

# Dragonflies – La Garrotxa

## Saturday 12 June – Saturday 19 June 2010

### Leader:

Mike Lockwood

A successful trip all in all, despite the mixed weather - we lost most of two afternoons to rain, and a couple more were distinctly cloudy and poor for insects. Even so, given the ferocity of the storm on the Sunday and the doom and gloom from the weather forecast, we can perhaps count ourselves lucky.

The worst part of the trip was the vans – stuck door and broken window on one, and back door that refused to open on the other.

But this was a minor annoyance, given the all-round variety of wildlife that we found: a surprising amount of amphibians and terrapins, all the best birds of the area, good orchids and an abundance of dragonflies and damselflies. The lateness of the season gave us good views of some very fresh newly emerged species of both Odonata and butterflies, although in a more ‘normal’ spring we would have perhaps seen up to 20 further species of butterfly.

The highlight for me were the variety of dragonflies, the birds at Coll de Malla, the summer lady’s tresses and some of the sparkling newly emerged butterflies.

Thanks to all for letting me get so enthusiastic about the dragonflies!!

**It must be stressed that Mike had permits for the capture of both dragonflies and butterflies from the Catalan Department of the Environment, without which insects cannot be caught in Catalonia, even for quick examination.**

### DAILY DIARY

#### Saturday 12 June

##### Barcelona Airport – Riera de Muntanyola – La Moixina

Weather: cloudy and cool.

After all meeting on time, we headed north from Barcelona towards the town of Vic, before detouring off the motorway for our picnic lunch next to one of the cleanest streams in the area. After eating, we went down to the water’s edge and immediately recorded Blue Emperor *Anax imperator* and Broad-bodied Chaser *Libellula depressa*, and Mercury Bluet *Coenagrion mercuriale*. We examined the design on the second segment of the abdomen and were then able to compare it with an Azure Bluet *Coenagrion puella*. A little further down stream, we found the same species with the addition of a number of tandems of Large Red Damselfly *Pyrrhosoma nymphula*.

From here we head off to our hotel and after a break, we reconvened for a walk around the marshy woods of La Moixina. In the marshy woods we could hear Wren, Robin, Blackbird, Song Thrush and Chaffinch singing and calling, and once out on the road we heard and then saw a Marsh Tit. Around the back of the woodland, a Cirl Bunting was seen briefly. We walked along a wall made of volcanic stone, where Sue pointed out a Pearly Heath taking the last of the afternoon sun. In the distance we all had views of three Ravens mobbing a Booted Eagle.

## Sunday 13 June

### Coll de Bestracà – Joanetes – Coll de Bracons – El Mallol

Weather: sunny morning; then storm

The day started fine, although with a threat of rain in the afternoon. We headed north up to the area of limestone mountains known as the Alta Garrotxa for a day of flowers and butterflies.

First stop was in the pastures below Coll de Rabassa, where we enjoyed our first butterflies: a Red-underwing Skipper and a Glanville Fritillary, and then a flush of blues - Osiris, Adonis, Provence Chalkhill and Silver-studded, as well as Brown Argus (with a black mark on the upper forewing), Berger's Clouded Yellow and a quite fresh Glanville Fritillary. The pastures were full of blue aphyllanthes *Aphyllanthes monspeliensis*, Common rock-rose *Helianthemum nummularium* and white flax *Linum suffruticosum*.

Birdwise, we had views through the scope of a male Red-backed

Shrike, one of the two that have territory here, a Stonechat and a male Cirl Bunting. We scanned the skies, but there was a distinct lack of raptors, a tonic that was to continue throughout the day.

We pressed on into the woods, where the small open areas of pasture held common spotted orchids *Dactylorhiza fuchsii*, common twayblade *Listera ovata*, Burnt orchid *Orchis ustulata*, lots of fragrant orchids *Gymnadenia conopsea* and a few greater butterfly orchids *Plantanthera clorantha*. Here we also found the best butterfly of the day – a nervous female Chestnut Heath, seemingly looking for somewhere to lay her eggs.

Coming down a path Mike stopped to let us hear a frog calling quietly in the woods. The sound - like a shoe squeaking was quite clear - and as we continued we realised that it was coming from a pool in the woods, which turned out to be a puddle on the path. We stood and listened, hearing the call very clearly until Sue spotted a frog in the water. We all more or less were able to see it; it then moved and half hid itself under an overhang. For most everyone, this was their first view of a Parsley Frog, a small spotted frog that is not uncommon in these parts.

We pushed on and had 'first lunch' in the shade at Coll de Bestracà, enjoying the sun that was threatening to disappear at any minute. After lunch we wandered over to a pool, where we were impressed to find at least 8 male Broad-bodied Chasers zooming around the pool, skirmishing and then flying on. Any female that appeared was quickly grabbed and mated. She then immediately start to lay her eggs and in one case we were able to see her eggs - like miniature grains of rice clustered around a plant stalk in the water. Also in the water we noted the water boatmen swimming upside down, and the pond skaters skating on the water surface. Also of interest were the pink worm-like creatures that formed pink patches on the muddy base of the pond.

Also here were a number of Iberian Pool Frogs, but best of all was a Stripeless Tree Frog that Steve spotted motionless (the frog, not Steve!) on a branch overhanging the water. We all had good views of this common but hard-to-see species. On the water's edge we watched through the scopes Silver-studded Blue and a Safflower Fritillary, identifiable by the continuous white margin on its under hindwing.

Soon it was time to go and we made our way back along the same track, avoiding the puddles, adding fly orchid *Ophrys insectifera* to our list of orchids.

Back at the van we had our second lunch before heading downhill in a veritable deluge and back down to the valley of El Fluvià. Here Mike made a couple of phone calls to try and ascertain which way the storm was heading. Local information seemed to indicate that it was heading east along the valley, and so we returned to Olot and out through the Vall d'en Bas and to a forest just above the village of Joanetes. Here we debussed and entered an orchid-rich forest, where in a few minutes we came across both lesser and greater butterfly orchids *Plantanthera bifolia*, a very dead sword-leaved helleborine *Cephalanthera longifolia*, lots of perfect red helleborines *C. rubra*, excellent groups of bug *Orchis coriophora* and pyramidal orchids *Anacamptis pyramidalis* and a few tall stands of long gone-over violet limodores *Limodorum arbortivum*. Other flowers here included the parasitic yellow bird's-nest *Monotropa hypopitys*.

The rain sent us scuttling back to the van, but as it was still reasonably early and so we decided to head up the road to the pass at Coll de Bracons, some 600 m above us. We debussed in the fog, looked at the patches of *Coronilla minima*, and then drove down the road a little way to look for the Pyrenean bellflower

*Campanula speciosa* that grows on the cliffs here. Sue had spotted the large blue flowers on the way up, and so we all got out for a good look at these extravagant bellflowers. At the same place we also found a couple of Eschers' Blue and a Common Blue shivering on plant stems.

The rain defeated us again and on the way back to the hotel we made a detour to the village of El Mallol where Mike explained the barrage-lake effect that created the flat agricultural lands at our feet: the lava from the volcano Croscat dammed the river Fluvià, thereby creating a large lake that over the centuries silted up/was drained, leaving today a flat fertile agricultural plain. Pam spotted out first Black Redstart in the village. And with that time was time for home.

## **Monday 14 June**

### **Can Jordà – Riu Ser**

Weather: sunny morning, but dull drizzly and overcast in the afternoon

A strange day, as we managed to avoid the worst of the weather, had a delay while we fixed a broken window in the van, but ended up happily watching emerging dragonflies on the river Ser.

First stop was Can Jordà, the HQ of La Garrotxa Volcanic Zone Natural Park, where Emili Bassols, one of the technical staff in charge of the park's natural heritage, gave us a quick explanation of the park's work. As it was fairly sunny, we were itching to get down to the nearby pools and have a good hunt for Odonata. However, our start was delayed rather when, as Mike closed the side of the van, the side window shattered, leaving a rather puzzled expression on the faces of all of us. We decided that we would cross this bridge once we had got back from our tour of the lagoons.

Walking down the track to the pools, our first find was a Common Blue Damselfly *Enallagma cyathigerum* hiding in the hedgerow. As we approached the lagoons, it soon became apparent that the rains had left the ground fairly boggy - but we were still able to get near enough to the water to watch a male Blue Emperor that perched conveniently just in front of us, a couple of Four-Spot Chasers *Libellula quadrimaculata* and the first of many, many Azure Bluets.

Hedgerow and water prevented us continuing alongside the pools and so we headed back to skirt the other side of the lagoons. Our first find was a freshly emerged Winter Damselfly *Sympecma fusca*, the only European odonat that hibernates as an adult and hatches in a single generation in the summer. Otherwise, as we walked along (or stumbled over the fence in the case of Pam when Mike was unable to hold the mildly electric fence down well enough) and found even more Azure Bluets, and just a couple teneral Broad Scarlets *Crocothemis erythraea* and a Keeled Skimmer *Orthetrum coerulescens*, lacking their fine adult colours. We reached the end of the pools and studied a bank of brambles where we identified a fresh Heath Fritillary sunning itself, that Mike caught and revealed how it separates this species from the very similar Provençal and Meadow Fritillaries. On the way back, after catching many Azure Bluets, Mike finally caught up with a mating pair of Dainty Damselflies *Coenagrion scitulum*, which we studied and all agreed that it was possible to separate it from the other bluets with binoculars. We found an Iberian Blue-tail *Ischnura graellsii* and made note of how to separate it from the Common Blue-tail we were to see later on in the week.

Back at the van we had to solve the window problem, which in the end was resolved by knocking out the whole window and affixing black plastic bags over the resulting hole. After this annoying delay – as the skies threatened all the while to open - we headed off to the river Ser, a habitat that promised a different selection of dragonfly species.

And so it turned out. At the first stop at the village of El Torn, the group found an American Mink and a male Western Demoiselle *Calopteryx xanosthoma* whilst Mike phoned the car hire company. Mike then arrived and led the group into the undergrowth where many of the damselflies were hiding - here we found our first White *Platycnemis latipes* and Orange *P. acutipennis* Featherlegs, fresh-looking and perching at camera height amongst the stinging nettles. Also here, a female Western Demoiselle and a male Large Red Damselfly.

We pushed off to another stretch of the river, where there were at least 10 male Western Demoiselles, a number of females and both featherlegs in and around the river. Roland spotted our first Gomphidae (that

Mike had just walked past it) on a piece of bracken and we all admired a very fresh female Large Pincertail *Onychogomphus uncatus*. Other Pincertails flew over, probably tenerals emerging at that very moment.

We wandered up the road, stopping for a Provence Chalkhill Blue and one of the year's first Spanish Marbled White. We wandered through an area of pastures that Mike claimed would be good for Gomphidae - and lo and behold we found a Western Clubtail *Gomphus pulchellus* sat on a rock in characteristic fashion.

Rain threatened, but there was still a good site a little downstream to visit. After a stop for an excellent stand of bee orchids *Ophrys apifera*, we parked up next to the Ser again and proceeded to look for some action. Nothing was flying, but we decided to concentrate on looking for exuvias. Mike found one exuvia and then an emerging Large Pincertail whose wings had not unfolded properly. Almost at the same moment Steve pointed out a larva that emerging from the water that seemed to be on the point of metamorphosing. After a bit of await, its back split and with John snapping away happily, we then spent almost an hour watching as the adult dragonfly slowly emerged and gradually 'pumped up' its wings and abdomen. By 6 we decided that enough was enough and that it might be some time before it actually flew off. We headed back to the base, leaving Mike with the unenviable task of driving to Girona Airport to pick up the replacement van.

## **Tuesday 15 June**

### **Montperdut – Sant Quirze de Colera**

Weather: damp start but bright and sunny in afternoon.

The weather was still a bit dodgy, and we decided to head over towards the coast where we hoped to get a full sunny day and not just a half a day.

We had quite a long drive at first and our first stop was in the Cap de Creus Natural Park on the road up to the monastery of Sant Pere de Rodes. After parking the van, we picked up a track through the scrub and cork oak trees heading towards the distinctive summit of Montperdut. Almost immediately we found our first Spanish Gatekeeper on the wing, accompanied by the occasional False Ilex Hairstreak and Wall Brown. Birdwise, we soon found the here omnipresent Corn Bunting and Woodchat Shrike, and were pleased to get a view through the scope of a male Golden Oriole sitting briefly in view in an oak tree on the other side of the valley.

We caught quick glimpses of a pair of dragonflies, and then Roland pointed out a third such dragonfly perched in full view on a bush – it turned out to be a teneral Southern Darter *Sympetrum meridionale*, identifiable by the almost complete lack of black lines or colouring on the side of its thorax. Continuing up the track we noted our first Red-rumped Swallows, cruising over the scrub below the summit and then a falcon, that circled and swept down low over our heads. In the end Mike called it as an Eleonora's Falcon, not rare in this area in early summer.

We sat and had our first lunch on the summit of the mountain, entertained by the Thekla Larks calling around us. Flowerwise, of interest was a patch of Pyrenean pink *Dianthus pyrenaicus*, with its first flowers just appearing. On the way down we looked at the typical shrubs that constituted the scrub: Mediterranean buckthorn *Rhamnus alaternus* in fruit, thorny broom *Calicotome spinosa*, lentisc *Pistachia lentiscus*, French lavender *Lavandula stoechas*, and narrow-leaved *Cistus monspeliensis* and grey-leaved cistus *Cistus albidus*. We noted that a couple of cistus bushes were covered in a dodder, probably *Cuscuta epithimum*.

We stopped for a long time to admire a Great Banded Grayling on the path, and a couple of the group had views of Sardinian and Orphen Warblers.

Back at the van, it was time to head off for lunch ... and after a drink and ice-cream on the terrace of the restaurant at Sant Quirze de Colera (where a Blue Rock Thrush was entering into a nest to feed young), we started out post-prandial wander through the scrub of this area of the L'Albera mountains.

Despite being a fairly dry area, we soon saw a number of interesting butterflies including a magnificent Cardinal, and Iberian Marbled White, Cleopatra, Small and Large Whites, Holly Blue, False Ilex Hairstreak and Spanish Gatekeeper. We wandered down to the small stream, probably with more water than normal for mid-June and found our target species - summer lady's tresses, apparently extinct in Britain, in the company

of a number of common tongue orchids. The stream also held a Common Frog, to add to our growing amphibian list, and a new dragonfly for the trip Southern skimmer *Orthetrum brunneum*. Other Odonata here included Broad Scarlet, Broad-bodied Chaser and Large Red Damselfly. On our way back to the van we came across Corn Bunting and Red-backed Shrike.

We moved on and stopped on the river Orlina near the village of Rabós. Here Mike made us approach the river in silence to have a chance of viewing the European Pond Terrapins through the scope. We all had good views before they eventually slid off their rocks and into the water. Much closer at hand a much larger terrapin entered the water and swam towards us – we judged it to be an escape (introduced) given its lack of any apparent shyness. Over the water there were a number of small damselflies on the wing, which were judged to be Blue-eyes *Erythromma lindenii* on account of the males' long 'claspers'. Finally, a dragonfly half in and half out of the water attracted our attention. It was a Western Clubtail but we could not quite see what it was doing. Something seemed to be pulling it back into the water, but although it seemed to work its way free, it could not quite free itself and take off. The movement in the water suggested that there was a fish trying to eat it, but we were too far away to see.

For a final stop we headed off towards the village of Capmany, where we thought that some of the lax-flowered orchids might just be hanging on. Alas, no. But we did get excellent views of a Short-toed Eagle overhead and were able to admire the huge flower spikes of pale bugloss *Echium italicum*. And with that it was back to our hotel after another action-packed day!

### **Wednesday 16 June**

#### **Estany de Banyoles – Riu Ser**

Weather: sun with just a few clouds

The better weather meant that it was time to head for Banyoles, the best dragonfly site in the area.

After a first tick-removal stop in Besalú, we reached the lagoon and debussed in an area known as Can Morgat, where a series of lagoons have been created as an associated habitat to the main lake.

From the first hide we had views of Lesser Emperor *Anax parthenope* and Emperor, a teneral darter (probably Common Darter *Sympetrum striolatum*), as well as avian specialities such as Melodious and Great Reed Warblers, Coot and Moorhen. We pushed on and after a first fruitless look at the small stream that feeds these lagoons, we found Southern Skimmer on a large puddle.

We reached the best shallow lagoon in the area and were rewarded after a wait by excellent views of Green-eyed Hawker *Aeshna isocetes* perched on a reed, which was later occupied by a Lesser Emperor. Then, an Orange-spotted Emerald *Oxygastra curtisii* appeared, giving us all good views, unlike the Blue Chaser *Libellula fulva* that appeared and disappeared all in the same instant. On a smaller note, here we examined our first Common Blue-tailed Damselfly *Ischnura elegans* and learnt how to separate it from the Iberian Blue-tail.

We pushed on around the lagoon, noting tenerals of Southern Darter and another Orange-spotted Emerald, and at the far end found our first Keeled Skimmer *Orthetrum coerulescens* right next to our first Copper Demoiselle *Calopteryx haemorrhoidalis*. A suitable end to the morning.

We lunched back at the van and then pushed on foot to the lake itself, having good views of Orange-spotted Emerald as soon as we left the bus. Over on the lake we found Green-eyed Hawker and our first Black-tailed Skimmer *Orthetrum cancellatum* on the wooden platform of the viewing point. Further along on the northern part of lagoon we all had excellent views of Blue Chaser on a twig overhanging the track. Also here, another Green-eyed hawkler.

We were beginning to flag a little and so it was decreed that it was time for a drink, although once we had parked in front of the bar there was still enough energy to admire the brilliant colours of Violet Dropwing *Trithemis annulata* just on the edge of one of the lake's satellite lagoons.

After our refreshment, we drove over to the other side of the lake, but found very little was flying now that the afternoon was cooling rather. And so we pushed on to a rather different but nearby habitat, the clean and

sandy-bottomed river Ser. Here we found large numbers of Western Demoiselle, both male and female, an Orange-spotted Emerald, a Mercury Bluet and many Blue-eyes. Mike wandered onto a gravel bank and soon found Small Clubtail *Onychogomphus forcipatus*, which all the group managed to see very close up. Somewhat unfortunately, no one but Mike was to see the Lesser Purple Emperors that he surprised when he wandered through the bushes to another stretch of river.

It was soon time to head for Besalú, where we were to dine. From the road we saw Black Kite and the group on their wander around the village came across on a roof one of the local Rock Sparrows. We ended the day with a truly excellent meal in a restaurant with a magnificent view of Besalú's famous medieval bridge.

## **Thursday 17 June**

### **Coll de Malla – El Far - Joanetes**

Weather: sunny with a few cloudy intervals

We headed first of all up to Coll de Malla, at over 1000 m, where the limestone pastures are flower-rich in spring. We parked up and set off across the pastures, painted yellow (common rock-rose, bird's-foot trefoil *Lotus corniculatus*), red (a sainfoin *Onobrychis supina*), white (white flax) and blue (blue aphyllanthes, a veronica *Vicia austriaca*). We quickly found Red-backed Shrike and Cirl Bunting in the scope. Then we headed uphill finding early purple *Orchis mascula* (gone over) man *Aceras anthropophorum*, common spotted, pyramidal and a single fly orchids. Meanwhile, Mike could hear the quiet call of a Rock Bunting and we all had good views of this smart bird through the scope. Suddenly we looked up and an Egyptian Vulture and then Honey Buzzard appeared over the cliff-edge, giving us good views but disappearing all too quickly. This little purple patch of birds was rounded off with views of good numbers of Alpine Swift flying fast above us. Butterflies here included Red-underside Blue, Osiris and Provence Chalkhill Blues, Meadow Brown and Black-veined White.

We moved up towards the forest, slightly shadier, where we found more common spotted orchids, and as the sun began to come out we noted Pearly Heath, both Provençal and Heath Fritillaries and lots of Black-veined Whites. Circling around and down to reach the cliff-edge we stopped by a large rock to admire a few ramonda *Ramonda myconi* still in flower. On the cliff-edge itself we enjoyed the sun, as well as a reasonably near Short-toed Eagle and a Wood Lark singing overhead. We noted an interesting composite next to where we were sitting, which turned out to be *Inula montana*. A. On the way back to van, we stopped at a cattle pool, where we watched at least five male Broad-bodied Chasers and an Emperor do battle for aerial dominance.

Next stop was the Sanctuary of El Far, right at the end of the limestone promontory. Here we parked and went for wander, first spotting *Saxifraga corbariensis* on the rock outcrops, whilst in the meadow we identified winged greenweed *Chamaespartium sagittale*, a catchfly *Silene gallica* and more ramonda in the woods. Butterflies in the meadow included Glanville, Heath and Provençal Fritillaries. We reached the cliff-edge again, noting the blue mats of matted globularia *Globularia repens*, before heading back into the woods to find our first bird's-nest orchids, a profusion of common spotted orchids and two more catchflies, Nottingham Catchfly *Silene nutans* and the larger *Silene italica*. We returned to the sanctuary, where we sat and had the rest of our picnic and a drink, admiring the fabulous view and many Alpine Swifts tearing along the cliff edge.

After this second lunch we dropped down to a pool near Sant Esteve d'en Bas. At first there were no dragonflies, but after spotting a solitary Large Red Damselfly and Black-tailed Skimmer, we noted in the vegetation both male and female Beautiful Demoiselles *Calopteryx virgo*, and then a female Copper Demoiselle. After walking around the pool, we stopped on a bridge over a stream where we looked at both male and female Beautiful Demoiselles in the scope.

Then we decided to go back to the orchid wood we had visited in the storm on Sunday. We found the same as before, but were able to get better photographs. However, as a friend of Mike's had indicated, we also searched for and duly found a small-leaved helleborine *Epipactis microphylla*, very discrete and hard to see.

## **Friday 18 June**

### **Navata – Mas Margall – La Muga – Sales de Llierca – Pont de Llierca - Croscat**

Weather: Warm morning but prolonged 'shower' in afternoon

On our way to our first dragonfly site we stopped in an area of cereal crops for some early morning birding. First stop was a wire with a pair of Bee-eaters – our first. Further on, after disturbing a Short-toed Eagle from a pylon next to the track, we debussed and saw on another wire Crested Lark, Corn Bunting, Woodchat and Southern Grey Shrike (the latter rather in a haze), and more Bee-eaters. Behind us in the copse Nightingales sung.

We pushed on to our first wetland of the day, near the village of Avinyonet de Puigventós. We parked and walked through the dry meadows noting Lulworth Skipper, Knapweed and our first Spotted Fritillaries, as well as numerous Meadow Browns, a few Southern Marbled Whites and a single Spanish Gatekeeper. Bird-wise John saw a quick Montagu's Harrier fly overhead, and in the trees and vegetation around the pool we recorded Fan-tailed Warbler, Serins and heard Turtle Doves. At the pool, we pushed through the trees to the waterside, which at first seemed rather quiet. However, we soon found our first Migrant Spreadwing *Lestes barbarus*, a female, and then began to note rather more as the males became more and more obvious around the water's edge. Few Anisoptera were evident, though, and we were limited to one female Blue Emperor and a few emerging Southern Darters.

We decided to head for a second pool, deeper and perhaps with more dragonflies. From inside the hide, we could see that this second pool was less well vegetated, and held a Little Grebe with three young, a patrolling Blue Emperor, numerous Blue-Eyes, and most interesting of all 6-7 European Pond Terrapins hauled out on the tree trunks. On the galactites *Galactites tormentosa* thistles in front of the hide, a Cardinal nectared long enough for a few photos to be taken.

Next stop from here was the river Muga to the north, where we had our first lunch. By the river Western and Copper Demoiselles, White feather-leg, Blue-eye, a mating pair of Large Red Damselfly, a Black-tailed Skimmer but little else. Unfortunately, just as we were about to go and examine the river further downstream, the first of the afternoons' rain showers sent us scuttling for the van.

We returned towards La Garrotxa and visited an area where Mike does his weekly butterfly counts. After our second lunch and under threatening clouds we walked into the nearby pastures, noting our first Dark-brown and Violet Fritillaries, as well as plants such as cut-leaved self-heal and a mysterious figwort photographed by John. In the end this flower turned out to be the flowers of bastard balm *Melittis melissophyllum* without the petals, which had already fallen off!. Few other butterflies were flying and the next shower eventually forced us back into the van.

Next, in light of the worsening weather, we decided that a cultural visit was in order, although we first made a brief detour to visit one of the only lizard orchids *Himantoglossum hircinum* in the region, which was just slightly past its best.

From here we went to Pont de Llierca, an unrestored and intact 14<sup>th</sup> bridge, but were soon forced back into the van by the rain. And this left us just time for a visit to the volcano Croscat in the natural park. Here we walked into the heart of the volcano as Mike attempted to explain some basic concepts of vulcanology. Birdwise we recorded our first Whitethroat and had our best views to date of a Hoopoe.

## **Saturday 19 June**

### **Olot – El Fluvià – Sils – Barcelona Airport**

Weather: sunny and then overcast

We made the best of the good weather and the time we had before the flight to examine the river Fluvià, one place we did not manage to visit during the week.

First, nevertheless, was Castellfollit de la Roca, for photographs of the marvellous basalt cliff with stunning hexagonal columns. Nothing was moving on the river, and we pushed on downstream to places near the

town of Sant Jaume de Llierca and Argelaguer where we could park next to the river and keep an eye on the van and its luggage.

No new species of Odonata were recorded, but we enjoyed views of Little Pincertail, Western Clubtail, Western Demoiselle, the two featherlegs, Black-tailed Skimmer and Broad Scarlet.

We pushed on to the lagoons at Sils, but had no more time. So, after a quick lunch we continued on to Barcelona uneventfully and made our goodbyes in the midst of the immense new Terminal 1.

**BIRDS CATALONIA, JUNE 2010**

Species	12/6	13/6	14/6	15/6	16/6	17/6	18/6	19/6	Comments
Mute Swan					X				1 male Banyoles
Mallard					X		X		Banyoles & Avinyonet
Little Grebe			H		X		X		Avinyonet
White Stork				X	X				From road north of Figueres and Banyoles
European Honey Buzzard						X	X		Coll de Malla and near Sales de Llierca
Common Buzzard	X		X		X		X		In wooded areas
Egyptian Vulture						X			Coll de Malla
Eurasian Griffon Vulture						X			Coll de Malla
Short-toed Eagle				X		X	X		Upland open areas
Black Kite					X		X	X	Over roads near Besalú
Booted Eagle	X								Over Olot
Montagu's Harrier							X		Avinyonet
Hobby					X				Catching dragonflies at Banyoles
Eleonora's Falcon				X					Montperdut
Green Sandpiper			X						Can Jordà
Common Kestrel						X			Coll de Malla
Yellow-legged Gull	X	X	X	X	X				Breeding in Olot
Rock Dove (Feral Pigeon)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Everywhere
Wood Pigeon	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Everywhere

Turtle Dove			H			X	X		Common
Eurasian Collared Dove					X		X	X	Around Olot
Common Cuckoo	H	H	H		H	H	H		Common
Alpine Swift						X			Coll de Malla
Common Swift	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Everywhere
Bee-eater							X		Near Navata
Kingfisher							X	X	Riu Borró and Riu Fluvià
Hoopoe		X	X	X		X	X		Around Olot
Golden Oriole				X	H	X	X		Olot, Banyoles, etc.
Great Spotted Woodpecker	X					X			From van
Green Woodpecker					X				Heard in woods
Woodlark				H		X			Montperdut and Coll de Malla
Crested Lark							X		Near Navata
Thekla Lark				X					Montperdut
Common House Martin	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Common
Barn Swallow	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Common
Red-rumped Swallow				X					Montperdut
White Wagtail	X		X	X	X		X	X	Common
Tawny Pipit				H					Heard in L'Albera
Red-backed Shrike		X		X		X	X		Common in shrubby areas
Southern Grey Shrike							X		Near Navata
Wren	X	X		X	X	X			Common
Short-toed Treecreeper	H	H				H			Heard in woods
Nuthatch						X			La Moixina
Common Blackbird	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Everywhere
European Robin	X	X	X		X	X	X		Common
Common Nightingale	X		X	X	X	H			Very common and loud
Black Redstart		X	X	X		X			Villages
Common Stonechat	X	X		X	X	X	X		Open areas
Fan-tailed Warbler				X			X		L'Albera, Avinyonet
Great Reed Warbler					X				Banyoles
Reed Warbler					X				Banyoles
Melodious Warbler				H	X				L'Albera,

									Banyoles
Blackcap	H	H			H	X			Common
Common Whitethroat							X		Crosbat
Garden Warbler	H								La Moixina
Subalpine Warbler						X			Coll de Malla
Sardinian Warbler				X					Montperdut
Western Orphean Warbler				X					Montperdut
Western Bonelli's Warbler						X			Coll de Malla
Chiffchaff		H	H						Woods
Firecrest						H			Coll de Malla
Long-tailed Tit				X					Surprisingly uncommon
Great Tit	X						X		In woods
Marsh Tit	X								La Moixina
Blue Tit	X	X				X			In woods
Crested Tit		X							Joanetes
Mistle Thrush			X						Can Jordà
Song Thrush	H								La Moixina
Blue Rock Thrush				X					Sant Quirze de Colera
Eurasian Jay	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Everywhere
Black-billed Magpie	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Everywhere
Carrion Crow	X	X	X		X		X		Common
Common Raven	X	X				X	X		Common
Common Starling	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Common
Spotless Starling				X		X			L'Albera
Cirl Bunting	X	X			X	X			Open cultivated areas, L'Albera
Rock Bunting						X			Coll de Malla
Corn Bunting				X			X		Near Navata
Common Chaffinch	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Everywhere
Serin	H		X	X	X	X	X		Common
Greenfinch	X				X				La Moixina
European Goldfinch				X	X	X	X		Common
Common Linnet				X					L'Albera
Bullfinch	X	X	X	X					Breeding in hotel
Rock Sparrow					X				Seen by group in Besalú (?)
House Sparrow	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Common
Tree Sparrow		X			X				Bestracà &

										Banyoles
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**OTHER VERTEBRATES CATALONIA JUNE 2010**

Species	12/6	13/6	14/6	15/6	16/6	17/6	18/6	19/6	Comments
<b>MAMMALS</b>									
American Mink					X				Riu Ser
<b>REPTILES</b>									
Moorish Gecko					X				Besalú
Common Wall Lizard		X	X				X		Common
European Pond Terrapin				X			X		Riu Orlina & Avinyonet
Ladder Snake									Banyoles
Montpellier Snake									Sales de Llierca
<b>AMPHIBIANS</b>									
Natterjack Toad				X			X		Very small adults in L'Albera and Avinyonet
Fire Salamander							X		At hotel on last evening
Painted Frog			X						L'Albera
Western Spadefoot Toad			X						Huge tadpoles seen in L'Albera
Iberian Water Frog	X	X			X	X	X		In rivers and ponds
Stripeless Tree Frog		X							Bestracà
Parsley Frog		X							Bestracà
Common Frog				X					Sant Quirze de Colera

**BUTTERFLIES, CATALONIA JUNE 2010**

Species	12/6	13/6	14/6	15/6	16/6	17/6	18/6	19/6	Comments
Scarce swallowtail						X			Only at Coll de Malla
Swallowtail			X	X			X		Fairly common
Black-veined white		X				X			In open limestone areas
Large white	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		Everywhere
Small white	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		Everywhere
Green-Veined White						X			Near Coll de Malla
Western Bath White				X		X			L'Albera and Coll de Malla (pterodactyl butterfly!)
Clouded yellow		X		X	X		X		Common

Berger's clouded yellow		X	X	X	X			Common on limestone
Brimstone					X		X	Scarce
Cleopatra				X	X		X	In Mediterranean areas
Wood white	X	X	X		X		X	Common on woodland
Green hairstreak		X						Bestracà
False Ilex Hairstreak				X	X		X	Lowland Mediterranean areas
Small Copper						X	X	Coll de Malla and Avinyonet
Small blue		X				X		Common
Osiris blue	X	X				X		Surprisingly common
Holly Blue		X		X	X			Fairly common in wooded areas
Silver-studded Blue		X						Pastures at Bestracà
Brown Argus		X						Pastures at Bestracà
Escher's Blue		X						In rain towards Coll de Bracons
Adonis blue	X	X	X			X		Comon
Provence Chalkhill Blue		X	X		X	X	X	Very common
Common blue		X						Bestracà
Peacock			X		X	X		Common
Painted lady		X	X				X	Here and there
Small tortoiseshell		X				X		Bestracà and Coll de Malla
Southern white admiral		X					X	Bestracà and Sils
Lesser Purple Emperor					X			Riu Ser
High Brown fritillary							X	Sales de Llierca
Cardinal				X			X	L'Albera and Avinyonet
Marbled fritillary			X					Can Jordà
Violet fritillary							X	Sales de Llierca
Knapweed fritillary			X				X	Can Jordà and Sales de Llierca
Spotted Fritillary							X	Avinyonet
Heath fritillary			X			X		Can Jordà and Coll de Malla
Glanville fritillary		X				X		Bestracà and Coll de Malla
Provençal fritillary						X		Coll de Malla
Marsh fritillary						X		Coll de Malla

Great banded grayling				X			X		L'Albera & Avinyonet
Small heath						X	X		Open areas
Pearly heath	X		X			X			Woodland edges
Chestnut heath		X							Bestracà
Southern marbled white			X	X	X		X		Common
Meadow Brown		X	X	X	X	X	X		Very common
Spanish gatekeeper				X			X		L'Albera & Avinyonet
Wall brown			X	X			X		Common
Speckled wood		X	X		X	X	X		Very common
Safflower skipper		X							Bestracà
Olive skipper						X			Coll de Malla
Red underwing skipper		X				X			Bestracà and Coll de Mallà
Large Skipper					X	X			Here and there
Lulworth skipper							X		Avinyonet
TOTAL 53 species									

**ODONATA, CATALONIA JUNE 2010**

Species	12/6	13/6	14/6	15/6	16/6	17/6	18/6	19/6	Comments
ODONATA									
Western Demoiselle			X		X	X	X	X	Common on clean rivers
Copper Demoiselle					X	X	X		Not rare
Beautiful Demoiselle						X			Only in Vall d'en Bas
Orange Featherleg			X		X	X	X		Common in vegetation near rivers
White Featherleg			X		X		X		Common in vegetation near rivers
Azure Bluet	X		X		X		X		Most widespread damselfly
Mercury Bluet	X		X		X				Not rare on smaller rivers and streams
Dainty Bluet			X						Only at Can Jordà
Common Bluet			X						Only at Can Jordà
Blue-eye				X	X		X	X	On rivers and ponds
Common Blue-tail					X				Only confirmed at Banyoles
Small Blue-tail				X					L'Albera
Iberian Blue-tail			X						Only at Can Jordà

Migrant Spreadwing							X		Avinyonet
Western Willow Spreadwing					X		X		Banyoles & Avinyonet
Common Winter Damselfly			X		X		X		Fairly ubiquitous
Large Red Damsel	X		X	X	X	X	X		Very ubiquitous
Blue Emperor	X		X		X	X	X		Common on all types of waters
Lesser Emperor					X		X		Only Banyoles and Avinyonet
Green-eyed Hawker					X				Only Banyoles
Orange-spotted Emerald					X				Only Banyoles
Western Clubtail			X	X				X	Riu Ser, Orlina and Fluvià
Large Pincertail			X						Only River Ser
Small Pincertail					X			X	Riu Ser and Fluvià
Broad Scarlet			X	X	X			X	Common
Violet Dropwing					X				Only Banyoles
Four-spotted Chaser			X						Only Can Jordà
Broad-bodied Chaser	X	X	X	X			X	X	Most ubiquitous of all
Blue Chaser					X				Only Banyoles
Black-tailed Skimmer					X	X	X	X	Banyoles, etc.
Keeled Skimmer			X		X			X	Banyoles, Fluvià,
Southern Skimmer				X	X			X	Banyoles, L'Albera and Fluvià
Red-veined Darter				X	X				Surprisingly rare
Southern Darter				X	X		X		Tenerals in L'Albera, Banyoles & Avinyonet
Common Darter							X		Only Avinyonet
TOTAL 35 SPECIES									

**Other invertebrates**

**ORCHIDS, CATALONIA JUNE 2010**

Species	12/6	13/6	14/6	15/6	16/6	17/6	18/6	19/6	Comments
Pyramidal orchid		X				X			Bestracà & Coll de Malla
Sword-leaved helleborine (gone over)		X				X			Bestracà & Coll de Malla
Red helleborine		X				X			Joanetes

Common spotted orchid	X			X		Bestracà & El Far
Broad-leaved helleborine	X			X		Joanetes
Fragrant orchid	X			X		Bestracà & Coll de Malla
Violet limodore	X		X	X		Mainly gone over: Bestracà & Coll de Malla
Common twayblade	X			X		Bestracà & Coll de Malla
Bee orchid	X	X		X		Bestracà & Coll de Malla
Fly Orchid	X			X		Bestracà & Coll de Malla
Burnt-tip orchid	X					Bestracà
Greater butterfly orchid	X			X		Bestracà & Coll de Malla
Lesser butterfly orchid	X			X		Bestracà & Coll de Malla
Bug orchid	X			X	X	Bestracà, Coll de Malla & Sales de Llierca
Common tongue orchid			X			Sant Quirze de Colera
Summer lady's tresses			X			Sant Quirze de Colera
White helleborine (gone over)				X		Joanetes
Early purple orchid (gone over)				X		Coll de Malla
Early spider orchid				X		Coll de Malla
Bird's-nest orchid				X		El Far
Man orchid				X		Coll de Malla
Small-leaved helleborine				X		Joanetes
Lizard orchid					X	Sales de Llierca

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