

## Bulgaria: The Secret Flyway

Sat 20th - Sun 28th September 2014

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*Photos, clockwise from top right: A first-winter male **Pied Wheatear** at Cape Kaliakra • Migrating **Bee-eaters** were the common thread of the week • Sometimes young **Red-backed Shrikes** seem to be found on every bush • Always nice to see, a **Spotted Flycatcher** • A juvenile **Red-footed Falcon**, one of many passing through • Another special bird – **Lesser Spotted Eagle** © photos on left by tour participant John van de Graaf; on right by leader Gary Elton, Limosa Holidays*

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

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## Trip Diary

**Tour Leaders: Gary Elton and Nikolay Dilchevi**

*with* **Colin Dunster, Gareth Jenkins, David Sadler & Christine Tani and John van de Graaff & Marylee Bomboy**

Once again it was a highly enjoyable and successful trip this year, with some fantastic birds and good company. On our arrival at Sofia airport we were met by Nikolay and Pancho, our guide and driver respectively, and after loading our luggage and us on the minibus, we made the drive across to the Black Sea coast and our destination for the next few days in Burgas. A lunch stop midway gave us our first real birding opportunity, where a fish-carrying Osprey was the main highlight and a further stop revealed a large field feeding group of Herons, Black Storks and Spoonbills, plus our first soaring Pelicans.

Our base in the east was well positioned for exploring the fields, marshes, lakes, woodland and salt pans around the Black Sea port of Burgas and Pomorie. We were also well situated for some good local birding, where a short walk to view the sea revealed Black-throated Diver, and both Black and Red-necked Grebes in residence.

The local salt pans were only a few minutes drive away and were the destination for our daily pre-breakfast jaunts and carefully scanning through the perched cormorants (Pygmy and Great), Sandwich Terns and Black-headed Gulls revealed Mediterranean and Little Gulls present amongst them, with a very late Little Tern one morning an unexpected bonus. The exposed water edges revealed Ruff, Wood Sandpiper and Little Stint, with nice opportunities to compare the three plover species, Ringed, Little Ringed and Kentish and a fishing Kingfisher was seen on several occasions.

During our time around Pomorie we spent time birding around the local lakes and on the hillsides watching largely for signs of aerial migration. Noteworthy sightings during this time included a fuel station stop on the edge of Burgas to watch a mixed group of c. 60 Lesser Spotted Eagles and Levant's Sparrowhawks circling around above us. Lesser Spotted Eagles also featured strongly later with a count of 350 made in total during the morning, with a single Steppe Eagle picked out by Nikolay amongst them. These were alongside several large migrating flocks of Black Storks and pelicans. Slightly more unusual species during our time around Pomorie included Collared Pratincole, Gull-billed Tern, Ferruginous Duck, Marsh Sandpiper, Short-toed Eagle and Icterine Warbler.

Red-backed Shrike would usually, for UK birders, fall into the 'scarce' category, but it was very much a common and easily seen bird here, appearing continually on tops of many bushes. Hawfinch was another bird that was seemingly everywhere, though unsurprisingly not as confiding as the shrike.

Our fourth day saw us heading north towards our next destination, further along the coast at Kavarna. Unfortunately, torrential rain accompanied us for most of our journey and the day, which meant missing out on at least one planned stop. On the plus side, our restaurant lunch was fantastic, a generous selection of traditional Bulgarian fare, and as we arrived on the outskirts of Kavarna the rain eased.

With several hours of daylight remaining we headed to do some birding in a small local valley, and we could not have timed it better as the next two hours definitely rated as one of the highlights of the trip. It became apparent that migrating birds, especially raptors, had been following the storm and now the rain had stopped, the birds appeared. Over 250 Red footed Falcons, 20+ Hobbies, eight Pallid Harriers, two Marsh Harriers, plus Lesser Kestrel and Goshawk were seen, along with a seemingly constant stream of hirundines and wagtails and several flocks of Bee-eaters.

The previous day's passage was very much a taste of things to come, with a favourable wind direction the following morning giving us another taste of visible migration. A visit to Topola valley saw large numbers of birds literally pouring along it, with an estimated 10,000 hirundines and several thousand wagtails (primarily White ) passing in front of us. Other species seen included Lesser Spotted Eagles, Levant and Eurasian Sparrowhawks, Long-legged Buzzard, Red-footed Falcon plus two Hoopoes, and several Tree Pipits. A stop higher up over the valley produced more Lesser Spotted Eagles and White Pelicans, with our count for this latter species ending up at around 1500 for the morning.

A variety of habitats were visited over the next few days and included the steppe area at Balgarevo where we enjoyed species such as Quail, Tawny Pipit and Calandra Larks plus, as seen in other European countries other than the UK, large numbers of Corn Buntings.

Durankulak and Shabla lakes gave us a different range of birds, adding Squacco Heron, Sanderling, Wood Lark and Paddyfield Warbler, amongst others, to our increasing list. The views unfortunately of the latter species were far from ideal. Some instructive birding was had prior to our lunch stop, with good views of both a ringtail Hen Harrier and Greater Spotted Eagle. It was also a useful opportunity to compare structural and plumage differences with the more numerous Pallid Harriers and Lesser Spotted Eagles.

One of the most memorable areas of the trip though was the Bolata valley, which gave us our first proper views of Red-breasted Flycatchers, with one of these, which was seen well by everyone, sporting a rather fine red breast! Other birds encountered here included a flock of Alpine Swifts, Long-legged Buzzard and a calling Eagle Owl. But with time unfortunately tight on our first visit, we decided to make a return visit the following evening at dusk, hoping to see the Owl emerging from its roost site. This proved a rather good move, with us arriving at the site the following evening to hear the Owl almost immediately. After a short wait the bird appeared, perching in full view on the opposite hillside. 'Scope views followed before it flew off, to be shortly followed by a second bird. Flushed with success we returned to the van with thoughts of our evening meal, though our journey was short lived as Nikolay slowed and stopped the van training his headlights on a Nightjar perched on the road in front of us!

As with previous mornings, our pre-breakfast birding had revolved around the small valley behind the hotel, where regular species encountered had included Hawfinches, flying up the valley and flitting through the trees. This morning, several groups perched for us openly in the treetops, allowing 'scope views, and our only Turtle Dove of the trip was also seen.

After breakfast we started our journey north, though spending the first part of the morning at Cape Kaliakra, where we spent a couple of hours birding around the castle ruins and point. Pied Wheatear was among our hoped-for targets and we were not disappointed, with two birds seen. Other birds here included at least six Red-breasted Flycatchers, Black and Common Redstarts, and a large mixed hirundine flock, which also contained several dozen Alpine Swifts.

As with our last travel day, rain was on the cards and we returned to the minibus just in time, before the heavens opened, which was unfortunately to be the theme for the next 15 hours! With our picnic lunch still waiting to be consumed, several earlier options as to where we were going to eat had largely fallen by the wayside, so when Pancho offered the use of his nearby house it seemed the ideal solution to keeping dry. What we weren't expecting was the large purpose built construction in his back garden. It transpired Pancho has a big family and loves entertaining so he had built his own restaurant/bar, complete with tables, chairs, oven, sink, TV, sound system, etc., and most importantly his own home made wine!

A very pleasant hour or so followed before we re-boarded the minibus and made our way west to our final destination, Pelican Lodge, near Silistra in the north of the country. The weather over the previous few weeks had been wet so the water level was particularly high both in the river and on the lakes we were to visit. This limited to a degree the species we were to encounter but the quality more than made up for that, with the woodpeckers particularly well represented, with Syrian, Middle Spotted and Grey-headed all seen very well. A trackside White-tailed Eagle gave breathtaking views for the occupants of the minibus at the time, and further Black Redstart and Long-legged Buzzard also added value.

Our last day was largely spent travelling. After a leisurely start to the day and journey, we crossed over the border into Romania and onto Bucharest airport to catch our return flight back to the UK.

Special thanks go to Nikolay and Pancho, for their birding knowledge and careful driving respectively, and to everyone else for making it such an enjoyable and fun trip to lead.

*Gary Elton*

A selection of photos taken by John van de Graaff, David Sadler, Gareth Jenkins and Gary Elton can be found at the link below – if you right click you can download them -  
<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.947817358563976.1073741842.629771357035246&type=1>

#### **ANNOTATED LIST OF BIRDS RECORDED**

*(Total number of species recorded by the group was 164)*

##### **Quail *Coturnix coturnix***

One at Balgarevo Steppes.

##### **Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus***

One en route to the airport on our last day.

**Mute Swan *Cygnus olor***

Common on freshwater lakes and recorded daily.

**Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna***

Common on Mandra Lake and Pomorie salt pans

**Gadwall *Anas strepera***

Small numbers were noted on three dates.

**Eurasian Wigeon *Anas penelope***

Three Pomorie salt pans and two Garvan marshland.

**Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos***

Common

**Shoveler *Anas clypeata***

Small numbers were noted at five sites

**Pintail *Anas acuta***

Largest numbers c. 20 were seen at Mandra Lake, with smaller numbers seen at a further four sites.

**Garganey *Anas querquedula***

Two female/eclipse males at Mandra Lake.

**Eurasian Teal *Anas crecca***

Very common in the south particularly at Mandra Lake with c200 on 22<sup>nd</sup>, with smaller numbers noted on four other dates.

**Common Pochard *Aythya ferina***

Recorded on three dates.

**Ferruginous Duck *Aythya nyroca***

20 were noted on Mandra Lake, two at Ropotamo reserve and six at Durankulak Lake and Garvan marshland.

**Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula***

Small numbers were noted on four dates.

**Black-throated Diver *Gavia artica***

A summer-plumaged bird offshore on our first morning in Burgas was a nice addition to our list.

**Greylag Goose *Anser anser***

Several hundred were seen in and around the Srebarna reserve.

**Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis***

Several in the south and c. 20 at Shabla Lake.

**Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena***

One off shore again on our first morning in Burgas.

**Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus***

Common Mandra Lake and Pomorie salt pans.

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

Up to six on Pomorie salt pans, with a similar number also noted just off shore on the sea.

**Black Stork *Ciconia nigra***

Noted on five dates, with the largest numbers being c120 seen on our journey from Sofia to Burgas and c. 80 high over the hillside at Mandra Lake.

**White Stork *Ciconia ciconia***

Much smaller numbers than the above species, recorded on five dates, with the largest numbers c. 20 noted on our journey from Sofia to Burgas.

**Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia***

Ten were seen enroute from Sofia to Burgas, with another single noted on 22<sup>nd</sup> and a flock of 13 in flight at Durankulak Lake.

**Squacco Heron *Ardeola ralloides***

Two at Mandra Lake on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, were followed by five more at Durankulak Lake on 25<sup>th</sup>.

**Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea***

Fairly common, recorded virtually daily.

**Great Egret *Ardea alba***

Arguably the most numerous egret, seen throughout our journey from Sofia to Burgas, and daily during our time in Burgas. A single bird was also seen at Srebarna reserve.

**Little Egret *Egretta garzetta***

Common, noted on all but one day.

**White Pelican *Pelecanus onocrotalus***

Seen daily during our time in Burgas and Karvana. Large numbers included 50 'pink' birds collected on a small island at Vaia Lake, and an impress 1,500 in several migrating flocks over the Topola Valley and Balgarevo during the morning of 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Dalmatian Pelican *Pelecanus crispus***

Seen daily during our time around Burgas, with the largest number being c100 over the hillside watchpoint at Lake Mandra, c. 30 were also noted at Srebarna Reserve.

**Pygmy Cormorant *Phalacrocorax pygmeus***

Noted and easily seen throughout the trip in suitable habitat.

**Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo***

Very common, and easily seen.

**Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis***

Noted at two sites in the North, Kamen Bryag and Cape Kaliakra

**Lesser Kestrel *Falco naumanni***

Only one was positively identified, seen during our 'Falcon bonanza' in the small valley just outside Kavarna.

**Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus***

Common throughout, recorded daily.

**Red-footed Falcon *Falco vespertinus***

Seen daily with some nice photo opportunities of perched roadside birds. The most impressive numbers though were on the afternoon of 23<sup>rd</sup>, where an estimated 250 individuals were seen.

**Hobby *Falco subbuteo***

Recorded virtually daily, with the afternoon of the 23<sup>rd</sup> again producing the maximum number, around 20 birds.

**Peregrine *Falco peregrinus***

Single birds were seen on three dates, at Kavarna and Topola Valleys and Cape Kaliakra

**Osprey *Pandion haliaetus***

Six in total on four dates.

**Honey Buzzard *Pernis apivorus***

Two birds were seen on three dates.

**Black Kite *Milvus migrans***

Single birds on two dates at Kablachtovo Hills and Mandra Lake.

**White-tailed Eagle *Haliaeetus albicilla***

A second Calender year bird was seen very well at Srebarna Nature Reserve.

**Short-toed Eagle *Circaetus gallicus***

A good showing with birds recorded on six occasions.

**Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus***

Common, with up to 15 seen daily.

**Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus***

One, a ringtail, at Durankulak lake was made more obvious following the number of Pallid Harriers we had been fortunate enough to see.

**Pallid Harrier *Circus macrourus***

Our arrival at the Kavarna Valley coincided with a passage of this species with eight seen in total including four males, which gave us great views. Four more, seemingly all 1<sup>st</sup> year birds were seen two days later at Durankulak Lake and Kamen Bryag, the latter bird briefly watched harassing a Long-legged Buzzard.

**Levant Sparrowhawk *Accipiter brevipes***

Double figure counts were made during our first full day, at the Kablachtovo Hills, and on the 24<sup>th</sup> when a mixed flock of c. 12 Levants, and 20 Lesser Spotted Eagles, were watched together from the roadside in Burgas. Several other single birds were also noted during our stay.

**Eurasian Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus***

Common, with birds seen daily seemingly everywhere, with a maximum of 30 on the 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis***

Our first a perched immature bird at Mandra Lakes, was followed by further single birds

**Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo***

Common, several noted daily.

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

Single birds were noted on four occasions during the trip.

**Lesser Spotted Eagle *Clanga pomarina***

Birds were noted on five dates, with 350 on the 21<sup>st</sup> by far the highest count, with the majority of these being seen from our watchpoint on the Kablachtovo Hills.

**Greater Spotted Eagle *Clanga clanga***

Instructive views were had of a single bird at Durankulak lake

**Steppe Eagle *Aquila nipalensis***

A sub-adult bird over the Kablachtovo hills was a welcome addition to the list.

**Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus***

Heard calling at five different sites.

**Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus***

Small numbers noted at wetland sites visited

**Coot *Fulica atra***

Noted at all wetland sites, with 100s, if not 1000s present on Vaia Lake.

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

Five were seen around Pomorie Lake.

**Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta***

35 were seen on the Pomorie South Pans.

**Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola***

Two Pomorie salt pans

**Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula***

Easily seen around Pomorie Lake

**Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius***

As above and a useful comparison.

**Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus***

Seen daily around Pomorie Lake.

**Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago***

One Pomorie salt pans and four at Durankulak

**Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus***

A maximum of six were noted on several dates at Pomorie Lake

**Redshank *Tringa totanus***

Noted daily around Pomorie Lake

**Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis***

One seen well at Pomorie on the afternoon of the 21<sup>st</sup>, but unfortunately disappeared quickly out of view.

**Greenshank *Tringa nebularia***

Several were seen on our pre breakfast visits to Pomorie salt pans

**Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus***

One at Pomorie salt pans on the afternoon of 21<sup>st</sup>

**Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola***

Up to eight were seen on our pre breakfast visits to the salt pans.

**Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos***

One on a roadside lake as we returned to the hotel on the afternoon of 27th

**Little Stint *Calidris minuta***

Easily seen around Pomorie salt pans.

**Dunlin *Calidris alpina***

Recorded daily around Pomorie salt pans.

**Sanderling *Calidris alba***

Seen at Durankulak beach

**Ruff *Philomachus pugnax***

Maximum of two daily at Pomorie Salt pans.

**Collared Pratincole *Glareola pratincola***

Two at Pomorie on the afternoon 21<sup>st</sup>, had presumably remained totally still and undetected until they took off and flew over us.

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

Common along the coast, and recorded daily.

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

One, an adult, at Durankulak lake on 25th

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

Common and seen virtually daily.

**Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus***

Seen daily at Pomorie salt pans, with c20 at Shabla Lake and 4 at Cape Kaliakra

**Mediterranean Gull *Ichthyaeetus melanocephalus***

Common along the coast

**Little Tern *Sternula albifrons***

A late winter plumaged bird was found sitting in amongst Sandwich Terns at Pomorie on 23rd

**Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybrida***

The commonest Marsh Tern, with max counts of c20 at Vaia Lake and 10 at Shabla Lake.

**Black Tern *Chlidonias niger***

One at Shabla Lake.

**White-winged Black Tern *Chlidonias leucopterus***

One at Durankulak and two at Shabla Lakes on 25<sup>th</sup>

**Sandwich Tern *Thalasseus sandvicensis***

Common along the coast

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

Two were seen very well quartering grassland at the Pomorie south pans.

**Common Tern *Sterna hirundo***

Fairly common along the coast particularly in the south

**Feral Dove/Rock Dove *Columba livia***

Common

**Wood Pigeon *Columba palumbus***

Only a handful seen

**Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur***

Two seen, one at the Balgorevo steppes and a juvenile on wires on our last pre breakfast walk.

**Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto***

Common

**Eurasian Eagle Owl *Bubo bubo***

After initially hearing one calling in Bolata valley late afternoon on the 24<sup>th</sup>, a return visit was made the following evening, where one was seen brilliantly perched high on the cliff top with a second seen in flight shortly after.

**Little Owl *Athene noctua***

One was heard calling late in the night out side our hotel at Pomorie.

**Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus***

A bonus find, with one perched on the road and seen well in the headlights as we returned from the Bolata valley on the evening of 25<sup>th</sup>.

**Alpine Swift *Tachymarptis melba***

Several flocks of c. 20 birds were seen over the Bolata valley and at Cape Kaliakra

**Common Swift *Apus apus***

Recorded in small numbers of four dates.

**Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis***

Four seen during our stay in Pomorie.

**European Bee-eater *Merops apiaster***

Many seen and recorded on six dates.

**Hoopoe *Upupa epops***

Four seen in total during the trip.

**Middle Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos medius***

A flight view at Ropotamo reserve was followed by perched views in the garden at Pelican Lodge.

**Syrian Woodpecker *Dendrocopos syriacus***

Recorded regularly during the trip, with good views had on several occasions.

**Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major***

Several noted during the trip.

**Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis***

More often heard than seen; recorded most days.

**Grey-headed Woodpecker *Picus canus***

Our first were brief views of two in the Topola Valley, excellent views of several followed later in the week, with a particularly confiding bird at Malak Preslavets lake and others on our last morning's walk and stop at the Bee-eater colony on our journey back to the airport.

**Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio***

Abundant, particularly around Pomorie and Karvana, with lesser numbers in the north.

**Golden Oriole *Oriolus oriolus***

Two were seen briefly in flight during our time in the Kablachtovo hills.

**Jay *Garrulus glandarius***

Quite common, recorded daily.

**Magpie *Pica pica***

Common

**Jackdaw *Corvus monedula***

Common

**Hooded Crow *Corvus cornix***

Noted on the majority of days

**Rook *Corvus frugilegus***

200+ on wires near Silistra on 26<sup>th</sup>.

**Raven *Corvus corax***

Several were seen daily during our time around Pomorie.

**Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris***

At least one with a passerine flock at Malak Preslavets Lake.

**Great Tit *Parus major***

Noted most days.

**Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus***

Noted most days

**Sand Martin *Riparia riparia***

Noted regularly in amongst the migrating hirundine flocks.

**Swallow *Hirundo rustica***

Very common, with thousands seen on some days.

**House Martin *Delichon urbicum***

Again noted at times in large numbers in the mixed hirundine flocks.

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

Recorded most days in small numbers.

**Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus***

Several noisy roving flocks were seen on the 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Calandra Lark *Melanocorypha calandra***

A mobile flock of around 25 birds were seen on the Balgarevo Steppes, with reasonably views eventually had by everyone.

**Crested Lark *Galerida cristata***

Recorded daily, with particularly confiding birds encountered at Pomorie.

**Sky Lark *Alauda arvensis***

At least six at the Balgarevo Steppes.

**Wood Lark *Lullula arborea***

Four at Durankulak lake on 25<sup>th</sup>, we found four more the same day further round the coast.

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

Several were heard during the trip

**Great Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus arundinaceus***

One appeared briefly on the top of some reed stems at our last stop of the day on 21<sup>st</sup>

**Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus***

Noted on several occasions around Pomorie, with birds easily seen around Durankulak Lake.

**Paddyfield Warbler *Acrocephalus agricola***

One was glimpsed briefly in the reed bed at Durankulak Lake.

**Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus***

At least one on the 21<sup>st</sup>, with again several noted at Durankulak Lake.

**Icterine Warbler *Hippolais icterina***

A rather drab individual was seen well just after our lunch on the hillside at Mandra Lake.

**Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus***

Recorded daily, with a maximum of c. 10 on 27<sup>th</sup>.

**Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita***

Again recorded virtually daily in seemingly slightly lower numbers than the above.

**Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla***

Birds were noted on five dates.

**Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin***

A retrospective tick, with one turning up on Gary's camera screen, in amongst a series of Red-breasted Flycatcher pictures!

**Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca***

Recorded on five dates, with best views of several birds around our lunchtime stop at Balgarevo.

**Common Whitethroat *Sylvia communis***

Amazingly only one was seen, during our lunch stop on 25<sup>th</sup>

**Bearded Tit *Panurus biarmicus***

Several were seen at Durankulak and Shabla Lakes.

**Nuthatch *Sitta europaea***

One at our lunch stop at Mandra Lake on 21<sup>st</sup>, with two at Malak Preslavets lake on 27<sup>th</sup>.

**Treecreeper *Certhia famaliaris***

A singing bird was noted at the boardwalked Ropotamo reserve

**Starling *Sturnus vulgaris***

Common, recorded daily

**Blackbird *Turdus merula***

Seen most days

**Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos***

Only recorded in the North, with largest numbers in the woodland and gardens near Pelican Lodge.

**Robin *Erithacus rubecula***

Heard on various occasions, with birds only seen at the Bolata Valley.

**Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros***

Singles at Cape Kaliakra and Malak Preslavets Lake

**Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus***

Recorded at Malak Lake (four), Balgarevo and Cape Kaliakra (two).

**Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra***

Recorded on five dates, with a maximum of six on 21<sup>st</sup>, the majority around the Pomorie area

**Pied Wheatear *Oenanthe pleschanka***

Two seen well at Cape Kaliakra

**Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata***

Seen everyday day

**Red-breasted Flycatcher *Ficedula parva***

Our first was at our hillside watchpoint near Mandra Lake on 22<sup>nd</sup>, which was followed by three including a red-breasted bird at the Bolata valley, and c. 12 at Cape Kaliakra.

**House Sparrow *Passer domesticus***

Abundant

**Spanish Sparrow *Passer hispaniolensis***

Several large flocks were seen as we travelled from the airport on day one, with others seen around the Pomorie area over the following two days.

**Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus***

Seen daily in small numbers.

**Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava***

Seen at Pomorie saltpans, with fly over calling birds also regularly noted throughout the trip.

**Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea***

Recorded on five dates, with a max. of three on 24<sup>th</sup>.

**White Wagtail *Motacilla alba***

Common, with migrating birds noted regularly in small flocks of 50+ birds.

**Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis***

A perched bird was seen by Colin and Gary at a roadside stop on day 1.

**Tawny Pipit *Anthus campestris***

At least five were seen on our second visit to the Balgarevo Steppes, with several birds seen very well.

**Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis***

Noted daily, with the majority of birds being fly over calling birds, though perched birds were also seen well

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

Unfortunately only heard, at Balgarevo, though at least one was seen there by Nickolay.

**Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs***

Noted daily, at various sites.

**Greenfinch *Chloris chloris***

Several were noted during our time in the north.

**Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis***

Common, recorded daily.

**Linnet *Linaria cannabina***

Recorded on five dates, with c. 40 at Balgarevo Steppes being the largest number recorded.

**Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes***

Seemingly very common, with birds recorded daily at various sites.

**Corn Bunting *Emberiza calandra***

Fairly common, with a flock of c. 150 birds noted at the Balgarevo Steppes.

**MAMMALS**Red Deer *Cervus elaphus*Red Squirrel *Sciurus vulgaris***AMPHIBIANS**Common Tree Frog *Hyla arborea* (heard only)Marsh Frog *Rana ridibunda***BUTTERFLIES & MOTHS**Large White *Pieris brassicae*Small White *Artogeia rapae*Clouded Yellow *Colias crocea*Small Copper *Lycaena phlaeas*Lesser Fiery Copper *Lycaena thersamon*Brown Argus *Aricia agestis*Common Blue *Polyommatus icarus*Peacock *Inachis io*Red Admiral *Vanessa atalanta*Painted Lady *Vanessa cardui*Comma *Polygonum c-album*Cardinal *Argynnis pandora*Spotted Fritillary *Melitaea didyma*Woodland Grayling *Hipparchia fagi*Meadow Brown *Maniola jurtina*Small Heath *Coenonympha pamphilus*Grizzled Skipper *Pyrgus malvae*Hummingbird Hawkmoth *Macroglossum stellatarum***DRAGONFLIES**Southern Darter *Sympetrum meridionale*Common Darter *Sympetrum striolatum*Migrant Hawker *Aeshna mixta*Southern Migrant Hawker *Aeschna affinis*Eastern Willow Spreadwing *Lestes parvidens*