
- European Robin** *Erithacus rubecula*
Heard on 27th.
- Common Nightingale** *Luscinia megarhynchos*
Common in both Monfragüe and the Coto Doñana, unsurprisingly heard with only a few seen.
- European Pied Flycatcher** *Ficedula hypoleuca*
Several birds on the way to JA Valverde and one bird at the Odiel marshes.
- Black Redstart** *Phoenicurus ochruros*
Common in Monfragüe.
- Common Redstart** *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*
Only one bird at the Odiel Marshes.
- Blue Rock Thrush** *Monticola solitaria*
Common in Monfragüe, with smaller numbers at Alange.
- Whinchat** *Saxicola rubetra*
One bird on the Santa Marta plains and a few more in Doñana.
- European Stonechat** *Saxicola rubicola*
Very common. Seen daily
- Northern Wheatear** *Oenanthe oenanthe*
Common migrant, noted on three dates.
- Black Wheatear** *Oenanthe leucura*
One male at Alange Reservoir.
- House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus*
Very common
- Spanish Sparrow** *Passer hispaniolensis*
Very common on the plains between Trujillo and Caceres, with smaller numbers elsewhere.
- Eurasian Tree Sparrow** *Passer montanus*
A couple of birds seen in front of our hotel in Doñana.
- Black-headed Weaver** *Ploceus melanocephalus*
An adult male at Dehesa de Abajo.
- Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla flava*
Very common in Doñana and the Odiel Marshes.
- Grey Wagtail** *Motacilla cinerea*
Two birds at Rio Almonte.
- White Wagtail** *Motacilla cinerea*
Small numbers recorded on most dates.
- Common Chaffinch** *Fringilla coelebs*
Common in forested areas.
- European Greenfinch** *Chloris chloris*
Seen daily.
- Common Linnet** *Linaria cannabina*
Noted on most dates.
- European Goldfinch** *Carduelis carduelis*
Seen daily.
- European Serin** *Serinus serinus*
Very common, seen daily
- Corn Bunting** *Emberiza calandra*
One of the most common birds of the trip. Seen daily.

Rock Bunting *Emberiza cia*

Half a dozen birds at Monfragüe and a singing male at Alange Reservoir.

Cirl Bunting *Emberiza cirlus*

A single male seen at Monfragüe.

MAMMALS

Red Deer *Cervus elaphus*

European Rabbit *Oryctolagus cuniculus*

Iberian Hare *Lepus granatensis*

Red Fox *Vulpes vulpes*

BUTTERFLIES

Common Swallowtail *Papilio machaon*

Spanish Festoon *Zerynthia rumina*

Large White *Pieris brassicae*

Small White *Artogeia rapae*

Western Bath White *Pontia daplidice*

Clouded Yellow *Colias crocea*

Cleopatra *Gonepteryx cleopatra*

Small Copper *Lycaena phlaeas*

Long-tailed Blue *Lampides boeticus*

Southern Brown Argus *Aricia cramera*

Red Admiral *Vanessa atalanta*

Painted Lady *Vanessa cardui*

Queen of Spain Fritillary *Issoria lathonia*

Spanish Marbled White *Melanargia ines*

Small Heath *Coenonympha pamphilus*

Speckled Wood *Pararge aegeria*

Small Skipper *Thymelicus sylvestris*

DRAGONFLIES

Iberian Bluetail *Ischnura graellsii*

Common Winter Damsel *Sympecma fusca*

Blue Emperor *Anax imperator*

Lesser Emperor *Anax parthenope*

Black-tailed Skimmer *Orthetrum cancellatum*

Red-veined Darter *Sympetrum fonscolombii*

Broad Scarlet *Crocothemis erythraea*

REPTILES & AMPHIBIANS

Spanish Terrapin *Mauremys leprosa*

Moorish Gecko *Tarentola mauritanica*

Large Psammmodromus *Psammmodromus algirus*

Andalusian Wall Lizard *Podarcis vaucheri*

Iberian Water Frog *Pelophylax perezi*

ORCHIDS

Naked Man Orchid *Orchis italica*

Champagne's Orchid *Anacamptis morio* ssp. *champagneuxii*

Loose-flowered Orchid *Anacamptis laxiflora*

Early Spider Orchid *Ophrys sphegodes* ssp. *atrata* (*O. incubacea*)

Woodcock Orchid *Ophrys scolopax*

Mirror Orchid *Ophrys speculum*

Yellow Bee-Orchid *Ophrys lutea*

Tongue Orchid *Serapias lingua*