

ORNITHOLIDAYS' TOUR TO BULGARIA AT LESIURE
The Black Sea Flyway

05 – 12 September 2009



Leaders: Nigel Jones and Lyubo Profirov

ORNITHOLIDAYS TOUR TO BULGARIA

The Black Sea Flyway

5 - 12 September 2009

A Personal Diary

Saturday 5 September

The whole group arrived early at Gatwick for the British Airways flight. In just under three hours we arrived at the small airport in Varna and met up with our guide Lyubo and driver Crassy. The yellow Mercedes minivan was an ideal size for us and we departed for the two hour drive to Pomorie.

A welcome bowl of soup and bread was provided for us when we arrived at the hotel but we were ready for bed as it was midnight local time!

Sunday 6 September

At 7am most of the group took a pre-breakfast walk, just a short distance to the salt pans. The weather was fine and warm and overhead there were a large numbers of Barn Swallows, plus many Sand and House Martins. Once at the pans by the Salt Museum we spotted good numbers of birds including Little and Mediterranean Gulls, a Whimbrel and some Little Ringed Plovers. Our first Red-backed Shrike was in a tamarisk bush.

After breakfast we all returned to the same spot and explored further. Caspian Gulls were common, with large numbers of Great Cormorants wing-drying on the dykes. Black-necked Grebes bobbed out on the water, while Kentish Plovers mingled with Little Ringed and Common Ringed. A couple of Marsh Sandpipers were a good find, as they fed amongst Ruff and Greenshank and two large Caspian Terns flew over (an adult followed by a squeaking juvenile). However, the highlight was the vast numbers of Little Gulls in many plumages – from the dusky juveniles, to adult birds with black heads, to adults moulting to winter plumage. There were hundreds of them - spinning on the water's surface, in flight dipping to take food and occasionally giving their barking calls.

We moved to another section of the salt pans where we watched large numbers of Common Shelducks, plus some Little Stints. Overhead flew our first Short-toed Eagle. We took our lunch at this spot – a picnic with fresh tomatoes and juicy peaches.

We then drove towards Burgas where we used a service station for loos and buying ice creams. A track took us to a viewpoint over more pans, where we watched Pied Avocets and could see distant flocks of gulls and waders. Lyubo decided that we should try to get nearer to the waders, so we drove further down the road and took a track through tall grasses and bushes, passing a smelly river. Down on the pans we spotted several Eurasian Spoonbills, some hunting Marsh Harriers and a few species of duck. A Great Reed Warbler gave splendid views to the group as we walked back to the minibus.

The highlight of the afternoon was a migrating group of White Pelicans which passed over us – perhaps 30 in total. We returned to the hotel to freshen up, before a fine dinner of vegetable soup, pork cuts with aubergines, followed by Bulgarian tiramisu.

Bird of the day – Little Gull

Monday 7 September

The pre-breakfast walk was curtailed due to the fact that it rained and was blowing a gale! From the balconies of our rooms we could look out over the Black Sea and watch Caspian and Little Gulls battling over the waves. We took our time over breakfast and did not leave the hotel until 9.30am when it was just beginning to ease off raining.

We motored towards a busy Burgas, past Lake Vaya and stopped at the Poda Protected Site, where we entered the main building. Here we were given a brief introductory talk about the area and its different biomes. The weather outside was still wet and windy so we took coffee and watched through the windows. We could make out Pygmy Cormorants, Black-crowned Night-herons, and our first Dalmatian Pelicans. Eventually, the weather relented and we made it outside and took lunch sitting on the steps of the building. We then walked towards the hide, stopping to look out at Foros Bay where there were Mute Swans, Great Cormorants, Little Ringed Plovers and many Sandwich Terns. The hide gave good views over a fresh water marsh where we spotted Little Stints, Wood, Green and Curlew Sandpipers, Ruff and a Glossy Ibis. Reed Warblers fed in the reeds just outside of the hide. A feature of this area was the electricity pylons festooned with nests of Great Cormorants – hundreds of nests and hundreds of cormorants loafing on the pylon's arms. How long before the corrosive nature of their guano rots through the structures? We walked further along the path and found a confiding Water Rail that showed itself to the whole group. At the last pool we found Mute Swans with well grown youngsters and over 20 Ferruginous Ducks. A bird “tutting” from the reed-beds had us stumped to its identity – Bluethroat was an option, but Gillian spotted the bird briefly and it was a warbler. But which species? At the centre a brief spell of “pishing” enticed Sedge, Reed and Marsh Warblers into view. A Great Reed Warbler showed itself as it flew over the reed-bed.

We stopped once again at the service lay-by, for loos and coffees. The view from the bank showed Pied Avocets and Dunlin but no sign of yesterday's Spoonbills. On the drive back the “tutting” warbler was considered and, with the use of the iPod tapes, we realised that it was a Savi's.

We arrived back at the hotel in good time for a warm shower, before a dinner of chicken soup, followed by moussaka and fig pie.

Bird of the day – Dalmatian Pelican

Tuesday 8 September

The early morning walk was a bit chilly but the birds were in evidence this morning with large numbers of Barn Swallows roosting on the football stadium. A “quip” noise drew our attention to a flock of European Bee-eaters that were also roosting nearby and we watched them through the scope as they huddled on the tree branches. They took to the air, circled and gained height and were gone – moving ever southwards towards Africa. Two Temminck's Stints were not so confiding and flew off as we approached. Yesterday's rain had flooded out many of the small salt pans and they were now birdless. As we walked back past the tamarisk bushes a staccato rattle betrayed the presence of not one, but two, Red-breasted Flycatchers. A Lesser Whitethroat was also watched. We returned for breakfast pleased we had ventured out!

After breakfast we drove past Burgas and stopped at the extensive Lake Vaya. In the distance we could make out a feeding frenzy of White Pelicans with numerous, gulls, terns and Great Cormorants gorging on fish. Dalmatian Pelicans were in small, discrete groups fishing or flying to roost in sheltered bays. All the White Pelicans appeared to be pink-hued adults, which were in sharp contrast to the dull grey Dalmatians. A European Roller gave a brief fly-past. There was much bird activity as we stood and watched the lake – a Common Kingfisher was active close by, Squacco Herons flew past in a steady trickle, while terns seemed to be everywhere. There were squeaking Little, raucous Sandwich, daintily feeding Blacks and a few Commons carrying fish to youngsters. There were also small flocks of Whiskered, many showing traces of their darker summer plumage, one or two Gull-billed and a solitary juvenile White-winged Black showing its characteristic dark saddle and pale rump and tail. That's seven species of tern from one spot! Andrew spotted a Peregrine passing over and two small falcons turned out to be migrating Red-foots. As we waited the feeding mass of pelicans swam ever nearer and we were able to scope the vast assemblage of birds as they plunged their beaks into the water in groups, while others flew ahead to leap-frog them for the best position. It was a scene more reminiscent of Africa than of Europe – but absolutely fantastic!

We drove around the lake taking a farm track where Red-rumped Swallows flitted with their commoner Barn cousins, and Northern Wheatears and Whinchats fed amongst the furrows. A Syrian Woodpecker showed briefly, while European Bee-eaters constantly flew overhead. A white Sand Martin was an unexpected find – Lyubu told us that this sighting meant good luck for us!

We took lunch at a small restaurant in Dolno Esorovo owned by a local boatman, Russi. The soup and sausages were excellent. As we stood outside the building chatting White Storks (40), Black Kites (4) Red-footed Falcons (2) and Marsh Harriers (2) passed overhead on their migration. We moved to another section of the lake, where there was a pontoon where Russi launches his boats. A good session with the tapes followed where we had views of Cetti's, Savi's, Marsh, Reed and Willow Warblers. As we left a movement of White Pelicans was occurring and we watched hundreds fly overhead. A Wood Warbler was found as we waited by a level crossing over the railway.

We returned to Pomorie via some more salt pans, stopping to walk along a "quiet" road. Here we heard a Red-throated Pipit but could not find it in the ploughed field. There were at least 10 Whinchats and a female Montagu's Harrier but the highlight was the movement of White Storks and we watched as over 400 birds drifted over us towards Burgas – a wonderful sight.

A great day's birding with many unforgettable sightings.

Bird of the day – White Pelican

Wednesday 9 September

Everyone attended the 7am walk and we took our normal route. It started well with two Hawfinches and then a Red-breasted Flycatcher followed by Willow Warblers and a Lesser Whitethroat. As we passed the dump there were lots of Yellow Wagtails and Tree Pipits – there had obviously been a fall of migrants. Overhead flew both Marsh Harriers and Black Kites. In the tamarisks were more Red-breasted Flycatchers and the now ubiquitous Red-backed Shrikes. By the time we returned to the hotel we had seen at least five different Red-breasted Flycatchers!

After breakfast we drove out of Pomorie passing two flying Black Storks. Our plan this morning was to watch from one of the hills to spot some visible migration – but it was too windy. We did see some Jackal footprints and three Corn Buntings. Plan B was to look at a spot where Stone-curlews regularly occur on autumn migration, so we walked over a grassy field – initially just flushing Common Skylarks but eventually finding over four different Common Quail!

We drove to a small lake where a group of students were milling about. There was some bird ringing going on and we witnessed Willow Warbler, Lesser Whitethroat and Red-breasted Flycatcher in the hand. The call of Common Kingfishers could be heard from the lake and we scoped two birds that were intent on fishing and fighting for perches. We tentatively followed Lyubo over a narrow concrete bridge and surveyed a large lake, where we could see Great Egrets and a single Eurasian Spoonbill. Margaret and Les spotted a Great Bittern in flight and it obliged by flying the length of the lake so we could all watch it. Overhead passed our first Lesser Spotted Eagles along with a couple of Short-toed Eagles. Andrew found a Lang's Short-tailed Blue and we also added Bath White and Balkan Green Lizard to the "extras" list.

We visited an area of damp, closed-cropped pasture where we looked for pratincoles and stone-curlews without luck. However, we did find Tawny Pipit and watched some Black Kites and harriers passing overhead. We moved to the nearby salt pans, where we parked the vehicle and set up for a picnic lunch. After eating we walked the short distance to a bank where two wooden structures had been built for sitting back and watching the migration. We were rewarded with fantastic views of White Pelicans as they moved south. Over a 1,000 in one flock, 800 in another and then smaller groups. There were also European Bee-eaters, Black Storks, Levant Sparrowhawks, Lesser Spotted, Booted and Short-toed Eagles, Steppe and Common Buzzards and Red-footed Falcons and Common Kestrels to add to the mix. An incredible sight.

To end the day we moved back to the pans near Pomorie and found some very obliging Penduline Tits, hundreds of Little Gulls and our first Slender-billed.

Another exceptional day with great migration and over 100 species found. Dinner was soup, followed by stuffed peppers, and then some delicious green fig ice cream.

Bird of the day – Red-breasted Flycatcher

Thursday 10 September

This morning we took Lyubo's advice and walked a new route out of the hotel but there was little of note except for the normal Red-backed Shrikes and some Lesser Whitethroats.

As we assembled after breakfast Les and Margaret told us they had been watching some Red-necked Grebes out on the sea, so we set up scopes and found a couple. Two Eurasian Hoopoes that I had been watching on the dunes were less forthcoming. Overhead whizzed three Alpine Swifts and we found a Common Redstart flitting alongside one of the beach buildings.

We stopped at Uzun Geren, next to a billowing chimney which smelt of bitumen. We scanned the edge of the lake and found a lone Collared Pratincole, along with a few Little Ringed Plovers and assorted ducks. We then moved on to overlook Lake Mandra where Andrew had the first Sombre Tit. At the Izvorska River mouth a tame White Stork was an attraction. It was being thrown fish by the local fishermen but was quite a road hazard for oncoming traffic! Overhead passed a thousand White Pelicans, with some dropping down to the water to rest. There were numerous dragonflies and we identified Lesser Emperors and Migrant Hawkers.

We moved on to a hill overlooking a bay where we watched more White Pelicans with a couple of Dalmatians, as well as a sunbathing Purple Heron and a couple of stalking Squaccos. Andrew spotted a European Roller perched on some telephone wires – through the scope we could make out its lovely blue colouration. Overhead buzzed small groups of European Bee-eaters. We must have coincided with their main migration as they seemed to be a constant presence. We walked to a bridge over the river where we could scope noisy Spanish Sparrows and watched a Sedge Warbler as it foraged to food on a muddy island. Southern Migrant Hawkers showed off their electric blue bodies and eyes.

We returned to the White Stork spot and found a Temminck's Stint, while Les spotted an immature Little Bittern. We took lunch in a shady lay-by where we could sit on a bank and watch the Woodland Grayling butterflies flit and perform territorial or mating displays. Hawfinches, Great Spotted Woodpeckers and Sombre Tits entertained us while we ate our picnics.

We moved to an enormous dam where a small pool held Yellow Wagtails and Emperor dragonflies, plus a lone Wood Sandpiper. Overhead we watched two Ravens and a Booted Eagle. It was now time for a caffeine injection so a service station gave us loo, coffee and ice-creams and kicked started our batteries for a visit to Poda where we watched a lone Eurasian Spoonbill and a Common Kingfisher. The reserve itself was very quiet, with much higher water levels than our last visit.

Bird of the day – Little Bittern

Friday 11 September

Everyone was out for the pre-breakfast walk and we took our normal route. Red-breasted Flycatchers could be heard calling in the tamarisks and the salt pans now had less water, so the first Little Gulls were returning to sit on the small dykes. Spanish Sparrows were moving in noisy flocks, obviously on passage and a lone Tree Sparrow fed near the dog pen. As we returned a nightingale gave a single "chuck" note from the tamarisks and, with the aid of the iPod, we lured a Thrush Nightingale into view briefly. More obliging was the Icterine Warbler that was slowly moving in the same bushes, which showed well to everyone.

We drove to Medovo and stopped by what could have been a quiet road apart from the lorries that were zooming past on their way to a new quarry. Common Skylarks were feeding in the tilled fields and Corn Buntings jangled and quipped as they flew around the stubble. In the trees over the road we watched Hawfinches and then an adult Lesser Spotted Eagle floating above a calling juvenile. The hillside was covered in hirundines as they hawked for insects, while Steppe Buzzards hovered over the distant tree-line.

Poroy Forest was interesting as it consisted mainly of oak trees about 100 years old with no understorey – being kept grazed by sheep and goats. Very different from most English oak woods. We wandered amongst the trees finding some of the commoner species from home: Nuthatch, Mistle Thrush, Chaffinch, Great and

Blue Tits and Great Spotted Woodpecker. More unusual was the Middle Spotted Woodpecker and the Short-toed Treecreepers. Les found a female Lesser Spotted Woodpecker and there were brief views of Woodlarks. The butterflies kept us interested with Brown Argus and the graylings that still needed some identification work. Overhead passed even more European Bee-eaters.

After our picnic lunch we moved to a nearby hill which overlooked a distant arm of a lake. The sandpit, now used for biking, held many holes which must have been a European Bee-eater colony. Booted Eagles and Common Buzzards drifted over the woods. Lyubo did well to spot a distant Eurasian Hoopoe which we scoped and was admired by Barbara who really wanted to see this species. A Common Tree Frog, a Smooth Snake and some immature Sand Lizards proved equally interesting diversions from the birds. Both Tawny Pipits and Crested Larks showed well.

Our last stop was at the salt pans where we watched some White Pelicans migrating, as well as Kentish and Little Ringed Plovers, Little Stints, hundreds of Common Shelducks and an immature Montagu's Harrier.

Tonight we toasted Lyubo with wine produced from the local merlot grapes.

Bird of the day – Middle Spotted Woodpecker

Saturday 12 September

The early morning walk was quiet today with just the normal few Red-backed Shrikes and some Little Gulls on the salt pans. Small gangs of Spanish Sparrows passed in swiftly moving gangs. By 9am we were all loaded with our bags and set off towards Varna.

Our first stop was at a wooded site where we stopped in an expansive parking area with a couple of cafes. A Red-rumped Swallow was nesting in one of the abandoned huts and gave good views. Further on we came across a pair of obliging Sombre Tits that performed well. A group of Yellowhammers were busy feeding on the short grass and a Common Redstart was briefly seen. The odd Red-breasted Flycatcher could be heard calling in the woodland as we walked on the path to a more sheltered locale. Our first Robin of the tour showed itself to Les and Margaret, while a group of Woodlarks were a little more difficult to see in the tall grass. We returned to a welcome cup of coffee and chocolate croissants.

We moved on to another pull-in where we took a brief walk. A wheatear raised hopes of a possible Black-eared but it turned out to be an adult male Northern moulting into winter plumage. As we walked we spotted Whinchats and Lesser Whitethroats but the surprise came in the form of a Corncrake that we flushed which flew a short distance and then dived into a bramble patch – not to be refund! European Bee-eaters were constantly on the move and some perched on a dead tree and gave good views. A Red Squirrel was spotted as we searched a tree for a woodpecker.

We moved to Irakli on the coast where we were assaulted by the sound of European Bee-eaters. They were everywhere, calling and dipping for insects – with probably 600 birds. In a plum tree we watched Blackcaps and Garden Warblers feeding together, while a couple of Red-breasted Flycatchers sallied from low perches. Cardinal butterflies allowed a very close approach. Lunch was taken in a lovely restaurant with a good cat collection!

Goritza Forest proved to be quiet for birds with just a couple of Eurasian Hobbies and some Hawfinches of note. It was lovely to walk amongst the oaks and having the whole forest to ourselves. Our last stop was the look-out over a small reserve on the outskirts of Varna where we watched Pygmy Cormorants and Great Egrets. We stopped in a service station for coffees and then made our way to the airport where we said our goodbyes to Lyubo.

The flight was delayed by 35 minutes but three hours later we were at London Gatwick collecting our luggage and saying our farewells.

Bird of the day – European Bee-eater

Acknowledgements

Thanks are due to Lyubo for being a great guide throughout the tour. He chose the daily itinerary well and we were in the best spot for hitting the only day when there was a significant passage of raptors. Many thanks to you all for being punctual and good humoured throughout the tour - I enjoyed your company. I was thrilled by the visible migration, so I hope you will all have great memories of thousands of pelicans, with lesser numbers of storks and eagles. Then of course the supporting cast of Red-breasted Flycatchers, Bee-eaters, Little Gulls, butterflies, dragonflies and much more. I hope to meet up with you on another Ornitholidays very soon.

Nigel Jones
Ornitholidays
29 Straight Mile
Romsey
Hants
SO51 9BB
Tel: 01794 519445
Email: info@ornitholidays.co.uk

September 2009

Itinerary and Weather

05 September	Flew from Gatwick, London to Varna, Bulgaria. Transfer to hotel in Pomorie Fine 20C
06 September	Pomorie Salt Pans and Salt Museum. New Salt Lakes. Atanasovsko Lake Fine but windy 23C
07 September	Poda Protected Site Rain, clearing later 19C
08 September	Vaya Lake and environs Windy 21C
09 September	Atanasovsko Lake and raptor watch point. Pomorie Pump Station Windy but fine 20C
10 September	Mandra Lake. Uzum Geren. Izvorska River. Fakiyska River. Poda Fine 25C
11 September	Medovo. Poroy Forest Fine 22C
12 September	Banya. Irakli. Goritza. Yatata. Varna. Fine 20C

CHECKLIST OF BIRDS SEEN DURING TOUR

**Max no of days
seen or heard**
Maximum = 7
h = heard only

Abundance scale
Maximum seen (on one day)
1 = 1-4
2 = 5-9
3 = 10-99
4 = 100-999
5 = 1000-9999
6 = 10000-99,999

SPECIES	No of days recorded	Abundance Scale	SCIENTIFIC NAME
Black-throated Diver	2	1	<i>Gavia arctica</i>
Little Grebe	5	3	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>
Great Crested Grebe	7	3	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>
Red-necked Grebe	3	2	<i>Podiceps grisegena</i>
Black-necked Grebe	5	4	<i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>
Great Cormorant	7	5	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>
Pygmy Cormorant	4	3	<i>Phalacrocorax pygmeus</i>
Dalmatian Pelican	4	3	<i>Pelecanus crispus</i>
White Pelican	6	5	<i>Pelecanus onocrotalus</i>
Great Bittern	1	1	<i>Botaurus stellaris</i>
Little Bittern	1	1	<i>Ixobrychus minutus</i>
Black-crowned Night Heron	3	3	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>
Squacco Heron	3	3	<i>Ardeola ralloides</i>
Little Egret	7	4	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>
Great Egret	5	3	<i>Egretta alba</i>
Grey Heron	7	3	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>
Purple Heron	4	2	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>
Black Stork	2	3	<i>Ciconia nigra</i>
White Stork	3	4	<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>
Glossy Ibis	1	1	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>
Eurasian Spoonbill	4	3	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>
Mute Swan	5	4	<i>Cygnus olor</i>
Common Shelduck	6	5	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>
Eurasian Wigeon	2	3	<i>Anas penelope</i>
Gadwall	3	2	<i>Anas strepera</i>
Mallard	7	3	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>
Common Teal	5	3	<i>Anas crecca</i>
Garganey	1	3	<i>Anas querquedula</i>
Northern Shoveler	4	3	<i>Anas clypeata</i>
Common Pochard	3	4	<i>Aythya ferina</i>
Tufted Duck	2	1	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>
Ferruginous Duck	2	3	<i>Aythya nyroca</i>
European Honey Buzzard	2	2	<i>Pernis apivorus</i>
Short-toed Eagle	4	2	<i>Circaetus gallicus</i>
Lesser Spotted Eagle	2	3	<i>Aquila pomarina</i>
Booted Eagle	3	1	<i>Hieraaetus pennatus</i>
Black Kite	4	2	<i>Milvus migrans</i>
Western Marsh Harrier	6	3	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>
Montagu's Harrier	3	1	<i>Circus pygargus</i>
Common Buzzard	5	2	<i>Buteo buteo</i>
Steppe Buzzard	3	1	<i>Buteo (b.) vulpinus</i>
Eurasian Sparrowhawk	5	1	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>
Levant Sparrowhawk	1	3	<i>Accipiter brevipes</i>
Common Kestrel	7	3	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>
Red-footed Falcon	2	2	<i>Falco vespertinus</i>
Eurasian Hobby	1	1	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>
Peregrine Falcon	1	1	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>
Common Quail	1 1h	1	<i>Coturnix coturnix</i>
Corncrake	1	1	<i>Crex crex</i>

Water Rail	1	2h	1	<i>Rallus aquaticus</i>
Common Moorhen	3		3	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>
Eurasian Coot	5		4	<i>Fulica atra</i>
Eurasian Oystercatcher	4		3	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>
Black-winged Stilt	5		3	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>
Pied Avocet	5		4	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>
Collared Pratincole	1		1	<i>Glareola pratincola</i>
Little Ringed Plover	7		3	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>
Common Ringed Plover	6		2	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>
Kentish Plover	6		3	<i>Charadrius alexandrinus</i>
Grey Plover	3		1	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>
Northern Lapwing	3		3	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>
Dunlin	3		3	<i>Calidris alpina</i>
Curlew Sandpiper	3		3	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>
Turnstone	2		1	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>
Little Stint	5		3	<i>Calidris minuta</i>
Temminck's Stint	2		1	<i>Calidris temminckii</i>
Ruff	5		3	<i>Philomachus pugnax</i>
Eurasian Curlew	3		1	<i>Numenius arquata</i>
Whimbrel	1		1	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>
Black-tailed Godwit	2		4	<i>Limosa limosa</i>
Common Redshank	6		3	<i>Tringa totanus</i>
Spotted Redshank	3		1	<i>Tringa erythropus</i>
Marsh Sandpiper	2		1	<i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>
Common Greenshank	5		3	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>
Green Sandpiper	4		1	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>
Wood Sandpiper	5		3	<i>Tringa glareola</i>
Common Sandpiper	2		1	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>
Common Snipe	5		3	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>
Mediterranean Gull	4		3	<i>Larus melanocephalus</i>
Little Gull	7		5	<i>Larus minutus</i>
Black-headed Gull	7		5	<i>Larus ridibundus</i>
Slender-billed Gull	3		2	<i>Larus genei</i>
Caspian Gull	7		3	<i>Larus cachinnans</i>
Gull-billed Tern	1		3	<i>Sterna nilotica</i>
Caspian Tern	1		1	<i>Sterna caspia</i>
Sandwich Tern	7		4	<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>
Common Tern	7		4	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>
Little Tern	7		3	<i>Sterna albifrons</i>
Whiskered Tern	1		3	<i>Chlidonias hybridus</i>
White-winged Tern	1		1	<i>Chlidonias leucopterus</i>
Black Tern	5		3	<i>Chlidonias niger</i>
Rock Pigeon	7		3	<i>Columba livia</i>
Stock Dove	1		1	<i>Columba oenas</i>
Eurasian Collared-Dove	7		1	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>
Eurasian Turtle-Dove	5		1	<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>
Common Cuckoo	1		1	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>
Common Swift	5		2	<i>Apus apus</i>
Alpine Swift	1		1	<i>Apus melba</i>
Common Kingfisher	5		3	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>
European Bee-eater	6		5	<i>Merops apiaster</i>
European Roller	2		1	<i>Coracias garrulus</i>
Eurasian Hoopoe	2		1	<i>Upupa epops</i>
European Green Woodpecker	1	1h	1	<i>Picus viridis</i>
Great Spotted Woodpecker	3		1	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>
Syrian Woodpecker	3		1	<i>Dendrocopos syriacus</i>
Middle Spotted Woodpecker	1	1h	1	<i>Dendrocopos medius</i>
Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	1		1	<i>Dendrocopos minor</i>
Crested Lark	6		3	<i>Galerida cristata</i>
Woodlark	2		2	<i>Lullula arborea</i>
Common Skylark	3		3	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>
Sand Martin	7		4	<i>Riparia riparia</i>
Barn Swallow	7		5	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>

Red-rumped Swallow	4		1	<i>Hirundo daurica</i>
House Martin	7		4	<i>Delichon urbica</i>
Tawny Pipit	2		1	<i>Anthus campestris</i>
Tree Pipit	4		3	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>
Red-throated Pipit	-	3h	1	<i>Anthus cervinus</i>
Yellow Wagtail	7		3	<i>Motacilla flava</i>
Black-headed Wagtail	4	1h	1	<i>Motacilla (f.) feldegg</i>
White Wagtail	6		3	<i>Motacilla alba</i>
Winter Wren	1		1	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>
European Robin	1		1	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>
Thrush Nightingale	1		1	<i>Luscinia svecica</i>
Common Redstart	2		1	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>
Whinchat	5		3	<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>
Common Stonechat	2		1	<i>Saxicola torquata</i>
Northern Wheatear	7		3	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>
Common Blackbird	3	1h	1	<i>Turdus merula</i>
Song Thrush	1		1	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>
Mistle Thrush	2		1	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>
Cetti's Warbler	1	4h	1	<i>Cettia cetti</i>
Savi's Warbler	2		1	<i>Locustella luscinioides</i>
Sedge Warbler	3		1	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>
Marsh Warbler	4		1	<i>Acrocephalus palustris</i>
European Reed Warbler	3		1	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>
Great Reed Warbler	4		1	<i>Acrocephalus arundinaceus</i>
Icterine Warbler	1		1	<i>Hippolais icterina</i>
Lesser Whitethroat	5		2	<i>Sylvia curruca</i>
Common Whitethroat	3		1	<i>Sylvia communis</i>
Garden Warbler	2		1	<i>Sylvia borin</i>
Blackcap	1		2	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>
Wood Warbler	1		1	<i>Phylloscopus sibilatrix</i>
Willow Warbler	5		3	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>
Chiffchaff	3		1	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>
Spotted Flycatcher	5		2	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>
Red-breasted Flycatcher	5		3	<i>Ficedula parva</i>
Long-tailed Tit	-	1h	1	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>
Marsh Tit	-	3h	1	<i>Poecile palustris</i>
Sombre Tit	2		2	<i>Poecile lugubris</i>
Eurasian Blue Tit	7		1	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>
Great Tit	5	1h	1	<i>Parus major</i>
Eurasian Penduline-Tit	2	2h	3	<i>Remiz pendulinus</i>
Eurasian Nuthatch	2		2	<i>Sitta europaea</i>
Short-toed Treecreeper	2		2	<i>Certhia brachydactyla</i>
Red-backed Shrike	7		3	<i>Lanius collurio</i>
Eurasian Jay	4		3	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>
Common Magpie	7		3	<i>Pica pica</i>
Western Jackdaw	6		3	<i>Corvus monedula</i>
Rook	1		1	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>
Hooded Crow	6		3	<i>Corvus corone cornix</i>
Common Raven	1		1	<i>Corvus corax</i>
Common Starling	7		5	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>
House Sparrow	7		4	<i>Passer domesticus</i>
Spanish Sparrow	4		3	<i>Passer hispaniolensis</i>
Tree Sparrow	4		3	<i>Passer montanus</i>
Common Chaffinch	3		3	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>
European Greenfinch	2		1	<i>Carduelis chloris</i>
European Goldfinch	5		3	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>
Common Linnet	1		1	<i>Carduelis cannabina</i>
Hawfinch	4		3	<i>Coccothraustes coccothraustes</i>
Yellowhammer	1		3	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>
Corn Bunting	3		3	<i>Emberiza calandra</i>

MAMMALS

Red Squirrel	1	1	<i>Sciurus vulgaris</i>
Brown Hare	1	1	<i>Lepus capensis</i>
Short-tailed Vole	1	1	<i>Microtus agrestis</i>
White-toothed Pygmy Shrew	1	1	<i>Sunchus etruscus</i>

DRAGONFLIES

Lessor Emperor
Emperor
Southern Migrant Hawker
Migrant Hawker
Scarce Blue-tailed Damselfly
Southern Darter
Red-veined Darter
Ruddy Darter

BUTTERFLIES

Large White
Small White
Bath White
Clouded Yellow
Lang's Short-tailed Blue
Common Blue
Small Copper
Red Admiral
Painted Lady
Cardinal
Small Heath
Woodland Grayling
Meadow Brown
Mallow Skipper

OTHER ANIMALS

Common Pond Tortoise
Balkan Green Lizard
Sand Lizard
Smooth Snake
Marsh Frog
Balkan Frog
Praying Mantis

This list represents those birds and other animals seen by party members of this tour.



White Storks



Dalmatian Pelican



'Feeding frenzy'



White Pelicans



Squacco Heron



Great Cormorant



White Stork



White Stork

Photographs © Nigel Jones



Black-winged Stilt



Gull-billed Tern



Little Tern



Whiskered Tern



European Bee-eater



Cetti's Warbler



Willow Warbler

Front cover: migrating White Pelicans

Photographs © Nigel Jones