



These Griffon and Cinereous Vultures at a carcass truly represent our Wild Spain tour (Dani Lopez-Velasco).

WILD SPAIN

30 APRIL – 7 MAY 2017

LEADER: DANI LOPEZ-VELASCO

2017 saw yet another highly successful Birdquest tour to Spain, and luckily we were blessed with excellent weather during most of the trip. Great scenery, fantastic food and many exciting birds all on offer, so what else can you ask for in a trip? Our birding began right after leaving Madrid airport, starting with great views of a nesting Eurasian Eagle Owl. Afterwards we headed to Alcazar lagoons in Castilla-La Mancha, where highlights included several smart White-headed Ducks, lots of Greater Flamingos and a vagrant Audouin's Gull, amongst others. Extremadura lived up to its reputation as being one of the best birding destinations in the world, with excellent views of nesting Black Storks, an overwhelming range of raptors including wonderful views of Spanish Imperial Eagle, as well as Booted, Golden, Short-toed Snake and Bonelli's Eagles, lots of Cinereous Vultures and Lesser Kestrels and a family of Black-winged Kites. Both Great and Little Bustards showed very well in the steppes too (the very small numbers of Little Bustards that we saw reflected a sudden very steep decline in the whole country), where we also managed to find both Pin-tailed and Black-

bellied Sandgrouse, in flight and on the ground, as well as an obliging Great Spotted Cuckoo. Thekla, Calandra and Greater Short-toed Larks performed to perfection, and warblers were everywhere, with Western Orphean, (Western) Subalpine, Sardinian, Dartford and Western Bonelli's Warblers all on offer. Black and Western Black-eared Wheatears obliged, while Spectacled Warbler was a good write-in. A nearby wetland gave us amazing views of Savi's Warbler, as well as Western Swamphen, Little Bittern and Great Reed Warbler, together with many colorful European Bee-eaters. Moving up to the Gredos mountains, Iberian Green Woodpecker eventually showed well for everybody, and we had superb looks at Common Rock Thrush, (Iberian) Pied Flycatcher, Bluethroat and Ortolan Bunting. Next on the agenda was the highly sought-after Dupont's Lark near Sepulveda, and we weren't dissatisfied, as the larks put on a fantastic show for us, even doing song-flight display. A carcass with over 300 vultures of 3 species was a truly unforgettable, and wild, sight, and on our last day we finished off the trip with unbeatable views of several Citril Finches and smart Common Firecrests.



A confiding male Citril Finch.

We started our Spanish adventure at Madrid airport on a Sunday morning, and we were soon on our way to our first destination. Half an hour later we arrived to a small village in the outskirts of Madrid, and we quickly had our scopes trained on a house balcony.... Not the most conventional birding stake-out, for sure, but although hard to believe, that's where a pair of Eurasian Eagle Owls – yes, wild ones!- have raised their young for the last decade. We marvelled at a couple of fledglings with huge orange eyes, about to jump out of the "nest", while the female kept an eye on them, and us. Truly bizarre, but nevertheless fascinating, stuff! Afterwards we started driving south, making a detour on our way to Extremadura that would take us to some lagoons near Alcazar de San Juan, in Don Quixote land. This would be the first time we visited them on our Birdquest tour, but it sure was a good addition, as the birding was superb. White-headed Ducks definitely stole the show here, with several cracking males seen very well in the scope, but breeding-plumaged Black-necked Grebes and Red-crested Pochards were most welcome too. Western Marsh Harriers patrolled the reeds, and good numbers of Greater Flamingos were also present. Scanning a large flock of gulls, mostly Black-headed and Lesser Black-backed Gulls, revealed a first summer Mediterranean, and then a major unexpected surprise in form of a first summer Audouin's Gull, a great rarity in central Spain. Afterwards it was time for our 3 hour drive towards Extremadura. We eventually arrived to our lovely accommodation near Trujillo, where we would spend the following 4 nights.

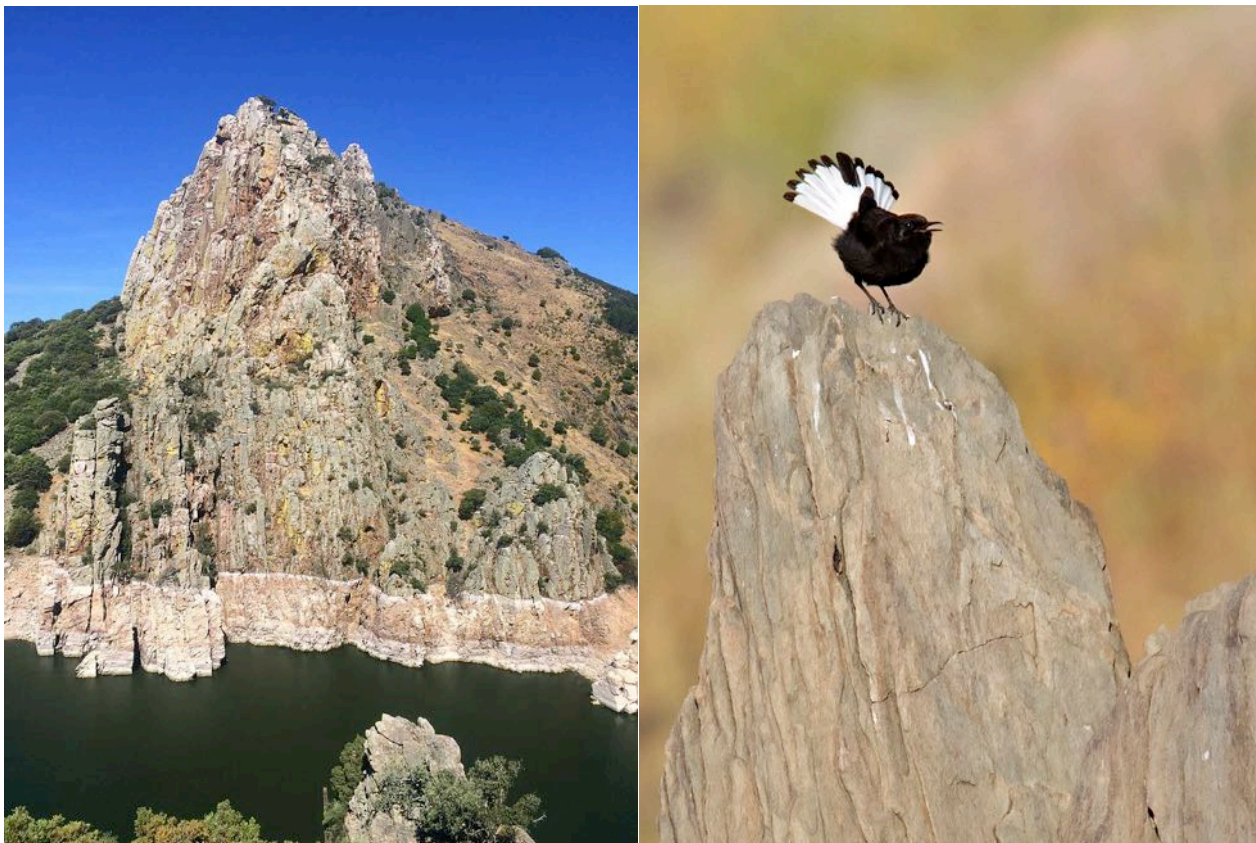
Our first full day in Extremadura, under clear blue skies, first took us to the steppes of Santa Marta de Magasca. Things started very well, as we soon had a male Little Bustard in the scope, first seen in flight and then on the ground. Little Bustard used to be common in these plains in the past, but for various reasons, mostly changes in land management, the species has suffered a catastrophic decline over the last few years. Right after we found a magnificent male Great Bustard in nearly full-display, giving excellent views, while not far a group of about 20 females were scoped. While watching them I heard the typical flight call of Pin-tailed Sandgrouse, and it didn't take long to find a single bird in flight, which soon dropped to an area of sparse vegetation. We looked with the scopes, and we soon realized there were some other Pin-tailed, together with a few Black-bellied Sandgrouse. These two can be unpredictable in their movements and difficult to track down, so we were more than pleased with our sighting. Within an hour we had seen our 4 key steppe birds. Excellent! Other birds of note included a lovely male Montagu's Harrier -another bird that's in serious trouble in Iberia-, a pale morph Booted Eagle, a brief Tawny Pipit, dozens of Calandra and Crested Larks, a flock of Spanish Sparrows and the soon-to-be-very-familiar Corn Bunting. We carried on and had great looks at some Rollers -yet another species, like most steppe birds, going through a very steep decline-, as well as our first squadron of Griffon Vultures with an accompanying Cinereous. We then entered an area of *dehesa*, the park-like stands of Cork Oaks and sometimes Olives that are so characteristic of the region. Here, we had good looks at Iberian (Azure-winged) Magpies, both Woodchat and Southern Grey Shrikes and a very vocal Western Bonelli's Warbler, as well as convincing views of Thekla Larks and some brief views of a singing Woodlark too. A nearby river gave us a pair of Common Kingfishers, and nearby we coaxed into view a skulking Dartford Warbler, which ended up showing brilliantly. Afterwards we admired a stunning Spanish Imperial Eagle, possibly the most iconic bird of the country, perched close to its nest.



A magnificent Cinereous Vulture under the rain in the Gredos Mountains.

We then had lunch in Trujillo, after a quick visit to the crowded *Plaza Mayor*. Afterwards we made a stop in a certain area of mediterranean maquis vegetation, and soon had wonderful views of a male Spectacled Warbler, a write-in for this tour! Moving on to our next por of call, we eventually made it to a very birdy reed-fringed reservoir. Black Kites and White Storks were everywhere, and herons were represented by dozens of Purple Herons, some flighty Little Bitterns, a Great White Egret and couple of Black-crowned Night Herons, the latter two both surprises. We spent some time trying to get views of skulkers, succeeding with smashing views of Savi's Warbler out in the open, as well as Great Reed and Eurasian Reed Warblers. Also in the

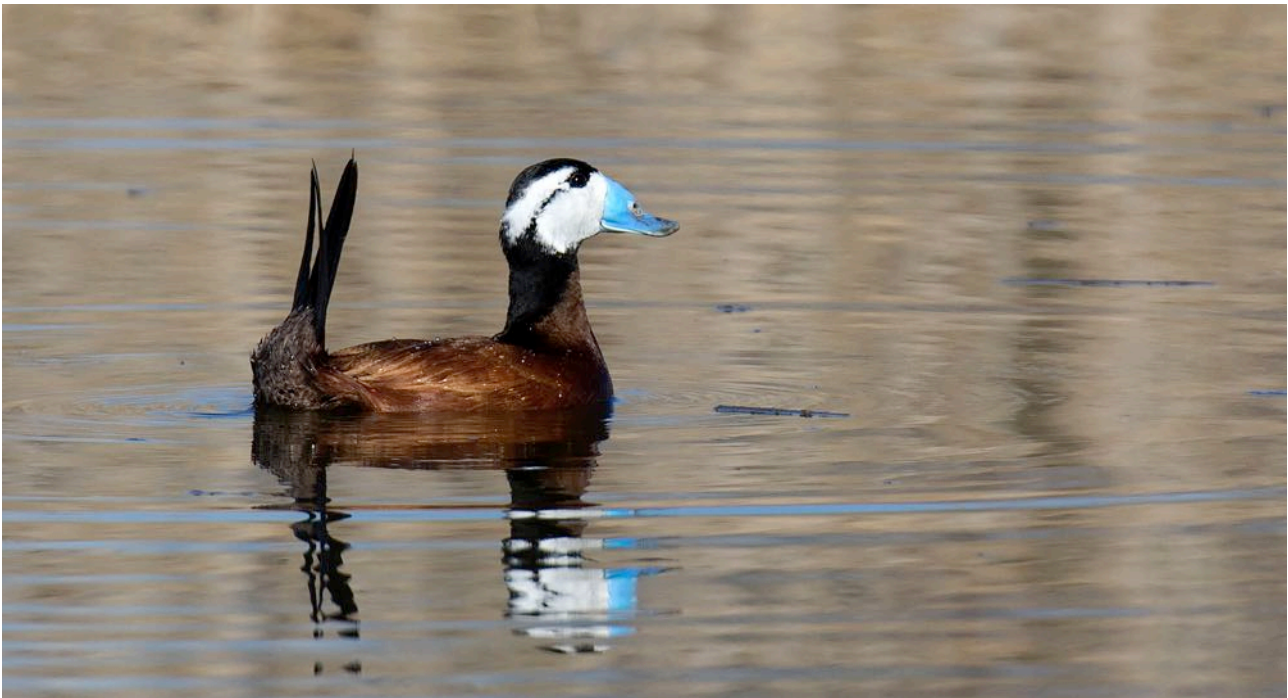
area were a few Great Cormorants, some Gull-billed Terns, a single Purple Swamphen and good numbers of colorful and cheerful European Bee-eaters. A short drive took us to an area normally favoured by Black-winged Kites, and sure enough, as soon as we got out of the car we enjoyed excellent views of 4 recently-fledged juveniles and a cracking adult. Continuing on to our country hotel, we enjoyed a fine evening with a Nightingale calling before having a sumptuous dinner. Afterwards, some of us tried to see a calling Eurasian Scops Owl, and in the end Alan and the leader succeeded.



The impressive Peñafalcon at Monfrague National Park, and a displaying male Black Wheatear.

Day two, and after a negative try for Red-necked Nightjar, which hadn't probably arrived yet, by the accommodation, we had an early breakfast and then drove towards Caceres. On the way I noticed a Great Spotted Cuckoo perched on a fence by the road, so we stopped the car and had great views for it. This turned out to be the only one of the trip. We carried on and arrived to a river area with cliffs. Here, the highlight was undoubtedly a very vocal Black Wheatear- a rather uncommon species in the area-, which gave fantastic views. The same spot provided really nice views of eye-level Alpine Swifts, our first Red-legged Partridges, a male Blue Rock Thrush, some Red-rumped Swallows, hundreds of nesting Common House Martins and a single Rock Bunting. Moving on, we explored another steppe area, where we had flight views of a good flock of Black-bellied Sangrouse, as well as a brief Golden Eagle and our first Little Owl of the trip. A nearby reservoir yielded some Great Crested Grebes and Gadwalls, while a smart Western Orphean Warbler gave excellent views in some small bushes by the road, sharing them with a Melodious Warbler. Not far from there we coaxed into view a singing Cetti's Warbler. After lunch some opted to stay back at the *finca*, while others went birding to a nearby reservoir. Good numbers of egrets and herons were roosting in a dead tree, and with them were 5 Eurasian Spoonbills. A single Collared Pratincole was a good find by Dick, and amongst the common waterfowl were an unexpected Egyptian Goose with 8 goslings, Common Shelduck, a female Eurasian Wigeon, some Northern Shovelers and a Red-crested Pochard. We also saw a nice breeding-plumaged Black Tern, both Common and Little Ringed Plovers and a party of Long-tailed Tits. And then it was back to base for dinner.

We spent most of the following day at the famous Monfragüe national park, an area of craggy forested hills which is undoubtedly one of the best places in Europe for raptors, and where the density is truly impressive. The weather was fabulous, there were few people –for Monfragüe standards at least! –, and we all truly enjoyed our time in the park. We first drove up to the car park at the Castillo de Monfragüe, and from there we went on a nice walk all the way up to the castle, seeing some Eurasian Blue Tits, Short-toed Treecreepers and our first nesting Griffon Vultures with small chicks –one per nest-. We were the first people up, where we spent an hour enjoying stunning views in glorious sunshine of many species, amidst a very spectacular background. All three vultures, some at very close eye- level, were admired, as well as Booted and Short-toed Snake Eagles. We scanned hard for White-rumped Swifts, but surely they hadn't arrived yet from their winter quarters in Africa. We then moved down to the viewpoint at *Salto del Gitano*, with the impressive *Peñafalcon* cliff in front, another superb location. Here we had further close views of many species with particularly excellent looks at of 3 nesting Black Storks. These storks, in good light, are not just “black and white”, at all, and the green, bronze and purpl iridescent colors gleamed in the scope.



A cracking male White-headed Duck.

A singing Blue Rock Thrush gave fantastic views too. We made another stop at the bridge over the Tagus river, where several Alpine Swifts entertained us. A short walk here produced European Robin, Eurasian Blackcap and Eurasian wren. After lunch in Villarreal de San Carlos we went to look for our next target, Western Black-eared Wheatear. And it didn't take long to find a beautiful male, singing from top of a rock. Our next stop saw us watching a pair of mating Egyptian Vultures, and by mid-afternoon we arrived to the famous Portilla del Tietar. One of the first birds seen was a rather distant subadult Bonelli's Eagle. The number of nesting Griffon Vultures was very impressive, and we also saw Black Stork and Egyptian Vulture. In the passerine front, a showy (Western) Subalpine Warbler obliged, as did a singing Rock Bunting. The regular pair of nesting Spanish Imperial Eagles had for some reason failed this year, so even though we waited for quite a while, they didn't appear. Some scanning of the cliff face didn't reveal any eagle owls either. We decided to call it a day, and headed back to our accommodation, where dinner awaited.

Sadly, all too soon it was time to leave the *Finca* behind. We started our last day's birding in Extremadura by paying another visit to *Portilla del Tietar*. And this time we were in luck, as it didn't take more than 5 minutes before we had a stonking adult Spanish Imperial Eagle soaring over our heads, in all its glory. The bird put on a fantastic show, flying around and perching briefly on top of the cliff, being harassed by Iberian (Azure-winged) Magpies most of the time. Very happy with our sighting, we moved on. It was time a scenic drive north and east into the mountains and the imposing *Parador de Gredos*.



Two of the best birds seen on the tour. The impressive Spanish Imperial Eagle, being harassed by some Iberian Magpies, and the sought-after Dupont's Lark, seen exceedingly well near Sepulveda.

A few stops on the way yielded some goodies, including a cooperative Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, some Cirl Buntings and our first Common Whitethroat. Given the weather forecast for the following day didn't look promising, we decided to drive to the *Plataforma de Gredos* in the afternoon. In hindsight this was a good move. Weather was already deteriorating, but we managed to get great views of a pair of Common Rock Thrush, as well as a fine Ortolan Bunting, Water Pipit and some Spanish Ibex. We then dropped down to a forest road where we had a couple of encounters with our target Iberian Green Woodpecker. Other birds in the area included European Crested Tits, Western Bonelli's Warbler and Great Spotted Woodpecker.



Western Bonelli's Warbler.



Amazing scenery at Hoces del Duratón, with eye-level Griffon Vultures.

After an early breakfast we went back again to *Plataforma*, in awful weather. On the way we picked up a nice male (Iberian) Pied Flycatcher, a rather different looking subspecies of European Pied Flycatcher, looking much more like Atlas Flycatcher from North Africa, as well as a male Northern Wheatear of the pale *libanotica* race. Once we reached the parking lot, where we would normally start our hike up, it became clear the weather was too bad, with strong winds, fog and heavy rain, for any walking attempt, so we decided to do some roadside birding on our way to Sepúlveda. A couple of stops gave us a brief White-throated Dipper and Eurasian Skylark, and on our last attempt we finally found a male Bluethroath, which eventually gave good views. Nearby, a soaked wet Cinereous Vulture flew over our heads, and we also saw a pair of Red-legged Partridges sheltering from the rain. We then headed towards our base for the following 2 nights Sepúlveda, a small town not far from Segovia. This is possibly the most reliable site in the country to find one of Europe's most elusive and enigmatic birds: the mighty Dupont's Lark. We allowed 2 mornings to maximize our chances of seeing it, and sure enough, we had brilliant views of them, not just in the scope, singing its melancholic song from a rock, but also doing display song-flight above our heads. A very rare sight, and surely one of the trip highlights for everyone. Other larks were plentiful in the area, including many Theklas, making it a 7 lark day! We also enjoyed superb views of several Western Black-eared Wheatears, while Rock Sparrows were fairly common. A nesting Eurasian Eagle Owl on a small cliff was much appreciated, and a nearby riverside woodland held a singing Eurasian Wren, a Common Chiffchaff and a male Common Redstart, the latter two uncommon in the area. The scenery at *Hoces del Duratón* gorge was simply breathtaking, and we marvelled at eye-level Griffon Vultures, while our only Stock Doves of the trip were seen here too. Another unforgettable moment in the area was the finding of a pig carcass with at least 300 vultures, mostly Griffons, but a few Cinereous and a couple of Egyptians, in attendance. We approached them to within a few metres, and seeing and hearing the vultures, covered in blood and fighting with each other for a piece of meat really felt as watching a BBC documentary!

Our last day of the tour still had plenty to offer. After an early breakfast we left our base and headed towards Madrid. A female Eurasian Sparrowhawk was our only one of the trip, and after an hour we reached the base of the Guadarrama mountains. We slowly drove up, towards *Navacerrada*, where the birding in the pine

woodland was excellent. Our target here was Citril Finch, and we soon found it, including juveniles, females and some beautiful adult males. A delightful and really tiny Common Firecrest kept us busy, some Red Crossbills showed briefly, while overhead we had an Eurasian Hobby. Unfortunately it was then time to get back on the car and drive to the airport, with a Ruddy Shelduck – a few, either escapes or vagrants, are now present in some Madrid reservoirs-, being the last bird of the trip. And this marked the end of a wonderful tour, packed with highlights, with a great group. Thanks everyone for making it possible!

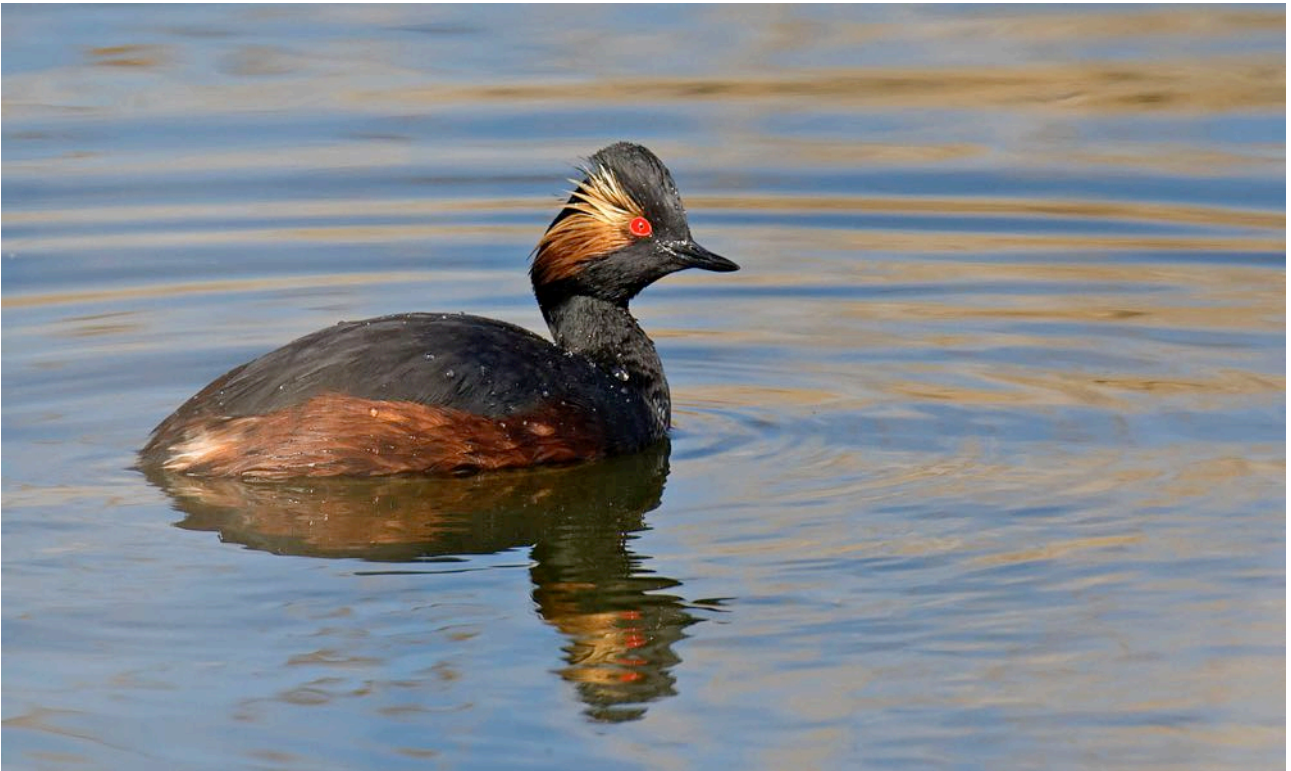


Booted Eagle and Western Black-eared Wheatear





Griffon Vulture and Black-necked Grebe





Griffon Vulture covered in blood after attending a carcass.

SYSTEMATIC LIST OF SPECIES RECORDED DURING THE TOUR

The species names and taxonomy used in the report mostly follows Gill, F & D Donsker (Eds). **IOC World Bird Names**. This list is updated several times annually and is available at <http://www.worldbirdnames.org>.

Species which were heard but not seen are indicated by the symbol (H).

Species which were only recorded by the leader are indicated by the symbol (LO).

Species which were not personally recorded by the leader are indicated by the symbol (NL).

Species marked with the diamond symbol (◊) are either endemic to the country or local region or considered 'special' birds for some other reason (e.g. it is only seen on one or two Birdquest tours; it is difficult to see across all or most of its range; the local form is endemic or restricted-range and may in future be treated as a full species).

Conservation threat categories and information are taken from *Threatened Birds of the World*, BirdLife International's magnificent book on the sad status of the rarest 10% of the world's avifauna, and updates on the BirdLife website: <http://www.birdlife.org/datazone/home>

E = Endangered, **V** = Vulnerable, **NT** = Near Threatened, **DD** = Data Deficient.

Egyptian Goose *Alopochen aegyptiaca* One adult with goslings at Alcollarin.

Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea* One near Madrid.

Common Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna* A couple of sightings.

Northern Shoveler *Anas clypeata* Seen at Alcazar and Alcollarin.

Gadwall *Anas strepera* A few in Alcazar and Extremadura.

Eurasian Wigeon *Anas Penelope* One female at Alcollarin.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos* Small numbers scattered around, and 100+ in Alcollarin.

Red-crested Pochard *Netta rufina* Good numbers at Alcazar.



Male Red-crested Pochard

Common Pochard *Aythya farina* A few at Alcazar.

White-headed Duck ◊ *Oxyura leucocephala* Excellent views at Alcazar.

Red-legged Partridge ◊ *Alectoris rufa* A handful seen.

Common Quail *Coturnix coturnix* (H) Heard in Extremadura.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis* Small numbers recorded.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus* Several at the lakes at Almaraz and Alcollarin.
Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis* A few at Alcazar.
Greater Flamingo *Phoenicopterus roseus* Several at Alcazar.
Black Stork *Ciconia nigra* Great views of several in Monfragüe, and one in Segovia.
White Stork *Ciconia ciconia* Abundant in Extremadura, and seen throughout the tour.
Little Bittern *Ixobrychus minutus* Good views in Almaraz.
Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax* A couple at Almaraz.
Western Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis* Some large flocks in Extremadura.
Little Egret *Egretta garzetta* A few seen.
Great Egret *Egretta alba* One seen at Almaraz.
Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea* Small numbers seen.
Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea* Several seen.
Eurasian Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia* Seen at Alcollarin.
Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo* At least a dozen at the lake at Almaraz.
Black-winged Kite *Elanus caeruleus* Excellent views of 2 adults and 4 juveniles near Almaraz.
Egyptian Vulture *Neophron percnopterus* Four in Extremadura, also a few seen in the Pyrenees.
European Honey Buzzard *Pernis apivorus* One female in Extremadura.
Griffon Vulture *Gyps fulvus* Common, with 300+ in a carcass in Segovia being particularly impressive.
Cinereous Vulture (Eurasian Black V) *Aegypius monachus* Seen every day of the tour, with up to 50.
Short-toed Snake Eagle *Circaetus gallicus* A total of 5 seen.
Booted Eagle *Hieraaetus pennatus* Unusually common in Extremadura, and seen every day of the tour.
Spanish Imperial Eagle ◊ (S E) *Aquila adalberti* Magnificent views of an adult in Monfragüe.
Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos* A brief bird in Llanos de Cáceres.
Bonelli's Eagle *Hieraaetus fasciatus* One subadult at Monfragüe.
Eurasian Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus* One near Segovia.
Western Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus* Small numbers seen.
Montagu's Harrier *Circus pygargus* Going through a very steep decline. Only 3 in Cáceres plains.
Black Kite *Milvus migrans* Abundant.
Red Kite *Milvus milvus* Small numbers seen.
Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo* A scatter.
Little Bustard ◊ *Tetrax tetrax* Just a couple seen in Extremadura. Another species in serious trouble in Spain.
Great Bustard ◊ *Otis tarda* At least 15 in Extremadura, with some good looks.
Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus* (H) Heard only at Alcazar.
Western Swamphen (P Gallinule) *Porphyrio porphyrio* Seen at Almaraz.
Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus* A few.
Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus* A few seen.
Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius* Small numbers seen.
Pied Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta* Seen in Alcazar.
Common Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula* Some at Alcazar and Alcollarin.
Dunlin *Calidris alpina* Seen at Alcazar.
Little Stint *Calidris minuta* Seen at Alcazar.
Common Redshank *Tringa tetanus* Seen at Alcazar.
Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia* Seen in various wetlands.
Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos* A few seen.
Collared Pratincole *Glareola pratincola* Seen on two dates.
Black-headed Gull (Common B-h G) *Larus ridibundus* Many hundreds at Alcazar.
Audouin's Gull ◊ *Ichthyaetus audouinii* We found a first summer in Alcazar.
Mediterranean Gull ◊ *Ichthyaetus melanocephalus* One first summer at Alcazar.
Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus* Good numbers at Alcazar.
Gull-billed Tern *Gelochelidon nilotica* A few at Almaraz.
Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybrida* Seen well at Alcazar.
Black Tern *Chlidonias niger* 5 in breeding plumage at Alcazar lagoons.
Pin-tailed Sandgrouse ◊ *Pterocles alchata* Good scope views, both in flight and on the ground, near Trujillo.
Black-bellied Sandgrouse ◊ *Pterocles orientalis* Good views near Trujillo.

Rock Dove *Columba livia* Seen in both town and countryside.
Stock Dove *Columba oenas* Great views at Hoces del Duraton.
Common Wood Pigeon *Columba palumbus* Scattered throughout.
Eurasian Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto* Widespread.
European Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur* Only 2 seen.
Great Spotted Cuckoo *Clamator glandarius* Great views of one in Extremadura.



Great Spotted Cuckoo ad European Roller

Common Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus* A scatter heard and a few seen.
Eurasian Scops Owl *Otus scops* Seen by some and heard near our hotel in Extremadura.
Eurasian Eagle-Owl *Bubo bubo* Great views near Madrid and Sepulveda.
Little Owl *Athene noctua* Good views near Trujillo and Sepulveda.
Common Swift *Apus apus* Common.
Pallid Swift *Apus pallidus* A few seen well in Extremadura.
Alpine Swift *Tachymarptis melba* Magnificent, eye-level views near Caceres and Monfrague.
Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis* Seen well in Extremadura.
European Bee-eater *Merops apiaster* Common. A stunning bird.
European Roller *Coracias garrulus* Seen well in Extremadura.
Eurasian Hoopoe *Upupa epops* Fairly common.
Lesser Spotted Woodpecker *Dryobates minor* Seen exceedingly well on our way to Gredos.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major* A few in Gredos.
Iberian Green Woodpecker ◊ (Sharpe's G W) *Picus sharpei* Seen well in Gredos.
Lesser Kestrel *Falco naumanni* Good looks in Extremadura.
Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus* A few.
Eurasian Hobby *Falco subbuteo* One seen well near Madrid.



Alpine Swift

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus* (LO) One seen at Monfrague.
Southern Grey Shrike *Lanius excubitor* Excellent views several times.
Woodchat Shrike *Lanius senator* Common in Extremadura.
Eurasian Golden Oriole *Oriolus oriolus* Seen in flight in Monfragüe.
Eurasian Jay *Garrulus glandarius* A few seen.
Iberian Magpie ◊ (I Azure-winged M) *Cyanopica cooki* Common in Extremadura.
Eurasian Magpie *Pica pica* Common.
Red-billed Chough *Pyrhcorax pyrrhcorax* Seen well at Hoces del Duraton.
Western Jackdaw *Corvus monedula* Common in Extremadura.
Carrion Crow *Corvus corone* Fairly common in the Gredos mountains.
Northern Raven *Corvus corax* A few seen.
European Crested Tit *Lophophanes cristatus* Good looks in Gredos and near Madrid.
Coal Tit *Pariparus ater* Common in the Gredos and Guadarrama.
European Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus* Fairly common.
Great Tit *Parus major* Again, fairly common.
Bearded Reedling *Panurus biarmicus* Recorded at Alcazar.
Dupont's Lark ◊ *Chersophilus duponti* Excellent views of up to 3 birds near Sepulveda.
Calandra Lark *Melanocorypha calandra* Abundant in the steppes.
Greater Short-toed Lark *Calandrella brachydactyla* Several in the plainsg5.
Crested Lark *Galerida cristata* Common.
Thekla Lark ◊ *Galerida theklae* Some good (and convincing) looks near Trujillo.
Woodlark *Lullula arborea* Excellent views on several dates.

Eurasian Skylark *Alauda arvensis* Several near Gredos.
Sand Martin *Riparia riparia* Good numbers near Alcazar.
Eurasian Crag Martin *Ptyonoprogne rupestris* Good looks on several dates.
Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica* Common.
Red-rumped Swallow *Cecropis daurica* Fairly common.
Common House Martin *Delichon urbicum* Locally abundant around dams and bridges.
Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus* Small numbers seen.



Coal Tit

Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti* Great views at Talavan.
Common Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita* A singing bird near Sepulveda.
Western Bonelli's Warbler ◊ *Phylloscopus bonelli* Great views several times.
Great Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus arundinaceus* Great views at Almaraz.
Eurasian Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus* Several at Almaraz.
Savi's Warbler *Locustella luscinioides* Fantastic views at Almaraz.
Melodious Warbler ◊ *Hippolais polyglotta* Great views near Talavan.
Zitting Cisticola (Fan-tailed Warbler) *Cisticola juncidis* Fairly common.
Eurasian Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla* Several seen.
Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin* Brief views near Gredos.
Dartford Warbler ◊ *Sylvia undata* Two showed very well in near Cáceres.
Subalpine Warbler *Sylvia cantillans* Seen very well a number of times.
Spectacled Warbler *Sylvia conspicillata* Seen near Trujillo.
Sardinian Warbler *Sylvia melanocephala* Eventually, really good views near Trujillo.
Western Orphean Warbler *Sylvia hortensis* One showed very well near Cáceres.
Common Whitethroat *Sylvia communis* Common in the Gredos.



Northern Wheatear

- Common Firecrest** *Regulus ignicapillus* Great views in Guadarrama.
- Eurasian Wren** *Troglodytes troglodytes* Seen very well in Extremadura.
- Eurasian Nuthatch** *Sitta europaea* Excellent views several times.
- Short-toed Treecreeper** *Certhia brachydactyla* Several seen well in Monfragüe and Gredos.
- Spotless Starling** \diamond *Sturnus unicolor* Very smart, and really spotless. Common.
- Common Blackbird** *Turdus merula* Common.
- Mistle Thrush** *Turdus viscivorus* A few seen.
- European Robin** *Erithacus rubecula* Small numbers seen.
- Bluethroat** *Luscinia svecica* Great views of one near Gredos, in spite of awful weather.
- Common Nightingale** *Luscinia megarhynchos* Seen a couple of times, commonly heard. What a songster!
- Iberian Pied Flycatcher** *Ficedula (hypoleuca) iberiae* A fine male in the Gredos.
- Black Redstart** *Phoenicurus ochruros* Seen well a few times.



(Western) Subalpine, left, and Western Orphean Warblers.

Common Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus* One near Sepulveda.
Common Rock Thrush *Monticola saxatilis* Great views in Gredos.
Blue Rock Thrush *Monticola solitarius* Several in Monfragüe.
European Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola* Small numbers seen.



Male Ortolan Bunting

Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe* Several in the Gredos.
Western Black-eared Wheatear *Oenanthe hispanica* Seen in Monfrague and Sepulveda.
Black Wheatear ◊ *Oenanthe leucura* Great views near Caceres.
White-throated Dipper *Cinclus cinclus* One briefly near Gredos.
House Sparrow *Passer domesticus* Common.
Spanish Sparrow *Passer hispaniolensis* Some big flocks near Trujillo. Great views of males too.
Rock Sparrow *Petronia petronia* Briefly at Extremadura.
Common Waxbill *Estrilda astrild* One at Almaraz.
Dunnock *Prunella modularis* Common in the Gredos.
Western Yellow Wagtail (Iberian W) *Motacilla (flava) iberiae* Fairly common in the Gredos.
Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea* Several in the Gredos.
White Wagtail *Motacilla alba* A few in Extremadura and the Gredos.
Tawny Pipit *Anthus campestris* Seen on 3 dates.
Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis* Recorded at Gredos.
Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta* Good looks in the Gredos.
Common Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs* Common.
Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes* Great views at some feeders in Sepulveda.
European Greenfinch *Chloris chloris* A few seen.
Common Linnet *Linaria cannabina* Seen well a few times.
Red Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra* Seen well in the Guadarrama.
European Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis* Common.
European Serin *Serinus serinus* Fairly common.
Citril Finch ◊ *Serinus citrinella* Excellent views in the Guadarrama.



Singing male Dupont's Lark and European Crested Tit



Cirl Bunting *Emberiza cirlus* Seen well near Gredos.

Rock Bunting *Emberiza cia* Good views in Monfragüe and the Gredos.

Ortolan Bunting *Emberiza hortulana* Great looks in the Gredos.

Corn Bunting *Miliaria calandra* Abundant in Extremadura.

MAMMALS

Eurasian Red Squirrel (Red Squirrel) *Sciurus vulgaris* A couple seen in Gredos.
Spanish Ibex *Capra pyrenaica* Really good looks at La Plataforma de Gredos.



Common Rock Thrush in display flight and a pair of soaked-wet Red-legged Partridge

