



ORIOLE BIRDING



TOUR REPORT SOUTHERN CYPRUS 23RD – 30TH MARCH 2017

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THURSDAY 23RD MARCH

Our British Airways flight to Larnaca departed about an hour late and we arrived at our destination just before 7pm local time. After a smooth transition through passport control and baggage, we had soon collected our two hire vans noting our first bird of the trip in the process – a **Short-eared Owl** quartering the edge of the car park! It was of course dark by now though and so the journey of about one and a half hours to our hotel did not produce any other surprises. After a welcome meal, we crashed out ready for our first pre-breakfast walk in the morning!

FRIDAY 24TH MARCH – *Fine & sunny in light winds, 25C*

We were eager to get out into the field this morning having arrived last night under the cover of darkness, and so we took a pre breakfast walk for an hour down through the fields to the dry valley of the Dhiarizos River. Sparrows were immensely common, and we had good views of a couple of Spanish Sparrows, and soon began to hear, and see, our first Sardinian Warblers. A Cetti's Warbler was shouting from the few dry stands of papyrus at the edge of the valley and down along the dry river bed we had good views of two male **Cyprus Pied Wheatears**. The buzzy song of this species would no doubt become a familiar sound by the end of the week. Best bird though was a **Great-spotted Cuckoo**, which while distant, perched up in a poplar tree and allowed us to watch it for some time through the scope from various different angles. Breakfast was most welcome by this point, and with a Steppe Buzzard over the hotel as we loaded up, it was time to set off for our first visit to Paphos Headland.

This area is now much more developed, and disturbed, than it once was, but still holds some lovely habitat and is of course the first point of landfall for many birds crossing the Mediterranean Sea from Egypt and Libya. Crested Larks and Corn Buntings were common along the outer head, and along the fence here we had some very nice views of several dapper male **Eastern Subalpine Warblers**. Both Common and Lesser Whitethroat were also seen, and a **Tawny Pipit** flew low east calling. Reaching the point, we had a scan out to sea – a **Yelkouan Shearwater** was passing by, and a Eurasian Hoopoe was picked up flapping in low over the waves, up the beach and down into the grass. Great to see migration in action! A **Red-throated Pipit**, albeit lacking a red throat, was foraging around among the vegetation just inside the fence, its drawn out piercing call helping to differentiate it from the many Meadow Pipits around. Walking back, we were pleased to see a flock of sixteen **Black-crowned Night Herons** heading in over the town, looking for somewhere to settle! Back by the car park, and after a welcome coffee, we found two each of Northern and **Isabelline Wheatears** on an open earthy area with scattered small trees. The light was great, and we were able to spend a bit of time comparing the subtle plumage features and tail patterns of the two species.



Crested Lark & Eastern Subalpine Warbler, Paphos Headland 24th March

Next we drove around to the main entrance to the mosaics, on the harbour side of the headland. We took our lunch with us, and set about birding the more heavily vegetated areas just inland of the lighthouse. The whole area was full of warblers, and we had a great time comparing features of the various species. Common Chiffchaffs were all over the head in big numbers, with perhaps fifty just around the main area of trees on the centre. Common Whitethroat, 10+ Lesser Whitethroat, 10+ **Eastern Subalpine Warblers** and at least four stonking **Ruppells Warblers** were also noted. We were surprised to connect with this species in such good numbers here, and in fact there could have been more. Only one female was seen, the rest all being fine males. Single Common Nightingale, flushed from the path, and female Black Redstart, were also noted before we made our way up to the lighthouse itself. Here we could enjoy the fantastic views across the banks of wildflowers and out over the azure blue sea. An immature male **Eastern Black-eared Wheatear** was sallying for insects from a dead perch to which it kept returning, flashing its extensive white tail. Another Eurasian Hoopoe flew in and a Common Cuckoo, freshly arrived, buzzed round the lighthouse garden before continuing inland. Large numbers of hirundines had now started to gather over the slopes below, and among the House Martins and Barn Swallows were at least half a dozen stunning **Red-rumped Swallows**, often making low passes right over our heads. By the time we started making our way back towards the entrance, it was getting pretty hot, but we enjoyed more views of Eastern Subalpine and **Ruppells Warblers**, a perched up Common Nightingale, very brief **Cretzchmar's Bunting** and best of all, a lovely male **Masked Shrike**.

Heading out of Paphos, we made our way back eastwards and called in next at the coastal fields at Mandria. This is a popular spot with birders and we bumped into a couple of ex-pat locals here who were telling us what had been seen in recent days. The area was in fact reasonably quiet, save for another **Masked Shrike** and a nice brace of **Isabelline Wheatears**. The highlight here was a flock of around two hundred Yellow Wagtails in a potato field, comprising mainly **Black-headed Wagtails** but also with one or two Blue-headed Wagtails mixed. Back near the village, a newly mown field held at least one hundred White Wagtails too! The day was wearing on by now, but we had about an hour of decent light left and decided to spend it around the base of Asprokremnos Dam. Here a **Chukar** was calling up on the dam wall and we enjoyed good scope views as it scurried between the boulders before perching proudly to deliver its raucous 'song'. In the scrubby valley, a male **Cyprus Warbler** showed well, singing from the top of the bushes in between bouts of grubbing about out of view inside. Nice to get both endemics in the bag today, and now it was time for a much needed cold beer – thankfully from here, the hotel was only ten minutes drive away. It had been a very good first day, with a good number and variety of migrants, in particular the warblers and wheatears.

SATURDAY 25TH MARCH – *Fine ☺ sunny in light winds, 23C*

Our pre-breakfast walk in the Dhiarizos Valley was rather quiet this morning, though several Blackcap appeared newly arrived and there was a steady northward passage of European Serins along the river valley. The biggest surprise was an adult **Black-crowned Night Heron** floating along before dropping into someone's garden! Good scope views of Sardinian and Cetti's Warblers were also had, but we couldn't locate any of the Stone Curlews which we have been hearing over the last two evenings. Akrotiri peninsula would be our location for the whole day today, about 45 minutes drive to the east. We started in the south-west corner of the salt lake, where distantly we could see several hundred **Greater Flamingo**, a few Little Stints, **Kentish Plover** and two flocks of **Slender-billed Gulls**. **Chukar** and Eurasian Hoopoe were also noted, and a Common Cuckoo flew by. At Phassouri reedebed, we found some nice looking pools of water but a dearth of birds! Singles of Ruff and Northern Lapwing were all we could find! A Black Francolin was calling, but remained hidden, and there were several migrant Blackcaps in the bushes plus Marsh Harrier over the reeds. We moved on a bit further to the coastal track, and parked up by an interesting area of scrub which held a nice **Masked Shrike**. Two Northern Wheatear were on the beach, and offshore we could see a flock of ducks. These turned out to be a party of 41 **Garganey**! None of us had seen this species on the sea before, and it was quite a sight – especially when they flew and dropped in amongst a mixed flock of Black-headed, **Mediterranean** and **Slender-billed Gulls**! Next we walked south through the low

scrub, looking for migrants. Three **Eastern Subalpine** and a single male **Ruppells Warbler** were noted, and a **Steppe Buzzard** flew in mobbed by **Hooded Crows**. We couldn't find any **Spectacled Warblers** though, and instead found several rather annoying biting insects! We walked back towards the vans, flushing a passerine from the path – it was a fine male **Cretzchmar's Bunting**. Unlike yesterdays brief sighting, this one perched beautifully on the top of a bush for a prolonged scope view, even briefly being joined by a second **Masked Shrike**.



Cretzchmar's Bunting, Akrotiri 25th March

Lunch was had on the south side of the salt lake, with two **Alpine Swifts** overhead and a lovely spread of flowers – though a strange lack of butterflies. We did see **Swallowtail** and **Clouded Yellow** around and about though. After lunch, we continued to the coastal track on the east side of the salt lake, known as **Lady's Mile**. Here we found the saline pools held plenty of water, and our first real spread of wading birds. Five **Greater Flamingo**, 50 each of **Ruff** and **Black-winged Stilt**, a few lovely close **Kentish Plovers** and another **Isabelline Wheatear** were the pick of the bunch along this stretch. At the north end of the pools, a **Marsh Sandpiper** was found, feeding in company of a lone **Black-winged Stilt**. We had some good scope views of the bird, which was coming into summer plumage and looking very smart indeed. On an adjacent pool, an assortment of gulls included **Caspian**, **Yellow-legged**, **Mediterranean** and two stunning adult **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** of one of the eastern races. Perhaps most likely *intermedius*, they were diminutive and small-headed, with white in the wingtip limited to a very small mirror on the outermost primary. Interesting birds indeed and perhaps study of the photographs a bit later on will be more definitive.



Marsh Sandpiper and Pallid Harrier, Akrotiri 25th March



Cyprus Scops Owl, Nikokleia 25th March

After a very welcome coffee in the nearby beach restaurant, we checked out Zakaki Pool, a spot which used to be extremely good but that is now largely overgrown and dried out. It still provided us with an excellent half hours birding, as a male **Black Francolin** could be heard calling as we got out of the vans and was soon spotted perched proudly on the top of a bush! We all had great views before it slinked back down into the vegetation. The adjacent tower hide produced nice views of three **Ferruginous Ducks** and a few Common Teal, before a stonking male **Pallid Harrier** cruised by from the beach and off over the town chased by Hooded Crows – what a bird! A **Squacco Heron** was skulking in one of the subsidiary pools before flying off over the reeds, a **Red-rumped Swallow** delighted us overhead and very distantly, two **Purple Herons** flew north offshore. We drove straight back to base from here, taking a break and a shower before meeting up for a beer and a try for the **Cyprus Scops Owl** which has been calling the last two evenings outside the hotel. It was calling in a big eucalyptus tree in the garden again this evening, but we could not spot it despite listening to it for twenty minutes right above our heads! Eventually, the glint of two eyes was picked up in the torch and we had it – fantastic views for everyone as it eventually moved to a lower tree by the parking area and showed in the open for several minutes. An absolutely superb bird and one which will take a lot of beating!

SUNDAY 26TH MARCH – *Hazy sunshine and light winds, 20C*

With the clocks going forward one hour overnight, we decided to opt out of a pre-breakfast walk this morning! Instead we made Mandria our first destination for the morning, an excellent area of cultivated coastal fields which is attractive to many migrants which favour open ground habitats. In particular this includes the wagtails and pipits, and we soon found ourselves pulled up alongside a newly cut field which was alive with a wonderful spread of **Yellow Wagtails** of five different subspecies. We set the scopes up roadside and enjoyed fantastic views of the birds at close range – *flava*, *feldegg*, *superciliaris*, *thunbergi* and *dombrowskii* were identified but it was the wonderful colour palette when they all took to the air, spooked by a passing ringtail **Pallid Harrier**, which was the most impressive part! The ditch along the road held Blackcap, Lesser Whitethroat, Common

Chiffchaff and a male **Ruppells Warbler** and amongst the wagtails, we heard the distinctive drawn out call of **Red-throated Pipit**. Eventually after some perseverance, we had excellent views of two birds. Just as we were about to pack up and move, we spotted a **Spur-winged Plover** sitting at the back of the field – we assumed it had just flown in, rather than us having overlooked it for the last half hour! Further along the coastal track, an **Isabelline Wheatear** was noted, but not a great deal else. When we drove back along, the pipits and wagtails had moved across the road and were now showing in much better light, so we couldn't resist another look at them! After coffee in the village, we moved on to our next stop at Asprokremnos Dam.

The sun had burnt through the hazy cloud by the time we reached the dam and this meant that we saw several butterflies on the wing – Paphos Blue, Cyprus Grayling, Cleopatra and Eastern Festoon being the main ones. Our quarry here though was the endemic **Cyprus Warbler**, which we wanted to get some better views of. It didn't take very long to locate one in the gorse scrub in the 'hanging valley' adjacent to the dam, and we all managed scope views this time. Sardinian, **Eastern Subalpine** and **Ruppells Warblers** were also noted – two of the latter making for a very successful trip so far for this species. A Black Redstart was on the dam, and a **Chukar** flew up to the side of the valley. We had to move on now though, as we planned to head up into the Troodos Mountains for the remainder of the day.

We reached Troodos around 1430 and had a late lunch in one of the picnic spots with dramatic views down to Limassol on the coast. The habitat here was Calabrian Pine woodland, quite sparsely dotted across the stony slopes and attracting a small but niche variety of birds which includes several distinctive subspecies. We managed to see these all just around Troodos itself, taking a trail into the woods for a short distance behind the main car park. The **Cyprus Coal Tit** was perhaps the most distinctive of these, with its dark plumage, larger black bib, smaller white nape patch and different song and calls. The **Short-toed Treecreeper** here is very different too, looking frosty on the



Cyprus Crocus and Cyprus Coal Tit, Troodos 26th March

upperparts more like the Northern race, and having a distinctly different song to the continental birds. We had excellent views of this species, which was in fact very common and could be easily heard all over the forest. Good numbers of finches were feeding in a lovely sheltered valley with a

small stream, and this included several European Serins, Chaffinch, Goldfinch and at least two **Hawfinch**. These proved tricky to view, but with some patience we all had nice scope views of a female. The biggest surprise here was a Fieldfare and two Redwing which we thought would have been long since departed from the island at this time of year! Three **Common Crossbills** were also seen in the pines here, with a female feeding a recently fledged youngster. The final subspecies to note was the local race of Eurasian Jay, which we succeeded in finding but not obtaining the best of views – it seemed to appear distinctly smaller than the ones we are used to seeing back home. The Cyprus Coal Tit showed very well as we made our way back to the parking area – a very distinctive race indeed. Finally, two **Pallid Swifts** overhead gave some good views in the wonderful evening light, looking especially sandy up against the blue sky. We had been birding among the last remaining snow beds of winter, but it certainly didn't feel like it in the lovely temperatures! The endemic **Cyprus Crocus**, flowering where patches of snow had recently melted, was lovely to see and just one of many beautiful flowers we had seen over the last few days.

MONDAY 27TH MARCH – *Overcast turning to sunny spells, 21C*

We breakfasted early today in order to head down to Paphos Headland as soon as possible and see what newly arrived migrants were around. We started at the outer part of the head along the cycle track, and it was soon apparent that a decent scattering of **Red-throated Pipits** had appeared, along the top of the beach. We saw perhaps up to ten, including one with full red throat and several other rather scruffy looking moulting birds. They were accompanied by one or two Meadow Pipits for comparison and the odd **Isabelline Wheatear** was also seen along the same stony stretch. A Whimbrel was on the rocks here and a Sandwich Tern flew along just offshore, while several Corn Buntings and Crested Larks were to be found singing along the fenceline at the edge of the mosaics. A European Hoopoe was feeding on the point, with another seen flying in off the sea, and overhead a single **Purple Heron** flew west with two Grey Herons for company. The best bird was seen on the way back, as a male **Red-spotted Bluethroat** flushed from the lush bank of flowers just inside the fenceline and perched up beautifully on a post for us – magnificent scope views for about half a minute as it sat there, calling and cocking its tail!



Red-throated Pipit and Red-spotted Bluethroat, Paphos 27th March

Inside the mosaics, we spent about two hours wandering around birding some of the areas of thicker cover looking for migrants. Four different **Cretzchmar's Buntings** included an obliging male foraging on the track just in front of us, and we also had a decent view of a **Common Nightingale** in the

bushes by the central buildings. Ten or so Lesser Whitethroats, the odd Blackcap and far less Common Chiffchaffs than previous days were noted, and the only **Ruppells Warbler** seen here today was a female. The highlights were all out in the more open areas – three **Common Quail** were flushed and gave good flight views, while we were trying to relocate a **Tawny Pipit** which had flown over us calling. We found the bird, feeding in the open on the track by the lighthouse, and everyone had prolonged scope views of this sandy, upright, unstreaked pipit. Five **Spur-winged Plovers** then flew in along the shore, before dropping into the mosaics area. We had them briefly perched on a stone wall before they were flushed by walkers and after doing two laps of the area and passing right over us, they headed east.



Ruppells Warbler and Tawny Pipit, Paphos Headland 27th March

After lunch we headed north up the coast, to Cape Drepanum. We took the track north towards Avakas Gorge, and stopped on the bend overlooking the beach and a promising looking area of low coastal scrub. A lovely male **Cyprus Pied Wheatear** greeted us, and we decided to have a walk down through the scrub towards the shore, noting a **Mediterranean Shag** flying south just offshore. One of the group spotted a male Stonechat, sallying from a dead stick, and thankfully it was flagged up to the leaders as something a bit more interesting! We were thrilled to find it to be an absolutely stunning male **Caspian Stonechat** [or Siberian Stonechat of the Caspian race *variegata*] and after a bit of a chase between the shrubs after initially losing the bird, we all had some superb views of it flycatching from the top of the bushes. The amount of white in the scapulars, rump and tail was dazzling each time it flew to a new perch, and its underparts were very similar to a *maurus* with small red breast patch and gleaming white belly and undertail. It really was an awesome little bird and a definite candidate for bird of the trip, being a lifer for everyone in the group including both leaders!



Male Caspian Stonechat [race *variegata*], Avakas, 27th March

With this beauty in the bag, we continued to the mouth of Avakas Gorge and took a walk down through the now deceased citrus grove. Another male Cyprus Pied Wheatear showed well, and we added Eastern Festoon butterfly. Over the distant crags of the gorge, an adult **Bonelli's Eagle** soared up and thermalled around allowing everyone a go at it with a scope. Its pale body contrasting with darker underwing coverts could be clearly seen, as well as its flat-winged profile. Just as in previous days, the place was not dripping with birds but we were eking out some real quality here! Further down in the gorge, it was a bit hot so we didn't walk too far – an **Eastern Bonelli's Warbler** was calling but only showed briefly, and we saw several European Serins by the parking area. Back along the coast we enjoyed a coffee in the shade overlooking the bay, before continuing to our last stop of the day.

Paphos Sewage Works is not a particularly user friendly location but the cultivated fields adjacent to the plant are irrigated and offer similar opportunities to the area around Mandria for open ground migrants. We found seven **Spur-winged Plovers** here in one of the wetter fields, possibly involving the group of five seen nearby at the headland earlier. Four **Cattle Egrets** were new for the list and we found a nice assortment of Yellow Wagtails feeding in a newly cut field with White Wagtails, Isabelline and Northern Wheatears. *Feldegg, thunbergi, flava* and *dombrowskii* could all be picked out. Our final action of the day was on the road up to Nikokleia just near to Asprokremnos Dam, as we pulled over to enjoy excellent views of at least twenty **Alpine Swifts** hawking by the side of the road. A ringtail **Pallid Harrier** cruised by, only seen by two of us, and the **Cyprus Scops Owl** was calling just after dark.

TUESDAY 28TH MARCH – *Fine and sunny in light winds, 21C*

We headed east today back towards Larnaca, to spend some time birding the wetland areas adjacent to the airport. Our first stop was a little to the west of there, at Kiti Dam, where in pleasantly warm conditions we encountered a decent scattering of common migrants. Common Chiffchaffs were everywhere, perhaps indicating a new arrival, and we saw several Blackcaps and Lesser Whitethroats too. A male **Ruppells Warbler** showed at point blank range right in front of us, and a **Common Nightingale** was hopping around on the ground under a stand of bamboo. We also picked up a Eurasian Hoopoe, and our first Swallowtail butterfly of the day. After a quick check off the beach down at Perivolía, we headed along to the south section of the airport lagoons at Larnaca. Here we found a **Stone Curlew** preening out in the open on a spit and picked up good views of Kentish Plover, and a couple of Little Stint. Common Chiffchaff and Lesser Whitethroat were still the predominant passerine migrant in the bushes, and a small party of **Slender-billed Gulls** were loafing on the water. Moving along to Spiro's pool, we spent some time searching the low coastal scrub for **Spectacled Warbler**. We found two singing males and a female, and with patience we all had some excellent views of them even though they only perched on the top of the bushes for a few seconds at a time! A stunning male **Eastern Black-eared Wheatear** was also present. We spent a bit of time checking the pool for plovers as a Greater Sandplover had been seen here recently, but we only managed to find Kentish Plovers.

Over lunch we visited the hide and two artificial small reservoirs which lie on the southern boundary of the airport perimeter. This was more productive with good numbers of wildfowl including around fifty Northern Shoveler, drake **Garganey**, female Northern Pintail and five very nice **Ruddy Shelducks**. **Spur-winged Plovers** also showed extremely well here with at least seven noted. Three large gulls dropped in – adult and second calendar year Yellow-legged Gulls, with the third bird appearing clearly a bit smaller with paler mantle, smaller rounder head and a combination of dark eye and black/red subterminal bill markings. It was an **Armenian Gull** – a subspecies which we had been keeping an eye out for and were very pleased to connect with. The bird appeared to be in its third calendar year, still with some black in the tail band and extensive black in the wing.



Spur-winged Plover, Larnaca 28th March

Oroklini Marsh, to the east of Larnaca, is a site which had been popping up quite a bit in recent reports and which we were keen to visit. After bumping into another birder who told us it had been quite a productive location recently, we decided to round off our afternoon there. This was a good choice, as there was a great deal to be seen. From the first hide, nesting Cattle Egrets adorned a small shrubby island and we saw a pair of **Red Crested Pochards**, Common Snipe, two **Black-necked Grebe**, several Little Grebe, seven Ruff, Little Egret, **Spur-winged Plover**, and European Reed Warbler. Best of all was a female **Little Crake**, which showed briefly about three times, along the reed edge left of the hide. The second hide produced a further five **Garganey**, Little-ringed Plover, Sedge Warbler, two more Ruff, Common Snipe, and a calling male **Black Francolin** perched up on a ridge in an adjacent barley field. A coffee stop along the beach road rounded off our day, and from here it was about a one hour twenty minute drive back to base.

WEDNESDAY 29TH MARCH – *Fine sunny day in light winds, 23C*

Perhaps our most challenging day for birds today in continuing hot sunny weather, with most of the migrant birds quite clearly going over the top of us and onwards! With the weather settled throughout the whole of our trip, it had certainly been pleasant enough conditions for being out in the field, but we had been left feeling how it could have been different with some cloud, wind and rain! We set off for the north-west corner of the island, starting out near Kathikas where we checked a gorge for **Long-legged Buzzard**. There was no sign of the birds though, so we moved on to the nearby abandoned village of Terra. Here the vast swathes of flowering mustard resounded to the song of Sardinian Warbler, and we had migrant Blackcap, Lesser Whitethroat and Common Chiffchaff but little else. A male **Cyprus Pied Wheatear** was singing and perched on a dead snag just above us, and the cliffs were bustling with the silver-collared 'Eastern' Jackdaws and noisy Common Kestrels. Over the ridge, a **Long-legged Buzzard** appeared and gave us some excellent views – our main target for today, so we were very pleased!



Cyprus Pied Wheatear, Terra 29th March

The valley south of Polis was our next stop and here we stopped to check a nice spot where the stream was running, noting Blue-tailed Damselfly, Red-veined Darter and Eastern Festoon butterfly. Over the hillside behind, a **Northern Goshawk** was a surprise, appearing fairly briefly to make a few slow circles before dropping below the ridge out of sight. A Common Buzzard was also seen, and again Sardinian Warbler was numerous. A little further on up the track towards Polis, we stopped again to scope a superb male **Woodchat Shrike** which proved to be our only one of the trip. In an adjacent ploughed field, about fifteen **Short-toed Larks** had paused to break their northbound journey, and we had some excellent views of them as they scurried in and out of the furrows looking especially pale in the strong sunshine. After lunch at Polis campsite, we continued to the Baths of Aphrodite and took a walk around the caravan park there to check for migrants. It was desperately quite though – coffee in the restaurant overlooking the azure blue sea and with views across to the north coast of the island, was the highlight! Our route back took us by Evretou Reservoir, where a showing of orchids, and both Clouded Yellow and Cleopatra Butterflies were seen, before we dropped back down to Paphos and along the motorway to Mandria. This had been one of our best migration spots during the week and once again we encountered a fantastic mixed flock of Yellow Wagtails here of the various races. In the afternoon sun, some absolutely superb male **Black-headed Wagtails** were seen drinking from a leaky pipe by the side of the track. After dark, our own Cyprus Scops Owl was calling, and we enjoyed an excellent final meal to round off the week.



Eurasian Hoopoe, Paphos Headland 30th March

THURSDAY 30TH MARCH – *Overnight thundery showers, cloud and fresh South-east breeze*

Our final morning and with the weather finally shaking up a little bit overnight and some fresher winds, we made our last visit to the archeological ruins at Paphos Headland to check for any newly arrived migrants. On arrival just after 0830, we heard from friends who were already birding here that they had found a **Cinereous Bunting**, a scarce species here which passes through in small numbers en route to breeding grounds in Turkey. Within a few minutes we had joined them, but the bunting had flicked out of sight possibly into a dense area of flowers among the ruins. We approached gingerly and the bird flew up, looking strikingly pale grey and with a lot of white in the tail. It landed on a wall and about half the group managed scope views at this point, before it dropped down out of view. A tense half hour followed, with several cracking **Cretzchmar's Buntings** providing false alarms, but a welcome distraction in their own right! We moved around to the far side of where we thought the bunting had dropped, and flushed a **Stone Curlew** from the grass! It flew off over the town – clearly there were one or two new arrivals around! We had almost given up on the bunting when it flushed again at close range and this time perched beautifully on a wall only 15m from us. Everyone got a good view this time – what a cracking bird! Eventually it flew again and dropped into the area where it had first been found – we left it alone and carried on around the headland to see what else was about. Overhead, a steady trickle of **Black-headed Wagtails** could be heard and seen heading over west, and about four **Red-throated Pipits** were among them. A Eurasian Hoopoe flushed up from the grass and perched for us on a bare tree, and there were several Lesser Whitethroats, a single Common Whitethroat, and a few Common Chiffchaffs in the bushes. A large warbler moved ahead of us, showing a big tail in flight and when it pitched up in a bush and flashed streaky undertail coverts at us, we realised we had an **Eastern Orphean Warbler**! After a little bit of cat and mouse, we had several excellent views of the bird – a female – and could see its strong bill, dark hood, pale edged tertials and huge black tail with broad white fringe. A really nice bird to end our trip on! A Common Nightingale and a smart male **Eastern Subalpine Warbler** were our final birds before it was time to hit the road and make the hour and a half transfer back to Larnaca for the return journey home.

SYSTEMATIC LIST

1. Little Grebe
2. Black-necked Grebe
3. Mediterranean Shag
4. Yelkouan Shearwater
5. Greater Flamingo
6. Cattle Egret
7. Little Egret
8. Black-crowned Night-heron
9. Squacco Heron
10. Grey Heron
11. Purple Heron
12. Ruddy Shelduck
13. Common Teal
14. Garganey
15. Mallard
16. Northern Pintail
17. Northern Shoveler
18. Red Crested Pochard
19. Ferruginous Duck
20. Marsh Harrier
21. Pallid Harrier
22. Eurasian Sparrowhawk
23. Northern Goshawk
24. Common/Steppe Buzzard
25. Long-legged Buzzard
26. Bonelli's Eagle
27. Common Kestrel
28. Peregrine
29. Chukar
30. Black Francolin
31. Common Quail
32. Common Moorhen
33. Common Coot
34. Little Crake
35. Stone Curlew
36. Black-winged Stilt
37. Little-ringed Plover
38. Common Ringed Plover
39. Kentish Plover
40. Spur-winged Plover
41. Northern Lapwing
42. Common Snipe
43. Common Sandpiper
44. Ruff
45. Little Stint
46. Whimbrel
47. Marsh Sandpiper
48. Yellow-legged Gull
49. Armenian Gull
50. Caspian Gull
51. Lesser Black-backed Gull [*intermedius*]
52. Black-headed Gull

53. Mediterranean Gull
54. Slender-billed Gull
55. Sandwich Tern
56. Rock Dove
57. Woodpigeon
58. Collared Dove
59. Common Cuckoo
60. Great-spotted Cuckoo
61. Short-eared Owl
62. Cyprus Scops Owl
63. Common Swift
64. Pallid Swift
65. Alpine Swift
66. Eurasian Hoopoe
67. Crested Lark
68. Short-toed Lark
69. House Martin
70. Barn Swallow
71. Red-rumped Swallow
72. Tawny Pipit
73. Meadow Pipit
74. Red-throated Pipit
75. White Wagtail
76. Yellow Wagtail [*flava*, *superciliaris*, *thunbergi*]
77. Black-headed Wagtail [*feldegg*, *dombrowskii*]
78. European Robin
79. Common Nightingale
80. Red-spotted Bluethroat
81. Black Redstart
82. Common Stonechat
83. Siberian Stonechat [*variegata*]
84. Northern Wheatear
85. Eastern Black-eared Wheatear
86. Cyprus Pied Wheatear
87. Isabelline Wheatear
88. Blackbird
89. Song Thrush
90. Fieldfare
91. Redwing
92. Zitting Cisticola
93. Cetti's Warbler
94. European Reed Warbler
95. Sedge Warbler
96. Sardinian Warbler
97. Spectacled Warbler
98. Eastern Subalpine Warbler
99. Ruppells Warbler
100. Cyprus Warbler
101. Eastern Orphean Warbler
102. Lesser Whitethroat
103. Common Whitethroat
104. Blackcap
105. Common Chiffchaff
106. Eastern Bonelli's Warbler
107. Cyprus Coal Tit

108. Great Tit
109. Short-toed Treecreeper
110. Masked Shrike
111. Woodchat Shrike
112. Black-billed Magpie
113. Eastern Jackdaw
114. Eurasian Jay
115. Hooded Crow
116. House Sparrow
117. Spanish Sparrow
118. Chaffinch
119. European Serin
120. Greenfinch
121. Goldfinch
122. Common Linnet
123. Common Crossbill
124. Hawfinch
125. Cretzchmar's Bunting
126. Cinereous Bunting
127. Corn Bunting

Butterflies

1. Swallowtail
2. Eastern Festoon
3. Large White
4. Small White
5. Small Bath White
6. Orange Tip
7. Clouded Yellow
8. Cleopatra
9. Paphos Blue
10. Common Blue
11. Painted Lady
12. Red Admiral
13. Speckled Wood
14. Mallow Skipper
15. Cyprus Grayling

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