

# *Romania in Spring*

*Saturday 6 - Sunday 14 May 2006*

## **Trip report**

### **Leaders:**

Tudor Blaj  
Jamie McMillan

### **Driver:**

Costi

## **TRIP DIARY**

### **Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> May**

After leaving London an hour late we arrived at a warm Bucharest airport only half an hour behind time... but Simon's luggage didn't, so after completing the necessary forms we met up with Jeff who had flown in from the States, Tudor our local guide and Costi, our driver.

We stopped an hour along the road to scrutinize a Red-backed Shrike, and a pair of Lesser Grey Shrikes popped up at the same time, calling and giving excellent views. Another half an hour on at a roadside pool a couple of Night Herons prompted another stop. Here Great Reed Warblers grunted from the bulrushes and Souseliks scampered about on the bank opposite. Simon (as he was to do many times during the trip!) found three distant soaring Storks which revealed themselves as Black Storks in the telescopes.

On to C\_l\_r\_a\_i Fish Ponds where large white birds swimming about turned into both Mute Swans and Dalmatian Pelicans, one of the target birds of the trip. Tudor explained the distinguishing features from White Pelicans. As we were leaving, right on cue four distant skeins of birds resolved themselves as White Pelicans, which approached to give excellent views as they flew over the lake. We arrived at the hotel just after 7.30 for dinner, checklist and a short talk on Romania from Tudor.

### **Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> May**

Our pre-breakfast walk took us down to the riverside park where we could see obvious "tide marks" from the recent flooding and water still lapping round the park benches in one area.

We scrutinized Caspian Gulls on the rooftops and Tree Sparrows on the ground as the local frogs delighted in their new play area giving a deafening chorus. Whiskered Terns flew over the impressively wide warm arm of the Danube as a barge travelled past, while Golden Orioles and Thrush Nightingales sang, one of the former giving excellent views as it flew over while another stayed to be scoped in a tree over the river. A female Syrian Woodpecker showed much closer as it fed on a cut bough on nuts, presumably placed there by the locals. More action took place overhead with Night Heron, Hoopoe and male Montagu's Harrier flying over in quick succession. On the way back to the hotel a fine male Redstart was admired on the rooftop.

After breakfast it was a short drive out to C\_l\_r\_a\_i Fish Ponds with their overwhelming numbers of birds. The first to draw gasps were splendid White-winged Black Terns amongst the myriads of Whiskered and Black Terns. Then a Little Bittern flew across perching on a reed to be scoped and admired by all. In the middle of the pond smart Black-necked Grebes vied for attention with dapper Ferruginous Ducks and the odd Garganey. The sun was warming things up and raptors were soaring, including five Honey Buzzards. As we turned to go, two Dalmatian Pelicans and a flock of over a hundred White Pelicans drew us back for a final look.

### **White-winged Black Terns**

We drove towards the ferry noting the sandbags along the side of the road which had just held the floods at bay. The water today was about one metre lower than last week, according to Tudor. We stopped to look at a roadside rufous-phase Cuckoo and a Roe Deer before arriving at the ferry terminal, a café and slipway, plus assorted tractors and other vehicles. The half hour journey across was punctuated by views of marsh terns and an old aircraft by some tower block in the Bulgarian side which Tudor explained was in fact a local café.

As we drove away close to the border we could see the fence with the Bulgarian town on the other side. Tudor told us to hide our binoculars so as not to upset the border police, but within a few hundred yards we had them out again to look at a fine pair of Rollers.

Then along to Bugeac Lake where a Barred Warbler song-flighted next to the bus. Here four Glossy Ibis flew in before our target bird, three Ruddy Shelduck, also arrived. Spanish Sparrows courted in a nearby quarry. We could also see a mass of falcons and Bee-eaters over a nearby monastery on the other side of the lake. We drove over for wonderful views of both Hobby (in the majority) and Red-footed Falcons feasting on flying insects over the monastery: a memorable sight. As thunder clouds bubbled up to the west more raptors kept appearing. In the end there were over thirty falcons, ten Honey Buzzards and two Steppe Buzzards. As we tore ourselves away from the spectacle and drove on, the Danube looked vast in the distance, about twice its usual width according to Tudor.

We drove to Canaraua Fetei where a small lake held our first Pygmy Cormorants. Nearby a Stonechat on a wire made us stop and, as soon as we'd got out, two Red-rumped Swallows (a very local species in Romania) flew past while a Spur-thighed Tortoise scuttled away from the edge of the field. We then turned into towards the quarry and while Tudor and Costi prepared lunch we admired an increasing variety of birds overhead. Turtle Doves were flying everywhere; then two Short-toed Eagle appeared hovering closely followed by a Lesser Spotted Eagle giving excellent views. Then two Goshawks soared over one of the ridges.

After lunch we walked towards the woods getting wonderful views of Hawfinch on the ground and in the low branches. Many butterflies were active including the attractive Map butterfly, while raptors included two Long-legged Buzzards. A Corncrake called but wouldn't show itself.

We continued onto the Byzantine fortress at Adamclisi with Wheatears and Whitethroats and then headed down towards the coast. Most of us were nodding off this time, but it was a good thing Simon wasn't as he found us a superb Levant Sparrowhawk which Costi backed the coach to see in a roadside tree.

We arrived at our beachside hotel at Mamaia-Sat at 7.15. At dinner the total bird count for the day reached an amazing one hundred and seventeen species, one of the best days I have ever had with a group in Europe!

### **Monday 8<sup>th</sup> May**

Up at 6.30, and we were greeted by cloud, a west wind and spots of rain, but the migrants looked good with Collared and Pied Flycatcher, three Whinchats and a Red-footed Falcon in or over the hotel garden.

Out on the beach it became apparent that a huge marsh tern passage was in progress, with flocks of ten to thirty continually going through, and including many White-winged Terns. Simon mentioned an odd gull, and we immediately saw one with white triangles on its wings: a first summer Kittiwake and real Romanian rarity! It swiftly disappeared to the south. A bit dazed from this find we watched the Sanderling, Oystercatcher and Little Ringed Plover, while two flocks of Purple Herons flew in off the sea. There was definitely visible migration going on today.

Then we were off belatedly to the oil refinery pools where Bearded Tits were seen quickly, along with Reed Bunting. The wind had got up and it was hard to see the warblers, though Jeff's identification of refinery towers came in handy for locating a Black Stork flying past. A Water Rail flew out of the Reeds and a male Red-crested Pochard was seen, but, try as we may, only glimpses of Paddyfield Warbler were gained by two of us. Marsh terns were going through continuously and it was evidently going to be an exciting day.

After breakfast Jim's expression of surprise cannot be repeated here as he found a Long-eared Owl in one of the hotel trees for us all to see, while Tudor was showing the group Olivaceous and Wood Warblers nearby. The rain started in earnest as we set off for Histria and we were astonished to see a flock of six Golden Orioles flying parallel with the bus (at fifty kilometres an hour) over the ploughed fields. A bit further on we stopped for the more expected Calandra Lark but then, on an unploughed strip, up popped a splendid male Black-headed Bunting. A perched male Red-footed Falcon was also a bonus in the scopes.

At the Histria wetlands rain became more insidious, but we walked up the road getting excellent views of about hundred breeding-plumaged White Pelicans on the near shore. Water Rail and Bittern were calling and we saw a Spoonbill. Further on we had better views of an excellent collection of waders including summer-plumaged Spotted Redshank and Curlew Sandpiper, and a Temminck's Stint amongst the much more numerous Little Stints. A 'psst' call alerted us to first one and then two Red-throated Pipits, one eventually scoped by everybody revealing a superb brick red throat. Finally a Great White Egret flew past before we dived into the shelter of the bus and headed for the café, but still the endless procession of marsh terns continued.

While Tudor sorted out some hot soup and mulled wine for us we watched migrants around the café including Lesser Whitethroat and other warblers and flycatchers. It was a very welcome café break out of the rain. The mulled wine in particular had gone down a treat, but admittedly we drifted off in the afternoon as we drove to the Cheia Dobrogea Gorge.

In heavy rain we walked for Wheatears soon finding Eastern Black-eared and a further on a Pied Wheatear, but we got soaked in the process. Then on to some open steppe country for Isabelline Wheatear, which we saw quite close, but with misty binoculars and lightning flashing nearby - and torrential rain - we thought it best to return to base and most welcome hot showers.

### **Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> May**

A dull and calm start, thankfully with no rain, brought more migrants pouring in. The hotel grounds held both Common and Black Redstarts and Lesser Whitethroat, while the beach was all action again: amazing flocks of water birds were coming in off the sea. There were twelve Squacco Herons followed by fifty six Pygmy Cormorants, nine Purple Herons, seven Great White Egrets, seven Night Herons, ten Cattle Egrets and twelve Glossy Ibis! And that was just for starters. Next seven Collared Pratincoles went over our heads. Marsh terns were going through in droves again, with the Black Terns stopping to feed with gulls on the fish thrown out on the beach by the fishermen. They were joined by several Mediterranean Gulls.

Waders were also going through with Curlew Sandpiper, Ruff, Grey and Ringed Plovers all joining the rush north. Finally three Rollers went over as we tore ourselves away for breakfast pausing briefly to look at a Tawny Pipit that had dropped into the beach as dozens of Yellow Wagtails flew over.

After breakfast we headed for the oil refinery again where two Little Gulls were dipping for food and a remarkable flock of eighteen Purple Heron flew in. En route to Vadu a female Merlin shot across the field towards the bus and dashed just in front and there were several Red-footed Falcons and Marsh Harriers, one of which was seen to get up from the field clutching a mole which it had caught. We stopped on a rise overlooking some pools by a derelict factory that Tudor told us was an old uranium plant!

#### **Little Bittern**

Vast reedbeds stretched away into the distance absolutely teeming with birds. Avocets swept the shallows nearby while White-winged Black Terns perched at the edge. Several Pratincoles flew over while we admired flocks of Curlew Sandpiper in fine breeding plumage. As we progressed through the reed bed the number and variety of birds was almost overwhelming. Cracking views of a reeling Savi's Warbler were followed almost immediately by a soaring female Montagu's Harrier. Flocks of Collared Pratincoles, a settled pair of Red-crested Pochard, over fifty Greylag Geese, odd Ferruginous Ducks, Garganey and Gadwall and lovely views of breeding plumaged Spoonbill came in quick succession. Little Bitterns were flying across, both Mediterranean and Little Gulls were feeding on a pool, and then suddenly the sky was filled with Pelicans. An amazing flock of at least two hundred White Pelicans winged their way towards and soared right overhead. On the way out of this amazing place we stopped to admire a perched female Red-footed Falcon, while Tudor found Eastern Spadefoot Toads and a dead Pond Terrapin in a water tank.

On the road north two Lesser Spotted Eagles flew over and we stopped for good views of a perched Long-legged Buzzard. We drove up into the low downy oaks of the Babadag Forest and stopped for a picnic in the warm sunshine. Many interesting flowers were out including some superb mauve and yellow irises. Butterflies abounded with Scarce Swallowtail, Wood White and Dingy Skipper to be noted, but these were forgotten as we walked across a clearing to watch a splendid singing male Ortolan Bunting. Meanwhile Simon was picking out raptors as usual. There was a procession of Honey Buzzards flying across, a couple of Lesser Spotted Eagle. Then, amazingly, a pair of Levant Sparrowhawks flew over, the male showing the white underwing with the black tips, then displaying to the female with exaggerated butterfly wing tips – breathtaking!

All too soon it was time to head for Tulcea where we boarded the pontoon – spacious and with new, en suite cabins! - at 4.00 pm and were soon hitched up to a tug and being pulled gently down the Danube. The flooding here was very evident with water lapping round the old reed thatched houses and covering the gardens. Various battered cars were stranded on the roads with tidelines half way up the body work. The locals were coping as best they could: a lady was feeding her pigs on a tiny island with a rowing boat moored up ready to take her back across her garden.

The birds were constantly entertaining with many marsh terns, a succession of Rollers and two new raptors: a Black Kite and a Peregrine. After a lovely sunset we went in for dinner sipping wine as the banks of the Danube glided by, bathed in a glorious evening light. Over pudding the boat slowed, and we found our mooring on the banks of the old Danube. As darkness fell, Tudor told us about the delta people and the history of his country.

### **Collared Pratincoles**

#### **Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> May**

We awoke to the sound of Cuckoos, Golden Orioles and Grey-headed Woodpeckers, and several couldn't resist an early watch on the deck. We picked out various songs in the dawn chorus including Garden Warbler, and then a Black Woodpecker flew across, much to Jim's delight. As others emerged on deck it performed again giving good flight views. Then a Grey-headed Woodpecker was scoped in a tree for at least ten minutes while a Kingfisher flew past several times. An Olivaceous Warbler sang in the overhanging willows. Other birds included a Treecreeper and a hooting Tawny Owl.

After breakfast we boarded the small boats in perfect calm, sunny conditions and set off down the maze of channels. There seemed to be a Roller or two every hundred yards or so and we saw both Collared Flycatcher and several singing Redstarts as well as superb views of perched Red-footed Falcons.

The great thing about being in a small boat is that you are able to get close to the birds. We had wonderful views of Hobby, Night Heron and Red-necked Grebe. The highlight was seeing a pair of Penduline Tits returning to their intricate nest. The water was surprisingly clear considering the flooding over such a huge area and we could see huge leeches swimming and two or three Grass Snakes.

### **Night Herons**

After a big lunch of fish soup and carp we headed in the ponton through the backwaters in the sunshine. Tantalizing glimpses of a large eagle eventually turned into distant but sustained views of White-tailed Eagle soaring over the delta trees. Late in the afternoon a second boat trip took us through a maze of overhanging willows (we had to duck at several points) and tiny channels to a mixed colony of Night Grey and Squacco Herons, Great and Pygmy Cormorants, Little Egrets and Spoonbills, a superb climax to the day. We headed back towards Tulcea in the evening sunshine enjoying beers on the deck before supper.

## **Red-footed Falcons**

### **Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> May**

It was raining as we awoke being pulled towards Tulcea, and this continued off and on all day. After waiting for another ponton to get out of our way (and accompanied by much subdued Romanian cursing from our skipper Eddie) we eventually docked and were ready to leave the ponton at ten to nine.

Our first stop was a monastery but here it was still raining hard, nonetheless we strode hard off into the orchards seeing Nuthatch and Middle Spotted Woodpecker for our pains but no sign of the hoped for Sombre Tit.

Next stop was for fuel and petrol station coffees and then we diverted for lunch near a lake. Here there were over a hundred gulls and many Black-necked Grebes but it was hard to see these in the driving rain. Equally impressive were the thousands of hirundines feeding over the lake and fields. As we finished we stopped by a belt of trees near a railway crossing and it soon became clear that it held a few migrants: flycatchers, warblers and two Golden Orioles, one of the latter apparently an immature male calling and courtship feeding, and giving excellent views low in the tree. But these were eclipsed by a quiet call from Pauline: "Nightjar!" Surely not... but there it was roosting in plain view on a branch ten foot up from the roadside: an extraordinary find and making it very easy to see the beautiful plumage of this normally nocturnal bird.

After this we dozed towards the Carpathians stopping briefly at another lake, then joining the main road up to Sinaia arriving about 6.15 at the characterful Hotel Furnica to be greeted by Black Redstarts, Chiffchaff and Coal Tit in the courtyard and Fieldfares outside in the spruce trees.

### **Friday 12<sup>th</sup> May**

A cloudy start after overnight rain but a walk round the hotel area was productive with Firecrest seen well and a Red-breasted Flycatcher heard singing. Several Red Squirrels scampered up tree trunks and we caught up with familiar birds like Wren, Robin and Grey Wagtail.

We drove over the main ridge and dropped down to the Brasov plain. From here we drove up our first gorge getting good views of Dipper and two Crag Martins but no sign of Wallcreeper. The roadside flowers were abundant with swathes of Oxslips in the meadows amongst others. A Lesser Spotted Eagle was a good sighting on the road before we headed up to Râsnov Citadel perched high on a bluff above the town with astounding views across the valley. Here we were greeted by singing Serins and also bizarrely by some opera: 'Nessun Dorma' was being piped from loud speakers attached to the trees. Other new birds here included Marsh Tit and we had a chance to catch up with Nuthatch and Tree Creeper.

We walked down to the nearby restaurant for an excellent 'al fresco' lunch before heading up a much rougher road to another gorge. Here Tudor found Yellow-bellied Toad for us before we walked up the narrowest part of the gorge to another Wallcreeper site. We were unsuccessful, but enjoyed the scenery of flowers, including the endemic Snowbell *Soldanella ungarica*. Spots of rain were falling now and heavy rain set in at Mina 1 May sending us back to Sinaia for a quick postcard shop and hot shower.

But the day was not yet over. After dinner we gathered at 10.00 pm to set off for Brasov. The full moon was brightening from behind the cloud and the weather conditions were good. Although we dozed on the way over the pass, a line of cars stopped on the hairpin bend alerted us to a dead Red Deer stag sadly killed on the road.

We continued into Brasov and headed for one of the housing estates surrounded by forest. Along one edge Tudor got out to check some rubbish bins. We joked that a giant paw might emerge from one but Tudor got back into the bus announcing that the bins were empty – no bears here... or rubbish to attract them. Now I think we had all noticed a blue flashing light by the next set of bins but forgot about it immediately, as Simon called us to a halt. A large shape was moving on the slope just behind: it was a medium sized Brown Bear! It stared back at us and ambled off along the bank - a breathtaking moment. But our triumph was short-lived. Not far down the road the blue flashing light pulled in front of us. Suddenly there were police everywhere, writing in notebooks and arguing with Costi and Tudor. Apparently the bears had been deemed ‘personae non grata’... and so were any tourists that came to watch them. After some considerable discussion we left, ticked off and chastened - but we had seen a bear (so there!).

### **Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> May**

A wonderful clear morning sent us to the Flycatcher place and soon we were getting super views of singing male Red-breasted Flycatcher right over our heads. We walked down to Peles Castle seeing Wren and Dipper, and then Tree Pipit. We had done a species count last night, and this was number 198 on the group list. Tudor thought that we may be on for a record number...

We drove to Zane\_tu and walked up the gorge in lovely fine conditions, which suited several Alpine Swifts that were visiting the rock face. We had splendid views of these aerial scythes calling, displaying and prospecting the nest-sites.

Sadly there were no Wallcreeper here or further on – but we did see the nest!

We then drove to Mina 1 May for a second bite at the apple orchard, having our final picnic in the sunshine, with a backdrop of the snowy Carpathian peaks. Many butterflies were on the wing, including a fly-past Camberwell beauty, and the orchard was full of flowers, including False White Helleborine. A Corncrake called from a wet field, and Tudor caught one of the many Sand Lizards that were scuttling about. We were just watching a Middle Spotted Woodpecker in one of the apple trees, when Pauline (who else) flushed a dark brown bird that flew into a hedge – where we could all see that it was another Nightjar! This time a female, with no white on wings or tail, it showed very well in the scopes.

In the afternoon we drove back to Sinaia, and up a rough road through flower-rich woodland to the ‘Queen’s Clearing’, a meadow filled with swathes of Oxlips, Purple Hellebores, False White Helleborines, and several orchids in bud. A Bullfinch was added to the list – species 199 – and then in quick succession Mistle Thrush, and, best of all, a superb male Ring Ouzel with the white flecking of the *alpestris* race so different to our British ones. So, 201 species, and we had broken Tudor’s trip record!

In the evening we headed for the nearby Game restaurant where we feasted on Wild Boar, amongst other treats, and were serenaded by some excellent local musicians – and some were even persuaded to

indulge in ballroom dancing! The Nightjar was voted bird of the trip, the Bear was best mammal, with as many 'best moments' of the trip as there were members of the group!

### **Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> May**

A really fine start to our last day – how often that happens! – and we had great views of a male Crossbill in the spruce outside the hotel, with another Bullfinch flying over, and a Redstart singing from a treetop.

What usually happens on the last day of most trips is that we head for the airport with one or two stops for a rest, without any real hope of anything new. So I hadn't expected much from the stop just outside Sinaia, in a lightly wooded valley by a picnic site. The Goldcrest above us was a good new species, though.

Then a woodpecker flew across – showing its white back clearly. Unbelievably, it perched in a tree close by for us all to see – where it was mobbed by a male Collared Flycatcher. It flew back across the river, where it was joined by another – and now we could see the male's red crest well too. Eventually we realised that they were visiting a nest hole, and could actually see the male poking its head out, chucking out wood chippings. What an amazing finale to the trip! The Willow Tit – a new bird for our Romania list – was almost forgotten in the excitement.

Our final stop was by a pond where many local fishermen were catching – and keeping – tiny Crucian Carp, and we enjoyed our final looks at Little Bittern, Whiskered Tern, and some obliging Golden Orioles.

## **Collared Flycatcher**

### **Species Lists:**

The various species lists below use the following references:

**Birds:** We have used the suggested worldwide English names and systematic order as found in *World Bird Species Checklist: with alternate English & scientific names* (Wells, M.G., 1998). Commonly used alternates are enclosed in [ ] or separated by / .

*Collins Bird Guide* (Svensson, L. Grant, P.J., Mullarney, K. & Zetterström, D., 1999)

**Mammals:** We have used the suggested worldwide English names and systematic order as found in *Mammals of the World, A Checklist* (Duff, A. & Lawson, A., 2004)

*Collins Field Guide: Mammals of Britain & Europe* (Macdonald, D. & Barrett, P., 1993)

**Butterflies:** *Collins Field Guide: Butterflies of Britain & Europe* (Tolman, T. & Lewington, R., 1997)

**Amphibians and Reptiles:** *Collins Field Guide: Reptiles & Amphibians of Britain & Europe [second edition]* (Arnold, E.N. & Ovenden, D.W., 2002)

## BIRDS

<b>Little Grebe</b>	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	One or two noted five days C_1_ra_i Fish Ponds, N_vodari Pools, Pucheri Moreai.
<b>Red-necked Grebe</b>	<i>Podiceps grisegena</i>	C50 mainly on the 'return leg' by the Danube Delta trip from the ponton.
<b>Great Crested Grebe</b>	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>	Noted on six days, various wetlands – not in Danube Delta
<b>Black-necked (Eared) Grebe</b>	<i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>	Several at C_1_ra_i Fish Ponds; six at Fundata Lake and c20 Balta Rodeau en route to Sinaia, 11 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Great Cormorant</b>	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	Noted five days on coast and in delta. Often flying in 'squadron formation'.
<b>Pygmy Cormorant</b>	<i>Phalacrocorax pygmaeus</i>	Wonderful to see so many of these. Six near Canaraua Fetei. Many in off the sea at Mamaia-Sat on 9 <sup>th</sup> , with one flock of 56; common in the delta.
<b>(Great) White Pelican</b>	<i>Pelecanus onocrotalus</i>	Impressive numbers on 5 days; C_1_ra_i Fish Ponds, coast and delta; max 500 on 9 <sup>th</sup> in delta; a flock of c200 overhead at Vadu particularly impressive.
<b>Dalmatian Pelican</b>	<i>Pelecanus crispus</i>	Noted 4 days. Up to 6 C_1_ra_i Fish Ponds – odd pairs and singles at several coastal wetlands and on delta.
<b>Grey Heron</b>	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	Widespread on coast and lowlands – noted 7 days.
<b>Purple Heron</b>	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>	Seen on 5 days at lowland wetlands. Max c25 on 9 <sup>th</sup> at Mamaia-Sat included a migrating flock of 18 in off the sea.
<b>Great White Egret</b>	<i>Egretta alba</i>	Noted 4 days coast and delta. Max 11 on 9 <sup>th</sup> at Mamaia-Sat in two flocks in off the sea.
<b>Little Egret</b>	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	Noted 5 days coast and delta.
<b>Squacco Heron</b>	<i>Ardeola ralloides</i>	Seen at many coastal wetlands, and several in off the sea on 9 <sup>th</sup> . Impressive breeding plumage seen at one of the delta colonies.
<b>Black-crowned Night-heron</b>	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>	Seen at many lowland wetlands; max on coast 27 including several in off the seen on 9 <sup>th</sup> . More in delta including some at a breeding colony.
<b>Little Bittern</b>	<i>Ixobrychus minutus</i>	Good numbers, and several good views. Noted six days with up to 6 per day.
<b>Great Bittern</b>	<i>Botaurus stellaris</i>	Heard booming at Histria, 8 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Black Stork</b>	<i>Ciconia nigra</i>	Three C_1_ra_i Fish Ponds on 6 <sup>th</sup> ; four over Canaraua Fetei, 7 <sup>th</sup> ; but views one flying over N_vodari Pools. Presumably on migration, 8 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>White Stork</b>	<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>	Seen each day – including several on nests around village most days. Max flock of 28 over Babadag Forest on 9 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Glossy Ibis</b>	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>	Seen four days at coastal wetlands; flocks of 12 and c30 in off the sea on 9 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Eurasian Spoonbill</b>	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>	Noted six days at coastal wetlands. Best views on 9 <sup>th</sup> at Vadu up to c10/day.
<b>Mute Swan</b>	<i>Cygnus olor</i>	Noted six days on lowland wetlands.

<b>Greylag Goose</b>	<i>Anser anser</i> Vadu, 9 <sup>th</sup> .	Noted four days at coastal wetlands. Max 50+ at
<b>Ruddy Shelduck</b>	<i>Tadorna ferruginea</i> Fetai later that day.	Three at Lake Bugeac, 7 <sup>th</sup> . Two near Canaraua
<b>Common Shelduck</b>	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	Noted three days at coastal wetlands.
<b>Gadwall</b>	<i>Anas strepera</i> the delta on 10 <sup>th</sup> .	Noted four days at coastal wetlands. Max 30+ in
<b>Mallard</b>	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	Noted each day – at coastal wetlands. Never common, with c10/day max except in delta. Two Sinaia, 13 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Northern Pintail</b>	<i>Anas acuta</i>	One at C_1_ra_i Fish Ponds, 6 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Garganey</b>	<i>Anas querquedula</i> 8 <sup>th</sup> Histria area	Noted five days at coastal wetlands. Max 20+ on
<b>Northern Shoveler</b>	<i>Anas clypeata</i> day.	Pair N_vodari Pools, 9 <sup>th</sup> ; one in the delta on same
<b>Red-crested Pochard</b>	<i>Netta rufina</i> Enisala, 9 <sup>th</sup> .	One N_vodari Pools, 8 <sup>th</sup> ; two Vadu 9 <sup>th</sup> ; 5-6
<b>Common Pochard</b>	<i>Aythya ferina</i>	Probably the commonest duck; noted five days at coastal wetlands.
<b>Ferruginous Duck</b>	<i>Aythya nyroca</i>	Refreshing to see good numbers of this duck well; noted four days at coastal wetlands with max 30+ in delta, 10 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Tufted Duck</b>	<i>Aythya fuligula</i> Pools.	Four C_1_ra_i Fish Ponds; up to 4 N_vodari
<b>European Honey Buzzard</b>	<i>Pernis apivorus</i>	Noted four days with passage evident on 7 <sup>th</sup> , when c30 seen and on 9 <sup>th</sup> when at least 15 were seen following the same flight-line over Babadag Forest.
<b>Black Kite</b>	<i>Milvus migrans</i>	One low over the pontoon on 9 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>White-tailed Eagle</b>	<i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i> 10 <sup>th</sup> .	An adult seen distantly but well from the ponton,
<b>Short-toed Eagle</b>	<i>Circaetus gallicus</i>	Two over Canaraua Fetei. 7 <sup>th</sup> , gave good views.
<b>Montagu's Harrier</b>	<i>Circus pygargus</i> Vadu, 9 <sup>th</sup> .	A male over C_1_ra_i town on 7 <sup>th</sup> ; a ringtail at
<b>Western Marsh Harrier</b>	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i> farmland.	Common on coast over both wetlands and
<b>Levant Sparrowhawk</b>	<i>Accipiter brevipes</i>	An excellent showing, with a male seen very close albeit perched in a roadside tree near Constanta on 7 <sup>th</sup> ; then a pair over Babadag Forest with the male display-fighting on 9 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Eurasian Sparrowhawk</b>	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	Seen four days – three on 7 <sup>th</sup> , Canaraua Fetei, four on 9 <sup>th</sup> over coast, one in delta 10 <sup>th</sup> ; one near Râsnov, 12 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Northern Goshawk</b>	<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>	Two Canaraua Fetei on 7 <sup>th</sup> soaring over.
<b>Common (Eurasian) Buzzard</b>	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	Five on 7 <sup>th</sup> were Steppe Buzzard, seen with a migrating flock of falcons at Derveni Monastery; thereafter noted six days with more 10+ on 12 <sup>th</sup> in the mountains where it was the commonest raptor.
<b>Long-legged Buzzard</b>	<i>Buteo rufinus</i>	Seen on four days; two Canaraua Fetei on 7 <sup>th</sup> ; one near Vadu 9 <sup>th</sup> ; one, 11 <sup>th</sup> Celicdere Monastery.
<b>Lesser Spotted Eagle</b>	<i>Aquila pomarina</i>	Two Canaraua Fetei on 7 <sup>th</sup> ; two Babadag Forest and one Vadu on 8 <sup>th</sup> ; three in Carpathians 12 <sup>th</sup> & 13 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Common (Eurasian) Kestrel</b>	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	Common and widespread – seen daily.
<b>Red-footed Falcon</b>	<i>Falco vespertinus</i>	Impressive numbers in the lowlands 7 <sup>th</sup> and 11 <sup>th</sup> , with many on migration. Max 30+ in bad weather on the travel day,

11<sup>th</sup>. A flock of c20 with Hobbies over Derveni Monastery on 7<sup>th</sup> was most striking.

<b>Merlin</b>	<i>Falco columbarius</i> Vadu, 9 <sup>th</sup> .	A female flew across in front of the bus near
<b>Eurasian Hobby</b>	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>	Wonderful numbers, max 30-40 on 7 <sup>th</sup> , mainly over Derveni Monastery. Stunning views of perched birds in the delta. Noted 6 days.
<b>Peregrine</b>	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	One from the pontoon, 9 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Grey Partridge</b>	<i>Perdix perdix</i> Jeffs 'nemesis-bird'.	Two in steppe country, 8 <sup>th</sup> ; one on the beach, 9 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Common Quail</b>	<i>Coturnix coturnix</i> Adamclisi ruins, 7 <sup>th</sup> .	Glimpsed Canaraua Fetei, 6 <sup>th</sup> . Heard at
<b>Common Pheasant</b>	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>	Noted six days in lowlands.
<b>Water Rail</b>	<i>Rallus aquaticus</i> Histria the same day.	One in flight, N_vodari Pools on 8 <sup>th</sup> ; one heard
<b>Corn Crake</b>	<i>Crex crex</i>	Heard Canaraua Fetei, 7 <sup>th</sup> ; heard Mira Mai??, 13 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Little Crake</b>	<i>Porzana parva</i>	One glimpsed, C_l_ra_i Fish Ponds, 7 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Common Moorhen</b>	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	Noted 7 days, lowland wetlands.
<b>Eurasian Coot</b>	<i>Fulica atra</i>	Noted 7 days, lowland wetlands.
<b>Eurasian Oystercatcher</b>	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	Three on the beach, Mamaia-Sat, 8 <sup>th</sup> and 9 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Black-winged Stilt</b>	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i> Histria.	Noted three days at coastal wetlands; max 12 at
<b>Pied Avocet</b>	<i>Recurvirostra avocetta</i> Vadu.	Noted three days at coastal wetlands; max 20+
<b>Collared Pratincole</b>	<i>Glareola pratincola</i> at Vadu.	Seven in off the sea on 9 <sup>th</sup> ; 50+ later the same day
<b>(Northern) Lapwing</b>	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	Seen 6 days at lowland wetlands.
<b>Grey Plover</b>	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i> flying north.	Three off the beach, Mamaia-Sat on 9 <sup>th</sup> were
<b>(Greater) Ringed Plover</b>	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i> sat, 9 <sup>th</sup> .	One at Histria, 8 <sup>th</sup> . One off the beach, Mamaia-
<b>Little Ringed Plover</b>	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>	One at the beach, 8 <sup>th</sup> and 9 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Kentish Plover</b>	<i>Charadrius alexandrinus</i>	4-5 at Histria, 8 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Black-tailed Godwit</b>	<i>Limosa limosa</i>	Three at Histria, 8 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Spotted Redshank</b>	<i>Tringa erythropus</i>	Three at Histria, 8 <sup>th</sup> ; 10+ Vadu, 9 <sup>th</sup> – many in stunning breeding plumage.
<b>Common Redshank</b>	<i>Tringa totanus</i>	One Histria, 8 <sup>th</sup> ; at least two Vadu, 9 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Common Greenshank</b>	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>	One at Histria, 8 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Green Sandpiper</b>	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>	Three at Histria, 8 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Wood Sandpiper</b>	<i>Tringa glareola</i>	Up to 50/day on the coastal wetlands.
<b>Common Sandpiper</b>	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i> 9 <sup>th</sup> ; one Lake Fundata, 11 <sup>th</sup> .	Two from Danube ferry, 7 <sup>th</sup> ; 7 coastal wetlands,
<b>(Ruddy) Turnstone</b>	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>	One, N_vodari Pools, 8 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Sanderling</b>	<i>Calidris alba</i>	Up to four, Mamaia-Sat beach.
<b>Little Stint</b>	<i>Calidris minuta</i>	Up to 100/day coastal wetlands, but not in delta.
<b>Temminck's Stint</b>	<i>Calidris temminckii</i>	Two at Histria, 8 <sup>th</sup> .

<b>Dunlin</b>	<i>Calidris alpina</i>	Fifty at Histria, 8 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Curlew Sandpiper</b>	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>	5-10 at Histria, 8 <sup>th</sup> ; 100+ past Mamaia and on coastal wetlands, 9 <sup>th</sup> – many in superb breeding plumage.
<b>Ruff</b>	<i>Philomachus pugnax</i>	The most numerous wader, with several hundred per day on the coastal wetlands. Noted 5 days.
<b>Yellow-legged Gull</b>	<i>Larus michahellis</i>	Common and widespread.
<b>Caspian Gull</b>	<i>Larus cachinnans</i> C_l_ra_i	Noted three days, mainly on coast and near
<b>Lesser Black-backed (Baltic) Gull</b>	<i>Larus fuscus</i>	Two at Mamaia-Sat beach, 8 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Mediterranean Gull</b>	<i>Larus melanocephalus</i>	Good passage on 9 <sup>th</sup> , with 10+ past Mamaia-Sat heading north and 10+ at Vadu.
<b>Black-headed Gull</b>	<i>Larus ridibundus</i>	Noted 6 days at lowland wetlands.
<b>Little Gull</b>	<i>Larus minutus</i>	Passage on 9 <sup>th</sup> with 9 seen at various wetlands; 100+ at Fundata Lake on 11 <sup>th</sup> were also held up on passage.
<b>Whiskered Tern</b>	<i>Chlidonias hybrida</i>	The commonest tern. Widespread, on most lowland wetlands. Noted 7 days with several hundred/day on passage at Mamaia-Sat.
<b>White-winged (Black) Tern</b>	<i>Chlidonias leucoptera</i>	One of the most impressive sights of the trip was the constant passage of these past Mamaia-Sat and on coastal wetlands. Noted 4 days with hundreds seen on 8 <sup>th</sup> and 9 <sup>th</sup> , and superb views in the delta.
<b>Black Tern</b>	<i>Chlidonias niger</i>	Hundreds on passage at Mamaia-Sat and lowland wetlands - noted six days.
<b>Sandwich Tern</b>	<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>	Up to four/day on three days on the coast.
<b>Common Tern</b>	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>	Widespread on lowland wetlands – noted six days.
<b>Little Tern</b>	<i>Sterna albifrons</i>	Two off beach, 8 <sup>th</sup> . One, N_vodari Pools 9 <sup>th</sup> with two at Vadu.
<b>Rock Dove (Feral Pigeon)</b>	<i>Columba livia</i>	Common and widespread. Noted daily.
<b>Stock Dove</b>	<i>Columba oenas</i>	C10/day seen in an around the delta, 9 <sup>th</sup> and 10 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>(Common) Wood Pigeon</b>	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	Widespread, but never common. Up to c10/day in both lowlands and mountains on six days.
<b>European Turtle Dove</b>	<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>	Noted seen days, max passage on 7 <sup>th</sup> , when we lost count!
<b>Eurasian Collared Dove</b>	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	Common and widespread; noted daily.
<b>Common (Eurasian) Cuckoo</b>	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>	Wonderfully common and widespread. Seen on all but the first day. Max 40+ in the delta on 10 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Tawny Owl</b>	<i>Strix aluco</i>	Heard in the delta and at Sinaia.
<b>Kittiwake</b>		An extraordinary record of a first year bird close in off the beach at Mamaia-Sat, feeding with other gulls briefly on 8 <sup>th</sup> , then flying off south. A vagrant in Romania.
<b>Long-eared Owl</b>	<i>Asio otus</i>	Wonderful views of a roosting bird in the hotel grounds, Mamaia-sat, 8 <sup>th</sup> and 9 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Alpine Swift</b>	<i>Apus melba</i>	Superb views of c10 coming to their nest site in Zane_li Gorge on 13 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Common Swift</b>	<i>Apus apus</i>	Common and widespread – noted daily.
<b>Common Kingfisher</b>	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	Noted four days; two at C_l_ra_i Fish Ponds, 7 <sup>th</sup> . Five seen in the delta. One at Pucheni Moreni on 14 <sup>th</sup> .

<b>European Bee-eater</b>	<i>Merops apiaster</i>	40+ at Dervenii Monastery, 7 <sup>th</sup> ; two in the delta on 9 <sup>th</sup> , a distant flock at Fundata Lake on 11 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>European Roller</b>	<i>Coracias garrulus</i>	One of the highlights of the trip was seeing so many of these. Noted 5 days in coastal lowlands, max 50+ in the delta with superb views from the pontoon and boats.
<b>(Eurasian) Hoopoe</b>	<i>Upupa epops</i>	Up to c10/day on 5 days in coastal lowlands.
<b>Middle Spotted Woodpecker</b>	<i>Dendrocopos medius</i>	One at Celicdere Monastery on 11 <sup>th</sup> . Two at Mira 1 Mai on 14 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Syrian Woodpecker</b>	<i>Dendrocopos syriacus</i>	One fem. At C_l_ra_i town park on 7 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Great Spotted Woodpecker</b>	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>	Noted on three days – commonest in the delta.
<b>White-backed Woodpecker</b>	<i>Dendrocopos leucotos</i>	After a brief ‘heard-only’ at Queens Clearing, we waited until the final morning for one of the birds of the trip, with a pair wonderfully seen including – get this – a male excavating a nest hole outside Sinaia on 13 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Black Woodpecker</b>	<i>Dryocopus martius</i>	On heard at C_l_ra_i town park on 7 <sup>th</sup> ; one early morning from the ponton 10 <sup>th</sup> declared ‘Absolutely a Black Woodpecker’ by Jamie.
<b>Green Woodpecker</b>	<i>Picus viridis</i>	Three at C_l_ra_i town park on 7 <sup>th</sup> ; heard Sinaia on 12 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Grey-headed Woodpecker</b>	<i>Picus canus</i>	Heard C_l_ra_i, 7 <sup>th</sup> ; at least four seen well from the pontoon, 10 <sup>th</sup> ; heard Mira 1 Mai 13 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>European Nightjar</b>	<i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>	<u>The</u> bird of the trip for most. One male found near Fundata Lake in rain on a female, 11 <sup>th</sup> by Pauline, seen beautifully on a roadside branch. Another female incredibly also flushed by Pauline on 13 <sup>th</sup> at Mira 1 Mai from a grassy orchard was good in sunshine in a hedge there. Both birds presumably on passage.
<b>Calandra Lark</b>	<i>Melanocorypha calandra</i>	Excellent views on the lowland farmland on three days.
<b>Crested Lark</b>	<i>Galerida cristata</i>	Noted on four days sparsely on lowland farmland.
<b>(Eurasian) Sky Lark</b>	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	Widespread – noted seven days.
<b>European Sand Martin</b>	<i>Riparia riparia</i>	Noted six days in the lowlands with hundreds on most days, and max thousands in bad weather on 11 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Eurasian Crag Martin</b>	<i>Hirundo rupestris</i>	Four on 12 <sup>th</sup> in the two gorges, Carpathians.
<b>Barn Swallow</b>	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	Common and widespread, seen daily. Many on passage on the coast. Max thousands in bad weather on 11 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Red-rumped Swallow</b>	<i>Hirundo daurica</i>	Two pairs seen in and near Canaraua Fetei, 7 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Common House Martin</b>	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>	Common and widespread. Max hundreds in bad weather on 11 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Yellow (Blue headed) Wagtail</b>	<i>Motacilla flava</i>	Noted five days, mostly in singles.
<b>Black-headed Wagtail</b>	<i>Motacilla flava feldegg</i>	Noted four days in the lowlands. The most frequent race encountered.
<b>Grey-headed Wagtail</b>	<i>Motacilla flava thunbergi</i>	One at Histria, 8 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Yellow (Dombrowki’s) Wagtail</b>	<i>Motacilla flava dombrowskii</i>	This handsome Romanian race seen two days on the coast.
<b>White Wagtail</b>	<i>Motacilla alba alba</i>	Widespread. Noted daily. Commonest in the mountains.
<b>Grey Wagtail</b>	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	10+ seen daily in the mountains.
<b>Tawny Pipit</b>	<i>Anthus campestris</i>	One on Mamaia-Sat beach, 9 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Tree Pipit</b>	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>	Two seen Sinaia and Queens Clearing, 13 <sup>th</sup> .

<b>Red-throated Pipit</b>	<i>Anthus cervinus</i> 9 <sup>th</sup> .	Two seen well at Histria, 8 <sup>th</sup> . One heard at Vadu,
<b>Red-backed Shrike</b>	<i>Lanius collurio</i>	Common and delightfully widespread.
<b>Lesser Grey Shrike</b>	<i>Lanius minor</i>	Noted 6 days in the lowlands, max 7 on 7 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>(White-throated) Dipper</b>	<i>Cinclus cinclus</i>	Up to 6+ noted daily in the mountains.
<b>(Winter) Wren</b>	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	Noted three days in the mountains.
<b>Hedge Accentor (Dunnock)</b>	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	One at Sinaia, 11 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Ring Ouzel</b>	<i>Turdus torquatus</i> 13 <sup>th</sup> .	A superb male <i>alpestris</i> rare in Queen's Clearing,
<b>Common (Eurasian) Blackbird</b>	<i>Turdus merula</i> never numerous.	Widespread in both lowlands and mountains, but
<b>Fieldfare</b>	<i>Turdus pilaris</i>	Up to 4+ seen daily in mountains.
<b>Song Thrush</b>	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	Noted 6 days in both lowlands and mountains.
<b>Mistle Thrush</b>	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	Three in Queen's Clearing, 13 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>European Robin</b>	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	Noted five days, mostly in mountains.
<b>Thrush Nightingale</b>	<i>Luscinia luscinia</i> showed itself.	Noted six days, mostly heard, but the odd bird
<b>Common Nightingale</b>	<i>Luscinia megarhynchos</i> Moreai.	Heard Ostrov, Babadag, the delta and Pucheni
<b>Black Redstart</b>	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i> villages.	Noted six days. Mostly in and around towns and
<b>Common Redstart</b>	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>	Seen Mamaia-Sat on passage, with 10+ in the delta, and on two days in and around Sinaia.
<b>Whinchat</b>	<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>	Up to 5/day seen on passage on the coast and up to 3/day in the mountains. Noted 5 days in total.
<b>Common Stonechat</b>	<i>Saxicola torquata</i>	One near Canaraua Fetei on 7 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Northern Wheatear</b>	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	A handful noted five days in the lowlands.
<b>Pied Wheatear</b>	<i>Oenanthe pleschanka</i>	Two males at Cheia Dobrogea??, 8 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Black-eared Wheatear</b>	<i>Oenanthe hispanica</i>	Two males at Cheia Dobrogea??, 8 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Isabelline Wheatear</b>	<i>Oenanthe isabellina</i>	Two in the Dobrogea steppe, 8 <sup>th</sup> in heavy rain.
<b>Bearded Tit (Reedling)</b>	<i>Panurus biarmicus</i>	Up to 8/day in the Histria/Vadu wetlands.
<b>Savi's Warbler</b>	<i>Locustella luscinioides</i> with good sightings	Noted four days at various lowland reed beds, of reeling males at Histria and Vadu.
<b>Sedge Warbler</b>	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>	Noted four days in the coastal wetlands.
<b>Paddyfield Warbler</b>	<i>Acrocephalus agricola</i> 8 <sup>th</sup> .	One glimpsed a couple of times, N_vodari Pools,
<b>(Eurasian) Reed Warbler</b>	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>	Noted four days in the coastal wetlands.
<b>Great Reed Warbler</b>	<i>Acrocephalus arundinaceus</i> reeds.	Noted seven days in most lowland wetlands with
<b>Eastern Olivaceous Warbler</b>	<i>Hippolais pallida</i> 10 <sup>th</sup> .	One at Mamaia-Sat, 8 <sup>th</sup> . One from the ponton, Both early morning birds.
<b>Willow Warbler</b>	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>	Noted on seven days in both lowlands and mountains. C2/3/per day.
<b>Common Chiffchaff</b>	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	Noted on seven days in both lowlands and mountains. Max c5/day in mountains.
<b>Wood Warbler</b>	<i>Phylloscopus sibilatrix</i> Up to 2/3/per day.	Noted six days in both lowlands and mountains.

<b>Blackcap</b>	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	Noted daily. Max c10 Mamaia-Sat on 9 <sup>th</sup> amidst other passage migrants.
<b>Garden Warbler</b>	<i>Sylvia borin</i>	3/4 both in the delta and at Mira 1 Mai.
<b>Common Whitethroat</b>	<i>Sylvia communis</i>	3+ at Adamelisi Ruins, 7 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Lesser Whitethroat</b>	<i>Sylvia curruca</i>	One or two on four dates in the lowlands and mountains.
<b>Barred Warbler</b>	<i>Sylvia nisoria</i>	C4 at Bugeac Lake, 7 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Firecrest</b>	<i>Regulus ignicapillus</i>	A singing male at Sinaia on two mornings.
<b>Goldcrest</b>	<i>Regulus regulus</i>	Two singing outside Sinaia on 14 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Spotted Flycatcher</b>	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>	Noted five days, both lowlands and mountains, max 5+ in the delta.
<b>European Pied Flycatcher</b>	<i>Ficedula hypoleuca</i>	A total of six noted on passage 8 <sup>th</sup> and 10 <sup>th</sup> on the coast.
<b>Collared Flycatcher</b>	<i>Ficedula albicollis</i>	One or two noted on six dates both lowlands and mountains. Excellent views of some superb males both on passage and on territory.
<b>Red-breasted Flycatcher</b>	<i>Ficedula parva</i>	One or two noted each day around Sinaia, with wonderful views of a singing male on the morning of 13 <sup>th</sup> in the Peles Castle garden.
<b>Long-tailed Tit</b>	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>	Singles in the delta on two dates, with a pair near Râsnov on 13 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>(Eurasian) Penduline Tit</b>	<i>Remiz pendulinus</i>	10+ in the delta with fabulous views of a pair building a nest, watched from the small boats.
<b>Marsh Tit</b>	<i>Parus palustris</i>	3+ at Râsnov Citadel.
<b>Willow Tit</b>	<i>Parus lugubris</i>	One outside Sinaia on 14 <sup>th</sup> was our final new bird – our 205 <sup>th</sup> ! - of the trip
<b>Coal Tit</b>	<i>Parus ater</i>	Up to c10/day in the mountains.
<b>Great Tit</b>	<i>Parus major</i>	Noted 7 days – common in the delta and mountains.
<b>Blue Tit</b>	<i>Parus caeruleus</i>	Noted 4 days – abundant only in the delta.
<b>Eurasian Nuthatch</b>	<i>Sitta europaea</i>	Noted at Celicdere Monastery and in the mountains.
<b>Eurasian Treecreeper</b>	<i>Certhia familiaris</i>	Three seen in the delta. One at Râsnov Citadel, with singles in Sinaia.
<b>Eurasian Jay</b>	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	Two Canaraua Fetei; one near Histria; seen both days in the mountains.
<b>Black-billed (Common) Magpie</b>	<i>Pica pica</i>	Common and widespread.
<b>Eurasian (Western) Jackdaw</b>	<i>Corvus monedula</i>	Common and widespread.
<b>Rook</b>	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	Common and widespread.
<b>Hooded Crow</b>	<i>Corvus cornix</i>	Common and widespread,
<b>Common Raven</b>	<i>Corvus corax</i>	Heard Cheia dobrogea; seen three days in the mountains with a remarkable stack of 50+ circling near Mira 1 Mai, on 13 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>(Eurasian) Golden Oriole</b>	<i>Oriolus oriolus</i>	The numbers of these seen almost daily was one of the more delightful features of the trip. Usual daily count 10-20 and heard frequently.
<b>Common (European) Starling</b>	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	Common and widespread.
<b>Corn Bunting</b>	<i>Emberiza calandra</i>	Widespread in farmland.

<b>Yellowhammer</b>	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>	One Canaraua Fetei, one Babadag; two seen on both visits Mira 1 Mai.
<b>Ortolan Bunting</b>	<i>Emberiza hortulana</i>	Superb singing male in Babadag Forest.
<b>Black-headed Bunting</b>	<i>Emberiza melanocephala</i>	Superb male in a fallow strip amongst ploughed fields near Histria, 8 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>(Eurasian) Reed Bunting</b>	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>	Up to 10/day on coast in reedbeds.
<b>Common Chaffinch</b>	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	Widespread 0 noted 7 days.
<b>European Serin</b>	<i>Serinus serinus</i>	3-4 at Râsnov Citadel; one over the hotel in Sinaia on 13 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>European Greenfinch</b>	<i>Carduelis chloris</i>	Widespread but never common; noted 7 days both coast and mountains.
<b>European Goldfinch</b>	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	Widespread and more frequent than the former species, noted 7 days both coast and mountains.
<b>Common Linnet</b>	<i>Carduelis cannabina</i>	Six at Adamclisi; also seen at Râsnov citadel.
<b>Common (Red) Crossbill</b>	<i>Loxia curvirostra</i>	Up to 4/day over Sinaia included a stunning red male perched outside the hotel on the final morning.
<b>Eurasian Bullfinch</b>	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	Just 'scoped' this with a male in Queen's Clearing on 13 <sup>th</sup> , and a male over the hotel on 14 <sup>th</sup> in Sinaia.
<b>Hawfinch</b>	<i>Coccothraustes coccothraustes</i>	10+ in Canaraua Fetei gave superb views feeding in low branches. Three at Celicdere Monastery. Two over Sinaia, 13 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>House Sparrow</b>	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	Very common and widespread.
<b>Spanish Sparrow</b>	<i>Passer hispaniolensis</i>	Seen each day 6 <sup>th</sup> -9 <sup>th</sup> , with excellent views at Lake Bugeac.
<b>Eurasian Tree Sparrow</b>	<i>Passer montanus</i>	Delightfully common and widespread.
<b>MAMMALS</b>		
<b>Common Mole</b>	<i>Talpa europaea</i>	One seen caught by a Marsh Harrier near Vadu on 9 <sup>th</sup> , from a ploughed field.
<b>Red Fox</b>	<i>Vulpes vulpes</i>	One seen well in the delta from the ponton.
<b>Brown Bear</b>	<i>Ursus arctos</i>	One seen on the outskirts of Brasov - superb views close to the bus late at night.
<b>Wild Boar</b>	<i>Sus scrofa</i>	Prints and 'rootings' seen in the mountains.
<b>Red Deer</b>	<i>Cervus elaphus</i>	One seen freshly killed on the road to Brasov at night.
<b>Roe Deer</b>	<i>Capreolus capreolus</i>	One C_l_ra_i Fish Ponds, 7 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Red Squirrel</b>	<i>Sciurus vulgaris</i>	Up to 5/day at Sinaia.
<b>European Souselik</b>	<i>Spermophilus citellus</i>	Several seen between Bucharest and the coast, 6 <sup>th</sup> & 7 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Muskrat</b>	<i>Ondatra zibethicus</i>	One C_l_ra_i Fish Ponds; two seen well in the delta.
<b>Brown Hare</b>	<i>Lepus europaeus</i>	One Celicdere Monastery.
<b>AMPHIBIANS</b>		
<b>Fire-bellied Toad</b>	<i>Bombina bombina</i>	Heard in the lowland wetlands.
<b>Yellow-bellied Toad</b>	<i>Bombina variegata</i>	A few seen in the mountains in roadside ditches and puddles.
<b>Marsh Frog</b>	<i>Rana ridibunda</i>	This or the following species were abundant in the wetlands.
<b>Edible/Pool Frog</b>	<i>Rana esculenta/lessonae</i>	
<b>Eastern Spadefoot</b>	<i>Pelobates syriacus</i>	Two at old factory, Vadu.
<b>REPTILES</b>		
<b>Green Lizard</b>	<i>Lacerta viridis</i>	One juv. Canaraua Fetei.

<b>Balkan Green Lizard</b>	<i>Lacerta trilineata</i>	Two Babadag Forest.
<b>Sand Lizard</b>	<i>Lacerta agilis</i>	Several in the mountains, usually in meadows.
<b>Snake-eyed Skink</b>	<i>Ablepharus kitaibelii</i>	One at Babadag Forest.
<b>Spur-thighed Tortoise</b>	<i>Testudo graeca</i>	One Canaraura Fetei.
<b>European Pond Terrapin</b>	<i>Emys orbicularis</i>	One dead at Vadu, several at Pucheni Moreni pond, 14 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Grass Snake</b>	<i>Natrix natrix</i>	Three in the delta.
<b>BUTTERFLIES</b>		
<b>Scarce swallowtail</b>	<i>Iphiclides podalirius</i>	Seen Babadag Forest and Sinaia.
<b>Large white</b>	<i>Pieris brassicae</i>	Seen Canaraura Forest and area.
<b>Small white</b>	<i>Artogeia rapae</i>	Seen Canaraura Forest and area.
<b>Green-veined white</b>	<i>Artogeia napi</i>	Seen on at least four days.
<b>Orange-tip</b>	<i>Anthocharis cardamines</i>	Seen on at least four days.
<b>Brimstone</b>	<i>Gonepteryx rhamni</i>	Canaraura Fetei and Sinaia, where numerous.
<b>Wood White</b>	<i>Leptidea sinapis</i>	Babadag Forest and mountains.
<b>Holly blue</b>	<i>Celastrina argiolus</i>	Seen three days, Canaraura Forest and mountains.
<b>Common blue</b>	<i>Polyommatus icarus</i>	Seen Canaraura Fetei.
<b>Common glider</b>	<i>Neptis sappho</i>	One seen Canaraura Fetei.
<b>MapButterfly</b>	<i>Araschinia levana</i>	Seen well at Canaraura Fetei.
<b>Camberwell Beauty</b>	<i>Nymphalis antiopa</i>	Seen fleetingly Mina 1 Mai.
<b>Peacock</b>	<i>Inachis io</i>	Several Mina 1 Mai
<b>Red admiral</b>	<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>	Canaraura Fetei and Mina 1 Mai.
<b>Comma</b>	<i>Polygonia c-album</i>	At Canaraura Fetei and Sinaia.
<b>Speckled wood</b>	<i>Pararge aegeria</i>	Canaraura Fetei and mountains.
<b>Dingy skipper</b>	<i>Erynnis tages</i>	Canaraura Fetei, Babadag and mountains.
<b>Large skipper</b>	<i>Ochlodes venatus</i>	Ostrov and mountains.
<b>MOTHS</b>		
<b>Speckled yellow</b>	<i>Pseudopanthera macularia</i>	Canaraura Fetei and Babadag.
<b>Silver Y</b>	<i>Autographa gamma</i>	Babadag.
<b>DRAGONFLIES</b>		
<b>Azure Damselfly</b>	<i>Coenagrion puella</i>	many at Pucheni Moreni pond.
<b>Blue-tailed Damselfly</b>	<i>Ischnura elegans</i>	Seen in the delta and Pucheni Moreni pond.
<b>Broad-bodied Chaser</b>	<i>Libellula depressa</i>	Many at Pucheni Moreni pond.
<b>Lesser Emperor</b>	<i>Anax parthenope</i>	Several in the delta.
<b>OTHER INSECTS</b>		
<b>Field Cricket</b>	<i>Gryllus campestris</i>	Heard at C_l_ra_i Fish Ponds, 7 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Hornet</b>	<i>Vespa crabro</i>	Seen in the delta and Pucheni Moreni pond.
<b>Violet Carpenter Bee</b>	<i>Xylocopa violacea</i>	One at Babadag.
<b>Oil Beetle</b>	<i>Meloe sp.</i>	One at Sinaia, 13 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Violet Ground Beetle</b>	<i>Carabus violaceus</i>	One Mina 1 Mai.
<b>7-spot Ladybird</b>	<i>Coccinella 7-punctata</i>	A few in the mountains.

Reading past reports, I knew it was going to be good – but this was a truly great trip! Starting with the overwhelming numbers of birds at C\_l\_ra\_i Fish Ponds, we ended the first full day with an astonishing 117 species including Dalmatian Pelican and Levant Sparrowhawk – both new birds for me. The migration in off the sea and along the Black Sea coast was something quite extraordinary – a wetland bird extravaganza comparable to the great raptor movements I've seen at Eilat and Panama! The huge wetlands on the coast were superb as ever (but have any of us ever seen so many marsh terns?), and Simon excelled even his sharp eyes at Babadag Forest with a pair of displaying Levant Sparrowhawks.

But having heard about the Danube floods I was worried that the delta would be full of water with no birds. Not a bit of it – the views of Rollers, herons and even woodpeckers were amazing, and the whole ponton experience uniquely enjoyable. A lurgy caught up with me on the travel day, but I still managed to enjoy Pauline's roadside Nightjar – what an extraordinary find! Then on to the lovely scenery of the Carpathians around Tudor's home patch, with swathes of Oxlips in the woods and meadows, alpine Ring Ouzel and the last-day White-backed Woodpecker at its nest outstanding for me. Oh, and Pauline's

*double-whammy of another Nightjar! The Brown Bear right beside the coach at Brasov was superb – but sad to think that we may be the last wildlife group to go there, after our ‘blue-light’ experience!*

*I would like to thank Tudor for his superb leadership, enthusiasm and knowledge, Costi for his patience and excellent driving, and also all of you whose good company, support and good cheer made this trip so enjoyable. I look forward to seeing you all on another trip in the not-too-distant future.*

*Jamie McMillan, June 2006*

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**Middle Spotted Woodpecker**