

Limosa

CYPRUS: SPRING MIGRATION ON APHRODITE'S ISLE TRIP REPORT AND SYSTEMATIC LIST



The group enjoyed fantastic views of Cyprus Warbler on our 2024 tour © Gareth Rees, tour participant

CYPRUS: SPRING MIGRATION ON APHRODITE'S ISLE

2-9 April 2024

Leader: Gary Elton

Trip Diary

Tuesday 2 April

The group's flight arrived slightly ahead of schedule, although as is often the case, luggage retrieval then took longer than hoped! Gary met everyone at Arrivals and with the luggage loaded into the bus, we headed off to our first birding spot of the trip. After a twenty-minute drive, we arrived at a large lake just outside the town of Oroklini.

There were two hides, on the north and south sides of the lake, and the first birds seen on looking out from the northern one were Greater Flamingos. These were quickly followed by some familiar faces, in the form of Little Grebe, Shoveler and a solitary Common Pochard. At least two pairs of Red-crested Pochard were also noted and it was pleasing to see this species in a more natural environment.

We moved on to the southerly hide which had a selection of pools and scattered islands in front of it. New birds quickly followed which included three Garganey, at least five Ferruginous Ducks and some distant Ruff, Black-tailed Godwits and Cattle Egrets. Black-winged Stilts were also scattered around the pool, with smaller numbers of Spur-winged Lapwings noted too.

The journey to Paphos was straightforward and we arrived in good time, checked in to our rooms before meeting again for dinner and an early night with a busy week ahead of us.

Wednesday 3 April

With our plans for the day centred around the Paphos Headland, we met as soon as we could for breakfast before heading out. Our route for the morning was a walk on the coastal path around the headland, then into the Archaeological site, before breaking for lunch in a local taverna to then return to the Archaeological site for the remainder of the afternoon.

Our birding started with both Common Sandpiper and Common Kingfisher on the rocks along the shoreline and as we approached the headland, we took one of the dirt tracks which ran parallel to the path and this proved to be a good move as we discovered several feeding Yellow Wagtails. Closer inspection revealed three different subspecies were present, the commonest in the area was the black-headed *feldegg*, along with *thunbergi* and *dombrowski*.



Red-throated Pipit © Gareth Rees, tour participant

There were also at least six Red-throated Pipits with the wagtails, with the majority showing at least a wash of red colour on their throats.

We approached the headland to be beckoned over by some other birders. A Sand Plover had been found earlier that morning and was apparently still present. As we approached, we were met by an increasing amount of mist, and our first views were somewhat mixed. The bird certainly looked interesting, and the first impression was the daintiness of the bird and its small bill, which seemed wrong for Greater Sand Plover.

The mist then lifted and we were rewarded with some nice views of the bird.

Concerns had been shared on the local WhatsApp group and attention drawn to the fact that the closest breeding Greater Sand Plovers (to Cyprus) were in Turkey and were the smaller billed *columbinus* race which looks very similar to 'Lesser' Sand Plover. The debate extended on well into the evening until it was finally agreed that the bird was indeed a Tibetan (Lesser) Sand Plover and believed to be a first for Cyprus.

We walked on towards the harbour, noting a brief overflying Tawny Pipit and a non-avian highlight in the form of a feeding Striped Hawkmoth.

Entering the Archaeological site, we headed to the western edge where we found several Northern Wheatears, Lesser Whitethroats and Chiffchaffs. Lunch followed, after which we returned to the site focussing our attention on the eastern side.

With the temperature now moving into the high twenties and clear blue skies with little wind, bird activity was, unfortunately, rather limited. This resulted in our afternoon walk producing a male Whinchat, male Redstart, Hoopoe, Tree Pipit and a flyover Stone-curlew.

We found plenty of Lesser Whitethroats, but all we could find accompanying them was a handful of Chiffchaffs and Blackcaps. Wheatears featured too, around a dozen in total, but all were Northerns.



Striped Hawkmoth © Ron and Sue McIntyre, tour participants

Thursday 4 April

Our main destination today was the Troodos Mountains and we set off promptly after breakfast. We had several stops planned along the way, with the first of these being a traditional Cyprus Scops Owl roosting site. The birds can be rather fickle and we had several visits planned over the week should we fail on the earlier ones. Today, however, we struck lucky with two birds found on our arrival, asleep in their favoured area.

Our next stop was a small pull-in with a bridge spanning a dry riverbed. Climbing out of the bus, the first thing we heard was the buzzing song of a Cyprus Wheatear and it wasn't long before we had added this second Cyprus endemic to our list. It turned out there were at least four males in the area, and more were to follow during the day.

We took a short walk around the general area which proved a good move as we found several Tree Pipits and Blackcaps plus a singing Eastern Olivaceous Warbler, with at least one other present. A flock of Jackdaws showed the paler nape markings of eastern birds, and a Peregrine was a welcome addition flying over the area.

Non-avian additions included Eastern Festoon, Paphos Blue and Orange-tip butterflies, and two species of orchid.

Our next stop was Troodos village where our luck appeared to continue, with a series of routes centred around the village carpark producing all the endemic species we had hoped to

see. Added bonuses included an Alpine Swift and at least two Pallid Swifts, with the latter birds' identity left in no doubt as they flew around in the company of several Common Swifts.



Cyprus Wheatear © Gareth Rees, tour participant

Our first Masked Shrikes appeared too, always a welcome addition, although views were rather brief.

Next up was the Botanical Gardens which produced a nice range of species including several Serins, ten or so Red-rumped Swallows, a pair of Masked Shrikes and a pair of Blue Rock Thrushes which were high up on the nearby shale slopes.

A large parking area a short drive further along the road was to be our lunch stop, which proved a good move with some nice bird surprises in store for us. The first of these was a singing Woodlark although, unfortunately, it remained hidden from view as it sang over the tree canopy above us. In contrast, a showy pair of Masked Shrikes appeared on a nearby fence line, and whilst watching these, a smaller bird was noted visiting a small puddle nearby. The bird's identity was quickly solved, a female Crossbill, and as we watched a second larger bird flew in next to it, a Hawfinch, not what we were expecting, with a second Crossbill then joining them too.

We then returned to the coast with our last stop of the day being a series of water tanks on the outskirts of the village of Agia Vavara. We enjoyed a very productive hour here, with both Baillon's and Little Crakes, Squacco and Purple Herons, Great Spotted Cuckoo, Peregrine and Long-legged Buzzard all seen.

Friday 5 April

Our travels today took us along the west coast and into the Agamas Peninsula and whilst we waited for the bus to arrive, we found both Pallid and Common Swifts over the hotel, along with a single Sand Martin.

Our first stop was only a short distance from the hotel, a small beach area with a series of rocky outcrops above it. Our hoped-for species here was Blue Rock Thrush and with no sign of it as we viewed from the beach area, we moved up onto the rocks themselves. We didn't have to wait long for the bird to appear, a cracking male which was surprisingly confiding.



Blue Rock Thrush © Gareth Rees, tour participant

Next along the coast was a large reservoir, where we parked and spent an hour or so exploring the general area. One hoped for species here was our last endemic, Cyprus Warbler, and we didn't have to wait long before the first one appeared in view. We enjoyed numerous sightings of at least four male birds during our visit, offering some nice photo opportunities.

Cyprus Wheatears were easily seen too with their far carrying buzzing song signalling their presence. Another vocal bird, Great Spotted Cuckoo, was seen as well, with two birds calling and following each other around the general area. Several Chukar Partridges were also present, the first in flight and the second perched up in view on a rock.

We continued along the coast to Cape Drepanum. This can be a good migration spot and we started out full of anticipation, although given the time of day and fine weather, we were also to a degree realistic. We worked our way around the site, noting both Eastern Black-eared and Isabelline Wheatears, a small flock of five Short-toed Larks, and a fly over flock of four Grey and seven Purple Herons.

We continued onto the Agamas Peninsula, with our last destination of the day being the Baths of Aphrodite.

On arrival, lunch was our priority, after which we spent the next couple of hours exploring the area. We walked around the old campsite before taking a short walk along the coastal track to return via Aphrodite's Bath before finally exiting through the Botanical Gardens.

Another Isabelline Wheatear was a welcome addition, and we noted at least seven Tree Pipits during our time in the area. Cyprus Wheatears were again visible, and Red-rumped Swallows flew over us almost continually. A distant calling Black Francolin remained just that, and two Eastern Olivaceous Warblers, whilst considerably closer than the francolin, did everything they could, to stay hidden, only giving us the occasional glimpsed view.

The highlight and in many ways the frustration of the day, was a bunting that appeared on the base of the cliff face. Distance made picking out any detail virtually impossible and whilst 'back of the camera' shots seemed to imply it was probably an Ortolan, habitat meant Cretzschmar's couldn't be ruled out.

Our journey back to the hotel produced two Long-legged Buzzards and as we returned slightly earlier than planned, this allowed for some extra birding by some of the group which resulted in another Eastern Black-eared Wheatear, this time a male, and six more Short-toed Larks.

Saturday 6 April

Today was the day that just kept giving. An early walk to the headland for some of the group produced at least fifty Red-throated Pipits, many sporting brick red chests.

Breakfast was followed by a prompt departure with our plan for the day being to head along the east coast and spend the bulk of the time in the Akrotiri area. Our route took us past the Griffon Vulture colony at Kensington Cliffs, although with the temperature already rising, we needed a degree of luck if we were to find them still there.

Luck certainly played its part again, with our drive through nearby Episkopi coinciding with a kettle of raptors spiralling up into the sky alongside us. We pulled over to look, and sure enough, they were the Griffon Vultures. Around fifteen in number, being joined at one stage by a Peregrine and we watched them drift higher and higher, eventually disappearing from view.

The area we had just pulled into looked like it could be worth exploring, so we spent ten minutes looking around. A Masked Shrike was the best bird and we also noted several more orchids, including Pyramidal and Fragrant Bug.

A set of water tanks followed next, and we enjoyed a leisurely walk along the side of these, birding as we went. Various Yellow Wagtail races were present and noisy Green and Wood Sandpipers flew up as we disturbed them, although they quickly resettled again.

Several Ruff and Common Snipe were also noted, along with Cattle and Little Egrets and a single Purple Heron. A flock of Short-toed Larks flew over calling and a glimpsed male Little Crake eventually gave everyone acceptable views.

Our next stop was Akrotiri Salt Lake, with us driving first along a stretch of road called Lady's Mile which is sandwiched between the lake and the beach. We drove along periodically stopping to look at and for birds. Ruff and Little Stint were the most common, followed by Kentish Plover. Four Little Ringed Plover and single Spotted Redshank and Dunlin were also noted, along with the expected Greater Flamingos.

Another short drive took us to a monastery, complete as is often the case in this part of the world, with numerous cats. We walked out of the carpark and around to a large square, tree-lined, pool where we stood in the shade scanning the area with Black-crowned Night Heron, Purple Heron, Ferruginous Duck, Shoveler, Teal and Little Grebe amongst the species seen.

Returning to the bus, we then headed on to our lunch stop, a small chapel complete with a large, vegetated picnic area. Edward, our driver, prepared our lunch and whilst he did this, we went for a short walk. Initially, we took a path that ran through the bushes and we didn't go far before we flushed a bunting. Frustratingly brief and giving just one soft call, it was either an Ortolan or Cretzschmar's Bunting but it flew off, seemingly heading to the outside edge of the site.

We decided to head back through the gate and then along the road to look for it but hadn't gone far before a black and white flycatcher was spotted on the fence that borders the site. This too quickly vanished, and whilst we stood hoping it would reappear, a Common Redstart dropped into view. We enjoyed nice views of the redstart, a female, and whilst we watched, the flycatcher reappeared, briefly perching in full view and for long enough to confirm its identity as a Collared.

Lunch was next and then back for more flight views of the flycatcher, which was now reluctant to settle in view again for us. Another bonus bird was a stunning Wood Warbler, which again appeared briefly before also vanishing.

A drive along a series of sand tracks followed next, with several large shallow lagoons. There were only a few birds on the lagoons including a Black-crowned Night Heron, Greenshank, three Ruff, two Little Stint and a Kentish Plover.

We headed on to Akrotiri Marsh next, noting two Marsh Harrier as we arrived. We parked and headed round to the tower hide. Immediately obvious were half a dozen Spur-winged Lapwings and a Kingfisher flashed by calling. We could hear two Black Francolins calling and we eventually tracked down both, one was on a raised mound of earth, the other in a small bush, not where we had expected to find it!!

We then drove along the road that runs adjacent to the marsh, stopping periodically to view the birds on show. Ruff, Green and Wood Sandpipers, Spur-winged Lapwing, Snipe and Teal, were all noted. We made several stops and at one of these a small male harrier flew over scattering the birds out over the marsh. Frustratingly, it was flying directly away from us and into the sun making conclusive identification impossible.



Blue-cheeked Bee-eater © Gareth Rees, tour participant

Our next stop was to look at a flock of around forty-five Glossy Ibis on the marsh, and whilst watching these, the distinct brrrp brrrp of a bee-eater was heard. The coarser sounding note was typical of Blue-cheeked, and we didn't have to wait long to confirm this, as they appeared above us. The birds proceeded to fly around, landing occasionally in some roadside trees, giving us some fantastic views!

We made one last stop at the far end of the marsh which resulted in us finding Black-crowned Night Heron, Black-winged Stilt, a pair of Garganey and two Marsh Sandpipers which were in a small flock of Ruff. Seven Purple Herons were also seen heading over the reed bed.

As we drove out, the small male grey harrier reappeared over an adjacent field and this time, we could clearly see that it was a male Pallid, with the bird even settling momentarily on the ground.

Sunday 7 April

The day started with several of the group assembling at the headland shortly after dawn. Once again Red-throated Pipits were clearly arriving, with birds settling on the rocks on the headland before moving in small flocks onto the Archaeological site.

Looking out to sea proved a good strategy as did checking the gulls that flew by. Whilst the majority were Yellow-legged, there were also two Slender-billed and one Baltic Gull. A Caspian Tern was an excellent bonus, and a male Marsh Harrier was watched flying north before it changed tack and headed inland.

After breakfast, our first stop was along the coast at the largely agricultural area of Mandria. We made several stops, checking out the tracks and fields but things were clearly on the quiet side, and the best birds were a small flock of Alpine Swifts and several Short-toed Larks and Red-throated Pipits in a recently harvested field.

Next was nearby Asprokremnos Reservoir, where we first visited the area below the dam, after which we headed to a small wood adjacent to the dam itself.



Long-legged Buzzard © Gareth Rees, tour participant

A walk around several of the tracks at the lower part of the dam, produced a pale looking Long-legged Buzzard, which was constantly mobbed by the local Hooded Crows. Chukar Partridges were flushed on several occasions, with one sitting in view for us on the rock face by the dam overflow. A pair of Great Spotted Cuckoos flew noisily around above us, and a Great Reed Warbler was heard grating out its song from a large stand of reeds.

Other birds included a heard Tree Pipit and Hoopoe, a flyover flock of at least eight Short-toed Larks and a singing Cyprus Warbler.

The wood at the top of the dam was quiet, although whilst we were walking round, we heard Stone Curlews calling on the nearby farmland, so set off to look for them. They took some finding but, fortunately, the birds chose to take off and fly around as we approached the area they were in. They then landed, making the job of finding them on the ground relatively easy.

Driving further along the road took us to an area called Anarita Mast, where we went for a short walk with a male Northern Wheatear and a Little Owl being the highlights, with the latter perched in full view at the top of a large stony bank.

Lunch was next up with us heading to nearby Anarita Park for this. After eating, we then went for a walk around the area, noting another Long-legged Buzzard, a flyover Tree Pipit and two new butterfly species for the trip.

The highlight, however, was finally catching up with Cretzschmar's Bunting, a species that had been eluding us. The first bird was noted whilst we were scanning an area of rocky hillside with bushes. Fortunately, it stayed long enough for a scope to be trained on it, with everyone managing to get a satisfactory look at it and when it did fly off, it was joined by three more. It then transpired there was actually a fifth bird present which gave us further perched views before it too headed off.

More Cretzschmar's Bunting views were to follow, with another male found a short distance further along the track, with this one slightly closer and choosing to sing for us as well.

Our last stop of the day was a return visit to Agia Vavara, where we explored a different set of tanks from before.

On the non-bird front, a new dragonfly, Violet Dropwing, was found, which was particularly impressive, whilst the birds included two Little Crakes, Wood Sandpiper, Common Snipe, Purple Heron and Black-crowned Night Heron.

A surprise as we drove to the last set of tanks was a Black Francolin that chose the moment we were driving along the entrance track to appear on the road in front of us. It ran ahead of us for a while, enabling some of us to see it before it veered off and headed back into the crop it had originally appeared from.

Monday 8 April

The day started with some of the group making it to the headland for a short walk before breakfast. Once again, Red-throated Pipits featured strongly, plus a solitary Short-toed Lark and a pair of Stone-curlews.

After breakfast, we headed to a largely under-watched site near the airport called Timi Beach. We walked out towards the coast, noting Common Kingfisher and Common Sandpiper on the rocks, before walking back towards the bus and around an area of Eucalyptus trees and scrub.

Two Long-legged Buzzards were watched over the distant treeline, and a small flock of four Purple Herons flew in and settled in the top of some large bushes. A flock of perched Barn Swallows also contained two Red-rumped Swallows and a vocal Black Francolin could be heard in the distance. The highlights of the visit, however, was our first male Collared Flycatcher of the day, followed by a pair of Stone-curlews that were seemingly nesting in the area.

Our next stop was nearby Mandria, where we returned to the area of stubble we had been to the previous day, to find the number of larks and pipits had increased, with around twenty Short-toed Larks and fifteen Red-throated Pipits present.

At the Asprokremnos Dam Wood area, we hoped to find some more black and white flycatchers. Although we searched in vain, we did find four Hoopoes and, as we turned to walk back to the bus, a large falcon appeared above us. The bird's size, dark underwing coverts, rufous body, white cheeks and hooded head plumage meant it was an Eleanora's Falcon and a real bonus!

Our plan was to head back to Paphos for our picnic lunch and Edward knew the perfect spot, not only to eat but as it turned out also for birds, as we discovered another male Collared Flycatcher and a heavily worn brown and white female type, which on balance was likely to be Collared too.

The rest of the afternoon was spent at the Archaeological site, with the heat making birding somewhat hard work. That said we were well rewarded, finding two more male Collared Flycatchers, a Whinchat and two new species for the trip in the form of an Eastern Bonelli's Warbler and a Woodchat Shrike.

Tuesday 9 April

Our last day saw the regulars head toward the headland for a pre-breakfast walk and to see whether the unsettled weather had produced any new birds. Time was limited, although we spent a pleasant twenty minutes exploring which produced the expected Red-throated Pipits, an 'in-off the sea' Stone-curlew, Northern Wheatear, Common Sandpiper, and four flocks of Glossy Ibis which numbered 75 individuals in total.

The clouds were thick and black but there had been little sign of the forecasted heavy storms. It turned out this was to change, with our journey to, and time in, Larnaca punctuated with heavy and at times long and torrential bursts of rain. We dodged these as best we could, having to bird from the bus most of the time.

Brief breaks in the weather enabled us to find at least two Calandra Larks, along with a small flock of Short-toed Larks and a male Eastern Black-eared Wheatear around the agricultural fields near Perivolia.

We paused as we passed by the first of the saltwater lagoons, noting several Ruff and Greenshank and stopped for a while at an elevated hide that overlooks several large ponds which are part of the water treatment works.

This was a welcome dry viewpoint and we quickly added new species for the day. These included the expected wildfowl such as Shoveler and Teal, but also several Ferruginous Ducks, Garganey and Pintail, the latter being new for the trip. Two fly by terns were identified as Gull-billed and a small group of Greater Flamingos flew along the rear of one of the lagoons.

The rain had eased but was still falling, so we headed along the coast road until we reached a large, ploughed field that clearly had some larks and pipits in it. We drove in along the track to get better view of the birds, for the majority to promptly take flight and head off back along the way we had just come and disappear out of view.

Following the flock was the plan but, unfortunately, this wasn't to be the case, as we quickly found we were stuck where we were, the rain had soaked in and loosened the surface sand on the dirt track!

Edward made numerous attempts to get the bus out but to no avail, so cabs were arranged, we said our goodbyes to him and transferred straight to the airport in plenty of time for our flight.

Our departure from Larnaca was delayed slightly due to the inclement weather, which resulted in us arriving back at Heathrow some twenty minutes behind schedule at the end of a most enjoyable and very successful trip.

Systematic List

Garganey *Spatula querquedula*

Noted in small numbers at Oroklini Lake, Akrotiri Marsh and at the treatment lagoons in Larnaca.

Northern Shoveler *Spatula clypeata*

Seen at the same sites as above, and at Bishop's Pool, Akrotiri.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Seen at various wetland sites in small numbers.

Eurasian Teal *Anas crecca*

Noted at the same sites as the above species.

Red-crested Pochard *Netta rufina*

At least three pairs from the first hide we visited at Oroklini Marsh.

Common Pochard *Aythya farina*

A drake at Oroklini Lake.

Ferruginous Duck *Aythya nyroca*

We did well for this species, noting up to eight, at Oroklini Lake, Bishop's Pool and the water treatment lagoons in Larnaca.

Black Francolin *Francolinus francolinus*

Heard on five dates at various locations, with several views of birds at Akrotiri Marsh and a brief sighting for some of the group as one crossed the road in front of the bus at Agia Vavara.

Chukar Partridge *Alectoris chukar*

Heard or seen on five dates at various locations.

Alpine Swift *Tachymarptis melba*

Our first, a single in the Troodos, was followed by eight at Mandria and another single at Anarita Park.

Common Swift *Apus apus*

Noted daily at various sites.

Pallid Swift *Apus pallidus*

Two birds alongside Common Swifts gave a useful comparison over Troodos village, with two more noted over our hotel the following day.

Great Spotted Cuckoo *Clamator glandarius*

We did well for this vocal species, with birds seen on four dates, a mix of views, with most in flight.

Rock Dove *Columba livia*

Noted daily largely as feral pigeons.

Common Wood Pigeon *Columba palumbus*

Common and noted daily.

Eurasian Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

Common and seen daily.



Laughing Dove © Gareth Rees, tour participant

Laughing Dove *Spilopelia senegalensis*

A species that has spread rapidly in Cyprus, with birds recorded daily at numerous sites.

Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

Noted at four wetland sites.

Eurasian Coot *Fulica atra*

As above and seen at the expected wetland sites.

Little Crake *Zapornia parva*

We did well for this species, with a total of three males and a female seen at Agia Vavara and the M1 Pools.



Baillon's Crake © Gareth Rees, tour participant

Baillon's Crake *Zaponia pusilla*

One was seen extremely well on the motorway pools at Agia Vavara.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Birds were seen at Oroklini Lake, Agia Vavara, Bishops Pool and Larnaca water treatment lagoons.

Greater Flamingo *Phoenicopterus roseus*

Noted at Akrotiri and Larnaca Salt Lakes.

Eurasian Stone-curlew *Burhinus oedichnemus*

Recorded on five dates with several migrating birds seen at the Paphos Headland with others at Asprokremnos Dam and Timi Picnic Site.

Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*

Only seen at two sites: Oroklini Lake and Akrotiri Marsh.

Spur-winged Lapwing *Vanellus spinosus*

Easily seen at Oroklini Lake, Akrotiri Marsh and various sites in Larnaca.

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

Four were seen along Lady's Mile in Akrotiri, with two more noted later in the day at the Akrotiri Marsh.

Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus*

Easily seen along Lady's Mile and at Akritori Marsh.



Tibetan Sand Plover © Gareth Rees, tour participant

Tibetan Sand Plover *Anarhynchus atrifrons*

A Tibetan 'Lesser' Sand Plover on Paphos Headland, was arguably the biggest surprise of the trip and believed to be a first for Cyprus.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Six distant birds at Oroklini Lake were followed by a much closer individual at Agia Vavara. These were of the nominate subspecies *limosa*.

Ruff *Calidris pugnax*

Small numbers at Oroklini Lake and Larnaca, with bigger numbers along Lady's Mile and at Akrotiri Marsh.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

One coming into summer plumage amongst a selection of shorebirds along Lady's Mile, Akrotiri.

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

At least forty at various spots on the pools along Lady's Mile.

Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Seen well at Akrotiri Marsh and Agia Vavara.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

Noted on the coastal rocks outside our hotel, at the M1 Pools and Timi beach.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Noted at three sites: Agia Vavara, M1 Pools and Akrotiri Marsh.

Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis*

Nice views of two at Akrotiri Marsh.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

Seen on four dates at M1 Pools, Akritori Marsh, Agia Vavara and Larnaca Salt Lakes.

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

Singles along Lady's Mile and at Akrotiri Marsh.

Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

One at Akrotiri Gravel Pits, with seven more at Larnaca Salt Lakes.

Slender-billed Gull *Chroicocephalus genei*

Two adult birds were a pleasant surprise flying past the headland early one morning.

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

A single bird was found at Larnaca water treatment lagoon on our last day.

Yellow-legged Gull *Larus michahellis*

Noted daily.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*

Single adults at two sites, one past the headland and another at Spiros Beach on our last day.

Gull-billed Tern *Gelochelidon nilotica*

Two were seen at Larnaca Water treatment works on our last day.

Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne caspia*

Another surprise fly-by bird early one morning at Paphos Headland.

European Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Noted on five dates, the majority flying past the headland.

Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Surprisingly, only noted at two locations: Oroklini Lake and Mavroklymnos Dam.

Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*

We did well for this species, with 45 counted on the marsh at Akrotiri, 75 in several flocks past the headland of our last morning and another flock of around 30 birds over the water treatment lagoon in Larnaca.

Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*

Noted on three dates at five sites, all singles, other than two at Bishop's Pool, Akrotiri.

Squacco Heron *Ardeola ralliodes*

Two obliging birds were appreciated at the motorway pools at Agia Vavara.

Western Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*

Seen at three sites: Oroklini Lake, M1 Pools and with cattle at Akrotiri Marsh.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

The rarer of the large herons and only seen on one date, with four flying overhead in the company of seven Purple Herons at Cape Drepanum.



Purple Heron © Ron and Sue McIntyre, tour participants

Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea*

Noted on five dates with the majority being migrating birds, although five were noted at Bishop's Pool and seven at Akrotiri Marsh.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Seen at three sites, with the largest number, around 30 individuals, in the Larnaca area.

Griffon Vulture *Gyps fulvus*

We timed our arrival just right at Episkopi, with a spiralling flock of 15 birds seen well as they were leaving their overnight roosting site.

Western Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

Five seen in total: three at Akrotiri Marsh and singles at Paphos Headland and Mandria.

Pallid Harrier *Circus macrourus*

Great views of a male at Akrotiri Marsh.

Cyprus Scops Owl *Otus cyprius*

Great views of two roosting birds on our third day, with a day calling bird also heard briefly in the Troodos area near the Botanical Gardens.



Little Owl © Gareth Rees, tour participant

Little Owl *Athene noctua lilith*

One showed well for us perched in the sun on a quarry face at Anarita Mast.



Long-legged Buzzard © Ron and Sue McIntyre, tour participants

Long-legged Buzzard *Buteo rufinus*

We did well for this species and enjoyed some nice views, with up to two birds at six sites on four dates.

Eurasian Hoopoe *Upupa epops*

Rather scarce at the start of the week, with numbers increasing towards the end. Largest numbers were four at Asprokremnos Dam Wood and six in the Larnaca area on our last day.

Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

Singles offshore at Paphos and Timi, with another at Akrotiri Marsh.



Blue-cheeked Bee-eater © Ron and Sue McIntyre, tour participants

Blue-cheeked Bee-eater *Merops persicus*

Two vocal birds surprised and thrilled us as they landed in trees next to where we were parked at Akrotiri Marsh, giving us some wonderful views.

Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Easily seen and noted daily throughout the trip.

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*

Three singles, at a roadside stop enroute to the Troodos, at Agia Vavara and with the Griffon Vultures at Episkopi.

Eleonora's Falcon *Falco eleonora*

A pale morph bird appeared briefly, high above us, as we stood in the small wood at Asprokremnos Dam, an early date for this species and not one we were expecting to see.

Woodchat Shrike *Lanius senator niloticus*

Seen at two sites, singles at Paphos headland and another noted perched on hay bales as we drove along the entrance track to the Larnaca water treatment site.

Masked Shrike *Lanius nubicus*

At least six were seen during our visit to the Troodos, with a roadside bird noted at our 'vulture stop' at Episkopi.

Eurasian Jay *Garrulus glandarius glaszneri*

Several were seen during our visit to the Troodos Mountains.

Eurasian Magpie *Pica pica*

Noted as we travelled around, with birds seen on four dates.

Western Jackdaw *Coloeus monedula soemmerringii*

Noted on six dates, with birds showing a paler hind neck collar which is characteristic of eastern birds.

Hooded Crow *Corvus cornix sharpii*

Common and noted daily.

Coal Tit *Periparus ater cypriones*

Easily seen or heard on our visit to the Troodos.

Great Tit *Parus major aphrodite*

Common and noted daily.

Woodlark *Lullula arborea*

A nice surprise during our picnic lunch in the Troodos was a singing bird heard high above us although, unfortunately, it wasn't seen.



Crested Lark © Ron and Sue McIntyre, tour participants

Crested Lark *Galerida cristata cyprica*

Common and noted daily.

Greater Short-toed Lark *Calandrella brachydactyla*

Birds were noted on six dates during the trip, with variable numbers from single birds to a large flock of around 50 at Larnaca.

Calandra Lark *Melanocorypha calandra*

Two were seen in the stubble fields at Perivolia. Unfortunately, these were not the best of views, largely due the inclement weather.

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

Singles were noted in amongst the flocks of Barn Swallows on three occasions.

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

Common and easily seen.

Western House Martin *Delichon urbicum*

As above and seen daily.

Red-rumped Swallow *Cecropis daurica*

Seen in small numbers on four dates with nice views of perched birds in amongst the Barn Swallows at Timi.

Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti orientalis*

Heard daily and occasionally seen throughout our week, invariably around wetland areas or in the various valleys.

Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

Brief views at St George's Chapel, Akrotiri.

Eastern Bonelli's Warbler *Phylloscopus orientalis*

A nice surprise find during our second visit to the Archaeological site.

Common Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

Surprisingly scarce, with birds only noted on three dates.

Great Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus arundinaceus*

A singing bird grating away in a large clump of reeds at the base of Asprokremnos Dam was a nice addition to our list.

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

One was seen well at Akrotiri Marsh.

Eurasian Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

Heard and seen in expected habitats, primarily around Agia Vavara and Akrotiri Marsh.

Eastern Olivaceous Warbler *Iduna pallida*

A roadside stop on the way to the Troodos revealed two singing birds, one of which was seen well, with two more less cooperative individuals heard at the Baths of Aphrodite.

Zitting Cisticola *Cisticola juncidis*

A regular sight and sound as we travelled around the countryside.

Eurasian Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

Seen on six dates and noted at various sites.

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

Noted on three dates. Most numerous on our walk around the Heritage site on our first full day.

Cyprus Warbler *Sylvia melanothorax*

Nice views of at least four males at Mavrokolympus Dam, with another singing male at Asprokremnos Dam.



Sardinian Warbler © Gareth Rees, tour participant

Sardinian Warbler *Curruca melanocephala*

Seen daily at most suitable sites we visited.

Short-toed Treecreeper *Certhia brachydactyla dorotheae*

Several were heard and seen during our visit to the Troodos.

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

Heard during our walk around the Archaeological site on our first day.

Common Blackbird *Turdus merula*

Heard and seen on our visit to the Troodos.



Collared Flycatcher © Ron and Sue McIntyre, tour participants

Collared Flycatcher *Ficedula albicollis*

We did well for this species and enjoyed some nice views. Our first sighting was at St George's Chapel, Akrotiri which was followed by five more birds including four males which were recorded across three sites: Timi Picnic site, 'Edward's Picnic site' and Paphos Archaeological site.

Common Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Two sightings, a male at the Archaeological site on our first full day followed later in the week by a female at St George's Chapel, Akrotiri.

Blue Rock Thrush *Monticola solitarius*

A somewhat distant pair was found in the Troodos at an old Quarry site near the Botanical Gardens. The next day, we enjoyed an amazingly confiding, and blue, male which we saw a short drive along the coast from our hotel in Paphos.

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

Seen on two dates at Paphos Headland, with both birds being males.

Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Recorded on five dates. This species was seen in the largest numbers at the Archaeological site on our last visit, when at least eleven individuals were present.

Isabelline Wheatear *Oenanthe isabellina*

Singles at three sites: Paphos Archaeological site, Cape Drepanum and Baths of Aphrodite.

Eastern Black-eared Wheatear *Oenanthe melanoleuca*

Three birds in total with a female at Cape Drepanum and males at the headland and Perivolía.



Cyprus Wheatear © Ron and Sue McIntyre, tour participants

Cyprus Wheatear *Oenanthe cyriaca*

Seen well on our day in the Troodos, at Mavrokolympos Dam and the Baths of Aphrodite.



House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

Common and seen daily.

Spanish Sparrow *Passer hispaniolensis*

Noted on five dates during the trip but, undoubtedly, overlooked to a degree.

Spanish Sparrow © Ron and Sue McIntyre

Western Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*

Seen daily often in good numbers, especially around the headland. Birds were typically of the Black-headed *feldegg* race and Blue-headed *flava*, with the occasional Grey-headed *thunbergi* noted too. The two inter-racial hybrids '*dombrowskii*' and '*superciliaris*' were also seen.

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba*

Common and noted daily.

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

Noted on several dates around the headland.

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*

Recorded on six dates with most being overflying calling birds, however, we had nice perched views at the Baths of Aphrodite campsite and the roadside stop enroute to the Troodos.

Red-throated Pipit *Anthus cervinus*

Found on five dates, with the majority on our pre-breakfast walks around the headland and which included lots of nice 'red-throated' individuals.

Eurasian Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs syriaca*

Seen well at the Troodos.

Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

Another big surprise, with a male dropping in to drink alongside a Crossbill at our picnic site in the Troodos.

European Greenfinch *Chloris chloris muehle*

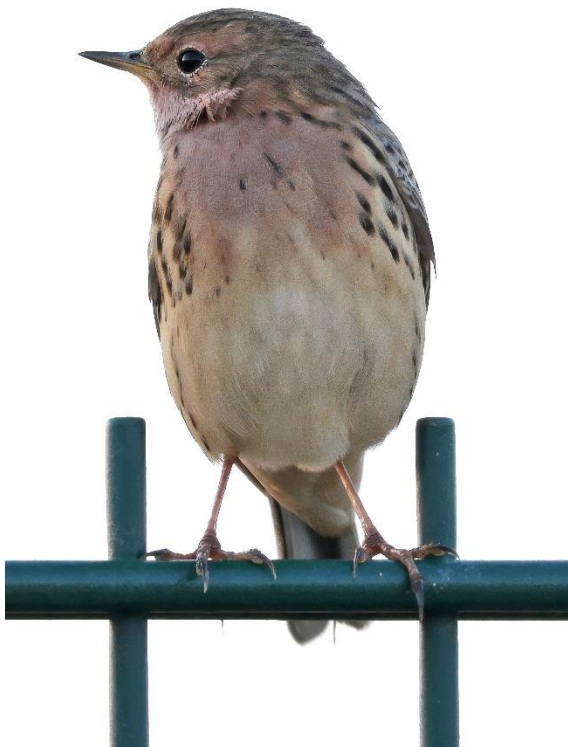
Noted daily. Most sightings were around the hotel and headland area.

Common Linnet *Linaria cannabina bella*

Only noted at Cape Drepanum, with three birds seen.

Red Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

A total of four birds during our time in the Troodos were noted in two different areas.



European Goldfinch *Carduelis niediecki*

Noted daily.

European Serin *Serinus serinus*

Several seen at Akrotiri Marsh and in the Troodos.

Eurasian Siskin *Spinus spinus*

A heard only, with an overflying bird in the Troodos.

Corn Bunting *Emberiza calandra*

Only one sighting and that was a leader only. Normally, this is an easily seen species and we can only speculate whether the heat and drying out of the coastal grass areas had possibly driven the birds further inland.

Ortolan Bunting *Emberiza hortulana*

A chipping bunting flushed at St George's Chapel was thought to be this species but, unfortunately, it could not be relocated to confirm this.

Cretzschmar's Bunting *Emberiza caesia*

This is always a tricky species to find. Our first, a distant bird at the Baths of Aphrodite, was thought likely to be this species. Much better views were to follow at Anarita Park, with a total of six individuals seen.

Butterflies

Common Swallowtail *Papilio machaon*
Eastern Festoon *Allancastris cerisy*
Large White *Pieris brassicae*
Small White *Pieris rapae*
Eastern Dabbled White *Euchloe ausonia*
Common Orange-tip *Anthocharis cardamines*
Clouded Yellow *Colias crocea*
Lesser Fiery Copper *Lycaena thersamon*
Small Copper *Lycaena phlaeas*
Long-tailed Blue *Lampides boeticus*
Paphos Blue *Glaucopsyche paphos*
Common Blue *Polyommatus icarus*
Painted Lady *Vanessa cardui*
Cyprus Meadow Brown *Maniola cypricola*
Lulworth Skipper *Thymelicus acteon*

Moths

Striped Hawkmoth *Hyles livornica*
Crimson Speckled *Utetheisa pulchella*

Other Insects

Carpenter Bee *Xylocopa violacea*
Short-horned Grasshopper ????

Reptiles and Amphibians

Levant Water Frog *Pelophylax bedriagae*
Starred Agama *Stellagama stellio*
Snake-eyed Lizard *Ophisops elegans*
Fringe-toed Lizard *Acanthodactylus schreiberi*
Black Whip Snake *Dolichophis Jugularis*

Orchids

Fragrant Bud Orchid *Anacamptis coriophora*
Giant Orchid *Himantoglossum robertianum*
Pyramidal Orchid *Anabaptism pyramidalis*
Ophrys mammosa