

Spanish Pyrenees

Saturday 6 – Saturday 13 June 2009

Leader:

David Cottridge

Tour Report

Saturday 6 June

Flight to Barcelona & travelling to the Hecho Valley

Generally sunny and warm, becoming overcast and cooler with some showers as we approached the Pyrenees

Our group met each other and became acquainted at Heathrow Airport, and after a delayed flight departure and arriving in Barcelona and sorting out our vehicle, we headed for the Spanish Pyrenees in the late afternoon sun. Because of the need to press on we had an uneventful journey, with just the odd shower once we had passed by the town of Huesca, eventually arriving in the Hecho Valley and the Hotel Uson, that was to be our centre for the week. We were greeted by our hosts Lucia and Imanuol who had a nice meal ready for us and, after that, it was time for bed.

Sunday 7 June

Hotel Uson, the road to Arres and the road to Alastuey

Overcast in the Hecho Valley becoming brighter as we moved lower down

We awoke to an overcast morning and the sound of bird song that included Garden Warbler, Song Thrush, Chaffinch and Coal Tit and after breakfast we headed down the Hecho Valley, stopping just after a kilometre or so to look for some orchids. We quickly found several Greater Butterfly Orchids and Early Purple Orchid at a little grassy lay-by, and in a pine wood adjacent to the road we could hear both Firecrest and Goldcrest calling. On the other side of the road we enjoyed excellent views of a male Red-backed Shrike that posed for us on the tops of bushes, before crossing the road to perch in a pine tree. Just before we left a Green Woodpecker called from the valley below. We moved onto Puente de la Reina where we stopped at a petrol station to buy some water and whilst we were doing so a male Serin was seen singing on a wire and a male Black Redstart was perched on a nearby roof.

Just beyond Puente de la Reina we drove along the road to Arres stopping at a vantage point that looked across a wide valley and a scrubby hillside alongside the road. We had more views of Red-backed Shrike but this time supported by a pair of Woodchat Shrikes, as well as Cirl Bunting, Melodious Warbler, several Pairs of Stonechats, a Honey Buzzard drifting overhead and in the distance an Ortolan Bunting could be heard singing. Alongside the road were good numbers of Pyramidal orchids growing and a Great Green Bush Cricket decided to show itself. We retraced our route back to La Puente de la Reina stopping just past it to look at some orchids growing along the roadside. There were several Lady Orchids, one or two Lesser Butterfly Orchids, and Fragrant Orchid

Further on towards Jaca we turned onto the road to Alastuey and stopped for lunch by a bridge that transverses a stream and a small marshy area. We ate our lunch to the sound of a Nightingale singing in the bushes and Bonelli's Warblers calling in nearby woodland. We spent the rest of the afternoon exploring the road further on and were enjoyed such delights as the aerial acrobatics of Bee-eaters, the beautiful song of the Woodlark as it parachuted down from the sky, the sobriety of a Tawny Pipit in full view and Bonelli's Warbler as it searched for insects, flicking its wings to reveal its bright yellow rump. We were tested by some blue butterflies but were able to identify Common Blue, Idas Blue and the diminutive Little Blue. Some of these were enjoyed on a pleasant walk along a track that climbed gently up the side of the Valley where there was also one of our star butterflies, a Spanish Fritillary, that posed perfectly on a small bush and brought our cameras into action. All in all it had been a delightful start to our week with a good selection of birds, butterflies and plants.

Monday 8 June

Travelling to Jaca, Sallent de Gallego and Formigal

Overcast all day, wet and cold at Formigal, torrential rain travelling back.

On an overcast morning we set off once again down the Hecho Valley with a view to exploring the Pyrenees above Jaca around Sallent de Gallego and Formigal. Just south of Hecho we stopped to look at six Egyptian Vultures, of various ages, as they were foraging in a meadow, and further along on the road to Jaca, we watched a similar scene but this time with sixteen Red Kites. Our first planned stop was in the town of Jaca at the ancient military fortress, the Cuidadela, begun in the 15th century and not completed until the 18th, and is based on an attractive Pentagonal construction. The fort is home to a good number of Rock Sparrows, who build their nests in the fortress walls. As we approached the moat that bounds the fortress the sparrow's presence soon became apparent as their distinctive wheezy calls seemed to emanate from the walls themselves. We were able to locate several singing males, perched on the battlements, and using a telescope we were able to see the characteristic yellow spot on the throat, that is only visible when the bird is in song. Also present around the fort were Common Swifts, who were also nesting in the walls, two Tree Sparrows that were feeding in the surrounding park and a small herd of captive Red Deer that lived in the now dry moat.

After a coffee stop in a nearby cafe we made our way to the eastern side of Jaca and then turned northwards Sallent de Gallego, Formigal and the French border. Unfortunately, it began to rain and it was a fairly uneventful journey until we reached Sallent de Gallego. We stopped at a lay-by where we were greeted by a young Spanish lady, and as luck would have it, the rain stopped, and we were led to a wonderful display of Lady Slipper Orchids, cameras at the ready. Also at the site were Broad-Leaved Marsh Orchid and two colour forms of Elderflower Orchid, pale Yellow and Magenta. The break in the rain brought a few birds out and we observed a Tree Pipit performing its song-flight, two Short-toed Eagles drifting by and a single Raven was also seen in flight. A little further on we watched a flock of twelve Red-billed Choughs in a field and as we climbed up to Formigal several Northern Wheatears were seen along the road side. When we reached the French border we had lunch during which the rain returned and the wind coming over the pass made it quite cold. After lunch, during which we had seen a couple of Alpine Choughs on a nearby rock, the rain had stopped but the cold remained, but undaunted we went for a short walk into France. The botanists had plenty to enjoy as they searched around, but birds were few and far between, although a couple of Water Pipits, a few Black Redstarts and, as we drove back down the valley, a Golden Eagle, gave us something to enjoy.

Because of the weather, highlighted by torrential rain as we approached Jaca on our return journey, it had been a difficult day during which not a single butterfly was seen, but we managed to find enough to interest and delight us. A small reward on returning to our hotel was a small flock of Crested Tits in the car park and a Golden Eagle drifting over a ridge.

Tuesday 9 June

Hotel Uson, Boca del Infierno & the upper Hecho Valley

Generally cloudy with sunny periods

Another overcast morning (at least it wasn't raining) and after breakfast we spent a while watching the mountain ridges from the hotel hoping to see Lammergeier. Although our target bird wasn't seen we saw many Griffons, two Golden Eagles and much nearer to us by the hotel a Red-backed Shrike. We moved onto Boca del Infierno, a narrow gorge, which tapers to just a few feet across in places, alongside the road. We parked just before the gorge where the roadside was fringed appropriately, with Fringed Pinks, and other attractive flowers. In the gorge itself several Pyrenean Saxifrages were growing out of the rock faces, Crag Martins and House Martins were darting around in between visits to their nesting locations and a couple of Black Redstarts were less energetic. Further along the valley we stopped at a spot where the valley sides were much flatter and along the river a Dipper and several Grey Wagtails were seen and in a nearby wooded area we watched a family party of Marsh Tits.

As we moved higher up the valley we kept scanning the mountain tops and ridges where the ever-present Griffons were soaring and flocks of Red-billed Choughs were performing their acrobatics, and at one spot we added a nice booted Eagle to our list. We had lunch in the upper reaches of the valley where many of the meadows were strewn with orchids that included Elderflower Orchid, Burnt Orchid, Frog Orchid, and in pools formed by melted snow beside the track we found some Palmate Newts and the larva of a Fire Salamander. On

a meadow high up on the valley side we watched a Pyrenean Chamois as it fed on the new spring grass and much closer to us quite close to the track, along which we were travelling, John spotted an Alpine Marmot. Amongst the bird species we saw were Yellowhammers, which were common, small flocks of Linnets and a Southern Grey Shrike, but a cry from Geoff produced the best bird of the day - he had spotted a pair of Lammergeiers. They were drifting along a ridge drifting just above the horizon against the sky and occasionally dropping down against the valley side, providing us with excellent views of these majestic birds. Late in the afternoon we made our way back to the hotel, stopping occasionally, and reflecting on a most enjoyable day exploring the upper Hecho Valley.

Wednesday 10 June

Los Mallos de Riglos & Embalse de Sotonera

Pleasant and warm during the morning becoming hot and sunny in the afternoon

A day during which we would journey down towards the flat plains around Huesca, where we would encounter a habitat much different to that which we would experience on the other days. Our first stop was at Los Mallos de Riglos, dramatic pillar-shaped cliff-face that rises dwarfing the village of Riglos at the bottom. On the way up to the village we stopped at a convenient lay-by to scan the hillside for birds and the search the roadside verges for butterflies and plants. One of the first birds we found was a handsome male Black-eared Wheatear conveniently finding dead twigs and trees to perch on, as did Stonechat. We also had good views of a male Sardinian Warbler and a family of Dartford Warblers that were close to the roadside and, as is often their nature, were quite obliging. It was also a good spot for butterflies with both Clouded and Berger's Clouded Yellow present, along with Cleopatra, Green Hairstreak, False Ilex Hairstreak and Dark Green Fritillary. We moved on up to the village and walked around the foot of the cliffs where several rock climbers were scaling the towering pillars that seemed most daunting to us and so we turned our attention to gentler pursuit of nature. As we walked around the sound of Red-billed Choughs floated down to us and the distinctive call of Rock Sparrows seem to emanate from the cliff-face itself. We had excellent views of a fine male Blue Rock Thrush as it perched on a prominent Rock and speeding around high above us amongst the Crag Martins were several Alpine Swifts. After a cup of coffee in the village we witnessed an aerial attack by a small flock of Red-billed Choughs on a Booted Eagle and the pursuers were not content until their target had been chased away.

Our lunch, and the rest of the afternoon, was spent at the Embalse de Sotonera, a large reservoir to the south of the town of Ayerbe. On our drive to the location we passed by a number of White Storks nests perched on the top of church towers and platforms constructed especially for their use. Much closer to the reservoir a pair of Little Ringed Plovers on the track turned out to be the only waders we would see. Around the shores of the reservoir we had several excellent views of a male Montagu's Harrier and a Marsh Harrier, half a dozen Little Egrets, a Hoopoe and a singing Western Orphean Warbler. There were also several species of lark to be seen in the surrounding meadows with good numbers of Crested Larks, several singing Calandra Larks including one we saw well on the ground, and a lone Skylark rising up into the sky in full song. We saw our only dragonflies here which were Red-veined Darter, Vagrant Emperor and Southern Emerald Damselfly. It was very hot around the shores of the reservoir and in the late afternoon we returned along the route that had brought us down from the mountains for a day.

Thursday 11 June

Gabardito & Monasterio San Juan de la Pena

Warm & sunny all day

Throughout the week our plans to visit Gabardito to look for Wallcreeper has been thwarted because of a road closure, and throughout the week we eagerly awaited news from Imanuel to tell us that it had re-opened. It was, therefore, with great relief when after breakfast we were informed that the road was now open. We decided to go straight to the car park at the Refugio de Gabardito driving the last three kilometres on a brand new road the construction of which was the reason for the closure. One of then first birds we saw was a nice male Citril

Finch that posed for us in the top of a pine tree and several were also seen flying over. In addition a couple of Eurasian Treecreepers were seen and the usual Black Redstart around the refuge building. We began our walk up to the cliff-face where the Wallcreepers traditionally breed stopping en route to look things of interest. We had not walked very far when a pair of Red Squirrels were close by in a pine tree and further on we enjoyed good views of Firecrest, Crested Tit, Coal Tits and a Nuthatch feeding newly fledged young. On reaching our destination we set up a vigil and hoped for sighting of the enigmatic Wallcreeper. As we waited there were other birds to enjoy such as Alpine Swifts and Red-billed Choughs mobbing a passing Raven. Down below in the valley the call of Black Woodpecker was heard and closer to us the yaffle of a Green Woodpecker sounded as if the bird was quite close. After half an hour or so of waiting a Wallcreeper was seen flying out of the gorge above us, where its nest was thought to be located, and frustratingly it flew around the corner and out of sight. A short while later, what we assumed was the same bird, was seen flying back from the direction it had towards which it had disappeared, continued on past us and headed across to the other side of the valley. They were brief moments of magic and, although we waited longer, it would be the only sighting we would get of this bird. There was some compensation when just before we left when a Lammergeier came drifting over the ridge above us and a short while after a Peregrine was seen.

During the afternoon we made a visit to the Monasterio San Juan de la Pena, an ancient monastery whose beginnings date back to the 10th century. Not far from the monastery itself we stopped at a church, which is part of the site, set back onto a cliff-face giving it a spectacular aspect and the feeling that it could have evolved out of the rock itself. On the surrounding banks were some stunning flower displays highlighted by the imposing Pyrenean Saxifrage, but also *Petrocoptis hispanica* growing out of the walls of the church and interestingly the species was first described for science from plants collected at this location. We moved on up to the monastery where we had lunch, after which we went for a walk in woodland, where we found a couple of Birds Nest Orchids, after which we explored a meadow where there were Black-veined Whites and Dark Green Fritillaries, and from bushes at the side of the meadow a Common Whitethroat was uttering its scratchy song.

Thursday 11 June

Warm & sunny all day

Our final morning with time before breakfast to say goodbye to the birds that had kept our hotel environment full of song, and the various plants and butterflies that had added great variety to our week in the Hecho Valley and surrounding areas. After breakfast we bid farewell to our hosts and headed for Barcelona on a warm sunny morning. Our journey was fairly uneventful and we arrived in good time to check-in and with a flight that took of on time we landed at Heathrow in the early evening. Finally, goodbye to each other and time to reflect on the delights of Pyrenean natural history that we had experienced during our week spent in the Hecho Valley and surrounding areas.

BIRDS

Common Quail *Coturnix coturnix* Only heard calling in cornfields along the road to Arres on the 7th.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis* One at the Embalse de Sotonera on the 10th.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus* Six at the Embalse de Sotonera on the 10th.

European White Stork *Ciconia ciconia* At least six birds as we travelled to the Hecho valley on the 6th and ten during our visit to the lowland areas on the 10th.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea* A total of four seen in rivers between Hecho and Puente de la Reina and two at the Embalse de Sotonera on the 10th.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta* Six at the Embalse de Sotonera on the 10th.

Common (Eurasian) Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus* A total of seven birds recorded during the week.

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus* One at Gabardito on the 11th was the only record.

European Honey Buzzard *Pernis apivorus* A single bird over woodland along the road to Arres on the 7th.

Red Kite *Milvus milvus* Common throughout the week.

Black Kite *Milvus migrans* Very common, recorded in good numbers every day.

Lammergeier (Bearded Vulture) *Gypaetus barbatus* A pair in the upper Hecho Valley on the 9th and one at Gabardito on the 11th.

Egyptian Vulture *Neophron percnopterus* Seen regularly in small numbers with a daily maximum of seven on the 8th.

Eurasian Griffon *Gyps fulvus* Very common throughout the week.

Short-toed Eagle *Circaetus gallicus* A total of seven birds spread over three days during the middle part of the week.

Western Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus* One just south of Hecho on the 7th and three during our journey to the lowlands on the 10th.

Montagu's Harrier *Circus pygarrus* A superb male at the Embalse de Sotonera on the 10th.

Common (Eurasian) Buzzard *Buteo buteo* Seen regularly throughout the week in small numbers.

Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos* One near to Salient de Gallego on the 8th, and one later the same day and two the following morning at the Hotel Uson.

Booted Eagle *Aquila pennata* One as we travelled up the upper Hecho Valley on the 9th and one being mobbed by Red-billed Choughs at Riglos on the 10th.

Common Coot *Fulica atra* About a dozen birds at the Embalse de Sotonera on the 10th.

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius* A pair along a track at the Embalse de Sotonera on the 10th.

Yellow-legged Gull *Larus michahellis* An adult at the Embalse de Sotonera on the 10th.

Feral Rock Dove *Columba livia* Fairly common, seen throughout the week in smallish numbers.

Common Wood Pigeon *Columba palumbus* Very common as we travelled to the Hecho Valley on the 6th and again when we returned, a total of about 15 seen in between.

Eurasian Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto* Recorded throughout the week in reasonable numbers.

Common Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus* Two seen on the 7th, with one along the Arres road and the other along the road to Alastuey. It was also heard calling on three other days.

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco* One heard calling on the evening of the 11th from the hotel Uson.

Alpine Swift *Tachymarptis melba* Five above Los Mallos de Riglos on the 10th and six at Gabardito on the following day.

Common Swift *Apes apus* Common, recorded throughout the week.

European Bee-eater *Merops apiaster* A total of eight seen along the road to Alastuey on the 7th and one seen during our visit to the lowland area near Ortilla on the 8th.

Common Hoopoe *Upupa epops* One heard calling along the road to Alastuey on the 7th and two seen briefly on the 8th, with one near to Ortilla and the other at the Embalse de Sotonera.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major* Heard calling on several occasions but a male seen in the Hecho Valley on the 10th and a female at the car park at the Refugio de Gabardito on the following day.

Black Woodpecker *Dryocopus martius* One heard calling from the valley below as we waited for Wallcreeper at Gabardito on the 11th.

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis* Two birds seen in the Hecho Valley and a couple of birds heard calling on separate days with one at Gabardito.

Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio* A resident bird at our hotel seen regularly and in addition small numbers recorded each day.

Southern Grey Shrike *Lanius meridionalis* One in the upper Hecho Valley on the 9th and one as we travelled to Anso on the 12th.

Woodchat Shrike *Lanius senator* One as we travelled on the 6th, a pair along the road to Arres on the 7th and one later the same day, and one at the Embalse de Sotonera on the 10th.

(Eurasian) Golden Oriole *Oriolus oriolus* Heard calling on three separate days but frustratingly none showed themselves.

Eurasian Jay *Garrulus glandarius* Recorded in small numbers everyday of the tour.

Eurasian (Common) Magpie *Pica pica* Very common throughout the week.

Red-billed Chough *Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax* Recorded in quite good numbers at various locations such as Los Mallos de Riglos, Upper Hecho Valley, Gabardito and Salient de Gallego.

Alpine Chough *Pyrrhocorax graculus* Two birds at Formigal were the only two we saw.

Eurasian (Western Jackdaw) Jackdaw *Coloeus monedula* A single bird on the causeway at the Embalse de Sotonera.

Carriion Crow *Corvus corone* Very common, recorded in good numbers throughout the week.

Northern (Common) Raven *Corvus corax* A total of 13 birds recorded during the week at various locations.

Marsh Tit *Parus palustris* A family party of five in the Hecho Valley on the 9th and six further down the valley on the following day.

Coal Tit *Parus ater* Smallish numbers encountered around our hotel, but good numbers seen during our walk to Gabardito and back on the 11th.

(European) Crested Tit *Lophophanes cristatus* Encountered most days in small numbers that includes several sightings at our hotel.

Great Tit *Parus major* Good numbers recorded south of Puente de la Reina but Sparse in the Pyrenean valleys.

Eurasian Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus* Fairly common, recorded in smallish numbers each day.

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica* Recorded regularly in good numbers each day of the week.

Eurasian Crag Martin *Ptyonoprogne rupestris* Common throughout the week.

Northern House Martin *Delichon urbicum* Common throughout the week.

Long-tailed (Bush) Tit *Aegithalos caudatus* Four seen in the Upper Hecho Valley on the 9th.

Calandra Lark *Melanocorypha calandra* One seen in flight and one sitting on the ground at the Embalse de Sotonera on the 10th.

Crested Lark *Galerida cristata* Very common on the lowlands in the Ayerbe area on the 10th.

Woodlark *Lullula arborea* One seen along the road to Alastuey on the 7th.

Eurasian Skylark *Alauda arvensis* One in flight, rising up singing at the Embalse de Sotonera on the 10th.

Great Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus arundinaceus* One heard singing at the Embalse de Sotonera on the 10th.

Melodious Warbler *Hippolais polyglotta* One along the road to Arres on the 7th and two south of Anso on the 12th.

Common Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita* Heard singing on several occasions.

Western Bonelli's Warbler *Phylloscopus bonelli* Two birds seen well along the road to Alastuey on the 7th and heard singing on a few other days.

(Eurasian) Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla* Heard singing fairly often but one seen near Riglos on the 10th.

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin* One heard singing from our hotel every morning .

Western Orphean Warbler *Sylvia hortensis* A singing male seen at the Embalse de Sotonera on the 10th and another south of Anso on the 12th and occasionally heard singing elsewhere.

Common Whitethroat *Sylvia communis* One at the Monasterio San Juan de la Pena on the 11th.

Dartford Warbler *Sylvia undata* A family group of four seen near Riglos on the 10th.

Sardinian Warbler *Sylvia melanocephala* Heard calling several times on the 7th but a male seen near Riglos on the 10th.

Firecrest *Regulus ignicapillus* Heard on several occasions not too far from our hotel but two seen well on our walk up to Gabardito on the 11th.

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus* A couple seen near our hotel and heard elsewhere on a few occasions.

Northern Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes* Heard everyday outside our hotel and a few other places but eventually we caught up with one before breakfast.

Eurasian Nuthatch *Sitta europaea* Heard each morning from our hotel but it never showed itself although we eventually saw an adult feeding newly fledged chick on the way up to Garbardito on the 11th.

Wallcreeper *Tichodroma muraria* During our vigil at Gabardito on the 11th we had two separate flights views of what was probably the same bird.

Eurasian Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris* Two near the hotel on the 9th and two at the beginning of our walk to Gabardito on the 11th.

Spotless Starling *Sturnus unicolor* Fairly common throughout the week.

Common (Eurasian) Blackbird *Turdus merula* Recorded regularly throughout the week.

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos* Heard singing at various locations.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus* One in the upper Hecho Valley on the 9th and one as we drove up to Gabardito on the 11th.

European Robin *Erithacus rubecula* One or two seen on several days and also heard on other occasions.

Common Nightingale *Luscinia megarhynchos* Often heard singing deep in bushes as is their nature but single birds seen on the 8th and the 10th.

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochuros* Recorded daily in ones and twos with a daily maximum of ten on the 11th.

Common Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus* A male in the upper Hecho Valley on the 9th.

European Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola* Good numbers recorded along the roads to Alastuey and Arres on the 7th and one on the way up to Riglos on the 10th.

Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe* Five birds were seen from Salient de Gallego and Formigal on the 8th and a single bird seen near Riglos on the 10th.

Black-eared Wheatear *Oenanthe hispanica* A handsome male was seen on our drive up to Riglos on the 10th.

Blue Rock-thrush *Monticola solitarius* We enjoyed good views of a nice male at Los Mallos de Riglos on the 10th.

White-throated Dipper *Circus cyrcus* Three birds were seen as we travelled up and back again to Upper Hecho Valley on the 9th.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus* Very common, recorded in good numbers every day of the week.

Eurasian Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus* Two birds seen at the fort in Jaca on the 8th.

Rock Sparrow *Petronia petronia* Heard calling along the Alastuey road on the 7th but good numbers present at the fort in Jaca on the following day and several seen and heard calling at Los Mallos de Riglos on the 10th.

Hedge Accentor (Dunnock) *Prunella modularis* A couple of birds seen and others heard singing during the week.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea* Four birds were seen as we travelled up and back again to Upper Hecho Valley on the 9th.

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba* Recorded in ones and twos most days but twelve seen on the 10th and ten the following day.

Tawny Pipit *Anthus campestris* One posed nicely on a low bush for us along the road to Alastuey on the 7th and one at the Embalse de Sotonera on the 10th.

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis* One seen in song-flight at Sallent Gallego as we were looking at Lady Slipper Orchids on the 8th.

Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta* Two just over the French border at Portal de Portalet on the 8th.

Common Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs* Common, recorded each day in quite good numbers.

European Serin *Serinus serinus* Recorded regularly in small numbers each day.

European Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris* A total of eight birds recorded during the week.

European Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis* Three birds recorded in the Pyrenean valleys and ten recorded during our visit to the lowland areas on the 10th.

Citril Finch *Carduelis citronella* Two males seen well at the Refugio de Gabardito and a few others in flight on the 11th.

Common Linnet *Carduelis cannabina* Recorded regularly throughout the week.

Common (Red) Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra* A male at the Refugio de Gabardito on the 11th and a pair at the Hotel Uson on the following day.

Corn Bunting *Miliaria calandra* Very common throughout the week.

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citronella* One heard singing along the road to Alastuey on the 7th, good numbers in the upper Hecho Valley on the 9th and as we travelled to Zurita on the 12th.

Ortolan Bunting *Emberiza hortulana* One heard singing along the road to Alastuey on the 7th.

Cirl Bunting *Emberiza cirlus* Quite good numbers seen during the week.

MAMMALS:

Roe Deer *Capreolus capreolus*

Pyrenean Chamois (Isard) *Rupicapra pyrenaica*

Red Squirrel *Sciurus vulgaris*

Alpine Marmot *Marmota marmota*

Brown Hare *Lepus europaeus*

AMPHIBIANS & REPTILES:

Fire Salamander *Salamandra salamandra*

Palmate Newt *Triturus helveticus*

Iberian Wall Lizard *Podarcis hispanica*

BUTTERFLIES:

Swallowtail *Papilio machaon*

Black-veined White *Aporia crataegi*

Large White *Pieris brassicae*

Small White *Artogeia rapae*

Green-veined White *Artogeia napi*

Orange Tip *Anthocaris cardamines*

Clouded Yellow *Colias crocea*

Berger's Clouded Yellow *Colias alfacariensis*

Cleopatra *Gonepteryx cleopatra*

Wood White *Leptidea sinapis*

Blue-spot Hairstreak *Satyrium spini*

False Ilex Hairstreak *Satyrium esculi*

Green Hairstreak *Callophrys rubi*

Small Copper *Lycaena phlaeas*

Provence Short-tailed Blue *Everes alcatas*

Small Blue *Cupido minimus*

Osiris Blue *Cupido osiris*

Holly Blue *Celastrina argiolus*

Idas Blue *Lycaeides argus*

Brown Argus *Aricia agestis*

Spanish Chalk-hill Blue *Lysandra albicans*

Adonis Blue *Lysandra bellargus*

Common Blue *Polyommatus icarus*

Duke of Burgundy *Hamearis lucina*

Southern White Admiral *Limenitis reducta*

Peacock *Inachis io*

Red Admiral *Vanessa atalanta*

Painted Lady *Vanessa cardui*

Small Tortoiseshell *Aglais urticae*

Dark Green Fritillary *Mesoacidalia aglaja*

Pearl-bordered Fritillary *euphrosyne*

Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary *Clossiana selene*

Weaver's (Violet) Fritillary *Classiana dia*

Knapweed Fritillary *Melitaea phoebe*

Meadow Fritillary *Mellicta parthenoides*

Spanish Fritillary *Eurodryas desfontainii*
Marbled White *Melanargia galathea*
Western Marbled White *Melanargia occitanica*
Meadow Brown *Maniola jurtina*
Spanish Gatekeeper *Pyronia bathseba*
Dusky Heath *Coenonympha dorus*
Pearly Heath *Coenonympha arcania*
Spanish Heath *Coenonympha iphioides*
Chestnut Heath *Coenonympha glycerion*
Speckled Wood *Parage aegeria*
Wall Brown *Lasiommata megera*
Large Wall Brown *Lasiommata maera*
Grizzled Skipper *Pyrgus malvae*
Red-underwing Skipper *Spialia sertorius*
Dingy Skipper *Erynnis tages*
Small Skipper *Thymelicus sylvestris*
Large Skipper *Ochlodes venata*

MOTHS (micros)

Aethes pierci
Chrysocrambus craterella and/or *Chrysocrambus linetella*
Pyrausta ostrinalis
Pyrausta purpuralis
Green Oak Tortrix *Tortrix viridana*

MOTHS (macros)

Garden Tiger - caterpillar *Arctia caja*
Straw Belle *Aspitates gilvaria*
Silver Y *Autographa gamma*
Mother Shipton *Callistege mi*
Yellow Shell *Camptogramma bilineata*
Latticed Heath *Chiasmia clathrata*
Clouded Buff *Diacrisia sannio*
Common Heath *Ematurga atomaria*
Burnet Companion *Euclidia glyphica*
Bright Wave *Idaea ochrata*
Humming-bird Hawkmoth *Macroglossum stellatarum*
Small Purple-barred *Phytometra viridaria*
Silver-ground Carpet *Xanthorhoe montanata*
Six-spot Burnet *Zygaena filipendulae*
White-collared Burnet *Zygaena lavandulae*
Zygaena osterodensis (a burnet moth)
Zygaena rhadamanthus (a burnet moth)
Five-spot Burnet *Zygaena trifolii*

DRAGONFLIES

Southern Emerald Damselfly *Lestes barbarus*
Vagrant Emperor *Hemianax(Anax)ephippiger*
Red-veined Darter *Sympetrum fonscolombii*

OTHER INSECTS

Bishop's Mitre *Aelia acuminata*
Carpocoris purpureipennis (a shield bug)
Green Tiger Beetle *Cicindela campestris*

Seven-spot Ladybird *Coccinella septempunctata*

Dock Bug *Coreus marginatus*

Sloe Bug *Dolycoris baccarum*

Eurygaster maura (shield bug)

Twenty-two-spot Ladybird *Psyllobora vigintiduopunctata*

Fire Bug *Pyrrhocoris apterus*

Tipula maxima (crane-fly)

Trichodes apiarius (a bee-eating beetle)

unidentified stick insect

(Many thanks to Hugh for sending insect lists)

PLANTS

St Bernard's Lily *Anthericum liliago*

Pyrenean Fritillary *Fritillaria pyrenaica*

Trumpet Gentian *Gentiana acaulis*

Great Yellow Gentian *Gentiana lutea*

Pyrenean Gentian *Gentiana occidentalis*

Spring Gentian *Gentiana verna*

Lent Lily *Narcissus pseudonarcissus*

Bird's Eye Primrose *Primula farinosa*

Round-leaved Wintergreen *Pyrola rotundifolia*

Pyrenean Saxifrage *Saxifraga longifolia*

Man Orchid *Aceras anthropophorum*

Pyramidal Orchid *Anacamptis pyramidalis*

Long leaved Helleborine *Cephalanthera longifolia*

Frog Orchid *Coeloglossum viride*

Lady's Slipper Orchid *Cypripedium calceolus*

Common Spotted Orchid *Dactylorhiza fuchsia*

Early Marsh Orchid *Dactylorhiza incarnata*

Broad Leaved Marsh Orchid *Dactylorhiza majalis*

Elder Flowered Orchid *Dactylorhiza sambucina*

Bird's Nest Orchid *Neottia nidus-avia*

Bee Orchid *Ophrys apifera*

Early Purple Orchid *Orchis mascula*

Lady Orchid *Orchis Purpurea*

Burnt tip Orchid *Orchis ustulata*

Lesser Butterfly Orchid *Plantanthera bifolia*

Greater Butterfly Orchid *Plantanthera chlorantha*

(Many thanks to Pippin for sending the plant list who was supported in the field by Jenny & Bobbie)

David Cottridge, June 2009

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