

FOREWARD

It has been another busy year for the AOS and whilst I type an expedition to South America is underway. The programme each year provides a mix of old favourites and new ideas. I encourage all members to take advantage of these trips whenever feasible. The trips do vary in hardship however the AGM weekend does provide reasonable accommodation with good company, with lots of birds. In this edition you will note that the editor and Mark Easterbrook have been busy globetrotting. I am sure that we both feel that we have not done much given our other commitments. There must have been more trips by our members which will be of interest to our readership. Therefore the annual plea is please submit articles and photographs for the Bulletin. Whilst we were globetrotting Richard Seargent was stuck in one place and I am sure that his article, besides being of general interest will be poignant for many ornithological organisations as records in this area are rare. It is not unusual for operational deployments to provide useful reports. This has happened since the AOS was initiated. The trips to Ascension all started because of a deployment to the South Atlantic 25 years ago. The monitoring has provided data to allow plans to be formed up and progress shown in areas of conservation and improving scientific knowledge. There is another detailed trip to Southern Africa from Anne Nason. Also Keith Cherry has taken another birding holiday. The birds seen on these two trips are immense and I like to think that any trips are logged by the local guides to improve the knowledge of bird diversity and abundance in their area. There is still a lot for us to understand about birds and distribution is a key indicator. As the BTO starts its programme to update the UK Bird Atlas I would encourage all our members to take part even if it is to submit casual records of their patch. Details on how you can help are available from the BTO. Finally I would like to thank all contributors to this year's Bulletin.



Editor bird surveying - someone has to do it!
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AOS TRIP TO NORFOLK



The party enjoying time on the beach

© A Bray

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*
Tundra Swan *Cygnus columbianus*
Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*
Greater White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons*
Greylag Goose *Anser anser*
Snow Goose *Anser caerulescens*
Greater Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*
Brent Goose *Branta bernicla*
Black Brant *Branta Nigricans*
Egyptian Goose *Alopochen aegyptiacus*
Common Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*
Eurasian Wigeon *Anas penelope*
Gadwall *Anas strepera*
Eurasian Teal *Anas crecca*
Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*
Northern Pintail *Anas acuta*
Northern Shoveler *Anas clypeata*
Common Pochard *Aythya ferina*
Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*
Greater Scaup *Aythya marila*
Common Eider *Somateria mollissima*
Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*
Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*
Common Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*
Smew *Mergus albellus*
Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*
Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*
Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*
Common Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*
Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

Northern Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*
Red Knot *Calidris canutus*
Sanderling *Calidris alba*
Dunlin *Calidris alpina*
Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*
Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*
Eurasian Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*
Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*
Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata*
Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*
Common Redshank *Tringa totanus*
Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*
Pomarine Skua *Stercorarius pomarinus*
Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*
Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus*
Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*
Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*
Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*
Mew Gull *Larus canus*
Common Guillemot *Uria aalge*
Razorbill *Alca torda*
Stock Pigeon *Columba oenas*
Common Wood Pigeon *Columba palumbus*
Eurasian Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*
Barn Owl *Tyto alba*
Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*
Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*
Sky Lark *Alauda arvensis*
Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*
White / Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba*

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*
Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*
Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*
Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*
Northern Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*
Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*
Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*
Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*
Eurasian Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*
Eurasian Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*
Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*
Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*
Common Coot *Fulica atra*
Eurasian Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*
Pied Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*
Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*
European Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*
Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

Winter Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*
Hedge Accentor *Prunella modularis*
European Robin *Erithacus rubecula*
Common Blackbird *Turdus merula*
Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*
Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*
Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*
Great Tit *Parus major*
Black-billed Magpie *Pica pica*
Rook *Corvus frugilegus*
Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*
Common Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*
House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*
Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*
European Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris*
European Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*
Common Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*
Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*



Dotterel at Liddington Hill Wiltshire

CASTLEMARTIN AGM

(Andrew Bray)

The country was experiencing sunny weather. The drive along the M4 heading west suggested that all would be well. Naturally the forecast for Pembrokeshire was windy and showers. That was all we needed as during our last visit the weather cancelled our trip to Skomer. Everyone turned up on Friday night in an ebullient mood enjoying the sunshine. That evening we held the formal AGM which passed off with no-one wanting to replace the secretary. Naturally this was followed by a social get together before an early night to be prepared for Saturday's excursion. In total 40 members arrived looking forward to some good birding.

On Saturday we all shared cars with their own start and plan to get to the National Trust Car Park by the ferry to Skomer. Setting off last did not mean we arrived last! On the way some waifs and strays were collected. One car must have stopped for a cup of tea as they were pulling out of a private drive. At least all were accounted for and we met up with our guide, Bob Haycock and his wife Annie. Both are very heavily involved with the local conservation organisations and Bob works for the Countryside Council for Wales. We cannot book the ferry and it is a case of first come first served. There was a long queue and it took two trips to get everyone over. The ferry, converted small fishing boat (?), pulled up to the metal ramp to allow us on board, quickly filled up and headed out of the cove. The journey was only about 10 minutes and not too rough. On the way we saw lots of birds on the water and a **Storm Petrel** flew by. The question the previous night was when we would see decent groups of **Puffins**. As crossed to Skomer there were rafts of them. As we pulled into Skomer they dominated the sea and cliffs. This was a spectacular not often seen. It would seem that the low cloud and drizzle brought them all out of their burrows.

Once on the island proper we set off in an anti clockwise direction from the old farm. Unfortunately the mist did not allow good views but we regularly picked up birds. On some of



Puffin on Skomer

© R Dickey

the points we even saw the local grey seal and porpoises. Besides the expected species of pipits, larks and gulls, we found a **Spotted Flycatcher**. The group was naturally strung out which ended up with two locations for lunch. The rear group stopped for lunch at a promontory with just enough shelter to cut out the worst of the wind for good views of the birds flying past including **Manx Shearwater** and **Gannet**; even the porpoises put in a good showing. In the afternoon more spectacular views of the seabird colonies as well as **Chough**, **Ra-**

ven, **Whitethroat** and **Stonechat**. The low cloud had now lifted to give panoramic views across the Island. At last we could see the ponds complete with ducks. All too soon we had headed back to the ferry point to join the queue and it took two trips to get everyone back

with excellent close up views of **Gannets** sailing across the tips of the waves.

In the evening Bob Haycock gave us a talk about Castlemartin Range. This illustrative talk took us around some of the range landscape covering the flora and fauna. He gave some insights into some of the unusual species and a bit of a promise on the bird life; the sights had been set! All too soon we had to finish ready for our traditional evening dinner and a very delightful evening. The only tale that can be told is that a new member won the Bird Count with 62 species for the day.

On Sunday morning we set off for the range with thick cloud and a stiff breeze. First walk was to the beach on the western side collecting warblers as we followed the valley. There was not a great deal on the beach so over the ridge we went to the next bay and there on the sand was a large group of **Sanderling**, **Ring Plover** with a few **Dunlin** in summer plumage. It was then back to the cars for a drive along the coast to a stop to see the only pair of known breeding **Ring Plover** in Pembrokeshire with both chicks on display. Next stop was for very close views of **Chough**, **Raven** and **Rock Pipit**. Bob was ticking off all the promises and only **Peregrine** was left on the list.



Lunch break at the Stack on the ranges

© R Hayward

Suddenly the convoy of cars came to a halt and there in the distance was a **Peregrine** hanging in the wind (where we had stopped earlier). By lunchtime we had reached Stack Rock for the views of the major **Guillemot** roost with **Razorbill** and **Kittiwakes** on the cliff sides. Amongst the throng we were able to pick out **Bridled Guillemot** which tends to indicate a more northern bird. The total species for the day was 62.

Despite the forecast the rain had held off and we had good views of our target species. We were fortunate to witness the **Puffin** spectacular, saw **Choughs** seeing off **Ravens** and caught late migration waders in summer plumage.



Razorbill

© J Stentiford

Castlemartin List

Mute Swan <i>Cygnus olor</i>	Chaffinch <i>Fringilla coelebs</i>
Greater Canada Goose <i>Branta canadensis</i>	European Greenfinch <i>Carduelis chloris</i>
Common Shelduck <i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	European Goldfinch <i>Carduelis carduelis</i>
Mallard <i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	Common Linnet <i>Carduelis cannabina</i>
Northern Shoveler <i>Anas clypeata</i>	Manx Shearwater <i>Puffinus puffinus</i>
Common Pheasant <i>Phasianus colchicus</i>	European Storm-petrel <i>Hydrobates pelagicus</i>
Northern Fulmar <i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>	Northern Gannet <i>Morus bassanus</i>
Great Cormorant <i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	European Shag <i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>
Grey Heron <i>Ardea cinerea</i>	Common Buzzard <i>Buteo buteo</i>
Common Moorhen <i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	Peregrine Falcon <i>Falco peregrinus</i>
Common Coot <i>Fulica atra</i>	Black-legged Kittiwake <i>Rissa tridactyla</i>
Eurasian Oystercatcher <i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	Black Guillemot <i>Cephus grylle</i>
Eurasian Curlew <i>Numenius arquata</i>	Atlantic Puffin <i>Fratercula arctica</i>
Lesser Black-backed Gull <i>Larus fuscus</i>	Little Owl <i>Athene noctua</i>
Herring Gull <i>Larus argentatus</i>	Common Swift <i>Apus apus</i>
Great Black-backed Gull <i>Larus marinus</i>	Barn Swallow <i>Hirundo rustica</i>
Razorbill <i>Alca torda</i>	House Martin <i>Delichon urbicum</i>
Common Wood Pigeon <i>Columba palumbus</i>	Rock Pipit <i>Anthus petrosus</i>
Eurasian Collared Dove <i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	Stonechat <i>Saxicola torquata</i>
Sky Lark <i>Alauda arvensis</i>	Northern Wheatear <i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>
Meadow Pipit <i>Anthus pratensis</i>	Song Thrush <i>Turdus philomelos</i>
White / Pied Wagtail <i>Motacilla alba</i>	Sedge Warbler <i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>
Winter Wren <i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	Common Whitethroat <i>Sylvia communis</i>
Hedge Accentor <i>Prunella modularis</i>	Common Chiffchaff <i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>
European Robin <i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	Spotted Flycatcher <i>Muscicapa striata</i>
Common Blackbird <i>Turdus merula</i>	Red-billed Chough <i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i>
Blue Tit <i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	Eurasian Jackdaw <i>Corvus monedula</i>
Black-billed Magpie <i>Pica pica</i>	Common Raven <i>Corvus corax</i>
Rook <i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	Common Bullfinch <i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>
Carrion Crow <i>Corvus corone</i>	Reed Bunting <i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>
House Sparrow <i>Passer domesticus</i>	Yellowhammer <i>Emberiza citrinella</i>



Guillemot Colony Stackhead

© J Stentiford

TWO DAYS IN SUFFOLK

(Andrew Bray)

The weather forecast was not good but that did not stop two explorers packing tent, stove and sleeping bags in a car for a trip to the Suffolk coast. The trip got off to a good start by diverting away from the direct route to avoid the major traffic incidents. It was a good start as we arrived at the campsite in daylight and before food closed. The campsite was the Lion at Theberton now under new owners. The previous owner had sold off a lot of land forcing the previous tenant's hand. They left and the owner then sold the pub separately to the land fenced off. The campsite now can only be accessed by the gate in the courtyard wall with room for a few tents only. At least the gentleman's area had been reclaimed from the ivy which was scant compensation for a major six foot fence restricting space. The rub was whether the pub maintained its tradition for real ale – it had!

Friday morning and with the sun shining the traditional start of breakfast of egg and bacon rolls got underway. Some culinary skills had been forgotten but it did not detract from the feeling of anticipation of what was to come. We started off at Dunwich Heath and no sooner than we were out on the trail the drizzle began. Well it would wouldn't it: "if it is not raining it is not training" sprang to mind. After a while it started to worsen so we turned back; a cup of tea was calling. It was then we saw our target birds of **Dartford Warbler** and **Stonechat** together on a small dead pine. Spirits were up so we had a quick look from the car park out to sea and over Minsmere where a **Bittern** put in a flying appearance.

At Minsmere, after a cup of tea, the major decision was coat or not! We sided on caution and set off around the scrapes calling in at all the hides. There were a lot of birds about including **Spoonbill**, **Spotted Redshank** and **Mediterranean Gull**. On the causeway between North Hide and the beach we had superb views of **Bearded Tit** plus a selection of warblers. At East Hide we saw all three Terns and were told of a Little Gull further round but failed to see it at South Hide though we did find a **Knot**. On the path to East Hide we had a very close view of a **Bittern** on a long flight and also picked up **Marsh Harrier**. In fact everywhere we looked throughout the day there seemed to be **Marsh Harriers** in the air.

After lunch we ditched the coats and visited Bittern Hide and continued with the circuit around to Island Mere Hide where 3 **Hobbies** put on an aerial display catching dragonflies on the wing. From both of these hides the **Marsh Harriers** were constantly on show. As we approached the path off the road to Canopy Hide we came across a buzz of activity with a range of woodland birds including a **Nuthatch** family of 2 adults and 1 youngster all together on a branch (binoculars were not required!). At long last we also picked up **Turtle Dove** which we thought was never going to show.

After yet more tea it was back around the scrapes in the opposite direction to find this Little Gull – absolutely nothing! It must have been a visitor for a fleeting moment as we must have checked and double checked every single gull. Also the Black Tern which had stopped off for a few days had gone as well. It was really great to hear how it was constantly seen the previous day. Despite the dip, we did see 76 species at Minsmere which include some surprising omissions.

That night saw us on the heath for **Nightjar** which were chirring away but too far to see in flight. We did have an encounter with a Red Deer and noted **Little Owl**. Allegedly this was

the best site for Nightjars and back in the pub a couple was surprised we did not see them as there plenty around the previous night! Again there is that word – previous. At the end of the day we had 84 species in the book, not bad for a relaxed days birding in the sunshine, especially as everywhere else was experiencing rain.

The next day was a bit cloudy but still we managed breakfast and packed up before a spot of rain fell. We even had a **Marsh Harrier** fly over us midway through a bacon roll; they were everywhere! We were just finishing packing up when another AOS member turned up confused by the lack of a large red Espace in the car park and no campsite through the gate. It did not help that the early morning start had not materialised which he had expected. At Carl Powell's we delayed departure as the rain fell. He also mentioned the "P" word as earlier on that morning he had ringed a **Lesser Whitethroat**; the first he had trapped in his garden. As the shower eased off we went to the beach at Sizewell for the non Black Redstart. Our next stop was Hens Reedbed; a small Suffolk Wildlife Trust reserve. Once again the highlights included **Bittern** and **Bearded Tit** (a year tick for our newly arrived visitor). The **Bitterns** were very active giving fantastic views as they flew past. The reserve is by a tidal estuary with good views over the mud flats, so we added **Curlew** to the list. A scrape had recently been dug on the reserve with Black Tailed Skimmers (Dragonflies) making the most of it.

Our next stop was to take in both Benacre and Covehithe Broads. All the rain had raised the water levels so waders were sparse. The cliffs between the two Broads were full of **Sand Martin** colonies. There used to be a village there put it had disappeared with time as the cliffs were eroded away. Unfortunately both Broads were not that productive and little was added to the list for the weekend, **Marsh Harriers** were no longer an excitement! We were getting closer to 100 on the list and the search was on for Blackcap, Rook; since when did someone twitch for Rook (not us!). We called it day late afternoon with a total list of 97 (less Rook but did include the Black Swans at Minsmere). On the journey back we encountered the rain and again diverted to avoid the huge queues on the M25, parts of which were closed. What else did we expect as we had to have some difficulties after the good fortune we had birding for 2 days on the Suffolk coast.



Green Woodpecker
© E Bevan

Suffolk List

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*
Greylag Goose *Anser anser*
Greater Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*
Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*
Common Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*
Eurasian Wigeon *Anas penelope*
Gadwall *Anas strepera*
Eurasian Teal *Anas crecca*

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Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*
Northern Shoveler *Anas clypeata*
Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*
Ruddy Duck *Oxyura jamaicensis*
Common Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*
Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*
Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*
Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*
Great Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*
Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*
Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*
Eurasian Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*
Eurasian Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*
Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

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Eurasian Hobby *Falco subbuteo*
Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*
Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*
Common Coot *Fulica atra*
Eurasian Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*
Pied Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*
Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*
Northern Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*
Red Knot *Calidris canutus*
Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*
Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata*
Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*
Common Redshank *Tringa totanus*
Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*
Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*
Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*
Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus*
Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*
Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*
Black-legged Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*
Little Tern *Sternula albifrons*
Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*
Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*
Stock Pigeon *Columba oenas*

Common Wood Pigeon *Columba palumbus*
European Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur*
Common Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*
Little Owl *Athene noctua*
European Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus*
Common Swift *Apus apus*
Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*
Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos ma-*

Sand Martin Riparia riparia
Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*
House Martin *Delichon urbicum*
Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*
White / Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba*
Winter Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*
Hedge Accentor *Prunella modularis*
European Robin *Erithacus rubecula*
Common Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*
Stonechat *Saxicola torquata*
Common Blackbird *Turdus merula*
Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti*
Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*
Eurasian Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scir-*

Common Whitethroat Sylvia communis
Dartford Warbler *Sylvia undata*
Common Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*
Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*
Bearded Tit *Panurus biarmicus*
Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*
Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*
Great Tit *Parus major*
Coal Tit *Parus ater*
Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*
Wood Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*
Eurasian Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*
Eurasian Jay *Garrulus glandarius*
Black-billed Magpie *Pica pica*
Eurasian Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*
Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*
Common Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*
House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*
Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*
European Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris*
European Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*
Common Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*
Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*
Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

AOS VISIT TO PORTLAND -2007

(Hilary Nash)

After a rather slow start bids came in thick and fast and eventually 15 signed up for the weekend. Most arrived on Friday evening after a frustrating journey especially by those who used the A31. There was sufficient light left to visit **Ferrybridge** before invading "*The Pulpit*". There was a mixed flock of **Turnstones**, **Dunlins** and **Ringed Plovers** and **4 Knots** and **2** each of **Curlew Sandpipers** and **Sanderlings**. "*The Pulpit*" provided a good meal and beer and the party staggered back the Observatory under a clear starry sky.

Saturday dawned clear having proved an excellent night for migration, from the birds' point of view as very few stopped at Portland. **Ortolan Buntings** were reported but all seemed in a hurry to get somewhere and were identified by their flight calls as they passed overhead. The **Top Fields** produced a **Merlin** and there were both **Spotted** and **Pied Flycatchers** at **Culverwell**. The sea was flat calm, including **The Race** and virtually bird-less a few gulls and the odd **Gannet**.

Most then did the circuit of **Ferrybridge**, which had much the same as the evening before with the addition of **2 Little Egrets**. **Radipole** produced a **female Marsh Harrier**, **Bearded Reedlings**, a **Water Rail** and **Reed Warblers**. The third stop of the circuit, **Lodmoor** provided excellent views of a **Hobby** hawking dragonflies. It also has **Sandwich Terns**, but waders were in short supply, with only **Lapwings**, **Dunlins** and **3 Black-tailed Godwits** to be seen.



Something is more interesting

© A Bray

A glorious sunny day, one of the best of the summer, somewhat compensated for the few birds around, though the variety was surprisingly good.

Saturday evening saw the traditional curry get together, in "*The Ghurkha*" in **Weymouth**; the self service buffet encouraged most to eat too much.

Sunday dawned cloudier, but not enough to put off the migrants and again there were few birds around either on land or at sea. Some fairly diligent searching produced Goldcrests and a **Grasshopper Warbler** at **Culverwell**. A Corncrake spotted in the field opposite the Observatory entrance by 2 birders caused much excitement but it dived into thick cover and was seen by no-one else and that included all AOS members. With few birds about most of the crew dispersed mid-morning.



A tiring day

© A Bray

2007 proved a good year for visitors 15 being a record total and species 97, which equals our previous best. The 'ton' still eludes us. This year no one recorded a Song Thrush or a Chaffinch!

LIST OF BIRD SPECIES SEEN IN 1999 TO 2007

The provisional list for the 2007 Portland visit is attached. It is based on my records with extras that were reported to me. There are several surprising gaps eg: **Fulmar, Snipe, Song Thrush, Stonechat and Chaffinch**. The **Water Rail** was heard at **Radipole** but not seen.

English Name	Scientific Name	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2007
Black Throated Diver	<i>Gavia arctica</i>							X	
Red-throated Diver	<i>Gavia stellata</i>			X					
Black-necked Grebe	<i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>	X						X	X
Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	X	X	X				X	X
Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Fulmar	<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
Manx Shearwater	<i>Puffinus puffinus</i>		X						X
Balearic Shearwater	<i>Puffinus mauretanicus</i>			X	X	X		X	
Sooty Shearwater	<i>Puffinus griseus</i>			X			X	X	
Gannet	<i>Morus bassanus</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
Shag	<i>Phalacrocorax aristorelis</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>			X	X	X	X	X	X
Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>		X	X		X	X	X	X
[Black Swan]	<i>Cygnus atratus</i>					X (2)			
Canada Goose	<i>Anser canadensis</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
[Barnacle Goose]	<i>Branta leucopsis</i>	X	X	X		X		X	
[Snow Goose]	<i>Anser caerulescens</i>		X			X			
Brent Goose	<i>Branta bernicla</i>			X					
Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	X	X	X		X (1)	X	X	X
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Gadwall	<i>Anas strepera</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>			X					
Shoveler	<i>Anas chrypeata</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

English Name	Scientific Name	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2007
Wigeon	<i>Anas penelope</i>		X	X	X	X	X	X	
Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
Eider	<i>Somateria mollissima</i>				X			X	
Common Scoter	<i>Melanitta nigra</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Ruddy Duck	<i>Oxyura jamaicensis</i>					X	X	X	X
Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	X			X	X (1)	X	X	
Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>	X		X	X				X
Peregrine	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	X		X		X	X	X	X
Merlin	<i>Falco columbarius</i>		X		X				X
Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>	X		X		X			
Water Rail	<i>Rallus aquaticus</i>			X	X	X	X	H	X
Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Ringed Plover	<i>Chararius hiaticula</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Knot	<i>Calidris canuta</i>	X					X		X
Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>					X			X
Purple Sandpiper	<i>Calidris maritima</i>					X	X		
Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Curlew Sandpiper	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>	X	X	X		X			X
Little Stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>	X		X	X				
Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	X				X		X	
Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>	X				X			X
Spotted Redshank	<i>Tringa erythropus</i>				X				
Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>	X		X		X		X	
Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa</i>			X		X	X	X	X

English Name	Scientific Name	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2007
Bar-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>	X	X		X			X	
Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	X		X	X		X	X	X
Great Skua	<i>Stercorarius skua</i>							X	
Parasitic Skua	<i>Stercorarius parasiticus</i>		X	X				X	
Black-headed Gull	<i>Larus ridibundus</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Common Gull	<i>Larus canus</i>	X	X	X					
Mediterranean Gull	<i>Larus melanocephalus</i>						X		
Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Great Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus marinus</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Kittiwake	<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>		X				X	X	
Sandwich Tern	<i>Stena sandvicensis</i>		X		X	X	X	X	X
Common Tern	<i>Sterno hirundo</i>		X		X				X
Guillemot	<i>Uria aalge</i>				X		X		
Stock Dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>			X	X			X	X
Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Common Cuckoo	<i>Cululus canorus</i>						X		
Short-eared Owl	<i>Asio flammeus</i>				X				
Little Owl	<i>Athene noctua</i>			X	X	X			
Green Woodpecker	<i>Picus viridis</i>					X(2)			
Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopus major</i>								X
Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>			X	X	X		X	
Wryneck	<i>Jynx torquilla</i>	X		X		X			
Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
House Martin	<i>Delichon urbica</i>	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
Rock Pipit	<i>Anthus petrosus</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Tree Pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>								X
Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

English Name	Scientific Name	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2007
Pied Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>	X	X	X	X			X	X
Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>						X		X
Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Hedge Accentor	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>	X		X		X			X
Northern Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Stonechat	<i>Saxicola torquata</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Whinchat	<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>			X	X	X	X		X
Garden Warbler	<i>Sylvia borin</i>	X		X	X				X
Lesser Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia curruca</i>	X			X				
Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>			X		X(1)			X
Sedge Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>					X		X	X
Grasshopper Warbler	<i>Locustella naevia</i>					X			X
Cetti's Warbler	<i>Cettia cetti</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>	X			X				X
Icterine Warbler	<i>Hippolais icterina</i>					X			
Melodious Warbler	<i>Hippolais polyglotta</i>	X		X		X			
Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>					X	X		X
Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>				X	X	X	X	X
Firecrest	<i>Regulus ignicapillus</i>			X	X				
Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>					X		X	X
Pied Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula hypoleuca</i>	X		X					X
Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Blue Tit	<i>Parus caeruleus</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caedatus</i>						X		

English Name	Scientific Name	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2007
Bearded Reedling	<i>Panurus biarmicus</i>	X					X	X	X
Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Jackdaw	<i>Corvus monedula</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Carrion Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>			X	X	X	X		H
Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Rose-coloured Starling	<i>Sturnus roseus</i>					X			
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	X	X	X		X	X	X	
Linnet	<i>Carduelis cannabina</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Greenfinch	<i>Carduelis chloris</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Siskin	<i>Carduelis spinus</i>			X					
Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>	X	X				X		X
Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>								X
Ortolan Bunting	<i>Emberiza hortulana</i>					X			
Total Species		84	72	93	77	97	85	86	97

Notes Where there is a (1) or (2) against a record, it indicates that the bird was seen out side the “traditional” recording area of **Portland, Ferrybridge, Radipole or Lodmoor.**

2003 (1) = West Fleet at Langton Herring. (2) = Fleet at Abbotsbury

TEXEL HOLLAND

(Andrew Bray)

Texel is an island which belongs to a string of islands in the Dutch Wadden Sea. The island measures about 25 km in length and is about 9 km wide. It has a wide variety of habitats and is very popular amongst Dutch birdwatchers and German holidaymakers. The type of habitats mainly consist of dune areas (along the western side), salt marshes, sandbanks, tidal pools, grasslands, forested areas, pasture lands and swampy areas surrounded by reed beds. The island can be reached via the town of Den Helder which is about 60km north of Amsterdam. The crossing from Den Helder to Texel takes only 30 minutes and the ferry runs about every hour.

There is a lot of accommodation on the Island varying from camping to luxury hotels. During our stay we camped at Duinkampeerterrein Kogerstrand which is a campsite in the dunes by the town of de Koog which caters for the tourist trade. There was a wide range of restaurants at which to eat. All birding spots can be easily reached by car or even by bicycle; it is important to remember when you have to give way to bicycles.

Six of us travelled out on Thursday evening in October taking the ferry from Dover and Calais and driving through the night to the ferry at Den Helder. We then drove to the south side of Mokbaai where we cooked the infamous CAOS breakfast before first light. The tide was in and the birds were very close to the viewing sites. It was an excellent start to the day with **Osprey**, **Hobby**, **Spoonbill** plus a wide range of waders and ducks. We then took a short walk to view the lakes at Horsmeertjes and picked up a **Blackcap** as one of the few warbler species found. In the woods at De Dennen we came across a **Short-toed Woodcreeper** as well as a **Greater Spotted Woodpecker**.

At lunch time we collected Frits Maas, a friend of Richard Seargent who had spent many years birding on Texel. We then gradually headed north through the Waal area where a **Peregrine** perched by a windmill watching the waders. We then drove on to De Schoren where a **Firecrest** put in an appearance and finally to the lighthouse areas at the north of the Island. Unfortunately no rarities were found in the scrub area around the 'garden'. This was the start point for Saturday's birding. Nothing had been blown in overnight so we then headed for De Slufter which involved a stop in the local café for a hot drink and apple pie (a local favourite).



At the lighthouse
© A Bray

De Slufter is a vast tidal area which gave us the opportunity to look out into the North Sea. The vast sandy and vegetated areas eventually produced the target bird of **Horned Lark**.

We then headed to the east coast for constant views of grebes, divers and **Eider**. Though too far out for us to distinguish individuals we could make out vast flocks of shore birds, gulls and terns on the sandbanks. Whilst at a lunch stop decided to go on a twitch for **Yellow-browed Warbler** that was in the garden of a Dutch Birder. On arrival it showed very briefly but the views were not good enough for one of us. I then spent the next half an hour



A very contented group
© A Bray

looking for this very small bird in the tree canopy. Just as I was about to give up it finally popped out onto the edge and gave superb views for 5 minutes before disappearing from view. We then continued south stopping at new and familiar sites ending back at the lakes around Hoorsmeertjes for **Bearded Tit**. The light started to fail all too soon which brought an end to another day of intensive birding.

The next day was a drive back to Calais and a mini pelagic across the Channel which included **Little Gull**. At the end of the weekend we had seen 114 different species, enjoyed some fine meals with good company and explored a bird-watcher's island. The rarities failed to material-

ise in the numbers that could be expected however the amount of birds more than made up for this.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*
Greater White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons*
Greylag Goose *Anser anser*
Brent Goose *Branta bernicla*
Egyptian Goose *Alopochen aegyptiaca*
Common Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*
Eurasian Wigeon *Anas penelope*
Gadwall *Anas strepera*
Eurasian Teal *Anas crecca*
Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*
Northern Pintail *Anas acuta*
Northern Shoveler *Anas clypeata*
Common Pochard *Aythya ferina*
Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*
Greater Scaup *Aythya marila*
Common Eider *Somateria mollissima*
Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*
Common Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*
Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*
Common Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*
Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*
Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*
Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*
Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*
Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*
Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*
Northern Gannet *Morus bassanus*
Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*
Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*
Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*
Eurasian Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*

Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*
Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*
Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*
Little Gull *Larus minutus*
Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus*
Mew Gull *Larus canus*
Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*
Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*
Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*
Black-legged Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*
Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*
Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*
Common Guillemot *Uria aalge*
Stock Pigeon *Columba oenas*
Common Wood Pigeon *Columba palumbus*
Eurasian Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*
Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*
Sky Lark *Alauda arvensis*
Horned Lark *Eremophila alpestris*
Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*
Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*
White / Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba*
Winter Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*
Hedge Accentor *Prunella modularis*
European Robin *Erithacus rubecula*
Stonechat *Saxicola torquata*
Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*
Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*
Common Blackbird *Turdus merula*
Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*
Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*
 Eurasian Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*
 Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*
 Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*
 Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*
 Eurasian Hobby *Falco subbuteo*
 Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*
 Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*
 Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*
 Common Coot *Fulica atra*
 Eurasian Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*
 Pied Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*
 Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*
 European Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*
 Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*
 Northern Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*
 Red Knot *Calidris canutus*
 Sanderling *Calidris alba*
 Dunlin *Calidris alpina*
 Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*
 Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*
 Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*
 Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*
 Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata*
 Common Redshank *Tringa totanus*
 Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*
 Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*
 Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*
 Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*
 Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*
 Firecrest *Regulus ignicapilla*
 Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*
 Bearded Tit *Panurus biarmicus*
 Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*
 Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*
 Great Tit *Parus major*
 Coal Tit *Periparus ater*
 Short-toed Treecreeper *Certhia brachydactyla*
 Eurasian Jay *Garrulus glandarius*
 Black-billed Magpie *Pica pica*
 Eurasian Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*
 Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*
 Common Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*
 House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*
 Eurasian Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*
 Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*
 Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*
 European Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris*
 European Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*
 Common Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*
 Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*



Nightjar
 © E Bevan

ASCENSION ISLAND

(Andrew Bray)

Our visit was just before the start of the 25th anniversary of the Falklands War. It was a member of the Army Ornithological Society (AOS), Major Peter Hubert the Force Reconnaissance Officer who compiled a report on the birds on Ascension which was published in our Bulletin in May 1982. These reports went to Birdlife International who then asked the British Armed Forces to carry on with a monitoring programme as so little information was known except for the odd expedition report.



Author's assistant
© A Bray

It was only a small trip based on 3 teams over 4 weeks with John Hughes providing the continuity. It has been four years since the feral cats were largely eradicated even though it has taken time to officially declare this. This year we tried a different approach and sent a few members rotating every so often to cover a month on the **Sooty Tern** fairs. This was most useful especially as this seems to be a spectacular year. There were over 14 hectares occupied by the terns with a population of over 200,000 pairs. This is the largest number we have had since a peak in 1996. On top of this the productivity rate looks like being one of the best yet. This is the amount of birds that successfully rear a chick that

fledges. Normally the rate is about 30% but we are estimating that it will be over 40% this season. This is more than what is required to sustain the population so perhaps we are on the threshold of an expansion in numbers; only time will tell.

During our visit we ringed 4,000 birds of which 1,100 were pulli. For the last 3 years we have deliberately ringed large amounts of pulli so we hope to provide information on survival rates once the birds return to breed after 5 years. The difficulty is finding the right size pulli to ring. Once they are of the right size the comic capers begin as you try to catch them. They are not passive and have a turn of speed over the rocky strewn ground.



Sooty Tern fledglings
© A Bray

The mortality from predation by **Mynas** and **Frigatebirds** continues however there is a major decline in rat predation which was of previous concern. The number of rats trapped on the fairs was dramatically reduced in comparison to the previous year. The major news is that the number of **Brown Noddy** pairs on the fairs continues to rise with five pairs with young birds. In addition the numbers of **Masked Booby** pairs nesting on Letterbox has grown to over 200. There is also the start of a colony rather than isolated nests.

MASKED BOOBY (*Sula dactylatra*) NESTING ON LETTERBOX ASCENSION ISLAND

(Royston Griffin and Mike Vincent)

For over a hundred years Feral cats have prevented **Mask Boobies** from nesting successfully on Ascension Island. Following the eradication of the feral cats in 4004, Boobies have returned to Letter Box area of the main Island from the predatory free offshore islets. We report on the latest survey on the AOS study site on Letter Box.

Mike Vincent and I were tasked by John Hughes to go and count the **Masked Boobies** nesting on Letter Box. We had some prior knowledge that **Masked Boobies** were nesting on Letter Box from, the Ascension Island Conservation Department (AICD). Raymond who works for the AICD informed us that there were approximately 75 nests on Letter Box.

So with great expectation I set off for Letterbox with Mike at 0820 on the 3rd of May 2007. This being my first trip to Letter Box I had no idea what to expect. Mick said hope you are feeling fit into the site. Hmm good start! Well it actually turned out to be quite pleasant. After we arrived at our drop of point, near the NASA site, we started our walk in. 20-30 minutes into the walk we sighted nesting **White Turns** south west from Spire Rock. As we traversed around the north side of White Horse hill, I had my first personal encounter with a **White Turn** hovering just above my head. These little birds are quite enchanting. As we approached Louis Ledge on the way down to Letterbox, we noticed that a **Masked Booby** had taken up residence and was nesting there. It transpired that there was one egg in the nest. That was my first encounter with a **Masked Booby**. Just past the nest we set up a scope and had a look at Boatswain Bird Island (BBI) where we saw **Brown Boobies** (*Sula leucogaster*), **Black Noddies** (*Anous minutus*), **Masked Boobies** and squadrons of **Frigate Birds** (*Fregata aquila*) over head and some on the edge of BBI. I also noticed that **Black Noddies** were nesting in/on the cliffs of BBI. Then we turned the scope onto our task, Letterbox. Having a good look we both agreed the majority of the nests were on the north and north/west side of Letterbox (in the area of grid 770217), with individual nests scattered over ether rest of the area.



Brown Noddy
© R Dickey

After a short while we pushed on down to Letterbox, whilst on the way we encountered several **Masked Booby** nests. We took GPS positions, egg and bird counts of each nest. It was at one of these nests that we saw the largest of all the chicks we were to see that day, with its downy white plumage. Once on Letter Box we surveyed the main nesting area and immediately realising there were many more nests than we had been informed of by the AICD. We made our way over to the letter box (for those who have never been, there is a rusty old letter box at spot height 417). Over to the south of Letterbox on the first ridge running

south east (in the area of grid 775211) was a roost of **Masked Boobies** ≈ 200 birds. Unfortunately with time restrictions on us we were unable to survey the area more closely.

At first we GPS surveyed the isolated nests, I used the GPS whilst Mick wrote down the de-

tails ie 1 bird, 2 eggs etc (Mick had seen my note book from the Sooty Turn fairs and I don't think he liked my method of recording details).

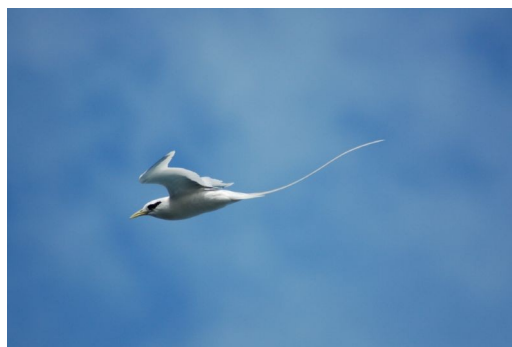


Masked Booby and chick
© M Vincent

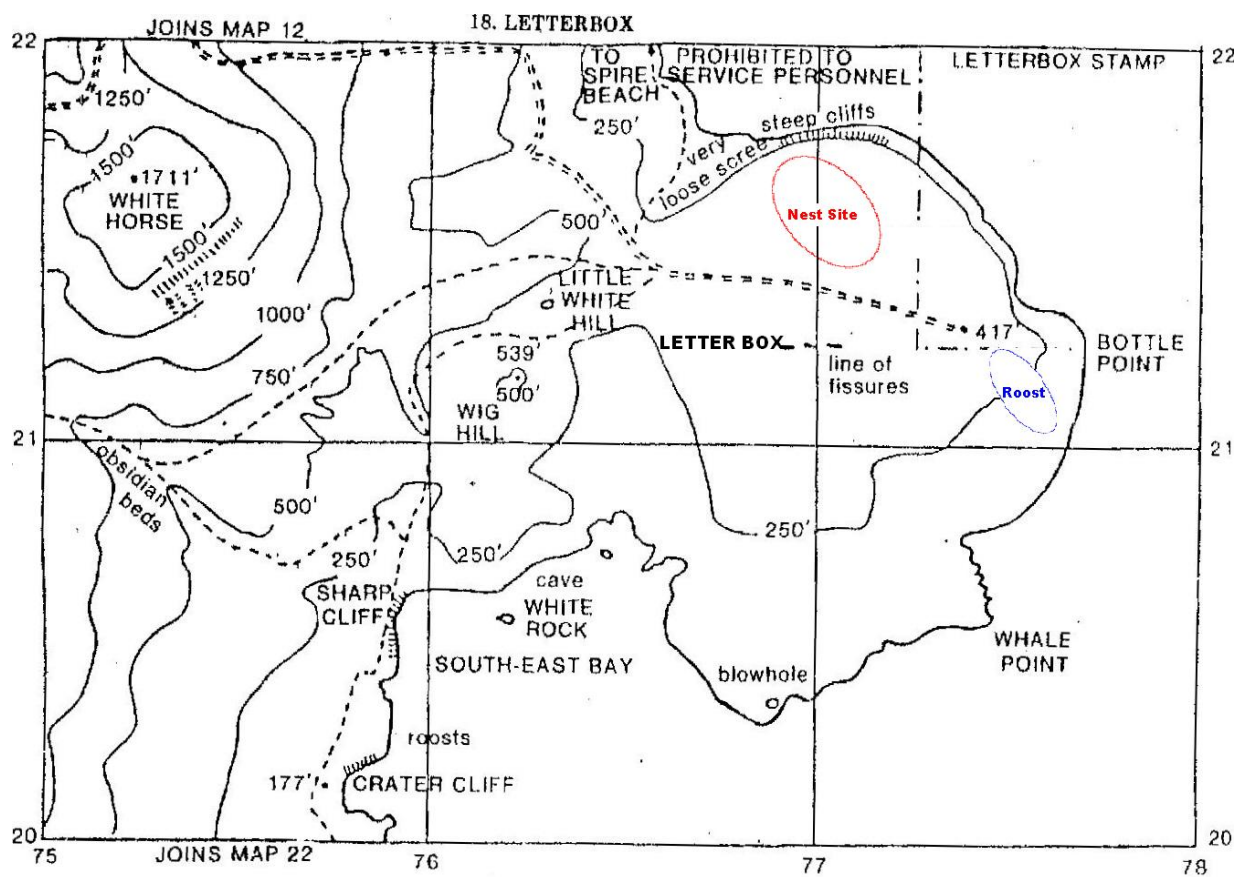
A **Masked Booby's** nest is quite a crude affair, consisting of a scrap in the ground with loose shale around it. The nest area is approximately one meter across. The bird locate their nests in no identifiable order, the nests can be touching or anything up to several meters apart. Normally the nests are not located in rocky areas, however we did see several nests not constructed in the usual manor. There are normally two eggs per nest, with chalky white colouring that are incubated for approximately 45 days both parent birds. The eggs are quite big, roughly the size of a duck egg. The chicks that

we saw on Letterbox were less than three to five days old, having no plumage at all. Once hatched it is not uncommon for the first chick to kill its smaller sibling.

After two hours of surveying we had lunch over looking BBI where we were able to take a closer look at all of the species of bird on the island. One of these sighted was a **Yellow-billed Tropic-bird** with its long white tail feathers. After lunch we continued our survey, an hour and half later we headed back to the Land Rover having located 186 nests with 231 birds, 174 eggs and 5 chicks of varying ages. The number of Boobies nesting on Letter Box has increased ten fold on our previous highest record. The return trip was not as easy as the outward trip due to the climb. For my first ever survey of a nesting colony it was a very memorable experience, I very much hope that I will have the opportunity to do it again.



Yellow-billed Tropic-Bird
© R Dickey



View of Letterbox
© A Bray

OPERATION HERRICK 6 – A BIRDER'S PERSPECTIVE

(Richard Sargent)

Ever since reading 'A short walk in the Hindu Kush' by Eric Newby as an 18 year old I had always wanted to visit Afghanistan. I never thought that I would but events following 9/11 there was always a strong possibility that eventually my wish would come true. Eventually, during the period 4th April until 1st October 2007, I took part in Operation HERRICK 6 in Helmand Province, Afghanistan as part of the United Kingdom Joint Force Medical Group in Camp Bastion.

Camp Bastion is the main Forward Operating Base in Helmand Province not only for the British Military but detachments of Danes, Czechs and Jordanians. It provides the main logistic hub and accommodation for troops deploying into the wider desert and Green zone around the Helmand river but also includes a Role 2 (Enhanced) Hospital where most casualties in Helmand are initially taken. It was around Camp Bastion, especially around the environs of the Hospital where for six months I passed the time away birding when not working. Camp Bastion was on a main migration route from northern Europe and Central and Northern Asia to both Africa and the Indian Sub-continent so subsequently a diverse bag of species was seen. Side visits to Kabul, Kandahar and Lashkahr eased the monotony and provided the odd additional species. Kandahar added the majority of wader species seen and would have been an excellent birding location for six months.

By the end of the tour I had amassed a total of 82 species, most of which passed through on migration, many in large numbers. On departure I had 14 extra lifers for my world list, one or two which were most unexpected. For anyone wishing to see a month by month list of species seen please go to the AOS website at www.aos-uk.com and all details are found in my Bastion blog in the message board.

Initial sightings were to prove disappointing and it appeared that I would be in for a long six months. **Crested Larks** were omnipresent, as were **Tree Sparrows** but the northerly migration quickly picked up with large numbers of **Black-winged Stilts** flying over and increasing numbers of Warbler species in and around the accommodation. Shrikes were to prove a major family to be seen and fed on the numerous cricket and locust species mingling with the odd **Bluethroat** and **Rock Thrush**. Warblers appeared in many forms and were easy to find as they perched on barbed wire and tentage throughout the camp. Bee-Eaters fed over the camp and the odd raptor passed through on a regular basis.

By the middle of May migration had drawn to a close and birding became increasingly difficult in the heat which, by July occasionally reached plus 50 degrees centigrade at midday. Swallows made the reverse migration early at the end of June with thousands passing south through the day. June and July provided little to see although new species occasionally appeared.

A two week break on R&R in August was followed by the reverse migration which found **Demoiselle Cranes**, **Crowned Sandgrouse**, Shrikes, Rollers, **Trumpeter Finches**, various Sparrows, Warblers and Wagtails around and over camp. This migration appeared a lot more diverse with many species seen including a number of lifers. Extremely large flocks of the migrating race of **House Sparrow**, the '**Bactrian**' Sparrow *Passer domesticus indicus*, flew South East daily with the odd post dispersal flock of **Pale Rock Sparrow**. Warblers

threw in the odd surprise with a lone **Arctic Warbler** and a very obliging **Ménétries's Warbler** within a few days of each other. The spring migration of **Easter Olivaceous Warbler** was replaced by an Autumn migration of **Syke's Warbler** which begged the question 'Why differing migration routes?'

Before I knew it I was returning to the UK via Cyprus and back to normality. Within three weeks of my return I had been to Texel with members of the AOS and had been sent on a recce to Kenya with my unit where I knocked up another 101 lifers. 2007 had been good birding wise but I'd rather of not spent most of it separated from my family.

SYSTEMATIC LIST OF SPECIES SEEN DURING OPERATION HERRICK 6

Little Grebe	Blue-headed Wagtail
Night Heron	Citrine Wagtail
Little Bittern	Red-backed Shrike
Shikra	Long-tailed Shrike
Steppe Eagle	Bay-backed Shrike
Hobby	Isabelline Shrike
Red-footed Falcon	Blyth's Reed Warbler
Common Kestrel	Gret Reed Warbler
Laggar Falcon	Clamorous Reed Warbler
Quail	Moustached Warbler
Demoiselle Crane	Booted Warbler
Common Coot	Syke's Warbler
Black-winged Stilt	Easter Olivaceous Warbler
Little-ringed Plover	Upcher's Warbler
Red-wattled Plover	Desert Lesser Whitethroat
White-tailed Plover	Lesser Whitethroat
Broad-billed Sandpiper	Hume's Lesser Whitethroat
Temminck's Stint	Orphean Warbler
Little Stint	Ménétries's Warbler
Common Sandpiper	Desert Warbler
Green Sandpiper	Greenish Warbler
Ruff	Arctic Warbler
Red-necked Phalarope	Plain Leaf Warbler
Crowned Sandgrouse	Spotted Flycatcher
Palm Dove	Red-breasted Flycatcher
Collared Dove	Stonechat
Little Owl	Pied Stonechat
Syk'es Nightjar	Rock Thrush
Little Swift	Desert Wheatear
European Bee-Eater	Variable Wheatear
Blue-checked Bee-Eater	Black Redstart
Roller	Bluethroat
Hoopoe	Rufous Bushchat
Oriental Skylark	Trumpeter Finch
Crested Lark	Tree Sparrow
Barn Swallow	House Sparrow
Crag Martin	Pale Rock Sparrow
Plain Sand Martin	Rose-coloured Starling

Sand Martin
Richard's Pp
White 'Masked' Wagtail

Common Myna
Black-billed Magpie
House Crow

EGYPT NILE RIVER CRUISE 19 – 26 MAR 07

(Mark Easterbrook)



References:

1. Collins Guide to the *Birds of Britain & Europe with N. Africa & The Middle East*.
2. Trip Reports posted on the Web.

Introduction

This was a family holiday selected by my wife, travelling with Voyages Jules Verne on one of the more “up-market” vessels (The SS MISR – King Farouq’s refurbished steamer), currently sailing on the Nile River.

Having previously travelled widely in the Middle East, there was only really one target bird; the Nile Valley Sunbird, with an outside chance of Kittlitz’s Plover.

The River cruise produced some good birds in a relaxed atmosphere, unlike the usual rushing around that I achieve whilst abroad.

Common Species

The following table contains a list of common species that can be easily seen in good numbers from Luxor, South to Aswan along the Nile River.

Scientific Name	Common Name
Phalacrocorax carbo	Great Cormorant
Ardeola ralloides	Squacco Heron
Bubulcus ibis	Cattle Egret
Egretta garzetta	Little Egret
Ardea cinerea	Grey Heron
Ardea purpurea	Purple Heron

Circus aeruginosus	Eurasian Marsh Harrier
Falco tinnunculus	Common Kestrel
Gallinula chloropus	Moorhen
Porphyrio porphyrio madagascariensis	Purple Gallinule
Fulica atra	Coot
Himantopus himantopus	Black-winged Stilt
Vanellus spinosus	Spur-winged Plover
Larus ridibundus	Black-headed Gull
Streptopelia senegalensis	Laughing Dove
Ceryle rudis	Pied Kingfisher
Upupa epops	Hoopoe
Hirundo rustica savignii	Egyptian Barn Swallow
Motacilla alba	White Wagtail
Corvus (carone) cornix	Hooded Crow
Passer domesticus	House Sparrow

Day by Day Itineraries with highlights

19 Mar 07

We flew from Gatwick at 0945, although this was delayed by an hour, which appears to be the normal state of affairs. The flight can hardly be recommended but achieved the desired aim after many queues for a number of reasons. We arrived on board our vessel the MS MISR at about 1930 local time (2 hours in front of UK time), settled in and enjoyed dinner on board.

Day 1 – 20 Mar 07

The boat had sailed from Luxor to Esna barrage overnight and in the morning light continued to Edfu. Two **Garganeys**, several **Whiskered Terns** and five **Purple Gallinules** were noted. Further down the Nile, the only **Slender-billed Gulls**, five **Spoonbill** and several **Glossy Ibis** made an appearance.

At Edfu – Temple of Horus, two **Blue-cheeked Bee-eater** and two **Brown-necked Ravens** were noted amongst the impressive buildings.

We re-boarded the boat after some hectic haggling (Life of Brian style), with some zealous vendors and journeyed to Kom Ombo. Whilst on route along the river the only **Ruff** of the trip, a **Night Heron**, another **Spoonbill** and several more **Gallinule** were noted. The only two **Egyptian Geese** were also noted on this leg of the journey.

Day 2 – 21 Mar 07

Today saw an early morning visit to Kom Ombo. From the boat a small long tailed bird was seen it was surely a **Nile Valley Sunbird**, although better views were required. We were not disappointed and the gardens under the Temple revealed two pairs of these superb little birds, the males in full breeding regalia. With migration well under way, several **Lesser Whitethroats** flitted about whilst the local **Graceful Prinias** and **Common Bulbuls** were in

good voice. A familiar Reed Warbler like song from a bush was soon identified as an **Eastern Olivaceous Warbler** with its typical tail pumping action.

The boat then sailed from Kom Ombo to Aswan with the target bird safely secured on day two, which was a relief. The now familiar riverside birds continued to show and were complemented by several flocks of wildfowl, one of which contained three **Ferruginous Ducks**.

Day 3 – 22 Mar 07

We awoke in Aswan and set out to visit the Temple of Philae. A **White-crowned Black Wheatear** was seen by the jetty and a cracking male **Masked Shrike** also showed well. A **Little Green Heron** was seen on a rocky outcrop and several **Gull-billed Terns** circled the boat. On the Island, at least another four **Nile Valley Sunbirds** entertained us, an **Osprey** put in a brief appearance as did five **Red-rumped Swallows** and about sixty **White Pelicans** roosted on a nearby beach. We viewed a thermal full of **Black Kites** from the temple some of which were of the Yellow-billed sub-species.

Later in the afternoon we took a Felucca ride to Kitchener Island which produced another two male **Nile Valley Sunbirds**, a male **Bluethroat** (red spot), ten **Ferruginous Duck** and the usual common migrants.

Day 4 – 23 Mar 07

A 0315 wake-up call and an early departure saw us heading for Abu Simbel. Our arrival was greeted with a **White-crowned Wheatear**, another **Hoopoe** was seen as was a **Graceful Prinia** but the only new bird was a very pale grey coloured **Crested Lark**.

After lunch, we set sail north for our return to Luxor. Between Aswan and Kom Ombo the only **Senegal Thick Knees** were noted, along with two more **Blue-checked Bee-eaters** and a **White Pelican**. Numerous **Pied Kingfishers** and the Egyptian sub-species of **Barn Swallow** continued to circle the vessel as we sat in the sun and enjoyed a beer or two.

From Kom Ombo to Edfu, a **Clamorous Reed Warbler** was heard and the only **Ringed Plover** of the trip was seen.

Day 5 – 24 Mar 07

The usual and common birds were seen on this leg of the journey between Esna and Luxor with no new birds for the trip being added.

Day 6 – 25 Mar 07

The group briefly stopped at the Colossi of Memnon but not before adding two **Black-shouldered Kites** on route. These striking birds appear to be present in small numbers around the cultivated fields of Luxor. At the statues three displaying **Fan-tailed Warblers** were seen, another **Masked Shrike** and two **Stonechat**.

The Temple of Hatshepsut was next and we added **Trumpeter Finch** and two **Brown-necked Ravens** here whilst **Pale Crag Martins** continued to be present at all Temple sites

and several authentic **Rock Doves** were seen.

Later in the Valley of the Kings, at least fifteen **Trumpeter Finches** came to a bowl of water and some seed which allowed some close photos to be taken (by my wife) of this at times difficult bird to connect with. Whilst departing the site a **Little Green Bee-eater** perched on a rock.

A short afternoon walk by the Traveline moorings produced good views of a **Clamorous Reed Warbler** and another **Night Heron**.

Of interest during an evening visit to Luxor Temple was a noisy roost of Godfrey's Tomb Bat.



Trumpeter Finches at the Valley of the Kings

Day 7 – 26 Mar 07

On route to the Temple of Karnak another **Black-shouldered Kite** sat on telegraph wires and a **Hoopoe** fed along the roadside.

The journey to the airport produced several of the ubiquitous **Pied Kingfishers**, several **Pallid Swifts** overhead and one more **Black-shouldered Kite**, a species that appears to be quite common around the cultivated farmland of Luxor.

Summary

The trip produced the target bird! A Cruise along the River Nile is an ideal relaxed way to bird watch, whilst keeping the family happy and enjoying the Egyptian historical sites. The excursion to Abu Simbel is a little tiring and a little over-priced, with not many birds on offer (unless you are lucky enough to encounter something like an **African Skimmer** on Lake Nasser), however, to go that far and not visit the site would be a shame.

I would recommend a cruise for the above reasons but if you are looking for a large list this is not the trip for you. Take care in selecting a vessel to travel on, as many look tired and not in particularly good order.

Selective Species List

<u>Species</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
Little Grebe <i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	2 seen on the southerly journey between Esna and Edfu
Great White Pelican <i>Pelecanus onocrotalus</i>	A flock of circa 60 seen roosting from Philae Temple and later migrating North with 1's along the river
Little Bittern <i>Ixobrychus minutus</i>	1 along the river between Kom Ombo and Aswan
Black-crowned Night Heron <i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>	Singletons seen along the river but not numerous
Little Green Heron <i>Butorides striatus</i>	3 birds seen 2 on the river between Kom Ombo and Aswan, 1 whilst approaching Philae Temple
Great White Egret <i>Egretta alba</i>	Only 2 birds seen between Kom Ombo and Aswan on the 21st
Glossy Ibis <i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>	1s & 2s along the river with a large flock of c60 between Kom Ombo and Aswan
Eurasian Spoonbill <i>Platalea leucorodia</i>	5 birds seen on a river island between Esna and Edfu and 1 seen between Edfu and Kom Ombo
Egyptian Goose <i>Alopochen aegyptiacus</i>	2 were seen on a river island between Edfu and Kom Ombo
Eurasian Wigeon <i>Anas penelope</i>	Small groups seen along the river
Eurasian Teal <i>Anas crecca</i>	8 birds seen in 2 groups
Northern Pintail <i>Anas acuta</i>	2 drakes at Aswan with Northern Shoveller and 1 with the same species between Edfu and Kom Ombo
Garganey <i>Anas querquedula</i>	3 birds seen, 2 drakes and 1 duck along the river with Northern Shoveller
Northern Shoveller <i>Anas clypeata</i>	Large flocks seen all along the river
Ferruginous Duck <i>Aythya nyroca</i>	3 between Esna and Edfu. 10 from Kitchener Island
Tufted Duck <i>Aythya fuligula</i>	Small parties (mostly drakes) along the river between Edfu and Kom Ombo
Black-shouldered Kite <i>Elanus caeruleus</i>	2 near the Colossi of Memnon, 1 over the fields near Luxor and 1 on the way to the airport on the final day
Black Kite <i>Milvus migrans</i>	Numerous over Philae Temple with singletons seen elsewhere
African "Yellow-billed" Kite <i>Milvus migrans parasitus</i>	Birds contained within the thermal at Philae were of this Ssp
Osprey <i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	1 at Philae Temple
Senegal Thick-knee <i>Burhinus senegalensis</i>	11 seen on the return journey between Aswan and Kom Ombo on a "beach"
Ringed Plover <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	1 seen during the return journey up-river between Aswan and Kom Ombo
Ruff <i>Philomachus pugnax</i>	A group of 8 were seen on an river island between Edfu and Kom Ombo
Common Snipe <i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	1 at Edfu - flushed by a Marsh Harrier and one along the river between Aswan and Kom Ombo
Black-tailed Godwit <i>Limosa limosa</i>	2 were seen feeding between Esna and Edfu
Common Redshank <i>Tringa totanus</i>	1 seen between Aswan and Kom Ombo
Marsh Sandpiper <i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>	1 seen between Aswan and Kom Ombo
Common Sandpiper <i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	Singletons seen throughout the trip along the river
Slender-billed Gull <i>Larus genei</i>	A group of 5 seen between Esna and Edfu
Gull-billed Tern <i>Gelochelidon nilotica</i>	Common around Philae Temple with 1s along the river

Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybridus* Good numbers seen all along the river

White-winged Black Tern *Chlidonias leucopterus* Small numbers mixed with the above and a group of 20 heading North between Esna and Edfu on the 20th

Rock Dove *Columba livia* Authentic birds seen at the Temple of Hatshepsut

Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur* 1 bird seen at Philae Temple

Common Swift *Apus apus* Good numbers migrating in the second half of the week

Pallid Swift *Apus pallidus* Probably mixed with the previous species but 5 positively identified on the return to the airport

Little Green Bee-eater *Merops orientalis* 1s & 2s seen at Kom Ombo, Abu Simbel and Valley of the Kings

Blue-cheeked Bee-eater *Merops persicus* A flock of 18 seen between Esna and Kom Ombo, with a pair at Edfu Temple and several around Luxor

Crested Lark *Galerida cristata* 2 seen. 1 at Abu Simbel and 1 at the Colossi of Memnon

Pale Rock Martin *Ptyonoprone fuligula* Seen regularly in small numbers at all Temples

Red-rumped Swallow *Hirundo daurica* A group of 5 seen over Philae Temple

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava* Singletons seen along the river

Black-headed wagtail *Motacilla (flava) feldegg* 1 seen between Edfu and Kom Ombo

Common Bulbul *Pycnonotus barbatus* Fairly common - 1s & 2s seen in suitable habitat

Bluethroat *Luscinia svecica* 1 male seen on Kitchener Island

Stonechat *Saxicola torquata* A male and female at the Colossi of Memnon

White-crowned Black Wheatear *Oenanthe leucopyga* 2 at Philae Temple, 2 at Abu Simbel and one at the boat jetty to Philae Temple

Zitting Cisticola *Cisticola juncidis* Several seen in grasslands bordering the River

Graceful Prinia *Prinia gracilis* 1s & 2s heard and seen in reeds along the river

Clamorous Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus stentoreus* Heard along the river and 1 seen in reeds near Luxor

Olivaceous Warbler *Hippolais pallida* Migrants seen and heard in suitable habitat

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca* Good numbers seen at Philae Temple, Kom Ombo Temple and singletons seen throughout in suitable habitat

Nile Valley Sunbird *Anthrepetes metallicus* At least 8 seen in pairs, including stunning males in suitable habitat at Kom Ombo Temple, Kitchener Island and Philae Temple (nest seen)

Masked Shrike *Lanius nubicus* 3 at Philae Temple and 1 at the Colossi of Memnon

Brown-necked Raven *Corvus ruficollis* 2 at Edfu Temple of Horus and 2 at the Temple of Hatshepsut

Trumpeter Finch *Bucanetes githagineus* 4 at the Temple of Hatshepsut and common in the Valley of the Kings (photographed coming to water)



Wheatear
© E Bevan

VISIT TO CHETE ISLAND, LAKE KARIBA, ZAMBIA

(Anne Nason)

“The best laid schemes o’ mice and men gang aft a-gley.” How true this proved to be when Ian and I flew from Harare to Lusaka on the 7th February 2007. We had planned to spend a week in South Luangwa National Park at two Lodges where the birding was said to be exceptional. The night before we left we heard a rumour that the Luangwa River had flooded, but as we were due to leave early next morning, we had no time to consult our travel agent. Anyway, one of the Lodges was described as an “all-year-round Lodge” so everything should be alright, shouldn’t it?

On the 18 seater Air Zambia plane to Lusaka next morning we discovered we were the only passengers. I said to Ian “Do other people know something we don’t know?” The journey lasted about an hour before our “private plane” arrived with a thud on the tarmac at Lusaka (not encouraging for the return flight to see the pilots examining the front wheel!) and we took a taxi to the Holiday Inn Hotel. There the Manager, Adrian Penney, had been asked to contact us to explain that it was impossible to fly to Mfuwe the next morning as the Luangwa River had burst its banks, the Lodges were flooded and the airport unusable. He had already re-booked us into Chete Island Safari Lodge on Lake Kariba and arranged our transport. All he needed was our agreement to the new plan which we readily gave. He personally took us to Air Zambia to be reimbursed for our flight to Mfuwe so we would have the funds to pay for the car journey to Lake Kariba. Next morning after breakfast our minibus arrived and we set off for the 5 hour drive to Lake Kariba with thankfulness, a most reliable driver. It was ironic that we were driving south, back to the border with Zimbabwe, but interesting to see the Zambian countryside, and farming areas on the way. We passed coffee estates, sugar plantations and cattle ranches. Several white Zimbabwean farmers have re-located to Zambia, and the economy is obviously benefiting.



Black Egret
© I Nason

We drove south-west through Monze and Pemba and turned off the main road at Batoka, a few miles before Choma, descending through the hills to Sinazongwe on the shores of Lake Kariba. There we were met by Chete Island staff and embarked on the 40 minute trip to the island and Chete Safari Lodge, through moderately choppy water.

Chete Island was formed when the Zambezi River was dammed at Kariba in 1958, creating the lake which is now 52,000 sq km in size, with the border between Zambia and Zimbabwe running through the middle. One of the boats still being used by the Safari Lodge had taken part in “Operation Noah” when thousands of animals were relocated as they became trapped on small “islands” as the waters rose over a period of four years. Chete Island is about 17 km long and some game was relocated there, including a small herd of elephants. This herd has now grown to about 100 strong and has been added to by the introduction of two orphan

elephants that had been reared in a Zoo. Unfortunately these two elephants are now causing problems as one had turned over the safari vehicle on a couple of occasions making safari drives no longer possible. The other, “Pungwe,” a 15 year old male, tends to hang around the tents or stand on the path between the jetty and the camp so that one has to take a detour to avoid confronting him. However, this lends a certain *frisson* to life on Chete, and once I walked along a path between the very comfortable “tents” to spot birds for Ian to photograph when I heard and smelt elephant, and spotted Pungwe only a few metres away. I retreated towards one of the tents and waited until I could skirt round another way, as he is known to “play charge”. Other large game on the island included Impala, Kudu, Waterbuck, Baboon and Lion, and in the water, Hippo and Crocodile.

The birdlife was abundant, although all the water birds were very familiar to us. However, the trips out in the boat were most enjoyable as the weather was extremely hot, and we were kept cool by a pleasant breeze as we motored along. The boatmen became quite skilled at turning off the engine and gliding towards the bank for Ian to photograph herons, egrets, pratincole etc. This gave him the chance to improve on some of his photos of water birds. **African Fish Eagles** were common and one of the most interesting incidents was to witness a crocodile stalking two **Fish Eagles**, eating a fish on the shore. Finally the crocodile advanced at speed and stole the prize from the **Fish Eagles**. The dire predictions of accumulated pesticides and pollution in the lake that would affect these magnificent birds does not seem to have happened, as there were several immatures about and the haunting cry of the adults a constant accompaniment.



Green-winged Pytilia
© I Nason

The inlet where the jetty had been built was the most productive area for birds although the hippos needed watching as we cruised by. Some of the shore was quite marshy and provided a feeding ground for **Common** and **Wood Sandpipers** and **Collared (Red-winged) Pratincole**. Herons, like the **Goliath Heron**, **Black Egret** and **Glossy** and **Sacred Ibis** frequented the swampy areas. Once we saw **Red-billed Ox-peckers** sitting on a semi-submerged hippo, but usually they would be attending to the Kudu or Impala. In places near the shore, bare tree trunks rose from the water, remnants of the now submerged forest, and these provided perches for **African Long-tailed Cormorants**, **Darters** and **Pied Kingfishers**.

Walking trips with an armed guide were offered, but the weight of the camera and tripod in the heat made this almost impossible, and the birds would not allow us to get near when we were on foot. The best “hide” was to use the veranda of the tented Lodges and here Ian got some of his best photographs – the **Green-winged Pytilia (Melba Finch)**, **Barred Owl**, **Meve’s Long-tailed Starling**, **Golden-breasted Bunting**, **Little Bee-eater** and **Black-backed Puffbacks** displaying. Fortunately it was the “off” season, and for much of the time we were the only guests so we could use the verandas of other Lodges, always remembering to keep an eye out for Pungwe! The **Barred Owl** was photographed only feet away from our tent as the **Meve’s Starlings** had been mobbing it mercilessly and I had gone to investigate.

In the 60's Lake Kariba was stocked with kapenta, a small sardine-like fish from Lake Tanganyika, which has given rise to a very productive fishery. In turn this has encouraged **White-winged Black Tern** and **Grey-headed Gulls** to the lake. On one of our boat trips we were just passing a fishing village when to our surprise we saw a **Saddle-billed Stork** only a few metres away from the fishermen.



Saddle-billed Stork
© I Nason

One of the commonest birds was the **European (Barn) Swallow**. It was interesting to see many of them following a herd of elephant when only a few weeks later they will be following herds of black and white cows in English pastures. Large numbers of **Cattle Egrets** also followed the game, as the Kudu and Impala came down to the water to drink every evening. **European Bee-eaters** were not uncommon, but never seemed to be close enough to photograph. However, Ian finally caught up with them in Harare, where they are very common at this time of year. Sometimes in the evening a large flock of **Red-billed Quelea** would perform aerial feats in the sky above us.

One boat trip took us within 200 metres of Zimbabwe! However there are no border posts along this part of Lake Kariba so it was easier to return to Lusaka and fly back to Harare as planned. Paul and Sonia, the Managers of the Lodge, looked after us magnificently on Chete Island and we enjoyed our visit a great deal. Listening to the hippos grunting, the boom of the **Ground Hornbill** in the early morning, going out on bird-watching trips, swimming in the pool in the afternoon to cool off, and sitting by the fire outside in the evening looking at the stars, and yes, even dodging our friend Pungwe, made our visit a most memorable one.

White-breasted Cormorant <i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	Barred Owl <i>Glaucidium capense</i>
Reed Cormorant <i>Phalacrocorax africanus</i>	Little Swift <i>Apus affinis</i>
African Darter <i>Anhinga rufa</i>	Pied Kingfisher <i>Ceryle rudis</i>
Grey Heron <i>Ardea cinerea</i>	Grey-hooded Kingfisher <i>Halcyon leucocephalus</i>
Black-headed Heron <i>Ardea melanocephala</i>	European Bee-eater <i>Merops apiaster</i>
Goliath Heron <i>Ardea goliath</i>	Little Bee-eater <i>Merops pusillus</i>
Great White Egret <i>Egretta alba</i>	Lilac-breasted Roller <i>Coriarius caudatus</i>
Yellow-billed Egret <i>Egretta intermedia</i>	Grey Hornbill <i>Tockus nasutus</i>
Black Egret <i>Egretta ardesiaca</i>	Red-billed Hornbill (Southern) <i>Tockus rufirostris</i>
Cattle Egret <i>Bubulcus ibis</i>	Southern Ground Hornbill <i>Bucorvus leadbeateri</i>
Green-backed Heron <i>Butorides striata</i>	Bearded Woodpecker <i>Dendropicus namaquus</i>
Open-billed Stork <i>Anostomus lamelligerus</i>	Cardinal Woodpecker <i>Dendropicus fuscescens</i>
Saddle-billed Stork <i>Ephippiorhynchus senegalensis</i>	European Swallow <i>Hirundo rustica</i>

Yellow-billed Stork *Mycteria ibis*
Sacred Ibis *Threskiornis aethiopicus*
Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*
African Spoonbill *Platalea alba*
White-faced Duck *Dendrocygna viduata*
Egyptian Goose *Alopochen aegyptiacus*

Red-billed Teal *Anas erythrorhyncha*

White-backed Vulture *Gyps africanus*
Bateleur *Terathopius ecaudatus*

African Fish Eagle *Haliaeetus vocifer*
African Jacana *Actophilornis africanus*
Kittlitz's Plover *Charadrius pecuarius*
Blacksmith Plover *Vanellus armatus*
White-crowned Plover *Vanellus albiceps*

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*

Collared Pratincole (Red-winged) *Glareola pratincola*

White-winged Tern *Chidonius leucopterus*

Grey-headed Gull *Larus cirrocephalus*
Red-eyed Dove *Streptopelia semitorquata*

Cape Turtle Dove *Streptopelia capicola*

Namaqua Dove *Oena capensis*
Diederik Cuckoo *Crysococcyx caprius*

Jacobin OR Striped Cuckoo *Clamator jacobinus*

Pearl-spotted Owl *Glaucidium perlatum*

Wire-tailed Swallow *Hirundo smithii*
European Golden Oriole *Oriolus oriolus*
Southern Black Tit *Parus niger*
Arrow-marked Babbler *Turdoides jardneii*
Black-eyed Bulbul *Pycnonotus tricolor*
Terrestrial Bulbul (Brownbul) *Phyllastrephus terrestris*
White-browed Scrub-robin *Cercotrichas leucophrys*
Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*
Grey-backed Bleating Warbler *Camoptera brevicaudata*
Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*
African Pied Wagtail *Motacilla aguimp*
Tropical Boubou *Laniarius aethiopicus*
Black-backed Puffback *Dryoscopus cubla*
Plum-coloured Starling *Cinnyricinclus leucogaster*
Meve's Long-tailed Starling *Lamprotornis mevesii*
Red-winged Starling *Onychognathus morio*
Red-billed Oxpecker *Buphagus erythrorhynchus*
Village Weaver (Spotted-backed Weaver) *Ploceus cucullatus*
Southern Grey-headed Sparrow *Passer diffusus*
Red-billed Quelea *Quelea quelea*
Melba Finch (Green-winged Pytilia) *Pytilia melba*
Red-billed Firefinch *Lagonosticta senegala*
Blue Waxbill *Uraeginthus angolensis*
Steel-blue (Village) Widowfinch *Vidua chalybeata*
Golden-breasted Bunting *Emberiza flaviventris*



White-vented Myna
© R Dickey

TWO TRIPS TO TRIPOLI

(Nicholas Beswick)

When a senior colleague asked me to join a business trip to Libya at five days' notice, my initial reaction was to check that it wasn't April 1st. But it was August and, once I'd recovered from the surprise, I immediately wondered whether I would have any chance of seeing interesting birds. First impressions on arrival were not encouraging: having eventually completed formalities at the airport, we were driven into the city centre at breakneck speed to our hotel with no hint of anything more interesting than sparrows and pigeons to be seen (though the former all proved to be Italian House x Spanish hybrids). However, the hotel was only a couple of minutes' walk from the sea front and, as our business followed irregular hours, I had several opportunities to explore for the odd half-hour. Nobody seemed to be in the least interested in my activities!

The shoreline yielded little, though **Turnstones**, a **Hoopoe** and a **Kingfisher** were pleasant surprises. There were plenty of birds out at sea but just too distant to identify without the scope that I had felt imprudent to bring. My fortune changed on the evening of 9 August when a moderate breeze forced a steady movement of birds close to the shore. These included at least fifteen **Black Terns** in varying stages of moult, a **Caspian Tern** and a couple of **Lesser Crested Terns** that allowed close-up views. The following day provided a **Slender-billed Gull** and many more terns, nearly all too distant to be identified.

My second trip, the next May, followed a similar pattern and I wasted no opportunity in heading out from the hotel to the beach. This time there was a much larger group of **Turnstones** along with **Common Sandpipers** and an obliging adult **Night Heron**. A first-summer **Caspian Tern** flying along the shoreline afforded excellent views. **Little Terns** were numerous but, in contrast to the August trip, numbers of other tern species and gulls were low. Just back from the sea wall, the freshly-laid and watered turf centre of a roundabout attracted three *flava* **Yellow Wagtails** and, more surprisingly, three **Whinchats**. In the absence of any perches, these adopted a wagtail style of feeding – running and pouncing on prey. This short visit ended on a high note from an ornithological perspective, with three majestic **White Storks** gliding low over the road as we headed to the airport.

Whilst it was disappointing that neither trip offered any chance of seeing anything more of the country than the centre of Tripoli, I was fortunate to have been staying by the sea and to have seen a reasonable variety of birds. Doubtless there are many more to be discovered given the opportunity.

Species	8-11 August 2005	2-4 May 2006
Great Cormorant <i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	2	2
Night Heron <i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>		2
Little Egret <i>Egretta garzetta</i>	1	7
Grey Heron <i>Ardea cinerea</i>	1	2
White Stork <i>Ciconia ciconia</i>		3
Kestrel <i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	2	1
Black-winged Stilt <i>Himantopus himantopus</i>	1	
Common Sandpiper <i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>		3
Turnstone <i>Arenaria interpres</i>	3	16
Slender-billed Gull <i>Larus genei</i>	1	

Species	8-11 August 2005	2-4 May 2006
Yellow-legged Gull <i>Larus michahellis</i>	many	2
Little Tern <i>Strerula albifrons</i>	2	3+
Caspian Tern <i>Hydroprogne caspia</i>	2	1
Black Tern <i>Chlidonias niger</i>	15+	
Lesser Crested Tern <i>Sterna bengalensis</i>	3+	3+
Sandwich Tern <i>Sterna sandviciensis</i>		1
Common Tern <i>Sterna hirundo</i>		1
Feral Pigeon <i>Columba livia</i>	many	many
Swift <i>Apus apus</i>	many	many
Kingfisher <i>Alcedo actitis</i>	1	
Hoopoe <i>Upupa epops</i>	1	
Sand Martin <i>Riparia riparia</i>		a few
Swallow <i>Hirundo rustica</i>		many
House Martin <i>Delichon urbica</i>		a few
Yellow Wagtail <i>Motacilla flava flava</i>		3
Whinchat <i>Saxicola rubetra</i>		3
Southern Grey Shrike <i>Lanius meridionalis</i>	1	1
Italian Sparrow <i>Passer domesticus x hispaniolensis</i>		20
Spanish Sparrow <i>Passer hispaniolensis</i>		1
Serin <i>Serinus serinus</i>		1



Cirl Bunting
© E Bevan

VENEZUELA 11TH – 20TH NOVEMBER 2006
HENRY PITTIER & THE LLANOS

(Keith Cherry)

After several discussions on various destinations including a return trip to Ecuador, Ethiopia and Brazil, the North Herts Bird Club agreed that our next trip should be to Venezuela. Our trip would once again be with Naturetrek, who we have found to be excellent organisers of our previous trips and we looked forward to this experience with confidence. The usual suspects were in the group consisting of Ray James, Tony Hukin, Ian Hardy, Richard (Sparrowman) Pople, Dave Beer, Trevor Brownsell, John Tomkins, and myself.

The regular trip is spread over two centres. The Llanos (Venezuelan Flatlands) and the **Henri Pittier National Park**, but we also chose an optional two-day extension to Coloni Tovar.

ITINERARY

November 11th Early morning from Heathrow with Air France flight to Paris (Charles De Gaulle). Change aircraft, Air France flight to Caracas. Transfer to Posada el Limon in Maracay

November 12th Posada el Limon and then transfer to Hato Pinero Ranch

November 13th – 15th Exploring trails of Hato Pinero Ranch. Transit to Posada el Limon

November 16th Henri Pittier National Park. Ocumare Road to Rancho Grande Biological Station. Walked Loop Trail then on to Cumbato

November 17th Henri Pittier National Park. Choroní Road to Puerto Colombia

November 18th Henri Pittier National Park. Ocumare Road to Rancho Grande Biological Station and Loop Trail

November 19th Choroní Road transit to Coloni Tovar

November 20th Coloni Tovar. Transit to Caracas Airport.

Trip Report

Day 1: Saturday November 11th:

I was the last to be picked up at 03:15hrs by our minibus taking us to the airport for our 06:25 flight to Paris. We joined the already formed queue and before long we met up with Charlie Jackson, who had also been with us on our trip to Ecuador and Bob Lugg from Devon. The last two people on the trip would meet up with us in Caracas. We finally checked in our luggage and went through to the departure area and waited.... and waited.... and waited for our departure. We would eventually take off one and a half hours late, which meant that our transfer time had been seriously eaten away. Realising that, we were now at panic stations over our ability to make our connecting flight. As soon as we got off the plane we breathlessly made a dash for it. Only to be met by an Air France stewardess telling us we had missed the flight and would be going tomorrow!! The most vociferous of the group immediately made their feelings known and it seemed to work. After a few frantic phone calls, she came back and urgently said “follow me”. Apparently the plane was being held back so that we could board. Cheaper than putting numerous people up in hotels no doubt!! To cut a long story short we did board and settled down for our 9 hour 40 minutes flight. Our only concern was whether our luggage would be coming with us. The flight was fine and uneventful and we arrived at 16:05 local time and halleluiaah our luggage arrived as well. Alls well that ends well!

Our guide, Cecilia Herrera, along with Steve Morgan and Rawdon Saunders were there to meet us so the group was now complete. We loaded up the small coach and set off on a two and a half hour drive to Maracay and our overnight stay at the Posada el Limon, a comfortable colonial style Inn that we would be returning to for the second half of the trip, due to its close proximity to the Henri Pittier National Park. We were soon checked in and enjoying a nice meal accompanied with one or two beers. Bed beckoned, so we all retired with high hopes for the trip ahead.

Day 2: Sunday November 12th:

Weather: Very warm during day with evening Thunderstorm

Most of the group are up and out at first light to bird the surrounding area. **Social Flycatcher, Kiskadee, Stripe-backed Wren**, the stunning **Saffron Finch** and **Scaled Dove** were soon listed. Cecilia joined us for a short while and **Greyish Saltator, Bare-eyed Thrush, Pale-vented Pigeon** and **Black-faced Grassquit** were seen.

After a good breakfast we met our driver Gabrielle and loaded up the coach. We had a four and a half hour drive to Hato Pinero.

While we were refuelling at a garage, **Chestnut-fronted Macaw's** were seen flying, followed shortly after by **Yellow-crowned Parrot's**.

A comfort stop en-route at Aguadita near to Tinaco produced **Aplomado Falcon, Grey-breasted Martin, Cattle Tyrant** and the beautiful **Fork-tailed Flycatcher**.

As we had a long journey ahead, stopping time en-route was to be limited but an impressive list was starting to form including **Savannah Hawk, Wattled Jacana, Black-collared Hawk, Smooth-billed Ani, Roseate Spoonbill, Green-rumped Parrotlet, Little Blue Heron** and **Brown-throated Parakeet**.

We finally arrived at the gates to Hato Pinero. It is a 17Kms drive to reach the ranch and the road is not good. Not far from the ranch a **Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture** was seen. This pleased Cecilia, as they can be elusive and hard to see.



Hato Pinero

Hato Pinero is a working ranch covering some 75,000 hectares and holds 13,000 head of cattle. The rooms are large and comfortable but currently only has cold water. The meals are of a high standard and the use of the free bar is very welcome at the end of a long hot day.

Otto Guanchez, who is an extremely nice guy, met us at the ranch. He is very proud of Hato Pinero and rightly so and has an abundance of enthusiasm and energy and is the resident tour guide. He welcomed us and directed us to the bar, which held a multitude of bottled beers in a chilled cabinet. Being free they seem to go down even smoother! After a great lunch



On observation lorry

we did some birding around the grounds adding **Yellow-headed Caracara**, the endemic **Venezuelan Troupial**, **Common Tody-Flycatcher**, **Red-breasted Blackbird**, **Northern Crested Caracara** and **Brown-headed Flycatcher**. We then embarked on the first of several trips around the ranch on the back of a specially adapted lorry with an observation platform. We were soon seeing new birds including **Red-vented Conebill**, **White-tailed Hawk**, several **Buff-necked Ibis**, **Red-vented Chacalaca**, **Burnished-buff Tanager**, **Plain Thornbird** and several species of **Seed-eater**, namely **Grey**, **Lined** and **Yellow-bellied**.

Rusty-margined Flycatcher, **Crested Bobwhite**, **Lineated Woodpecker** and **Trinidad Euphonia**

quickly followed these. We soon arrived at **Benjamin Bridge**, a place we would see on most days. The group soon picked out two or three **Black-capped Donacobius** in the long grass ahead of the bridge. In what seemed no time at all we added, among others, **Striated Heron**, **Greater Ani**, **Limpkin**, two breathtaking Scarlet Macaw's flew overhead and several amazing **Hoatzin** sitting in the trees. A truly unique bird!!

The other side of the bridge produced **Cocoi Heron**, **Rufescent Tiger Heron**, **Yellow-chinned Spinetail** and **Groove-billed Ani**.

We moved on to the river and saw **Pied Water tyrant**, **Red-capped Cardinal**, **Southern Lapwing** and several **Spectacled Caiman** on the riverbank.



Hoatzin

By now it was getting quite dark so we headed back to the ranch and started lamping. In no time at all a magnificent **Great Horned Owl** was spotted in a roadside tree and everyone had great views. We just had time to see **Common Parakeet** when, what was thought to be a fairly distant thunderstorm suddenly decided to unleash itself overhead. Simone, our driver quickly handed out waterproof capes as we found ourselves in the middle of a spectacular and spectacularly wet thunderstorm. We reached the safety of the ranch soaking wet, even with the capes, but none the worse for it. We all dried off, had a very nice evening meal, did the call over and then attacked the chiller cabinet.

Day 3: Monday November 13th

Weather: Rain am. Hot and Humid.



Up at 05:15. The plan today was, as is usual here, to split the group in two. One group would walk a forest trail whilst the other does a river trip. We all loaded up onto the lorry and set off. It was not long until we were into the birds including Yellow-rumped Cacique, Southern Beardless Tyrannulet, Hooded Tanager, Pale-tipped Tyrannulet, Glaucous Tanager and Rufous-vented Chacalaca. Further on we saw Straight-billed Woodcreeper, Black-crowned Tityra, Rufous-throated Puffbird, Grey-breasted Martin, Crane Hawk and Roadside Hawk. We headed on to Benjamin Bridge and almost immediately everyone's target bird was seen, Sunbittern. Other birds seen included Green Ibis, Lesser Kisskadee and later on a flying Lin-eated Woodpecker brought the lorry to a sudden halt. Further on we added the near endemic White-bearded Flycatcher, Pied Water Tyrant, the magnificent Jabiru and Black-crowned Night Heron. We dropped the trail walkers off and headed for the river. Alas, we had not reached the river before the rain started. We put the capes on once again and rushed back to pick up the others. We had no alternative but to hurry back to the ranch.

While we sat on the veranda watching the resident House Wren flying to and from its nest on the veranda and Blue-grey Tanagers visit the bird table, some of the group sought comfort from a bottle of local rum. Every cloud has a silver lining!!

After lunch and when the rain had stopped we went for a walk, without our guide, as she surprisingly felt the need for a further siesta. We managed to add **White-winged Swallow**, **Zone-tailed Hawk**, **Spot-breasted Woodpecker** and **White-tailed Hawk** to our lists. This also proved an ideal time to get some photographs of the amazing butterflies that are abundant here.

The numerous and beautiful Blue Morpho flew within a few feet of us as we wandered

about. Many species were seen but identification is always a problem, even with the Butterflies of South America book



A stunning Atlas Moth was found resting low down on some vegetation and numerous photographs were taken. The lorry arrived and we were off again. New birds were soon listed including **Forest Elaenia**, **Orinocan Saltator**, **Glittering-throated Emerald**, **Groove-billed Ani**, **Orange-chinned Parakeet**, **Grey-necked Woodrail**, **Purple Galinule**, **Blue-tailed Emerald**, **Ringed Kingfisher**, **Spot-breasted Woodpecker** and the stunning **Rufous-tailed Jacamar**. Further on **Rusty-backed Spinetail**, **Red-rumped Woodpecker**, **Snail Kite** and **Laughing Falcon**. As the light began to fade we happened across a dead tree that was being used as a Vulture roost. A juvenile **King Vulture** and a juvenile **Lesser-headed Vulture** were present along with numerous **Black** and **Turkey Vultures**. We moved on and added **Bi-coloured Wren** before we started lamping again on our return to the ranch seeing numerous **Great Potoo**, **Lesser Nighthawk**, **White-tailed Nighthawk** and **Common Parakeet**. The group received a massive bonus during this session when we all saw a juvenile **Jaguar** walk out of the undergrowth to the right of the lorry. This excited everyone and was a brilliant way to end, as it is an extremely rare sight. We arrived back at the ranch at 20:30hrs, tired but pleased with our day, considering how it had been disrupted by the weather. The evening was brought to an end in the usual way, dinner, call over, chiller cabinet.

Day 4: Tuesday 14th November:

Weather: Hot and humid.

Up at 05:30. After breakfast and at first light most of the group and Cecilia decided to check out the ranch parking area where there is a very bright lamppost. The light had attracted numerous moths and the birds were arriving for an easy breakfast. **Boat-billed** and **Social Flycatcher's** and a **Straight-billed Woodcreeper** were soon joined by **White-winged Becard**, **Tropical Gnatcatcher**, **Ochre-lore Flatbill** and several **Crested Oropendola's**. We all climbed aboard the truck and headed for the river to try for a joint river trip. On the way we saw, among others, a **King Vulture** feeding, a large flock of **Sharp-tailed Ibis**, **Black-collared Hawk** and several **Yellow-knobbed Curasow**.

The trouble with going the same way every day means that seeing new birds becomes increasingly more difficult.

The river is actually a flooded canyon known as Canyon San Geronimo. At the river we all

boarded the boat, which was just about big enough for us all. Despite continued efforts by Simone, he was unable to get the outboard motor to work. More advanced preparation needed!!!!



This meant that Simone had no alternative but to punt the boat along. It was a hot day so Simone had our sympathy but it did mean that we travelled along in silence. Bird numbers were fairly low but included **Anhinga**, **Limpkin**, **Red-capped Cardinal**, unfortunately only a female **Ruby-topaz Hummingbird**, **American Pygmy Kingfisher**, **Pale-tipped Inezia**, nesting **Hoatzin** and a few were fortunate to see **Green-and-rufous Kingfisher**, which cleaned up the Kingfisher's. We managed to fish out a fairly tatty Blue Morpho butterfly from the water and it decided that Tony's hat was the ideal place to dry out.



We headed back to the ranch adding **White-headed Marsh Tyrant** to our list. Near to the ranch we took a new road (at last) and found a marshy area with ponds and scrapes. Here there were lots of **Black-bellied Whistling Duck**, a solitary **Black Skimmer**, **Spotted Sandpiper**, **Roseate Spoonbill**, **Whistling Heron** and a few **Shiny Cowbirds**. On the other side of the track is an area of high grass and reeds, which held a healthy population of **Yellow-hooded Blackbird** and some **Red-chested Blackbird's**. **Barn Swallow**, **Eared dove** and **Yellow-browed Sparrow** (much to Richard's delight) was also seen. We continued on along the track, heading toward a **Scarlet Ibis** rookery. En-route birds seen included **Grey Hawk**, **Rusty-margined Flycatcher**, **Black-collared Hawk**, **Snail Kite**, **Slender-billed Kite**, better views of the **Bi-coloured Wren** with an **Orange-crowned Oriole** in the same tree. As we approached the rookery we came upon a tree in which hundreds of **Fork-tailed Flycatchers** were coming to roost, which was an amazing spectacle. This was soon to be eclipsed when the **Scarlet Ibis** started to arrive. And arrive they did in their hundreds. Along

with a fewer numbers of **White Ibis** they covered every branch of any tree in the area. Truly stunning!!! After watching the roosts and collecting Scarlet Ibis feathers we set off back to the ranch, lamping on the way. A **Collared Plover**, the only inland plover, was the only new bird seen. The lamping did produce the eye shine of an **Ocelot** and some of the group managed to get acceptable views.

To finish the day a **Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl** was heard and then seen in the ranch parking area. A great end to a long and hot day.

Day 5: Wednesday 15th November:

Weather: Clear am Overcast pm. Hot and Humid.

Up early as usual. After breakfast we set off to do the forest trail that had been abandoned earlier on in the week. Unfortunately, despite Cecilia playing several taped calls only a few new birds were seen namely **Barred Antshrike**, **White-bellied Antbird**, **Slate-headed Tody-Flycatcher** and **Ruddy-breasted Seedeater**. We did see one **Howler Monkey** and a party of **Wedge-capped Capuchin Monkeys**.

As our time was running out we tried the ponds again and were rewarded with great views of several **Horned Screamers** lazing in a treetop along with **Muscovy Ducks**.

We returned to the ranch, had lunch, loaded up the coach and set off on a 4-hour journey back to Maracay and the Posada el Limon. As we left, work to install hot running water was well underway.

As time was important we only had a comfort stop at Aguadita. We arrived at Posada el Limon, unpacked, had a nice meal and prepared to set off for **Henri Pittier** when it started to rain. When it stopped we set off for the park, which is very close by. Our first stop produced **Neo-tropical Palm Swift**, **White-vented Plumeleteer**, **Golden-crowned Warbler**, and **Pale-breasted Thrush**. The light was beginning to fade but Cecilia decided to try for a **Sharp-tailed Stream Creeper**. We walked over to where a stream was running down some rocks and there it was. No tape required. This was a lifer for Cecilia so she was delighted and so were we.

We returned to Posada el Limon for a relaxing evening. Shock! We had to start paying for our beer.

Day 6: Thursday 16th November:

Weather: Clear am, Overcast pm. Hot and humid.

Up at 05:45. After we had got our driver Gabrielle out of bed we set off for the park.

It was not long before we entered the park and we were in for quite a surprise! Parked in a lay-by was a van. In the lay-by were tables and chairs, fully laid, with lace tablecloths and cutlery. Along side was a table laden with our breakfast. We sat down to a great breakfast in dawn light as the forest was waking up. Terrific!



As soon as we finished eating we started to see birds. A perched **Moustached Puffbird** was the first addition to our list. A nice bird. We moved on, up the Ocumare road seeing, among others, **Thick-billed Euphonia**, **Scaled Piculet**, **Red-legged Honeycreeper**, **Green Honeycreeper**, **Brown-throated Parakeet** and **Tropical Parula**. We moved on again to the Rancho Grande Biological Station.

The station occupies the highest point on the coastal cordillera at 1100 meters. Unfortunately the gatekeeper had the wrong key, which meant we could not gain entry. Another avoidable mishap! While we waited for the key to arrive we made the most of the time. The area around the gate entrance suddenly became very lively with **Red-billed Parrot**, **Chesnut-capped Becard**, **Streaked Xenops**, **Speckled Tanager**, **Orange-billed Euphonia**, **Common Bush-Tanager** and **Silver-beaked Tanager** being eagerly identified.

Eventually the key did arrive but the consequence of the lost time meant that we would all be doing the forest trail instead of splitting, with half the group observing the feeding table. Birding in dense forest is hard at any time but with 12 people and the guide it would be a lot harder for everyone to see the birds. We set off on the loop trail behind the station.

This trail is dedicated to a biologist named Andrew Field, who was studying the canopy when he fell from his canopy platform. As we set off **White-tipped Swift** were swirling around our heads. On the trail **Bananaquit** was first to be seen with **Slaty-throated Whitestart**, **Plain Ant-Vireo**, **Scale-crested Pygmy-Tyrant** and the beautiful **White-tipped Quetzal** following on.

The next bird was a lot duller and a lot harder to see, namely **Slaty Antbird**. As a stark contrast the stunning **Golden Tanager** gleamed in the streaming sunrays. We stopped on the trail at a point where the canopy was high but visible and this proved to be a good place as many birds were seen as they dropped from the canopy, including the endemic **Venezuelan Bristle-Tyrant**, **Montane Foliage-gleaner**, **Olivaceous Woodcreeper**, **Marble-faced Bristle-Tyrant** and **Yellow-olive Bristle-Tyrant**. As we made our way back, disappointed at not seeing a Guttulated Foliage-gleaner, we add **Black-faced Antthrush**. We left the Biological Station and continued down the north slope of the cordillera towards the area of Cumbato. Prior to Cumbato we added the very attractive **Bay-headed Tanager** and the endemic **Groove-billed Toucanet**.

Birds seen in transit and around Cumbato included **Fasciated Tiger-Heron**, **White-lined Tanager**, **Amazon Kingfisher**, **Northern Waterthrush**, **Green Kingfisher**, **Squirrel Cuckoo**, **Streaked Saltator**, **Rufous-browed Peppershrike** and a **Black-crested Antshrike** led some of us a merry dance as it skulked its way through a bush.

Surprisingly, Cecilia decided to return to our Posada even though there was plenty of light left. We arrived back to find there was a power cut in the area so it shattered our hopes of our first warm shower for days. We were all very hungry after our long day but the evening meal didn't really do the job as the portions were on the small side. Call over was carried out wearing headlights but eventually the power did return so we were able to relax in relative

Day 7: Friday 17th November:

Weather: Clear. Hot and Humid.



Up before first light and we set off for the park. Today we would be birding the Choroní Road, which leads to the coastal town of Puerto Columbia. First of all we had another excellent roadside breakfast. Breakfast over; we started to react to the sounds of the forest. **Blue-black Grassquit** was first to put in an appearance, quickly followed by a perched **Brown-throated Parakeet** and **Crested Oropendola's** flying overhead. A **Black-striped Sparrow** had Richard panicking as he had missed its first appearance, but it returned much to his relief. Things started to get very lively as a

Copper-rumped Hummingbird zoomed about. A **Lesser Elaenia** and **Yellow-bellied Seedeater** competed for space in a low bush as **Southern Rough-winged Swallows** and **Tropical Kingbirds** swapped spaces on the telegraph wires.

A short walk and considerable patience produced a skulking **Pale-breasted Spinetail**, and another **Moustached Puffbird** was found perched behind our breakfast site. As activity subsided we moved on seeing among others **White-vented Plumeleteer**, **Slaty-capped Flycatcher**, **Tropical Parula** and **Golden-fronted Greenlet**. Further up the road we came across another

Groove-billed Toucanet and the truly stunning **Golden-headed Manakin** **Speckled Tanager**

accompanied by **Buff-fronted Foliage-gleaner**, **Golden-olive Woodpecker** and the elegant **Booted Racket-tail**. As we reached the high elevation, at 1600 metres, **Vaux's** and **White-collared Swift's** performed aerial acrobatics'. Another member of the amazing Tanager family appeared in the shape of a **Blue-headed Tanager**. An **Andean Solitaire** was briefly seen before possibly the bird of the trip flew into the tree above our heads. **The Handsome Fruiteater** certainly lives up to its name and was seen well by everyone. Moving on down the slope more birds were seen including **Three-striped Warbler**, **Pale-edged Flycatcher**, **Collared Trogon**, **Beryl-spangled Tanager**, **Golden-crowned Warbler** and **Black Hawk-Eagle**.

We carried on down the slope to have a riverside lunch, which was very nice. The butterflies here were stunning so many photographs were taken. A walk along the other side of the river produced **Inca Dove**.

On the way into Puerto Columbia we saw **Ringed Kingfisher** and at the seafront there were several **American Brown Pelican's** swimming close by and **Magnificent Frigatebirds** flew above our heads. A **Brown Booby** and a **Royal Tern** flew across the bay. **Carib Grackle**, **Cattle Tyrant**, **Yellow-headed Caracara** and **Common Black-Hawk** rounded off the available birds.

From the coast area we proceeded to the local cemetery. There is a chance of seeing the endemic Buffy hummingbird here so we were all hopeful. A skulking **Northern White-fringed Antwren** played with our patience but the entire group managed to get good enough views. A **Rufous-tailed Jacamar** was perched in a tree quite close to the road and we all appreciated what a stunning bird it is. A **Blue-tailed Emerald** put in an appearance but the Buffy Hummingbird failed to show. Our attention was alerted by a flock of **Orange-winged Parrots** that came in to roost in the tops of nearby trees and some were fortunate to see a **Bat Falcon** as it flew across close to the trees. The light was starting to fade so we started our long drive back to the accommodation. We showered and had our evening meal. Pepe Clavijo, who was to be our guide for the two-day extension, attended our callover.

Day 8: Saturday 18th November:

Weather: Fine all day

Today is the last day of the scheduled trip and so Cecilia and three of the group would be leaving the rest of us. Cecilia would be returning to pick up the next group, Rawdon and Bob are returning home and Steve would be returning to Hato Pinero for four days to concentrate on looking for **Jaguar** and **Ocelot**.

But for now we were up and out by 05:30hrs to have our usual and very satisfying roadside breakfast alongside the Ocumare Road.

Boat-billed Flycatchers seem to be the first birds up and visible and a **Plain-backed Antpitta** was heard. In a treetop a **Three-toed Sloth** was spotted as it woke in the early morning light. We continued up the road towards the Biological Station **American Redstart**, **Golden-olive Woodpecker**, **Vaux's Swift**, **Long-tailed Sylph**, **Buff-fronted Foliage-gleaner**, **Rufous-breasted Wren** along with the endemic **Blood-eared Parakeet** were seen.

No problem gaining entry to the Biological Station today so we started birding the upper story veranda. Almost straight away a stunning male **White-winged Tanager** was seen. A feeding flock at the back of the station produced **Southern Nightingale-Wren**, **Grey-breasted Wood-Wren**, **Golden-fronted Greenlet**, **Brown-capped Vireo** and **Cinnamon Flycatcher**. A check of the bird table produced **White-necked Thrush**, **Green Honey-creeper**, the amazing **Speckled Tanager** and the beautiful and endemic **Violet-chested Hummingbird**. There appeared to be a very unusual bird flying noisily around the treetops. It turned out to be a luscious **Red-crowned Woodpecker**. It was all white except for its red crown. It certainly had us guessing! Another stunning member of the Tanager family, namely **Fulvous-headed Tanager** was next to be seen, soon to be followed by a soaring **White Hawk**. A **Red-billed Scythebill** was observed with the use of telescopes on a tree while **Streaked Xenops**, **Common Bush-Tanager**, **Cinnamon Becard**, **Rufous-browed**

Peppershrike, Rufous-lored Tyrannulet brought the activity around us to a halt. This seemed an ideal opportunity for Cecelia and those leaving the group to set off for their various destinations.

Pepe now took over as our guide and we continued where we left off seeing a female **Hand-some Fruiteater, Blackpoll Warbler, Collared Trogon, Black-Hawk Eagle**, another, and much closer, **Red-billed Sythebill** and we watched **Crested Spinetail's** as they flew to and from their nest. It was now about the hottest part of the day so we relaxed in the shade adding **White-tipped Dove** and **Smokey-brown Woodpecker** to the list. When the time was right we walked the loop trail again but things were still a bit quiet. Having said that we saw **Slaty Antwren, Plain Antvireo, Venezuelan Antwren, Grey-throated Leaf Tosser** and some managed to see **Plain Antpitta**. As we left the trail a **Foothill Screech-Owl** was seen and a **Black-and-white Owl** was heard. Pepe was proving his worth with four more endemics now listed. It was getting dark so we headed back to the Posada. After our meal and call-over we packed for a 03:30 leave the next morning.



Golden Tanager



Groove-billed Toucanet

Day 9: Sunday 19th November:

Weather: Misty am, fine all day

We all managed to make the coach on time and loaded up. Our new driver was to be Gabrielle's brother Miguel. We headed for the high point on the Chironi Road at 1600mts. Unfortunately there was a lot of mist about which was to hinder our ability to see birds. Having said that we disturbed a **Short-tailed Night Hawk**, which proceeded to fly around us, in and out of the mist. This was shortly followed by a **Glossy-black Thrush**, a bird that Pepe was surprised that we had not seen already. We then spent some time looking and calling some skulkers, which produced **Chestnut-capped Brush-Finch** and a reluctant **Schwartz's Ant-thrush**.

Time had moved on so we returned to the high point for our final roadside breakfast, which was of its usual high standard. We then carried on down the slope towards the Biological Centre seeing amongst others **Three-striped Warbler, Common Bush-Tanager, Black-throated Spinetail, Streaked Tuftedcheek**, and **Blue-naped Chlorophonia**.

At a lower elevation we saw another **White-tipped Quetzal**, **Black-and-white Warbler**, **Bronzy-Inca**, **Ochre-breasted Brush-Finch**, and the endemic **Rufous-cheeked Tanager**.



Moving on we saw **Blue-winged Mountain Tanager**, **Streaked Xenops**, **Olive-backed Woodcreeper**, **Speckled Hummingbird** and **Beryl-spangled Tanager**.

At this point Pepe decide to head on for Coloni Tovar. A **Burnished-buff Tanager** was the only new bird added before we were in the grassland savannah leading up to Coloni Tovar. New habitat, new birds, including **Wedge-tailed Grassfinch**, **Grassland Yellow**

-Finch, **Blue-and-white Swallow**, **Rufous-collared Sparrow**, **Highland Hepatic Tanager**, **Grassland Sparrow**, **Band-tailed Pigeon**, **Sparkling Violetear** and the endemic **Green-tailed Emerald** had us worried by only putting in a brief appearance before disappearing. Fortunately our patience was rewarded when it returned and everyone had great views. It was time to head off for our overnight accommodation at The Hotel Freiberg.



Day 10: Monday 20th November:

Weather: Thick Mist am, Fine pm.

Coloni Tovar is an amazing place, being a German enclave. In the 16th century German settlers were encouraged to climb up the mountains on the false promise of jobs and houses already being there. When they found that they had been tricked, they set about building homes in the only way that they new and to see them in Venezuela is to say the least bizarre.

We awoke to quite a thick mist, which is the last thing that we needed as we were intending

to explore the highest point above the town. We set off hoping that the mist would lift. We worked the road, which bordered the Pico Cadazzi Reserve, and saw **White-throated Tyrannulet**, **Black-crested Warbler** and a **Black-throated Spinetail** as it foraged in some low branches. The mist was very persistent and we were reduced to virtually 'blob' watching as we tried to get views of a **Caracas Tapaculo**. Pepe decided to drop down to the town in the hope that the mist had lifted there. This proved to be a good idea as the roadways were now virtually clear and we added **White-sided Flowerpiercer**, **Oleaginous Hemispingus**, **Blackburnian Warbler**, **Violet-fronted Brilliant**, **Tyrian Metaltail**, **Bluish Flowerpiercer**, **Rufous-shafted Woodstar** and some managed views of **Black-headed Tanager**. Unfortunately it was time to return to the hotel and load up for our return trip to Caracas Airport. A **Black Phoebe** on the hotel roof finished off the bird list here, so we loaded up and set off on our two-hour trip adding **Short-tailed Hawk** en route. After saying our goodbyes to Pepe and Miguel we checked in the bags and did some shopping before boarding the Air France flight to Heathrow.

Trip List Locations:

PLN:	Posada el Limon
RT:	River Trip
HTPO:	Hato Pinero
HPNP:	Henry Pittier National Park
OR:	Ocumare Road
RGBS:	Rancho Grande Biological Station
LT:	Loop Trail
CUM:	Cumbato
CHR:	Chironi Road
PC:	Puerto Columbia+
CTOV:	Coloni Tovar
TRAN:	Transit
H:	Heard

TRIP LIST

Red-legged Tinamou: (H)	HTPO
Brown Booby:	PC
Brown Pelican:	PC
Neotropic Cormorant:	HTPO
Anhinga:	HTPO
Magnificent Frigatebird:	PC
Horned Screamer:	HTPO
White-faced Whistling Duck:	HTPO
Black-bellied Whistling Duck:	HTPO
Muscovy Duck:	HTPO
Rufescent Tiger-Heron:	HTPO
Fasciated Tiger-Heron:	CUM
Cocoi Heron:	HTPO
Great Egret:	HTPO
Snowy Egret:	HTPO

Little Blue Heron:	HTPO
Cattle Egret:	HTPO
Striated Heron:	HTPO
Whistling Heron:	HTPO
Black-crowned Night Heron:	HTPO
Boat-billed Heron:	HTPO
Buff-necked Ibis:	HTPO
Sharp-tailed Ibis:	HTPO
Green Ibis:	HTPO
Bare-faced Ibis:	HTPO
White Ibis:	HTPO
Scarlet Ibis:	HTPO
Roseate Spoonbill:	HTPO
Jabiru:	HTPO
King Vulture:	HTPO
Black Vulture:	All Areas
Turkey Vulture:	All Areas
Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture:	HTPO
Osprey:	HTPO
Hook-billed Kite: (Juv)	HTPO
White-tailed Kite:	HTPO
Snail Kite:	HTPO
Slender-billed Kite:	HTPO
Crane Hawk:	HTPO
White Hawk:	OR, RGBS
Savanna Hawk:	HTPO
Common Black-Hawk:	CHR
Great Black-Hawk:	HTPO
Black-collared Hawk:	HTPO
Grey Hawk:	HTPO
Roadside Hawk:	HTPO, CHR
Short-tailed Hawk:	TRAN to Caracas
Zone-tailed Hawk:	HTPO
White-tailed Hawk:	HTPO
Black Hawk-Eagle:	HPNP
Northern-crested Caracara:	HTPO, TRAN to Coloni Tovar
Yellow-headed Caracara:	All Areas
Laughing Falcon:	HTPO
Aplomado Falcon:	Aguadita, HTPO
American Kestrel:	HTPO, TRAN to Coloni Tovar
Bat Falcon:	CUM
Rufous-vented Chachalaca:	HTPO
Yellow-knobbed Curassow:	HTPO
Crested Bobwhite:	HTPO
Grey-necked Wood-Rail:	HTPO
Purple Gallinule:	HTPO
Sunbittern:	HTPO
Limpkin:	HTPO
Double-striped Thick-knee:	HTPO
Southern Lapwing:	HTPO

Collared Plover:	HTPO
Wattled Jacana:	HTPO
Spotted Sandpiper:	HTPO
Royal Tern:	PC
Black Skimmer:	HTPO
Feral Pigeon:	All Areas
Band-tailed Pigeon:	CTOV
Pale-vented Pigeon:	HTPO, HPNP
Ruddy Pigeon:	HPNP
Eared Dove:	HTPO, CTOV
Common Ground-Dove:	HTPO, HPNP
Ruddy Ground-Dove:	HTPO, HPNP
Scaled Dove:	HTPO, HPNP
White-tipped Dove:	HTPO, CR
Scarlet Macaw:	HTPO
Chestnut-fronted Macaw:	TRAN to Hato Pinero, HTPO
Scarlet-fronted Parakeet:	OR
Brown-throated Parakeet:	HTPO, OR, CR
Blood-eared Parakeet:	RGBS
Green-rumped Parrotlet:	TRAN to Hato Pinero, HTPO
Orange-chinned Parakeet:	HTPO
Lilac-tailed Parrotlet: (H)	RGBS
Blue-headed Parrot:	OR
Red-billed Parrot:	OR
Yellow-crowned Parrot:	HTPO
Orange-winged Parrot:	PC
Squirrel Cuckoo:	HTPO, OR, CTOV
Greater Ani:	HTPO
Smooth-billed Ani:	HTPO
Groove-billed Ani:	HTPO
Hoatzin:	HTPO
Rufescent Screech-Owl: (H)	CHR
Foothill Screech-Owl:	LT
Great Horned Owl:	HTPO
Ferruginous Pygmy Owl:	HTPO
Black-and-white Owl: (H)	LT
Great Potoo:	HTPO
Short-tailed Nighthawk:	CHR
Lesser Nighthawk:	HTPO
Common Pauraque:	HTPO
White-tailed Nightjar:	HTPO
White-collared Swift:	RGBS
Vaux's Swift:	RGBS
White-tipped Swift:	RGBS
Neotropical Palm-Swift:	OR
Sooty Capped Hermit:	CHR
Striped-throated Hermit:	OR
Green Violetear:	CTOV
Sparkling Violetear:	CTOV
Ruby-topaz Hummingbird:	RT

Violet-headed Hummingbird:	CR
Blue-tailed Emerald:	HTPO, PC
Green-tailed Emerald:	CTOV
White-chinned Sapphire:	OR
Glittering-throated Emerald:	HTPO
Wedge-billed Hummingbird:	CR
Copper-rumped Hummingbird:	OR, CTOV
White-vented Plumeleteer:	HTPO, CR
Speckled Hummingbird:	CHR
Violet-fronted Brilliant:	CHR, OR
Violet-chested Hummingbird:	RGBS
Bronzy Inca:	CHR
Booted Racket-tail:	CHR
Long-tailed Sylph:	OR, RGBS
Tyrian Metaltail:	CTOV
Rufous-shafted Woodstar:	CTOV
White-tipped Quetzal:	OR, CHR
Collared Trogon:	CR, RGBS
Ringed Kingfisher:	HTPO, PC
Amazon Kingfisher:	RT, CUM
Green Kingfisher:	CUM, TRAN to Puerto Columbia
Green-and-rufous Kingfisher:	RT
American Pygmy Kingfisher:	RT
Rufous-tailed Jacamar:	HTPO, PC
Russet-throated Puffbird:	HTPO
Moustached Puffbird:	OR, CHR
Groove-billed Toucanet:	OR, RGBS
Scaled Piculet:	OR
Spot-breasted Woodpecker:	HTPO
Golden-olive Woodpecker:	OR, CHR
Lineated Woodpecker:	HTPO
Red-crowned Woodpecker:	All Areas
Smoky-brown Woodpecker:	RGBS
Red-rumped Woodpecker:	HTPO
Pale-breasted Spinetail:	CHR
Stripe-breasted Spinetail:	CHR
Black-throated Spinetail:	CHR, CTOV
Rusty-backed Spinetail:	HTPO
Yellow-chinned Spinetail:	HTPO
Crested Spinetail:	OR, RGBS, CTOV
Plain Thornbird:	HTPO
Streaked Tuftedcheek:	CHR
Montane Foliage-gleaner:	LT, OR, RGBS
Buff-fronted Foliage-gleaner:	CHR, OR, LT,
Streaked Xenops:	CHR, RGBS,
Plain Xenops:	LT
Grey-throated Leaf-tosser:	LT
Sharp-tailed Streamcreeper:	OR
Olivaceous Woodcreeper:	LT, CHR,
Strong-billed Woodcreeper:	CUM

Straight-billed Woodcreeper:	HTPO
Cocoa Woodcreeper:	RGBS
Olive-backed Woodcreeper:	CHR, CTOV
Streak-headed Woodcreeper:	HTPO
Montane Woodcreeper:	CHR
Red-billed Scythebill:	RGBS
Black-crested Antshrike:	HTPO, CUM
Barred Antshrike:	HTPO
Plain Antvireo:	LT, RGBS
Venezuelan Antvireo:	LT
Slaty Antwren:	LT
Rufous-winged Antwren:	RGBS
Northern White-fringed Antwren:	PC
White-bellied Antbird:	HTPO
Black-faced Antthrush:	LT
Schwartz's Antthrush:	CHR
Short-tailed Antthrush: (H)	LT
Plain-backed Antpitta:	LT
Chestnut-crowned Antpitta: (H)	CHR
Slate-crowned Antpitta: (H)	CTOV
Scallop-breasted Antpitta: (H)	CHR
Caracas Tapaculo:	CTOV
Venezuelan Tyrannulet:	CHHR
Southern Beardless Tyrannulet:	HTPO
Forest Elaenia:	HTPO
Yellow-bellied Elaenia:	HTPO
Lesser Elaenia:	CR
White-throated Tyrannulet:	CR, CTOV
Pale-tipped Inezia:	HTPO, RT
Olive-striped Flycatcher:	CHR
Slaty-capped Flycatcher:	CHR
Rufous-lored Tyrannulet:	RGBS
Marble-faced Bristle-Tyrant:	LT, RGBS
Venezuelan Bristle-Tyrant:	LT, CHR
Scale-crested Pygmy-Tyrant:	LT
Pale-eyed Pygmy-Tyrant:	CHR
Slate-headed Tody-Flycatcher:	HTPO
Common Tody-Flycatcher:	HTPO
Yellow-olive Flatbill:	LT, RGBS
Ochre-lored Flatbill:	HTPO
Cinnamon Flycatcher:	RGBS
Smoke-coloured Pewee:	RGBS
Black Phoebe:	OR, CHR, CTOV
Vermilion Flycatcher:	HTPO
Cattle Tyrant:	Aguadita, HTPO, PC
Pied Water-Tyrant:	HTPO
White-headed Marsh-Tyrant:	HTPO
Dusky-capped Flycatcher:	OR
Pale-edged Flycatcher:	CHR
Brown-crested Flycatcher:	HTPO

Great Kiskadee:	HTPO
Lesser Kiskadee:	HTPO
Boat-billed Flycatcher:	HTPO, OR, CHR
White-bearded Flycatcher:	HTPO
Social Flycatcher:	HTPO, CUM
Rusty-margined Flycatcher:	HTPO
Streaked Flycatcher:	HTPO
Golden-crowned Flycatcher:	CHR
Tropical Kingbird:	All Areas
Fork-tailed Flycatcher:	Aguadita, HTPO
White-winged Becard:	HTPO
Cinereous Becard:	RGBS
Chestnut-crowned Becard:	OR
Black-crowned Tityra:	HTPO
Golden-breasted Fruiteater: (H)	OR
Handsome Fruiteater:	CHR, LT
Lance-tailed Manakin: (H)	HTPO
Golden-headed Manakin:	CHR
Rufous-browed Peppershrike:	CUM, RGBS, CTOV
Red-eyed Vireo:	HTPO
Brown-capped Vireo:	RGBS, CTOV
Scrub Greenlet: (H)	OR
Golden-fronted Greenlet:	HTPO, OR, CR, RGBS
Inca Jay:	TRAN to Puerto Columbia
Brown-chested Martin:	OR
Grey-breasted Martin:	Aguadita, HTPO
White-winged Swallow:	HTPO
Blue-and-white Swallow:	HTPO
Southern Rough-winged Swallow:	HPNP
Barn Swallow:	HTPO
Black-capped Donacobius:	HTPO
Bi-coloured Wren:	HTPO
Stripe-backed Wren:	PLN, HTPO,
Whiskered Wren: (H)	CHR
Rufous-breasted Wren:	OR
Buff-breasted Wren:	HTPO
House Wren:	HTPO
Grey-breasted Wood Wren:	RGBS
Southern Nightingale Wren:	RGBS
Tropical Gnatcatcher:	HTPO
Andean Solitaire:	CHR
Orange-billed Nightingale Thrush: (H)	CTOV
Yellow-legged Thrush: (H)	CHR
Glossy-black Thrush:	CHR, CTOV
Bare-eyed Thrush:	PLN, HTPO, CUM
Pale-breasted Thrush:	OR
White-necked Thrush:	RGBS
Tropical Mockingbird:	HTPO, TRAN to Coloni Tovar
Tropical Parula:	OR, CHR
Yellow Warbler:	HTPO

Blackpoll Warbler:	RGBS
Blackburnian Warbler:	CHR, CTOV
Black-and-white Warbler:	OR, RGBS, CHR, CTOV
American Redstart:	CHR, RGBS, CTOV
Northern Waterthrush:	HTPO, OR, CHR
Slate-throated Whitestart:	OR, RGBS, CHR, CTOV
Bluish Flowerpiercer:	CTOV
White-sided Flowerpiercer:	CTOV
Three-striped Warbler:	CHR
Black-crested Warbler:	CTOV
Golden-crowned Warbler:	OR, CHR
Bananaquit:	HTPO, PLN, OR, CHR
Chestnut-vented Conebill:	HTPO
Common Bush-Tanager:	OR, CHR, RGBS, CTOV
Oleaginous Hemispingus:	CTOV
Fulvous-headed Tanager:	OR, RGBS, CTOV
Guira Tanager:	OR, CHR
Hooded Tanager:	HTPO
White-lined Tanager:	OR, CHR, RGBS
Highland Hepatic Tanager:	OR, TRAN to Coloni Tovar
White-winged Tanager:	RGBS
Silver-beaked Tanager:	OR, CHR, RGBS
Blue-grey Tanager:	All Areas
Glaucous Tanager:	HTPO
Palm Tanager:	HTPO, OR, CHR
Blue-capped Tanager:	CHR, CTOV
Blue-winged Mountain Tanager:	CHR
Thick-billed Euphonia:	OR
Orange-bellied Euphonia:	OR, CHR, RGBS
Trinidad Euphonia:	HTPO
Blue-naped Chlorophonia:	CHR
Golden Tanager:	HPNP. All Areas
Rufous-cheeked Tanager:	CHR
Beryl-spangled Tanager:	CHR, CTOV
Black-headed Tanager:	CTOV
Burnished-buff Tanager:	HTPO, TRAN to Coloni Tovar
Blue-necked Tanager:	OR
Speckled Tanager:	OR, CHR, RGBS, CTOV
Bay-headed Tanager:	LT, OR, CHR
Green Honeycreeper:	RGBS
Red-legged Honeycreeper:	OR
Southern Greyish Saltator:	HTPO
Streaked Saltator:	CUM
Orinocan Saltator:	HTPO
Red-capped Cardinal:	HTPO
Blue-black Grassquit:	HTPO, CHR
Grey Seedeater:	HTPO
Lined Seedeater:	HTPO
Yellow-bellied Seedeater:	HTPO, CHR, CTOV
Ruddy-breasted Seedeater:	HTPO

Saffron Finch:	PLN, HTPO
Grassland Yellow-Finch:	CTOV
Ochre-breasted Brush-Finch:	CHR
Chestnut-capped Brush-Finch:	CHR
Stripe-headed Brush-Finch:	CHR
Black-striped Sparrow:	CHR
Grassland Sparrow:	CTOV
House Sparrow:	Caracas Airport
Yellow-browed Sparrow:	HTPO
Rufous-collared Sparrow:	CTOV
Wedge-tailed Grass-Finch:	CTOV
Yellow-hooded Blackbird:	HTPO
Eastern Meadowlark:	HTPO
Red-breasted Blackbird:	HTPO
Carib Grackle:	Caracas Airport, HTPO, PC
Shiny Cowbird:	HTPO
Venezuelan Troupial:	HTPO
Yellow-backed Oriole:	CHR
Orange-crowned Oriole:	HTPO
Yellow-rumped Cacique:	HTPO
Crested Oropendola:	HTPO, CHR
Lesser Goldfinch:	OR

Species Seen - 324

Species Heard - 13

OTHER RECORDED SPECIES

Jaguar:	HTPO
Ocelot:	HTPO
Red Howler Monkey:	HTPO, OR, CHR
Wedge-headed Capuchin Monkey:	HTPO
White-tailed Deer:	HTPO
Red-tailed Squirrel:	PLN, HPNP
Cotton-tailed Rabbit:	HTPO
Savannah Fox:	HTPO
Capybara:	HTPO
Spectacled Caiman:	HTPO
Mato Lizard:	HTPO
Green Iguana:	PLN, HTPO

SPAIN PYRENEES & STEPPES 3 -10 MARCH 2007

(Mark Easterbrook)



References

Collins Guide to the *Birds of Britain & Europe with N. Africa & The Middle East*.

1. Introduction

The group consisted of six people, three of which booked through Birdseekers and three of which had booked privately with the leader Josele Sais.

Leaders: Josele Sais and David Moreno.

The Group: Mark Easterbrook, Mick Carr and Cliff Ross (Birdseekers).
Jeff, Jean and Jackie (Josele's party) – forgive the omission of Surnames.

2. Daily Itineraries

Day One

A 1530 flight saw us arriving at our accommodation in Quinto at approximately 1930, after seeing numerous **White Storks** en route from the airport in Zaragoza.

Day Two

An early start and off to the now famous **Dupont's Lark** site at Belchite – El Planeron. We arrived at 0705 and immediately heard birds singing. It did however take two more hours to locate one on the ground perched in scrub singing for the scope. As anyone will testify who has attempted to see this bird, patience and a little luck is required to get decent views.

The remainder of the day was spent searching the Steppe for Sandgrouse. Five **Black-bellied** were seen but no Pin-tailed. **Southern Grey Shrike** was added whilst numerous Larks were scrutinised revealing **Thekla**, **Crested**, **Lesser-short Toed**, **Calandra** and **Sky-lark**. A keen find was a **Great Spotted Cuckoo** closely followed by several **Stone Curlews**.

We progressed to Tosos Reservoir and raptor watch point. This location lived up to its billing delivering three **Goshawk**, **Hen Harrier**, a pair of **Golden Eagle**, pair of **Bonelli's Eagle**, **Red Kite** and **Griffon Vultures**.

An hour or so by the river and irrigated fields in Quinto produced **Water Pipit**, **Tree Sparrow**, **Fan-tailed Warbler**, **Black Kites**, **White Storks**, **Kingfisher** and a heard **Wryneck**.

The routine evening call over became synonymous with the phrase “Is common – tick it” – thanks Josele.

Day Three

A journey to the Monegros Plains to search for Steppe species was very productive and soon seven **Great Bustards** and a total of fifty one **Little Bustards** were located. Four **Lesser Kestrels** and a couple of **Common Buzzard** added to the raptor tally. Further searching the area revealed **Stone Curlews** and **Red-billed Choughs** in good numbers.

After a morning coffee, where we met another group who tipped us off to the presence of a **Little Crake** further north was a productive encounter. We paused at Candasnos Lake for lunch whilst viewing **Red-crested Pochards**, numerous **Marsh Harriers** a male **Garganey** and the only **Sand Martin** of the trip.

A stop at Ontinena Bridge produced **Grey Wagtail** and a dedicated Mick found the female **Little Crake** allowing everyone to get a good eye-full, whilst Cliff heard **Penduline Tit** and four were soon located. A **Green Sandpiper** also flew up river.

A brief stop a Piraces searching for Eagle Owl revealed several **Rock Sparrows** a **Southern Grey Shrike** and a **Blue Rock Thrush** but no Eagle Owl.

We arrived at Loporzano – Boletas Ornithological Centre (Josele's home) ready for dinner. The surroundings were homely, friendly and Esther (Josele's wife) consistently produced dinners of a very high standard.

Day Four

The **Wallcreeper** site at Riglos must surely be one of the easiest places to see this species in Europe and two were quickly found along with at least three **Alpine Accentors**. The first **Egyptian Vultures** were seen at this site and the only **Peregrine Falcons** of the trip. One **Black Wheatear** was seen well and several **Cirl Buntings** sang from exposed bushes. The passage of several thousand calling **Common Cranes** was a spectacle to be remembered.

We arrived at Loarre Castle, added another male **Wallcreeper** and found **Crested Tit**, **Blue Rock Thrush** and **Short-toed Treecreeper**, whilst a **Golden Eagle** drifted above the hills.

The final stop of the day was at Sotonera Lake where several hundred Cranes that had not decided to attempt migration remained. A solitary **Great White Egret** was the only one of the trip as was a **Great Crested Grebe**.

Day Five

We departed for the Pyrenees and arrived at Portalet on the French border in heavy snow. A flock of fifty or so **Skylarks** were seen but little else. We headed back to our accommodation in Villanua amidst heavy rain. There was little chance of seeing any birds in the prevailing weather conditions so in true Spanish style we headed for a coffee and siesta.

We departed for the mountains once more at about 1400 and soon arrived in Astun Ski resort. Few birds were around so we commuted between here and Candanchu Ski resort in the hope of locating our quarry. Eventually in extremely lucky circumstances, three **Snow Finches** landed on the ski lift café where we attained good scope views.

On our return to Villanua several **Griffon Vultures** were noted at cliffs near the village and three **Lammergeiers** were also seen (one adult and two sub-adults).

Day Six

We headed for the Pyrenees once more in the hope of seeing **Alpine Chough** at closer quarters. At Candanchu we achieved our aim where about twenty five birds wheeled and called above us with two perching obligingly on a lamp post.

We worked our way down the mountain valleys stopping at Santa Cruz near to San Juan de Pina. We were unable to go to the monastery because of the road conditions so the large flock of Citril Finches were missed. However in the village a **Firecrest** and **White-throated Dipper** were seen. In the forest near Villalunga on our journey back to Laporzano, we stopped and could hear **Citril Finches** where eventually the group members had good flight views of the birds.

Josele left us in Huesca to travel to Barcelona and a very able and friendly David took over the leadership mantle.

Day Seven

After a brief stop at the scrub on the hill by Laporzano cemetery and adding two **Orphean**

Warbler to our lists, we headed towards Alquezar in the hills. Another adult **Lammergeier** was added en route and two early **Alpine Swifts** were noted over the viewpoint in the village.

From the viewpoint, six **Alpine Accentors** fed and Mark sighted the first of four migrating **Short-toed Eagle**.

We departed after lunch for Santa Cilia and the **Lammergeier** feeding station. Seven or Eight were noted with one obliging adult sitting on a rock for the scope. Several **Dartford Warblers** were seen, two **Golden Eagles** an interesting male **Siberian Stonechat** (*maura*) and several **Woodlark** were seen at this location.

Day Eight

We left John at Laporzano and travelled towards Zaragoza. We had a 1900 flight so a whole day's birding lay ahead. We hoped to catch up with Pin-tailed Sandgrouse and Rock Bunting which had eluded us so far. On some fallow fields near the village of Villaneuva de Galliego, we found our first target with about sixty **Pin-tailed Sandgrouse** being seen, several well on the ground. Eleven **Little Bustard** were also flushed here which was a surprise and an **Egyptian Vulture** drifted overhead.

After dropping Jean and Jackie at Zaragoza bus station we headed off to Jusibol; a village near some cliffs and an oxbow nature reserve off the River Ebro. Three **Black Wheatears**, a **Spectacled Warbler** and a surprise adult **Black Stork**, migrating up the Ebro was also noted. This was the final bird of the trip, a fitting end but no Rock Bunting!

We returned to the UK via a fairly uneventful flight courtesy of Ryan Air that arrived fifteen minutes early.

5. Summary

An excellent trip! It was well led and accommodated that delivered all of the expected Alpine and Steppe specialities. I would recommend a trip to the North East of Spain for anyone wishing to see some of the difficult birds of Europe on a budget.

Consolidated Systematic Species List

Little Grebe <i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	At least 20 seen at Candansos Lake
Great Crested Grebe <i>Podiceps cristatus</i>	1 seen at Sotonera Lake
Black-necked Grebe <i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>	At least 8 at Candansos Lake
Cormorant <i>Phalacrocorax carbo senensis</i>	Numerous at Tosas with 1s & 2s seen in suitable habitat
Great White Egret <i>Egretta alba</i>	1 at Sotonera Lake
Grey Heron <i>Ardea cinerea</i>	Seen almost anywhere in suitable habitat
Black Stork <i>Ciconia nigra</i>	1 adult at Jusibol Cliffs - Ebro Oxbow
White Stork <i>Ciconia ciconia</i>	Numerous birds seen on nest sites atop electricity pylons – all over the Northern area
Wigeon <i>Anas penelope</i>	26 at Sotonera Lake
Gadwall <i>Anas strepera</i>	A pair at Candansos Lake

Teal <i>Anas crecca</i>	2 at Sotonera Lake
Mallard <i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	Candansos Lake & Sotonera Lake
Pintail <i>Anas acuta</i>	10 at Sotonera Lake
Garganey <i>Anas querquedula</i>	1 drake at Candansos Lake
Shoveler <i>Anas clypeata</i>	Sotonera Lake & Candansos Lake
Red-crested Pochard <i>Netta rufina</i>	15 at Candansos Lake
Pochard <i>Aythya ferina</i>	Sotonera Lake & Candansos Lake
Tufted Duck <i>Aythya fuligula</i>	2 at Candansos Lake
Black Kite <i>Milvus migrans migrans</i>	Large & small numbers noted on passage throughout the area.
Red Kite <i>Milvus milvus</i>	Fairly common throughout the lowlands in small numbers
Lammergeier <i>Gypaetus barbatus</i>	3 at Villanua, 1 at Villalunga, 1 near Alquezar and 7 or 8 at Santa Cilia feeding area.
Egyptian Vulture <i>Neophron percnopterus</i>	1s & 2s noted at Riglos, Vadeillo, Loporzano, Alquezar and Zaragoza Steppe.
Griffon Vulture <i>Gyps fulvus</i>	Common and widespread in large numbers
Short-toed Eagle <i>Circaetus gallicus</i>	4 migrating birds at Alquezar
Marsh Harrier <i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	Very common at Candansos lake with 1s & 2s seen in lowland steppe
Hen Harrier <i>Circus cyaneus</i>	1 ringtail from Tosos Res watchpoint & 1 male near Vadeillo
Northern Goshawk <i>Accipiter gentilis</i>	3 from Tosos Res watchpoint
Sparrowhawk <i>Accipiter nisus</i>	
Buzzard <i>Buteo buteo</i>	Widespread but uncommon seen in 1s & 2s throughout
Golden Eagle <i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>	A pair near Tosos, 1 at Loarre Castle, 1 at Villanua & 2 at Santa Cilia
Bonnelli's Eagle <i>Hieraetus fasciatus</i>	A pair from Tosos Res watchpoint
Lesser Kestrel <i>Falco naumanni</i>	4 at Monegros Plains and 1 at Candansos Lake
Kestrel <i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	Fairly common seen anywhere in 1s & 2s
Merlin <i>Falco columbarius</i>	1 on Monegros Plain and 1 at Sotonera Lake
Peregrine Falcon <i>Falco peregrinus</i>	2 at Riglos
Red-legged Partridge <i>Alectoris rufa</i>	1s & 2s seen throughout the lowlands
Water Rail <i>Rallus aquaticus</i>	1 heard at Quinto river and 1 heard at Jusibol
Little Crake <i>Porzana Parva</i>	A female at Ontinena Bridge was a very good record
Moorhen <i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	2 seen near Loporzano
Coot <i>Fulica atra</i>	Seen in all wetland areas
Common Crane <i>Grus Grus</i>	Several thousand seen from Riglos with smaller numbers seen migrating throughout the trip. C 500 noted at rest at Sotonera Lake
Little Bustard <i>Tetrax Tetrax</i>	51 seen on the Monegros Plains and 11 seen on the cereal fields en route to Zaragoza
Great Bustard <i>Otis tarda</i>	7 seen on the Monegros Plains
Stone Curlew <i>Burhinus oediconemus</i>	5 on the Steppe near Belchite, 2 at Monegros Plains and 2 at Ontinena Plains
Common Snipe <i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	Several at a pool on the irrigated fields near Belchite
Green Sandpiper <i>Tringa ochropus</i>	1 on the irrigated area near to Belchite and one at Ontinena Bridge
Black-headed Gull <i>Larus ridibundus</i>	6 on the Monegros Plains and at least 4 at Lake
Yellow-legged Gull <i>Laurs michahellis</i>	4 en route to Riglos and 2 at Sotonera Lake

Black-bellied Sandgrouse *Pterocles orientalis* 5 on the Belchite Steppe were the only sighting

Pin-tailed Sandgrouse *Pterocles alchata* At least 60 in the fallow fields close to the village of Villaneuva de Galliego

Rock Dove *Columba livia* 1 convincing individual was seen at Vadeillo Dam

Wood Pigeon *Columba palumbus* Fairly common in lowland habitat

Eurasian Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto* Common

Monk Parakeet *Myiopsitta monachus* 4 in Zaragoza

Great Spotted Cuckoo *Clamator glandarius* 1 adult male on Belchite Steppes

Little Owl *Athene noctua* 1 near Belchite

Alpine Swift *Apus melba* 2 early migrants at Alquezar

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis* 1 on the river at Quinto

Hoopoe *Upupa epops* 1 on Belchite Steppe and 3 on Ontinena Plains

Wryneck *Jynx torquilla* 1 heard near the river at Quinto

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major* 1 on the river at Quinto, 1 at Loporzano cemetery hill and one near to Loporzano

Dupont's Lark *Chersophilus duponti* At least 6 heard at the famous site near Belchite and one seen well singing from a tussock.

Calandra Lark *Melanocorypha calandra* Widespread in suitable habitat in small numbers – numerous on Belchite – El Planeron Steppes

Lesser Short-toed Lark *Calandrella rufescens* The most common lark on the Steppes

Crested Lark *Galerida cristata* Widespread and numerous

Thekla Lark *Galerida theklae* Less common than Crested but easily identified at Belchite Steppe and elsewhere

Woodlark *Lullula arborea* 1 at Loporzano and at least 4 at Santa Cilia feeding site

Skylark *Alauda arvensis* Numerous in various locations at flock of 50 at Portalet was noteworthy

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia* 1 at Candansos Lake

Crag Martin *Ptyonoprogne rupestris* Seen in reasonable numbers near cliff faces

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica* 2 at Lake and 1 at Jusibol River Ebro Ox bow reserve

House Martin *Delichon urbica* 2 at Jusibol River Ebro Ox bow reserve

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis* Common at low altitudes

Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta* 1 at the irrigated fields behind Quinto

Grey Wagtail *Morticilla cinerea* 2 at Ontinena Bridge, 2 at Santa Cruz and 2 at Alquezar

White Wagtail *Motacilla (alba) alba* Seen almost anywhere generally near habitation

Black-bellied Dipper *Cinclus cinclus* 1 at Santa Cruz

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes* 2 at Riglos and others heard in various locations

Dunnock *Prunella modularis* 1 at Riglos

Alpine Accentor *Prunella collaris* At least 3 at Riglos and 6 at Alquezar

Robin *Erithacus rubecula* Widespread in ones and twos

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros* Numerous seen almost anywhere

Stonechat *Saxicola torquata* Numerous and seen everywhere

Siberian Stonechat *Saxicola torquata maura* A male individual at Santa Cilia was most certainly of the ssp *maura*

Black Wheatear *Oenanthe leucura* 1 at Riglos, 2 at Montiaraton Castle and 3 at Jusibol Cliffs

Blue Rock Thrush *Monticola solitarius* 1 at Piraces and 1 at Loarre Castle

Blackbird *Turdus merula* Numerous and common

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos* 1s and 2s at various locations

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus* Pairs seen near Loporzano and Jusibol Cliffs

Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti* Widespread and numerous in suitable habitat
 Spectacled Warbler *Sylvia conspicillata* A pair on the Ontinena Plain
 Sardinian Warbler *Sylvia melanocephala* Widespread in scrubby habitat
 Western Orphean Warbler *Sylvia hortensis* 2 at Loporzano cemetery & 1 at Santa Cilia
 Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla* The most common warbler seen in most locations
 Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita* Widespread and common in small numbers
 Firecrest *Regulus ignicapillus* 2 at Villanua, 1 near Vadeillo and one at Santa Cruz
 Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus europaeus* 1 at Ontinena Bridge, 2 near Vadeillo
 and 2 near Loporzano
 Crested Tit *Parus cristatus* 1 at Loarre Castle
 Blue Tit *Parus ultramarines* Common in small numbers in lowland habitat
 Great Tit *Parus major* As above
 Wallcreeper *Tichodroma muraria* 2 at Riglos and 1 at Loarre Castle
 Short-toed Treecreeper *Certhia brachydactyla* 1 at Loarre Castle and 1 near Vadeillo
 Penduline Tit *Remiz pendulinus* 4 at Ontinena Bridge
 Southern Grey Shrike *Lanius meridionalis* This distinctive race noted in 1s & 2s at
 Belchite Steppe, Loporzano and Piraces
 Magpie *Pica pica* Common and Widespread
 Alpine Chough *Pyrrocorax graculus* A flock of 25+ was seen well at Candanchu
 Red-billed Chough *Pyrrocorax pyrrhorax* Good size flocks in all locations also 1s & 2s
 seen in flight
 Jackdaw *Corvus monedula* Circa 40 seen on Monegros Plain
 Carrion Crow *Corvus corone* Common and widespread
 Raven *Corvus corax* 1s & 2s seen in various locations - common
 Starling *Sturnus vulgaris* From 1 to 5 seen in Loporzano
 Spotless Starling *Sturnus unicolor* The most common Starling in the lowlands
 House Sparrow *Passer domesticus* Widespread and numerous
 Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus* 9 by the irrigated fields in Quinto
 Rock Sparrow *Petronia petronia* Fairly common around Loporzano and Piraces, 2 at Jusibol
 cliffs
 Snow Finch *Montifringilla nivalis* 4 at Candanchu Ski Resort
 Chaffinch *Fringilla spodiogenys* Common and widespread
 Serin *Serinus menachensis* Heard and seen almost anywhere and everywhere
 Citril Finch *Serinus (citronella) citrinella* 2 singing and seen in flight at Villalunga
 Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris* Common and widespread
 Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis* Not numerous but widespread
 Linnet *Carduelis cannabina* Large numbers seen in the Lowlands
 Cirl Bunting *Emberiza cirlus* Common in small numbers on scrubby hillsides
 Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus* 1s & 2s in suitable habitat
 Corn Bunting *Emberiza hortulana* Common and widespread in lowland habitat

SINGAPORE

(Andrew Bray)

Two members of the AOS, Roger Dickey and I, were fortunate to join a Royal Navy Bird Watching Society (RNBWS) expedition to Diego Garcia. This included a stopover at Singapore before catching a US Airforce KC10 to our final destination. During the stopover in Singapore we took the opportunity to get some bird watching in.

We arrived at Changi Airport early on Sun 28 Oct where we were met and transferred to our hotel on Beach Rd. It may have been an appropriate name in the past but with the land reclamation programme it is now part of history. We changed in the backroom to the lobby, had some breakfast then set off on a full day of bird watching. We started at Lower Pierce Reservoir where the first wildlife we saw was monkeys. Up on the wall a lone **Common Sandpiper** worked its way along the water's edge; it was very hot. We soon got our eye in for **Flame-backed Woodpeckers**, **Green Doves**, **Yellow-vented Bulbuls** and **Racquet Birds**. The idea of walking south to the next reservoir rapidly evaporated in the intense heat and we decided to head straight to the Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve on the north of the Island. This is a great reserve offering something for everyone for an afternoon stroll to some serious watching. It is home to lots of Monitor Lizards that were not too disturbed by humans walking past them.

The reserve is tidal in location and the pools are managed accordingly. Thus whilst it might be high tide the amount of water entering some of the pools is controlled to still provide a good habitat for shore birds. We were soon into wader identification which was very useful for sorting out Sandpipers before our trip SW. We were also picking up kingfishers and herons. There are plenty of hides around the reserve and we tended to visit just about everyone. The tree hide built in the canopy provided us with the best views of **Brahminy Kite** and **White-bellied Sea-eagle**. Despite the dense cover we were able to find small birds such as

Ashy Tailorbird. This reserve is a must for anyone transiting through Singapore.



Little Egret
© R Dickey

That evening we ate at Newton Circus Food Court which is a large open air area surrounded by very small shops offering different types of food. It is a real pick and mix that is a favourite with locals. A good night's sleep beckoned as we had another day of bird watching. When we got back to the hotel we were told our flight out had been delayed 24 hrs.

The next day we headed for the Chinese Cemetery. This is a large area in the centre that has been allowed to overgrow developing into secondary jungle rich with wildlife. The wildlife included little things that bite and despite covering ourselves in anti-mossie sprays, those who wore shorts were mercilessly attacked. The bites took a while to disappear. There fantastic views of **Black-naped Oriole**, Sunbirds, Woodpeckers and Flowerpeckers. We were fortunate to see both **Tiger Shrike** and **Brown Shrike** out in the open.

In the afternoon we went to the MacRitchie Reservoir area but did not make it to the aerial walkway. The woods are dense and there were few birds. We therefore headed for the Botanic Gardens and the landscaped lawns and gardens. This was an absolute delight with lots of birds present including **Scaly-breasted Munia** and **Asian Koel**. As the sun started to set we headed back to the hotel. The good news was that the flight would depart the following lunchtime giving a few of us the opportunity to re-visit the Botanic Gardens and head off in a separate direction. For those who went that day this has more than one meaning especially after the authentic Chinese meal the previous night on the pavement café which included frog, duck's tongues and lots of exotic spices. After the quick trip there was time for a brush up and then off to the military airport for our next flight. For those who have experienced Brize Norton, the movers are like BA Staff on speed compared to what we went through.

On our return journey we only had time to transfer between airports. Singapore despite exuding metropolitan ambience has lots of green areas with a fantastic birdlife. My list of birds totalled 59 species the majority of which are lifers.



Waterhen
© R Dickey

Striated Heron *Butorides striata*
 Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*
 Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*
 Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea*
 Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*
nus
 Brahminy Kite *Haliastur indus*
 White-bellied Sea-eagle *Haliaeetus leucogaster*
 Japanese Sparrowhawk *Accipiter gularis*
 White-breasted Waterhen *Amaurornis phoenicurus*
 Pacific Golden Plover *Pluvialis fulva*
 Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*
 Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus*
seus
 Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*
 Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*
 Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis*
 Common Redshank *Tringa totanus*
 Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*
 Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*
 Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*
 Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*
 Spotted Dove *Stigmatopelia chinensis*
 Pink-necked Green-pigeon *Treron vernans*
 Long-tailed Parakeet *Psittacula longicauda*
tatum

Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*
 Blue-tailed Bee-eater *Merops philippinus*
 Blue-tailed Bee-eater *Merops philippinus*
 Coppersmith Barbet *Megalaima haemacephala*
 Brown-capped Woodpecker *Dendrocopos na-*
nus
 Banded Woodpecker *Picus mineaceus*
 Common Flameback *Dinopium javanes*
 Common Iora *Aegithina tiphia*
 Tiger Shrike *Lanius tigrinus*
 Brown Shrike *Lanius cristatus*
 Black-naped Oriole *Oriolus chinensis*
 Greater Racket-tailed Drongo *Dicrurus paradi-*
seus
 House Crow *Corvus splendens*
 Large-billed Crow *Corvus macrorhynchos*
 Pacific Swallow *Hirundo tahitica*
 Pacific Swallow *Hirundo tahitica*
 Yellow-vented Bulbul *Pycnonotus goiavier*
 Common Tailorbird *Orthotomus sutorius*
 Ashy Tailorbird *Orthotomus ruficeps*
 Arctic Warbler *Phylloscopus borealis*
 Common Myna *Acridotheres tristis*
 Asian Brown Flycatcher *Muscicapa dauurica*
 Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker *Dicaeum cruen-*
tatum

Asian Koel *Eudynamys scolopaceus*
Lesser Coucal *Centropus bengalensis*
Edible-nest Swiftlet *Collocalia fuciphaga*
Little Swift *Apus affinis*
Asian Glossy Starling *Aplonis panayensis*
White-vented Myna *Acridotheres grandis*
Collared Kingfisher *Todiramphus chloris*

Purple-throated Sunbird *Nectarinia sperata*
Olive-backed Sunbird *Nectarinia jugularis*
Crimson Sunbird *Aethopyga siparaja*
Eurasian Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*
Scaly-breasted Munia *Lonchura punctulata*
Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

SOUTH WEST TURKEY 26 MAY – 1 JUNE 2007

(Mark Easterbrook)



References

1. Collins Guide to the *Birds of Britain & Europe with N. Africa & The Middle East*.
2. *A Birdwatchers' Guide to Turkey* Ian Green & Nigel Moorhouse.
3. *Finding Birds in Western Turkey* Dave Gosney

INTRODUCTION

I visited Turkey in late May. My friend had moved there a while ago and asked if we'd like to visit. He owns a villa in Ovacik near to Hisannarou (a popular tourist area), which is about an hour from Dalaman Airport and two hours from the Korkuteli hills.

Due to the limited time available and the fact that there were other reasons for the trip apart from birding, I stuck to the sites in the books mentioned in the references.

I had lived in Cyprus for seven years, so the South Western Turkish specialities were the most sought after species.

The report will also act as an update to Dave Gosney's excellent paperback which gives details of the most productive sites.

DAILY ITINEARIES

Day One

We arrived in Dalaman at about 4 am. Our friends picked us up and we headed to Ovacik which was about an hour away. Several common species were seen along the road but nothing earth shattering. On arrival at the villa, **Red-rumped Swallows** drank from the swimming pool; which was a good start.

After a cup of tea and with my wife feeling the effects of the “red-eye” flight, she went to bed and I went for a walk to Kayakoy, walking the track mentioned in the Gosney Guide (page 17). Along the track marked “2” in the book were a pair of **Kruper’s Nuthatch** at the nest and a singing **Cretzmars Bunting**, a **Short-toed Eagle** also drifted past overhead. On arrival in the village (“3” in the book), a **Finsch’s Wheatear** and female **Black-eared Wheatear** were noted.

Later in the day around Ovacik a pair of **Syrian Woodpeckers** drummed and perched on nearby telegraph poles.

Day Two

Babadag (Gosney: Page 17 site “4”), was only a short walk from the villa, so I ventured a fair way up the track on foot to see what was about in the early morning. Land Rovers constantly passed ferrying Parascenders to the top (a world renowned site for this), you could probably get a lift if you wished but the walk is probably more productive. Several more **Syrian Woodpeckers** were seen, a superb male **Masked Shrike** and the only **Long-tailed Tits** of the trip. In a gully not far up the track a cracking male **Ruppel’s Warbler** displayed, which was the first of many.

Further up the hill, **Cretzschmar’s** and **Cirl Buntings** were fairly common, as were **Kruper’s Nuthatch** and **Turtle Dove**. A **Cuckoo** was heard and a **Bonnelli’s Warbler** sang and was seen. Two **Mistle Thrushes** were seen at the higher altitude and another **Short-toed Eagle** was seen. No **Sombre Tits** were encountered unfortunately.

Day Three

I rode a bike to Kayakoy hearing **Sombre Tits** along the way but still not being able to see one. On arrival at the village, I paid the entrance fee to walk the ruins. Here I found another **Cretzschmar’s Bunting**, **European Roller** and a family party of six **Western Rock Nuthatches** along with a male **Finsch’s Wheatear**. **Alpine swifts** were also present overhead.

We visited the ruins at Dalyan – Kaunos (Green & Moorhouse: page 89) in the afternoon. Here we saw more **Rock Nuthatches** a **Peregrine Falcon**, **White Storks**, **Long-legged Buzzards** and a male **Ferruginous Duck** on a pond below the ruins.

Day Four

A day of shopping and markets (great)! In any event, the only new species added was an **Eastern Olivaceous Warbler** from the villa garden, accompanied by the ever present **Syr-**

ian Woodpeckers.

That evening we ate at the fish market in Fethiye (well worth a visit). On exiting I heard a **Scops Owl** calling from trees near to the central mosque. It soon appeared and perched on a nearby television aerial. Shortly joined by its mate, copulation was witnessed.

Day Five

I hired a car for two days and this was the first. The must see bird of the trip for me was White-throated Robin. The timing of the trip could not have been better and I realised if I made for the right sites, I should connect with this much sought after chat.

An early morning start from Ovacik. I headed straight for the drinking trough to the east of Cavdir (Gosney: page 19 site “1” and arrived just before 7am.

After about five minutes the target birds appeared. The first was a striking **Sombre Tit** and then two female **White-throated Robins**. An **Ortolan Bunting** fed in the grass verge along with a **Spanish Sparrow**. Attention was soon diverted away from them upon the arrival of a fantastic male **White-throated Robin**. A female **Rock Thrush** also put in a brief appearance. Two **Lesser Grey Shrikes** were also seen here.

I headed back towards Cavdir and Sogut. Along the roads, **Calandra Lark** were common, a male **Black-headed Bunting** sat on telegraph wires and a **Nightingale** was heard and then seen in nearby bushes. A **Hoopoe** flew over the road along with some **Common Swifts** and an **Orphean Warbler** hopped through the vegetation.

At Sogut (Gosney: site “3”) roadside cutting, two **Isabelline Wheatears** were seen along with a **Rock Sparrow**, **Lesser Grey Shrike** and **Black-eared Wheatear**. A grey looking Bunting was suspected of being a Cinereous, however closer inspection revealed, a yellow wash on the under tail coverts which led to it going down as a female **Black-headed**. At (Gosney: site “4”) **Short-toed**, **Calandra** and **Crested Larks** were seen and a **Long-legged Buzzard** soared above me.

Before heading to Korkuteli for an enjoyable, cheap, authentic Turkish Kebab for lunch we stopped at (Gosney: site “5” – still on page 19). I spent along time here walking the hills to the summit. However the Red-fronted Serin and Crimson-winged Finch did not reveal themselves; so another visit is in order. Despite this a pair of **Red-backed Shrikes**, several pairs of breeding **Isabelline Wheatears**, a beautiful male **Rock Thrush**, another male **White-throated Robin** and numerous **Linnets** were observed. All in all a really enjoyable day out!

Day Six

I headed to Koycegiz Lake (Green & Moorhouse: page89). On route I stopped at Calis beach (Gosney: page 17 site “5”). Here I added *feldegg* **Yellow Wagtail**, **Reed Warbler**, **Sandwich Tern** and heard **Cetti’s Warblers**.

South of the village of Koycegiz along the road at Bayobast, I encountered the surprise of the trip a male **Levant Sparrowhawk** being mobbed as it crossed the road above me.

The reeds bordering the lake itself produced **Fan-tailed Warbler**, **Corn** and **Black-headed Bunting** and more **Yellow Wagtails** with **Great Reed Warbler** being heard. However generally I concur with whoever wrote that it was “depressingly devoid of birds”.

A **Scops Owl** perched on the villa roof in the evening at about nine o’clock, with several others heard nearby.

Day Seven

The last bird was a **Red-rumped Swallow** as we boarded the aircraft for the early morning (delayed) Onur Air flight to Gatwick.

SUMMARY

An easy, inexpensive place to get to, with some excellent birds, good food, fine weather, easy driving and not a “Turkish Tummy” in sight. It’s not too hot at this time of year and the birds are singing and displaying, perhaps not the best time for the Serin and Finch as they have probably ascended to breed.

Why not go and see for yourself? Soak up some sun and have a Turkish bath and a shave?



Purple Sandpiper
© E Bevan

SPRING TRIP TO FINLAND 14/5/07 TO 24/5/07

(Rodney Walker)

This Spring we decided to try to see the migration through Finland. Our hosts were some self storage colleagues who happen to own a house in Helsinki and a Summer cottage on Lake Paijanne. Unfortunately, with the incredibly warm Winter and early Spring, we probably missed the migration – if there was one! Nevertheless we saw a number of species and sensed that some of the birds were still only just arriving – no **Blue Tits** in the first week but a number seeking nesting sites during the second week.



Off to see Ospreys
© R Walker

The first 2 days were spent close to Helsinki. Immediately we came to the conclusion that we probably never wanted to see a **Fieldfare** again – they were everywhere and ever so tame. The same went for **Chaffinches**! Our first excitement was to see a number of **Slavonian Grebes** on Soumenola Lake close to where we were staying. There was a **Reed Bunting** on the old reeds, **White Wagtails** on the paths, Swifts in the air and a welcome sighting of **Moorhen** (I recall the last AOS trip to Poland where no moorhen was to be seen during the 2 weeks of adventure).

The next port of call was a wonderful cottage, complete with sauna, lots of beer and a small boat with an outboard motor, on Lake Paijanne near to Padasjoki – 200 kms from Helsinki. It was on the island (saari) of Virmailan. Before long the first of many **Red-necked Grebes** were seen. Next morning - early – whilst contemplating nature! – there to my amazement was **Black-throated Diver** just offshore. After a morning on an island close by where **Little Gull** was enjoying the fresh winds we motored round a protected area picking up **Whooper Swans** on the way and hearing **Chiffchaff** and **Cuckoo**. Suddenly we heard the screeches of an **Osprey**. The next half an hour was spent watching this bird protecting its nest under airborne assault from **Herring** and **Common Gulls**. What a sight and for ever memorable.

The next day there were further sightings of the **Ospreys**, both male and female. **Pied Flycatcher** and **Swallow** were just arriving at the lakeside. That afternoon we went to a very new tower on the lake which our host's father had suggested we should visit. We can proudly report that we were the first British visitors to the Nyystölä lintutorni where we were given a typical Finnish welcome – very polite but no smiles! Here we were lucky enough to see one of the first **Sedge Warblers** to arrive and yet another **Osprey** again under attack from a gull. Unbelievably and after much prodding of a slightly deaf retired gunner officer we heard the boom of the local **Bittern** which made our day. It even brought a smile out of the local boat builder who was determined to tell me that it was a crane!



Lintutorni
© R Walker

On the final afternoon we were privileged to see a **Great Spotted Woodpecker** male trying to enter a nesting box in the next door garden under persistent attack from some very brave **Pied Flycatchers**. They appeared to be successful and without our assistance. In the bay was a pair of **Goosanders**.

Then on return to Helsinki visits were made to the Porkalan peninsular with sightings of **Eider**, a deer and **Yellowhammer** probably just on its way in. Further visits included Kahitalahti - where **Treecreeper** and **Garganey** were seen – Laajalahti Nature Reserve where Red Squirrel and a number of waders made an appearance. Amongst them were **Red-necked Phalarope**, **Greenshank**, **Spotted Redshank** and **Ringed Plover**. We had also by now identified the noisy day and night songster close to the house. It was to be the first (and definitely the most vociferous) of a number of **Thrush Nightingales**.

After a day off on a visit to Tallinn in Estonia we spent time at the Vikki recreational area. Here we saw a huge number of **Coots** and **Great Crested Grebes** building and on nests. **Arctic Tern** and **Heron** appeared for the first time on the journey. Late in the day there was a first sighting of **Spotted Flycatcher**.

The weather was kind and warm throughout and although the list could have been longer it was a joy to see some species, which one does not see very often, at close range.

Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica*
Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*
Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegna*
Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*
Bittern (H) *Botaurus stellaris*
Heron *Ardea cinerea*
Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*
Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*
Eurasian Wigeon *Anas penelope*
Eurasian Teal *Anas crecca*
Garganey *Anas querquedula*
Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*
Northern Shoveller *Anas clypeata*
Common Pochard *Aythya ferina*
Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*
Common Eider *Somateria mollissima*
Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*
Goosander *Mergus merganser*
Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*
Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*
Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*
Coot *Fulica cristata*
Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*
Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*
Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*
Dunlin *Calidris alpina*
Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*
Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*
Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*
Wood Pigeon *Columba palumbus*
Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*
Eurasian Swift *Apus apus*
Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*
Woodlark *Lullula arborea*
Swallow *Hirundo rustica*
House Martin *Delichon urbica*
Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*
White Wagtail *Motacilla alba alba*
Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*
European Robin *Erithacus rubecula*
Thrush Nightingale *Luscinia luscinia*
Blackbird *Turdus merula*
Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*
Redwing *Turdus iliacus*
Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*
Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*
Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*
Chiff Chaff *Phylloscopus collybita*
Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*
Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*
Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*
Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*
Crested Tit *Parus cristatus*
Blue Tit *Parus caeruleus*

Curlew <i>Numenius arquata</i>	Great Tit <i>Parus major</i>
Spotted Redshank <i>Tringa erythropus</i>	Common Treecreeper <i>Certhia familiaris</i>
Redshank <i>Tringa totanus</i>	Jay <i>Garrulus glandarius</i>
Greenshank <i>Tringa nebularia</i>	Magpie <i>Pica pica</i>
Common Sandpiper <i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	Jackdaw <i>Corvus monedula</i>
Turnstone <i>Arenaria interpres</i>	Hooded Crow <i>Corvus corone cornix</i>
Red-necked Phalarope <i>Phaloparus lobatus</i>	House Sparrow <i>Passer domesticus</i>
Little Gull <i>Larus minutus</i>	Chaffinch <i>Fringilla coelebs</i>
Black-headed Gull <i>Larus ridibundus</i>	Greenfinch <i>Carduelis chloris</i>
Common Gull <i>Larus canus</i>	Goldfinch <i>Carduelis carduelis</i>
Herring Gull <i>Larus argentatus</i>	Yellowhammer <i>Emberiza citrenella</i>
Lesser Black-backed Gull <i>Larus fuscus</i>	Reed Bunting <i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>



Lapland Bunting
© E Bevan

ORLANDO

(Andrew Bray)

In October I had a business trip to Orlando for a week with only one day off planned so there was going to be little opportunity to go birding. There was no possibility to go birding before work as it was still dark and it was dusk when we returned. The contractor's site however did have lakes, trees and open spaces. At the short lunch stops I was able to walk out onto a terrace overlooking a lake. During these breaks I was able to see Egrets, Vultures and Herons. In addition other birds included the **Anhanger**, **Brown Thrasher**, **Palm Warbler**, **Northern Mockingbird** and **Downy Woodpecker**. The local alligator did not put in an appearance. Though the drive between the office and the hotel was short there were still plenty of ponds about all with a small population of **Snowy Egrets**. **Common Grackles** lived up to their name and could always be found around the hotel and shops.

I did have Saturday off and whilst my colleagues took the opportunity to visit attractions an employee of the contractor picked me for a whirlwind tour of good birding sites. These included the Orlando Wetland Park, Merrit Island Wildlife Park, the coast at Cape Canaveral and Viera Wetland Site. Birding was mainly by car and the aircon was always welcome. It was a case of drive to a location, hop out, scan around then back in the car. We had a short

stop at Orlando Wetland Park which is the result of an old sewage works modified into a vast reserve. It was here that I saw my first alligator though it was a small one. My guide was not suitably dressed for a hike and we moved on knowing that I had an opportunity to return early the next morning before the flight. It was here that I saw **Limpkin**, **Black Bel-**



Whistling Duck
© K Warden

lied Whistling Duck and **Bald Eagle**. **Osprey** and **Turkey Vulture** were very common birds that day no matter where we went. Merritt Island is a vast complex with numerous trails. The main birding trail at Merritt Island is by car and anyone who walks definitely needs certifying. I now understand why transects in the States are carried out by car. I was too early for the mass of birds on their winter holidays however there was still a good selection including **Little Blue Heron**, **Green Heron**, **Reddish Egret**, **Wood Stork**, **White Ibis** and **Roseate Spoonbill**. This is a wetland area like most of the sites; everywhere you go there is water. It was on one of the roads in this area that I came across a really big alligator fortunately on the other side of the ditch so I could get out taking the required photo. We drove through Titusville and on to the coast which

is part of the part of the Cape Canaveral complex and I was able to see the Shuttle on the pan. On the drive to the beach I saw **Brown Pelican** and **Royal Tern** whilst on the beach there were **Willet** and **Sanderling** that came very close. We took in the Manate stop plus a short walk on the Scrub Jay trail. It was very quiet and on our return just before the car park we came across 3 **Florida Scrub Jays** that stayed put even as we walked right up to them. During the day I soon got used to seeing **Red-shouldered Hawk** and had difficulty finding anything else. At Viera that was a sewage works that had been converted to a drive through reserve I did see another raptor though I was not expecting a **Crested Caracara**. In the fields nearby there were **Sandhill Crane**. My list for the day was 58 species which were mainly the larger variety.



A waiting game
© K Warden

Black-bellied Whistling-duck *Dendrocygna autumnalis*
Mottled Duck *Anas fulvigula*
Blue-winged Teal *Anas discors*
Pied-billed Grebe *Podilymbus podiceps*
Wood Stork *Mycteria americana*
White Ibis *Eudocimus albus*
Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*
Roseate Spoonbill *Platalea ajaja*
Green Heron *Butorides virescens*

Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*

Great Blue Heron *Ardea herodias*
Great Egret *Casmerodius albus*
Reddish Egret *Egretta rufescens*

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*
Willet *Catoptrophorus semipalmatus*
Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*
Sanderling *Calidris alba*
Laughing Gull *Larus atricilla*
Gull-billed Tern *Sterna nilotica*
Royal Tern *Sterna maxima*
Little Tern *Sterna albifrons*
Mourning Collared-dove *Streptopelia de-*
cipiens
African Collared-dove *Streptopelia*
roseogrisea
Chimney Swift *Chaetura pelagica*
Belted Kingfisher *Ceryle alcyon*
Red-bellied Woodpecker *Melanerpes*
carolinus

Tricoloured Heron *Egretta tricolor*
Little Blue Heron *Egretta caerulea*
Snowy Egret *Egretta thula*

Brown Pelican *Pelecanus occidentalis*
Double-crested Cormorant *Phalacrocorax auritus*
Anhinga *Anhinga anhinga*
Turkey Vulture *Cathartes aura*
Black Vulture *Coragyps atratus*
Crested Caracara *Caracara cheriway*
Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*
Bald Eagle *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*
Red-shouldered Hawk *Buteo lineatus*

Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*
American Coot *Fulica americana*
Sandhill Crane *Grus canadensis*
Limpkin *Aramus guarauna*

Downy Woodpecker *Picoides pubescens*
White-eyed Vireo *Vireo griseus*
Florida Scrub-jay *Aphelocoma coerulescens*
American Crow *Corvus brachyrhynchos*
Grey Catbird *Dumetella carolinensis*
Northern Mockingbird *Mimus polyglottos*
Brown Thrasher *Toxostoma rufum*
Pine Warbler *Dendroica pinus*
Palm Warbler *Dendroica palmarum*
Common Yellowthroat *Geothlypis trichas*
Brown-headed Cowbird *Molothrus ater*
Red-winged Blackbird *Agelaius phoeniceus*
Great-tailed Grackle *Quiscalus mexicanus*
Boat-tailed Grackle *Quiscalus major*
Eastern Meadowlark *Sturnella magna*
Northern Cardinal *Cardinalis cardinalis*



Grey Heron
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