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Balearic Warbler – Cabrera – May 2026 – © Andrew Kinghorn

Mallorca & Cabrera – Balearic Birding in Spring – 27TH April
to 4TH May 2026

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INTRODUCTION

Late April and into early May in Mallorca offers some high-quality spring birding in southern Europe, the weather is largely settled, and whilst you can get showery days, the prevailing weather tends to be mild, calm days with sunny skies. The following account is a summary of key highlights of events and birds seen during the tour. Please note that the day narratives are by no means intended to be exhaustive, instead they outline highlights for each day. For the sake of consistency all species below possess names as defined by AviList version 2025 (*AviList Core Team. 2025. AviList: The Global Avian Checklist, v2025. <https://doi.org/10.2173/avilist.v2025>*), and to this author's best knowledge are correct as of May 2026. The tour was led by Andrew Kinghorn.

MONDAY 27TH APRIL

The day was largely dominated by travel, arriving in Palma in the afternoon, we then drove eastwards to our accommodation for the week. After arrival, we had our first look at the surrounding area, new birds came thick and fast with **Turtle Dove** singing and **Wryneck** also in fine voice, it was good to get **Red-legged Partridge** so early on in the tour too.

TUESDAY 28TH APRIL

With it being our first full day in Mallorca a decision was taken to get the trip list off to a flier with a trip to s'Albufera, this is one of the best places in Europe in which to connect with certain species and is one of the largest reedbeds in Europe. On arrival we headed to the annex to the south of the reserve, this is a series of small basins often containing a good number of birds. We had our first **Greater Flamingos** of the trip here, as well as our first views of **Stone-Curlews** and a flyby **Purple Heron** was of course well received. Moving onto the main reserve itself we had fabulous views of the heronry where with patience we were able to sift through the birds and pick out **Black-crowned Night-Heron** and **Glossy Ibis** on their nests. Rounding the corner a singing **Moustached Warbler** was a bit of a surprise, the species is a resident here and an early breeder, with most males having stopped singing by this time of year, result!

The end of our lunch was a bit rudely interrupted by a flyover flock of **European Bee-Eaters**, they did the right thing and came down low to feed and performed really well, if a little more briefly than we had hoped. The wider nature reserve itself brought the new birds thick and fast, with **Black-winged Stilts**, **Kentish Plovers**, **Wood Sandpipers**, and yet more **Greater Flamingos** amongst the noteworthy highlights. Brief **Audouin's Gulls** came in to bathe before departing, a skilfully picked out **Squacco Heron** was our only individual of the trip. We finished off the day at the annex once again, where this time we added a hoped-for target; two **Marbled Ducks**.

WEDNESDAY 29TH APRIL

Today we headed off to Portocolom to look for Balearic Warbler, upon arrival we enjoyed pointblank views of **Audouin's Gulls** as they went about their business on the tideline right next to the road. A short walk later and we were enjoying fabulous views of **Balearic Warbler** and alongside them we were getting good views of **Sardinian Warblers**, all to the usual soundscape of **Common Nightingale**. We took a short drive around to the headland itself, offshore we had a solid steady passage of **Scopoli's Shearwaters** and around where we were parked, we enjoyed good views of **Blue Rock Thrush**, our first views of **Thekla's Larks** were well received as were the **Pallid Swifts** going about their business. Our lunch stop was taken at Castell de Santueri, here we had great views of both **Eurasian Crag Martin** and our main target of **Alpine Swift**, an unexpected **Cinereous Vulture** flew over and was followed shortly after by a **Griffon Vulture**. A distant **Booted Eagle** was clearly agitated by something, and the culprit soon revealed itself when a **Peregrine Falcon** came whizzing past us.

After lunch we headed to Parc Natural Es Trenc-Salobrar, the salt pans here offer a good opportunity to look through flocks of birds. Our walk down produced good views of **Black-winged Stilts** and **Western Yellow Wagtails** flitted around over the saltmarsh itself. It was sadly fairly quiet on the wader front, but some flyover **Gull-billed Terns** were very well received as they flew over the reserve

and departed. The day was not punishingly hot, and so we retreated back to the hotel for a rest before a walk around the wider hotel grounds. Our late afternoon walk was productive, with more views of Wryneck and once again the Turtle Doves purred from the trees.



Audouin's Gull– Portocolom – April 2026 – © Andrew Kinghorn

THURSDAY 30TH APRIL

It was an early start and we made our way to Dragonera island, this lies off the western coast of Mallorca. We took the drive westwards and took the very short walk down to the quay to go on the boat to get over to the island. From the boat itself we had good views of **Scopoli's Shearwaters**, and both **Yellow-legged Gulls** and **Audouin's Gulls** were loitering in the strait. A high-flying **Cinereous Vulture** reinforced just what a change in status the species has undergone on Mallorca. The plan was to walk south to the lighthouse at the southern end of the island, but the pathway was largely closed to allow for repairs of the lighthouse, but setting off that way proved fruitful when we had excellent views of **Balearic Warbler**. Once we had made a course correction we headed towards the opposite end of the island, on the way we stopped regularly to look for migrants, we had much success with this; **Garden Warbler**, **Common Redstart**, **Willow Warbler**, and **Chiffchaff** were all new for the trip! As we made our way towards the lighthouse, we were getting good views of **Eurasian Crag Martin** and it wasn't long until the first **Eleonora's Falcons** of the trip made an appearance above the steep-sided cliffs of the island. On the way back we had further views of the **Eleonora's Falcons** as well as **Balearic Warbler**, one of which showed remarkably well. When we returned to the mainland, we took it easy with a café stop due to the heat, after an ice cream it was time for the drive back to our hotel to reflect on another excellent day's birding in Mallorca. After our evening meal we took a look around the hotel grounds for the **Eurasian Scops Owl**, eventually with patience we managed to get some views of this charismatic species.

FRIDAY 1ST MAY

Today we headed north for the Serra de Tramuntana, this is a spectacular 90-kilometre mountain range in the north of the island. It was a bit of a drive to our first stop of the day, but the weather was working in our favour, as we arrived the low cloud was starting to lift somewhat and this was causing the birds to become more active. On arrival at our first stop the first notable bird of the day was a singing male **Cirl Bunting**, only a short time later and we were enjoying good views of **Bonelli's**

Eagle as it broke cover from nearby ridges and up into the clouds, often disappearing into them! As the cloud began to clear more birds of prey were on offer, with more **Griffon** and **Cinereous Vultures** appearing into view, and a distant **Kestrel** looked somewhat out of place. Our initial **Bonelli's Eagle** was joined by a second bird (an immature) and they had what appeared to be a territorial dispute in the air, which the vultures just stayed out of! Other highlights on our raptor walk included great views of a family of **Common Crossbills**.

Our next stop of the day was to Cuber Reservoir, on arrival there were moody skies but this did not deter the birds, once again both **Black** and **Griffon Vultures** were present overhead. We started along the walk on the edge of the reservoir, a skilfully picked out **Tawny Pipit** which perched up on a rock was welcome, even more so when it was joined by a second individual. Walking further on we had further **Firecrests** and with patience, our main target showed itself; **Moltoni's Warbler**. Over the reservoir a seriously impressive flock of **House Martins** were in evidence and we tested our skills picking out **Eurasian Crag Martins** amongst them. On the way back to the hotel we checked some farmed fields to see what was about, it was worth the effort and we saw two **Black Kites** amongst the **Red Kites** as well as our first **Quail** of the trip singing and **Stone-Curlew** showed really well, with the day now drawing to a close we headed back to the hotel for a well-deserved evening meal.



Tawny Pipit – Cuber Reservoir – May 2026 – © Andrew Kinghorn

SATURDAY 2ND MAY

This was our final full day on the mainland, as a result a decision was made to revisit s'Albufera as this site gave us the greatest chance of additional birds we had missed on our last visit. However, on the way we headed to some cut fields nearby to our hotel, it was definitely worth a visit we had fantastic views of **Greater Short-toed Larks**, and other goodies enroute came in the form of a flyover female **Montagu's Harrier**. On arrival at s'Albufera we headed towards the heronry on the river, but we didn't even get there before another new trip bird came into view; a male **Little Bittern** showed quite well amongst the reeds. In the heronry itself we had excellent views of the **Western Cattle Egret** once again and this time it seemed easier to come across showy **Black-crowned Night-Herons**, whilst we were scanning through the colony an **Osprey** flew past us. Rounding the corner the **Moustached Warbler** was still singing and we had a short wait for the next target to eventually

show; **Purple Swamphen**. From here we headed to see a **Red-knobbed Coot** which was showing point-blank and then headed for our lunch break, lunch was interrupted somewhat by flypast from a flock of **European Bee-Eaters**.

After lunch we headed for the other hides, we had not visited, it was great to once again take in the point-blank **Greater Flamingos** and a really nice surprise came in the form of three **Collared Pratincoles** showing well; they put on a brilliant aerial feeding display. A potentially unpredicted new trip bird come in the form of **Northern Shoveler**. On the way out we had brief views of two **Purple Herons** flying past. We finished the day off with another look at the cut fields close to our hotel, we had further views of **Greater Short-toed Larks** and an immature male **Montagu's Harrier** was a brilliant surprise. We did find one tractor which was cutting sileage and sure enough there were **Lesser Kestrels** in tow, a frustratingly energetic **Hobby** was distant and hard to get onto, but was another new bird for the trip. What a fabulous end to our final full day on mainland Mallorca!



Greater Flamingo – s'Albufera – May 2026 – © Andrew Kinghorn

SUNDAY 3RD MAY

Today we headed to Cabrera, this picturesque Balearic Island lies off the southern end of Mallorca. On the boat over we had good views of **Scopoli's Shearwater** as well as **Shag**. On arrival we headed towards the picnic site, it quickly became apparent that there had been a mini-fall of passage migrants with **Common Redstart** dotted around the area, including some stunning males. There were other passage migrants in attendance with **Northern Wheatear** showing well, and a male **Moltoni's Warbler** was running around on the deck. We took a short walk across the island which produced multiple **Balearic Warblers**, one of which showed very well. Overhead we also had **Booted**

Eagle and other migrants seen included European Turtle Dove, Chiffchaff, and Willow Warbler. On the boat journey back to the mainland we had excellent views of a fishing Osprey and as we passed the Eleonora's Falcon colony, we could see multiple birds flying around above the steep cliff faces upon which they breed. Upon returning to the hotel, we had enough time after evening meal to look for the Eurasian Scops Owl and this time we had more prolonged views.

MONDAY 4TH MAY

There was just enough time before we headed for the airport for some birding around the wider hotel area, we had the usual suspects once again, but with special mention going to the Wryneck and Turtle Doves, the latter were particularly vocal. All to the backdrop of Common Nightingales singing strongly. After this it was time to head back to the airport at Palma where the tour concluded.

Systematic List

LIST KEY:

Green = Expect to see regularly on a typical tour to Mallorca during this time period.

Amber = Less likely to see on a typical tour to Mallorca during this time period, but with effort likely to be encountered during this time period.

Red = Difficult to see on a typical tour to Mallorca during this time period, likely to require targeted effort.

No.	Species List	Scientific name
1	Common Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>
2	Northern Shoveler	<i>Spatula clypeata</i>
3	Gadwall	<i>Mareca strepera</i>
4	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>
5	Marbled Duck	<i>Marmaronetta angustirostris</i>
6	Red-crested Pochard	<i>Netta rufina</i>
7	Common Pochard	<i>Aythya ferina</i>
8	Common Quail	<i>Coturnix coturnix</i>
9	Red-legged Partridge	<i>Alectoris rufa</i>
10	Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>
11	Greater Flamingo	<i>Phoenicopterus roseus</i>
12	Scopoli's Shearwater	<i>Calonectris diomedea</i>
13	Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>
14	European Shag	<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis desmarestii</i>
15	Little Bittern	<i>Ixobrychus minutus</i>
16	Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>
17	Great White Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>
18	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>
19	Western Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>
20	Squacco Heron	<i>Ardeola ralloides</i>
21	Black-crowned Night-Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>
22	Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>
23	Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>
24	Cinereous Vulture	<i>Aegypius monachus</i>
25	Griffon Vulture	<i>Gyps fulvus</i>
26	Booted Eagle	<i>Hieraetus pennatus</i>
27	Bonelli's Eagle	<i>Aquila fasciata</i>
28	Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>
29	Montagu's Harrier	<i>Circus pygargus</i>

30	Red Kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>
31	Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>
32	Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>
33	Water Rail	<i>Rallus aquaticus</i>
34	Purple Swampphen	<i>Porphyrio porphyrio</i>
35	Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>
36	Red-knobbed Coot	<i>Fulica cristata</i>
37	Eurasian Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>
38	Stone-curlew	<i>Burhinus oedicephalus</i>
39	Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>
40	Pied Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>
41	Kentish Plover	<i>Charadrius alexandrinus</i>
42	Common Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>
43	Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>
44	Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>
45	Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>
46	Common Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>
47	Collared Pratincole	<i>Glareola pratincola</i>
48	Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>
49	Audouin's Gull	<i>Ichthyophaga audouinii</i>
50	Yellow-legged Gull	<i>Larus michahellis</i>
51	Gull-billed Tern	<i>Gelochelidon nilotica</i>
52	Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>
53	Sandwich Tern	<i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>
54	Rock Dove/Feral Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>
55	Common Woodpigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>
56	European Turtle Dove	<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>
57	Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>
58	Eurasian Scops Owl	<i>Otus scops</i>
59	Alpine Swift	<i>Apus melba</i>
60	Common Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>
61	Pallid Swift	<i>Apus pallidus</i>
62	Eurasian Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>
63	European Bee-eater	<i>Merops apiaster</i>
64	Eurasian Wryneck	<i>Jynx torquilla</i>
65	Lesser Kestrel	<i>Falco naumanni</i>
66	Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>
67	Eleonora's Falcon	<i>Falco eleonorae</i>
68	Eurasian Hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>
69	Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>
70	Woodchat Shrike	<i>Lanius senator badius</i>
71	Common Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>
72	Greater Short-toed Lark	<i>Calandrella brachydactyla</i>
73	Thekla's Lark	<i>Galerida theklae</i>
74	Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>
75	Eurasian Crag Martin	<i>Ptyonoprogne rupestris</i>
76	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>
77	House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>
78	Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>
79	Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>
80	Eurasian Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>
81	Firecrest	<i>Regulus ignicapilla</i>
82	Cetti's Warbler	<i>Cettia cetti</i>



83	Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>
84	Common Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>
85	Moustached Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus melanopogon</i>
86	Eurasian Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>
87	Zitting Cisticola	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>
88	Eurasian Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>
89	Garden Warbler	<i>Sylvia borin</i>
90	Moltoni's Warbler	<i>Sylvia subalpina</i>
91	Sardinian Warbler	<i>Sylvia melanocephala</i>
92	Common Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>
93	Balearic Warbler	<i>Sylvia balearica</i>
94	Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa tyrrenica</i>
95	Common Nightingale	<i>Luscinia megarhynchos</i>
96	Common Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>
97	Blue Rock Thrush	<i>Monticola solitarius</i>
98	European Stonechat	<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>
99	Northern Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>
100	Common Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>
101	Spotless Starling	<i>Sturnus unicolor</i>
102	Western Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>
103	Tawny Pipit	<i>Anthus campestris</i>
104	Cirl Bunting	<i>Emberiza cirlus</i>
105	Corn Bunting	<i>Emberiza calandra</i>
106	Common Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>
107	European Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>
108	Common Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>
109	Common Crossbill	<i>Loxia curvirostra balearica</i>
110	European Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>
111	European Serin	<i>Serinus serinus</i>
112	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>