

Spain

Extremadura & Andalucia

Tue 17th – Tue 24th April 2018



Trip photos (clockwise, from top left): Short-toed Snake Eagle • European Bee-eater • Magical Extremadura • Ferruginous Duck • Squacco Heron • Lesser Kestrel © Peter Ross/Mary Anketell/Gary Elton/Limosa Holidays

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

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Tour leaders: Fernando Enrique & Gary Elton

with Mary Anketell, Pete & Jen Bangs, Pippin Lanyon, Anne McGregor, Peter & Jillyan Ross, Tony Smith & Aileen Brown and Richard Swinbank

It's difficult to sum up the highlights of our trip this year, far too many to relate here, though the sheer number and variety of species at times will undoubtedly be the main memory we took away. The Plains around Trujillo producing a 'Bustard Extravaganza', with displaying Great and Little Bustards, sandgrouse, numerous Montagu's Harriers, four Spanish Imperial Eagles, Black Wheatear, Rock Bunting and Blue Rock Thrush. In Coto Doñana, selected highlights included a Penduline Tit attending its nest, the cacophony of singing Great Reed Warblers, hundreds of nesting Glossy Ibises and Purple Herons, the large, tiered egret and heron breeding colony, White-headed and Marbled Ducks and the bushes at our lunch stop on the last full day, which were alive with migrant warblers

Tuesday 17th April

Our flight arrived on time and after collecting our bags and organising the minibus we set off on the first part of the trip, travelling from Madrid into Extremadura. Successfully skirting Madrid in the early afternoon traffic, we started birding from the bus, enthusiastically noting the more common species as we drove along. A stop for lunch, enabled us to look at the finer identification points of Pallid Swifts, plus, for the lucky few, a male Hen Harrier, a late date for this wintering species in the region. With time largely against due to the late timing of our flight, our main birding stop at Embalse de Arrocampo was quite brief, but still proved productive. Best sightings included Western Swamphen, Savi's Warbler, Black-winged Kite, an immature Bonelli's Eagle plus several non-birding highlights that included Sawfly Orchid and a Lesser Emperor Dragonfly. After arriving at our hotel, we enjoyed a welcome evening meal and a chance to discuss plans for the days ahead.

Wednesday 18th April

We decided to opt for a leisurely breakfast, followed by a day in the Monfragüe National Park, with our hotel ideally positioned for accessing this. Our first stop was a brief road side one at Arroyo de la Vid, a small stream and bridge, which gave us views of our first Griffon, Cinereous (Black) and Egyptian Vultures, plus Bee-eaters and Serins and an unexpected Weasel, scurrying in amongst the shale-covered bank of the river. 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. The downside is that the viewpoint is sheltered from the sun for the first couple of hours of the day and we quickly realised we could do with a few more layers of clothes! Our minds, though, were largely taken off this with a host of good birds enjoyed by us all. These included Blue Rock Thrush, Rock Bunting, Black Redstart, Short-toed Treecreeper, Black Stork and a pair of Peregrines, plus the vultures of course, all three species again. 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. A leg stretch along one of the marked routes near the park's visitor centre was very welcome as our next stop. Here, a selection of warblers was our hoped-for target and, after some perseverance, we were rewarded with good views of Sardinian, Subalpine and Orpheat. The first of what was to be many Woodchat Shrikes of the trip plus Northern Wheatear and Red-rumped Swallows were also seen.

Lunch followed at a riverside picnic stop, which produced both Booted and Short-toed Eagles and several Hawfinches, which proved as tricky as ever to see! 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, which seemed rather bizarre! The Portilla del Tietar viewpoint gave us our first Spanish Imperial eagle, though disappointingly distant, high above us and quickly disappearing from view. We continued travelling through the park before retracing our route and heading back to the hotel. Birds seen as we travelled included three vocal and active Common Cuckoos at one stop, though 'spot of the day' must go to Anne who had seen an interesting-looking wheatear by the roadside and we discovered not one but two, rather smart, male Black-eared Wheatears.

Thursday 19th April

A slightly earlier breakfast this morning and a swift departure. Our destination today was the Santa Marta de Magasca Road to view the plains. We made regular stops as we travelled along the newly tarmacked road, with highlights including numerous Calandra Larks, Bee-eaters, Hoopoes, Montagu's Harrier, Southern Grey and Woodchat Shrikes, Whinchat and Common Cuckoo. Only one Great Bustard was seen, in flight, which was both disappointing and surprising, though we still had several days left in the area so we weren't, as yet, too concerned, honest! We had several sightings of both Black-bellied and Pin-tailed Sandgrouse in flight, their habit of calling regularly making locating them easier and the salient features of both species were seen. We left

Santa Marta de Magasca, taking the road towards Cáceres and driving along a nestbox-lined road, hoping to see the species they have primarily been erected for - European Roller. The Rollers performed on cue, with at least eight sat on wires near the boxes, while a good number of the boxes were occupied by Lesser Kestrels. Other birds here included a flock of at least 20 Pin-tailed Sandgrouse and another immature Spanish Imperial Eagle with a second bird appearing briefly as well.

Lunch was taken in the shade of a large hide, with the hide overlooking a distant pond that revealed several equally distant Black-winged Stilts. A Willow Warbler sang and was seen briefly nearby, the lack of trees somewhat limiting its choice of habitat! We retraced our steps to Santa Marta de Magasca, buying water, ice creams and utilising the facilities before continuing along the road that leads back to Trujillo. A picturesque stop at Rio Almonte was fruitful, with a fly-over Golden Eagle the highlight. The remainder of the afternoon was spent driving and stopping, looking for birds and enjoying what we saw. Several more Montagu's Harriers, Booted Eagles and yet another Spanish Imperial Eagle were note worthy. A pair of Little Owls spotted by Fernando on a stone wall deserved closer inspection and, whilst viewing these, we disturbed a male Little Bustard! The bird flew up and across the field in front of us, disappearing from view but allowing enough time for everyone to see it. Pleased with our success we started the journey back to the hotel, adding a Green Sandpiper on a roadside pool to the day list.

Friday 20th April

We woke to an unexpectedly windy start to the day, making our planned look for warblers near Jaraicejo rather challenging! But, after breakfast and unperturbed, we set off. Arriving at the site, we walked along the entrance track, noting Natterjack Toad spawn in some nearby water and a Woodlark singing briefly close by. Unsurprisingly, the latter proved more challenging than the former to see, but it wasn't long before we were enjoying scope views of a perched bird. An encouraging start, which was quickly followed by a Southern Grey Shrike and several Thekla Larks, the scrubby habitat very suitable for the latter species. As luck had it, a male Dartford Warbler was quickly located, the wind not putting it off and it sang and posed nicely for us. Unfortunately, the wind was showing no sign of easing, so we moved on to another site in search of Black Wheatear, with the large crag face there hopefully largely sheltered from the wind. There was unfortunately no sign of our target species, but a singing Blue Rock Thrush was a nice consolation. A break from birds (to a degree!) followed next, with an orchid site proving a nice distraction with six different species seen, though a singing Golden Oriole and pair of Hawfinches were, for some, a return to normality. A second visit to Embalse de Arrocampo gave a different spread of species, though the wind was still blowing, so any hope of the smaller reedbed birds was unlikely.

Lunch was taken outside the visitor centre, where Spanish and House Sparrows came to feed on the grass, allowing an opportunity to compare the two, while several Greenfinches in their breeding finery looked rather smart too. After lunch we visited the nearby hide, then walked down to view the edge of the reeds and expanse of water in front of us. Several Gull-billed Terns flew over, at least two Great Egrets appeared along with up to four Purple Herons, while a Western Swamphen with a chick understandably invited several 'ahhhs' from the group. A Hobby found by Pete allowed a percentage of the group to connect with it and a Shelduck was found sleeping on a section of the reservoir wall. A Kingfisher briefly flew across the mouth of the inlet in front of us and, as were leaving, an equally brief Little Bittern flew across the reedbed and dropped down; despite our efforts, it couldn't be refound.

We drove on to a further, small section of pools where we added Red-crested and Common Pochard, Black-winged Stilt and Cattle Egret to our list. All welcome additions and looked at keenly, but very much a small taster when compared with what was to greet us in Doñana! With the day having slipped past (it was so easy to get carried away!), we headed to Trujillo for a look at the town square and castle. A Red Kite, the second of the day, was seen on the outskirts of town and we detoured briefly to visit the local bullring. Lesser Kestrels breed in the roof of the bullring, but the time of day meant many of the birds were away hunting. We decided we'd return in the morning, *en route* to Doñana and we moved on to the town square. We parked adjacent to the square but, with time tight, it really was a short trip, though the erection of large marquees in the square itself had taken a degree of the impact of the square away. White Storks and Lesser Kestrels regularly flew above us, while several of the group 'yomped' up the hill for a view of the surrounding landscape from the castle itself.

Saturday 21st April

With this being our last morning in Extremadura and the wind having started finally to ease, we loaded the minibuses and began with a return visit to the Bullring at Trujillo. Unfortunately from a birding perspective, things were as quiet as the day before, so rather than waste time, we decided to start our journey south to Coto Doñana. We had several stops planned, the first to view more Spanish steppe habitat along the road to Campo Lugar. Up until now we had, surprisingly, seen only one Great Bustard, something we were to quickly remedy

after scanning the plain. At least 20 of these birds could be seen in small groups, mainly displaying males, seemingly doing everything they could to try and turn themselves inside out!! Three Stone-curlews were an added bonus, as were two more Rollers. We travelled further along the road, enjoying more views of Great Bustards and several Little Bustards; again, a species we had only seen in flight until now. A female Black-eared Wheatear was a bonus as well, though brief and viewed only from the minibus.

Alange Reservoir was our next stop, for lunch and more birds! Alpine Swifts and Gull-billed Terns greeted us and we took lunch scanning the rocky crag above, adding Rock Bunting, Blue Rock Thrush and the hoped-for Black Wheatear to our day list. A local short detour to view some recently tilled fields revealed eight Collared Pratincoles. Initially viewed distantly, several moved close to the road, giving us some great views. Two Common Quails, calling in an adjacent barley field, did what Quails do and choose to remain hidden from view. We continued our journey, arriving on the edge of the Coto Doñana park early in the evening. Viewing our first stretches of water, we noted Black-crowned Night Heron, Western Swamphen, Black-necked Grebe, Red-crested Pochard and Great Reed Warbler, before making the final part of the journey to the hotel. Again we added birds, with a fine male Pied Flycatcher, a confiding flock of Bee-eaters and six Common Waxbills perched on a roadside fence all seen well, not a bad way to end a day!

Sunday 22nd April

We started the day heading back to the lagoons we had viewed the night before, encountering a roadside Little Owl and Whinchat *en route*. Viewing again from the roadside, Black, Whiskered and Caspian Terns on the island in the centre of the lagoon were amongst the first birds seen, followed by several more Black-necked Grebes, Spoonbills, a pair of Marbled Ducks and a male White-headed Duck. The remainder of the morning was spent driving along the route they call the 'Corredor Verde', the green corridor, eventually arriving at the José Antonio Valverde visitor centre for lunch, so named after the founder of the park.

With the group in two vehicles, those in the second bus had started the journey frustratingly trying to play catch-up and view the birds found by the first. This clearly wasn't working as a plan, so, with enough birds for everyone, we basically did our own thing, with us all meeting up at the lunch stop. We crawled along for hours, stopping and finding birds in the roadside pools and tamarisk bushes that lined the track. A selection of birds seen included Glossy Ibis, Purple Herons, Wood Sandpipers and Greenshanks in the pools, Common Redstart, Garden and Subalpine Warblers, Pied Flycatcher, Turtle Dove and Woodchat Shrikes amongst the birds found in the bushes. A perched Short-toed Eagle on a pylon was a nice addition, though arguably bird of the morning was a male Penduline Tit visiting its suspended nest 15 feet in front of us, though you had to be quick, if you wanted a picture! After lunch we looked out from the visitor centre, where trees and reedbeds were alive with birds, primarily Glossy Ibises and Purple Herons. We made a short drive to a nearby road bridge, where the noise was deafening, with dozens of Great Reed Warblers singing in the small area of reeds that bordered the road. The expanse of open water here produced several more White-headed Ducks and Black-necked Grebes, with Little Bittern and Squacco Heron also seen well.

We spent the rest of the afternoon driving along the track, stopping and enjoying the spectacle of birds. Greater Flamingos, Glossy Ibis, Purple Herons, egrets and Black-winged Stilts were feeding in the flooded expanse around us, whilst Cattle Egrets and Whiskered Terns lined the roadside posts. Short-toed Larks were all along the track, with the first minibus being fortunate enough to see Lesser Short-toed Lark, too. Several hundred Collared Pratincoles were watched Hawking above the horizon and around a dozen Pin-tailed Sandgrouse were also seen, once again in flight. With time now running out we returned to the hotel, taking a shorter, albeit bumpier, route back, with Montagu's Harrier and a small flock of confiding Bee-eaters the highlights.

Monday 23rd April

After thunder and lightening throughout the night, we were relieved to wake to a dry, promising start to the day. A Tree Sparrow started the day, the first of the trip, found on the perimeter fence of the Hotel. We boarded the buses to head to our first destination, the Odiel Marshes on the outskirts of Huelva, our first port of call the salt pans there. Curlew Sandpipers and Dunlin were immediately obvious and offered a good opportunity for comparison, with several Little Stints also present. Greater Flamingos, Greenshank and Ringed Plover were also noted, as were two Slender-billed Gulls and a single Avocet. We moved and parked in the grounds of the visitor centre, adding a singing Western Bonelli's Warbler and several Whimbrel to the day's bird list, after which we walked out along the edge of the pans to a covered viewing area. The walk proved productive, with more waders, including Grey Plover and Bar-tailed Godwit, plus another ten Slender-billed Gulls and some nice views of Little Terns. A pair of Ospreys was an appreciated and hoped-for addition and a smart male Common Redstart was found frequenting the *sueda* near the viewing area. We returned to the buses and drove along the road towards the coast. The pools at the side of the road continued to reveal more waders, though all species we'd already encountered. We did notice, however, an increasing number of smaller passerines flitting through the bushes lining the road, this seemingly coming to a head when the bushes at the side of the road stopped.

We drove along a long section of the road with no bushes or cover, to find large numbers of birds had collected in the next available group of bushes. We parked in the conveniently positioned car park nearby, noting two Audouin's Gulls on a small pool with Lesser Black-backed and Yellow-legged Gulls. Lunch followed for some, whilst others took advantage of the glut of birds. The bulk of the birds were Willow Warblers, but searching through them revealed several Common Redstarts, Melodious Warblers and Western Bonelli's Warblers, with at least four of the latter feeding together in one bush!

With time running short (we did get carried away!) we headed back towards Doñana and our next destination, El Palacio del Acebrón near El Rocío. We drove along the entrance track with Nightingales singing around us and, as we drove through more open heathland, an eagle-eyed Anne called "Golden Oriole". Two males had flown up into the top of one of the handful of trees on the edge of the heath. We arrived at our destination, where we walked through an area of largely coniferous woodland with several Iberian Chiffchaffs heard singing then seen well after a bit of searching. Short-toed Treecreeper and at least two Melodious Warblers were also seen, though pride of place must go to a female Lesser Spotted woodpecker which performed admirably for us! A flying visit to the nearby 'wild west' style town of El Rocío ended the day, with ice-creams as a treat and a look at the lagoon, the latter giving us a new bird for the trip - Ruddy Shelduck.

Tuesday 24th April

Our last day had arrived and we had decided on a leisurely route with thoughts of 'mopping up' missed species and trying to get better views of some of the commoner ones. Nightingales were one such species and, for some reason this morning, these birds were particularly showy, which was a nice start to our day. Our next addition was a singing Wryneck, which performed admirably for everyone and allowed us all scope views. A short drive further on took us to a bridge where a look along the river revealed a dark morph Booted Eagle sat in a large tree which was soon joined by a Cuckoo. This sat for ages in the top of the tree, again giving scope views, which were particularly appreciated by one of the group! Another singing Wryneck and a vocal Lesser Spotted Woodpecker were also added. The remainder of the morning saw us visiting several other sites that produced a diversity of species, which included plants and insects, such as Painted Lady and Black-tailed Skimmer and birds such as Raven, more Booted Eagles and a briefly glimpsed Quail.

With no packed lunch today due to an 'admin. error' by the hotel, we took the opportunity to visit a traditional Spanish Restaurant for lunch, wisely handing the ordering of the food over to Fernando! This resulted in a lovely meal and a fitting last one together as a group. Our next birding stops were along the road to the Dehesa de Abajo, the large lagoon we had visited on our first day in Doñana. Our target bird, the elusive Ferruginous Ducks! Today, our luck was in and we ended up with good views of a pair. Western Olivaceous Warbler was another species that had been evading us and, as luck had it, a singing bird by the roadside eventually showed well enough for everyone to enjoy. Our last stop was at the main lagoon, where Caspian and Gull-billed Terns, Avocet and a pair of Marbled Ducks were a nice finale to the trip. We then made our return journey to the airport which was relatively straightforward. We boarded our flight on time, arriving slightly ahead of 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

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

Four near J.A. Valverde Visitor Centre and 20 at El Rocío.

Egyptian Goose *Alopochen aegyptiacus*

Two in flight near Trujillo and one at Dehesa de Abajo.

Common Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

A single bird at Arrocampo. Common at the Odiel Marshes.

Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea*

One distant bird at El Rocío.

Gadwall *Anas 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.

Marbled Teal *Marmaronetta angustirostris*

Four birds at Dehesa de Abajo on 22nd and two on 24th.

Red-crested Pochard *Netta rufina*

Seen on most wetlands. Common in Doñana.

Common Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Seen daily during our time in Doñana.

Ferruginous Duck *Aythya nyroca*

Male and female noted on the last day.

White-headed Duck *Oxyura leucocephala*

Four different males seen in the Doñana area on 22nd.

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

Single birds heard or seen on four dates.

Common Quail *Coturnix coturnix*

Several birds heard and one briefly seen near Dehesa Tornero.

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*

A single bird seen at Dehesa de Abajo on 21st and at least 15 noted on 22nd.

Greater Flamingo *Phoenicopterus roseus*

Very common on the wetland areas in the Coto Doñana.

Black Stork *Ciconia nigra*

At least five different birds in Monfragüe

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.

Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*

Common in Coto Doñana. Hundreds around the colony.

Little Bittern *Ixobrychus minutus*

A couple of birds seen at Arrocampo and excellent views of several birds in Doñana.

Squacco Heron *Ardeola ralloides*

Three birds noted on 22nd.

Western Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*

Very common, seen daily.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

Seen on most wetlands and rivers.

Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea*

Several at Arrocampo and very common in Doñana. One photographed with a Darvic ring had been ringed as a nestling in 2007.

Great Egret *Ardea alba*

At least two different birds at Arrocampo and 25-30 birds in the Coto Doñana.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Common, seen on most wetlands

Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

A few birds seen at Arrocampo and Doñana.

Western Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*

Five different birds, two breeding pairs and a single bird, seen at Odiel Marshes.

Black-winged Kite *Elanus caeruleus*

A single bird seen during our first visit to Arrocampo.

Egyptian Vulture *Neophron percnopterus*

Four or five at Monfragüe and a single individual along the Santa Marta road.

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 Snake Eagle *Circaetus gallicus*

Noted on three dates, with at least eight birds on 19th

Booted Eagle *Hieraaetus pennatus*

One of the most common raptors with several birds seen daily

Spanish Imperial Eagle *Aquila adalberti*

One bird at Portilla del Tietar in Monfragüe and three or four different birds along the Santa Marta road.

Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos*

Two adult birds at Rio Almonte.

Bonelli's Eagle *Aquila fasciata*

An immature at Arrocampo and one distant bird near Alange.

Eurasian Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

One at Portilla del Tietar.

Western Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

Small numbers seen daily.

Montagu's Harrier *Circus pygargus*

Noted on five dates, with at least 10 along the Santa Marta road.

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

One noted on 17th.

Black Kite *Milvus migrans*

Common. Seen daily

Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

Small number noted on three dates.

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

A few seen on most days

Great Bustard *Otis tarda*

One male in flight on the Santa Marta plains and 30, mainly males, at Campo Lugar. Seeing several of them displaying was definitely one of the highlights of the trip.

Little Bustard *Tetrax tetrax*

A close, though brief, encounter with a male along the Monroy road. We also noted five at Campo Lugar.

Western Swamphen *Porphyrio porphyrio*

Several seen and many heard at Arrocampo. Common in Coto Doñana.

Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

Seen on most wetlands

Eurasian Coot *Fulica atra*

Seen on most wetlands

Eurasian Stone-curlew *Burhinus oediconemus*

Excellent views of three at Campo Lugar.

Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*

Three seen at Arrocampo. Very common in Coto Doñana and the Odiel Marshes.

Pied Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

Six at Dehesa de Abajo on 22nd, one at Odiel Marshes and four at Dehesa de Abajo on our last day.

Northern Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

Three near La Escupidera, Doñana.

Common Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

Common at the Odiel Marshes.

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

Ten or so on a wet field before Dehesa de Abajo.

Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus*

Small numbers at the Odiel Marshes.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

One of the most common waders at the Odiel Marshes.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

Common at the Odiel Marshes.

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

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

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

Easily seen at Odiel Marshes.

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

At least a dozen at Odiel Marshes.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

One on a small pond along the Monroy road and two noted in Doñana.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

Single birds or small numbers noted on five dates.

Common Redshank *Tringa totanus*

Ten or so were noted in Doñana. Good numbers at Odiel Marshes.

Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

At least 25 seen in Doñana and even bigger numbers in the Odiel Marshes.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

Twenty or so individuals were seen in the Doñana area.

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

A single bird was noted near La Escupidera, Doñana.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

Good numbers at the Odiel Marshes with 30 plus birds.

Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata*

Five or six alongside the Whimbrel at the Odiel Marshes.

Collared Pratincole *Glareola pratincola*

Ten or so near Alange and several hundred during our time at Coto Doñana.

Slender-billed Gull *Chroicocephalus genei*

Thirteen were noted at the Odiel Marshes.

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

Quite common in Doñana and the Odiel Marshes.

Audouin's Gull *Ichthyaeetus audouinii*

A third-calendar year bird and an adult at the Odiel Marshes.

Yellow-legged Gull *Larus michahellis*

Seen at the Odiel Marshes.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*

A single seen near Alange and several at the Odiel Marshes.

Gull-billed Tern *Gelochelidon nilotica*

Ten or so seen at Arrocampo and bigger numbers during our time in Doñana.

Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne caspia*

Five in Doñana on 22nd, six at the Odiel Marshes and one at Dehesa de Abajo on the last day of the trip.

Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*

Seen at the Odiel Marshes.

Little Tern *Sternula albifrons*

Very common at the Odiel Marshes with 30+ birds, including a group of 21 resting together.

Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybrida*

Amazing sighting of more than 200 flying over the marshes in Coto Doñana.

Black Tern *Chlidonias niger*

Three on a small sandy island at Dehesa de Abajo.

Pin-tailed Sandgrouse *Pterocles alchata*

At least 35-40 in flight on the plains between Trujillo and Caceres, then a group of 14 at Coto Doñana.

Black-bellied Sandgrouse *Pterocles orientalis*

Four were seen and heard on the Santa Marta plains.

Rock Dove *Columba livia*

Seen daily

Common Wood Pigeon *Columba palumbus*

Common throughout the trip

European Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur*

An exact count of 13 noted at Coto Doñana and a single bird at the Odiel Marshes.

Eurasian Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

Seen daily

Common Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

Several heard and seen on various dates

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

Two on a stone wall along the Monroy road and a single bird *en route* near Villamanrique.

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

One calling near *Ardea Purpurea* on three nights.

Red-necked Nightjar *Caprimulgus ruficollis*

Two were head and seen by some members on the groups 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 garrulus*

Up to seven seen between Trujillo and Caceres and two more near Campo Lugar

Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

A single bird briefly seen at Arrocampo.

European Bee-eater *Merops apiaster*

Very common. Seen and heard daily

Eurasian Hoopoe *Upupa epops*

Common. Seen and heard daily

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

A couple of birds heard at Monfragüe and Palacio del Acebrón.

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker *Dryobates minor*

A female seen at Palacio del Acebrón then a male provided excellent views at Vado del Quema.

Eurasian Wryneck *Jynx torquilla*

One seen and several heard at Vado del Quema.

Lesser Kestrel *Falco naumanni*

Very common in Extremadura and Doñana.

Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Common, seen almost daily

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

Two at Peña Falcon, Monfragüe and a single bird in Coto Doñana.

Southern 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 most days in Extremadura, singing in front of our hotel. Two provided good views along the route to Palacio del Acebrón.

Eurasian Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Small numbers seen in Monfragüe and Miravete.

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.

Great Tit *Parus major*

Seen or heard daily.

Eurasian Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

Seen or heard daily.

Eurasian Penduline Tit *Remiz pendulinus*

Although we heard several, we had great views of two birds. One of them, a male, building his nest very close to the path and providing excellent views and photo opportunities.

Woodlark *Lullula arborea*

Several heard and one seen along the Santa Marta road and excellent views of several near Jaraicejo.

Crested Lark *Galerida cristata*

Common, seen daily.

Thekla Lark *Galerida theklae*

Seen daily in Extremadura.

Greater Short-toed Lark *Calandrella brachydactyla*

Small numbers noted on the plains, Alange and the Odiel Marshes and huge numbers all over the place at Coto Doñana.

Lesser Short-toed Lark *Calandrella rufescens*

Several heard and one seen well at Coto Doñana.

Calandra Lark *Melanocorypha calandra*

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

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

Seen at Arrocampo and Doñana.

- Eurasian Crag Martin** *Ptyonoprogne rupestris*
Seen daily in Extremadura, numerous in Monfragüe.
- Barn Swallow** *Hirundo rustica*
Very common. Seen daily
- Common House Martin** *Delichon urbicum*
Common. Seen daily
- Red-rumped Swallow** *Cecropis daurica*
Small numbers seen daily.
- Zitting Cisticola** *Cisticola juncidis*
Seen daily
- Cetti's Warbler** *Cettia cetti*
Heard almost daily with a few birds seen
- Long-tailed Tit** *Aegithalos caudatus*
Small numbers noted on most days in Extremadura and heard at Palacio del Acebrón.
- Savi's Warbler** *Locustella luscinioides*
One seen and heard at Arrocampo and one seen at Coto Doñana.
- Great Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus arundinaceus*
Very common and vocal at Coto Doñana, some of them providing great views.
- Eurasian Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*
Several seen and heard at Arrocampo and Doñana.
- Sedge Warbler** *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*
A single bird noted on the way to JA Valverde Visitor Centre.
- Western Olivaceous Warbler** *Iduna opaca*
It took a bit of finding but we managed to get good views of one near Dehesa de Abajo.
- Melodious Warbler** *Hippolais polyglotta*
Five were seen in the tamarisk trees on the way to JA Valverde. At least 10-12 were noted at Odiel Marshes, where a huge wave of migrants was grounded due to the stormy weather during the night.
- Willow Warbler** *Phylloscopus trochilus*
A single bird seen on the Caceres plains, at least a dozen recorded *en route* to JA Valverde and huge numbers, up to 100 birds, were everywhere at the Odiel Marshes.
- Iberian Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus ibericus*
One heard at Monfragüe and two seen very well at Palacio del Acebrón.
- Western Bonelli's Warbler** *Phylloscopus bonelli*
Three seen on the way to JA Valverde and at least six noted at the Odiel Marshes.
- Eurasian Blackcap** *Sylvia atricapilla*
Small numbers heard or seen on most dates.
- Garden Warbler** *Sylvia borin*
One of the most common migrants on 22nd with at least a dozen noted.
- Common Whitethroat** *Sylvia communis*
One at Monfragüe, two *en route* to JA Valverde and half a dozen at the Odiel Marshes.
- Western Orpheaan Warbler** *Sylvia hortensis*
Two provided good views along the "Yellow Trail" in Monfragüe.
- Dartford Warbler** *Sylva undata*
One male near Jaraicejo.
- Subalpine Warbler** *Sylvia cantillans*
Several seen displaying at Monfragüe, three *en route* to JA Valverde and half a dozen at the Odiel Marshes.
- Sardinian Warbler** *Sylvia melanocephala*
Small numbers seen or heard daily.
- Firecrest** *Regulus ignicapilla*
A male seen at Monfragüe.
- Eurasian Wren** *Troglodytes troglodytes*
Heard and seen on most days in Extremadura.
- Short-toed Treecreeper** *Certhia brachydactyla*
Heard and seen at Monfragüe and Palacio del Acebrón.
- Spotless Starling** *Sturnus unicolor*
Very common, seen daily
- Common Blackbird** *Turdus merula*
Common, seen daily.
- Mistle Thrush** *Turdus viscivorus*
A few seen in Extremadura
- Common Nightingale** *Luscinia megarhynchos*

Common in both Monfragüe and Coto Doñana, mostly heard, except for a couple of birds, which decided to perform for us in the open.

European Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*

One male *en route* to *Ardea Purpurea*, at least seven on the way to JA Valverde and a female near Palacio del Acebrón.

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

Common in Monfragüe. One at Alange.

Common Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

One on the Santa Marta plains, five noted on the way to JA Valverde and at least 10 at the Odiel Marshes.

Blue Rock Thrush *Monticola solitaria*

Common in Monfragüe, with smaller number at Alange.

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

Two on the Santa Marta plains and two more in Doñana.

European Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola*

Very common. Seen daily

Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Common migrant, noted on five dates.

Black-eared Wheatear *Oenanthe hispanica*

Great views of two males at Villareal de San Carlos and a female along the Campo Lugar road.

Black Wheatear *Oenanthe leucura*

One high on the outcrop at Alange Reservoir.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

Very common

Spanish Sparrow *Passer hispaniolensis*

Very common on the plains between Trujillo and Cáceres, with smaller number elsewhere.

Eurasian Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

Only one seen in front of our hotel in Doñana.

Black-headed Weaver *Ploceus melanocephalus*

An adult male at Dehesa de Abajo.

Yellow-crowned Bishop *Euplectes afer*

One noted *en route* to JA Valverde.

Common Waxbill *Estrilda astrild*

Half a dozen near our hotel in Doñana and a few more on the way to JA Valverde.

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*

Very common in Doñana and the Odiel Marshes, including "Shaking Steven" and its wife.

White Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Small numbers recorded on most dates.

Common Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

Common in forested areas .

Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

Three seen at Monfragüe with a further two along the "orchid trail".

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*

A couple of singing males at Monfragüe and two cooperative males at Alange Reservoir.

Cirl Bunting *Emberiza cirlus*

Male and female seen at Monfragüe.

MAMMALS

Red Deer *Cervus elaphus*

European Rabbit *Oryctolagus cuniculus*

Iberian Hare *Lepus granatensis*

Least Weasel *Mustela nivalis*
Stone Marten (dead) *Martes foina*
Iberian Lynx *Lynx pardinus*

BUTTERFLIES

Common Swallowtail *Papilio machaon*
Scarce Swallowtail *Iphiclides podalirius*
Spanish Festoon *Zerynthia rumina*
Large White *Pieris brassicae*
Small White *Pieris rapae*
Clouded Yellow *Colias crocea*
Brimstone *Gonepteryx rhamni*
Holly Blue *Celastrina argiolus*
Red Admiral *Vanessa atalanta*
Spanish Marbled White *Melanargia ines*
Small Heath *Coenonympha pamphilus*
Speckled Wood *Pararge aegeria*

DRAGONFLIES

Iberian Bluetail *Ischnura graellsii*
Lesser Emperor *Anax parthenope*
Black-tailed Skimmer *Orthetrum cancellatum*
Common Darter *Sympetrum striolatum*

REPTILES & AMPHIBIANS

Spanish Terrapin *Mauremys leprosa*
Moorish Gecko *Tarentola mauritanica*
Large Psammmodromus *Psammmodromus algirus*
Spiny-footed Lizard *Acanthodactylus erythrurus*
Iberian Green Frog *Pelophylax perezi*
Natterjack Toad *Epidalea calamita*
Iberian Ribbed Newt *Pleurodeles waltl*

ORCHIDS

Naked Man Orchid *Orchis italica*
Champagne's Orchid *Anacamptis champagneuxii*
Loose-flowered Orchid *Neotinea laxiflora*
Conical Orchid *Neotinea conica*
Sawfly Orchid *Ophrys tenthredinifera*
Early Spider Orchid *Ophrys incubacea*
Mirror Orchid *Ophrys speculum*
Yellow Bee-Orchid *Ophrys lutea*
Tongue Orchid *Serapias lingua*
Small Tongue Orchid *Serapias parviflora*