

Spain

Extremadura & La Mancha

Mon 20th – Mon 27th November 2017



Great Bustards grace us with their presence in Extremadura © Fernando Enrique/Limosa

**Report compiled by tour leader:
Fernando Enrique**

Spain | Extremadura & La Mancha

Tour leader: Fernando Enrique

with Derek Coleman, Ed Coleman, Cecile Gillard, Barbara Oldham and Bill Siggins

Monday 20 November

After a trouble-free flight, the group arrived on time at Madrid Airport. With luggage collection completed, we headed to the vehicle hire desk and then hit the open road, destination Extremadura, skirting Madrid in perfect timing to avoid rush hour. Due to the warm and sunny weather, we saw many raptors along the road, especially Red Kite, Buzzard and Kestrel, but also some more typical Spanish specialities, like Griffon and Black Vulture. We stopped for an enjoyable *tapas*-style lunch *en route* before reaching Arrocampo for some more serious birding later in the afternoon. But as soon as we stepped out of the restaurant, a huge raptor flew very low above our heads. A juvenile Spanish Imperial Eagle! Not a bad start to the trip. An even bigger Black Vulture joined the eagle, allowing nice comparison. We arrived at Arrocampo with ample time to visit one of the hides and drive along the northern side of the reservoir. In the reedbeds we found our first Western Swamphen of the trip, a very obliging Bluethroat, a big flock of Cattle Egrets and several Penduline Tits and Cetti's Warblers calling. Then we drove to a reliable spot for Black-winged Kite, where we found a nice adult bird that allowed fantastic scope views. With high expectations for the upcoming days after such a good start, we boarded the buses once more, seeing our first Iberian Magpies before arriving at the hotel close to Trujillo in the heart of Extremadura. A lovely dinner was taken and we retired early as most had been up very early that morning.

Tuesday 21 November

A chilly but clear morning greeted us today. It doesn't get light until around 8 am in Extremadura in November so we weren't able to have a pre-breakfast walk, despite the constant movement of birds outside the hotel. Once we got out, we realized that the place was full of Iberian Magpies, Song Thrushes, Serins and Sardinian Warblers, amongst other birds. But the "star bird" was a Hawfinch sitting on top of a bare tree; a bird that was destined to become a feature over the next few days. Today our destination was the plains between Trujillo and Caceres, an area of seemingly endless fields and steppes, alternating with expanses of *dehesa*, steep river gorges and the enchanting stony landscape of the granite boulders. This area, one of the best-preserved grasslands in Europe, is home to one of the healthiest populations of bustards and sandgrouse in Spain.

After an excellent breakfast we headed south, towards the plains between Trujillo and Caceres, one of the best-preserved grasslands in Europe. As soon as we arrived, a flock of six Black-bellied Sandgrouse flew overhead, while a single Great Bustard was seen in the distance. Other birds included several Hoopoes, Thekla Lark, our first of many Southern Grey Shrikes, Calandra Larks displaying and hundreds of Lapwings and Spanish Sparrows - and this was only the first stop! Navigating through the numerous tracks in the area we managed to find two flocks of 22 and 14 Great Bustards, exceptional numbers of Black-bellied Sandgrouse, smaller numbers of Pin-tailed Sandgrouse and our first Griffon and Black Vultures of the day. After a very productive morning we stopped for a picnic lunch at Rio Almonte, where we found our only Rock Bunting of the trip and other birds like Grey Wagtail, Crag Martin and Sardinian Warbler. After that, we drove through Santa Marta de Magasca and beyond to the plains, stopping on the way for one of Bill's target species, Dartford Warbler - we quickly found a very cooperative pair, much to everyone's delight.

Once again, patient waiting and observing paid dividends when a small flock of 12 female Great Bustards was spotted. We were only missing Little Bustard to complete the show so we drove back half a mile to a suitable field for this elusive species and bingo! A flock of 27 birds feeding in the tall grass allowed us prolonged scope views, along with several Pin-tailed Sandgrouse and a couple of Little Owls. On the way back to the hotel, we enjoyed the spectacle of a "murmuration" of thousands of Spanish Sparrows going to roost. After such an amazing first full day, we drove back to our hotel for another lovely dinner and a deserved rest.

Wednesday 22 November

After another excellent breakfast and with a promising weather forecast ahead of us, we visited Monfragüe National Park. Monfragüe is without any doubt the flagship of natural Extremadura. The national park encompasses a series of low, rocky hills along the Tagus River, with remnants of dense, Mediterranean forest on its north-facing slopes and it is also the place with the highest density of breeding raptors in Europe. For example, there are more than 400 pairs of Griffon Vulture and this area holds the largest Black Vulture colony on Earth, with over 300 pairs. Our first stop at Peña Falcon produced hundreds of Griffon Vultures, a few Black Vultures, a Peregrine, Black Redstart, Serin and Crag Martin, but the cold temperatures forced us to move smartly to warmer grounds. We climbed up to Monfragüe's castle, a good way to warm up. On the way up we

had the best views ever of several Firecrests and a Short-toed Treecreeper. From the castle tower, the views and birdlife were stunning, with the Griffons and Black Vultures flying at eye-level or even below us.

With the day slipping by, we drove on further into the park. We made a quick comfort stop at Villareal de San Carlos, which proved to be a good move, since we got excellent views of Sardinian and Dartford Warbler, Thekla Lark, Black Redstart, a big flock of Linnets and a pair of Cirl Buntings. After that, we stopped for lunch at a small picnic area by the river. This time, the star of the lunch break was a pair of Bonelli's Eagles, flying very low in front of us and giving us the perfect opportunity to compare the difference in size between male and female. The supporting cast over the course of our meal included numerous Griffon and Black Vultures soaring in the sky, the noisy Iberian Magpies and, in the river, Common and Green Sandpiper, Kingfisher and an unexpected Great Egret.

Further along the road, at Portilla del Tietar, our main target was one of the most iconic species in the country, the Spanish Imperial Eagle. This time we were very lucky since, as we stepped out of the car, we heard a bird calling. After a few seconds of intense searching, we managed to find an adult sitting on top of a Holm Oak. Five minutes later, the bird took off and we saw it in flight, soaring along with the vultures. One last stop at a rarely-visited corner of the reserve, produced great views of a male Lesser Spotted Woodpecker' an increasingly rare species in the UK and much appreciated by all members of the group. Reluctantly, we left this wonderful spot and we headed back to our hotel, in order to attend a lovely wine-tasting session, imparted by Juan Pedro.

Thursday 23 November

We awoke to a cloudy morning with a light breeze from the NW, the temperature was very pleasant throughout the day. Today we visited a nice array of different habitats, which resulted in probably the best day of the trip in terms of diversity, with 97 species recorded. Not bad for a single day in November! Our first stop was the plains near Campo Lugar, one of the best places to watch Great Bustards in Extremadura. By the end of the morning, more than 40 of these magnificent birds had been recorded, plus a nice array of other grassland birds and good numbers of raptors, including several Hen Harriers, lots of Marsh Harriers, a Merlin and a couple of Peregrines. This abundance of raptors might be the reason why we could only find one Stone-curlew at a traditional roost.

Our next stop was the Alcollarín reservoir, a brand new reservoir that attracts thousands of ducks and other waterbirds during the winter. We scanned the reservoir from the dam before lunch, a strategically-located watch point that gives you an idea of what's going on in the area, before a closer inspection from the road that goes around the reservoir. Some of the highlights of this first stop were an adult Black Stork, Spoonbill, Great Egret, Black-necked Grebe and huge numbers of ducks, cranes and Little Grebes, with several hundred noted. After that, we visited a small lagoon near the northern edge of the reservoir, where we found several Kingfishers, our first Egyptian Geese of the trip, numerous Snipe, Greenshank, Spotted Redshank and good numbers of ducks.

We followed the road around the reservoir stopping at several places, which allowed us to scan the different parts of the reservoir. The number of ducks and grebes was overwhelming. Thousands of Mallard and Shoveler, hundreds of Teal and Wigeon and smaller numbers of Tufted Duck, Pochard, Egyptian Goose, Greylag Goose and Black-necked Grebe were noted. We were running out of time, so we headed back to give ourselves time to get cleaned up and to head into Trujillo for a wonderful Extremaduran meal.

Friday 24 November

A cold and cloudy start soon cleared as the sun rose and we drove south again. This time our destination was the rice and maize fields near Vegas Altas, where thousands of Common Cranes spend the winter every year. But before that, we made a small detour to a small pond, surrounded by reeds. This tiny wetland has been home to a wintering Moustached Warbler, a very rare bird in Extremadura. After a bit of searching, we managed to get brief views of the little skulker several times before heading south again to the rice fields. As soon as we arrived, Common Cranes seemed to be everywhere. Meadow Pipits and White Wagtails were plentiful, as were buzzy groups of Common Waxbills and Red Avadavats. These exotics birds are now one of the most common features in the local avifauna, as they move around in big and noisy flocks during the winter. A flock of 26 Great Bustards feeding near the cranes was a nice addition. While we were enjoying these magnificent birds in our telescopes, Bill saw a bird flying over the ricefields. He rapidly noted that the bird was an owl. Indeed, it was a Short-eared Owl in plain sight at midday. Not bad!

One of the flooded fields near Vegas Altas was full of waders, including Dunlin, Little Ringed Plover, Ruff, Greenshank, Black-winged Stilt and smaller birds like Water Pipit and Bluethroat. At this same spot - and sitting on the only tree available in the area - there was a Black-winged Kite. This bird had a wing tag that we managed to read thanks to Bill's Swarovski. Later that day we contacted the ringer, who told us that the bird had been ringed as a chick only a few miles away, during the previous spring.

We spent the afternoon around the Finca Moheda Alta reserve, where a fine mix of *dehesa* and ricefields gave us some excellent birding. Amongst the huge numbers of cranes, we found Great Egrets and up to three Hen Harriers, including fantastic views of an adult male hunting Spanish Sparrows. Another highlight here was the gathering of ducks, which included Pintail, Greylag, Shoveler and Teal and also the presence of two rare wintering waders in Extremadura, Wood Sandpiper and Spotted Redshank. A male Bluethroat landed in front of us, providing fantastic views. We headed through some nice oakwoods and birded from the vehicle for a while, notching up good views of several Hoopes, Iberian Magpie, Red-legged Partridge and a nice range of finches, as well as many Common Cranes. Our journey took us down to the shores of the small Cubilar reservoir, where we spent a little time scanning the waters in search of a wintering Osprey, but to no avail. A few Egyptian Geese and a flock of at least 2000 cranes were the consolation prize. After a long day, we headed back to our hotel, where we enjoyed our last evening meal in Extremadura, before our journey to La Mancha.

Saturday 25 November

Today was mostly a transfer day. We said our farewells to Juan Pedro and Belén and reluctantly we left this wonderful corner of Extremadura. Our destination today was La Mancha, but on the way there we made several stops. The first was a secret location for Black Wheatear, a bird that is becoming increasingly rare in Extremadura. It took a few minutes and half a dozen Black Redstart and Blue Rock Thrush “false alarms”, but eventually we managed to get cracking views of one male and two females. Next stop was the Embalse de Arrocampo a large, reed-fringed reservoir complete with hides and a small visitor centre. We drove on to stop at the first roadside hide at the Embalse de Arrocampo, with a brief drive to collect a key from the visitor centre quickly allowing us access to it. Around the first hide and due to the thick fog, we could only see the birds that were close to us, like a couple of Western Swamphens, Bluethroat, Common Waxbill and Zitting Cisticola. Eventually, the sun burned off the fog and we moved to the second hide. There, we met a few members of the local ringing group, who very kindly invited us to join them. The most common species trapped in the nets was Chiffchaff, followed by Reed Bunting, Cetti’s Warbler, Penduline Tit and even a Bluethroat with a French ring. We were discussing with them the lack of Eurasian Bittern records this year, in fact, none had been recorded this autumn. And suddenly the birding gods smiled at us and a Bittern flew past in front of us. “First autumn record, there it goes” somebody said. Other birds recorded from the ringing table were a Black-winged Kite and a couple of Great Egrets. We said goodbye to our new friends and boarded the bus, destination La Mancha.

After a long and uneventful drive, we arrived at Alcázar de San Juan, where we visited La Veguilla, one of the most important wetlands in La Mancha, since it has water all year round, a rare thing in this region. In the lagoon, we found a nice selection of ducks including our first White-headed Duck of the trip and hundreds of Red-crested Pochards. Other birds noted were Shelduck, Tufted Duck, Pochard, Wigeon, several hundred Greater Flamingos and amazing numbers of Marsh Harriers, with up to 30 birds seen in flight at the same time, probably looking for a place to roost in the reeds. After a long day we arrived at our hotel, surrounded by vineyards in the heart of La Mancha.

Sunday 26 November

With a cold but promising weather forecast and after an excellent breakfast, we headed to our next destination. Today, we visited two of the most important wetlands in central Spain; firstly Las Tablas de Daimiel, at 3,000 ha the smallest of Spain’s fifteen national parks. In recent years the overexploitation of water resources for agriculture and the introduction of exotic fish put the survival of this important wetland in danger. Secondly, Laguna de Navaseca. This lagoon is now the most important place for White-headed Ducks in the region. During our visit we saw at least 150-200 of these globally threatened ducks and also five or six Ferruginous Ducks, probably the rarest breeding duck in Spain.

The lagoon was full of life, hundreds of ducks and flamingos. One of the most interesting finds was a group of 13 Whiskered Terns that apparently have decided to spend the winter in the area. A female Merlin that landed in front of us for a quick drink was another noteworthy record. But definitely the star of the show was a totally unexpected, Great Spotted Cuckoo, a bird rarely recorded at this time of the year in Spain. Although they are very early migrants, wintering records are very unusual. Other birds added to the list included, Black-tailed Godwit, a flock of 40+ Ruff, Bluethroat, Reed Bunting, Water Pipit, Purple Swamphen and the only Duncock of the trip, although most people weren’t very impressed with this little chap! We moved further on and arrived at the National Park at lunchtime. We were just finishing our plentiful lunch when Cecile spotted a big raptor being chased by a few smaller birds. It was an adult Golden Eagle being chased by several Marsh Harriers. Tired of being mobbed, the eagle landed on a distant tree, out of sight. After lunch we walked some of the numerous boardwalks of the reserve, finding a wonderful array of birds. But suddenly a couple of noisy little birds landed in front of us - a couple of Bearded Reedlings showed very well on top of the reeds. After this first encounter, we managed to find several flocks of these beautiful birds, always a favourite for the group. We made one last stop

at Rio Guadiana, where at least 3000 Cranes and 400 White Storks were getting ready to spend the night.

Monday 27 November

We only had limited time this morning, so we decided to pay a quick visit to some of the plains and lagoons near Alcazar. The first stop, at a traditional stopover site for Dotterel, produced great views of a female Merlin perched on a rock. We scanned the surrounding fields in search of this enigmatic wader to no avail. Instead, we found big flocks of Calandra Larks and Skylarks. With no time to waste, we visited La Veguilla one last time, where we found a similar selection of birds. Our last stop was the lagoon of Camino de Villafranca. A huge saline lagoon with exposed mudflats and a perfect habitat for waders. Here we found good numbers of Black-winged Stilt, Dunlin, Little Stint and thirty or so White Storks.

Successfully navigating Madrid we arrived at the airport with ample time to say our farewells and relax before the flight back to the UK and the end of a very enjoyable and successful trip to Extremadura and La Mancha. Thanks to all party members for such good humour, enthusiasm and some exceptional birding skills too! I look forward to seeing you all again on another Limosa tour very soon!

ANNOTATED LIST OF BIRDS RECORDED 138 species

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

Small numbers at Sierra Brava, common on most wetlands in La Mancha.

Egyptian Goose *Alopochen aegyptiaca*

Eight birds at Cubilar reservoir and a small flock at Alcollarin.

Common Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

Eleven birds at Sierra Brava. Common on most wetlands in La Mancha.

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

Common. Seen on most wetlands.

Eurasian Wigeon *Anas penelope*

Common. Seen on most days.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Very common and widespread. Seen on most days.

Northern Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

One of the most abundant birds of the trips. Several thousand noted.

Northern Pintail *Anas acuta*

A dozen on the ricefields of Moheda Alta

Eurasian Teal *Anas crecca*

Very common. Noted on most days.

Red-crested Pochard *Netta rufina*

A female was present at Alcollarín on 23rd. Very common in La Mancha.

Common Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Noted on most wetlands.

Ferruginous Duck *Aythya nyroca*

Fantastic views of 6 or 7 birds at Navaseca on 26th.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Small numbers noted at Alcollarín.

White-headed Duck *Oxyura leucocephala*

One male at La Veguilla on 25th, at least 170 birds at Navaseca on 26th.

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

Small numbers seen or heard on most days

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Common on most wetlands. Huge numbers at Alcollarín, with up to 1000 birds.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Common on most wetlands. Huge numbers at Alcollarín, with up to 500 birds.

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

Small numbers at Alcollarín and Navaseca.

Greater Flamingo *Phoenicopterus roseus*

Common on most wetlands in La Mancha with several hundred noted.

Black Stork *Ciconia nigra*

An adult bird was noted at Alcollarín on 23rd.

White Stork *Ciconia ciconia*

Two birds on the first day. Very common in La Mancha, with up to 300 birds near Daimiel NP

Eurasian Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*

One bird on 23rd and two birds noted in Las Tablas de Daimiel

Western Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*

Very common, seen daily

Eurasian Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

Uncommon wintering bird in Extremadura. One bird in flight at Arrocampo. First record of the season according to the members of the local ringing group.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

Seen on most wetlands and rivers

Great Egret *Egretta alba*

Small numbers of overwintering birds on four dates. More than 10 were noted at Alcollarín.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Common, seen on most wetlands

Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Common on most wetlands.

Black-winged Kite *Elanus caeruleus*

Single birds noted on three dates. Included a tagged bird near the ricefields of Vegas Altas.

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

Spanish Imperial Eagle *Aquila adalberti*

Amazing views of a juvenile on the first day and one adult at Portilla del Tietar on 22nd

Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos*

One adult chased by several Marsh Harriers seen at lunch time on 26th.

Bonelli's Eagle *Aquila fasciata*

Male and female at La Tajadilla, Monfragüe on 22nd.

Eurasian Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Single birds noted on four dates

Western Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

Common, especially at La Mancha. Seen daily

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

Two adult males on 23rd and four different birds on 24th

Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

Common. Seen on most days

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

Common. Seen on most days

Great Bustard *Otis tarda*

One of the highlights of the trip. A total of 102 birds were seen on several dates.

Little Bustard *Tetrax tetrax*

Despite the decline in numbers of this species, we managed to find a flock of 27 birds on the plains near Trujillo and we had a very close encounter with four birds near Campo Lugar.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Seen or heard on most wetlands.

Western Swamphen *Porphyrio porphyrio*

Several seen at Arrocampo, Navaseca and Tablas de Daimiel.

Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

Seen on most wetlands

Eurasian Coot *Fulica atra*

Seen on most wetlands

Common Crane *Grus grus*

A major feature of the holiday, with wonderful views and sounds of these birds on a daily basis. Especially common near Vegas Altas, where several thousand were noted feeding on the rice fields.

Eurasian Stone-curlew *Burhinus oedichenus*

Only one bird seen on a traditional roosting site on 23rd and three more on 24th.

Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*

Small numbers on most wetlands.

Northern Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

One of the most common birds of the trips. Seen everywhere!

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

A few birds at Alcollarín and Vegas Altas

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

Good numbers at Laguna del Camino de Villafranca on 27th

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

Several birds noted at Laguna del Camino de Villafranca on 27th

Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Seen on most wetlands.

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

Two birds noted near Alcollarín. Also two birds were seen at the rice fields of Moheda Alta.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

Uncommon wintering bird in Extremadura. One bird noted on the rice fields of Moheda Alta.

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

Small numbers seen on several dates

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Small numbers seen on most wetlands.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

Seen on several dates.

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

One bird seen on the ricefields of Vegas Altas and a flock of 40+ birds at Navaseca

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

A flock of 6 birds at Navaseca.

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

Common. Seen daily.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*

Very common. Seen daily.

Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybrida*

Despite being a very scarce wintering bird in Spain, we saw 13 of this graceful terns at Navaseca on 26th.

Pin-tailed Sandgrouse *Pterocles alchata*

At least 20-25 birds were noted on the plains near Trujillo.

Black-bellied Sandgrouse *Pterocles orientalis*

Excellent numbers this year, with nearly 50 birds seen, especially on the plains near Trujillo.

Rock Dove/Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*

Seen daily

Wood Pigeon *Columba palumbus*

Common throughout the trip

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

Seen daily

Great Spotted Cuckoo *Clamator glandarius*

Totally unexpected! One of the highlights of the trip. A single bird seen several times around Navaseca.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

Three birds on the plains near Trujillo and two birds seen at La Mancha on 26th

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

One bird in flight amazingly spotted by Bill near Vegas Altas.

Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

Seen on most wetlands.

Eurasian Hoopoe *Upupa epops*

Common. Seen daily.

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker *Dryobates minor*

A very obliging male seen at Monfragüe.

Iberian Green Woodpecker *Picus sharpei*

Brief views of one bird in flight at Monfragüe

Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Common, seen almost daily.

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

One or two birds seen at Peña Falcón and a "northern" bird near Campo Lugar.

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

Single birds noted on three dates. A beautiful female drinking in front of us at Navaseca will remain vivid in our minds for a long time.

Southern Grey Shrike *Lanius meridionalis*

Small number seen on varios dates

Iberian Magpie *Cyanopica cooki*

Winter flocks of this bird can be impressive and on at least a couple of occasions we watched parties of 30 or so birds trailing through the oaks near our hotel.

Eurasian Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

A few seen at Portilla del Tietar, Monfragüe.

Eurasian Magpie *Pica pica*

Very common. Seen daily

Western Jackdaw *Coloeus monedula*

Common, seen almost daily

Northern Raven *Corvus corax*

One or two birds almost daily

Great Tit *Parus major*

Common

Eurasian Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

Common

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

A small flock on 22nd and another one on 26th

Eurasian Penduline Tit *Remiz pendulinus*

Heard or seen on most wetlands. Very good views of several birds at Arrocampo.

Bearded Reedling *Panurus biarmicus*

Up to a dozen birds provided excellent views along the boardwalks of La Tablas de Daimiel.

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

One bird seen at Arrocampo on the first day

Eurasian Crag Martin *Ptyonoprogne rupestris*

Common. Seen on five dates

Eurasian Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

Good numbers seen on most days.

Crested Lark *Galerida cristata*

Common, seen daily

Thekla Lark *Galerida theklae*

Seen daily in Extremadura

Calandra Lark *Melanocorypha calandra*

Very common in Extremadura

Zitting Cisticola *Cisticola juncidis*

Seen daily

Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti*

Heard almost daily with a few birds seen

Moustached Warbler *Acrocephalus melanopogon*

A very rare bird in Extremadura. One bird seen near Madrigalejo on 24th.

Common Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

Very common. Seen daily.

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

Common

Dartford Warbler *Sylva undata*

Common. Seen or heard on most days.

Sardinian Warbler *Sylvia melanocephala*

The most common warbler of the trip, seen daily

Firecrest *Regulus ignicapilla*

Excellent views of several birds at Monfragüe

Eurasian Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Heard and seen on most dates

Eurasian Nuthatch *Sitta europaeus*

Several birds calling at Monfragüe.

Short-toed Treecreeper *Certhia brachydactyla*

A few seen very well at Monfragüe and near our hotel in Extremadura.

Common Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

Very common. Seen daily.

Spotless Starling *Sturnus unicolor*

Very common, seen daily

Common Blackbird *Turdus merula*

Common

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

Seen on most mornings around our hotel in Extremadura.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

A few birds seen in Extremadura

Eurasian Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

Common

Bluethroat *Luscinia svecica*

Several birds on both visits to Arrocampo, two or three birds near Vegas Altas on 23rd, a male provided amazing views at Moheda Alta on 24th and a couple of birds at Navaseca on 26th.

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

Common, seen daily

Blue Rock Thrush *Monticola solitaria*

Common in Monfragüe

European Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola*

Very common. Seen daily

Black Wheatear *Oenanthe leucura*

One male and two females at a secret location on 25th.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

Very common.

Spanish Sparrow *Passer hispaniolensis*

Very common with flocks of several hundred near Trujillo and around the rice fields.

Eurasian Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

Several birds seen in mixed flocks with other sparrows.

Common Waxbill *Estrilda astrild*

Very common around Vegas Altas and few birds seen at Arrocampo.

Red Avadavat *Amandava amandava*

Very common. Several flocks seen around Vegas Altas and Moheda Alta.

Dunnock *Prunella modularis*

A bird heard at Moheda Alta and a single bird at Navaseca.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

One or two birds seen daily.

White Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Very common. Seen daily.

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

Very common. Seen daily.

Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta*

A couple of birds in Extremadura and good numbers on most wetlands at La Mancha.

Common Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

Common in forested areas

Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

Excellent year for this species. Seen daily in Extremadura, with excellent scope views of several birds at Monfragüe and around our hotel.

Eurasian Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

One bird in flight at lunch time near Rio Almonte.

European Serin *Serinus serinus*

Common. Seen almost daily.

European Greenfinch *Chloris chloris*

Common. Seen daily.

European Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

Common. Seen daily.

Eurasian Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

A few birds seen at Monfragüe.

Common Linnet *Linaria cannabina*

Common. Seen daily.

Corn Bunting *Emberiza calandra*

Common, seen daily.

Cirl Bunting *Emberiza cirlus*

Male and female at Monfragüe on 22nd.

Common Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

A dozen birds at Arrocampo, including some trapped by the local ringing group. Several seen at Navaseca and Tablas de Daimiel.

BUTTERFLIES

Clouded Yellow *Colias croceus*

Red Admiral *Vanessa atalanta*

REPTILES & AMPHIBIANS

Spanish Terrapin *Mauremys leprosa*

DRAGONFLIES

Migrant Hawker *Aeshna mixta*

Common Darter *Sympetrum striolatum*

MAMMALS

Red Deer *Cervus elaphus*

European Rabbit *Oryctolagus cuniculus*

Wild Boar *Sus scrofa*