

Extremadura

Sunday 28 September – Sunday 5 October 2008



An adult Griffon Vulture peers down at us from its ledge in Monfragüe N.P.
(© J.L.Muddeman)

Leaders:

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Introduction

Despite arriving with somewhat ‘threatening’ weather conditions on the first afternoon, for the rest of the week we basked in glorious ‘Indian summer’ sunshine. While this meant high spirits and great visibility, it did mean that the heat was a slight factor at times (over 30°C in the sun on a couple of days), but I think that we all braved this well! Indeed, a week later as I finish this report, the autumn rains have arrived, and though mild, it’s been very wet. We timed it to perfection!

The final tally of almost 150 bird species was outstanding, with some superb views of many terrific birds, from the first afternoon to the last morning, and evidence of considerable migration through the region was witnessed by the remarkable number of new species we added to the cumulative tour list – 11! One of these turns out to be the second record for the region, and the first of probable breeding, despite being of escape origin!

The timing of this tour, to see large post-breeding numbers of the resident species, the last of the summer breeders and migrants, and the first of the winter visitors was spot-on again.

DAILY DIARY

Sunday 28 September

Transfer to Madrid, Arrocampo & Finca Santa Marta

Overcast, Light rain showers, max temp 20°C.

We all meet up at Gatwick and the flight departs on time, but we land in Madrid ahead of time and here we join up with John at the car hire area. Then we load up the vehicles and set off, briefly stopping to collect some gear from John’s car before moving on to the motorway.

The journey is fairly quiet apart from Cattle Egret, Spotless Starling and Magpie until a single Great Bustard flies across the road. A few Red Kite, Buzzard, Little Egret, Mallard and Marsh Harrier are found before we stop for food and drinks.

We continue our drive and pull off to explore the wetland areas close to Saucedilla, here we find numerous Lapwing and Stonechat and then go to the Visitor Centre to collect the key to the hides. A very good mix of birds is found including: Purple Swamphen, Snipe, Gadwall, Shoveler, Great White Egret, Coot, Spoonbill, Common Crane, Cormorant, Little and Great Crested Grebe and Marsh Harrier. We then move to a different part of the wetland and see Southern Grey Shrike, Azure-winged Magpie and then a restless Green Sandpiper before returning along the track. We then locate a Black-shouldered Kite hunting nearby and so we drive to get a little closer. A large flock of Goldfinch fly ahead of us before we stop to enjoy closer views of the Kite. After a while we return the key to the Visitor Centre and drive to the main road and head off towards Trujillo.

As we near the Motorway Tunnel a good number of Griffon Vulture are found soaring above us.

At Trujillo we turn off and drive to the Finca and find Henri and his staff who welcome us and help us settle into our rooms, before again meeting up with Henri for a reception plus a short introduction to the history of the Finca Santa Marta including a tour of the winery including old vats. After a great meal we all retire for some well earned sleep.

Monday 29 September FSM, Zorita steppes, Madrigalejo area, Emb. de Sierra Brava

Sunny, max temp 27°C.

A pre-breakfast walk for some proved to be a good choice as we kicked off with 2 Hoopoe and 2 Mistle Thrush on the power lines whilst behind us a Sardinian Warbler called. Azure-winged Magpie called gently and then the airspace became busy with Crag Martin, Red-rumped Swallow, House Martin, Hawfinch, Corn Bunting, Cattle Egret, Lesser Black-backed Gull and both Black and Griffon Vulture. A calling Short-toed Treecreeper proved elusive along with a Great Tit. A hidden Red Deer stag roars on the opposite hillside, though a hind plus a youngster are seen.

After breakfast we drive south beyond Zorita and stop to view the steppe area and here we locate large numbers of Calandra Lark along with smaller numbers of Crested Lark. Northern Wheatears appear to be quite numerous along with Common Magpie and Lapwing. Distant Griffon Vultures begin to take off from the ground and drift around in a relaxed manner. Two Short-toed Eagles cruise gently as they hunt for prey and a flock of about 16 Black-bellied Sandgrouse take to the air. Slightly further along we turn off to explore the Campo Lugar Road to find good numbers of both Great and Little Bustard. A very obliging Red Kite drifts by but a Tawny Pipit proves difficult to relocate and soon disappears.

We then drive the short distance to Madrigalejo and stop for drinks. Just after we leave the café we stop to admire 10 Red-rumped Swallow sitting on overhead wires. This general area provides us with a wealth of birdlife including Booted Eagle, White Stork, Linnet, Yellow Wagtail, Red Avadavat, Little Bustard, Pied Flycatcher, Buzzard, and Marsh Harrier. Driving further along we stop to have our lunch but not before we see numerous Sand Martin, 12 Common Crane, hear 2 Little Owls calling and watch an adult Purple Heron do a circuit.

Our next stop takes place at the Casas de Hitos lake, a sizeable body of freshwater and here we find a great selection of birds. Good numbers of Mallard, Shoveler and Lapwing, with fewer numbers of Teal. A Drake Garganey in eclipse is a good sighting. Waders are varied with at least 40 Little Ringed Plover, plus Ringed Plover, Snipe, Spotted and Common Redshank, Greenshank, Green Sandpiper, Dunlin, Golden Plover, Wood Sandpiper and an immature Black-winged Stilt.

Our last stop is at the Embalse de Sierra Brava and here we find massive numbers of the commoner duck species plus a Pintail and one Cormorant before returning to the Finca to do the call-over before having our meal.

Tuesday 30 September

Monfragüe National Park

Sunny, max temp 30°C.

A pre-breakfast moth session with John provides us with a wonderful variety of different species.

After a welcome breakfast we head off towards the Monfragüe National Park and as we enter the park we see a lone Little Grebe in a small pond beside the road. We drive and stop at the car park just below the

Castle and before we even start to walk we find a host of species including: Long-tailed Tit, Pied Flycatcher, Firecrest, Robin and Hawfinch in the scrub whilst Black & Griffon Vulture drift overhead. As we near the castle a Honey Buzzard is found flying away and all too soon disappears leaving the airspace full of mixed hirundines. Once at the top we manage to find an adult Bonelli's Eagle on a crag opposite but this quickly flies off and is not seen again. As we walk back down from the castle a Black Stork cruises overhead and away.

Our next stop is by the Río Tajo for lunch and we find ourselves greeted by 80-100 Alpine Swift screeching overhead, then another Honey Buzzard appears on passage overhead. During lunch Wood Mouse and Rat are seen near the bin area. A few other birds are seen here including Chiffchaff, Blackcap, Great & Blue Tit plus Blackbird but the real stars are a pair of adult Bonelli's Eagle wheeling overhead for several minutes.

A short drive takes us to the nearby village of Villarreal de San Carlos for a bio-stop before moving to the nearby dam. Plenty of Griffon Vulture on the wing but we also find Blue Rock Thrush, Green Sandpiper and to our surprise Red Deer in the water and on the hillside.

Another brief drive and we are in pinewood habitat and within minutes we are looking at Great-spotted Woodpecker, Crested Tit, Willow Warbler, Pied and Spotted Flycatchers.

The afternoon is slipping by far too quickly as we move back and stop at the Pena Falcon Rock area to find Black Redstart, Rock Bunting and to our great astonishment have good views of a 'dog' Otter below us.

We return to the Finca for call over and then later travel into Trujillo for our evening meal, seeing Little Owl en-route.

Wednesday 1 October

Santa Marta de Magasca loop

Sunny, max temp 29°C.

Departure comes quickly after breakfast and we head out through Trujillo and turn off onto the Santa Marta de Magasca road before stopping to look at a skulking male Redstart in a tree next to the minibuses, Woodlark are singing nearby but are not seen so we move along and stop near an obvious viewpoint. A Southern Grey Shrike sits waiting for a chance to grab breakfast. Azure-winged Magpies are flitting through the scrub scattering the odd Pied Flycatcher, Stonechat or Whinchat. A good number of Northern Wheatear and Corn Bunting are seen, and also numerous Lapwing in the distance. A surprise find is a Dartford Warbler which bursts out of a bush that we have unwittingly surrounded.

Slightly further along the road we turn off along a dusty track and then stop near a small pool. Three Snipe are finally flushed from the pool and we see Great Bustard, Black-bellied Sandgrouse, Red Kite, Buzzard, Black & Griffon Vulture. On our journey to the village we make a brief stop to check out a small lake and find Black-headed Gull, Little Ringed Plover and Black-winged Stilt.

In the village of Santa Marta de Magasca we enjoy our drinks sitting under the shade of a tree and the group are given the chance to identify a raptor species flying high above us. Meanwhile House Martins and Red-rumped Swallows share places on a TV aerial no doubt keeping their eye on the Vultures, Red Kite and others overhead.

Lunch is taken just outside the village beside the Rio Magasca and here we see Kingfisher, Pied & Spotted Flycatcher, Robin, Short-toed and Golden Eagle plus a Grasshopper Warbler.

Another short drive and we stop at the Rio Tamuja and manage to find 2 Red-legged Partridge, Crag Martin, Red-rumped Swallows, Green Sandpiper and another Short-toed Eagle.

Our last area to visit is on the vast Cáceres Plains and here we find Great Bustard quite close to the road. We move off road along a track and stop beside a wall that runs away at right angles to the track and admire 2 Little Owls that do their best to be invisible. We return to the road and find more Great Bustard plus Red-legged Partridge and also see huge numbers of Corn Bunting & Calandra Lark before returning to the Finca.

Thursday 2 October

Trujillo, Deleitosa, Río Almonte, Belén Plain

Sunny, max temp 27°C.

Another pre-breakfast moth session with John produces yet more little gems, even a Hawfinch drops in to have a look, briefly.

Straight after breakfast the group are taken into Trujillo for culture, retail and also manage get Pallid Swift on the list before being picked up. Just on the outskirts of Trujillo we stop at a wader pool and see an interesting mix of birds including: Little Grebe, Red Kite, Sparrowhawk, Little Ringed Plover, Green and Common Sandpiper, Snipe, Ruff, Black-winged Stilt, Hoopoe, Serin, Southern Grey Shrike, Cetti's Warbler and Blue Rock Thrush.

We then drive and stop at a raptor feeding station, but as it is not active and there are very few birds apart from the usual suspects: Griffon & Black Vulture along the a few Red Kite, Raven and nearby we hear Woodlark singing.

We continue our journey seeing another Sparrowhawk en-route before stopping at the Río Almonte and find Cetti's Warbler, Grey Wagtail, Cirl Bunting, Blackbird, Blackcap, Mistle Thrush yet another Sparrowhawk and a pair of Black Wheatear.

We load up and move off to another viewpoint much further down the Río Almonte and stop once more. As we walk in a small flock of Thekla Lark fly off leaving us to concentrate on finding the Kingfisher hiding on the opposite bank. As we get to the bridge a very friendly Blue Rock Thrush allows us to study its plumage. Another Kingfisher is located beside the water and then a Rock Bunting flies into a nearby tree allowing good telescope views.

Time is marching on and so we decide to go back via the Belén Plain, this proves to be a wise move. Just as we turn off to go along the plain we have to stop as at least 2000 Spanish Sparrow are blocking the road, we do however manage to sneak past and yes, everybody saw one! Further along the road we stop to look at Lesser Kestrels hunting and in doing so find Great Bustard feeding in the same area. We drive on but then one vehicle stops to look at Little Bustard standing close to the road, these fly off and despite their efforts to catch up with the other vehicle they only manage to pass behind it.

Once back at the Finca it was time again for the call-over outside with teas and coffees before our meal.

Friday 3 October

FSM, Arrocampo, Valdecañas Dam

Sunny, max temp 25°C.

The pre-breakfast walk enables us to catch up with one of our missing species: Rock Sparrow, 3 of them at that, sitting on wires. We also see Mistle & Song Thrush, Redstart, Robin, Garden Warbler and Great-spotted Woodpecker.

After breakfast we drive to the Embalse de Arrocampo, Almaraz and stop near the entrance close to the first hide. Purple Swamphen, Squacco Heron, Little Bittern, Little Grebe, Kingfisher, Cattle & Little Egret in or over the water and Willow Warbler, Stonechat & Southern Grey Shrike on perches. A short drive and we stop near the second hide to find good numbers of Gadwall plus Great Crested Grebe, Purple Swamphen, Cormorants, Great White Egret, Marsh Harrier and Whinchat. As we start to leave this area we pass a wet flush in the grassland and see several Snipe fly off, along with a Green Sandpiper and a few Lapwings before arriving at Almaraz for drinks.

Lunch is taken near the Valdecañas Dam where Griffon Vultures are much in evidence, drifting by looking for a meal. A few Black Vultures are seen plus Raven, Buzzard, Red Kite and Hawfinch. A short drive and we are at the dam itself and find huge numbers of House & Crag Martin either flying around or perched on the dam wall. A Yellow-legged Gull is found along with several Black-headed Gulls on the lake as are Great Crested Grebe. Suddenly the martins sense danger and take to the air, the word Hobby is mentioned in passing and yes it duly appears from below as if by magic. The thought of all that food must have upset the Hobby as it flew away!

As we drive back we see a Jay flash across the road before moving to the nearby quarry and here we have brief views of Blue Rock Thrush & Black Wheatear. It is time to travel back to the Finca, one vehicle goes back whilst the other goes off to try and find a lost hat. The 'lost hat' vehicle eventually stops near

Trujillo to witness Griffon and Black Vultures eating dead sheep. The first vehicle found the 'lost hat' in the back of their vehicle once they had reached the Finca...

Saturday 4 October Sta Marta de Magasca, Vegas Altas, Río Gargáligas, Casas de Hitos

Sunny, Max Temp 24°C.

Yet another pre-breakfast start to try and get the other Sandgrouse species. As we travel out in semi-darkness we find 2 Little Owls sitting on power lines close to the road. We exit Trujillo heading west and then turn off along the Santa Marta de Magasca road and park near a viewpoint. We lock-up the vehicles and walk along a track seeing Southern Grey Shrike, Red Kite and Raven on the way. As we pass some cattle we find Yellow Wagtail and in the distance 5 Great Bustard. Then we start scanning for birds and quickly pick up a group of 46 Pin-tailed Sandgrouse on the near horizon. Despite the early time of day Griffon Vulture are starting to look for their breakfast and so are we, and walk back to the vehicles, then drive back to the Finca.

After breakfast we drive to the rice fields and stop just before Madrigalejo and as we exit the vehicles we find a Sparrowhawk flying just above us giving great views. In the distance a small flock of Cranes drift past. We drive into the rice fields and get good views of numerous Zitting Cisticola but poor views of White Stork so we move on. We start to explore cultivated fields south of Madrigalejo and soon see Black-bellied Sandgrouse, Green Sandpiper, Skylark, Southern Grey Shrike and a male Little Bustard.

We then move to the Vegas Altas area and stop at the Río Gargáligas and see Common Waxbill and hear Cetti's Warbler. The water level is too high and so we then move to the village of Vegas Altas to have drinks.

Our lunch is then taken in the arable fields nearby where we see Black & Griffon Vulture, Marsh Harrier and Red Avadavat.

We return to the Madrigalejo rice fields and enjoy long views of a male Hen Harrier hunting over the area. White Storks are seen in good numbers and then we stop to view the waders in a roadside pool. A female Egyptian Mongoose with a youngster moving through the rice field catches our attention but they soon vanish just like the waders. Just around the corner is the Casas de Hitos lake and so we park here and find a good mix of duck and wader species. Common Crane are noted overhead but we return our interest to the lake as we find a large Carp leaving the lake, (with help) and see a Viperine Snake below us.

After a tip off from a chance meeting with some fellow birders we drive to Palazuelo to check a wetland area. After driving through a motocross event in the village we locate the wetland and find that it is heaving with gulls and waders, in fact the numbers are quite intimidating! The most interesting species amongst them all has to be the 5 Glossy Ibis that came in just before we had to leave, but lots of waders were also enjoyed in wonderful light.

Then back to the Finca for call over before our meal.

Sunday 5 October

Transfer to Madrid via Monfragüe National Park

Sunny, Max Temp 23°C.

After breakfast we pack our luggage into the vehicles and say our goodbyes to Henri and his team, then depart. We head straight into the Monfragüe National Park and stop at the Peña Falcon area and as we exit the vehicles we hear and then see Short-toed Treecreeper. At last!

Meanwhile near the rock we see 2 immature Bonelli's Eagle soaring over. Griffon Vulture are around in reasonable numbers with smaller numbers of Black Vulture. A Peregrine flying over is a good find and we see Rock Bunting before driving to Villarreal de San Carlos for a bio stop.

Driving to the dam, apart from Willow Warbler and thousands of House and a few Crag Martins, it is quiet, so we move to the Tiétar Cliffs and have a birding/lunch stop.

Here we see Blue Rock Thrush, Black & Griffon Vulture, Rock Bunting, Firecrest, Kingfisher & Chaffinch before leaving the park. We make one brief stop to have drinks and take on fuel before jumping back on to the motorway.

Our last chance for Spanish Imperial Eagle was taken by the skin of our teeth as Janet fortunately manages to get her bins on a soaring dot and comments on its colour, even at 120 kph! Another chance for the species was taken just beside the main road, but we had to content ourselves with superb views of cruising Black Vultures, one of which even dropped down into a field at close range and was mobbed by tiny-looking Magpies!

The kilometres pass by and we finally make it to Madrid Airport, unload our luggage and say goodbye to John before flying back to the U.K.

We would like to thank you all for making this a fun and rewarding trip, and for being able to enjoy the weather, even when it got hot (!). This was the first time in the region for most of you, and yet despite the apparently 'parched' look to the landscape, the careful choice of a wide range of sites and habitats meant it was very bird rich. Tragically, one of the most diverse areas, at Casas de Hitos is under threat from a huge thermo-solar plant, as the owner alluded to in conversation in the field on site, and the >11000 cranes that roost there are at serious risk from having their habitat directly destroyed, plus other threats from associated infrastructures. While it may be too late to do anything (by 24th October), if anyone wants further information and to write protest letters, I can happily supply these and general information by email.

With very best wishes and looking forward to seeing you again on another Travelling Naturalist tour!

John Muddeman (john@naturalist.co.uk) & Ray Nowicki

SPECIES LISTS

The following bird list follows the taxonomy and names used by Gill, F. and M. Wright. 2006. *Birds of the World: Recommended English Names*. Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press. Species marked with an asterisk are new for the cumulative list.

BIRDS - AVES

GROUSE, PHEASANTS & allies - Phasianidae

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa* Just 2 Río Magasca & 4 en route on 1st, and 4 Lower Río Almonte on 2nd were notably few.

***Common Quail** *Coturnix coturnix* One was flushed Casas de Hitos on 29th and seen by a few as it flew past.

GEESE, SWANS & DUCKS - Anatidae

Greylag Goose *Anser anser* Two presumably wild birds Casas de Hitos on 29th.

Gadwall *Anas strepera* Only noted at Embalse de Arrocampo, but 40 on 28th and 80-100 on 3rd.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos* Common, widespread and seen daily in small to moderate number at various site, max. 1000s Embalse de Sierra Brava on 29th.

Northern Shoveler *Anas clypeata* Quite widespread: 2 Embalse de Arrocampo on 28th, c.100 Casas de Hitos on 29th, 2 Embalse de Arrocampo on 3rd, and 30-40 Casas de Hitos on 4th.

Northern Pintail *Anas acuta* One juvenile/female Embalse de Sierra Brava on 29th.

Garganey *Anas querquedula* One in eclipse plumage Casas de Hitos on 29th.

Eurasian Teal *Anas crecca* C.10 Casas de Hitos on 29th, 1 Santa Marta de Magasca on 1st, and 2 Casas de Hitos on 4th.

GREBES - Podicipedidae

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis* Widespread in small number: 2 Embalse de Arrocampo + 1 en route on 28th, 1 Embalse de Sierra Brava on 29th, 1 en route on 30th, 2 Trujillo Reservoir on 2nd, and 3-4 Embalse de Arrocampo on 3rd.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus* Also widespread in generally small number: 2-3 Embalse de Arrocampo on 28th, 10+ Casas de Hitos & Embalse de Sierra Brava on 29th, 16 Embalse de Arrocampo & 16 Valdecañas Dam on 3rd, and 6-8 Casas de Hitos on 4th.

STORKS - Ciconiidae

Black Stork *Ciconia nigra* Just 1 briefly over Monfragüe National Park on 30th.

White Stork *Ciconia ciconia* Only in the rice fields, but important concentrations: 135+ Madrigalejo rice fields on 29th and c. 500 various sites on 4th.

IBISES & SPOONBILLS - Threskiornithidae

***Glossy Ibis** *Plegadis falcinellus* 5 Palazuelo on 4th.

Eurasian Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia* Just 1 briefly in flight Embalse de Arrocampo on 28th.

HERONS & BITTERNES - Ardeidae

Little Bittern *Ixobrychus minutus* After a good wait, we were treated to good views of a perched and flying juvenile, then another flying juvenile, as well as others heard Embalse de Arrocampo on 3rd.

Squacco Heron *Ardeola ralloides* A very brief bird Embalse de Arrocampo on 28th, but 2 excellent fly-bys at the Embalse de Arrocampo on 3rd.

Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis* Noted daily except on 1st: max. 100+ various sites on 29th and 50 various sites on 4th.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea* Seen widely and daily in small number.

Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea* An adult Madrigalejo rice fields on 29th.

Great [White] Egret *Ardea alba* 4-5 Embalse de Arrocampo on 28th and 1 there on 3rd.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta* 2 various sites on 28th, 10 various sites on 29th, 2 Santa Marta de Magasca on 1st, c.20 Embalse de Arrocampo on 3rd, 15+ various sites on 4th.

CORMORANTS - Phalacrocoracidae

Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo* Noted widely on 6 days with max. 150 Embalse de Arrocampo on 28th, and 100+ there on 3rd.

FALCONS & allies - Falconidae

Lesser Kestrel *Falco naumanni* 2-4 Belén plain on 2nd.

Common/Eurasian Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus* Noted in small – moderate number widely and daily, probably including migrants and winter visitors.

Eurasian Hobby *Falco subbuteo* 1 Valdecañas Dam on 3rd.

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus* A male Monfragüe National Park on 5th.

HAWKS, EAGLES & allies - Accipitridae

***European Honey-buzzard** *Pernis apivorus* Two separate singles on active migration over Monfragüe National Park on 30th.

Black-winged/-shouldered Kite *Elanus caeruleus* 1 adult Embalse de Arrocampo on 28th.

Red Kite *Milvus milvus* Noted almost daily: 5 en route on 28th, 6+ on 29th, 1st and 2nd, 20 various sites on 3rd, 6+ various sites on 4th, a few en route on 5th.

Griffon Vulture *Gyps fulvus* Noted daily: 25+ en route on 28th, 100+ various sites on 29th, 150+ Monfragüe National Park on 30th, 50+ various sites on 1st, lots various sites on 2nd, 100+ various sites on 3rd, 30+ various sites on 4th, 100+ Monfragüe National Park+ on 5th.

Cinereous/Monk/Black Vulture *Aegypius monachus* Noted almost daily: 1 Finca Santa Marta & 3-4 various other sites on 29th, 4-5 Monfragüe National Park on 30th, 4+ various sites on 1st, 5+ Deleitosa on 2nd, 7+ various sites on 3rd, 2 Vegas Altas on 4th, and 10+ Monfragüe National Park & en route on 5th.

Short-toed Eagle *Circaetus gallicus* 2 + 1 Zorita steppes on 29th, and singles Río Magasca & Río Tamuja on 1st.

[Western] Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus* 7-8 Embalse de Arrocampo on 28th, 10+ various sites on 29th, 3-4 Embalse de Arrocampo on 3rd, 15+ various sites on 4th, 2 en route on 5th.

Hen/Northern Harrier *Circus cyaneus* A probable juvenile male Casas de Hitos on 29th and an adult male there on 4th.

Eurasian Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus* One Trujillo Reservoir, singles en route & Upper Río Almonte on 2nd, a male Valdecañas Dam on 3rd, 1 Madrigalejo rice fields plus a female Zorita on 4th, 1 Monfragüe National Park on 5th.

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo* Noted daily: a few en route on 28th, 6-ish various sites on 29th, 2-3 en route on 30th, 4-5 various sites on 1st, 7-8 various sites on 2nd, 6+ various sites on 3rd, 12-15 various sites on 4th, and 10+ en route on 5th.

Spanish Imperial Eagle *Aquila adalberti* A very high juvenile from vehicle en route on 5th.

Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos* An adult Río Magasca on 1st.

Bonelli's Eagle *Hieraaetus fasciatus* 3 adults Monfragüe National Park on 30th and 2 juveniles there on 5th.

Booted Eagle *Hieraaetus pennatus* 2 Madrigalejo rice fields + 1 Casas de Hitos (all pale phase birds) on 29th, plus 1 dark phase Santa Marta de Magasca on 1st.

BUSTARDS - Otidae

Great Bustard *Otis tarda* A huge male in flight over main road near Maqueda on 28th, 14 + 25 Zorita steppes on 29th, 4 Santa Marta de Magasca plus 5+2 Cáceres plains on 1st, 4 Belén plain on 2nd, 5 Santa Marta de Magasca on 4th.

Little Bustard *Tetrax tetrax* 10 Zorita steppes + 19 Madrigalejo rice fields on 29th, 5 Belén plain on 2nd, 1 male Vegas Altas on 4th, a flock of c. 20 flying over motorway en route on 5th.

RAILS, CRAKES & COOTS - Rallidae

Purple Swamphen *Porphyrio porphyrio* One adult Embalse de Arrocampo on 28th and 4+ seen and others heard there on 3rd.

Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus* 1 Embalse de Arrocampo on 3rd.

Eurasian/Common Coot *Fulica atra* 15-20 Embalse de Arrocampo on 28th, 100+ Casas de Hitos + Embalse de Sierra Brava on 29th, 1 Trujillo Reservoir on 2nd, 100+ Embalse de Arrocampo on 3rd, 6+ Casas de Hitos on 4th.

CRANES - Gruidae

Common Crane *Grus grus* 16+ Embalse de Arrocampo on 28th, 12+6+17 Madrigalejo rice fields & Casas de Hitos on 29th, heard Embalse de Arrocampo on 3rd, 30 + 9 Madrigalejo rice fields & 16 Palazuelo on 4th.

STILTS & AVOCETS - Recurvirostridae

***Black-winged Stilt** *Himantopus himantopus* A juvenile Casas de Hitos on 29th, 3 Santa Marta de Magasca on 1st, 2 Trujillo Reservoir & 1 Belén plain on 2nd, 5-6 Casas de Hitos & 12-15 Palazuelo on 4th.

PLOVERS & LAPWINGS - Charadriidae

Northern Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus* 20-30 Embalse de Arrocampo on 28th, 500+ various sites on 29th, 100s various sites on 1st, 40-50 various sites on 2nd, 40-50 various sites on 3rd, lots various sites on 4th, noted en route on 5th.

***European Golden Plover** *Pluvialis apricaria* 1 heard Zorita steppes & an adult, apparently of the southern race at Casas de Hitos on 29th.

***Common Ringed Plover** *Charadrius hiaticula* 1 Casas de Hitos on 29th, 2 Palazuelo on 4th.

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius* 40 Casas de Hitos on 29th, 1 Santa Marta de Magasca on 1st, 6-7 Trujillo Reservoir on 2nd, 80+ Palazuelo on 4th.

***Kentish plover** 2 Palazuelo on 4th.

SANDPIPERS, SNIPES & allies - Scolopacidae

Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago* 9 Embalse de Arrocampo on 28th, 5-6 Casas de Hitos on 29th, 1 + 2 Santa Marta de Magasca on 1st, 3+ Trujillo Reservoir on 2nd, 15+ Embalse de Arrocampo on 3rd, plenty Casas de Hitos & Palazuelo on 4th.

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus* 10 Casas de Hitos on 29th & 4th and c.10 Palazuelo on 4th.

Common Redshank *Tringa totanus* 3 Casas de Hitos on 29th and 13 there on 4th.

Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia* 3 Casas de Hitos on 29th, 2 Casas de Hitos & 1 Palazuelo on 4th.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus* 1 Embalse de Arrocampo on 28th, 4 Madrigalejo rice fields on 29th, 1 Monfragüe NP on 30th, 1 Santa Marta de Magasca + 1 Río Tamuja on 1st, 16+ Trujillo Reservoir on 2nd, 1 Embalse de Arrocampo on 3rd, plenty various sites on 4th.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola* 2 Casas de Hitos on 29th, 1 Casas de Hitos & 10+ Palazuelo on 4th.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos* 1 Trujillo Reservoir on 2nd, 1 heard Monfragüe on 5th.

***Black-tailed Godwit** 64+ Palazuelo on 4th.

Little Stint *Calidris minuta* 100+ Palazuelo on 4th.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina* 2 Casas de Hitos on 29th, 2 Casas de Hitos & 5+ Palazuelo on 4th.

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax* A juvenile male Trujillo Reservoir on 2nd, 1 Casas de Hitos & 4-5 Palazuelo on 4th.

GULLS, TERNS & SKIMMERS - Laridae

Yellow-legged Gull *Larus michahellis* An adult Valdecañas Dam on 3rd.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus* 4 Finca Santa Marta & several Embalse de Sierra Brava on 29th, 1 adult Santa Marta de Magasca on 1st, and 100s Palazuelo on 4th.

Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus* 40 Casas de Hitos & 100s Embalse de Sierra Brava on 29th, 1 Santa Marta de Magasca on 1st, 3 Finca Santa Marta + several Embalse de Arrocampo + 3 Valdecañas Dam on 3rd, 100s Palazuelo on 4th, 3 singles Monfragüe NP on 5th.

SANDGROUSE - Pteroclididae

Pin-tailed Sandgrouse *Pterocles alchata* 46 corks Santa Marta de Magasca on 4th!

Black-bellied Sandgrouse *Pterocles orientalis* 16-18 Zorita steppes on 29th, 13 + 4 Santa Marta de Magasca on 1st, 17-23 Vegas Altas on 4th.

PIGEONS & DOVES - Columbidae

Rock Dove / Feral Pigeon *Columba livia* Noted widely and daily, inc. a few wild-type birds.

Stock Dove *Columba oenas* 1 Santa Marta de Magasca on 4th.

[Common] **Wood Pigeon** *Columba palumbus* Noted daily in small number, except for more towards Madrid.

Eurasian Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto* Noted widely and daily.

PARROTS & allies - Psittacidae

Monk Parakeet *Myiopsitta monachus* 1 flew over front vehicle on outskirts of Madrid on 5th.

OWLS - Strigidae

Little Owl *Athene noctua* 2 heard Madrigalejo rice fields on 29th, 2 Cáceres plains on 1st, 1 heard Finca Santa Marta & 2 en route and 1 Madrigalejo rice fields on 4th.

SWIFTS - Apodidae

Alpine Swift *Tachymarptis melba* 80-100 in a noisy flock Monfragüe National Park on 30th.

Pallid Swift *Apus pallidus* 10 Trujillo on 2nd.

KINGFISHERS - Alcedinidae

Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis* Noted daily! 1 Embalse de Arrocampo on 28th, 2 Madrigalejo rice fields on 29th, heard Finca Santa Marta on 30th, 3 Río Tamuja on 1st, 2-3 Lower Río Almonte on 2nd, 2 Embalse de Arrocampo on 3rd, 1 Madrigalejo rice fields on 4th, 2+ heard Monfragüe National Park on 5th.

HOOPOES - Upupidae

Eurasian Hoopoe *Upupa epops* Noted almost daily, and strong migration was apparently underway. 2 Finca Santa Marta & 7-8 various sites on 28th, heard Finca Santa Marta + 1 en route on 30th, 30+ various sites on 1st, 15+ various sites on 2nd, 10 various sites on 3rd, lots various sites on 4th, a few various sites on 5th.

WOODPECKERS - Picidae

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major* 1 heard + 1 seen Monfragüe National Park on 30th, heard Finca Santa Marta on 2nd, 1-2 Finca Santa Marta on 3rd.

SHRIKES - Laniidae

Southern Grey Shrike *Lanius meridionalis* Seen daily: 2-3 Embalse de Arrocampo on 28th, 8 various sites on 29th, 3-4 en route on 30th, 10+ various sites on 1st, 8-10 various sites on 2nd, 3-4 various sites on 3rd, 10+ various sites on 4th, a few en route on 5th.

CROWS, JAYS & MAGPIES - Corvidae

Eurasian Jay *Garrulus glandarius* 1 + several heard Monfragüe National Park on 30th, 1 Valdecañas Dam on 3rd, 4 Monfragüe National Park on 5th.

Iberian Magpie *Cyanopica cooki* Common, widespread and seen daily!

Eurasian Magpie *Pica pica* Abundant, widespread and seen daily.

Western Jackdaw *Corvus monedula* Also quite common, widespread and seen daily.

Northern/Common Raven *Corvus corax* Heard Finca Santa Marta & 6-7 various sites on 29th, 1 Finca Santa Marta + 1 en route on 30th, 10+ Santa Marta de Magasca on 1st, 4+ Deleitosa & 2 Belén plain on 2nd, 2 Valdecañas Dam & 2 Finca Santa Marta on 3rd and 5 various sites on 4th.

TITS & CHICKADEES - Paridae

[European] Crested Tit *Lophophanes cristatus* 3-4 Monfragüe National Park on 30th.

Great Tit *Parus major* Plenty Finca Santa Marta on 29th, lots various sites on 30th, a few various sites on 1st, 3-4 various sites on 3rd, a few Finca Santa Marta+ on 5th.

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus* 6+ on 29th, lots on 30th, a few on 1st, and 1+ Finca Santa Marta on 2nd, a few there on 3rd and noted there on 5th.

SWALLOWS & MARTINS - Hirundinidae

Sand Martin / Bank Swallow *Riparia riparia* 300-400 Casas de Hitos on 29th.

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica* 1 Madrigalejo rice fields on 29th.

Eurasian Crag Martin *Ptyonoprogne rupestris* 3 Finca Santa Marta on 29th, lots Monfragüe National Park on 30th, plenty on 1st, 15+ Upper Río Almonte on 2nd, lots Valdecañas Dam on 3rd, plenty Monfragüe National Park on 5th.

[Common] House Martin *Delichon urbicum* Common various sites on 29th, abundant Monfragüe National Park on 30th, lots on 1st, abundant Valdecañas Dam on 3rd, 100s Madrigalejo rice fields on 4th, and perhaps 10 000 concentrated in Monfragüe National Park on 5th.

Red-rumped Swallow *Cecropis daurica* Seen on 7 days: 4 Finca Santa Marta & 10 Madrigalejo rice fields on 29th, common Monfragüe National Park on 30th, plenty on 1st, heard Finca Santa Marta on 2nd, 6 Finca Santa Marta on 3rd, 6+ Madrigalejo rice fields on 4th, several Monfragüe National Park on 5th.

BUSHTITS, LONG-TAILED TITS - Aegithalidae

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus* 10-12 Monfragüe NP on 30th and 4-5 there on 5th, heard Río Tamuja on 1st, several heard Valdecañas Dam on 3rd, 3 + heard Casas de Hitos on 4th.

LARKS - Alaudidae

Calandra Lark *Melanocorypha calandra* 150-200 Zorita steppes on 29th, 150+ Cáceres plains on 1st and 1 Santa Marta de Magasca on 4th.

Crested Lark *Galerida cristata* Common, widespread and seen daily, especially in arable areas.

Thekla Lark *Galerida theklae* 4 Monfragüe National Park on 30th, a few various sites on 1st, 8 Lower Río Almonte on 2nd, and a few en route Monfragüe National Park on 5th.

Woodlark *Lullula arborea* Several singing Santa Marta de Magasca on 1st, and heard there on 2nd.

Eurasian/Common Skylark *Alauda arvensis* 1 Vegas Altas on 4th.

CISTICOLAS & allies - Cisticolidae

Zitting Cisticola *Cisticola juncidis* 1 Embalse de Arrocampo on 28th, 6-7 Madrigalejo rice fields on 29th, 20+ various sites on 4th.

OLD WORLD WARBLERS - Sylviidae

Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti* Two heard Madrigalejo rice fields & Casas de Hitos on 29th, 2 heard Upper Río Almonte on 2nd, several heard Embalse de Arrocampo on 3rd, 2h Río Gargáligas on 4th, and heard Monfragüe National Park on 5th.

***Common Grasshopper Warbler** *Locustella naevia* A migrant by the Río Tamuja on 1st.

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus* 1 Monfragüe National Park on 30th, 1 Santa Marta de Magasca on 1st, 8-9 Embalse de Arrocampo on 3rd, and 3 Monfragüe National Park on 5th.

Common Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita* 1 Monfragüe National Park on 30th.

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla* A male Finca Santa Marta on 29th, several males Monfragüe National Park on 30th, 1 male Finca Santa Marta on 1st, 8-9 Upper Río Almonte on 2nd, 7+ Finca Santa Marta & a few Valdecañas Dam on 3rd, and noted Monfragüe National Park on 5th.

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin* 1 Finca Santa Marta on 3rd.

Common Whitethroat *Sylvia communis* 1 Madrigalejo rice fields on 29th.

Dartford Warbler *Sylvia undata* 1 Santa Marta de Magasca on 1st, 1 heard Deleitosa on 2nd.

Sardinian Warbler *Sylvia melanocephala* Several heard Finca Santa Marta on 29th, 2-3 Monfragüe National Park on 30th, several heard various sites on 1st, heard Lower Río Almonte on 2nd, heard various sites on 3rd, a few seen various sites on 4th, and heard Finca Santa Marta and Monfragüe National Park on 5th.

CRESTS & KINGLETS - Regulidae

Firecrest *Regulus ignicapilla* 4 + heard Monfragüe National Park on 30th, heard Río Tamuja on 1st, and 2+ Monfragüe National Park on 5th.

WRENS - Troglodytidae

[Winter] Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes* Heard Finca Santa Marta on 29th, 2nd, 4th and 5th, 2+ Monfragüe NP on 30th, and heard Upper Río Almonte on 2nd.

NUTHATCHES & WALLCREEPER - Sittidae

Eurasian Nuthatch *Sitta europaea* Heard Monfragüe National Park on 30th.

TREECREEPERS - Certhiidae

Short-toed Treecreeper *Certhia brachydactyla* Noted on 7 days at Finca Santa Marta almost daily, Monfragüe National Park on 30th, and one finally seen there, albeit briefly, on 5th.

STARLINGS - Sturnidae

Spotless Starling *Sturnus unicolor* Abundant and noted daily in quantity.

THRUSHES - Turdidae

Common Blackbird *Turdus merula* Common, widespread and noted daily, suggesting presence of passage and/or wintering birds.

***Song Thrush** *Turdus philomelos* Singles Roturas on 2nd and Finca Santa Marta on 3rd.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus* 2 Finca Santa Marta on 29th and 4th and 4 there on 3rd, 1 Monfragüe NP on 30th, 2 Upper Río Almonte on 2nd and 1 Madrigalejo rice fields on 4th.

OLD WORLD CHATS & FLYCATCHERS - Muscicapidae

European Robin *Erithacus rubecula* 1 Finca Santa Marta on 29th, 4-5 various sites on 30th, 2+ Río Tamuja on 1st, 1 + heard Upper Río Almonte on 2nd, 1 Finca Santa Marta on 3rd, 1+ Finca Santa Marta on 4th, and 2 Monfragüe National Park on 5th.

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros* Just 2 Monfragüe National Park on 30th.

Common Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus* An adult male Santa Marta de Magasca on 1st, 1 en route on 2nd, 1 male Finca Santa Marta on 3rd.

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra* 12 various sites on 29th, 1 en route on 30th, 15+ various sites on 1st, 6-7 various sites on 2nd, 5+ Embalse de Arrocampo on 3rd, 1-2 Madrigalejo rice fields on 4th.

European/Common Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola* 6+ Embalse de Arrocampo on 28th, 25+ various sites on 29th, several en route on 30th, 25+ various sites on 1st, 30+ various sites on 2nd, plenty various sites on 3rd, lots various sites on 4th.

Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe* A common migrant: 1 Arrocampo on 28th, 20+ various sites on 29th, 50+ various sites on 1st, 15-20 various sites on 2nd, 10+ various sites on 4th.

Black Wheatear *Oenanthe leucura* After a distant single which escaped us on Peña Falcón, Monfragüe on 30th, a pair Upper Río Almonte on 2nd and 1 Valdecañas Dam on 3rd.

Blue Rock Thrush *Monticola solitarius* 3 males Monfragüe National Park on 30th, 1 Trujillo Reservoir & 2 males Lower Río Almonte on 2nd, a pair Valdecañas Dam on 3rd, and 1 seen and 2 heard Monfragüe National Park on 5th.

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata* 2 Monfragüe National Park on 30th, 3 Río Tamuja on 1st, 1 Upper Río Almonte on 2nd.

[European] Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca* 1 Madrigalejo rice fields on 29th, 1 Finca Santa Marta + 7 Monfragüe National Park on 30th, 10+ various sites on 1st, 2-3 Upper Río Almonte on 2nd, 2+ Valdecañas Dam on 3rd, and 1 Monfragüe National Park on 5th.

OLD WORLD SPARROWS & allies - Passeridae

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus* Common, widespread and seen daily.

Spanish Sparrow *Passer hispaniolensis* Two seen + several heard Casas de Hitos on 29th, 1 male Cáceres plains on 1st, 2000+ Belén plain on 2nd, 1000s Casas de Hitos & Río Gargáligas on 4th.

Eurasian Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus* 1 Casas de Hitos & 5 Palazuelo on 4th.

Rock Sparrow *Petronia petronia* 3+ Finca Santa Marta on 3rd.

WAXBILLS, MUNIAS & allies - Estrildidae

***Black-rumped Waxbill** *Estrilda troglodytes* Two, apparently juveniles Casas de Hitos on 29th, constitute the second record for Extremadura and a probable breeding record!

Common Waxbill *Estrilda astrild* 5-6 + heard Casas de Hitos on 29th, 2 Casas de Hitos & 2 Río Gargáligas on 4th.

Red Avadavat *Amandava amandava* 10-15 Madrigalejo rice fields on 29th, 1 male Embalse de Arrocampo on 3rd, 10+ various sites on 4th.

WAGTAILS & PIPITS - Motacillidae

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava* Individuals unassigned to subspecies were noted on 4 days: 1 Embalse de Arrocampo on 28th, 2 Cáceres plains on 1st, 2-3 Embalse de Arrocampo on 3rd, 2 Santa Marta de Magasca & 1 Madrigalejo rice fields on 4th.

Blue-headed Wagtail *Motacilla flava flava* 12+ Madrigalejo rice fields on 29th.

[British] Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava flavissima* 1 male Madrigalejo rice fields on 29th.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea* 2 Finca Santa Marta on 30th, heard Río Tamuja + 1 Finca Santa Marta on 1st, 2 Trujillo Reservoir & 2-3 Upper Río Almonte & 1 Lower Río Almonte on 2nd, 1 Finca Santa Marta on 3rd, and 1 Monfragüe National Park on 5th.

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba* Common, widespread and seen daily.

Tawny Pipit *Anthus campestris* Singles Zorita steppes on 29th and Santa Marta de Magasca on 1st.

FINCHES & allies - Fringillidae

Common Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs* 6+ Monfragüe National Park on 30th, and 6+ there again on 5th.

European Serin *Serinus serinus* Just 2 seen + several heard Finca Santa Marta on 2nd, and a few there on 3rd.

European Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris* One at call-over Finca Santa Marta on 29th, 2 Monfragüe National Park on 30th, 3 Vegas Altas on 4th.

European Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis* 30-40 Embalse de Arrocampo on 28th, 30 various sites on 29th, 1 Monfragüe National Park on 30th, 10+ Cáceres plains on 1st, 2 Finca Santa Marta on 3rd, plenty various sites on 4th, and a few en route on 5th.

Common Linnet *Carduelis cannabina* 3 Madrigalejo rice fields on 29th, 3 Santa Marta de Magasca on 1st.

Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes* Widespread but very flighty: 6-8 Finca Santa Marta on 29th, 10+ Monfragüe National Park on 30th, 1 Río Tamuja on 1st, 1 Finca Santa Marta on 2nd, 8-10 Finca Santa Marta + 3-4 Valdecañas Dam on 3rd, and a few in flight Monfragüe National Park on 5th.

BUNTINGS, NEW WORLD SPARROWS & allies - Emberizidae

Corn Bunting *Emberiza calandra* Common, widespread and seen daily except on 30th.

Rock Bunting *Emberiza cia* A male Monfragüe National Park on 30th, 1 juvenile Lower Río Almonte on 2nd, and 3 Monfragüe National Park on 5th.

Cirl Bunting *Emberiza cirlus* 1 juvenile Upper Río Almonte on 2nd.

MAMMALS - MAMMALIA

RABBITS & HARES - Leporidae

Iberian Hare *Lepus granatensis* 1 Cáceres plains on 1st.

MICE, RATS, VOLES & GERBILS - Muridae

Wood/Long-tailed Field Mouse *Apodemus sylvaticus* 1 Finca Santa Marta on 29th and 3rd, and 1 Monfragüe National Park on 30th.

Brown/Norway Rat *Rattus norvegicus* 1 Monfragüe National Park on 30th.

MONGOOSES - Herpestidae

Egyptian/Large Grey Mongoose *Herpestes ichneumon* Mother + youngster Madrigalejo rice fields on 4th.

DOGS & allies - Canidae

Red Fox *Vulpes vulpes* 1 corpse en route on 30th.

WEASELS & allies - Mustelidae

Eurasian Otter *Lutra lutra* 1 male Monfragüe National Park on 30th.

American Mink *Mustela vison* Scats on 29th.

MOONRATS & HEDGEHOGS - Erinaceidae

Western Hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus* 2 dead en route on 30th.

VESPER BATS - Vespertilionidae

Common Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* 1 Finca Santa Marta on 30th, a few there on 2nd.

PIGS - Suidae

Eurasian Wild Boar *Sus scrofa* 'Rootlings' Finca Santa Marta on 29th.

DEER - Cervidae

Red Deer *Cervus elaphus* Hind + calf & heard male roaring Finca Santa Marta on 29th, lots Monfragüe National Park on 30th, heard Finca Santa Marta + 1 Lower Río Almonte on 2nd, heard Finca Santa Marta & 4 Valdecañas Dam on 3rd, heard Finca Santa Marta on 4th, and a few Monfragüe National Park on 5th.

REPTILES - REPTILIA

Old World Terrapins - Geoemydidae [=Bataguridae]

Spanish Terrapin *Mauremys [casgica] leprosa* 1 Embalse de Sierra Brava on 29th, lots Río Tamuja on 1st, lots Trujillo Reservoir & 1 Lower Río Almonte on 2nd, and 1 Embalse de Arrocampo on 3rd.

Geckos - Gekkonidae

Moorish Gecko *Tarentola mauritanica* 4-5 Trujillo on 30th, 1 Finca Santa Marta on 1st.

Wall/Typical Lizards - Lacertidae

Large Psammodromus *Psammodromus algirus* 1 Monfragüe National Park on 30th.

Spanish Psammodromus *Psammodromus hispanicus* 3 Río Tamuja on 1st.

Iberian Wall Lizard *Podarcis hispanica* One, probably this species Madrigalejo rice fields on 29th, 1 Monfragüe National Park on 30th, several Trujillo on 2nd.

Colubrid or "Harmless(!)" Snakes - Colubridae

Viperine Snake *Natrix maura* 1 Río Tamuja on 1st, 1 Casas de Hitos on 4th.

AMPHIBIANS - AMPHIBIA

Tree Frogs - Hylidae

Common/European Tree Frog *Hyla arborea* 1 Madrigalejo rice fields on 29th, heard Casas de Hitos on 4th.

Stripeless/Mediterranean Tree Frog *Hyla meridionalis* Heard Finca Santa Marta on 30th, 3 seen there on 1st, and heard Lower Río Almonte on 2nd.

Typical Frogs - Ranidae

Iberian Water Frog *Rana perezi* Several Madrigalejo rice fields on 29th, lots various sites on 4th.

LARGER FISH - PISCES

Common Carp *Cyprinus carpio* 4+ Monfragüe National Park on 30th, a few Embalse de Arrocampo on 3rd, and lots Casas de Hitos on 4th.

Barbel sp. *Barbus sp.* Plenty Lower Río Almonte on 2nd.

BUTTERFLIES - LEPIDOPTERA

Grizzled & Spreadwing Skippers - subf: Pyrginae

Mallow Skipper *Carcharodus alceae* 1 Trujillo on 1st.

Swordtails, Birdwings, Swallowtails & Fестоons - subf: Parnassiinae

[Common] Swallowtail *Papilio machaon* Singles Santa Marta de Magasca & Río Tamuja on 1st and Finca Santa Marta on 3rd.

Typical Whites - subf: Pierinae

Small White *Pieris rapae* Several Madrigalejo rice fields on 29th and 4th, a few Monfragüe National Park on 30th, a few various sites on 1st, a few on 2nd, and a few on 3rd.

Bath White *Pontia daplidice* Plenty Monfragüe National Park on 30th, lots Santa Marta de Magasca on 1st, a few on 2nd, 1 Valdecañas Dam on 3rd, and a few various sites on 4th.

Yellows & Sulphurs - subf: Coliadinae

Clouded Yellow *Colias crocea* Common: 2+ Madrigalejo rice fields on 29th, a few Monfragüe National Park on 30th, a few various sites on 1st, a few on 2nd, a few various sites on 3rd, plenty various sites on 4th, and a few Monfragüe National Park on 5th.

Cleopatra *Gonepteryx cleopatra* 1-2 males Monfragüe National Park on 30th.

Coppers - subf: Lycaeninae

Small Copper *Lycaena phlaeas* 4-5 Monfragüe National Park on 30th, 1-2 Río Tamuja on 1st, 1 on 2nd, 1 Valdecañas Dam on 3rd, 1 Vegas Altas on 4th.

Blues & Opals - subf: Polyommatainae

Lang's Short-tailed Blue *Leptotes pirithous* 5+ Monfragüe National Park on 30th, 1 Río Tamuja on 1st, 2+ Deleitosa on 2nd.

Long-tailed Blue *Lampides boeticus* 1 Monfragüe National Park on 30th, several Deleitosa on 2nd.

Geranium Bronze *Cacyreus marshallii* 1 Santa Marta de Magasca on 1st.

Holly Blue *Celastrina argiolus* 1 Monfragüe National Park on 30th, 1 Lower Río Almonte on 2nd.

Common Blue *Polyommatus icarus* 1 male Monfragüe National Park on 30th.

Spanish Brown Argus *Aricia agestis cramera* 30+ Monfragüe National Park on 30th, a few Río Tamuja on 1st, few Lower Río Almonte on 2nd, 1 Valdecañas Dam on 3rd, 1 Santa Marta de Magasca on 4th.

Pashas & (Tailed) Emperors - subf: Charaxinae

Two-tailed Pasha *Charaxes jasius* Fly-by singles Monfragüe National Park on 30th and Valdecañas Dam on 3rd.

Vanessids & smaller Fritillaries - subf: Nymphalinae

Red Admiral *Vanessa atalanta* 1 Finca Santa Marta on 1st.

Painted Lady *Vanessa cardui* 1 Cáceres plains on 1st.

Larger Fritillaries & Heliconians - subf: Heliconiinae

Cardinal *Argynnis pandora* 1 Valdecañas Dam on 3rd.

Browns, Ringlets & Satyrs - subf: Satyrinae

Wall Brown *Lasiommata megera* 10+ Monfragüe National Park on 30th, a few various sites on 1st, 1 Valdecañas Dam on 3rd.

Meadow Brown *Maniola jurtina* Several Casas de Hitos on 29th, several Monfragüe National Park on 30th, a few Río Tamuja on 1st, a few on 2nd, several Valdecañas Dam on 3rd, a few various sites on 4th.

Grayling *Hipparchia semele* 2-3 Deleitosa on 2nd.

MOTHS - LEPIDOPTERA

PYRALIDS - PYRALIDAE

Gold Fringe *Hysopygia costalis* 2 Finca Santa Marta on 30th and 1 there on 2nd.

HOOK-TIPS - DREPANIDAE

Oak Hook-tip sp. *Watsonalla uncinula* 1 Finca Santa Marta on 30th.

GEOMETERS - GEOMETRIDAE

Small Grass Emerald *Chlorissa viridata* A single Finca Santa Marta on 2nd.

Lace Border *Scopula ornata* Singles Finca Santa Marta on 30th and on 2nd.

Vestal *Rhodometra sacraria* Several Casas de Hitos+ on 29th, 3+ Finca Santa Marta on 30th, lots Río Tamuja on 1st, lots various sites on 2nd, several various sites on 3rd, several various sites on 4th.

Yellow Shell *Camptogramma bilineata* 1 Finca Santa Marta on 30th.

Lesser Treble-bar *Aplocera efformata* Singles Finca Santa Marta on 30th and 2nd.

Yellow Belle *Semiaspilates ochrearia* 2 Finca Santa Marta on 30th.

HAWK-MOTHS - SPHINGIDAE

Hummingbird Hawkmoth *Macroglossum stellatarum* 1-2 Monfragüe National Park & 1 Finca Santa Marta on 30th, 1 en route on 1st, 1 Finca Santa Marta on 3rd.

TIGER, ERMINE, FOOTMAN MOTHS & allies - ARCTIIDAE

Pigmy Footman *Eilema pygmaeola* 1 Finca Santa Marta on 30th.

Scarce Footman *Eilema complana* 10+ Finca Santa Marta on 30th and abundant there on 2nd.

Tiger moth sp. *Cymbalophora pudica* 10+ Monfragüe National Park on 30th, 1 Trujillo on 1st, plenty Finca Santa Marta on 2nd.

NOCTUIDS - NOCTUIDAE

Shuttle-shaped Dart *Agrotis puta* 2 Finca Santa Marta on 30th.

Radford's Flame Shoulder *Ochropleura leucogaster* 1 Finca Santa Marta on 30th.

L-album Wainscot *Mithimna l-album* 1 Finca Santa Marta on 30th.

Beautiful Gothic *Leucochlaena oditis* 1 Finca Santa Marta on 30th and a few there on 2nd.

Feathered Ranunculus *Polymixis lichenea* Singles Finca Santa Marta on 30th and 2nd.

Purple Marbled *Eublemma ostrina* Singles Finca Santa Marta on 30th and 2nd.

Scarce Silver-lines *Bena bicolorana* 1 Finca Santa Marta on 30th.

DAMSELFLIES & DRAGONFLIES - ODONATA

EMERALD DAMSELFLIES - Lestidae

Western Willow Spreadwing / Willow Emerald *Lestes viridis* A dead female Finca Santa Marta on 30th and 5+ Río Tamuja on 1st.

BLUE-TAILED & RED DAMSELFLIES - Coenagrionidae

Iberian Bluetail *Ischnura graellsii* 3 Madrigalejo rice fields on 29th.

HAWKERS & EMPERORS - Aeshnidae

Blue/Southern Hawker *Aeshna cyanea* A male Madrigalejo rice fields on 29th, 1 male Río Tamuja on 1st.

Migrant Hawker *Aeshna mixta* 1 Madrigalejo rice fields on 29th, 2-3 Monfragüe National Park on 30th.

Blue Emperor [Dragonfly] *Anax imperator* 1 male Madrigalejo rice fields on 29th, several Madrigalejo rice fields on 4th.

Lesser Emperor *Anax parthenope* 2 Río Tamuja on 1st.

CHASERS, SKIMMERS & DARTERS - Libellulidae

Broad Scarlet [Darter] *Crocothemis erythraea* 5 Madrigalejo rice fields on 29th, 1 male Monfragüe National Park on 30th, 15+ Madrigalejo rice fields on 4th.

Black-tailed Skimmer *Orthetrum cancellatum* A male Monfragüe National Park on 30th.

Epaulet Skimmer *Orthetrum chrysostigma* 1 male + several females Río Tamuja on 1st.

Long Skimmer *Orthetrum trinacria* 1 female Embalse de Arrocampo on 3rd.

Red-veined Darter *Sympetrum fonscolombii* 10s of 1000s Madrigalejo rice fields on 29th, 1000s Madrigalejo rice fields on 4th.

Common Darter *Sympetrum striolatum* 4-5 males Madrigalejo rice fields on 29th, 1 male Monfragüe National Park on 30th, a few Río Tamuja on 1st, 6+ Valdecañas Dam on 3rd.

OTHER SELECTED INSECTS - INSECTA

Egyptian Grasshopper *Anacridium aegyptium* 1 Casas de Hitos on 29th, 1 Finca Santa Marta on 30th.

Red-winged Grasshopper *?Oedipoda germanica* Several Río Tamuja on 1st, a few Lower Río Almonte on 2nd, Valdecañas Dam on 3rd.

Blue-winged Grasshopper *?Oedipoda caerulescens* Several Finca Santa Marta on 29th, plenty Monfragüe National Park on 30th, several Río Tamuja on 1st, plenty Lower Río Almonte on 2nd, Valdecañas Dam on 3rd.

Field Cricket *Gryllus campestris* 2 Finca Santa Marta on 29th.

wingless Bush Cricket 1 en route on 3rd.

Hornet *Vespa crabro* 5+ Monfragüe National Park on 30th.

Dung Beetle sp 1 Monfragüe National Park on 30th.

Churchyard Beetle *Blaps mucronatus* 2 Madrigalejo rice fields on 29th.

Praying Mantis *Mantis religiosa* A male Madrigalejo rice fields on 29th.

OTHER SELECTED TAXA

European Tarantula *Lycosa narbonensis* 1 female + young Finca Santa Marta on 2nd.

Red Signal Crayfish *Procambarus clarkii* noted on 2 days with several Río Tamuja on 1st, plenty Vegas Altas on 4th.

A few randomly selected wildlife photos from the tour (all pictures © J.L. Muddeman unless noted)



A special moth: *Compsoptera jourdanaria* and Autumn snowflake *Leucojum trichophyllum*



A pair of Bonelli's eagles and two Alpine swifts, plus a red deer hind in Monfragüe N.P.



The lovely autumn-flowering merendera and a male blue rock thrush



Otter (© Ray Nowicki) – OK, so this one was elsewhere, but ours views were good too!



the tiny Gold Fringe moth



and the highly fragrant *Narcissus serotinus*



and the ancient city of Trujillo.

October 2008

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