

ORNITHOLIDAYS TOUR TO FRANCE – THE CAMARGUE, CEVENNES & CAUSSES
Birds & Butterflies

20 – 27 May 2012



Leader: Mike Witherick

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A Personal Diary

Sunday, 20 May

Our check-in at Gatwick may have been a rather slow business, but our easyJet flight to Montpellier left and arrived on schedule. To add to our pleasure, the vehicle hire procedures are completed in record time, and it was not long before we were on the road in our Mercedes Vito minibus. Peter's impeccable navigation took us across the northern part of the Camargue and, at 6 pm just outside Beaucaire, we reached our base for the next four nights. On the way, we had a number of sightings which included Greater Flamingo, Glossy Ibis, Purple Heron and Black-winged Stilt.

Keen to stretch our legs, we met up for a fairly short circular walk. The skies were overcast. In these conditions and given the lateness of the hour, our avian prospects were rather limited. There were plenty of Common Nightingales singing their hearts out. Probably our best sightings were of a singing Common Redstart on a telegraph wire and a Eurasian Hobby. European Green Woodpecker was heard and a Great Spotted seen.

Having returned for the hotel for a quick freshen up, we met up at 7.30 pm and dealt with a leisurely 4-course dinner. The bottles of local white and red wine met with approval and eventually we retired to our rooms feeling something more than replete.

Monday, 21 May

There was heavy overnight rain, and at a breakfast it was still precipitating in a determined manner. As a consequence, we decided that our best bet in terms of birding was to make for the Camargue. We reasoned that wetland birds would not be too deterred by the inclement weather. Having reached the Natural Park, we were impressed by two things. The first were the thousands of Common Swifts seeking food at very low altitudes. The second was the vast amount of surface water. Clearly, what we were seeing was not the result of just last night's rain, but the cumulative effects of an unusually wet winter and spring.

During the course of time in the Camargue, we did well for herons (especially Purple) and egrets (Great, Little and Cattle). A Little Bittern was briefly seen. Our tally of terns included Whiskered, Black, Common, Gull-billed and Little. Gull species amounted to three – Yellow-legged, Black-headed and Mediterranean. We came across two small breeding colonies, one of White Storks and the other of Grey Herons. Great Crested Grebes were quite abundant, but very memorable was the sighting of a flock of some 40 Black-necked Grebes, all in breeding plumage and swimming close to the shore of the Etang de Vaccares. Our wader sightings included Common Ringed and Kentish Plovers, Common Redshank, Dunlin, Northern Lapwing, Pied Avocet and good numbers of Black-winged Stilts.

Because of the weather, we allowed ourselves the luxury of a coffee stop in the village of Sambuc. Fortunately, at lunch time we managed to find some structural cover and to consume our picnic, with its diversity of items, in reasonable comfort.

Other memories of our day in the Camargue included reaching the shores of a very rough Mediterranean Sea and appreciating the scale of the flooding which had inundated what is normally a huge area of sandy beach. Two European Bee-eaters showed well as they flitted from one roadside fencepost to another. Two European Rollers were seen, but not one of them well. Black Kites seemed to be the only raptor species not to be deterred by the weather, although we did have a couple of sightings of Eurasian Hobby. Likewise Short-toed Larks continued to indulge in their normal song flights.

We arrived back at the hotel at 5 pm. By now the rain had stopped – at last! After relaxing over our lunch-time bottle of rosé, we opted to undertake another spell of birding along the old railway line. Our virtue was

rewarded by an excellent sighting of Lesser Spotted Woodpecker. A European Honey Buzzard drifted over us; nearby we heard a few Golden Oriole calls.

Our evening meal was yet another substantial one, despite the fact we all opted to dispense with one course – for some of us it was the cheese board, for others the dessert. We did the checklist at the table and soon afterwards retired to our rooms, hoping that tomorrow's weather would be rather kinder to us than today's. However, it has to be said that, despite the weather, we had managed to record around 65 species during the course of the day.

Tuesday, 22 May

When I awoke it was not raining, but by the time I reached the breakfast room it had resumed. The plan was to spend most of the day exploring the birds to be found on the remaining tracts of Crau Plain. However, we started our excursion with a short drive through Les Alpilles in the vicinity of Les Baux. Despite the rain, we pressed on and visited two locations some distance apart. We were hoping to find the likes of Little Bustard and Stone Curlew. Instead our additions to the tour list were Red-legged Partridge, Eurasian Jay, Melodious Warbler and European Goldfinch. Come 11am, and with no easing of the weather in sight, we decided that the best thing option for us was to do as we did yesterday, namely to make for the Camargue. Thanks to Will's navigation, we made a faultless passage (a dry one) across the Rhone at Arles and then made all speed for Sambuc where we revisited yesterday's café to enjoy a reviving hot coffee.

By the time we had consumed our coffee, the rain had miraculously stopped. So we headed back to yesterday's picnic spot and with Collared Pratincole in mind. Eventually, we 'succeeded' with the species when a lone bird hurtled by. Also seen in the same location, either side of consuming another substantial picnic lunch, were Lesser Kestrel, Tree Sparrow and Squacco Heron.

The route we followed in the afternoon was exactly the same as taken yesterday, except that we made a stop at La Capeliere and followed the nature trail there. We saw several Blackcaps; Common Nightingales were very vocal but remained invisible. A few Black-crowned Night-Herons were seen at roost. A Common Cuckoo was seen several times, as well as a lonely female Gadwall. On our way to La Capeliere, we had a fairly close encounter with a female Western Marsh Harrier and saw a Eurasian Spoonbill in flight. North of Mas d'Argon, we saw Coot, Little Grebe and several Whiskered Terns. A little further on, at last, we came upon a European Roller that was prepared to show itself for a reasonable length of time - Jenn was particularly pleased.

On the way back to Beaucaire, we made a photo stop at a poppy field so that Peter could satisfy Sandra's request. Back at the hotel, we relaxed over a bottle of rosé, after which Peter and I went for a short walk up behind the hotel. We returned with just enough time for a shower before dinner. The remainder of the evening passed in a pleasant and relaxed manner.

Wednesday, 23 May

Much to our delight we awoke to clear skies. Clearly, the rain and cloud had been blown away by a strong and persistent wind that was to prove slightly frustrating as regards bird watching. The day was spent looking at the birds in two contrasting habitats – in the lightly forested limestone hills of Les Alpilles and on relict tracts of Crau Plain with their vast spreads of rounded pebbles brought down by the River Durance at the end of the Great Ice Age.

Our first stop in Les Alpilles produced two new species for the tour list – Short-toed Eagle and Cirl Bunting. Several Eurasian Jays were also seen. The first tract of Crau Plain, overlooking the Etang de les Aulnes, yielded some good views of raptors – first a dark morph Booted Eagle, then Black Kites, Lesser Kestrels and a Eurasian Hobby. Nearby a splendid male Red-backed Shrike was spotted by Will. A little further on, we came across Crested Lark and Tawny Pipit. All these species were seen again at a third location where there was a particularly extensive area of 'untouched' outwash plain. A brief Stone Curlew call was heard. Shortly afterwards, we found a purpose-built picnic table at which to consume our lunch. It was lovely to have the warmth of the sun on our backs.

After lunch we drove to what on the map was shown as a marshy area close to the Rhone. In the event, we discovered that it had been reclaimed for agricultural purposes. So we turned around and headed back to Les

Alpilles in the vicinity of La Caume (a peak of some 350 metres). We then walked for some time along the wooded trail with its useful markers informing us of the identities of some of the more interesting plants and trees. We only came across one new bird species – Crested Tit. However, in some more sheltered locations, we saw some butterflies –at last! These included Painted Lady, Wall Brown and Chalk-Hill Blue.

We arrived back at the hotel shortly after 5 pm and relaxed on the sun-kissed terrace. Here we enjoyed either a beer or a share of our daily issue of local rosé wine. Afterwards, Sandra, Peter and I went for a short walk which might have been unproductive bird-wise, but was thoroughly enjoyable. It certainly helped to give us an appetite for the evening meal. This included a very generous starter of locally-grown asparagus followed by roast pigeon (should they have been serving this up to a party of birdwatchers - was this a French joke?). The checklist was called at the table. We tarried for a short while afterwards and then hastened to our beds.

Thursday, 24 May

We were all loaded up and ready to start our transit to Pont de Montvert just after 8 am. Within the hour, we were parked up at the Pont du Gard and ready to visit this amazing Roman aqueduct – a World Heritage site. We arrived well ahead of the tourists and greatly enjoyed having the place to ourselves. New birds came thick and fast – Black Redstart, Alpine Swift, Crag Martin, White Wagtail and, perhaps best of all, Rock Sparrow. The cameras were also working busily. Before embarking on the next leg of our transit, we allowed ourselves a coffee. Actually, Will and Jenn also indulged in an ice cream each!

Heading northwards, Peter provided accurate navigational instructions, particularly through Uzes and around Alès. Our lunch stop was at Chateau de Portes with its wonderful views towards the Cevennes. We decided to indulge in a short walk before tucking into our sandwiches. Perhaps the most interesting sighting was that of a Blue Rock Thrush on the castle walls – but Will was walking on his own at the time. For the rest of us, the focus was more on butterflies, with sightings of Common Swallowtail, Clouded Yellow, White Admiral, Small Heath and Dingy Skipper.

From Chateau de Portes we took the very winding cross-country route to Pont de Montvert. We made one stop at a point with an excellent view out over the headwaters of the Tarn. We added two new species to the tour list – Common Whitethroat and Common Chiffchaff. From there, it was less than 30 minutes' drive to our base for the next three nights in the small settlement of Pont de Montvert.

By 3.30 pm we were occupying our rooms with their balconies looking down on the River Tarn. Thirty minutes later we left the hotel to spend the remainder of the afternoon exploring the Montagne du Bougès lying to the south of the Tarn. There was not much doing on the avian front save for views of Firecrest, but there was much to interest us in terms of flora, especially the Yellow Gentians that were yet to come and our first orchids – Pyramidal and Fragrant. We rounded off the day with a walk along a short stretch of the right bank of the Tarn in search of White-throated Dipper and Grey Wagtail. We scored with the latter and 'dipped' on the former, except to say that Will saw one from his balcony. Sandra, Peter and I drowned our disappointment at the local bar. It was lovely to sit outside in the sun and to drink in the local ambience (and beer).

We met in the dining room at 7.30 pm for a leisurely four-course dinner, followed by the checklist and bed.

Friday, 25 May

Three of us met up at 7 am for a short spell of pre-breakfast birding. White-throated Dippers were at the top of our agenda, but as it turned out, we failed, but whilst we were out, Will and Jenn saw one from the comfort of their balcony. There's little justice in this world! The best we could do was to add Winter Wren to the tour list.

The rest of the birding day was spent on the Mont Lozère massif – a great slab of granite reaching up to over 1,500 metres. It was really a day of two halves with a riverside picnic back at the hotel providing the interval. The weather for the morning half was warm and sunny. Rarely have I seen such a clear sky in these parts. We were soon adding new species for the tour, such as Common Linnet, Yellowhammer, Woodlark and Common Stonechat. But the bird stealing the show was a splendid male Rufous-tailed Rock Thrush seen perched on the summit of a nearby tor. A Great Spotted Woodpecker was an unusual sighting virtually at the

tree line. A Ring Ouzel was seen perched on the top of a pine tree. There was much interest in the fine spreads of Elder-flowered Orchids.

Eventually we reached the Ski Centre and here Citril Finch became the top priority. But we were out of luck and sought solace in a *café au lait* drunk out on the terrace. There was an abundance of European Goldfinches and Black Redstarts in the locality. It was around midday when we started back towards the hotel. On the way, what was initially thought to be our first Griffon Vulture subsequently turned out to be a sub-adult Golden Eagle. It was mobbed by no less than three other species of raptor – Common Kestrel, Eurasian Hobby and Booted Eagle. Another interesting observation on the way down was of a rufous morph Common Cuckoo.

In the afternoon session we put the focus on two species – Citril Finch and Rock Bunting. In the end, we had some excellent views of the former back at the Ski Station. At the same time, we heard the unmistakable call of a Black Woodpecker. Rock Bunting was found a little later lower down. We then decided to drive a 20 km loop through a particularly remote part of Mont Lozère. We passed through a number of small hamlets that had been deserted in the 19th and 20th centuries, but which are now gradually being resettled – largely by second-homers or done up as *gites* for rent to tourists. Apart from the landscape, interest centred on things botanical, such as the great carpets of Pheasant-eye and the small clusters of Wild Tulips.

We arrived back at the hotel around 6.30 pm with plenty of time for some relaxation and ablution before meeting up for our evening meal – another leisurely and tasty affair.

Saturday, 26 May

Although we went our own ways before breakfast, a subsequent comparison of sightings at the table revealed that we had all been lucky to see two White-throated Dippers close to the hotel. After breakfast, we followed the winding road down the Tarn valley to Florac, beyond which we ascended the steep edge of the Causse Méjean. A stop was made half way up, beneath the daunting limestone cliffs. Here we found an orchid-rich meadow and many photos were taken. Our first Eurasian Griffon Vultures were seen drifting along the top of the cliffs.

Once at the top of the scarp, we traversed the gently-rolling landscape of the plateau. A number of new species were encountered. These included Great Grey Shrike, Red Kite, Red-billed Chough and a female Montagu's Harrier. We made a welcome coffee stop at an *auberge* in a small hamlet. Several botanical stops were subsequently made. Eventually, we reached the southern edge of the plateau overlooking the Jonte gorge and started the descent until we reached a point where we could pull off the road into a small sheltered wooded area. Here we ate our picnic lunch, but in fits starts - our eating was interrupted by the sightings of attractive butterflies. These included the Green-underside Blue, Moroccan Orange Tip and Spanish Festoon. Another interruption occurred when a Western Bonelli's Warbler came into view.

After lunch, we completed the descent into the Jonte gorge with its spectacular cliffs that have become the nesting sites of re-introduced Eurasian Griffon Vultures. Will and Jenn went into the *Belvedere* and had the well-concealed nest of a Eurasian Black Vulture pointed out to them. This apparently is the only nest of Black Vulture in the Jonte Valley. The other members of this also re-introduced species seem to prefer the Tarn and Dourbie valleys. We rounded off our visit to the Jonte with an ice cream consumed on a terrace looking across the gorge. Feeling the better for this refreshment, we drove back up to the summit area of the plateau (about 1,000 metres above sea level) and made a long stop at a site of known botanical interest. Our discoveries included Fly Orchid and White Helleborine. A pair of Common Raven croaked as they passed overhead; an Ortolan Bunting was seen, and seemingly from nowhere came a noisy flock of some 35 Red-billed Chough.

Having enjoyed a sort of tea comprising items left over from previous picnics (lovely cherries and various forms of chocolate biscuit), we set off back to the hotel, reaching there a little before 6 pm. I spent a little time clearing out the minibuss and then joined Peter and Sandra for a reviving cold beer at the bar in the village.

We met up in the dining room at 7.30 pm for our last evening meal together. The plans for tomorrow's return to the UK were run through.

Sunday, 27 May

By 9 am, we are all packed up, paid up and loaded up. We headed up the Tarn Valley in the direction of Genolac. It was another fine, sunny morning. We made a leg-stretching stop at Chateau de Portes. It was a bit too early and the dew still too heavy for many butterflies to be about. However, we did hear the song of our first Garden Warbler. A little further on towards Alès, we made a coffee and loo stop. From there, with Peter confidently in charge of navigation, we drove towards Montpellier Airport, but first of all sought a handily-placed picnic spot at which to have our lunch. During the meal, we enjoyed a chorus of bird song – Golden Oriole, Common Nightingale, Cetti's Warbler and Blackcap. After the meal, it was a matter of a short drive and then filling-up and returning the minibus.

We are arrived at the airport some 30 minutes before the check-in opened. Happily, our back to Gatwick, although full, left on time and arrived slightly ahead of schedule. Sadly, the group disbanded in the baggage reclaim.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to the staff of both hotels who looked after us so well. Thanks to you all for your good company and humour. I hope you enjoyed this 'taste' of France, despite the inclement weather early on. The images illustrating this report have kindly been provided by Peter.

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July 2012

Itinerary and Weather

Sunday, 20 May	London Gatwick > Montpellier > Beaucaire Sunny intervals 18°C
Monday, 21 May	Camargue Natural Park Late pm: around hotel Light rain for most of day 14°C
Tuesday, 22 May	Les Alpilles > Crau Plain > Camargue Rain all morning, becoming drier 14°C
Wednesday, 23 May	Les Alpilles > Crau Plain Sunny all day; strong NE wind 23°C
Thursday, 24 May	> Pont du Gard > Chateau de Portes > Pont de Montvert Montagne du Bougès Fine all day 25°C
Friday, 25 May	Mont Lozère massif Fine, becoming thundery late afternoon 22°C
Saturday, 26 May	Causse Méjean & Jonte gorge Fine all day 25°C
Sunday, 27 May	Pont de Montvert > Chateau de Portes > Mauguio > Montpellier > London Gatwick Bright and warm 25°C

CHECKLIST OF BIRDS SEEN DURING TOUR

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

Locations
C = Camargue, Les Alpilles, Crau
Plain & Pont du Gard
Ce = Cévennes & Causse de Mejean

Abundance scale
Maximum seen (on one day)
1 = 1-4
2 = 5-9
3 = 10-99
4 = 100-999
5 = 1,000+

SPECIES	No of days recorded	Locations	Abundance Scale	SCIENTIFIC NAME
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The sequence and nomenclature of this list follow Collins Bird Guide 2nd Edition 2010.

Mute Swan	4	C	1	<i>Cygnus olor</i>
Mallard	5	C	2	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>
Gadwall	1	C	1	<i>Anas strepera</i>
Common Shelduck	3	C	1	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>
Red-crested Pochard	1	C	1	<i>Netta rufina</i>
Red-legged Partridge	2	1h	Ce	<i>Alectoris rufa</i>
Common Pheasant	1	C	1	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>
Little Grebe	1	1h	1	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>
Great Crested Grebe	2	C	3	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>
Black-necked Grebe	1	C	3	<i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>
Great Cormorant	2	C	1	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>
Little Bittern	1	C	1	<i>Ixobrychus minutus</i>
Black-crowned Night-Heron	2	C	1	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>
Squacco Heron	1	C	1	<i>Ardeola ralloides</i>
Cattle Egret	3	C	2	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>
Little Egret	5	C	3	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>
Great Egret	3	C	1	<i>Egretta alba</i>
Grey Heron	3	C	Ce	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>
Purple Heron	6	C	1	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>
White Stork	3	C	1	<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>
Glossy Ibis	1	C	1	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>
Eurasian Spoonbill	1	C	1	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>
Greater Flamingo	3	C	4	<i>Phoenicopterus ruber</i>
Eurasian Griffon Vulture	1		Ce	<i>Gyps fulvus</i>
Eurasian Black Vulture	1		Ce	<i>Aegypius monachus</i>
Golden Eagle	1		Ce	<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>
Short-toed Eagle	2	C	Ce	<i>Circaetus gallicus</i>
Booted Eagle	2	C	Ce	<i>Hieraaetus pennatus</i>
Red Kite	2	C	Ce	<i>Milvus milvus</i>
Black Kite	5	C	3	<i>Milvus migrans</i>
Western Marsh Harrier	1	C	1	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>
Montagu's Harrier	1		Ce	<i>Circus pygargus</i>
Common Buzzard	4	C	Ce	<i>Buteo buteo</i>
European Honey Buzzard	3	C	Ce	<i>Pernis apivorus</i>
Common Kestrel	3	C	Ce	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>
Lesser Kestrel	3	C	1	<i>Falco naumanni</i>
Eurasian Hobby	5	C	Ce	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>
Common Moorhen	1	C	1	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>
Eurasian Coot	2	C	3	<i>Fulica atra</i>
Pied Avocet	1	C	1	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>
Black-winged Stilt	3	C	3	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>
Stone Curlew	-	1h	C	<i>Burhinus oedicnemus</i>
Collared Pratincole	1	C	1	<i>Glareola pratincola</i>
Common Ringed Plover	1	C	1	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>
Kentish Plover	1	C	1	<i>Charadrius alexandrinus</i>
Northern Lapwing	2	C	1	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>

Dunlin	1		C		2	<i>Calidris alpina</i>
Common Redshank	1		C		2	<i>Tringa totanus</i>
Common Greenshank	-	1h	C		1	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>
Black-headed Gull	3		C		3	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>
Mediterranean Gull	4		C		3	<i>Larus melanocephalus</i>
Yellow-legged Gull	5		C		3	<i>Larus michahellis</i>
Gull-billed Tern	2		C		1	<i>Gelochelidon nilotica</i>
Little Tern	1		C		1	<i>Sterna albifrons</i>
Common Tern	1		C		1	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>
Black Tern	2		C		1	<i>Chlidonias niger</i>
Whiskered Tern	2		C		1	<i>Chlidonias hybridus</i>
Rock Dove (Feral Pigeon)	6		C		3	<i>Columba livia</i>
Common Wood Pigeon	3		C		1	<i>Columba palumbus</i>
Eurasian Collared Dove	7		C	Ce	2	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>
Eurasian Turtle Dove	1		C		1	<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>
Common Cuckoo	4	2h	C	Ce	1	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>
Common Swift	8		C	Ce	5	<i>Apus apus</i>
Alpine Swift	1		C		2	<i>Apus melba</i>
Eurasian Hoopoe	2		C		1	<i>Upupa epops</i>
European Bee-eater	2		C		1	<i>Merops apiaster</i>
European Roller	3		C		1	<i>Coracias garrulus</i>
European Green Woodpecker	2	1h	C	Ce	1	<i>Picus viridis</i>
Black Woodpecker	-	1h		Ce	1	<i>Dendrocopos martius</i>
Great Spotted Woodpecker	2		C	Ce	1	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>
Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	1		C		1	<i>Dendrocopos minor</i>
Short-toed Lark	5		C	Ce	2	<i>Calandrella brachydactyla</i>
Crested Lark	1		C		1	<i>Galerida cristata</i>
Woodlark	1			Ce	1	<i>Lullula arborea</i>
Eurasian Crag Martin	4		C	Ce	3	<i>Ptyonoprogne rupestris</i>
Barn Swallow	8		C	Ce	2	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>
Common House Martin	7		C	Ce	2	<i>Delichon urbica</i>
Tawny Pipit	1		C		1	<i>Anthus campestris</i>
Tree Pipit	1			Ce	1	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>
White Wagtail	4		C	Ce	2	<i>Motacilla alba</i>
Yellow Wagtail	1		C		1	<i>Motacilla flava</i>
Grey Wagtail	4			Ce	2	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>
White-throated Dipper	2			Ce	1	<i>Cinclus cinclus</i>
European Robin	1	1h	C	Ce	1	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>
Common Nightingale	1	6h	C	Ce	2	<i>Luscinia megarhynchos</i>
Common Redstart	2		C	Ce	1	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>
Black Redstart	4		C	Ce	2	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>
Northern Wheatear	2			Ce	2	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>
Common Stonechat	3			Ce	2	<i>Saxicola torquata</i>
Eurasian Blackbird	5		C	Ce	1	<i>Turdus merula</i>
Ring Ouzel	1			Ce	1	<i>Turdus torquatus</i>
Rufous-tailed Rock Thrush	1			Ce	1	<i>Monticola saxatilis</i>
Garden Warbler	-	1h		Ce	1	<i>Sylvia borin</i>
Blackcap	3	3h	C	Ce	1	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>
Common Whitethroat	3	1h		Ce	3	<i>Sylvia communis</i>
Sardinian Warbler	-	2h	C		1	<i>Sylvia melanocephala</i>
Cetti's Warbler	2	3h	C		1	<i>Cettia cetti</i>
Zitting Cisticola	1	1h	C		1	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>
European Reed Warbler	2		C		1	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>
Great Reed Warbler	2		C		1	<i>Acrocephalus arundinaceus</i>
Melodious Warbler	1	1h	C		1	<i>Hippolais polyglotta</i>
Western Bonelli's Warbler	1			Ce	1	<i>Phylloscopus bonelli</i>
Common Chiffchaff	1	3h		Ce	1	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>
Firecrest	2			Ce	1	<i>Regulus ignicapillus</i>
Winter Wren	1	1h		Ce	1	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>
Great Tit	6	1h	C	Ce	1	<i>Parus major</i>
European Blue Tit	3			Ce	1	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>
Crested Tit	1		C		1	<i>Lophophanes cristatus</i>
Great Grey Shrike	1			Ce	1	<i>Lanius excubitor</i>

Red-backed Shrike	3		C	Ce	1	<i>Lanius collurio</i>
Common Magpie	8		C	Ce	2	<i>Pica pica</i>
Eurasian Jay	6		C	Ce	2	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>
Western Jackdaw	8		C	Ce	3	<i>Corvus monedula</i>
Red-billed Chough	1			Ce	3	<i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i>
Carrion Crow	8		C	Ce	2	<i>Corvus corone</i>
Common Raven	1			Ce	1	<i>Corvus corone</i>
Common Starling	6		C	Ce	3	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>
Golden Oriole	-	3h	C		1	<i>Oriolus oriolus</i>
House Sparrow	7		C	Ce	3	<i>Passer domesticus</i>
Eurasian Tree Sparrow	2		C		1	<i>Passer montanus</i>
Common Rock Sparrow	1		C		1	<i>Petronia petronia</i>
Common Chaffinch	5	1h	C	Ce	2	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>
Common Linnet	2			Ce	3	<i>Carduelis cannabina</i>
European Goldfinch	5		C	Ce	3	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>
European Greenfinch	-	1h	C		1	<i>Chloris chloris</i>
Citrl Finch	1			Ce	1	<i>Serinus citrinella</i>
European Serin	-	1h	C		1	<i>Serinus serinus</i>
Ortolan Bunting	1			Ce	1	<i>Emberiza hortulana</i>
Yellowhammer	2			Ce	1	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>
Cirl Bunting	1		C		1	<i>Emberiza cirlus</i>
Rock Bunting	1			Ce	1	<i>Emberiza cia</i>
Corn Bunting	2	1h	C		1	<i>Miliaria calandra</i>

MAMMALS

Red Fox
Coypu
Rabbit
European Hare

Vulpes vulpes
Myocastor coypus
Oryctolagus cuniculus
Lepus europaeus

BUTTERFLIES

Grizzled Skipper
Small Skipper
Silver-spotted Skipper
Spanish Festoon
Swallowtail
Large White
Small White
Green-veined White
Orange Tip
Moroccan Orange Tip
Clouded Yellow
Southern White Admiral
Painted Lady
Red Admiral
Queen of Spain Fritillary
Meadow Brown
Southern Gatekeeper
Small Heath
Wall Brown
Little Blue
Holly Blue
Green-underside Blue
Chalk-Hill Blue

Pyrgus malvae
Thymelicus sylvestris
Hesperia comma
Zerynthia rumina
Papilio machaon
Pieris brassicae
Artogeia rapae
Artogeia napi
Anthocharis cardamines
Anthocharis belia
Colias crocea
Ladoga reducta
Vanessa cardui
Vanessa atalanta
Issoria lathonia
Maniola jurtina
Pyronia cecelia
Coenonympha pamphilus
Lasiommata megera
Cupido minimus
Celastrina argiolus
Glaucopsyche alexis
Lysandra coridon

ORCHIDS

Fly Orchid
Military Orchid
Early Purple Orchid
Pyramidal Orchid
Common Spotted Orchid
Elder-flowered Orchid
Fragrant Orchid
Man Orchid
White Helleborine
Burnt Orchid

Ophrys insectifera
Orchis militaris
Orchis mascula
Anacamptis pyramidalis
Dactylorhiza fuchsii
Dactylorhiza sambucina
Gymnadenia conopsea
Aceras anthropophorum
Cephalanthera damasonium
Neotinea ustulata

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



Kentish Plover (female)



Kentish Plover (male)



Little Egret



Greater Flamingos



Camargue Horses



Common Swallowtail



Burnt Orchid



Fly Orchid

Front cover: Greater Flamingos

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