

Limosa

HUNGARY: WINTER GEESE, WOODPECKERS AND WALLCREEPERS SYSTEMATIC LIST



The group enjoyed fantastic views of all the main target species on our 2025 winter tour to Hungary including this magnificent Wallcreeper © Gábor Simay

HUNGARY: WINTER GEESE, WOODPECKERS AND WALLCREEPERS

2-8 November 2025

BIRDS

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

Some birds were seen mainly on bigger ponds on three days.



A lone Red-breasted Goose in with Greater White-fronted Geese © Gábor Simay

Red-breasted Goose *Branta ruficollis*

We had some excellent views of these absolutely stunning birds at several locations on two days in the Hortobágy with the largest flock being 10 birds.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

One was seen in the Hortobágy in a large goose flock.

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

Fairly common in the lowlands with some bigger flocks, although most of them had already migrated.

Lesser White-fronted Goose *Anser erythropus*

A very successful trip for this species, as we recorded them on three days. Our biggest group was seven birds together. Some of the views were really fantastic!

Greater White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons*

Very common and abundant in the lowlands, although we heard migrating flocks even in the hills.

Tundra Bean Goose *Anser serrirostris*

Two birds were seen at the Common Crane roost site on one evening.

Common Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

Seen on two days in small numbers in the Hortobágy area.

Ferruginous Duck *Aythya nyroca*

One late female was seen at a fishpond in the Hortobágy. We were fortunate to find one on such a late date as they have usually all left by early November.

Common Pochard *Aythya farina*

We recorded this species on three days, with some bigger flocks above one hundred birds.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Recorded on three days. The biggest flock was around 50 birds.

Northern Shoveler *Spatula clypeata*

Fairly common but not numerous at the wetlands in the lowlands.

Gadwall *Mareca strepera*

Fairly common at all the wetland sites in the lowlands and especially numerous at the big fishpond system of the Hortobágy.

Eurasian Wigeon *Anas penelope*

Fairly common and recorded on four days.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Common in the lowlands.

Northern Pintail *Anas acuta*

Small flocks were seen on three days.

Green-winged Teal *Anas crecca*

Very common in the lowlands.

Common Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

Common.

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

We were lucky to have two encounters of small family flocks of this rapidly declining species on two days in the Kiskunság.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Recorded in small numbers on three days.

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisigena*

A lone individual was seen on our last day in the Kiskunság, near the airport.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Small numbers were regularly seen at the bigger lakes and ponds.

Great Bustard *Otis tarda*

On our first afternoon, we had good views of four males in the Kiskunság.

Rock Dove *Columba livia f. domestica*

A very common resident throughout the tour.

Common Wood Pigeon *Columba palumbus*

Only three birds were seen in a park in Debrecen. This species is mostly a migrant but more are overwintering as a consequence of milder winters.

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

A small flock was seen near the Zemplén Hills.

Eurasian Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

Very common in the villages and on farmlands.



Common Cranes © Gábor Simay

Common Crane *Grus grus*

After peak numbers in mid-October 2025, the number of individuals rapidly decreased, however, there were still plenty of them, especially in the Hortobágy area where thousands were seen every day. The biggest roost we visited held well over 10,000 individuals.

Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

A few birds were recorded on two days.

Eurasian Coot *Fulica atra*

Flocks of a few hundred birds were recorded on three days.

Pied Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

Three birds were found on a fishpond in the Hortobágy.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

Three birds were seen on two days.

Eurasian Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

One individual with Lapwings at the Bihar wetlands.

Northern Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

The commonest wader on the tour with approximately 3,400 individuals in a single flock at the Bihar wetlands.

Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata*

Regularly recorded in small numbers around wetlands and grasslands.

Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Recorded on three days in small numbers in the Hortobágy and Bihar.

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

We found a small flock at the Coom Crane roost site in the Hortobágy.

Ruff *Calidris pugnax*

A few birds were seen on one day at the Bihar wetlands.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

Small flocks of a few dozen were recorded on two days.

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

This species has undergone a serious decline in recent years and we only recorded it in small numbers, albeit on every day spent in the lowlands.

Common Gull *Larus canus*

Only two birds were seen on two days in the Hortobágy.

Caspian Gull *Larus cachinnans*

The commonest gull and recorded every day in the lowlands.

Yellow-legged Gull *Larus michaellis*

Only a few birds were seen on our last day at the Nyékládháza Gravel Pits. It was instructive to have a side-by-side comparison with the previous species.

Pygmy Cormorant *Phalacrocorax pygmeus*

Common and numerous but only at the big fishpond system of the Hortobágy and at the Nyékládháza Gravel Pits.

Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

A fairly common sight in the Hortobágy.

Great Egret *Egretta alba*

A common sight in the lowlands.

Western Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*

Three birds were seen on our first day in the Kiskunság.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

Common in the lowlands around wetlands.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

One bird was seen very well on a chimney in the Hortobágy.

Long-eared Owl *Asia otus*

Recorded on two days in the Hortobágy. We counted 28 birds at a day roost.

Eurasian Eagle-Owl *Bubo bubo*

One was seen at dusk calling from the top of a pine tree in the Zemplén Hills.

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

Recorded on two days in the Zemplén Hills. The one we found at its day roost gave us great views.

Ural Owl *Strix uralensis*

Arguably one of the tour highlights with a lone bird giving us stunning views as it hunted in a beautiful beech forest.

Black-winged Kite *Elanus caeruleus*

Three individuals were seen in the Hortobágy, where it is still a rarity.



Black-winged Kite remains a rarity in Hungary so seeing three was very fortunate © Gábor Simay

Great Spotted Eagle *Aquila clanga*

Good views of an adult bird at a fishpond in the Hortobágy.

Eastern Imperial Eagle *Aquila heliaca*

Recorded on four days. We saw a selection of different ages, with probably the best views being a perched adult pair near the Zemplén Hills.

Eurasian Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

We recorded this species on five days.

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

It was quite a good year for this species with lots of voles and one day in the Hortobágy, we saw about 25 birds. Overall, we recorded it on five days.

Western Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

Small numbers were recorded on most days.

White-tailed Eagle *Haliaeetus albicilla*

Recorded on four days, but mainly around the larger wetlands in the lowlands.

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

The commonest raptor of the tour and recorded every single day.

Rough-legged Buzzard *Buteo lagopus*

One bird was seen well in the Kiskunság.

Long-legged Buzzard *Buteo rufinus*

One was seen in the Hortobágy on the third day of the trip.

Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

Recorded on four days around wetlands.

Grey-headed Woodpecker *Picus canus*

We had fantastic views on three consecutive days in the Bükk and Zemplén Hills.

European Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

Heard almost every day but seen only twice in the Zemplén Hills and later at the Nyékládháza Gravel Pits.



Black Woodpecker © Gábor Simay

Black Woodpecker *Dryocopus martius*

One was seen in the Hortobágy but later in the Zemplén Hills we had great views of another bird.

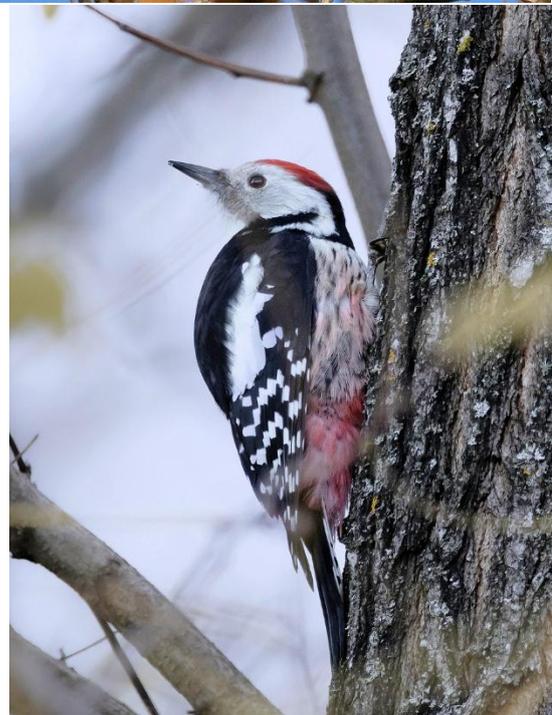
Middle Spotted Woodpecker © Gábor Simay

Middle Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocoptes medius*

Two individuals were seen well in the woods near Debrecen with another two in the Bükk Hills. Regularly heard in the Zemplén Hills.

White-backed Woodpecker *Dendrocopos leucotos*

Very good views of a male of this sought after woodpecker in the Bükk Hills.



Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

The commonest woodpecker of the trip. Recorded on five days.

Syrian Woodpecker *Dendrocopos syriacus*

We had very good views of a bird at our lodge in the Hortobágy.



Lesser-spotted Woodpecker © Gábor Simay

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos minor*

Cracking views of a male in the woods near Debrecen.

Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Common and recorded almost every day.

Saker Falcon *Falco cherrug*

Only recorded on one day although we saw three different individuals with two in the Hortobgy and one at the Bihar wetlands.

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*

Two young birds were seen from our lodge in the Hortobágy and a nice adult in the Bükk Hills.

Great Grey Shrike *Lanius excubitor*

We saw a total of five birds over four days.

Eurasian Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Recorded on four days, especially in the well wooded hills.

Common Magpie *Pica pica*

Very common and recorded every day.

Western Jackdaw *Coloeus monedula*

Quite common in the Hortobágy and seen on three days.

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

Very common, especially in the Hortobágy.

Northern Raven *Corvus corax*

Recorded on three days in the hills.

Hooded Crow *Corvus corone*

Common throughout the trip.



Eurasian Penduline Tit © Gábor Simay

Eurasian Penduline Tit *Remiz pendulinus*

We had very good views of two birds at a fishpond site in the Hortobágy.

Eurasian Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

Common throughout the tour and recorded almost every day.

Great Tit *Parus major*

Common throughout the tour and recorded almost every day.

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

Quite common in the woods near Debrecen, but several were also seen in the Bükk and Zemplén Hills.

Bearded Reedling *Panurus biarmicus*

We had very good views of an obliging flock in the Hortobágy by a small channel.

Eurasian Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

One migrating bird was heard on the third day in the Hortobágy.

Crested Lark *Galerida cristata*

Two birds were seen well in the Hortobágy.

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

A few flocks were seen at various locations. Most flocks contained *caudatus* and also *europaeus* (white-headed) subspecies.

Common Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

Only one bird was seen in the Hortobágy.

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

Common at most of the wooded habitats.

Wallcreeper *Trichodroma muraria*

Excellent views of this beautiful habitat specialist at a wintering site in the Bükk Hills.

Eurasian Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

Recorded on three days. Common in the woods near Debrecen, Bükk and Zemplén Hills.

Eurasian Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

We saw and heard this species on three days in wooded habitats.

Short-toed Treecreeper *Certhia brachydactyla*

Two birds were seen especially well in the woods near Debrecen.

Eurasian Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Seen or heard every day.

Common Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

Very common in the lowlands.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

Two birds were seen in the woods near Debrecen and another two in the Zemplén Hills.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

One individual in the Hortobágy.

Eurasian Blackbird *Turdus merula*

Common and recorded almost every day.

European Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

Quite common in the Zemplén Hills.

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

One bird was seen at the Bihar wetlands site.

European Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola*

A few birds were seen on the first two days of the trip.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

Common but mainly in villages.

Eurasian Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

Common in many types of habitats.

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba*

Three birds were seen at the Bihar wetlands.

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

Recorded on three days in the Hortobágy.

Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta*

One bird was heard near a fishpond on the second day of the trip in the Hortobágy.

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

One bird was seen with Chaffinches in the Bükk Hills.

Common Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

Small flocks were seen around wooded areas but also some of the wetlands.

Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

Very good views on two days in the Zemplén Hills.

Eurasian Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Heard at several locations and two males were seen in the Bükk Hills.

European Greenfinch *Chloris chloris*

Small flocks were seen or heard on five days.

Common Linnet *Linaria cannabina*

Common but only in the Zemplén Hills.

European Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

Fairly common and recorded almost every day.

European Serin *Serinus serinus*

Two birds were seen at the Nyékládháza Gravel Pits.

Eurasian Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

A small flock in the Hortobágy and heard commonly in the wooded areas.

Common Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Only two birds were seen in the Hortobágy.

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citronella*

Only seen on one day in the Zemplén Hills.

MAMMALS

Western Roe Deer *Capreolus capreolus*

Very common.

European Hare *Lepus europeus*

Very common in the lowlands.

Eurasian Red Squirrel *Sciurus vulgaris*

One was seen in the woods near Debrecen and two more in the Zemplén Hills.