

ORNITHOLIDAY'S TOUR TO GREECE - THE ISLAND OF LESVOS AT LEISURE
Spring Migration Magic

05 - 12 May 2012



Leader: Colin Bushell

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A Personal Diary

This was my third visit to Lesbos; a super island for birding lying on a major migration route for birds heading for Europe in the spring. The weather was good; too good! Clear blue cloudless skies coupled with soaring daytime temperatures ("June Weather" according to the hotel staff), well into the 30 degree Celsius bracket most days, made migrant finding difficult. But as always, Lesbos rarely fails to produce some magical birding moments, whether it be unsurpassed views of breeding birds (I have never seen Cinereous Bunting nor Rufous Bush Robin so well as on this year's tour) or that bush full of Black-headed Buntings or Red-backed Shrikes and European Bee-eaters making their way along the Meladia Valley, it remains a must-visit venue for birders.

5 May

This year we all fly from Gatwick (in previous years it has been possible to fly from Manchester) where we meet at the southern terminal for a very early hour for our Monarch flight to Mytilini in Lesbos. Three and a half hours after leaving Gatwick we see the lush green Aegean island below us and as we land at 11.45 am local time (Lesbos is two hours behind BST) it's hard to believe the outside temperature announcement of 18 degrees Celsius! Baggage and vehicle collected we're off on a magical mystery tour of Mytilini before exiting on the open road to Skala Kalloni and our last "hustle and bustle" behind us for a week as we head for this peaceful coastal resort.

It's lunchtime by the time we check in at our hotel and after a brief stop we head to a local taverna for a bite to eat. A stroll around the local roads to our hotel introduces us to our first Lesbos birds including Crested Larks and Eastern Olivaceous and Cetti's Warblers while Red-rumped Swallows join the Common House Martins overhead. Common Nightingales are just that (common) here; one male singing in the hotel garden throughout our stay on Lesbos. The Kalloni Pool outside our hotel may have seen better days (it's much dryer and choked with vegetation nowadays) but the platform provided by the Kalloni Bay Hotel allows us to view the marsh and see Squacco Herons and Wood Sandpipers with ease.

We finish our day with a walk along the bay towards the nearby Aegean Hotel where a pair of Black-headed Buntings reside in the gardens. We have fine views of this attractive species and the female appears to be collecting nesting material. Little and Common Terns fish in the Cristou (East) River where the incoming tide forced higher by a strong onshore wind pushes Ruff, Common Greenshank and Wood Sandpipers out from the cover of the salt marsh.

After a long and tiring day we enjoy a good meal and complete our daily bird list back at the hotel.

6 May

Our first full day in the field begins with a pre-breakfast walk from the hotel to the Cristou (East) River mouth. Birders present over the last week and new arrivals like ourselves comment on the general lack of migrants, but there's plenty to see still. The Black-headed Buntings near the Aegean Hotel show very well indeed in the early morning sun and handsome Black-headed Wagtails perch on the roadside fence. A nice group of European Bee-eaters is a very pleasant surprise indeed as we venture along the upper river with a smart Kentish Plover on show nearby as well as a rather distant and elusive Stone Curlew.

Returning to the hotel for the buffet breakfast we decide to stay "local" today for our birding with the morning spent at the Skala Kalloni salt pans. It's only a short journey in the bus and birds seem to be everywhere immediately on our arrival. Little and Common Terns fish in the nearby channels and a Tawny Pipit calls as it flies over our bus but lands out of view.

Scanning across the fields we find a female Montagu's Harrier and a Lesser Grey Shrike (our only one of the tour and one of very few reported this week) lands on the fence post close to our bus. Black Storks coast across the horizon as we pull up alongside the pool near the entrance to the salt works where some splendid White-winged Terns are on show alongside Whiskered and Gull-billed Terns. Ruddy Shelduck and European

Bee-eaters add a splash of colour to the scene with a few Little Stints and a single Common Greenshank feeding on the pool - definitely at the other end of the spectrum! The single Northern Lapwing on the pool is a rare visitor to Lesvos, more common in the winter months when some small flocks have been recorded.

By late morning it's getting rather hot so we try just one more site prior to lunch. We head down to the beach, traditionally a reasonable site for Rufous Bush Robin; a species that should by now be on territory. After a short search we locate a singing male, briefly accompanied by another (presumably a female) bird. The male performs wonderfully, posing on nearby bushes for us and singing his heart out. Undoubtedly my best views of this species, a rather late arrival in the spring migration season in Lesvos and very welcome indeed.

We return to Skala Kalloni for lunch at one of the many tavernas near the harbour, where we enjoy some fresh fish or a simply an omelette or pizza. The food is tasty, whatever the choice. Later we meet up once again after a siesta in the hotel and choose the sensible option in a search for Eurasian Scops Owl in a shady avenue of Eucalyptus trees at nearby Papiana. The search is aided somewhat by the arrival of a couple of birders who know the exact whereabouts of a roosting pair and we enjoy some great views of these beautiful small owls in the afternoon sunshine.

We use the remaining hours of the afternoon birding the Lower Tsiknias (West) River, mainly in the area of the lower ford. Temminck's Stints, Wood Sandpipers and Little Bittern entertain for a while, but the call of the ford is strong by late afternoon. There's quite a gathering of birders by the time we arrive, all watching and photographing Wood Sandpipers at close range with Little Bittern as a backdrop! Black Storks soar overhead with Black-headed and Cirl Buntings in song on the overhead cables. Too much!

7 May

For that ultimate "Lesvos Birding Experience" I personally think that the west of the island cannot be beaten. It has it all: some special breeding birds and also the chance of experiencing one of those magic moments when large numbers of migrants may be grounded at any time of the day.

The west is our destination today although with clear skies and temperatures already starting to rise even as we leave our hotel after an early breakfast, I am a little pessimistic about our chance of "a big day". As usual we make our first scheduled stop in the Ladia Valley to search the rocky gorge and scrub-covered slopes for birds. Handsome Black-eared Wheatears, a male Blue Rock Thrush, superb European Bee-eaters and delicate Red-rumped Swallows are on show immediately as we leave the bus. The sound of Cirl Buntings, Subalpine Warblers, Common Cuckoo and the purring of European Turtle Dove ring around the canyon as Short-toed Eagle and Long-legged Buzzard soar over the distant slopes.

We see all these birds without moving more than a few yards from the bus in the lay-by, although Common Rock Sparrow remains elusive this morning (we hear it calling quite a few times). A trio of Red-footed Falcons are over the valley as the sun warms the air and a noisy Middle-spotted Woodpecker makes its way across the gorge just as we about to leave. Just another quiet morning on Lesvos then?

Our next stop is at Vigla, another traditional site for birders to search en route to the west coast of the island. Our main target here is Isabelline Wheatear but there's none to be seen around the usual spot although there's an Olive-tree Warbler singing (unfortunately it's in a fenced-off area), with Eurasian Hoopoe, Woodlark and Black-eared Wheatears all around. A short drive a little higher on the slopes towards Ipsilou and we find our quarry. In fact we find at least ten Isabelline Wheatears and enjoy very close views indeed.

We've reached the bottom of the slopes up to Ipsilou Monastery but returning birders are talking of a hot and bird less experience on the exposed hill so we opt for an early lunch at our favourite taverna in Sigri before exploring the area for migrants. In truth the coastal fields are quite disappointing compared to previous visits in recent tours, no doubt many migrants are simply flying over the island on their way north this year, with no adverse conditions to ground them unfortunately (for us, at least). Our first Eastern Orphean Warbler of the tour "tack-tacks" its way along some roadside vegetation, European Bee-eaters gather above us and Woodchats and Black-headed Buntings use the overhead cables for perches. John sees a handsome male Red-backed Shrike but unfortunately the rest of the group fail to catch up with the bird. A few Lesser Kestrels can be seen in the cloudless sky but our best birds are found at the Lower Ford at Faneromeni where

we see a female Red-footed Falcon and several Alpine Swifts. We have just enough time for a quick stop below the Ipsilou Monastery on the way back to Skala Kalloni where we have great views of a male Cretzschmar's Bunting next to the road and a pair of Common Ravens croak as they fly overhead.

8 May

The forests of Achladeri is the choice of birding venue this morning but it would be foolish to drive past the Kalloni pools without stopping on the way. It's already quite hot as we leave the hotel after breakfast in the now customary clear blue sky. We are greeted by the sight of our first Glossy Ibis of the tour as we pull over to stop by the salt works pool, quickly followed by great views of a handsome drake Garganey, a Great Egret, Black Storks and a selection of waders that includes a Kentish Plover, at least four Little Ringed Plovers and several Common Ringed Plovers. Gull-billed and Little Terns are very much in evidence as we patiently wait for the next "goodie" to drop in. It doesn't but John has seen two distant pratincoles in flight (too far to identify specifically) and the rest of us catch up on his Red-backed Shrike from yesterday with a beautiful crisp male on the cables over the road.

It's now time for the short drive around Kalloni Bay to Achladeri (with a quick stop for photos of the stunning Poppy fields) for Krüper's Nuthatch, one of the special breeding species of Lesvos. Repeating the incredible field craft from last year's tour, the leader locates the nesting area of the nuthatches. OK, the leader follows directions from the latest posts in the Birding Lesvos Blog, following the main path, passing some rubbish and locating a tree with a deep black sap-scar and a ram's skull at the base. And there they are! The Krüper's Nuthatches pay many visits to the nest hole over the hour or so we watch, with at least one chick and a pair of Short-toed Treecreeper as a bonus. Unfortunately the car park area, usually so good for Masked Shrike is rather busy with groups looking at the stumps where the nuthatches bred two years ago. They are directed to the correct area and we head back to Skala Kalloni for another splendid lunch at our favoured taverna.

Another siesta completed we all meet again for a short trip to Metochi Lake where Little Crakes show briefly (but alas none of the group glimpse one) but Great Reed Warbler, Black-crowned Night Heron and Little Bittern are seen, even in the heat of the afternoon. A late afternoon visit to the Cristou River mouth produces great looks at a pair of Peregrines, a close fly by Black Stork plus the usual Ruff and Wood Sandpipers before we head back to the hotel for dinner.

9 May

Continuing with the Lesvos breeding bird theme we head north this morning for Kavaki near Petra. It's only a short excursion and once again our main target bird (Rüppell's Warbler) is on show the minute we arrive at the lay-by. The scrub-covered cliff tops are alive with song this morning (it's a warm and sunny one, once again) and the Rüppell's Warbler shows incredibly well with Blue Rock Thrush, Black-eared Wheatears, Black-headed Buntings and Crag Martins for company. We spend quite a bit of time with this attractive *Sylvia* warbler, turning our attention to Orphean Warblers, Sardinian Warblers and Subalpine Warblers every so often.

Short-toed Eagle and a few Black Storks are seen between Kavaki and the Kalloni Raptor Watchpoint but our day improves with time during our afternoon session. The Eurasian Scops Owls in the shady Eucalyptus avenues at Papiana are very much appreciated, after a spell on the hotel platform overlooking the Kalloni marsh outside our hotel looking at Purple Heron and Whiskered Tern. With the freshening breeze neutralising the hot sun somewhat we're able to search the open country near the beach at Kalloni Saltpans where several Short-toed Larks are seen well once coaxed carefully onto open dusty areas. Greater Flamingos, Stone Curlews, Black-headed Wagtails and numerous European Bee-eaters are here too but it's back to "Old Faithful" (the salt work pool) for the finale where at least 60 Ruff, numerous Wood Sandpipers and a couple of Common Greenshank are joined by 15 Little Stints and briefly by two Broad-billed Sandpipers that plop into the water right next to us before (wisely) joining the Little Stints on dry land! These two tiny, stripy-headed waders stay just long enough for everyone to enjoy them in the scope before heading back to the saltpans once again. The drake Garganey, several Black Storks, many Ruddy Shelduck and a few Great Egrets are watched before we have to head back for dinner. Roberta spots a White Stork on the Tsiknias River, well worth a stop as they've not been too numerous so far this year.

10 May

It's the early bird that catches the err, crake. At least that's the theory as Michael and I take a pre-breakfast trip to Metochi Lake this morning. We are in luck with one male and two female Little Crakes showing reasonably well in the reeds at the edge of the lake on the opposite bank. Little Bittern and Squacco Herons are also seen this morning in cloudy conditions for a change (at least on this tour).

Back to the hotel for breakfast and then heading west once again with our first stop just below Ipsilou Monastery. It's cooler today, cloudy with a north wind and hopes are high for migrants to drop in at any time here. But it is summer resident Woodlarks and Isabelline Wheatears that show well first with Golden Orioles, Eurasian Hoopoes and Chukars calling and teasing us in the distant valley. A few female Red-backed Shrikes and Spotted Flycatchers are indicative of some arrival, if only small. Cinereous Buntings are not always this easy to see either and how they perform today! Singing males show extremely well on the slopes and one, near the monastery gives best ever views for everyone, including myself. Another brace of female Red-backed Shrikes is augmented by a superb male and Blue Rock Thrush and Rock Nuthatch are seen on a windy Ipsilou slope. Only the Common Rock Sparrow evades the group, showing just to me as I stroll back from moving the bus.

Lunch is once again at the Taverna Australia, discussing our birds so far this tour over fish dishes and a beer or two for a few. We decide on the southern circuit this afternoon, heading for the Old Sanatorium and Meladia Valley for a change. Species variety is maybe a little lower than expected but density is certainly high with at least 25 Red-backed Shrikes counted on the outbound trip, with many more (and possibly not duplicates) seen on our return journey. Black-headed Buntings appear to be on the move still too; one bush has at least 30 in it, many making their way along the valley as we watch. Two Golden Orioles adorn a clump of bushes and incredibly our first two Whinchats (normally one of the commonest migrants here) of the trip are seen this afternoon. Spotted Flycatchers seem to have arrived in numbers today too, there's European Bee-eaters aplenty and even another Rock Nuthatch and a Chukar to look at. Eventually we have to leave and head back to Skala Kalloni, but who knows what other gems were hiding out here in the west of Lesvos?

11 May

It's our last full day in the field on Lesvos so we're up and out early watching the male Citrine Wagtail on the pool outside the hotel this morning. Admittedly it only shows briefly but we have it in the scope for a short period before disappearing and never to be seen again. In fact the pool is quite lively this morning with Purple Heron, White-winged and Whiskered Terns and a female Red-backed Shrike seen before we return for breakfast.

The Kalloni salt pans are on good form once again as we call in on the way to the Napi Valley. A good count of 55 Little Stints is reached, the Garganey shows extremely well and those White-winged Terns are just so graceful in the morning sun. The rarity in the Napi Valley is undoubtedly the overcast weather and even a few spots of rain. Rain jackets are used for the first time in the tour and at first there's little to take our minds off the change in climate. However our target bird appears with the slight improvement in weather as a handsome Masked Shrike is found perched on top of one of the bushes on the slope. Normally quite easy to find, this species (like many) has been tricky this year. Eurasian Hoopoes fly from one side of the slope to the other quite frequently, the best we've seen this species this tour and an Eastern Orphean Warbler calls "tac-tac" behind us in the olive groves. At least four Red-backed Shrikes are on show in the Napi Valley this morning, part of the influx of this species on the island during the last few days.

We spend our last afternoon of the tour "locally", travelling only a short distance to Kalami Marsh where several Little Stints and a Common Sandpiper are on view on the muddy fringes of the pools and Red-backed Shrikes in the scrub-covered hillside. A pair of Blue-headed Wagtails fly in and land on the path right in front of us just as we are about to leave for "Old Faithful" (the Kalloni salt works pool) for the last time.

We've not even left the bus before the call of "pratincoles" fills the air and there's at least five Collared Pratincoles on the dry expanse of mud in the centre of the marsh, much to our delight. We watch these attractive tern-like waders for quite some time in the scope before the next "alert" of Marsh Sandpiper on the pool. Side-by-side Marsh and Wood Sandpipers provide excellent views as White-winged Terns dip over the pool and 41 Whiskered Terns are counted making their way steadily across the salt pans. Two Curlew

Sandpipers show just how different they can appear; one in summer finery, the other hardly out of winter dress. Tens of Little Stints come and go between the pool and the salt pans and at least seven Gull-billed Terns have gathered on the pool by the time we decide to leave for dinner. Dinner? No chance! A last gasp, eleventh hour “goodie” in the form of Red-throated Pipit becomes our grand finale bird, but not just one – four! Again, a few have the flush of rosy-pink to their throats but some are almost clean white below the bill down to the chest. All are streaky though with nice “braces” and we have super views of these dapper pipits in the late afternoon sunshine. Brilliant!

We discuss our favourite birds and tour moments over drinks and dinner (shrikes and pratincoles feature heavily tonight) with plenty of time to pack for our journey home tomorrow. It won't quite be the same without that Common Nightingale singing, will it?

12 May

A last gasp early morning look at the Kalloni marsh; no sign of the Citrine Wagtail this morning but a final opportunity to look at Whiskered Terns and a male Little Bittern can't be refused with a Common Snipe causing a bit of excitement until it shows well in the open.

We leave promptly after breakfast for Mytilini airport in order to beat the package tour holiday makers to check-in. This works well and we are ready for our flight with boarding passes in hand before the hordes descend on departures. We're flying Air Finland this morning as Monarch have a “technical problem” (what does that expression mean in aviation terms?), but the alternative carrier is excellent and we arrive at Gatwick just after 2pm.

Baggage is safely collected at arrivals and we say our goodbyes. It may have not been a “classic” year for migration on Lesvos (can we have a bit of cloud and dare I say rain, in future please?), but we had a marvellous time. Fifty plus Red-backed Shrikes, 30 Black-headed Buntings in one bush and a regular “wader-fest” isn't bad after all, is it?

Acknowledgements

We are most grateful to the staff at our hotel. Lesvos folks were as always, friendly and welcoming and a special mention must go out to our “regular” tavernas in Skala Kalloni (the Dionysos) and in Sigri (Taverna Australia).

Once again I'd like to mention Steve Dudley who tirelessly helps all birders to see as many birds as possible on Lesvos, whether it be through his blog www.lesvosbirding.com or the log in the reception at the Hotel Pasiphae. I would also like to thank Ornitholidays' leader Roger Lawrence who shared his knowledge of this wonderful birding location with me during my first tour here in 2010.

Finally and most importantly I would like to thank everyone in our 2012 team: Mary, John, Michael, Roberta and Brian. We shared some magical birding moments, humour, great food and wonderful weather in Lesvos. I do hope to see you all again very soon.

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June 2012

Itinerary and Weather

- 5 May Fly Gatwick to Mytilini. Transfer to Skala Kalloni. Local birding around Skala Kalloni pool and Cristou River.
Fine and sunny, clear sky. 24 degrees Celsius.
- 6 May Skala Kalloni pool pre-breakfast. Morning at Kalloni saltpans. Lunch in Skala Kalloni. Afternoon watching Scops Owls at Papiana and migrants on Lower East River.
Fine and sunny with southeast wind. 28 degrees Celsius.
- 7 May Excursion to west Lesvos stopping at the Ladia Valley and Vigla (Isabelline Wheatear) and birding below Ipsilou Monastery slopes. Lunch in Sigri. Afternoon birding Sigri fields and Faneromeni, stopping below Ipsilou on the way back to Skala Kalloni.
Fine, hot and sunny with a northwest wind. 30 – 32 degrees Celsius.
- 8 May Morning excursion to see Kruper's Nuthatch at Achladeri, stopping at the Kalloni saltpan pool on the way back to Skala Kalloni for lunch. Afternoon birding Metochi Lake and Cristou River.
Fine and sunny with a cloudless sky. 30 degrees Celsius.
- 9 May Trip to the north at Kavaki (Molivos) for *Sylvia* warblers in the coastal scrub there. Brief stop at the Kalloni raptor viewpoint on the way back for lunch in Skala Kalloni. Afternoon at Papiana (Scops Owl) and Kalloni saltpans and sheep fields.
Fine and sunny. 30 degrees Celsius.
- 10 May Pre-breakfast trip to Metochi Lake for Little Crake. Day trip to the west, birding Ipsilou, Old Sanatorium and Meladia Valley.
Overcast in the early morning with a breezy northwest wind. Clearing later. 17 – 27 degrees Celsius.
- 11 May Morning birding locally at Skala Kalloni pool and Kalloni saltpans before heading to the Napi Valley.
Lunch in Skala Kalloni.
Afternoon at Mesa, Kalami Marsh and Kalloni saltpans.
Overcast with showers in the morning, clearing in the afternoon. 17 – 28 degrees Celsius.
- 12 May Pre-breakfast birding near hotel. Depart for Mytilini airport after breakfast for flight back to Gatwick, arriving mid-afternoon.
Fine and sunny. 25 degrees Celsius.

CHECKLIST OF BIRDS SEEN DURING TOUR

No of days recorded	Abundance Scale
1 2h means seen on 1 day and heard on 2 other days. Max 8 days.	maximum for any one day
	1 = 1 - 4
	2 = 5 - 9
	3 = 10 - 100
	4 = 100 - 1000
	5 = > 1000

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

Common Shelduck	3	2	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>
Ruddy Shelduck	5	3	<i>Tadorna ferruginea</i>
Mallard	2	1	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>
Garganey	3	1	<i>Anas querquedula</i>
Chukar	1	1	<i>Alectoris chukar</i>
Little Grebe	2	1	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>
Great Cormorant	2	1	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>
Little Bittern	6	1	<i>Ixobrychus minutus</i>
Black-crowned Night-Heron	1	1	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>
Squacco Heron	8	2	<i>Ardeola ralloides</i>
Little Egret	4	3	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>
Great Egret	3	1	<i>Egretta alba</i>
Grey Heron	4	2	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>
Purple Heron	2	1	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>
Black Stork	4	3	<i>Ciconia nigra</i>
White Stork	1	1	<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>
Glossy Ibis	1	1	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>
Greater Flamingo	1	3	<i>Phoenicopterus ruber</i>
Short-toed Eagle	4	1	<i>Circus gallicus</i>
Western Marsh Harrier	1	1	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>
Montagu's Harrier	1	1	<i>Circus pygargus</i>
Long-legged Buzzard	4	1	<i>Buteo rufinus</i>
Common Buzzard	4	2	<i>Buteo buteo</i>
Common Kestrel	2	1	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>
Lesser Kestrel	2	3	<i>Falco naumanni</i>
Red-footed Falcon	1	1	<i>Falco vespertinus</i>
Peregrine Falcon	1	1	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>
Little Crake	1	1	<i>Porzana parva</i>
Common Moorhen	4	1	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>
Eurasian Coot	2	1	<i>Fulica atra</i>
Pied Avocet	4	3	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>
Black-winged Stilt	5	3	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>
Stone Curlew	3	1	<i>Burhinus oedicephalus</i>
Collared Pratincole	1	2	<i>Glareola pratincola</i>
Little Ringed Plover	3	1	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>
Common Ringed Plover	3	3	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>
Kentish Plover	4	3	<i>Charadrius alexandrinus</i>
Grey Plover	2	1	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>
Northern Lapwing	3	1	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>
Broad-billed Sandpiper	1	1	<i>Limicola falcinellus</i>
Curlew Sandpiper	1	1	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>
Temminck's Stint	1	1	<i>Calidris temminckii</i>
Little Stint	4	3	<i>Calidris minuta</i>
Wood Sandpiper	6	3	<i>Tringa glareola</i>
Common Greenshank	5	1	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>

Marsh Sandpiper	1		1	<i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>
Common Sandpiper	1		1	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>
Common Snipe	1		1	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>
Ruff	4		3	<i>Philomachus pugnax</i>
Yellow-legged Gull	7		3	<i>Larus cachinnans</i>
Little Tern	5		3	<i>Sterna albifrons</i>
Common Tern	4		3	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>
Gull-billed Tern	4		2	<i>Gelochelidon nilotica</i>
White-winged Tern	2		2	<i>Chlidonias leucopterus</i>
Whiskered Tern	4		3	<i>Chlidonias hybridus</i>
Rock Dove	7		3	<i>Columba livia</i>
Eurasian Collared Dove	8		3	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>
European Turtle Dove	4	2h	2	<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>
Common Cuckoo	-	2h	1	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>
Eurasian Scops-Owl	2		1	<i>Otus scops</i>
Common Swift	7		3	<i>Apus apus</i>
Alpine Swift	1		1	<i>Apus melba</i>
Eurasian Hoopoe	1	1h	1	<i>Upupa epops</i>
European Bee-eater	6		4	<i>Merops apiaster</i>
Middle Spotted Woodpecker	2		1	<i>Dendrocopos medius</i>
Crested Lark	7		3	<i>Galerida cristata</i>
Woodlark	2	1h	1	<i>Lullula arborea</i>
Greater Short-toed Lark	1		2	<i>Calandrella brachydactyla</i>
Sand Martin	3		1	<i>Riparia riparia</i>
Eurasian Crag Martin	2		1	<i>Ptyonoprogne rupestris</i>
Barn Swallow	8		3	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>
Red-rumped Swallow	5		3	<i>Hirundo daurica</i>
Common House Martin	8		3	<i>Delichon urbica</i>
Tawny Pipit	1		1	<i>Anthus campestris</i>
Red-throated Pipit	1		1	<i>Anthus cervinus</i>
Yellow Wagtail	1		1	<i>Motacilla flava</i>
Black-headed Wagtail	2		2	<i>Motacilla (flava) feldegg</i>
Citrine Wagtail	1		1	<i>Motacilla citreola</i>
Rufous Bush Robin	1		1	<i>Cercotrichas galactotes</i>
Common Nightingale	1	7h	1	<i>Luscinia megarhynchos</i>
Isabelline Wheatear	2		3	<i>Oenanthe isabellina</i>
Black-eared Wheatear	4		3	<i>Oenanthe hispanica</i>
Whinchat	1		1	<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>
Common Stonechat	2		2	<i>Saxicola torquata</i>
Common Blackbird	4		1	<i>Turdus merula</i>
Blue Rock Thrush	3		1	<i>Monticola solitarius</i>
Eastern Orphean Warbler	3		1	<i>Sylvia crassirostris</i>
Sardinian Warbler	1		1	<i>Sylvia melanocephala</i>
Rüppell's Warbler	1		1	<i>Sylvia rueppelli</i>
Subalpine Warbler	1	2h	1	<i>Sylvia cantillans</i>
Cetti's Warbler	1	3h	1	<i>Cettia cetti</i>
Sedge Warbler	2	2h	1	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>
European Reed Warbler	2	2h	1	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>
Great Reed Warbler	-	2h	1	<i>Acrocephalus arundinaceus</i>
(Eastern) Olivaceous Warbler	4	3h	3	<i>Hippolais pallida</i>
Olive-tree Warbler	-	2h	1	<i>Hippolais olivetorum</i>
Common Chiffchaff	-	1h	1	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>
Spotted Flycatcher	1		3	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>
Great Tit	6		1	<i>Parus major</i>
Eurasian Blue Tit	6		1	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>
Sombre Tit	2		1	<i>Poecile lugubris</i>
Long-tailed Tit	-	1h	1	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>
Krüper's Nuthatch	1		1	<i>Sitta krueperi</i>
Western Rock Nuthatch	3		1	<i>Sitta neumayer</i>
Short-toed Treecreeper	1		1	<i>Certhia brachydactyla</i>
Lesser Grey Shrike	1		1	<i>Lanius minor</i>
Red-backed Shrike	4		3	<i>Lanius collurio</i>
Woodchat Shrike	4		2	<i>Lanius senator</i>

Masked Shrike	1	1	<i>Lanius nubicus</i>
Eurasian Jay	5	2	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>
Western Jackdaw	3	3	<i>Corvus monedula</i>
Hooded Crow	7	3	<i>Corvus cornix</i>
Common Raven	4	1	<i>Corvus corax</i>
Golden Oriole	1	1	<i>Oriolus oriolus</i>
House Sparrow	8	3	<i>Passer domesticus</i>
Spanish Sparrow	7	3	<i>Passer hispaniolensis</i>
Common Rock Sparrow	- 1h	1	<i>Petronia petronia</i>
Common Chaffinch	4	1	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>
Common Linnet	2	2	<i>Carduelis cannabina</i>
European Goldfinch	7	2	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>
European Greenfinch	4	1	<i>Carduelis chloris</i>
Cretzschmar's Bunting	3	2	<i>Emberiza caesia</i>
Cirl Bunting	4 1h	2	<i>Emberiza cirlus</i>
Cinereous Bunting	1	2	<i>Emberiza cineracea</i>
Black-headed Bunting	7	3	<i>Emberiza melanocephala</i>
Corn Bunting	7	3	<i>Miliaria calandra</i>
OTHER SPECIES			
Persian Squirrel	2	1	<i>Sciurus anomalus</i>
Spur-thighed Tortoise	2	1	<i>Testudo graeca</i>
Balkan (Stripe-necked) Terrapin	2	1	<i>Mauremys rivulata</i>
Levant Water Frog	- 5h	1	<i>Pelophylax bedriague</i>

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



Black-eared Wheatear



Black-headed Bunting



Cretzschmar's Bunting



Cinereous Bunting



Subalpine Warbler



Rüppell's Warbler



Rufous Bush Robin



Black-headed Wagtail



Collared Pratincole



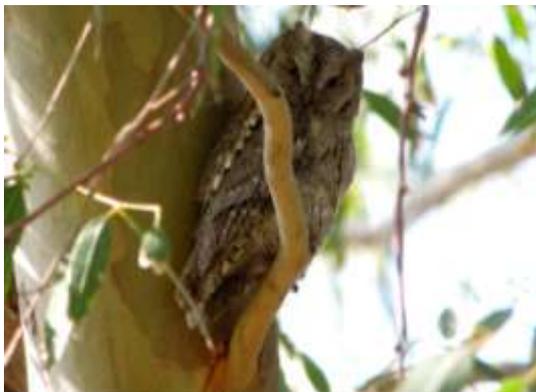
European Bee-eaters



Crested Lark



Isabelline Wheatear



Eurasian Scops Owl



Gull-billed Tern



Black Stork and Little Egret



Squacco Heron

Front cover: Red-backed Shrike

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