



TOUR REPORT



Mallorca and Cabrera

4th – 11th May 2022

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WEDNESDAY 4TH MAY – ARRIVAL, PRAT DE SANT JORDI, PORTOCOLOM

Overcast, moderate winds, 16C

The group arrived into Palma de Mallorca Airport at just before 1pm, meeting Jason in the arrivals hall, before heading out to the minibus and on towards Felanitx. Not before having a quick look in on a small wetland on the outskirts of the airport, called the Prat de Sant Jordi. The wetland was little more than a flooded field, with most of the area dry already. However the flooded field, with its associated horses, provided a superb selection of birds! Some of the first to be noted were 3 cracking **COLLARED PRATINCOLES** which were roosting by a near pool, before flying across and setting down further in. A summer plumaged **TEMMINCK'S STINT** was also picked up soon after we arrived and showed well; the site was looking superb! **Common Ringed Plover** numbered around 20 individuals, while 3 or 4 **Little Ringed Plovers** were also present. A single **Wood Sandpiper** was present, feeding in the churned up margins of the water, while a summer plumaged fiery orange **Little Stint**, a single **Ruff** and several **Black-winged Stilts** made up the rest of the wader contingent. In addition, a good number of **Spotless Starlings** were floating around, sometimes perching on the horses, and a couple of **Yellow Wagtails** were hiding amongst the grasses. With only one point of viewing, we were soon happy that we had seen the majority of what was to be seen here, so we headed on, arriving at the Hotel Aumallia at around 1500.



Temminck's Stint, Prat de Sant Jordi

After a welcome homemade lemonade we were soon out for a short but very pleasant wander along the lanes. **Turtle Doves** abounded, purring and flying between the carob trees. Our first **Mediterranean Flycatchers** were also noted nesting inside the hotel grounds, while further up the lane a **Thekla's Lark** was collecting food. A good but brief sighting here was of a **Balearic Woodchat Shrike** perched in a small carob, and darting between the ground and neighboring walls and trees to feed. After a short while, we headed back to the bus, making our way to Portocolom where we would spend the available couple of hours before dinner.

We headed straight for the coast, timing our arrival over the entrance of the harbour with the return of the local fishing boat, the Penyal Roig. The boat was trailing with it a good number of **SCOPOLI'S SHEARWATERS**, taking advantage of the discards. In smaller number, and generally further offshore were several **BALEARIC SHEARWATERS**, offering fine comparison with the larger Scopoli's. A single **Audouin's Gull** drifted by over the cliffs and a single **Mediterranean Shag** flew by, while a pair of **Pallid Swifts** were watched over their breeding cliffs. The coastal strip here held 3 **Northern Wheatears** and a male **Blue Rock Thrush** was singing from the rooftops nearby. Once we had had enough of the now brisk wind we headed for the van and went into an area of old fig grove and garrigue habitat. The area hosted a single **Common Whitethroat** of migrant interest, while **Nightingales** were bellowing out their

song but remaining hidden, and a couple of singing **Firecrests** were heard but not seen. Wrapping things up, we headed back to Hotel Aumallia, enjoying our first of many fine evening meals before wearily heading off to bed after a long day.

THURSDAY 5TH MAY – CAP DE SES SALINES, SALOBRAR DE CAMPOS AND SON NAVATA

Sunny and dry most of the day, moderate to strong NE winds, 20C

Today dawned overcast with a few spits of rain, though was dry for our pre-breakfast wander around Aumallia. With a fairly strong wind and overcast skies activity was fairly low as we walked through almond grove and pine stands, though we enjoyed sightings of **Booted Eagle** and Red Kite, and a cacophony of **Nightingale** and **Corn Bunting** song. A beautiful fallow field filled with poppies hosted the biggest surprise of the walk, with a pair of **Short-toed Larks**, including singing male, apparently looking quite at home there and maybe making to breed. **Thekla's Larks** and a fairly showy **Cirl Bunting** then saw us into a hearty breakfast, before we headed out. Our destination was the Cap de Ses Salines; the southern-most tip of Mallorca. A walk along a quiet lane here appeared quiet initially, at least for migratory species, with local birds such as **Balearic Woodchat Shrike** and **Mediterranean Flycatchers** entertaining as we went. On the way back a male **Common Redstart** and, even better, a **HONEY BUZZARD** battling against a strong headwind being mobbed by Red Kites increased our optimism! Singing **Short-toed Larks**, **Turtle Dove** and **Thekla's Lark** made up the rest here. We then headed for the peninsular, stopping briefly amongst pines where we noted another **Balearic Woodchat Shrike**, a **Hoopoe** and singles of **Wood Warbler** and **Common Whitethroat**, plus a male **Pied Flycatcher** a little further on; not bad! At the headland the sea was full of both **Scopoli's** and **Balearic Shearwaters**, while the sky was teeming with **Common Swifts** coming in from the south; thousands were seen to arrive during the course of the morning. The lighthouse garden noted a really nice array of common migrant species, with a patient watch yielding a female **Whinchat**, 2 **Northern Wheatears**, female **Common Redstart**, **Willow Warbler** plus several literally seen coming in off the sea, a flyover **Yellow Wagtail** and a single **Spotted Flycatcher**. A female **Marsh Harrier** battled in over the waves also; we were enjoying migration on a pretty grand scale here! Once we had thoroughly checked the area for further migrants we moved on, having a quick coffee in Ses Salines before heading for the saltpans of the Salobrar de Campos.

First birding the road leading to the beach, we scanned the roadside lagoons, noting **Greater Flamingoes**, **Black-winged Stilts**, **Avocets**, **Shelducks** and **Marsh Harriers**. The wind was really strong, with a lot of dust blowing making for difficult viewing conditions. We noted a nice pair of **Kentish Plovers** tending to recently hatched young, and a fine **Balearic Woodchat Shrike** on a fence line, before retreating to inside the van, where we ate out lunch out of the wind! Watching over the area we saw 2 **Booted Eagles** over distant pines, while a couple more **Kentish Plovers** and some **Common Ringed Plovers** were picked up, but not much else. From here we went round to the central track through the saltpans, parking near the Font Santa hotel. Walking down the wind was fairly tough going but not unbearable, and one good thing about it was that it had helped dry up the muddy track to make it easily passable. So we headed down and worked our way through the lagoons. The birding here proved exceptional, with the clear highlight being an adult **WHITE-WINGED TERN**, initially roosting before getting up and dip-feeding and doing laps around the near lagoons; superb! 'Supporting cast' was provided by a great selection of waders, including summer plumaged **Sanderling**, at least 45 **Curlew Sandpipers**, 2 **Spotted Redshanks**, many **Little Stints** and **Common Ringed Plovers**, around 50 **Ruff**, several **Dunlin** in summer plumage and a fantastic **COLLARED PRATINCOLE** roosting at close range. The viewing conditions were superb with fantastic light, allowing

us to admire these various species in their fantastic summer plumages. Walking back up the track a **GULL-BILLED TERN** flew alongside us and away; as if we hadn't seen enough good birds already!



White-winged Tern, Collared Pratincole and Curlew Sandpipers, Salobrar de Campos

It was time for us to head on, so we headed for the van and over towards Felanitx, stopping for a coffee in Cas Concos before heading for our last site of the day; the small water treatment works at Son Navata. This little wetland has limited viewing opportunities, but what little we could view gave us some great sightings. A **Western Swamphen** feeding in a corner of open water was superb to see, its vibrant colours really shown off by the sunshine. A super male **Spanish Yellow Wagtail** did its best to

vie for attention; quite successfully as it flew in and landed right alongside the bus! At another pool an adult **Glossy Ibis** was equally stunning in the sunshine, while a **Zitting Cisticola** shared a bush with a Corn Bunting behind; a nice selection of species! Finishing up, it was time to head back to Aumallia for a cold one and relaxed evening.



Glossy Ibis, Son Navata

FRIDAY 6TH MAY – S'ALBUFERA

Sunny all day with light NW winds, 20C

A very pleasant day spent in the areas in and surrounding the mighty s'Albufera marshes. We headed straight up towards Alcudia, arriving at the park in good time and parking up, before walking out along the banks of the Gran Canal. A couple of **Black-crowned Night Herons** were roosting in their usual bushes, but only these two, and they were very well hidden amongst the foliage. It was soon apparent why there weren't more in these roosting trees, as further up we discovered the heronry alive with birds! A flock of about 20 **Glossy Ibises** were circling and perching up in the trees, with some clearly on nests deep within, while 14 **Night Herons** were sat very prominently throughout. A cacophony of noise from the many Little and **Cattle Egrets** was entertaining, while a star here was a single **SQUACCO HERON** sat out on the front of the colony, giving great views of this scarce breeding species. A couple of **Common Terns** were floating over, while **Common Nightingale** was singing loudly.



Glossy Ibis' at the colony, s'Albufera



Squacco Heron, s'Albufera

Further along the Cami de Ses Puntes our target was the elusive **MOUSTACHED WARBLER**, and we succeeded in seeing one soon on arriving sat in a patch of rushes. It was soon off into deeper cover however, leaving only a couple of group members to see it unfortunately, and despite hearing a couple more singing during the day, we didn't manage another good sighting. **Great Reed Warbler** was singing also, while **Glossy Ibis** and Cattle Egrets were noted in flight. Continuing onwards we made our way to the area around Sa Roca. The trees here held singing **Common Chiffchaff** and **Willow Warbler**, and also a fairly showy and vocal **Sedge Warbler**. We moved around to view the marshes from a hide, where we observed a couple of pairs of **Red-crested Pochards**, a couple of flyover **Purple Heron**, several **Little Ringed Plovers** and **Kentish Plovers** and a single **Western Swamphen**. Further around the bend we had good but brief views of a **Great Reed Warbler** which fancied playing hide and seek whilst belting out its song at close range. On from here, we walked over to the two Cibollar Hides, which proved fairly quiet bar a **Common Sandpiper**, **Little Stint**, 2 **Ruff** and the breeding **Kentish Plovers**, **Black-winged Stilts** and **Avocets**. An **Osprey** drifted over distantly before quickly dropping out of view. Walking back a **Cetti's Warbler** showed extremely well before we headed back to the bridges for lunch. Our time spent here was rewarded with both views of an elusive female **LITTLE BITTERN** in the reeds, and also a single **RED-KNOBBED COOT** feeding with Common Coots. The coot was much easier to observe, with the **LITTLE BITTERN** keeping to deep cover at all times, slinking between reeds. Another **Great Reed Warbler** was seen along the reed fringes here before we started to head back out of the reserve. Our walk out was interrupted by a fine **Wood Warbler** which we watched feeding in a pine near the visitor centre. Leaving the reserve we heard another **MOUSTACHED WARBLER** singing but couldn't locate it, and took another look at the now more tranquil heronry, while a **Serin** incubating her eggs in a nest close to the path was nice to see. Back at the van, we headed into Alcudia for a coffee.



Moustached Warbler and Kentish Plover

Finishing our drinks, we walked across the road to take a look at the wetland of Maristany, where the biggest surprise was 2 **CINEREOUS VULTURES** which flew over high above our heads and away! The open water areas hosted nice bits such as **Little** and **Great Crested Grebe**, some splendid **Red-crested Pochards** including a pair with 10 recently hatched young, **Common Pochards** and **Gadwall**, while the reeds held 3 **Great Reed Warblers**, all singing and one closer bird showing briefly. On from here, we left Alcudia and headed round to the outskirts of the Albufera, to Son Bosc and the Depuradora de Muro. Driving in we were stopped in our tracks by the sight of a pair of superb **EUROPEAN BEE-EATERS** perched on dead branches of a big poplar! There were 3 birds at least in the end, and they gave us fantastic views through the scope, and then flying around hawking for insects. A female **Pied Flycatcher** in the same trees was relegated to also-ran! Then on to the tower overlooking the Depuradora, where we enjoyed some fantastic birds. One summer plumaged individual each of **BLACK TERN** and **WHISKERED TERN** were surely the highlights, dip-feeding actively in the nearest lagoon almost throughout our stay here! In addition we saw 6 **MARBLED DUCKS** foraging around the edges, waders including 2 **Wood Sandpipers**, **Little Stint**, **Greenshank** and several **Common Sandpipers** and **Little Ringed Plovers**, and a fly-past **Purple Heron**. The air was full of **Sand Martins** the whole time, and **Marsh Harriers** were prominent, while an **Osprey** circled in the distance. We could have easily passed the whole afternoon here, but dragged ourselves away to finish off at the tower of s'Amarador, just up the road. The visit could have been inspired if the birds had performed better, but a brief fly-through from a male Little Bittern and an equally elusive Moustached Warbler both eluded the groups eyes. However bonus birds came in the form of a fly-over **Purple Heron**, a **Bee-eater** which joined the many Swallows and Swifts here, and a couple of **Great Reed Warblers** which obliged by singing high

in the reedbed beyond the pools. It was soon time we hit the road, so we wound things up and headed south, back to Aumallia in time for a cold beer and checklist, followed by another superb dinner.



Western Swamphen and Marbled Duck

SATURDAY 7TH MAY – CABRERA, SA BARRALA, CASTELL DE SANTUARI

Overcast with sunny spells, light variable winds, 20C

A highly anticipated day today, seeing us head out to Cabrera! We headed down to Colonia de Sant Jordi in time for our boat across to the island at 09:30. We set off on a slightly choppy sea, still stirred up after a few days of windy weather, and after passing the large **Audouin's Gull** colony on the island of Na Guardis, we were heading out into open water. The crossing took around 45 minutes, and we enjoyed some nice views of both **Scopoli's** and **Balearic Shearwaters** as we crossed, while a couple of **Eleonora's Falcons** high above the cliffs of Sa Conillera were good to see as we arrived alongside the archipelago of Cabrera. With the Castle of Cabrera looming over the bay, we entered the natural harbour and disembarked onto the island, looking forward to go in search of migrants! Shortly into the walk we were noting our first **Common Redstarts** and **Pied Flycatchers**; the former far more abundant than the latter by a good margin. A **Wood Warbler** was feeding at the shoreline of a small beach alongside a couple of Pied Flycatchers and Redstarts; a very Cabrera experience! It was pleasing to note a handful of **Spotted Flycatchers**; permitting comparison with their now split-from cousins,

the many **Mediterranean Flycatchers** which we have seen this week. On from here we enjoyed the fantastic experience of witnessing the ground, bushes and trees literally littered with recently arrived migrant birds. Redstarts were absolutely everywhere, while several **Whinchats** were perching prominently. **Willow Warblers** were feeding through short grasses as well as amongst the more typical bushes and trees. **Pied Flycatchers** were flycatching around where we sat, while **Common Whitethroats** were skirting the edges of the open area, shared also with 3 **Yellow Wagtails** and a single confiding **Short-toed Lark**. We sat for a while to soak in the spectacle, noting a brief **Tree Pipit** as well as some high-flying **European Bee-eaters** as they 'prrrt'ed their way north and the occasional calling **Pallid Swift**. A quick lap around the picnic area yielded a really nice **MELODIOUS WARBLER** which worked its way a pine tree, offering occasionally good views. From here we headed up to the museum, where the highlight for certain were an impressive 6 or more **MOLTONI'S WARBLERS**, many of which we detected by their rattling calls, but a couple we managed to see as they worked through the pines, showing their salmon-washed underparts and grey upperparts; a very smart warbler at one of its Balearic Island strongholds. The museum and botanical garden area was fairly quiet barring some more **Redstarts** and a couple of **Booted Eagles** overhead, so we worked our way back towards the picnic area to further enjoy the sheer volume of migrants here. A short loop of the Napoleonic archaeological site (and its associated **Redstarts** and **Pied Flycatchers** of course!) we then started our walk back to the harbour, hearing several **BALEARIC WARBLERS** as we went, and seeing a couple briefly perched and in flight, but never very well, as the heat of the day began to see bird activity reduced. Back in the harbour, we sat at Sa Cantina and enjoyed a coffee before boarding our boat back to the mainland, enjoying some nice views of **Scopoli's Shearwaters** as we crossed, before arriving in Colonia de Sant Jordi at around mid-afternoon.



Whinchats and Melodious Warbler, Cabrera

Once we had collected our vehicle we headed on to the farmland just outside of the saltpans; Sa Barrala. It was a short loop around the area to quickly see what was about, and it proved fruitful. A pair of **COLLARED PRATINCOLES** were great to see roosting in a bare field, while a **GULL-BILLED TERN** was hunting insects over the cereal fields, showing fantastically well at times. A number of **Cattle Egrets** were feeding in the cereal fields, while our best views of male **Sardinian Warbler** of the week were also had here. Finishing up, we headed next to the Castell de Santuari, where we finished the days birding in relaxed and stylish fashion! Our main target, the breeding **ALPINE SWIFTS** made us wait a little but were soon whizzing passed across our view at break-neck speed, while **Crag Martins** gave an outstanding performance here. A male **Blue Rock Thrush** was singing from the castle turrets, while potentially the highlight of the visit here was a **Wryneck** which, singing from the pine forest below, went on to show really well for the whole group. A new bird for one group member; it was certainly worthy of a celebratory beer back at Aumallia!

SUNDAY 8TH MAY – DRAGONERA

Sunny all day, light variable winds, 23C

Today's itinerary was simple; Dragonera! We departed Aumallia in time to make the journey up to Sant Elm via a very quiet Sunday Palma, and had time to enjoy the ambience in this lovely seaside village, overlooking the mighty island of Dragonera. As 10:15 approached we could see the Margarita, our transport across to the island, bobbing its way gently across a flat sea, and we were soon boarding and heading across to the island, noting **Audouin's Gull** and **Mediterranean Shag** as we went. Landing at the other side, we were soon birding, noting our first **Willow Warblers** of what would prove to be a visit filled with this species. We walked around to the picnic area overlooking Cala Lladó, noting both **Common Redstarts** and **Pied Flycatchers**, plus a single **Whinchat**. A single fig tree amongst the olive groves was jumping with at least 8 **Willow Warblers** in and around this obviously invertebrate-filled tree! It was impossible not to notice the many **Lilford's Wall Lizards** which were creeping around everywhere we went. A single **Wood Warbler** offered us good views in pine trees as we walked up towards the path to the Tramuntana lighthouse. Along here we noted numerous more **Pied Flycatchers**, **Mediterranean Flycatchers** and **Common Redstarts**, and enjoyed good but often brief views of **BALEARIC WARBLERS**; one of our main targets of this visit, after yesterday's brief views on Cabrera. As we went along, we slowly improved our views of this special warbler, and in the end noted at least 10 different birds, with everyone seeing at least one well. Another massive highlight here were the **ELEONORA'S FALCONS** which, after a 5 minute wait, showed superbly from a viewpoint overlooking the sea and the breeding cliffs of this species. Flybys by 3 or more individuals here were at times breathtaking, passing at eye level against an azure sea and sky; just awesome falcons. A single **Osprey** also passed over the sea before we headed around to the lighthouse for our lunch, shared with swarms of **Lilford's Wall Lizards** hoping to steal a crumb or two!

After lunch (and a couple of **ELEONORA'S FALCON** sightings more), we headed back slowly towards the harbour, picking up further good views of **BALEARIC WARBLERS** on the way. With a little time to spare, but with the warmth of the day beating down, we opted to enjoy the shade of the pines and to dip our feet in the cool water of the beach, before having a last loop around in search for any new migrants in the pines. With none forthcoming, we headed down for our boat, and were soon back in St Elm, enjoying a few cold beers and coffee before returning back to Aumallia.

The days birding was not finished however, as a post-dinner attempt to locate the local **EURASIAN SCOP'S OWL** proved successful, spotting the bird both in flight and also perched in palm trees and

telegraph poles, often duetting with another bird more distantly. Calling **Stone Curlews** completed the soundtrack before we retired to bed.

MONDAY 9TH MAY – VILAFRANCA, MARIA, ALBUFERETA, LA VICTORIA, ALBUFERA

Light rain and overcast to start, warm and sunny later, light variable winds, 23C

Today started overcast and threatening to rain, and in fact as we headed north through the island we did run through the showers. Our first destination was Vilafranca, where we would search the vast cereal fields here for an array of farmland birds. One of the breeding highlights of this area are the large numbers of breeding **Greater Short-toed Larks**, which tend to sit along the tracks and fill the air with song. Another common breeding bird is the **Corn Bunting** and **Spanish Yellow Wagtail**, with both noted in good number, while **Marsh Harriers** patrolled the area. Several **Spotless Starlings** showed well near the water treatment works, while a **Common Quail** was heard calling briefly. Our hoped for targets of Lesser Kestrel and Red-footed Falcon were unfortunately not noted, so we moved up into another area of farmland where these species can occur; Es Blanquer near Maria de Salud. Here we had more joy, with a male and female **Lesser Kestrel** noted on wires above the cereal fields. On from here, we headed for a coffee in a small bar in Can Picafort, before moving up to the Albufereta wetland reserve. We stopped to view Sa Barcassa from a small viewing screen, enjoying good views of **Balearic Woodchat Shrike**, **Mediterranean Flycatchers**, **Little Stint**, **Greenshank** and a number of Ringed and Kentish Plovers, while a highlight was a **Purple Heron** at the back of the lagoon which had caught, and was duly struggling with a large eel. The bird flew off to one site to deal with its prey out of view, so we headed round to enter the main part of the Albufereta. Stepping out of the van, our first distraction came in the form of a flock of around 25 **Yellow Wagtails** of various favours; *flavissima*, *flava*, *thumbergi* and an individual which may have been *lutea*, possessing such a yellow head and almost grey mantle that we initially thought it may be a Citrine! The flock was fairly mobile, later being visible in a thin cereal field from the top of the main tower overlooking the Albufereta marsh. From up here we noted a fly-past **Purple Heron**, and another 2 birds in flight at close range in a nearby pool, but otherwise it was pretty quiet; the Yellow Wagtails offering the bulk of the entertainment as we had lunch, before heading on.



'Grey-headed' Wagtail, s'Albufereta



'Yellow-headed' Wagtail, potentially of the ssp. lutea, s'Albufereta

Departing the wetlands, we headed into a nearby mountainous area called La Victoria, where we went in search of **Common Crossbill**. We were successful, with two areas with water; a small spring and a dripping water pipe, yielding excellent views of numerous individuals, including males, females and juveniles. **Crag Martins** also put on a fantastic show up here, before we paused for a coffee by the hermitage, enjoying what was spectacular scenery in this local council run public finca. Finishing our coffees, we headed down, making our way to Es Forcadet (a lagoon at the back of the Albufera reserve), where we would finish off the day. Our walk along the high reed-lined track to the viewing tower was particularly interesting for its invertebrate sightings, with odonata including the **Norfolk Hawker**, **Lesser Emperor**, **Goble-marked Damsel** and **Small Red Damselflies**, plus butterflies including Cleopatra, Clouded Yellow and Swallowtail. Bird interest came in the form of a single **Great Crested Grebe** on the lagoon along with small numbers of Coots and Gadwall, plus several singing **Great Reed Warblers** and the numerous Marsh Harriers patrolling the vast reedbeds around us. By now it was time to head home, so we loaded into the bus and made our way back to Felanitx



Common Crossbill, La Victoria

TUESDAY 10TH MAY – SIERRA DE TRAMUNTANA

Unbroken sunshine all day, light variable winds, 24C

The warmest day of the week so far, with 26 degrees recorded in the south of the island, was spent in the high mountains of the Tramuntana. Our first destination was Cuber reservoir, where we would enjoy spectacular scenery under the highest peak in Mallorca; Puig Major. After an hours drive through the islands centre, we had a short coffee in the very scenic area of Lluc, with our first **GRIFON VULTURES** soaring over the ridge to keep us company! From here we continued along the winding and beautiful road towards the Cuber Reservoir, passing Gorg Blau as we went. Parking up, we walked out along the banks of the reservoir, noting high-flying **GRIFON VULTURES** over the ridges bordering the valley as we went, as well as an impressive flock of 30 or so **Ravens**, carrying amongst them 2 **Booted Eagles**. The young pine forest here hosted calling **Wryneck** and **Common Crossbills**, though both proved elusive on the whole, while many **Common Nightingales** belting out their fantastic song also kept themselves hidden. **Wrens** were singing; our first encounter of this trip, though unfortunately Moltoni's Warblers failed to grace us with neither their songs or calls, not views; a stark contrast to last weeks excellent showing here. **CINEREOUS VULTURE** was noted during the walk, while at the other end of the size scale was the humble **Blue Tit**; an ubiquitous bird back in the UK, but a true mountain species here in Mallorca!



Common Chiffchaff and Blue Tit, Cuber

Completing our walk, we loaded back into the van and headed in the direction of Lluc again, stopping just after at the Public Finca of Menut, where we had lunch under the ornamental trees. The site provided by far our best views of the week of **Common Nightingale**, with a bird singing on exposed branches of an old fig, and even showing fantastically on the ground. In addition, a couple of male **Firecrests** were also appreciated as they showed fairly well in low-hanging branches. **Common Crossbills** were also seen pretty well here, while low-flying **GRIFFON VULTURES** over the picnic area completed the avian entertainment as we ate our Spanish omelet sandwiches! Finishing up here, we headed on to our last stop of the mountain tour; the Mortitx Valley.



Nightingale, Menut

The valley and vineyards of Mortitx were just 10 minutes' drive along from Menut, so we were soon there and walking down into what is one of the most scenically impressive valleys in the Tramuntana. **Cirl Buntings** were noted near the vineyards, while **Blackcaps** and **Firecrests** sang from the old evergreen oak forests. Overhead we were soon picking up our first **CINEREOUS** and **GRIFFON VULTURES** soaring high overhead, while in the extensive vineyards at the bottom of the valley we noted a single **Tree Pipit** and a fine flock of around 30 **Western Yellow Wagtails**, 6 males of which were seen well being of the **Grey-headed Wagtail** subspecies *thumbergi*; a great little flock! From here we walked on into the ancient olive groves towards a viewpoint overlooking the sea and entrance to the Mortitx valley, pausing on our way occasionally to watch overhead vultures. Setting ourselves up in this incredibly scenic spot, we began scanning the skyline in search of our main target for this site; the impressive **Bonelli's Eagle**. With a known nesting site being not far from this area, we stood a reasonable chance of a sighting, so we were optimistic. During our watch we enjoyed superb views of low-flying **CINEREOUS VULTURES**, some distant **Crag Martins** and calling **Common Crossbills**, but after 40 minutes with no Bonelli's Eagle sighting, our optimism began to wane, and with a fair walk back to the van and a long drive home, we simply had to start heading back. Packing our bags up and turning to walk away however, Ray picked up 2 raptors circling below a **CINEREOUS VULTURE**; the adult pair of **BONELLI'S EAGLES**! An amazing spot, and fantastic timing! The pair circles up over the rugged hillside before cruising south-west along the ridge and away. A brief but exhilarating encounter with this fantastic eagle! Walking back, a male **Blue Rock Thrush** showed and gave full song flight, while **Mediterranean Flycatchers** entertained during our walk back to the van. With a spring in our step after such a fantastic encounter with the eagles, we were soon back at the vehicle, and set off down the mountain road towards Pollenca, with the iconic views of Puig de Maria at the mouth of the Tramuntana range, before then heading south through the island and back to Aumallia.



'Grey-headed' Wagtail and Cinereous Vulture, Mortitx valley

WEDNESDAY 11TH MAY – SON PROHENC, VILAFRANCA, PORTOCOLOM

Unbroken sunshine all day, light variable winds, 25C

Our last day on the island, with our fantastic Wensum Valley Bird Society group due to fly later in the evening. This left us with a decent day of birding to be had, and it can only be said that it started with a bang! Three of us headed out for a pre-breakfast walk around the lanes surrounding the hotel, noting a couple of **Balearic Woodchat Shrikes** in the almond trees and a small party of **Tree Sparrows**, one carrying nesting material; our first record of this species for the hotel surroundings, and for the trip! The backing sound track for the morning consisted of **Nightingale**, **Wryneck**, **Turtle Dove** and **Hoopoe**, plus another song which didn't sound familiar. Initially sounding a bit like the repeated phrases of a Short-toed Lark, it didn't have the wet chirping notes, and in any case the song sounded too strident and strong. A quick scan of the nearby fences yielded the answer; a male **BLACK-HEADED BUNTING**! Oh my god, a monster record for the Balearic Islands! The three of us enjoyed good but distant views of the bird, getting a few record shots and videos as it went from singing prominently to dropping in and feeding out of sight on grass seeds. We left the bird and headed round to the hotel, where we tore everyone from their breakfast to come and join us in re-finding the bird. We were able to get much closer this time, and were soon enjoying great views as it fed within 10 meters of us in long grasses. An absolute cracker. News was put out to the local grapevine, and the first local birders were able to get on the bird while we got on with having breakfast! With breakfast finished, bar bills paid

and suitcases stored ready for collection later, we had a quick look through the moth trap which we had put out the previous night; some of the group were keen 'moth'ers. It was a relaxed 20 minutes by the pool going through, the highlight of the trap probably being a couple of big **Pine-tree Lappets** and a beautifully marked **Spotted Sulphur** moth.



Balearic Woodchat Shrike and Black-headed Bunting, Son Prohenç, Felanitx

Finishing up here, we headed out to Vilafranca in search of passage falcons. A female Red-footed Falcon had been reported in the area this morning, so we were hopeful, but despite an extensive search of the whole area of farmland, and with many more promising cut cereal fields than earlier in the week, we still could not find either Red-footed Falcon nor Lesser Kestrels, though a dozen Common Kestrels were in the area. An unusual year, with the past 5 or 6 have seen these fantastic falcons present from the end of April onwards. Unfortunate, though we did enjoy the sight and sound of many **Short-toed Larks, Corn Buntings, Yellow Wagtails** here, plus several **Spotless Starlings, Red Kites** and **Marsh Harriers**.

We headed back to the coast, having a refreshment break in a small plaza in Portocolom to the sounds of singing **Hoopoe**, before heading round for lunch at the scenic bay of s'Algar, complete with turquoise waters. Our lunch was accompanied by a really nice group of **Pallid Swifts** which were fly by continuously and calling; their slightly hoarse and rasping calls as distinctive as their sandy plumages in such good light as today. **Audouin's Gulls** gave a few flybys also, while the surrounding garrigue and farmland yielded several Linnets and Stonechats, and a couple of **Northern Wheatears**. Around the

corner we noted another **Northern Wheatear**, before continuing around the natural harbour to take a short walk through an abandoned fig grove. The highlight by far here was provided by superb views of a singing **BALEARIC WARBLER** which we tracked through the tops of short pine trees, often giving completely exposed views and singing constantly. Another male was noted further round the corner; a fantastic way to finish off the birding this afternoon; the usual ambient music of **Nightingale**, **Wryneck** and **Hoopoe** accompanying us back to the van. Heading back to the hotel, the group had plenty of time to organize cases, change clothes and have some drinks before we said farewell to the excellent team at Aumallia and headed to the airport in time for their flights home.



Balearic Warbler, Portocolom

ORIOLE BIRDING

MALLORCA AND CABRERA SPRING MIGRATION

MAY 2022

Species order, names and taxonomy follows - Gill, F and D Donsker (Eds). 2018. IOC World Bird List (v 8.1). <http://www.worldbirdnames.org/>

#	Common Name	Scientific name	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Comments
Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)											
1	Common Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>		x	x	x		x			
2	Northern Shoveler	<i>Spatula clypeata</i>			1						
3	Gadwall	<i>Mareca strepera</i>		1	x			x			
4	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	x	x	x			x	x	x	
5	Marbled Duck	<i>Marmaronetta angustirostris</i>			x						
6	Red-crested Pochard	<i>Netta rufina</i>			x						
7	Common Pochard	<i>Aythya ferina</i>			x						
Phasianidae (Pheasants, Grouse, and Allies)											
8	Red-legged Partridge	<i>Alectoris rufa</i>	x	x	x	x		x		x	
Podicipidae and Phoenicopteridae (Grebes and Flamingos)											
9	Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>			x						
10	Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>			2			1			
11	Greater Flamingo	<i>Phoenicopterus roseus</i>		x				x			
Procellariidae (Shearwaters and Petrels)											
12	Scopoli's Shearwater	<i>Calonectris diomedea</i>	x	x		x					
13	Balearic Shearwater	<i>Puffinus mauretanicus</i>	x	x		x					Endemic species
Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)											
14	Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>			1						
15	European Shag	<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis desmarestii</i>	x	x		x	x				

#	Common Name	Scientific name	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Comments
Ardeidae (Heron, Egrets, and Bitterns)											
16	Little Bittern	<i>Ixobrychus minutus</i>			x						
17	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>		x	x			x			
18	Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>			x			x			
19	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>		x	x			x			
20	Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>		x	x	x		x	x	x	
21	Squacco Heron	<i>Ardeola ralloides</i>			1						
22	Black-crowned Night-Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>			14						
Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)											
23	Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>		1	20						
Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)											
24	Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>			2		1				
25	European Honey-buzzard	<i>Pernis apivorus</i>		1			1				
26	Cinereous Vulture	<i>Aegypius monachus</i>			2				x		
27	Griffon Vulture	<i>Gyps fulvus</i>							x		
28	Booted Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus pennatus</i>		x	1	x	x		x	x	
29	Bonelli's Eagle	<i>Aquila fasciata</i>							2		
30	Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	
31	Red Kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Rallidae and Gruidae (Rails, Coots and Cranes)											
32	Western Swamphe	<i>Porphyrio porphyrio</i>		1	2						
33	Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>		x	x			x			
34	Red-knobbed Coot	<i>Fulica cristata</i>			1						
35	Eurasian Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>		x	x			x			
Burhinidae (Thick-knees)											
36	Stone-curlew	<i>Burhinus oedicephalus</i>	x	H	1			x	H	H	
Recurvirostridae and Charadriidae (Stilts, Avocets, Plovers and allies)											
37	Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>	x	x	x			x			

[illegible]

#	Common Name	Scientific name	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Comments
62	European Turtle Dove	<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>	9	x	H	x	x	H		x	
63	Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Tytonidae and Strigidae (Owls)											
64	European Scops Owl	<i>Otus scops</i>		H		H	x		H		Endemic ssp. mallorcae
Apodidae (Swifts)											
65	Alpine Swift	<i>Apus melba</i>				6					
66	Common Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
67	Pallid Swift	<i>Apus pallidus</i>	2			x				30	
Upupidae (Hoopoes)											
68	Eurasian Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>	1	x	x	x	x		x	x	
Meropidae (Bee-eaters)											
69	European Bee-eater	<i>Merops apiaster</i>			4	14	6				
Picidae (Woodpeckers)											
70	Eurasian Wryneck	<i>Jynx torquilla</i>				1		H	H	H	
Falconidae (Falcons)											
71	Lesser Kestrel	<i>Falco naumanni</i>						2			
72	Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
73	Eleonora's Falcon	<i>Falco eleonora</i>				2	x				
74	Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>				2	2	x			
Laniidae (Shrikes)											
75	Balearic Woodchat Shrike	<i>Lanius senator</i>	1	3		1		1		2	Endemic ssp. badius
Oriolidae and Corvidae (Orioles, Crows, Jays, and Magpies)											
76	Common Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>		x	1	x	x	x	x	x	
Alaudidae (Larks)											
77	Greater Short-toed Lark	<i>Calandrella brachydactyla</i>		x		1		x		x	
78	Thekla's Lark	<i>Galerida theklae</i>	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Hirundinidae (Swallows)											
79	Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>			x						

#	Common Name	Scientific name	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Comments
80	Eurasian Crag Martin	<i>Ptyonoprogne rupestris</i>				x	2	x	x		
81	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
82	House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>	x	x				x	x	x	
Paridae (Tits)											
83	Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>							x		Endemic ssp. balearicus
84	Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	Endemic ssp. mallorcae
Troglodytidae (Wrens)											
85	Eurasian Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>							H		
Regulidae (Kinglets)											
86	Firecrest	<i>Regulus ignicapilla</i>	x					x	x		Near-endemic ssp. balearicus
Scotocercidae and Phylloscopidae (Bush and Leaf Warblers)											
87	Cetti's Warbler	<i>Cettia cetti</i>	H	x	x			x		H	
88	Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>		5	1	x	x				
89	Common Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>			1	x			1		
90	Wood Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus sibilatrix</i>		1	1	1	1				
Sylviidae (Sylviid Warblers)											
91	Melodious Warbler	<i>Hippolais polyglotta</i>				1					
92	Moustached Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus melanopogon</i>			1						
93	Sedge Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>			1						
94	Great Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus arundinaceus</i>			x			H			
95	Zitting Cisticola	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>		x	x	x		x		x	
96	Eurasian Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>		H	x	1			x		
97	Moltoni's Warbler	<i>Sylvia subalpina</i>				6					
98	Sardinian Warbler	<i>Sylvia melanocephala</i>	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
99	Common Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>	1	2	1	2					
100	Balearic Warbler	<i>Sylvia balearica</i>				x	10			2	Endemic species
Muscicapidae (Old World Flycatchers)											
101	Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>		1		3					

#	Common Name	Scientific name	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Comments
122	European Serin	<i>Serinus serinus</i>			x	x	x	x	x	x	
	<i>Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)</i>										
123	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
	Additional species	Scientific name	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Comments
124	White-winged Tern	<i>Chlidonias leucopterus</i>		1							
125	Black Tern	<i>Chlidonias niger</i>			1						
126	Black-headed Bunting	<i>Emberiza spodocephala</i>								1	
127	Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>								3	
a	Budgie							x			
b	Coscoroba Swan							x			
#	Other Wildlife		4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Comments
	Butterflies										
1	Painted Lady	<i>Vanessa cardui</i>	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		
2	Small White	<i>Pieris rapae</i>	x	x	x	x		x	x		
3	Red Admiral	<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>		x	x			x			
4	Holly Blue	<i>Celastrina argiolus</i>		x	x		x		x		
5	Speckled Wood	<i>Pararge aegeria</i>		x	x			x			
6	Cleopatra	<i>Gonopterix cleopatra</i>			x			x	x		
7	Swallowtail	<i>Papilio machaon</i>			x			x			
8	Bath White	<i>Pontia daplidice</i>			1		x				
9	Clouded Yellow	<i>Colias crocea</i>				x		x	x		
10	Small Copper	<i>Lycaena phlaeas</i>							x		
	Dragonflies and Damselflies										
1	Norfolk Hawker	<i>Aeshna isocola</i>			x						
2	Lesser Emperor	<i>Anax partenope</i>			x			x			
3	Red-veined Darter	<i>Sympetrum fonscolombii</i>			x						
4	Black-tailed Skimmer	<i>Orthetrum cancellatum</i>			x			x			

#	Other Wildlife		4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Comments
5	Emperor	<i>Anax imperator</i>						x			
6	Small Red Damsel	<i>Ceriatrum tenellum</i>						x			
7	Goblet-marked Damsel	<i>Erythromma lindenii</i>						x			
8	Blue-tailed Damsel	<i>Ischnura elegans</i>						x			
	Reptiles and amphibians										
1	Lilford's Wall Lizard	<i>Podarcis lilfordi</i>				x	x				
2	Perez' Water Frog	<i>Pelophylax perezii</i>		x							