

# Canary Islands

## Friday 11 – Friday 18 July 2008

### Leader:

Tony Clarke

## Tour Report

### Day 1 Friday 11th July

This year there were no major flight delays and so we were able to make the most of our first afternoon on Tenerife with a visit to the picnic area above Vilaflor. This area, known as Las Lajas, is now world famous as the most popular location for seeing the endemic Blue Chaffinch *Fringilla teydea*. This species is not only a different colour from its more widespread relative; it is also larger with a bigger bill which it uses for removing the seeds from the native pine cones. Also here we were treated to a fine display by the endemic form of the Great Spotted Woodpecker *D. m. canariensis* which appears to have dirty underparts in comparison to the north European forms and we encountered our first Atlantic Canaries *Serinus canaria* as they came to drink at a small pool along side the Woodpeckers and Blue Chaffinches. All in all quite a good start to the trip and we still had the scenic part of the afternoon to come. The drive through the Teide National Park was full of the usual delights and apart from the spectacular views we had some very close encounters with a few Canary Blues *Cylyrius webbianus* that landed on many of the group looking for salt and giving some excellent photographic opportunities. The drive back to Guimar was still quite scenic with the views across the Guimar valley but the road was rather windy, at least until we reached Arafo. After checking into the Hotel Finca Salamanca we had dinner and then retired after what was a rather long day for most of the group, as the flights all left the UK fairly early in the day.

### Day 2 Saturday 12th July

After a fairly casual breakfast we headed in the direction of the Anaga Peninsula where we stopped in the picnic area at the base of Monte Las Mercedes. As is usual the area already had some people preparing for their weekend barbeque but we still managed to see some of our target species that resided in the laurel forest. The endemic race of Chaffinch *F. c. canariensis*, with its pale peachy breast and blue upperparts was a common feature of the picnic area as they hopped around the tables in search of a few crumbs. *Cyanistes teneriffae teneriffae*, the local form of the African Blue Tit, was also fairly common and gave most people some great views of this recently split species. But the stars at this location were the endemic Bolle's Pigeons that perched in full view and long enough for everyone to get a good look through the telescopes at this scarce species. The dark terminal tail band and the orange tip to the bill were features that could clearly be seen by all before they flew away from their exposed positions and back into the forest. The next location was on the north coast of the island and was a small roadside pull in known as the Mirador Lagrimonas. Here we soon located the other endemic pigeon, the Laurel Pigeon, which can be distinguished from Bolle's Pigeon very easily by the white terminal band on the tail, usually displayed when the birds land, and the white tip to the bill when the tail can't be seen. Also here we were treated to a fine display by the local endemic reptile, the Western Canary Lizard *Gallotia gallotii*, we saw both the colourful males and the stripy immatures and females as they fought over the food scraps we threw for them. So on to the Monte del Agua area where we stopped for our first picnic lunch, it was an idyllic spot away from the crowds on the edge of an area of laurel forest but the weather was not so good, with some very gusty wind that made the whole experience a little less enjoyable. The rest of the afternoon was spent on the very windswept Punta de Teno where apart from scratching at the surface of the botanical wonders of this area we actually saw very little else as the Barbary Falcons for which the location is well known were either elsewhere or sheltering from the incessant wind. After a while the wind got the better of us as well and we gave up for the afternoon and returned to the Hotel Finca Salamanca.

### Day 3 Sunday 13th July

We had an early start this morning with a picnic breakfast as we were catching the ferry from Los Cristianos across to the neighbouring island of La Gomera. The ferry crossing is the best chance on the tour for seeing any of the more scarce seabirds as well as getting some views of the local cetacean population. The crossing over was not as eventful as one would have liked but a Bulwer's Petrel *Bulweria bulwerii* for most and an elusive Macaronesian Shearwater *Puffinus baroli* were the highlights for the birders along with some superb views of Cory's Shearwaters as they effortlessly glided over the waves. For the non birders the highlight of the crossing was undoubtedly the views of the resident population of Short-finned Pilot Whales, some of which came quite close to the boat. Once we docked on La Gomera we headed directly to the town park in San Sebastian where we saw an obliging Hoopoe plus a couple of nice butterfly species, namely Monarch and African Grass Blue. After this we headed inland and entered the Parque Nacional de Garajonay, unfortunately the weather was less than desired and the majority of the National Park was covered in low cloud leaving us with what could only be described as severely depleted visibility. This meant that the usual lookout, the Mirador del Rejo, wasn't at its best as we looked for the endemic pigeons. We stuck it out for a while and got some brief views of a Bolle's Pigeon and a few more prolonged views of a few Laurel Pigeons but the highlight was the rather obscured views of the West Canary Skink *Chalcides viridanus coeruleopunctatus*. This is now treated by some authorities as a distinct species *Chalcides coeruleopunctatus* (Salvador's Skink) and it appeared below the lookout wall just before we tried to get out of the cloud for our picnic. Unfortunately this didn't work and today's picnic was taken under rather damp conditions at the La Laguna Grande recreation area, but a bit of dampness was a lot better than the wind we had yesterday. During the day we also got some good views of the endemic Tenerife Kinglet and Canary Island Chiffchaff as well as many of the local race of Blackbird, African Blue Tit and Chaffinch plus a few Atlantic Canaries at lunch time. In the early afternoon we had another try from the Mirador del Rejo where the visibility had improved but the results were much the same. Our final stop for the day was in the vicinity of Los Roques, where we stood and admired these three ancient volcanic plugs – Roque Agando, Roque Ojila and Roque La Zarzita. By now the wind had become rather ferocious in this part of the island and so we didn't wait around for long. We did see a few endemic plants but other forms of life were remaining well hidden. All too soon it was time to return to San Sebastian where we caught the return ferry to Tenerife. The return crossing produced another Bulwer's Petrel and a few Short-finned Pilot Whales and apart from the ever present Cory's Shearwaters that was about it on the sea, which was a little disappointing. Once we were back on Tenerife we decided that there was still plenty of time to look for the Tricoloured Heron which had been on Tenerife since at least February and because of its rare status in Europe had attracted a lot of attention from many European birders. We checked all the beaches on which it had been seen recently but we could not find it anywhere. Eventually Tony located the bird on one of the fish pens off Los Cristianos but it was distant and not very easy to see even with the telescopes. It was spending a lot of time partially obscured but eventually everyone got some reasonable views of this first record for the Canary Islands. We also saw a couple of Berthelot's Pipits which were new for the majority of the group and gave us some excellent views as they ran around the rocks nearby. This species is the smallest of the Western Palearctic pipits and its affinities to Tawny Pipit in stance and habits were clear for all to see.

### Day 4 Monday 14th July

We had another early start this morning with a picnic breakfast as we had to catch our flight across to Fuerteventura. After the short flight and the effortless process of sorting out our vehicle for the next two days we headed off to our first location for the day at the Barranco de la Torre which was just a few kilometres south of the airport. We started well with a few Barbary Partridges and then a family group of Egyptian Vultures were located on their nesting cliff, two adults and an immature of the newly described race *N. p. majorensis* were watched preening before the adults took to the wing and left the area. However the stars of the morning were three Canary Islands Stonechats that gave us some incredible views as they approached us to within a few feet. After lunch at the Los Caracolitos restaurant in Salinas del Carmen, where we added Lesser Black-backed Gull and Whimbrel to the trip list, we continued southwards in the direction of our overnight base but en route we made a short diversion to the small reservoir known as Rosa de Catalina Garcia. This was the only place we recorded Ruddy Shelduck this year plus a reasonable selection of waterbirds including breeding Black-winged Stilts, a solitary Eurasian Spoonbill, Little Ringed and Kentish Plovers, a few Little Egrets, some Common Moorhens and the numerous Common Coots. Next stop en route to our hotel was La Lajita, a coastal location

with a lot of introduced vegetation as there is a small zoo, Cactus Park and camel ride all in the same area. This is one of the most reliable sites on Fuerteventura for Laughing Dove, a species that has recently colonised the island from mainland Africa. We search for a while without any luck but on the way back to our minibus a small group were located on the side of a dirt track. They seemed a little wary and the views could only be described as reasonable but that's certainly better than none at all. Also in this area we got some good views of a Southern Grey Shrike and rather surprisingly a pair of escaped Common Mynas while the lush and colourful roadside shrubs provided good habitat for Monarch Butterflies. The last birding for the day, only a short drive from our overnight base at the Hotel Sol Gorriones, was on the desert plain behind the ever expanding tourist development at Costa Calma. Although the increase in tourism here has directly increased the amount of human interference particularly in the number of people walking dogs, it is still possible to see many of the islands desert specialities with relative ease by driving on the network of dirt tracks that criss-cross the area. During the hour or so we had available to us we were able to get some good views of Stone-curlew, a family group of well camouflaged Cream-coloured Coursers as they ran around the plain and small flocks of Black-bellied Sandgrouse easily located in flight as they gave their distinctive bubbling call. But the highlights of the afternoon, if not the whole trip, were the views of a displaying male Houbara Bustard. This bird frequently fluffed up his black and white neck plumes, threw his head back and then ran around the desert like a headless chicken. This is one of those never to be forgotten experiences that the natural world produces from time to time.

### **Day 5 Tuesday 15th July**

Our second day on Fuerteventura started with an early morning excursion on to the Costa Calma plain trying for better views of the desert specialities. This morning we got some great views of a number of Stone-curlews and Cream-coloured Coursers but the highlight of the morning were the additional views of Houbara Bustard. We saw three different individuals and one of those was fairly close to our vehicle. The surprise of the morning was a distinct lack of Black-bellied Sandgrouse but you can't have everything. After breakfast we drove south to Morro Jable where a short stop outside the Dunas Jandia Resort gave us a great opportunity to observe the comings and goings of the colonial nesting Monk Parakeets. These birds are now fully established in this area and are a colourful but noisy addition to the local avifauna. Our next port of call was within the Jandia National Park and was one of the few locations where the rare and endemic *Euphorbia handiensis* can be found with relative ease. Today turned into a special day for Tony as this was the first time he had ever seen this particular plant species in flower, a fortunate experience for us all. On our way back to Costa Calma and en route to the centre of the island our attention was drawn to a group of birds flying high over the coast. A flock of herons was suggested and Tony rather flippantly put forward the idea that they might be storks. They were indeed storks, a flock of twelve White Storks migrating north along the coast just south of Costa Calma. While we watched they came inland, lost altitude but continued northwards over the desert hills and were lost in the distance. During the afternoon we started with a short time with the rather tame Ground Squirrels that frequent the mirador overlooking the now dry reservoir Presa de Las Peñitas. Then it was on to the barranco at Vega de Rio Palmas where we found the local race of African Blue Tit and another surprise for the day in the form of a European Bee-eater which flew over us a couple of times. Also along this valley were the Damselfly *Ischnura saharensis* known as Saharan Bluetail and a couple of Dragonflies, Epulet Skimmer *Orthetrum chrysostigma* and Broad Scarlet *Crocothemis erythraea*. The last stop for the day was a brief one in the Barranco de Rio Cabras where we saw little of note except for some good views of Canary Islands Stonechat as we drove in.

### **Day 6 Wednesday 16th July**

Back on Tenerife and our first stop for the day was at the Barranco de Ruiz where our most exciting encounter was with a couple of Canary Island Robins, one of which performed very well indeed. We then continued westwards to Punta de Teno, via Los Silos, where we had our second attempt at Barbary Falcon and this time we succeeded. A brief look at the vegetation in this area added a few rare species including *Limonium fruticans* which has a particularly restricted distribution on the island. The last location visited was the fields bordering the northern airport of Los Rodeos where we got our first looks at the western race of Linnet *C. c. meadewaldoi* and a large number of Corn Buntings which marked the end of a rather uneventful day.

## Day 7 Thursday 17th July

The last full day of the tour started with an early morning hunt for the Tricoloured Heron but today we were unlucky and could not locate the bird let alone get some better views of the bird. We also called in at a couple of reservoirs in the south of the island. The first at Cabo Blanco held a Lesser Flamingo of unknown origin which certain people consider to be a strong contender for a wild bird but at times it appeared a little tame. The second was the more well known Roquito del Fraile where we saw an unseasonal Black-headed Gull and a Spoonbill along with a load of Coot but nothing else note worthy. In the afternoon we did the return trip across to La Gomera and we had quite a good time with some excellent sightings of both birds and mammals. The avian highlight, apart from a couple of Bulwer's Petrels, was a close White-faced Storm-petrel which we observed characteristically bouncing off the sea – what a bird. The mammalian highlight other than the expected Short-finned Pilot Whale was a close, but brief, Cuvier's Beaked Whale that surfaced a few times before disappearing off into the distance. This was a fitting climax to the day and a good way to complete the final day of the tour.

## Day 8 Friday 18th July

The fact that the group was leaving on two different flights meant that John and Pam had a bit of extra time during the afternoon but we were all together up to lunchtime. The only birding of the morning was at Las Lajas where the species we much the same as our visit on the first day with some good views of both Blue Chaffinch and Great Spotted Woodpecker. Unfortunately when we dropped the advanced party at the airport we discovered that the flight back to London had been delayed by a substantial length of time. This is one problem that can never be blamed on anyone but can be a bit annoying at the end of the trip. As there was still some time available John and Pam went to Las Americas hunting for the Tricoloured Heron but it could not be located and the only thing we saw were a few waders including Turnstone and Dunlin which were the final additions to the trip list.

### Checklist of Bird Species Recorded

(Total species = 74)

#### **Barbary Partridge** *Alectoris barbara koenigi*

Only recorded on Fuerteventura where the best views were given by a group of about 20 birds seen in the Barranco de la Torre.

#### **Ruddy Shelduck** *Tadorna ferruginea*

Only recorded on Fuerteventura where 2 were seen at Rosa de Catalina Garcia on the 14th.

#### **Bulwer's Petrel** *Bulweria bulwerii*

Three on the first ferry trip and then two on the second trip were the only records this year.

#### **Cory's Shearwater** *Calonectris diomedea borealis*

Particularly numerous on all our ferry crossings and they really do give excellent views as they effortlessly glide over the waves.

#### **Macaronesian Shearwater** *Puffinus baroli*

As with last year this was a very scarce bird this year with only two individuals seen from the ferry on the 13th and neither of these were seen by everybody.

#### **White-faced Storm-petrel** *Pelagodroma marina*

One was seen well by everyone on the ferry trip on the 17th. It bounced off the water a couple of times in characteristic fashion and gave us some excellent close views all be it rather briefly. Along side the Tricoloured Heron this was one of the birds of the trip.

#### **[Sacred Ibis** *Threskiornis aethiopicus]*

One of the free flying birds was seen in the grounds of the Dunas Jandia Resort, Fuerteventura on the 15th.

#### **Lesser Flamingo** *Phoenicopterus minor*

A single bird of unknown origin was seen on the small reservoir at Cabo Blanco on the 17th.

#### **European White Stork** *Ciconia ciconia*

A flock of twelve birds were seen migrating along the coast and then over Costa Calma on the 15th.

#### **Eurasian Spoonbill** *Platalea leucorodia*

One at Rosa de Catalina Garcia on Fuerteventura on the 14th and one at Roquito del Fraile on Tenerife on the 17th were the only records for the tour.

**Western Cattle Egret** *Bubulcus ibis*

Three were seen on Fuerteventura on the 15th.

**Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea*

On Tenerife two were seen on the 13th and then one at Roquito del Fraile on the 17th, these were the only records this year.

**Tricoloured Heron** *Egretta tricolour*

This rare vagrant was seen on the Los Cristianos fish pens on the 13th, the views were not very good and it remained obscured for periods of time but these views were better than none at all. Some research after the tour discovered that this was the last sighting of this species during July and it has not been seen since, yet!

**Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta*

Fairly common with a maximum of ten on the Los Cristianos fish pens on the 13th and seven at Rosa de Catalina Garcia, Fuerteventura, on the 14th.

**Common Kestrel** *Falco tinnunculus*

*F. t. canariensis* common and widespread on Tenerife and La Gomera.

*F. t. dacotiae* recorded on Fuerteventura where it was widespread but not common.

**Barbary Falcon** *Falco pelegrinoides*

One was seen by Svein near to Poris de Abona on the 13th, one on Fuerteventura on the 15th and then back on Tenerife there were two at Punta de Teno on the 16th.

**Osprey** *Pandion haliaetus*

One on Fuerteventura on the 15th was the only record for the trip.

**Egyptian Vulture** *Neophron percnopterus majorensis*

This species was only recorded on our first day on Fuerteventura when three birds, a family group, were seen well on the small cliff along the Barranco de la Torre.

**Eurasian Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter nisus granti*

The only record this year was a single bird seen on the 18th.

**Common Buzzard** *Buteo buteo insularum*

Recorded on all the islands visited.

**Houbara Bustard** *Chlamydotis undulata fuerteventurae*

Only recorded on the Costa Calma Plain on Fuerteventura where one was seen during the late afternoon of the 14th and then three were located the following morning with one of these giving us some very good views.

**Common Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus*

Only recorded on Fuerteventura with about a dozen birds at Rosa de Catalina Garcia on the 14th and then one at the Barranco de Rio Cabras on the 15th.

**Common Coot** *Fulica atra*

Recorded on both Tenerife and Fuerteventura with maximum counts of 73 at Rosa de Catalina Garcia on the 14th and 35 at Roquito del Fraile on the 18th.

**Eurasian Stone-curlew** *Burhinus oedicnemus insularum*

The most unusual record was one at Salinas del Carmen in the middle of the day on 14th. The majority were seen in the same area of the Costa Calma plain on the evening of 14th and the morning of 15th with a maximum of about 30 birds on our morning visit.

**Black-winged Stilt** *Himantopus himantopus*

Seven adults and five chicks were seen at Rosa de Catalina Garcia on the 14th, obvious proof of breeding again this year.

**Little Ringed Plover** *Charadrius dubius*

Recorded on both Tenerife and Fuerteventura but this year it was scarce on both islands with a maximum count of three birds seen on each island.

**Kentish Plover** *Charadrius alexandrinus*

A pair of adults with two chicks were seen at Rosa de Catalina Garcia, Fuerteventura on the 14th.

**Whimbrel** *Numenius phaeopus*

One at Salinas del Carmen on the 14th and then two at Playa de Las Americas on the 18th.

**Ruddy Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres*

Seven were seen in Playa de Las Americas by Tony, John and Pam on the afternoon of the 18th.

**Dunlin** *Calidris alpina*

One was seen in Playa de Las Americas by Tony, John and Pam on the afternoon of the 18th.

**Cream-coloured Courser** *Cursorius cursor*

Only recorded on our visits to the Costa Calma plain but it was more numerous on the 15th when about 20 individuals were seen.

**Yellow-legged Gull** *Larus michahellis*

This species was recorded virtually daily on the tour and on all the islands visited.

**Lesser Black-backed Gull** *Larus fuscus*

One was seen at Salinas del Carmen, Fuerteventura on the 14th.

**Black-headed Gull** *Larus ridibundus*

The only record was one at Roquito del Fraile on the 17th.

**Common Tern** *Sterna hirundo*

One was seen from the ferry to La Gomera on the 17th.

**Black-bellied Sandgrouse** *Pterocles orientalis*

Only recorded on our late afternoon visit to the Costa Calma plain when we saw a total of 39 birds.

**Rock Dove/Feral Rock Dove** *Columba livia*

Either of these forms was recorded daily, although genuine looking Rock Doves were the rarer and only seen in a couple of areas.

**Bolle's Pigeon** *Columba bollii*

Recorded on both Tenerife and La Gomera, the best views were a few perched birds in a dead tree that was visible from the picnic area on Monte Las Mercedes on the 12th.

**Laurel Pigeon** *Columba junoniae*

On Tenerife birds were seen well from the Mirador de Lagrimonas and on La Gomera from the Mirador del Rejo within the boundaries of the Garajonay National Park.

**European Turtle Dove** *Streptopelia turtur*

This species was recorded almost daily but the maximum count was about half a dozen birds.

**Eurasian Collared Dove** *Streptopelia decaocto*

Reported daily during the tour.

**Laughing Dove** *Streptopelia senegalensis*

Nine were seen at La Lajita, Fuerteventura on the 14th and then the following day there were two at Vega de Rio Palmas.

**Rose-ringed Parakeet** *Psittacula krameri*

A flock of ten were seen in Los Cristianos on the 17th.

**Monk Parakeet** *Myiopsitta monachus*

This year the only birds seen were at Morro Jable on Fuerteventura where thirty or more were flying around their communal nests. They were also heard in Los Cristianos on the 17th.

**Long-eared Owl** *Asio otus canariensis*

One young bird was located roosting in a tree in the town park in San Sebastian on La Gomera on the 17th. The location of this bird was given away by the alarm calls of Blackbirds emanating from the same tree.

**Plain Swift** *Apus unicolor*

Common and widespread on Tenerife and La Gomera but it was much more scarce on Fuerteventura.

**European Bee-eater** *Merops apiaster*

One flew over the barranco, a couple of times, at Vega de Rio Palmas on the 15th.

**Common Hoopoe** *Upupa epops*

Rather surprisingly there were only two birds seen on the tour this year, one in the park in San Sebastian on the 13th and one on Fuerteventura on the 14th.

**Great Spotted Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos major canariensis*

Only recorded from the picnic area at Las Lajas where we saw five on our first visit and three on our second.

**Southern Grey Shrike** *Lanius meridionalis koenigi*

Only one was seen on Tenerife but it was much more numerous on Fuerteventura.

**Common Raven** *Corvus corax tingitanus*

Only recorded on Fuerteventura this year, where it was a common and widespread species.

**African Blue Tit** *Cyanistes teneriffae*

*C. t. teneriffae* easily located this year and quite common in the forests around Monte Las Mercedes, also in the grounds of our hotel.

*C. t. degener* much more localised than the *teneriffae* subspecies but they appear to be regular in the barranco at Vega de Rio Palmas after an absence of a year or two.

**Barn Swallow** *Hirundo rustica*

One was seen hawking insects in the park in San Sebastian, La Gomera on the 13th.

**Northern House Martin** *Delichon urbica*

Only recorded from Fuerteventura with three seen on the 15th.

**Lesser Short-toed Lark** *Calandrella rufescens polatzeki*

Fairly common in the desert areas on Fuerteventura.

**Canary Islands Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus canariensis*

Widespread and numerous on both Tenerife and La Gomera where it was found in the grounds of our hotel and in all forested areas.

**Blackcap** *Sylvia atricapilla heineken*

Present in the hotel gardens on Tenerife, in the park on La Gomera and in forested areas.

**Spectacled Warbler** *Sylvia conspicillata orbitalis*

Common and widespread on Fuerteventura but rather surprisingly just one bird was seen on Tenerife this year.

**Sardinian Warbler** *Sylvia melanocephala leucogastra*

Heard on Tenerife, but the only birds seen on the tour were in the barranco at Vega de Rio Palmas, Fuerteventura on the 15th.

**Canary Islands Kinglet** *Regulus teneriffae*

Our only sightings this year were by the Mirador del Rejo on La Gomera in the damp and misty laurel forest where the birds seemed quite confiding for once.

**Eurasian Blackbird** *Turdus merula cabreræ*

Fairly common on both Tenerife and La Gomera.

**Canary Islands Robin** *Erithacus superbis*

The only birds seen this year were two birds in the Barranco de Ruiz on the 16th, one of which was really quite showy and displayed the partial eye-ring, grey cowl and redder breast (in comparison to the European Robin) very well.

**Canary Islands Stonechat** *Saxicola dacotiae*

Endemic to Fuerteventura and seen well on both days, particularly so at our first port of call in the Barranco de la Torre on the 14th.

[**Common Myna** *Acridotheres tristis*]

Two obvious escapes were seen at La Lajita, Fuerteventura on the 14th.

**Spanish Sparrow** *Passer hispaniolensis*

Seen on all islands visited but it was most numerous on Fuerteventura. The hotel there is called Los Gorriones which translates into English as The Sparrows.

**Grey Wagtail** *Motacilla cinerea canariensis*

Seen on all our full days on Tenerife and quite regular in the grounds of the Finca Salamanca.

**Berthelot's Pipit** *Anthus berthelotii berthelotii*

Seen on both Tenerife and Fuerteventura with the highest daily count of 12 from Tenerife on the 17th.

**Chaffinch** *Fringilla coelebs canariensis*

This species was first encountered at the picnic area on Monte Las Mercedes on the 12th and then the following day seen well at La Laguna Grande on La Gomera. In both areas the birds were fairly tame and put on a good show.

**Blue Chaffinch** *Fringilla teydea teydea*

Only recorded on our first and last days when we went up the mountain. As always the views in the Las Lajas picnic area were one of the highlights of the trip for many people.

**Atlantic Canary** *Serinus canaria*

Fairly common on both Tenerife and La Gomera but nowhere recorded in large numbers.

**European Goldfinch** *Carduelis carduelis*

We only recorded this species on Fuerteventura this year, where it was seen on both days.

**Common Linnet** *Carduelis cannabina*

*C. c. meadewaldoi* four were seen on Tenerife on the 16th but, like last year, to only see four in the week was a bit of a surprise.

*C. c. harterti* this eastern islands form was more numerous than its Tenerife equivalent and was seen on both days on Fuerteventura.

**Trumpeter Finch** *Bucanetes githagineus amantum*

This species was fairly common on both of our days on Fuerteventura.

**Corn Bunting** *Emberiza calandra*

About 70 birds were seen in the fields at Los Rodeos on the 16th.

## Plant list

**Bold type** = a Canary Islands endemic

**BOLD TYPE** = an island endemic

\* = an Atlantic Island endemic

English names follow those used in *Flora of the Canary Islands* (Pocket Guide) by David Bramwell  
Order and scientific names follow *Die Kosmos-Kanarenflora* by Peter and Ingrid Schönfelder

PINACEAE

*Pinus canariensis* (**Canary Islands Pine**)    **common on Tenerife**

SALICACEAE

*Salix canariensis*\* (Canary Willow)    La Gomera

MYRICACEAE

*Myrica faya*    common in areas of Laurel forest

URTICACEAE

***Gesnouinia arborea*** (Tree Pellitory) Tenerife and La Gomera - laurel forests

POLYGONACEAE

***Rumex lunaria*** (**Canary Islands Sorrel**)    **common on all islands visited**

CHENOPODIACEAE

*Suaeda maritima*    Fuerteventura

*Atriplex glauca* ssp. *ifniensis*    Fuerteventura coastal zone

*Traganum moquinii*    Fuerteventura coastal zone

AIZOACEAE

*Aizoon canariense*    common on Tenerife and Fuerteventura

*Mesembryanthemum nodiflorum*    common on Tenerife and Fuerteventura

*Mesembryanthemum crystallinum* (Ice Plant)    common on Tenerife and Fuerteventura

CARYOPHYLLACEAE

*Polycarpha nivea*    fairly common on Tenerife and Fuerteventura

*Polycarpha carnososa* (**Succulent All-Seed**)    **Punta de Teno**

***Paronychia canariensis***    Los Roques on La Gomera

RANUNCULACEAE

*Ranunculus cortusifolius*\* (Atlantic Islands Buttercup)    Tenerife

LAURACEAE

*Appolonias barbujana*\*    Tenerife and La Gomera

*Laurus novocanariensis*\* (Canarian Laurel)    Tenerife and La Gomera

*Persea indica*\*    Tenerife and La Gomera

BRASSICACEAE

***DESCURAINIA BOURGEAUANA***    Cañadas del Teide

***Descurainia millefolia*** (Canary Flixweed)    Tenerife and La Gomera

***ERYSIMUM SCOPARIUM*** (Canary Island Wallflower)    Cañadas del Teide

***Erysimum bicolor***    Tenerife and La Gomera

*Lobularia canariensis* (Canary Islands Alison)    Tenerife and La Gomera

***CRAMBE SCABERRIMA***    Punta de Teno

*Hirschfeldia incana*    common and widespread, introduced weed

CRASSULACEAE

***AEONIUM SUBPLANUM***    common on La Gomera

***AEONIUM TABULAEFORME*** (Saucer Houseleek)    Barranco de Ruiz and Punta de Teno

*Aeonium urbicum* (Giant Houseleek)    common on Tenerife

*Aeonium sedifolium*    Punta de Teno

***Greenovia aurea*** (Golden Houseleek)    common on Tenerife

***Greenovia diplocycla***    on roadside cliffs on La Gomera

***Monanthes laxiflora***    roadside cliffs in laurel zones

***Monanthes polyphylla***    Punta de Teno

***Monanthes pallens***    Punta de Teno

***Aichryson laxum*** (Annual Houseleek)    Tenerife and La Gomera in laurel zone

ROSACEAE

***Marcetella moquiniana*** (Red Shrubby Burnet)    Tenerife north coast

*Prunus lusitanica* ssp. *hixa*    laurel forests of Tenerife

FABACEAE

***Chamaecytisus proliferus*** (**Tagasaste**)    **common on Tenerife and La Gomera**

***Spartocytisus supranubius*** (Teide White Broom)    Las Lajas, Cañadas del Teide

***Teline canariensis***    common on Tenerife and La Gomera

***Teline stenopetala***    La Gomera

*Ulex europaeus* (Gorse)    common on Tenerife

*Spartum junceum*    Tenerife

***Adenocarpus foliolosus*** (Sticky Broom)    common on Tenerife and La Gomera

***Adenocarpus viscosus*** (Teide Sticky Broom)    Cañadas del Teide

*Psoralea bituminosa* (Pitch Trefoil) common on all islands visited  
**Ononis hebecarpa (Sticky Restharrow) Costa Calma plain**  
*Ononis natrix* (Large Yellow Restharrow) Fuerteventura  
**Lotus lanzarottensis** Costa Calma plain  
*Lotus sessilifolius* **common on Tenerife**  
*Cassia didymobotrya* introduced on Tenerife and Fuerteventura  
*Acacia cyclops* introduced on Fuerteventura  
GERANIACEAE  
*Geranium canariense (Canary Islands Cranesbill) common in the laurel zone*  
ZYGOPHYLLACEAE  
*Zygophyllum fontanesii* (Canarian Bean-Caper) coastal areas on Tenerife and Fuerteventura  
EUPHORBIACEAE  
*Euphorbia balsamifera* common on all islands visited  
*Euphorbia regis-jubae* (Common Canary Spurge) common on Fuerteventura  
***Euphorbia broussonetii*** common on Tenerife and La Gomera  
***Euphorbia atropurpurea*** Punta de Teno  
***Euphorbia aphylla*** (Leafless Spurge) Punta de Teno  
*Euphorbia canariensis* (Canary Islands Cactus-Spurge) common on all islands visited  
**EUPHORBIA HANDIENSIS** Punta de Jandia, Fuerteventura  
*Ricinus communis* (Castor Oil Plant) seen on all islands visited  
AQUIFOLIACEAE  
*Ilex perado platyphylla\** (Broad-leaved Holly) Anaga Peninsula  
***Ilex canariensis*** Tenerife and La Gomera  
MALVACEAE  
***Lavatera acerifolia*** (Canary Tree Mallow) Punta de Teno  
GUTTIFERAE  
*Hypericum grandifolium\** (Large-leaved St. John's Wort) Tenerife  
CISTACEAE  
*Cistus monspeliensis* (Narrow-leaved Cistus) common on Tenerife and La Gomera  
*Helianthemum canariense* (Canary Island Rockrose) Fuerteventura  
TAMARICACEAE  
*Tamarix canariensis* (Canary Island Tamarisk) Tenerife and Fuerteventura  
FRANKENIACEAE  
*Frankenia laevis* (Canary Islands Sea Heath) common on Tenerife and Fuerteventura  
CACTACEAE  
*Opuntia fiscus-indica* (Prickly Pear) common introduction on all islands visited  
*Opuntia dillenii* introduction seen on Tenerife  
ARALIACEAE  
***Hedera canariensis*** found in the laurel zones on Tenerife and La Gomera  
APIACEAE  
*Astydamia latifolia* (Canary Samphire) common on all islands visited  
ERICACEAE  
*Erica arborea* (Tree Heath) common Tenerife and La Gomera  
PRIMULACEAE  
*Anagallis arvensis* (Scarlet Pimpernel) common on Tenerife and La Gomera  
PLUMBAGINACEAE  
**LIMONIUM FRUTICANS (Tenerife Sea-Lavender) Punta del Teno**  
***Limonium pectinatum*** (Dwarf Sea-Lavender) common on Tenerife and Fuerteventura  
ASCLEPIADACEAE  
*Periploca laevigata* **common on all islands visited**  
***Ceropegia dichotoma*** (Tenerife Wax Plant) Punta de Teno  
RUBIACEAE  
***Plocama pendula (Balo)*** **common on all islands visited**  
*Phyllis nobla\** (Capitana) common in laurel zones  
CONVOLVULACEAE  
***Convolvulus floridus*** (Canary Tree Bindweed) Barranco de Ruiz  
*Convolvulus caput-medusae* (Dwarf Sea-Bindweed) Fuerteventura  
*Cuscuta sp.* (Dodder) Fuerteventura  
BORAGINACEAE  
*Heliotropium bacciferum* Tenerife and Fuerteventura  
***Echium aculeatum*** common on Tenerife and La Gomera

*ECHIUUM GIGANTEUM* (**Giant White Bugloss**) **Barranco de Ruiz**  
*ECHIUUM WILDPRETHII* (**Teide Bugloss**) **Cañadas del Teide**  
*ECHIUUM VIRESCENS* (**Tenerife Viper's Bugloss**) **above Güímar**  
*Echium platagineum* (Purple Viper's Bugloss) abundant on all islands visited  
 LAMIACEAE  
*SIDERITIS CRETICA* (Teno False Sage) **Punta de Teno**  
*Cedronella canariensis* (**Balm of Gilead**) **La Gomera**  
*Lavandula minutolii* **Tenerife**  
*Lavandula canariensis* (Canary Islands Lavender) common on Tenerife and La Gomera  
 SOLANACEAE  
*Datura stramonium* (Thornapple) introduced, seen on Tenerife and Fuerteventura  
*Lycium intricatum* **Tenerife and Fuerteventura**  
*Nicotiana glauca* introduced pest, common on all islands  
 SCROPHULARIACEAE  
*Scrophularia smithii* (**Canary Figwort**) **roadsides near Las Mercedes**  
*Scrophularia glabrata* **Teide National Park**  
 PLANTAGINACEAE  
*Plantago aschersonii* **Punta del Teno**  
 CAPRIFOLIACEAE  
*Viburnum rigidum* (Canary Islands Guelder Rose) **areas with laurel forest**  
 DIPSACACEAE  
*PTEROCEPHALUS LASIOSPERMUS* **Mount Teide**  
 CAMPANULACEAE  
*Canarina canariensis* (Canary Bell-Flower) **Anaga Peninsula**  
 ASTERACEAE  
*Ageratina adenophora* common introduction from Mexico  
*Kleinia neriifolia* (Canary Islands Candle Plant) **common on all islands visited**  
*Schizogyne sericea* (**Canary Samphire**) **coastal zones of all islands**  
*Vieraea laevigata* (Tenerife Samphire) **Punta de Teno**  
*Nauplius aquaticus* **common on all islands visited**  
*NAUPLIUS SERICEUS* (**Fuerteventura Sea-Daisy**) **Fuerteventura (in the hills)**  
*Argyranthemum frutescens* (Paris Daisy) **Tenerife and La Gomera, common**  
*ARGYRANTHEMUM TENERIFE* **Teide National Park**  
*ARGYRANTHEMUM CORONOPIFOLIUM* ?(Buenavista Daisy) **Punta de Teno**  
*Argyranthemum broussonetii* **Tenerife and La Gomera, laurel zone**  
*Artemisia canariensis* **common on Tenerife and La Gomera**  
*Pericallis steetzii* (Gomeran Cineraria) **La Gomera**  
*PERICALLIS ECHINATA* **Punta de Teno**  
*Carlina salicifolia*\* (Canary Carline Thistle) **common on all islands visited**  
*Galactites tomentosa* **common on all islands visited**  
*Silybum marianum* **Tenerife**  
*CHEIROLOPHUS BURCHARDII* (**Teno Knapweed**) **Punta de Teno**  
*Centaurea melitensis* **Tenerife**  
*Launaea arborescens* (Spiny Lettuce or Barbed-Wire Bush) **common on all islands visited**  
*Sonchus congestus* (**Anaga Sow-Thistle**) **common in laurel zone, Tenerife**  
*Sonchus hierrensis* **common on La Gomera**  
*Sonchus acaulis* (Stemless Sow-Thistle) **common on Tenerife**  
*SONCHUS RADICATUS* (Tuberous Sow-Thistle) **Punta de Teno**  
*Atalanthus pinnatus* (Fennel-leaved Sow-Thistle) **Tenerife**  
*Andryala pinnatifida* (Canary Mouse-Ear) **common all islands visited**  
 ASPHODELACEAE  
*Asphodelus aestivus* (Common Asphodel) **Tenerife**  
*Aloe vera* **introduced**  
*Aloe succotrina* **introduced**  
 AGAVACEAE  
*Agave Americana* (Century Plant) **introduced**  
*Agave attenuata* **introduced**  
 ARECACEAE  
*Phoenix canariensis* (**Canary Islands Date Palm**) **seen on all islands visited**  
 POACEAE  
*Pennisetum setaceum* **common pest on Tenerife and La Gomera**

*Phragmites communis* Fuerteventura

SELAGINELLACEAE

*Selaginella denticulata* fairly common

HYPOLEPIDACEAE

*Pteridium aquilinum* (Bracken) Tenerife and La Gomera

### **Butterfly List**

Canary Large White *Pieris cheiranthi*

Small White *Artogeia rapae*

Bath White *Pontia daplidice*

African Migrant *Catopsilia florella*

Lang's Short-tailed Blue *Leptotes pirithous*

Canary Blue *Cyclurius webbianus*

African Grass Blue *Zizeeria knysna*

Monarch *Danaus plexippus*

Canary Speckled Wood *Parage xiphioides*

### **Dragonfly List**

Saharan Blue-tailed Damselfly *Ischnura saharensis*

Blue Emperor *Anax imperator*

Broad Scarlet *Crocothemis erythraea*

Epaulet Skimmer *Orthetrum chrysostigma*

### **Mammal List**

Bottle-nosed Dolphin *Tursiops truncatus*

Common Dolphin *Delphinus delphis*

Short-finned Pilot Whale *Globiocephala macrorhynchus*

Cuvier's Beaked Whale *Ziphius cavirostris*

### **Reptile List**

Canary Lizard *Gallotia galloti*

Atlantic Lizard *Gallotia atlantica*

Gomoran Skink *Chalcides caerulopunctatus*

Tenerife Gecko *Tarentola delalandii*

## **July 2008**

© Limosa Holidays & The Travelling Naturalist, 2008