



LESVOS TOUR REPORT

27th April – 4th May 2025



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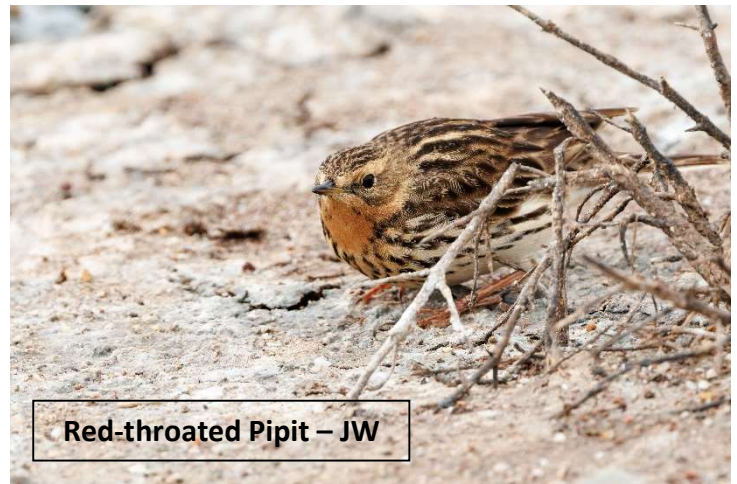
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Day 1: 27th April:

I picked up five of the crew from the Stansted flight but we had to wait for the delayed one from Manchester and so pottered up the road and sought some shade under the Tamarisks. Yelkouan Shearwaters were streaming past and a couple of Shags were seen while two White Wagtails ensured this somewhat tricky spring bird was on the list. Even Sardinian Warbler showed well on a telephone wire on the other side of the road. We collected Mike and John and headed back to Skala Kallonis seeing Alpine Swifts around the cliff outside of the capital on the way.

The wind had got up and after checking in a having a bevvie we headed back out for a first drive round Loutzaria and the pans. Common, Sandwich and Little Terns were at the Tsiknias river mouth and up river at the ford we quickly picked up at least two female Little Crakes once again as well as a bright legged Temminck's Stint, Black-headed Wagtails, Bee-eaters and three male Black-headed Buntings with the Mulberry male putting on a fine performance for us.

We bumped through the middle adding a male Red-backed Shrike and several Eastern Ollies and two Gull-billed Terns were still cruising around and picking snacks from the grass. The wind was now howling but somehow we had some good close views of at least 12 Red-throated Pipits feeding in the last damp patch on the Alykes Wetlands while down at the Sheepfields, our viewpoint gave us the all-important first day views of Dalmatian Pelicans and a couple of Ruddy Shelduck while Short-toed Larks spiralled above and Zitting Cisticolas did their thing.



Red-throated Pipit – JW

The dust in the wind was getting uncomfortable so we retraced and stopped at the Pump House Corner where Ruffs were with the Stilts, Ruff and Wood Sandpipers and a Temminck's Stint was on the other side of the road. The 2cy Montagu's Harrier was out quartering the back fields and we also picked up Marsh Harrier and a single White Stork before retreating once again with a final brief stop at Stilt Corner giving us the Spur Winged Plover once again – and like the Pelicans, always good to see one on the first afternoon of any trip.

We decided to retire for the day and give everyone a chance to chill before the first dinner.

Day 2: 28th April

The first full day and it dawned decidedly cool and breezy (three breakfast Night Herons briefly warmed us) but we stuck to the plan and headed for Metochi. It was Rollerless on the way down despite earlier reports but started well once we got out of the van with Bee-eaters overhead and three gloriously orangey Squaccos in the drainage channel and an even showier male Black-headed Bunting with its concertina neck making sure the other local males knew that it was his patch. Down at the lake we quickly picked up the requisite Coots and a Little Grebe and a male Little Crake came right out of the reeds and had a bath on the edge. A female was a little less obliging but poked her head out a couple of times. Small birds were trickier to find in the strengthening wind but hirundines and Swifts were



Black-headed Bunting

descending to feed and drink and the first Woodchat briefly sat up on top.

Black-capped Jays moved back and forth and the Hoopoe duck was broken at long last with several views of one flying through the Olives. More Swifts were moving through at height and Alpines were amongst them and there seemed to be more Short-toed Eagles on view than in recent days and Black Storks dropped out of the cloud. We started to walk back to the van when I looked up to see a Pygmy Cormorant dropping in and thankfully it landed in the same dead trees at the end as last week.

The Squaccos and Bee-eaters were still performing back at the start and we bumped into Eleni and her group and followed them on the back road to Potamia where Thrush Nightingale had been heard. It did not sing again but we had a very productive spell adding a male Red-backed Shrike and several Masked Shrikes and Woodchats along with at least five Golden Orioles that bombed around in the wind and disappeared into the large Elms.

A calling Middle Spotted Woodpecker kept returning to a large Elm but never stopped but at least we all got to see one! Turtle Dove, Cirl Buntings and our first Long-legged Buzzard were seen before we continued around into Potamia and headed up the valley a short way. A Middle Spot gave itself up on the base of an Olive tree and was watched by all from in the van to be followed by more Masked Shrike action.

There was a Long-legged Buzzard up over each ridge along with Common Buzzards and Ravens and we also saw a male Peregrine, female Sparrowhawk and Kestrel. Whilst scanning around I picked up several of the local Feral Goats

way up on the vertical crags. Eastern Orphean Warblers were counter singing and one was scoped for an age and the pair of Rock Nuthatches were actively feeding young in an overhang nest. With Eastern Black-eared Wheatears up above on the crags, we were quickly picking up some quality species. Two Crag Martins were with the other four hirundines and Cirl and Corn Buntings were both to be heard around us but the Eastern Subalpines were keeping very low.

I had just mentioned that Little Bitterns have been seen in the river here before when we reached a couple who promptly pointed one out to us and she watched us with beady eyes from the vegetation. Lunch was calling so we retraced our steps but still stopped twice to check out a Common Buzzard and then a low fly by from one of the Dalmatian Pelicans!

Lunch back at the Pela and then out and along the coast to Mesa where the wind was absolutely howling but we quickly got onto the flock of Red-footed Falcon out around the rock island. There were at least nine male and two female and when not sheltering from the wind, were up enjoying the conditions and evidently catching plenty of prey. The light was flat and the birds were at eye level affording views unlike anything I



Dalmatian Pelican

have had here before. We could barely stand up and it was perishingly cold so we ticked off a flying Spoonbill and headed back to Hide 1 where the kind occupants soon made way for our group. We had to put rock against the inside of the door to stop it blowing open and we were grateful for the shelter it offered.



Red-footed Falcon – PW

There were more new arrivals with about 40 White-winged Black Terns and 20 Whiskered Terns feeding in one flock which were joined by four Gull-billed and several Little and Commons. Six pinky adult Slender-billed Gulls were flying around and there were more waders to check too with

Curlew Sandpipers, 46 Ruff and a few Little Stints. Five Grey Plover and a Turnstone were found, while down in the channel there were the two Glossy Ibis and a lone Spoonbill. It was all go! Even the Pelicans were active and the strong wind seemed to be getting birds on the wing. There were five monsters all told and they sneakily followed each other around the pans.

Pump House Corner was our final stop of the day and the Spur-winged Plover had returned to his favoured corner where Little Stints and Curlew Sandpipers were with the Ruff, Stilts and Wood Sands. Three more White-winged Black Terns were in the hidden pool and the 2cy male Montagu's Harrier was hunting low in perfect light but still required a strong grip of your scope to watch it! It was getting even colder and so after watching seven White Storks up on the ridge we called it a day and retreated back to the hotel to warm up after what I hoped was a great first day for the gang.

Day 3: 29th April

Our Pela breakfast bird this morning was a fine adult Dalmatian Pelican that circled over the Bay for a few minutes but while watching this we missed yet another Roller that flew over the Kalloni Bay Hotel in front of us!

Our day started properly around the coast at Achaderi and despite the cold wind we all got superb views of the Kruper's Nuthatches. The woods were unsurprisingly quiet but we saw Cirl Buntings, Serins and Chaffinches and heard Short-toed Treecreepers. With early success we came back past Mesa where eight or so Red-foots were hanging on to the bushes for dear life but the light was far harsher and we still cherished our encounters there the day before.



Kruper's Nuthatch

I opted to avoid the eastern salt pans despite the White Pelican being there as it was just so windy (mistake) and headed round the bay the other way to Agi Ioannis and although sheltered it was disappointingly quiet with not one Cretzschmar's Bunting or Sombre Tit this time although we did see some fine EBEWs and found another Rock Bunting nest. A Great Tit brood had fledged and Cirl Buntings were showy allowing group views of their first male. Insects were thin on the ground but Small Copper, Orbed Underwing Skipper and Black-veined White were seen but just one of each.

Lunch in the olive groves below and then back to Skala Kallonis where a Lesser Grey Shrike was found in short order opposite the old night club where it hunted beetles from the wires alongside technicolour Bee-eaters. We drove out alongside the Tsiknias where Bee-eaters were already digging burrows and two Great Reed Warbler tried to out sing the wind.

Now was the time for the eastern pans but we timed our visit to miss two more White Pelicans! However we had a great couple of hours there and walked almost all the way down despite the cold wind. Four Dalmatian Pelicans were on the first pan with eight Spoonbills and included two fine curly crested adults while three more immatures were on the usual penultimate last pan.

The two Glossy bis were still mooching between the pans and their little pool and a large flight of Flamingos had the crew entranced. There was plenty of tern action with 15 each of Whiskered and White-winged Black, five Gull-billed and point blank views of Little Terns fishing by us in the channel.



Little Tern

There were plenty of waders now too with several big flocks of Ruff and a smattering of Little Stints and richly plumaged Curlew Sandpipers amongst them. A Broad-billed Sandpiper was reported and Paul and I quickly picked it up before the flocks all moved again. Fortunately we re-found it again from the main track but it did not stay and was soon a disappearing dot but it is always such a good species to see on any trip. There were 14 Grey Plover and seven Turnstone and both Ringed and Kentish Plovers and Paul picked up a Whimbrel

flying in – another quality wader that I have only seen here twice before.

Up above a Short-toed Eagle gave dazzling views but there were none of the hoped for incoming BOPs seen elsewhere. Two groups of six and two Med Gulls were noted and a full adult and 2cy Black-headed Gull continued the scarce bird run for this walk. They are another species that I very rarely see in the spring. We attempted to start the walk back when we picked up the flock of about 20 Collared Pratincoles flying along the Alykes Sheepfield where they had been spooked by the Short-toed Eagle but they landed out of view before most of the party got onto them and whilst still scanning, the 2cy male Montagu's Harrier popped up once again but unfortunately did not put up the Pratincoles but a Spotted Redshank flew through our view! A final scan and a bird took off from the back pool and I saw white at the back end and though Curlew but then thought 'the white goes across the tail not up the back'. It flipped over the fence and banked and I suddenly realised that it was a the Russian White-fronted Goose that has been around since March but was last seen ten days ago!

I popped the news out and we properly began the walk back seeing the Dalmatian Pelicans and Spoonbills in flight once again and checking any wader flocks that we could find. A non-black bellied Dunlin was a final new wader as it distantly fed with the Curlew Sands and Little Stints. There were a few small birds with a female Red-backed Shrike,

the usual Buntings and Larks and a host of hirundines and swifts. We were quite pleased with our afternoon efforts and went on our way after playing Frogger again on the main road.

The Goose beckoned and someone had actually followed up on my message and had seen it on the fields and with some help we too were watching my very first goose on Lesbos. It looked a little incongruous but eventually got up and had a wander around. I wonder how long it will stay?

Short-toed Larks were singing but the cold drove us back to the van and out past some more White-winged Black Terns before a final stop for the day at Pump House Corner where we were greeted by a host of Ruff and Curlew Sands jammed in the corner channel and amongst them were two superb Spotted Redshanks with one being sootier than the other.

Wood Sands, Stilts and Little Stints were also present but we could not re-find the Broad-bill. The WWB Terns came back in and alighted on the corner pan showing off their glowing white shoulders and the Ravens were still visiting their pine tree nest.

With bodies chilled we decided to call it a day and after dinner the wind had abated just enough to hear several Scops Owls preparing to keep everyone awake all night.



Russian White-fronted Goose

Day 3: 30th April

The 'plan' was to go straight out West but after buying our daily bread I opted to have a look for the local Long-eared Owls once again and this time we found two adults, one of which showed very well and we followed this up with a Scops Owl in the village (thanks Penny!) which glared down at us from in front of a Eucalyptus trunk. So good to see one at last especially as I reckon five were audible from the Pela yesterday evening.



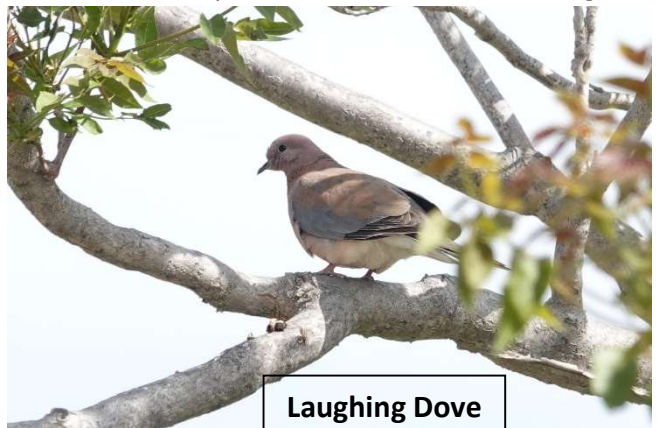
Scops Owl - JW

A chance glance up gave us yet another magnificent Dalmatian Pelican fly by with an adult and sub-adult circling not far above our heads while six Glossy Ibis came up from the Kallonis Pool.

West around the coast (adding a close Pallid Swift on the way!) and a stop at my usual spot on the old Agra road where the wind was light, the sun bright and the Cinereous and Cretzschmar's Buntings immediately on show. The fizzy EBEWs danced around and two male Blue Rock Thrush displayed with one on the highest pinnacle.

A Barred Warbler sung from the bushes below us but could not be found and Ravens barrel rolled above us. On again and into Eresos where a slight diversion onto the north road gave us two male Laughing Doves within three seconds of pulling up by the old work sheds on the edge of town. Mike was surprised at our enthusiasm having grown up with them on Cyprus but I was pleased to have seen some away from Loutra. The colonisation continues.

The Eresos to Sigri track started with a pristine male Red-backed Shrike on a fence just a few feet away and they were to become a feature of the day with over 30 noted along our route. We did not stop on the way up to the ridge – in fact it seemed very quiet bar Stonechats and the usual selection of Buntings and EBEWs and once up on the top we quickly found the Isabelline Wheatear on his favoured rock but the cool breeze was stymieing much in the way of song. There was more Shrike action and there were five Lesser Kestrels above the ridge which were parted by two Eleonora's Falcons on a power glide across the valley. Short-toed Eagles seemed to appear wherever



Laughing Dove

we looked and Ravens were ever present but the stars were the Alpine Swifts scything through the sky around us. The light was fantastic and they were close enough to pick out every detail.

Two French guys told us of a tree with four Rollers in it so we moved on down the valley seeing better Buntings and a Woodlark (not singing today) and stopping once again at the rock face with the noisy Rock Sparrows which were seen very quickly. There were Black-headed Buntings everywhere now and a male Red-footed Falcon was just sat up on the wires but there were no warbler migrants and only an Ollie and Subalp in the Chaste Trees. I still find it hard to believe that some of these Stonechats are just 'normal' European ones but I am not saying that they are Eastern either. We saw several proper pied individuals with huge white scapular patches and white rumps. They are just different.

Down at the Pear Trees of Happiness there were of course ZERO Rollers but our time between there and lunch at Meladia Chapel was excellent and very productive and the crew were very happy indeed. Everything showed well and we saw the aforementioned Warblers along with Blackcaps, Eastern Orpheans, our first Willow Warbler, Great Reed and Whitethroat while the Red-backed Shrikes were joined by Woodchats, three Lesser Greys and two Masked.



Black-headed Buntings were fighting it out for the best spots and we eventually saw a female that seemed to have not attracted any attention. Bee-eaters called and a Sombre Tit was mobbing one of the Lesser Grey Shrikes while at the Fig Grove we watched both Spotted and a fine male Collared Flycatcher on the fence before moving to the chapel for lunch due to the attention of a very large but very friendly dog that was politely pushing to be fed. Whinchats and Stonechats popped up with the latter having broods everywhere. At least four Short-toed Eagles were seen and a Hobby rocketed through and even gave one of the eagles a pop on the way through while Marsh Harrier and a weirdly plumaged 2cy male Montagu's Harrier were seen over the fields.



Lunch was enlivened by a Barred Warbler in the pines that soon spooked out into a gully and then the bushes but it rarely stayed still for long. There were two Blackcaps and a female Pied Flycatcher in there too along with Chaffinches and Buntings. The bump up towards the Evergreen container was much better in the bus and another Spotted Flycatcher and multiple Shrikes were seen along with one of only two Agama seen on the journey.

On reaching the view out to sea we could see Falcons on the ridge towards the coast but

these were not Lesser Kestrels but eight Red-foots in all their gleaming glory. We bumped the worst bit down to the Cheese Sanitorium and Steve calmly but firmly said 'Roller on the wires' and there it was in shades of gleaming blue and chestnut. I chucked everyone out and drove down to park up seeing a second one the way. I was oddly relieved to have seen one at last when so many had slipped through my grasp over the last ten days.

The Peach grove had no small birds really but it did have two showy Golden Orioles which posed very nicely while the Roller tried to nod off on the wires above. Lesser Whitethroat was a new species in the compound but it felt like most small birds had simply moved on so we continued to Sigri where two Jackdaw tried to sneak by as we drove down towards Faneromeni.



Collared Flycatcher - PW

One of the Spur-winged Lapwings was in the paddock looking like it was made from alabaster and shiny coal with its smart black and white tuxedo. Jed and Ralph had just had a couple of Levant Sparrowhawks go through so our hopes were raised and a glance to the right at some favoured trees gave us three more Rollers that became five when they were flushed by a dashing female Accipiter that banked showing the darkened underwing tips – bingo.

A Collared Flycatcher ‘peeped’ and a Spotted Fly drew us to another Ficedula female that showed all the characteristics of a female Semi-collared including pale grey rump and distinct

pale median covert wing bar. Whatever, it was a very instructive bird. A Wood Warbler flicked around and two Blackcaps appeared but the wind was getting up so we decided to be sensible and pack up and head back over the top after a magnificent day out West.

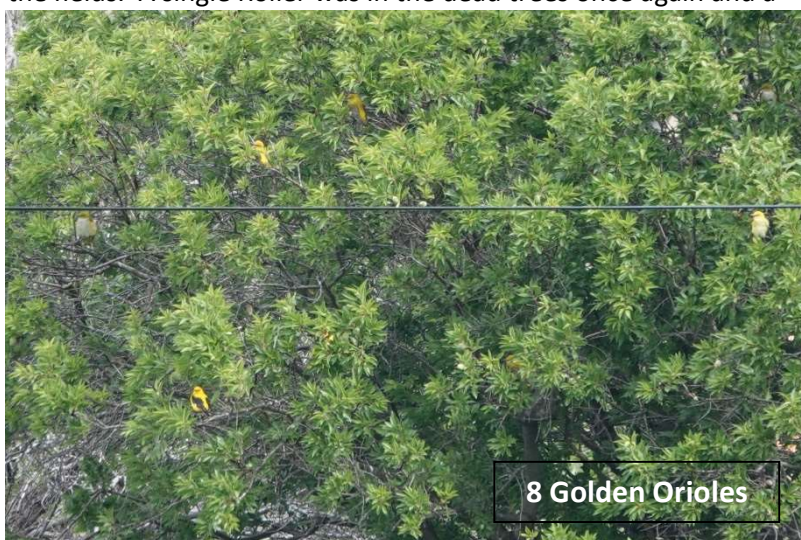
An enforced stop at Agriosikos (super slow break tapping numpty two cars ahead) was more about showing the gang the magnificent views down over Kalloni and the saltpan landscape that stretched out below.

It remained cold all evening although the wind may have lessened a bit and the Scops Owl and Barn Owl were once again clearly audible outside.

Day 5: 1st May

Being May Day we always head West as everywhere around the Bay gets very busy indeed and it started very well indeed with the River Warbler staccato reeling outside the Malemi being heard as we slowly drove through the crowd in our bus. It was never going to sit out with people only a few yards away – not that they actually had much choice given its chosen roadside bramble clump!

We stopped at Lardia but once again could only hear the Eastern Bonelli’s Warblers trilling before ip and over to Faneromeni. It was very windy but we opted to walk from the fig groves to the upper ford and back. It proved to be an excellent decision and during the morning we had nine Golden Orioles resting up in one tree alongside Bee-eaters while a duo of White-winged Black Terns hawked the fields. A single Roller was in the dead trees once again and a Laughing Dove got blown through. We counted 20 Red-backed Shrikes along with two Lesser Greys and the two breeding species, heard Wood Warblers and saw Lesser Whitethroats, Blackcaps, Great Reeds and even a slightly dowdy but very showy Barred Warbler. Lesvos migration magic in action.



8 Golden Orioles

There were plenty of Spotted Flycatchers but things changed above the ford where we were taken to an off the track spot where a full adult male Red-breasted Flycatcher was holding sway and seeing off Spotted, Pied and a male Collared. This was my first male on the island and it put on quite the show for the small crowd that mysteriously appeared. It was making a short pew call which I had not heard before as well as the expected rattle.

There were Squaccos and Wood Sandpipers in the river and ten Whiskered Terns got blown over and north along the coast. The river also hosted huge heaps of Green Toadlets which the waders and herons were feasting on.



Red-breasted Flycatcher

However, despite all this it was the morning of the Levant Sparrowhawk and after the first male decked out in lilac-blue and almost-orange, whipped passed the van and perched on the fence we managed to see at least 13 others with one group of four. The views far surpassed anything I had experienced before.

We took lunch on the beach and managed to position ourselves out of the wind. The Shearwaters were incredibly close and even the Yelkouan's were in full arc mode with towering sweeps far higher than I have ever seen Manx do. There were Scopoli's too that were close enough to discern every detail – again not a

regular occurrence here. The crew were very happy.

From here we tried the Petrified Forest road and here too there were small birds moving up and over the slopes and towards the end we found Pied and Spotted Flycatchers, Whinchats and Wood Warblers as well as the expected Buntings and Wheatears. Still no Chukars though. On up to Ipsilou passing a male Levant Sparrowhawk on the way up. It was quiet here with singing Golden Orioles, Cinereous Buntings, Blue Rock Thrush and a bouncy Persian Squirrel.



Levant Sparrowhawk – IN

Two more Levants were seen from here onwards while Agriosikos once again gave us a fine view but no birds really this time.

We would return. A final stop back at the Tsiknias gave us superb views of three Spotted Crakes just below us along with a Common Snipe and two Little Bitterns and finished with a flock of 21 Med Gulls heading purposefully towards the salt pans. An orange Squacco just sat there and let us glean every detail and was a grand way to round up a full day in the field.



Day 6: 2nd May

So, last night news came out of a Great Snipe at the same spot as our Common Snipe but it was clear that both species were involved so we opted for a pre-breakfast raid to chance our luck. For the first time all week it was calm and still although still not overly warm. Amazingly it only took me five minutes to relocate it which allowed us to enjoy watching it for a while before the hungry hoards descended. It was a bruiser and beautifully patterned too and put on quite a show until walking back into the reeds. Three Spoonbills flew over and seven Gull-billed Terns moved up river.



Great Snipe - PW

Leaving the crowd behind I drive us to the end of the river track so that we could walk out onto the foreshore in the slim hope that a Rufous-tailed Scrub Robin would materialise. After a few minutes I picked one up singing way off and thankfully he was perched up on top and looked great in the scope. There was no need to go closer.

Down at the sand bar we added Curlew, two Med Gulls, Kentish Plovers, Sandwich, Little, White-winged Black and Common Terns and the same Montagu's Harrier was once again quartering. Eight more Spoonbills circled us and a Little Crake in the river edge was a good way to end and send us back for a Pela breakfast.

Olive Tree Warbler was the target for the day so we spent the first half of the day around Metochi and Potamia passing two River Warblers in song on the way there! We ended up hearing the OTWs very well and even had them at the same time as singing Masked Shrikes for useful comparison but seeing one just never happened.

Two Rollers were seen – one on wires and another heading north and there were three Lesser Grey and 18 Red-backed Shrikes logged but it really was a raptor morning although it was at times very frustrating with birds often being picked up late as they actively moved northwards. Between us we saw three Lesser Spotted Eagles, six Short-toed Eagles, Black Kite, two Long-legged Buzzard, six Common Buzzard, seven Marsh Harrier, six Red-footed Falcons, Kestrel, three Hobbies, two female Sparrowhawk and a male Levant Sparrowhawk. The Lesser Spots included two together that actually appeared to be hunting which threw me to start with and I wished I had called them sooner. Such behaviour was noted by others during the morning and it seemed likely that they had arrived the day before and were hunting before carrying onwards.



Metochi itself held the Pygmy Cormorant once again and we found three Little Bitterns, Purple Heron and full breeding plumaged Cattle Egret that was happily eating Scolopendra! There were both Terrapins around the margins now that it had warmed back up a little.

Long-legged Buzzard



Lunch back at the Pela and then up to Agriosikos for a proper walk. The breeze had picked up it was at least attempting to be warm and we were rewarded with 12 singing Eastern Bonelli's Warblers although actually seeing one was almost impossible this time. European Nuthatch, Hawfinch, Robin and Wren were all new for the trip and Ravens were a constant companion as they called and tumbled overhead. They never found us a big BOP though and only Buzzard and another Levant Sparrowhawk were noted.

As hoped there were quite a few butterflies to track with Eastern Festoons, Small Coppers, Green Underside Blue and Scarce Swallowtail seen. There were a few other inverts and a recently deceased Lesser Blind Mole-Rat.

A trip down to the Kalloni Salt Pans before dinner saw us ensconced in the hide and counting a vast flock of marsh terns with at least 130 White-winged Black and 20 Whiskered. A Black Stork got blown towards us and the White Stork flock were mobile again but it was the Cetti's Warbler that almost came into the hide that made Carolyn's day. We said goodnight to the pair of Spur-winged Plovers that were getting very friendly in the channel and made a final stop at the Tsiknias where four Little Bitterns and Little Crake finished things up nicely.

Eastern Festoon



Spur-winged Plover



Day 7: 3rd May

Going West three times in a week is unusual but it was the final day and it offered us the best chance of encountering migrants and the unexpected as going north may have only netted us Great Spotted Cuckoo. A slight veer along the bay edge on the way to get bread added the Great Crested Grebe that Paul had seen each morning to the group tally before hitting the Eresos to Sigrí once more.

In warmer, stiller conditions were fared much better beginning with Sombre Tits on the fence as we drove it. A walk down from Rock Sparrow Corner gave us three Barred Warblers including a full adult male that came close to us and spent an age catching and thrashing hairy Eggar caterpillars to death on a favoured spot. Everyone spent quality scope time with this yellow eyed beauty. Sardinian and Orphean Warblers were similarly cat hunting. Woodlarks and all the Buntings were in full song this time and Northern Wheatears joined the other two species on the tops.

Over 20 Red-backed Shrikes were counted as well as three Lesser Greys and a good selection of falcons with 12 Redfoot spiralling over, a pale Eleonora's and six Lesser Kestrels. A finely barred Honey Buzzard was a trip tick and the orange, grey and brown ringtail male Montagu's Harrier was once again near the chapel.



We had lunch here once again and the Cypress trees were home to a great selection with an Icterine singing upon arrival although it never came out, two each of Wood and Willow Warbler, two Spotted, Pied and a female Red-breasted Flycatcher which bounded around us. Andrea appeared from the van and called over in a dead pan voice 'Howard, do you want a Roller? There is one in that fig tree' and walked off. Sure enough a hazy blue bird was sitting in the old figs below us.



Six Pallid Swifts were with the Common and a few Alpines around us and there were now many Meadow Browns and the first almost yellowy Balkan Marbled Whites on the wing. Andrea found another Roller just around the corner.

The Cheese Sanitorium was too busy to stop so we pressed onto Faneromeni stopping briefly at the new Olive press opposite the Oak Grove where John, Peter and Steve were watching a Little Owl on the roof! Cue a quick exit for this now tricky bird here.

Up to the top fields passing another Roller in the Oriole and Bee-eaters fields on the way and then a flurry of Roller action added another four as they were hunting from the Giant Fennel up slope. At this point it was 4 : 3 to me but the scores were equalled when Andrea found the best one of the day on the way back down. The crew decided that she should win on the '1st of the day Roller Rules'. I conceded the draw.

The hazy Little Owl was still on his distant barn and we collected 15 Red-backed Shrikes, Turtle Doves and three more Squaccos before once again heading over the top. The Rosefinch was a no show at the Petrified Forest but there were two more Lesser Spotted Eagles hunting as we rejoined the main road and we watched them hurtle

across the valley below. We finished up at Perivolis where the nesting Middle Spotted Woodpeckers did not really play ball but there were Medium-tailed Tits in the trees and the noisy Ravens. With packing and a final Pera meal we made our way home.

Day 8: 4th May

With the chance of squeezing in a little more birding, everyone was ready in good time for our departure to the airport. Jim and Jacqui took Andrea and our luggage as it would never have fitted in the van and followed us to Charamidia.

It was glorious and flat calm and the views across to the Turkish island to the south the clearest I have ever seen. Yelkouan Shearwaters glided close to the surface and a mystery cetacean was followed. It was certainly not a Bottle-nosed Dolphin and actually felt like a Harbour Porpoise although it would appear that they are incredibly scarce in the far eastern Med. Three Honey Buzzards circled above the ridge and thankfully the Ruppell's Warbler did the decent thing and gave a good couple of views on top of the pines including some energetic display flighting. Sardinian and Eastern Subalpine Warblers and the obliging Cretzschmar's Bunting made for a fine finale to the Oriole Birding adventure.



Roller - ACV

**Ruppell's
Warbler - TC**



Only one notable was missing – Chukar and what should happen but just like the previous Sunday one walked across the road in front of the van as we drove up the hill on the final stretch to the airport to a resounding cheer from the back!

We checked in and went and watched the sea for a while before boarding our slightly delayed flight home.

Antio Lesvos.

Birds			
Russian White-fronted Goose	Gull-billed Tern	Masked Shrike	Collared Flycatcher
Ruddy Shelduck	White-winged Black Tern	Woodchat Shrike	Semi-collared Flycatcher
Common Shelduck	Whiskered Tern	Eurasian Golden Oriole	Red-breasted Flycatcher
Mallard	Common Tern	Black-capped Jay	Blue Rock Thrush
Chukar	Sandwich Tern	Eurasian Jackdaw	Whinchat
Greater Flamingo	Scopoli's Shearwater	Hooded Crow	European Stonechat
Little Grebe	Yelkouan Shearwater	Western Rook	Northern Wheatear
Great Crested Grebe	Black Stork	Common Raven	Eastern Black-eared Wheatear
Rock Dove	White Stork	Greater Short-toed Lark	Isabelline Wheatear
Common Woodpigeon	Great Cormorant	Woodlark	Eurasian Blackbird
European Turtle Dove	Pygmy Cormorant	Crested Lark	Black-headed Wagtail
Collared Dove	European Shag	Sand Martin	Blue-headed Wagtail
Laughing Dove	Dalmatian Pelican	Eurasian Crag Martin	Grey-headed Wagtail
Common Cuckoo	Little Bittern	Barn Swallow	White Wagtail
Alpine Swift	Grey Heron	Red-rumped Swallow	Tree Pipit
Common Swift	Purple Heron	Common House Martin	Red-throated Pipit
Pallid Swift	Great Egret	Sombre Tit	Common Chaffinch
Water Rail	Little Egret	Eurasian Blue Tit	Hawfinch
Spotted Crake	Cattle Egret	Great Tit	European Greenfinch
Little Crake	Squacco Heron	Long-tailed Tit	Common Linnet
Common Moorhen	Black-crowned Night-Heron	Eurasian Nuthatch	European Goldfinch
Eurasian Coot	Glossy Ibis	Krüper's Nuthatch	European Serin
Black-winged Stilt	Eurasian Spoonbill	Western Rock Nuthatch	Black-headed Bunting
Pied Avocet	European Honey-buzzard	Short-toed Treecreeper	Corn Bunting
Grey Plover	Lesser Spotted Eagle	Eurasian Wren	Cirl Bunting
Spur-winged Lapwing	Short-toed Eagle	Cetti's Warbler	Cinereous Bunting
Kentish Plover	Booted Eagle	Wood Warbler	Cretzschmar's Bunting
Common Ringed Plover	Western Marsh Harrier	Willow Warbler	House Sparrow
Little Ringed Plover	Montagu's Harrier	Eastern Bonelli's Warbler	Spanish Sparrow
Whimbrel	Levant Sparrowhawk	Icterine Warbler	Rock Sparrow
Eurasian Curlew	Eurasian Sparrowhawk	Eastern Olivaceous Warbler	180 species
Ruddy Turnstone	Black Kite	Olive-tree Warbler	
Ruff	Common Buzzard	Sedge Warbler	
Broad-billed Sandpiper	Long-legged Buzzard	Eurasian Reed Warbler	
Curlew Sandpiper	Long-eared Owl	Great Reed Warbler	
Temminck's Stint	Barn Owl	River Warbler	
Dunlin	Eurasian Scops Owl	Zitting Cisticola	
Little Stint	Little Owl	Barred Warbler	
Great Snipe	Eurasian Hoopoe	Eurasian Blackcap	
Common Snipe	European Bee-eater	Lesser Whitethroat	
Common Sandpiper	European Roller	Eastern Orphean Warbler	
Spotted Redshank	Middle-spotted Woodpecker	Rüppell's Warbler	
Common Greenshank	Lesser Kestrel	Eastern Subalpine Warbler	
Wood Sandpiper	Common Kestrel	Sardinian Warbler	
Collared Pratincole	Red-footed Falcon	Common Whitethroat	
Slender-billed Gull	Eleonora's Falcon	Spotted Flycatcher	
Black-headed Gull	Eurasian Hobby	Rufous-tailed Scrub Robin	
Mediterranean Gull	Peregrine Falcon	European Robin	
Yellow-legged Gull	Red-backed Shrike	Common Nightingale	
Little Tern	Lesser Grey Shrike	European Pied Flycatcher	

Butterflies	Dragonflies
Red Admiral	Broad-bodied Chaser
Painted Lady	Red-veined Darter
Wall Brown	Small Pincertail
Orange Tip	Small Skimmer
Clouded Yellow	Blue Featherleg
Small White	Dark Spreadwing
Green-veined White	Herps
Large White	Balkan Stripe-necked Terrapin
Eastern Dappled White	European Pond Terrapin
Black-veined White	Starred Agama
Lesser Spotted Fritillary	Glass Lizard
Small Heath	Snake-eyed Lacertid
Small Copper	Eastern Balkan Green Lizard
Small Skipper	Green Toad
Orbed Underwing Skipper	Levant Water Frog
Mallow Skipper	Eastern Tree Frog
Holly Blue	Spiders
Common Blue	False Widow <i>Steatoda paykulliana</i>
Green Underside Blue	Stone Huntsman <i>Eusparassus walckenaeri</i>
Scarce Swallowtail	Red & Black Jumping Spider <i>Phileaus chrysops</i>
Common Swallowtail	Black Harvestman <i>Zacheus crista</i>
Eastern Festoon	Labyrinth Spider <i>Agelena labyrinthica</i>
	Orb Weaver <i>Agalenatea redii</i>
Orthoptera	Other stuff:
Smyrna Bush Cricket	Chequered Scorpion <i>Mesobuthus gibbosus</i>
Western Lesvos Bush Cricket	Mediterranean Banded Centipede <i>Scolopendra cingulata</i>
Common Digging Grasshopper	Termite sp
Broad Green Winged Grasshopper	Large Dung Beetle
	Flower Chafer <i>Pygopleurus vulpes</i>
Mammals:	
Red Fox	
Persian Squirrel	
Lesser Blind Mole-rat (deceased)	
Southern White-breasted Hedgehog (deceased)	
Beech Marten (deceased)	
Harbour Porpoise	