



# ORIOLE BIRDING



## TOUR REPORT MOROCCO

11TH – 22ND MARCH 2026

[www.oriolobirding.com](http://www.oriolobirding.com)

[oriolobirding@gmail.com](mailto:oriolobirding@gmail.com)



## TOUR LEADER

Dave Gosney

## PARTICIPANTS

John and Liz Dickenson, Janice Darch, Geoff Middleton, Celia Reed, Ted Lock, Mike Pollard, Philip Phillips, Ann Duff, Richard Seekins

Another terrific trip, not quite a clean sweep because we didn't get Plain Martin and Eastern Olivaceous Warbler but we did have some unexpected bonuses including Lesser Kestrel, 2 Houbara Bustards (one self-found) and a roosting Red-necked Nightjar.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to everyone on the trip for playing their part in us finding so many birds. Special thanks to Mike Pollard and John Dickenson for capturing such great photos and allowing us to use them here.

WEDNESDAY 11<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2026 – *a pleasant 21C even at dusk*

Our flights arrived late in the afternoon so there was no time for 'proper' birding but we did see **Common Kestrel** and **Common Bulbul** at the airport and species such as **Maghreb Magpie**, **Spotless Starling** and **Laughing Dove** en route to the hotel where a **House Bunting** was singing.



House Bunting. Or is it Hotel Bunting? Sometimes you don't even have to go outside to see them.  
Photo: John Dickenson

THURSDAY 12<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2026 – *Very pleasant all day with temperatures up to 23C*

The bushes around the hotel had a few birds including **Common Chiffchaff** and **Subalpine Warbler**, with **Pallid Swift** and **Common Kestrel** overhead but we set off quickly, heading north to Cap Rhir where we'd seen Bald Ibis the year before.



Pallid Swift. Dark eye in a pale head and a pale panel in the secondaries. Photo: Mike Pollard

This time there were no ibis here but we did find a few other species such as **Thekla's Lark**, **Hoopoe**, **House Bunting**, **Subalpine** and **Sardinian Warblers**, **Woodchat Shrike**, **Black Wheatear** and **Northern Wheatear** and we had our first views of the fabulous **Moussier's Redstarts**, male and female.



Moussier's Redstart – just as fabulous as they look in the books. Photo: Mike Pollard

Out at sea, the usual parade of **Gannets** was enlivened by regular parties of **Common Scoter** heading north. We don't often see them here but this time we soon had about 50 birds. **Greater Short-toed Larks** called briefly but weren't seen – a theme repeated many times during the rest of the trip.

The much sought-after **Bald Ibis** are often seen from the bus as we drive north but none were spotted before we reached the estuary near Tamri. The lagoon next to the beach was close to drying out completely but last year the beach was breached and the site was reflooded with sea water. This year the beach was intact and there seemed to be more freshwater, as reflected in the improved species list which included **Eurasian Coot**, **Common Sandpiper**, **Little Ringed Plover**, **Eurasian Spoonbill**, **Grey Heron**, **Little Egret** as well as the usual masses of gulls. These were mostly **Lesser Black-backed** and **Yellow-legged Gulls**, commuting between the lake and the beach, but we also picked out about 20 **Audouin's Gulls** and at least 2 **Mediterranean Gulls** and, briefly, a **Common Gull**.



Audouin's Gull – the adults always look immaculately clean. Photo: Mike Pollard

**Kentish Plovers and Sanderlings** were also on the beach. We also had our first views of **White Wagtail** here: both birds we saw were of the spectacular Moroccan race *subpersonata*.

Our main target bird here was, of course, **Bald Ibis** so it was with some relief that we managed to get views of the occasional bird flying over. Obviously we still wanted better views so we drove further north, still scanning the sand and scrubby areas en route. When we stopped to scan, we started to spot more Bald Ibis including a few that were feeding on the ground, easily visible on a sand dune and showing their rather untidy features very clearly. Others seemed to be flying up and down the coast including one flock of at least 40 birds. We'd now seen plenty of Bald Ibis, albeit not too closely, so we set off back towards Agadir, still scanning for more. As we approached the Cap Rhir headland there was a bird in the middle of the road – another Bald Ibis. It walked across to the scrub by the road and didn't retreat further even as we pulled up alongside it. We were now getting ridiculously close views of this bird and another that joined it. Wow.



Northern Bald Ibis – sometimes they're right by the side of the road. Photo: Mike Pollard

We drove on, thoroughly delighted to have seen one of the rarest birds in the world at such close range. Our tally of about 50 birds represented a substantial proportion of the Moroccan population (c700 birds in 2019), the only truly wild ones in the world.

For the afternoon we drove up an area called Paradise Valley. In the past we've found some special birds here including Bonelli's Eagle, Black-crowned Tchagra and even Tristram's Warbler but on this occasion we had none of those species. Instead we enjoyed close-up **Thekla's Larks**, our first views of **African Chaffinch**, **Serin** and **Crag Martin** and picked out some **Little Swifts** among the flocks of **Pallid Swift** before driving back to the hotel.



Thekla's Lark. Note the short, simple and rather unimpressive bill. Photo: Mike Pollard

FRIDAY 13<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2026 – *Another lovely day, reaching temperatures up to 25C*

On this day we squeezed in visits to both the estuaries in the Souss-Massa reserve. Visting the Oued Souss has become less rewarding now there is no access on foot to the last part of the estuary and it's bird-filled pools so instead we stopped further upstream where we still found lots of waterbirds including dozens of **Great Cormorants**, **Little Egrets** and **Greater Flamingoes**, occasionally making spectacular flights over the water. Other birds here included at least **30 Eurasian Spoonbills**, **14 Glossy Ibis**, our only **Common Shelducks** of the trip and a selection of waders including **Avocet**, **Grey Plover**, **Curlew**, **Spotted Redshank**, **Greenshank** and **Common Redshank**. There were several **Mediterranean Gulls** amongst the **Black-headed**s and a smart **Slender-billed Gull** too. Other birds flying around included **Western Marsh Harrier**, **Osprey** and **Sandwich Tern**. **Stone Curlews** called occasionally and we managed to locate at least 4 birds in the scrub close to the shore.

It was here that we got our first close views of **Spotless Starlings** and **Maghreb Magpies** before moving on to the next estuary.



Spotless Starling – they seem to have overdone it on the Brylcream. Photo: Mike Pollard

The key bird we were after at the Oued Massa was **Black-crowned Tchagra** and we wanted to get there while it was still early enough for them to be singing. They usually spend their time skulking in bushes so the easiest way to find them is to locate their really loud songs and follow where the sound is coming from. After stopping for a roadside **Little Owl** we arrived at the Tchagra site but it seemed that the birds had already stopped singing. We walked slowly through perfect habitat, hoping that one might pop up and eventually one was heard in the far distance. We rushed to get close to this bird but it only sang intermittently. Even so we did find it, but still some distance away on the far side of the river. Some of us, at least got views of it but it was hardly ideal. No further songs were heard so we concentrated on other stuff. The river itself had a few **Little Grebes**, **Eurasian Spoonbills**, **Little Ringed Plovers** and **Green Sandpipers** and the nearby cultivated fields had birds such as **Quail**, **Stonechat**, **Sedge Warbler**, **Common Whitethroat**, and lots of **Zitting Cisticolas**. **Western Marsh Harriers** were seen occasionally and a **Sparrowhawk** zipped past us over the water.

We heard the song of **Western Olivaceous Warbler** so we set off to a riverside spot where we hoped to see this species plus the much more sought-after **Plain Martin**. We'd had terrific views of the Plain Martins here the year before but this time the only martins we saw well enough proved to be Sand Martins. Even though we kept hearing Olivaceous Warblers they were really difficult to see well in the tamarisks. The time we spent looking for them did, however, pay dividends because one of the

group spotted a Tchagra just a few feet away. It climbed its way up a bush and gave us a burst of song and also fantastic views. Phew.



Black-crowned Tchagra – easy to find if they’re singing but a real challenge if they’re not. Photo: Mike Pollard

As ever we were propositioned by local bird guides, offering to find us some birds. Usually we feel we can manage without their help but one guide claimed he could show us a roosting **Red-necked Nightjar**. This would be a real bonus because our usual site for this species, at the Oued Souss, is now so difficult to access that we’d given up the idea of seeing them. So we followed him as he led us to a cultivated area with a bank and an overhanging tree. Sure enough, there it was, resting on the slope giving views that most birders never manage to get. Extraordinary.



Red-necked Nightjar. It's not often you get to see how colourful the plumage is. Photo: Mike Pollard

We still hadn't seen **Plain Martin** so we tried a traditional breeding site which had always been productive in recent years. This time however there were none there. Have they gone? In compensation we had close views of a **Black-crowned Night Heron** and a pair of **Black-crowned Tchagras** were spotted and gave everyone even better views than before – a terrific way to end the day before driving to our next hotel.



Black-crowned Night Heron flushed at close range. Photo: Mike Pollard

**SATURDAY 14<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2026** – *Another beautiful day with temperatures in the mid-twenties*

Today would be mostly a driving day to get us from the coast to the deserts but en route we still had a chance of some good birding. Driving along the Souss valley in the morning we had a chance to look for raptors and storks that had roosted in the valley but were now rising and climbing in order to cross the mountains. There was no shortage of birds, with over **100 Black Kites** and **37 White Storks** but the variety of birds was less than in previous years. Although we had no eagles this time we did at least pick out a **Black Stork** and were impressed by the spectacle of hundreds of swifts, almost entirely **Common Swifts** with a few **Alpine Swift** and at least **1 Little Swift**.

We made our usual stop at Aoulouz, where we'd found Morocco's first Lesser Moorhen the year before. This time the birding was less pulse-raising but we did add **Common Kingfisher** and **Western Bonelli's Warbler** to our trip list as well as one of the local Buzzards. These used to be regarded as a race of Long-legged Buzzard but are now classified as a race of **Common Buzzard** (*Buteo buteo cirtensis*), sometimes called Atlas Buzzard. Other birds here included **Sedge Warbler** and another **Tchagra** heard calling.



'Atlas' Buzzard. It looks like a Long-legged Buzzard but it's a race of Common Buzzard. Photo: Mike Pollard

We drove on through the desert and had our first views of species such as **Desert and White-crowned Wheatears** from the bus, but only in very small numbers and nothing exceptional. At a lunch stop by a wadi, there was running water which attracted **Little Ringed Plover**, **Green Sandpiper** and feeding **Crag Martins**. A **Meadow Pipit** was, surprisingly, the first pipit of the trip and we had our first really good views of **White-crowned Wheatear**.



White-crowned Wheatear at rest and in flight. The flying bird doesn't have a white crown but look how much white there is in the tail. Photo: Mike Pollard

We had a look for **Maghreb Wheatear** at three sites where we'd seen them before but this year didn't manage to locate one. They can be very elusive.

The rest of our drive was uneventful apart from a flying flock of 8 herons near Ouarzazate which proved to be **Purple Herons**.



Purple Herons. Part of a migrating flock. Photo: Mike Pollard

**SUNDAY 15<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2026** – *Very cool, but not bitterly cold, in the early morning then soon warming into another pleasant day of sunshine and temperatures in the early 20s*

This was our first proper day of desert birding, at a site which is iconic in birding folklore, the so-called Tagdilt Track. Over the years almost all the desert species have been seen here and, even though most of them have declined or disappeared, it is still the best place for some key species.

We started by checking a site where sandgrouse sometimes come to drink. Even if the sandgrouse don't settle, there's always a chance some might fly over and, anyway, this spot can still be unusually productive for small birds. As soon as we were out of the bus we were enjoying close views of one of the area's specialities: **Temminck's Horned Larks** – a desert version of Horned Lark with white, not yellow around the face and a pale sandy back. Surprisingly there was already one pair feeding a fledgling. We also had our first go at sorting out the local wheatears – mostly **Desert Wheatears** but also **Northern** and **Isabelline Wheatears** on passage. We'd never had so many Isabelline Wheatears before. This is a bird of eastern Europe and the Middle East. What are they doing here in such

numbers? We had great views of **Trumpeter Finch** too, a species that we couldn't find anywhere the previous year, and there was the thrill of finding 6 **Cream-coloured Coursers**.



Trumpeter Finch – we saw plenty this year, even though we'd missed them the year before. Photo: Mike Pollard

Birds flying around included **Black Kite**, a **Short-toed Eagle** and surprisingly few Greater Short-toed Larks. A bubbling call alerted us to a passing flock of **Black-bellied Sandgrouse**. Many of us didn't get good views of these but others managed to photograph them well enough to prove there was a **Pin-tailed Sandgrouse** amongst them.



Black-bellied Sandgrouse – but spot the Pin-tailed with the white belly. Photo: Mike Pollard

In the past we've had **Black-bellied Sandgrouse** on the ground in an area of higher, stonier, desert so we drove there next. Sure enough two birds flew up but again they were rather distant and just flew away. Another 2 coursers were also seen only distantly in flight but we had more joy with another speciality. A piping whistle had us scanning the ground for **Greater Hoopoe Larks** and we found 2 birds which did some chasing and displaying, showing off their 'sort-of-Hoopoe-like' wing pattern.



Hoopoe Lark. A terrific shot showing the dramatic wing pattern. Photo: Mike Pollard

Driving back, we almost ran over a pair of **Red-rumped Wheatears** which gave great views. These used to be common everywhere here but now they're rather localised. Another party of birders told us they'd seen a **Thick-billed Lark** nearby so we set off to walk across the area they described. Before too long we'd spotted it but it was still about a kilometre away. Over time we got closer and closer until it was within photographic distance. We didn't try to get too close and left it without ever flushing it. In recent years this has been a really difficult species to find and the only regular site has

been the disgusting town dump. At least this time we didn't have to photograph it amongst piles of plastic. We had another pair of **Red-rumped Wheatears** here too.



Thick-billed Lark – photographed with not a piece of plastic in sight – unlike in most years. Photo: Mike Pollard

In the middle of the day we drove up the spectacular valley of the upper River Dades, as far as the Gorge du Dades. We've had Tristram's Warbler and even Scrub Warbler here in the past but this year the best passerines were **Blue Rock Thrush** and **Rock Bunting**. The highlight though was an adult **Bonelli's Eagle** which swooped and stooped around the nearby cliff-face, perching in view in at least two places, one of which looked a likely nest site.

Our next stop was an attempt to catch up on some more desert species that had so far eluded us. We enlisted the help of a local guide who took us first to a nest of **Pharaoh Eagle Owl**. Last year we'd had fantastic views of a male sitting outside the nest site but this time the only bird in view was the female sitting inside the nest hole. The views weren't so great but with scopes we could still make out the heavy black markings across the chest and the black perimeter to the facial shield – key identification features.

Even with our local guide we've often failed to find **Maghreb Wheatear** here but this time he said he knew where their nest was. Before we'd even reached the nest site we had views of a pair of these wheatears, making up for the ones we'd missed the day before. Some authorities still classify these as a race of **Mourning Wheatear**, despite the fact that these females are much browner than the males.



Maghreb Wheatear – these males lack the obvious buff undertail of Mourning Wheatears from the Middle East. Photo: Mike Pollard

Continuing on, we had our first views of **Desert Larks** before reaching a valley where a pair of **Lanner Falcons** were nesting. On this occasion we didn't get any sightings of the male but, from a safe distance, we could get 'scope views of the head of the female sitting on the nest. This was a great end to a day in which we'd seen just about all the best birds of the area, apart from **Crowned Sandgrouse** and **Tristram's Warbler**. We still had further chances of those later in the trip.

**MONDAY 16<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2026**– *Uncomfortably hot for the first time in the week, reaching temperatures of 27C or more*

We began the day by trying to get better views of **Black-bellied Sandgrouse** near the Tagdilt track but this time we neither saw nor heard them. Two **Cream-coloured Coursers** flew over, distantly and, at last, the calls of **Greater Short-toed Lark** enabled us to pick out a small group that actually landed within sight. In some years we get hundreds of these birds, sometimes with **Lesser Short-toed** too, but this year there were hardly any.

The long drive to the 'true' deserts of Merzouga is scenically fabulous but usually produces few birds. However, it does give us a chance to find a really tricky species that is often missed by birders in Morocco: **Scrub Warbler**. Last year we found two new sites for this species so we revisited them again. At the first site we wandered through acres of suitable-looking habitat but it looked like the warblers would elude us. We did at least get great views of two sought-after species: first a **Great Grey Shrike** of the desert race *elegans* much paler and with extensive white in the wings and then a troop of **Fulvous Chatterers** (known to most of us as **Babblers**), fluttering from bush to bush.



Great Grey Shrike of the race *elegans*. So clean-looking, with lots of white in the wing. Photo: Mike Pollard

We'd been out in the heat for some time before a few of us spotted a **Scrub Warbler**. We paused to bring everyone together to see the bird that had disappeared into a bush. But when we approached that bush there was no sign of the bird. A further trawl of all the nearby bushes failed to relocate it. There were still members of the group who'd missed it.

So we tried again at our other new site. We weren't too hopeful because there was only a slither of suitable-looking habitat here. Indeed, it was better for ground loving species including a party of about 10 **Bar-tailed Larks** and, amongst them, another **Desert Lark**. After wandering for a while, we retraced our steps to the bus and, in doing so found a pair of **Scrub Warblers**. As ever they were very mobile and difficult to get views of but one of them flew out and landed in an open area where everyone could see this remarkable little bird bouncing around and waving its long tail.

By the time we reached the 'true' deserts beyond Erfoud it was late afternoon. We went for a walk up one of the partly vegetated wadis but, apart from the occasional song of a **Desert Wheatear** it was practically silent. Even so, we managed to get views of more **Bar-tailed Larks**, a pair of **Cream-coloured Coursers** and another **Isabelline Wheatear**. Before we reached our hotel we also made a stop to get views of our first **Brown-necked Raven**, surprised that we hadn't seen any earlier on the journey.

**TUESDAY 17<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2026** – *Distinctly cool in the morning but soon warming to temperatures in the mid twenties at least.*

We rose before dawn for our eagerly-anticipated day in the desert in 4x4s with local drivers. Our first main aim was to reach an area where sandgrouse usually come to drink but before that 'magic hour' we had time to look for other birds en route. Each time a bird was spotted, the drivers would get us all into a position where we could see them clearly from the vehicles and, in this way, we had great views of **Bar-tailed Larks**, **2 more Cream-coloured Coursers** and, most enjoyably, singing and displaying **Greater Hoopoe Larks**. The Hoopoe Larks are wonderfully showy with their patterned wings, dramatic outline, memorable, evocative songs and spectacular somersaulting displays.



Hoopoe Lark. We were getting excellent views from our 4 x4s. Photo: John Dickenson

In this early morning period we also had views of **Isabelline Wheatear** (again), **Brown-necked Raven** and, briefly, a **Spectacled Warbler**.

When we reached the sandgrouse drinking area there were already some **Spotted Sandgrouse** resting on the open plains nearby so we had views of those before getting into position at the drinking spot. We soon realised there could be a problem. Right next to where the sandgrouse would want to drink, there was a camouflage net with two photographers under it. Would they disturb the birds we wanted to see? Parties of **Spotted Sandgrouse** flew in and quickly marched to their drinking spot. However, even though a few of them may have snatched a drink they were clearly startled by the photographers only about **FOUR FEET** away and flew off. Several more parties of **Spotted Sandgrouse** arrived but almost immediately departed. **Crowned Sandgrouse** came too but landed further away and walked in more cautiously. They also got within a few feet of the photographers but, as far as we could see, didn't get close enough to drink. We complained to our local guides and our driver went with their driver to ask them to shift. They refused! One of our party was so cross that he stormed across to the photographers and told them in no uncertain terms that he wouldn't budge from there until they cleared off. They retreated to their vehicle to a chorus of boos and more of us gave them a mouthful of what we thought of them.



Two photographers under that camouflage canvas, being asked if they would kindly move away to let sandgrouse drink on that wet patch of sand in front of them. Photo: John Dickenson

By now most of the sandgrouse had moved on but we still managed to get views of both **Spotted and Crowned Sandgrouse** coming to drink without being disturbed. The photographers (Belgian we think) had spoilt that experience for all of us (and another group too). Instead of enjoying the fabulous birds we were more concerned about the whole disturbance situation. Even so, we did get great views of both species, over **100 Spotted Sandgrouse and maybe 40 Crowned** and for at least one of our group the sight and sound of dozens of sandgrouse wheeling around us was his number one highlight of the trip.



Spotted Sandgrouse wheeling in like a squadron of fighter bombers. Photo: Mike Pollard



Spotted Sandgrouse again, showing the difference between the female (above) and the male. Photo: Mike Pollard



Male Crowned Sandgrouse. Apart from the vertical black line on the face, notice that the flight feathers are more solidly black. Photo: Mike Pollard

It wasn't just the sandgrouse that were special. We also had views of a **Lanner Falcon** being chased by 2 **Brown-necked Ravens**.

As we drove away from the sandgrouse, our local guides got news on their mobiles that a **Houbara Bustard** had been seen. Wow. Houbara is a bird that we never expect to see on these trips; the one we'd seen the year before had taken us a couple of hours to locate, even with the help of the local Houbara-spotters. Could we get one two-years running? We reached the 'spotter' and were told that the bird was 'still in view, under one of those bushes'. We scanned distantly and rather forlornly across a plain of bushes until it was pointed out that the bird was under one of the bushes closest to us. That brown lump on the edge of the bush, shaped like a huge female pheasant, was the back of a Houbara and that whitish line in the middle of the bush was its white crown. By looking below its crown with a scope we could see the bird's beady yellow eye. It would have been phenomenal if it had walked off to give us more typical views of a bustard but we resisted the temptation to disturb it and left it *in situ*.

As we drove off to our next venue, the lead car in the group came to a stop and news came over the walkie-talkies that they'd got two **Desert Sparrows** right in front of them. The other cars couldn't

get alongside so we disembarked to try to get views. The birds were flighty and mostly distant but we soon stopped looking when one of us said 'there's another bustard in these bushes'. Blimey, we've seen Houbaras a few times on these trips but we've never actually found one ourselves. Now we did have a chance to see a walking **Houbara Bustard** but it wasn't that easy. The bushes here were much taller and it only came into view when it either walked across a gap or poked its head above a bush. With perseverance though, everyone managed to get a look. But we lost the sparrows.

Our next stop was not too far away, at one of those sadly-burgeoning tourist encampments. As we arrived there we again spotted a couple of **Desert Sparrows** but they quickly departed. It took a while but eventually they came back and disappeared around the back of a building. By following them we found they were repeatedly dropping inside a cardboard box. There must be some food in there. It attracted not just the Desert Sparrows (now 4 of them) but also **House Sparrows** too. We were able to get terrific views of them for many minutes, enjoying the shiny white, silver and black males and the equally gorgeous gingery females. Magic.



Desert Sparrow. Yes, it's still possible to see a group of birds together. Photo: Mike Pollard

We drove on for some kilometres to our lunch stop in a local hostel where we reflected on the terrific birds we'd already seen that morning. But there was more to come. We set off again in the hope of seeing an Egyptian Nightjar but first we stopped next to a small ridge of sand dunes. Two small warblers disappeared as we approached: one pale and sandy, a **Desert Warbler**, the other much darker, a **Spectacled Warbler**. Could we get good views though? For a while it was quiet but then a scratchy song heralded a mid-air coming together of 2 Desert Warblers. Were they fighting or mating? They disappeared into a bush and neither bird seemed to come out. Through a scope there were two pale lumps in the shadow of the bush. But they were motionless for minutes; stones perhaps? Then we realised that one of them had a wing! It was **two Desert Warblers** that had grappled in mid-air and fallen into the bush, still attached and seemingly unable to free themselves. Eventually one of them did manage to fly off, leaving the other one to parade around its territory in defiance, allowing us to get amazing views.



African Desert Warbler. This male was reasserting his dominance after a confrontation with another.  
Photo: Mike Pollard

Delighted, we turned our attention to look for the **Spectacled Warbler** and managed to relocate a pair that gave decent views.

Minutes later we were approaching Mubarak, the Nightjar Man. He beckoned us up a sandy slope and pointed at the stones and bushes just in front of us. There, sitting in the full sun (despite the presence of bushes) was an **Egyptian Nightjar**.



Spot the Egyptian Nightjar. It's just to the left of the biggest shadow. Some are a lot harder to see than this one. Thank goodness for Mubarak. How does he find them? Photo: Mike Pollard

As we studied it at close range through the scope it did some head-bobbing then half stood up and shuffled from side to side with its wings partly open before turning to a slightly different position. Was it turning eggs? Or just adjusting its angle to the sun? Either way it was the most action we'd ever seen from a roosting Egyptian Nightjar.



An Egyptian Nightjar actually doing something during the day. Photo: Mike Pollard

Our next port of call was much closer to the hotel - the lake at Merzouga where, for the second year running, there was plenty of water. This water must gather lots of salt from the ground below because the birds were mostly those associated with salt pans: about **100 Greater Flamingoes**, over **50 Ruddy Shelduck**, **Black-winged Stilts**, **Avocets**, **Kentish Plovers** and **6 Gull-billed Terns**. There were **Great Crested Grebes** too and **Western Marsh Harriers** over the water. Even better, we caught up on one of the birds we'd missed at Oued Souss: **Marbled Duck**. We counted 17 birds but they were at the far side of the lake so views weren't great. We'd try again tomorrow.

**WEDNESDAY 18<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2026** – *Probably over 25C but made cooler by a strong wind*

Today we had a chance to see what else we could find in the area without the help of the 4x4s and local guides. We started out back at Merzouga Lake where birds were now much closer and in sparkling light. Almost immediately we had close views of **Gull-billed Terns** and a pair of gorgeous **Marbled Ducks**. Scanning around we had at least 40 of these ducks and we added **8 Common Pochard** and **2 Little Grebes** to yesterday's tally.



Gull-billed Tern. They seem to like areas of salt-lake. Photo: Mike Pollard

On the nearby shoreline we at last had numbers of *flava* wagtails. They'd been remarkably scarce up to now but here there were about 2 dozen of them, mostly of the Iberian race but with a couple of 'British' Yellow Wagtails and at least one of the Italian race 'Ashy-headed Wagtail'. Eventually we spotted some pipits too. We'd had only one pipit until now (a Meadow Pipit) but here were three birds which, pleasingly, turned out to be Red-throated Pipits, showing their reddish throats very clearly. Maghreb Larks were next to the minibus, Greater Short-toed Larks were often heard calling but didn't land and a singing Desert Lark was picked out perched on a distant rocky slope. A flock of 40 herons turned out to be Grey Herons, seemingly on migration, and there were Red-rumped Swallows amongst the hirundines.

From here we went to a wadi in search of migrants. En route we passed about 50 Brown-necked Ravens and about 10 Black Kites around a rubbish dump. In the wadi we had a few passage birds such as Common Hoopoe and Common Redstart as well as Greater Short-toed Larks (calling overhead – not on the ground), Desert Larks (better views at last) and the local 'Maghreb Larks'. These are a desert race of Crested Larks but with exceptionally long bills (their scientific name *macrorhyncha* means big bill). There is evidence to suggest they should be treated as a distinct species but this isn't (yet) universally accepted.



Maghreb Lark. Currently viewed as a race of Crested Lark but just look at that bill. Photo: Mike Pollard

There were a few **Common Chiffchaffs** in the bushes but then we found a *sylvia* warbler which we assumed to be another Subalpine – blue above, maroon below. But the call wasn't quite right and when we finally got a good look we saw an incomplete white eye-ring and a brick-red colour in the wings. A **Tristram's Warbler**! This was a big surprise because although Tristram's Warbler is often found here in winter, we'd never seen one here so late in the season. It performed beautifully, giving us all terrific views, apart from one person who had chosen to stay back at the minibus. We'd still need to look for one in the mountains.



Tristram's Warbler. This one was still present at a wintering site. Photo: Mike Pollard

Our next mission was to try to find some **Blue-cheeked Bee-eaters**. There was no specific site for them and, indeed, they may not even have arrived yet, but we figured the best bet was to drive around the 'allotments' and gardens around Rissani. We checked all the wires and bare branches but had no joy. We gave up and tried to find another bird that may not have arrived yet: **Eastern Olivaceous Warbler**. We went to a site where they are easily heard singing if they are present but again we drew a blank.

We considered the possibility of a long drive to a ringing site but figured they wouldn't be able to put their mist-nets up in this wind. So instead we set off back to our hotel, still checking the wires for Bee-eaters. As we were leaving Rissani, a cry went up 'Bee-eaters!' Yes. At the side of the road were some flooded 'allotments' and, skimming over them, were about 6 **Blue-cheeked Bee-eaters**, sometimes right over our heads, sometimes perched on nearby wires. Suddenly their numbers were supplemented by a passing party of at least 50 more Blue-cheeks and the air hummed to their throaty calls. What a brilliant end to the day.



Blue-cheeked Bee-eater. OMG what a bird. Photo: Mike Pollard

**THURSDAY 19<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2026** – *another pleasant sunny day with temperatures in the mid 20s and without yesterdays strong winds*

Before setting off for our long journey back to Ouarzazate, some of us searched around the hotel and had some **Chiffchaffs**, **Subalpine Warblers** and a **Western Bonelli's Warbler** as well as the nesting **White-crowned Wheatears**.

En route we had more of these wheatears and the occasional **Great Grey** and **Woodchat Shrikes** but birds were a bit thin on the ground until we stopped for lunch by some cliffs and a valley of acacias. Around the cliffs were some **Kestrels**, '**Atlas**' **Buzzards** and among the hirundines, at least half a dozen **Red-rumped Swallows**. Then someone noticed that the kestrels were feeding on insects in flight and....there were a lot of them, maybe a dozen birds! These were obviously a passing party of **Lesser Kestrels**, a species we don't normally see on this trip, though we heard the calls of **Common Kestrel** too, maybe the local breeding pair.

There were more migrants in the acacias, mostly **Subalpine Warblers** and **Chiffchaff** but **Bonelli's Warbler** too. **Spanish Sparrows** and **Sardinian Warblers** could have been local breeding birds.

We motored on, trying to get to the wetland at Ouarzazate before dusk. The reservoir, the Barrage el Mansour, has shrunk considerably since it was first created about 50 years ago, so much so that for some years all visits to the west end of the lake failed to even find water. But last year the water was reachable and this year we again managed to enjoy some waterbirds. New birds were added in the form of **25 Teal** and **3 Great White Egret** and there were plenty of **Great Cormorants** and **Great Crested Grebes** and even more (hundreds) of **Sand Martins**. **Western Marsh Harrier** and **Black Kite** flew over and we also had a party of **7 Black Storks**. **Maghreb Larks** were on the plain where the water used to be.

After this long drive we settled in at our hotel just before nightfall.

**FRIDAY 20th MARCH 2026** – *After a calm, sunny morning at Ouarzazate, temperatures fell sharply as we climbed into the Atlas mountains. The bus thermometer said 8C but it felt bitterly cold thanks to a biting wind that drove rain, and sometimes sleet, horizontally into our faces. Over the hill towards Marrakech, temperatures climbed back above 20C before we turned back towards the cool and cloudy hills where our hotel was located.*

A pre-breakfast walk from the hotel was very enjoyable. From the hotel we had lots of views of **Pallid Swifts** and a few **Little Swift** too and **Linnet**s were more numerous than at any other site. A little rocky valley had a pair of **Little Owls** sitting in the open. In the bushes of a wadi we had some **Meadow Pipits**, **Spanish Sparrow**, a **Common Redstart** and a singing **Western Olivaceous Warbler** but the best birds of the morning were Bee-eaters. First we located 5 **Blue-cheeked Bee-eaters** settled, and even mating, around some buildings then we heard the calls of **European Bee-eater** too and found a group of 5 birds that settled in a palm tree.

Driving into the Atlas mountains, we stopped to listen for **Levaillant's Woodpecker** but this time didn't even hear one. Instead we enjoyed our best views of **African Blue Tits** and 2 **Rock Buntings** and our first **Mistle Thrush**. Better still, we were thrilled by a migrating flock of about 50 **European Bee-eaters** purring close overhead.

We made two stops close to the summit of the Tizi-n-tichka pass but the intense cold, driving rain and fierce winds made birding almost impossible. We persevered for long enough to see a flock of about 500 **Red-billed Chough**, swirling like an aerial baitball because a **Peregrine Falcon** was stooping at them, unsuccessfully.

Because of the weather we weren't sorry to leave the high peaks and drive on to what used to be a terrific woodland area. Sadly, many of the trees have been recently felled (even more since the year before) but we still managed to see **Coal Tit** and **Common Crossbill** and to hear a **Short-toed Treecreeper**. A **Sparrowhawk** flew over as we had lunch and a **Levaillant's Woodpecker** called but couldn't be seen. They're still there.

Someone asked earlier if we might see **Barbary Partridge** but I confessed that this was unlikely now that we were unable to visit the restricted parts of the Souss estuary. But we would be back in suitable habitat – we'd just have to be lucky. Imagine the excitement then when, as we were racing back into the hills, one of the group shouted that he'd just seen a lump that could have been a partridge. We reversed back up the road for some distance, not knowing exactly where the bird had been seen. The vegetation was rather tall, more than partridge height, so our chances seemed really slim. But then 2 partridges were spotted running along a path between the plants. They soon disappeared but then one stretched its head above the vegetation and we all managed to see its grey and brown head pattern and spotted neck. Talk about serendipity.



Barbary Partridge. A species that's easily missed so we were delighted to spot this. Photo: Mike Pollard

When we got back into the hills our main target birds were **Levaillant's Woodpecker** and **Tristram's Warbler** – because one of the group hadn't seen the bird at Rissani. We tried to find the site where one had been singing the year before and, just when we seemed to be in about the right place, a Tristram's started calling and, occasionally, singing. In fact it performed well enough for all of us to get great views for the second, or first, time. Meanwhile there were at least 3 pairs of **Short-toed Snake-eagles** showing off to each other overhead.



Short-toed Snake-eagle – one of several displaying birds. Photo: Mike Pollard

As we arrived at the hotel we had views of a **Common Cuckoo** in a tree by the drive and after dropping our bags we went for a walk in the local forests. Here we had views of **Common Crossbill**, **5 Hawfinch** and **Great Spotted Woodpecker**, with **Red-rumped Swallows** overhead. Once again, we heard **Levaillant's Woodpecker** but didn't see it. Maybe tomorrow.

After our evening meal we went up to the roof terrace. Last year we'd had great views of **Maghreb Wood Owl** from here but this time there was no sign.

**SATURDAY 21st MARCH 2026** – *Repeated showers, at times heavy, interspersed with sunshine or low cloud. Not too cold in the valley but down to about 8C near the ski resort. However, the wind had dropped so it was really quite tolerable, except during the showers.*

Just before dawn, the leader was woken up by the calls of a **Maghreb Wood Owl** outside his room. It only called a couple of times and was silent by the time he got outside in the rain. Nobody else had heard it.

Before breakfast we went back to the roof terrace hoping to find the **Levaillant's Woodpecker** that we'd seen so well the year before. However, it was raining miserably and we didn't even hear one. By

**Oriole Birding Morocco 2026**

taking a little walk we managed to see **Blackcaps**, a party of **Siskins** and at least 3 **Western Bonelli's Warblers**. Also, a woodpecker flew through the woods and was quickly identified as a 'Green-type' – obviously a **Levaillant's Woodpecker**. Sadly, although it landed in view it was both distant and silhouetted so we couldn't see its key features. Maybe later.

The leader was confident we'd find one at the next site – he's never failed there in at least 5 visits and last year the group found a nest. But, inexplicably, the **Levaillant's** were nowhere to be seen, although we heard one calling from a distant hillside. Oh dear. At least we managed some other decent birds here including **Mistle Thrush**, several **Short-toed Treecreepers** (great views this time), a **Eurasian Jay**, a **Sparrowhawk**, **Great Spotted Woodpecker** and 2 **Common Crossbills**. Both **Hawfinch** and **Firecrest** were heard singing at close range but failed to show themselves.

Moving on to the ski resort we were soon enjoying literally hundreds of **Red-billed Choughs** and probably over 100 **Alpine Chough** too.



Red-billed Chough. Literally hundreds were present at the ski resort. Photo: John Dickenson

Before long we'd had views of **Black Redstart** and also a 'treeful' of **Rock Sparrows** next to one of the car parks. Scanning across the chough-strewn grassy area we also picked up some distant **Horned Larks**. These birds with their reddish 'head shawls' are of the race 'atlas' which is genetically more different from European Horned Larks than Temminck's Lark is. So there's a strong case for treating it as a separate species, **Atlas Horned Lark**.

With all the rain we'd had (and were still having) we'd hoped that the mountainsides would be cloaked in snow, forcing the birds to concentrate in the cleared areas around the car parks. Yes, there was plenty of snow but also there were lots of open areas too which the key birds could disappear into. We'd already had rather distant views of the Horned Larks but we needed to find **Atlas Wheatear** and, especially **Crimson-winged Finch** too.

We bumped into another birding tour group who said they'd seen all of those species at the site we were aiming for next so we set off with some optimism. Unfortunately, the abundance of snow meant that the slopes were full of families having snowball fights and toboggan runs. It didn't seem promising. We scanned around the open stony areas near the stream and soon picked out more **Horned Larks** and **Rock Sparrows**. **Atlas Wheatear** was harder work but we found one eventually which some of the group then approached to get their photos.



Atlas Wheatear. A very striking-looking bird. Photo: Mike Pollard

We also had views of a White-bellied Dipper, a species we find only rarely, on the stream, raging with meltwater. However, still frustrated by a lack of **Crimson-winged Finches** we went back to the minibus. When we arrived at the car park a couple of small birds disappeared under one of the cars. Some managed to see them well; they were **Crimson-winged Finch** but they disappeared before most of us had decent views.

In these circumstances the best hope of seeing these superb birds is to hope that they'll come to the car park in search of broken nutshells left by the visitors. Our earlier sighting proved that birds might be willing to do that even when so many people were milling around. So we waited. And waited. And waited. Just when it was starting to feel hopeless, a small group of rather long-winged passerines flew low over our heads and disappeared. They were probably the finches we were after so we waited some more. It seemed ages before another such party arrived and perched on the roofs of the trader's stalls. Yes, **Crimson-winged Finch**, close and easy to see.



Crimson-winged Finch – if you see them at all you usually get fantastic views like this but you might have to be patient. Photo: John Dickenson

Then more arrived until we had a flock of 16 birds all queuing up to come down to the nuts in the car park. When I say nuts, I mean the walnuts but that could be a description of us too. We all had fantastic views and the photographers could fill their boots. They'd not been easy but the greater the effort, the greater the reward.



Crimson-winged Finch. They can be missing for hours but then suddenly you're surrounded by them. Photo: Mike Pollard

From there we tried a site where we've had Alpine Accentor in the past but the only birds we had this time were **Moussier's** and **Black Redstarts** and a pair of **Common Ravens**. Low cloud was rolling in but if we dropped to a lower level we might escape the cloud and try a site where we'd had **Levaillant's Woodpecker** many years ago. It took us a while to find the right site but, when everyone was in position, we tried playing a recording of the woodpecker. Almost instantaneously one whooshed past us and perched on the nearest tree. It was too close but it soon moved a few trees back where we could view it in the scope. We could just about make out its grey face and white moustache but the low cloud meant we were looking at it through mist. There was even some debate about whether it was male or female, the views were so obscured. But then the mist just drifted away and suddenly we were getting fantastic views of a male **Levaillant's Woodpecker**. Bingo.



Levaillant's Woodpecker in the mist. Grey face and a white line above the black moustache. Photo: Mike Pollard

We drove down the hill back to Marrakech in really high spirits.

**SUNDAY 22rd MARCH 2026** – *Another fine and sunny day, about 25C*

The leader got up while it was still dark, hoping that the local **Maghreb Wood Owl** would call to indicate its roosting site. There were no sounds but, even better, a bird flew in at dawn, landed on a

palm frond and worked its way to the centre of the tree. Perfect. Surely it'll stay there to roost. But within a minute it flew off again and disappeared over the distant streets!

We scanned around in daylight hoping to find an owl by cold-searching but had no joy. Instead, in the limited time we had before leaving for our flights, we enjoyed birds such as **Western Olivaceous Warbler**, **Little Swift**, **Booted Eagle** and, of course **House Buntings** in and around the hotel.



Western Olivaceous Warbler. If all else fails we can always find them at the last hotel. Photo: Mike Pollard

## SYSTEMATIC LIST

The total trip list came to 172 species

- |                      |                                    |
|----------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1 Ruddy Shelduck     | <i>Tadorna ferruginea</i>          |
| 2 Common Shelduck    | <i>Tadorna tadorna</i>             |
| 3 Northern Shoveler  | <i>Spatula clypeata</i>            |
| 4 Mallard            | <i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>          |
| 5 Eurasian Teal      | <i>Anas crecca</i>                 |
| 6 Marbled Duck       | <i>Marmaronetta angustirostris</i> |
| 7 Common Pochard     | <i>Aythya ferina</i>               |
| 8 Common Scoter      | <i>Melanitta nigra</i>             |
| 9 Common Quail       | <i>Coturnix coturnix</i>           |
| 10 Barbary Partridge | <i>Alectoris barbara</i>           |
| 11 Greater Flamingo  | <i>Phoenicopterus roseus</i>       |

12 Little Grebe  
 13 Great Crested Grebe  
 14 Rock Dove  
 15 Common Woodpigeon  
 16 Collared Dove  
 17 Laughing Dove  
 18 Pin-tailed Sandgrouse  
 19 Spotted Sandgrouse  
 20 Black-bellied Sandgrouse  
 21 Crowned Sandgrouse  
 22 Houbara Bustard  
 23 Common Cuckoo  
 24 Red-necked Nightjar  
 25 Egyptian Nightjar  
 26 Alpine Swift  
 27 Common Swift  
 28 Pallid Swift  
 29 Little Swift  
 30 Common Moorhen  
 31 Eurasian Coot  
 32 Stone-curlew  
 33 Black-winged Stilt  
 34 Pied Avocet  
 35 Grey Plover  
 36 Kentish Plover  
 37 Common Ringed Plover  
 38 Little Ringed Plover  
 39 Eurasian Curlew  
 40 Sanderling  
 41 Common Sandpiper  
 42 Green Sandpiper  
 43 Spotted Redshank  
 44 Common Greenshank  
 45 Common Redshank  
 46 Cream-coloured Courser  
 47 Slender-billed Gull  
 48 Black-headed Gull  
 49 Common Gull  
 50 Mediterranean Gull  
 51 Audouin's Gull  
 52 Yellow-legged Gull  
 53 Lesser Black-backed Gull  
 54 Gull-billed Tern  
 55 Sandwich Tern  
 56 Black Stork  
 57 White Stork  
 58 Northern Gannet  
 59 Great Cormorant

*Tachybaptus ruficollis*  
*Podiceps cristatus*  
*Columba livia*  
*Columba palumbus*  
*Streptopelia decaocto*  
*Streptopelia senegalensis*  
*Pterocles alchata*  
*Pterocles senegallus*  
*Pterocles orientalis*  
*Pterocles coronatus*  
*Chlamydotis undulata*  
*Cuculus canorus*  
*Caprimulgus ruficollis*  
*Caprimulgus aegyptius*  
*Apus melba*  
*Apus apus*  
*Apus pallidus*  
*Apus affinis*  
*Gallinula chloropus*  
*Fulica atra*  
*Burhinus oedicephalus*  
*Himantopus himantopus*  
*Recurvirostra avosetta*  
*Pluvialis squatarola*  
*Charadrius alexandrinus*  
*Charadrius hiaticula*  
*Charadrius dubius*  
*Numenius arquata*  
*Calidris alba*  
*Actitis hypoleucos*  
*Tringa ochropus*  
*Tringa erythropus*  
*Tringa nebularia*  
*Tringa totanus*  
*Cursorius cursor*  
*Chroicocephalus genei*  
*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*  
*Larus canus*  
*Ichthyophaga melanocephala*  
*Ichthyophaga audouinii*  
*Larus michahellis*  
*Larus fuscus*  
*Gelochelidon nilotica*  
*Thalasseus sandvicensis*  
*Ciconia nigra*  
*Ciconia ciconia*  
*Morus bassanus*  
*Phalacrocorax carbo*

|     |                           |                                       |
|-----|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 60  | Black-crowned Night-Heron | <i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>          |
| 61  | Grey Heron                | <i>Ardea cinerea</i>                  |
| 62  | Great White Egret         | <i>Ardea alba</i>                     |
| 63  | Little Egret              | <i>Egretta garzetta</i>               |
| 64  | Cattle Egret              | <i>Bubulcus ibis</i>                  |
| 65  | Glossy Ibis               | <i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>           |
| 66  | Northern Bald Ibis        | <i>Geronticus eremita</i>             |
| 67  | Eurasian Spoonbill        | <i>Platalea leucorodia</i>            |
| 68  | Osprey                    | <i>Pandion haliaetus</i>              |
| 69  | Short-toed Eagle          | <i>Circus gallicus</i>                |
| 70  | Booted Eagle              | <i>Hieraaetus pennatus</i>            |
| 71  | Bonelli's Eagle           | <i>Aquila fasciata</i>                |
| 72  | Western Marsh Harrier     | <i>Circus aeruginosus</i>             |
| 73  | Eurasian Sparrowhawk      | <i>Accipiter nisus</i>                |
| 74  | Black Kite                | <i>Milvus migrans</i>                 |
| 75  | Common Buzzard (Atlas)    | <i>Buteo buteo cirtensis</i>          |
| 76  | Little Owl                | <i>Athene noctua</i>                  |
| 77  | Maghreb Owl               | <i>Strix mauritanica</i>              |
| 78  | Pharaoh Eagle Owl         | <i>Bubo ascalaphus</i>                |
| 79  | Eurasian Hoopoe           | <i>Upupa epops</i>                    |
| 80  | Common Kingfisher         | <i>Alcedo atthis</i>                  |
| 81  | European Bee-eater        | <i>Merops apiaster</i>                |
| 82  | Blue-cheeked Bee-eater    | <i>Merops persicus</i>                |
| 83  | Great Spotted Woodpecker  | <i>Dendrocopos major</i>              |
| 84  | Levaillant's Woodpecker   | <i>Picus vaillantii</i>               |
| 85  | Common Kestrel            | <i>Falco tinnunculus</i>              |
| 86  | Lesser Kestrel            | <i>Falco naumanni</i>                 |
| 87  | Lanner Falcon             | <i>Falco biarmicus</i>                |
| 88  | Peregrine Falcon          | <i>Falco peregrinus</i>               |
| 89  | Black-crowned Tchagra     | <i>Tchagra senegalus</i>              |
| 90  | Great Grey Shrike         | <i>Lanius excubitor algeriensis</i>   |
| 91  | Woodchat Shrike           | <i>Lanius senator</i>                 |
| 92  | Eurasian Jay              | <i>Garrulus glandarius</i>            |
| 93  | Maghreb Magpie            | <i>Pica mauritanica</i>               |
| 94  | Red-billed Chough         | <i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i>        |
| 95  | Alpine Chough             | <i>Pyrrhocorax graculus</i>           |
| 96  | Brown-necked Raven        | <i>Corvus ruficollis</i>              |
| 97  | Common Raven              | <i>Corvus corax</i>                   |
| 98  | Greater Hoopoe-Lark       | <i>Alaemon alaudipes</i>              |
| 99  | Thick-billed Lark         | <i>Ramphocoris clotbey</i>            |
| 100 | Bar-tailed Lark           | <i>Ammomanes cinctura</i>             |
| 101 | Desert Lark               | <i>Ammomanes deserti</i>              |
| 102 | Horned Lark (Atlas)       | <i>Eremophila alpestris atlas</i>     |
| 103 | Temminck's Lark           | <i>Eremophila bilopha</i>             |
| 104 | Greater Short-toed Lark   | <i>Calandrella brachydactyla</i>      |
| 105 | Thekla's Lark             | <i>Galerida theklae</i>               |
| 106 | Crested Lark (Maghreb)    | <i>Galerida cristata macrorhyncha</i> |
| 107 | Sand Martin               | <i>Riparia riparia</i>                |

108 Eurasian Crag Martin  
 109 Barn Swallow  
 110 Red-rumped Swallow  
 111 Common House Martin  
 112 Coal Tit  
 113 African Blue Tit  
 114 Great Tit  
 115 Short-toed Treecreeper  
 116 Eurasian Wren  
 117 White-throated Dipper  
 118 Common Bulbul  
 119 Common Firecrest  
 120 Scrub Warbler  
 121 Cetti's Warbler  
 122 Western Bonelli's Warbler  
 123 Common Chiffchaff  
 124 Western Olivaceous Warbler  
 125 Sedge Warbler  
 126 Zitting Cisticola  
 127 Eurasian Blackcap  
 128 African Desert Warbler  
 129 Tristram's Warbler  
 130 Subalpine Warbler  
 131 Sardinian Warbler  
 132 Common Whitethroat  
 133 Spectacled Warbler  
 134 Fulvous Chatterer  
 135 Moussier's Redstart  
 136 Common Redstart  
 137 Black Redstart  
 138 Blue Rock Thrush  
 139 European Stonechat  
 140 White-crowned Wheatear  
 141 Black Wheatear  
 142 Northern Wheatear  
 143 Atlas (Seeböhm's) Wheatear  
 144 Mourning (Maghreb) Wheatear  
 145 Red-rumped Wheatear  
 146 Black-eared Wheatear  
 147 Desert Wheatear  
 148 Isabelline Wheatear  
 149 Mistle Thrush  
 150 Eurasian Blackbird  
 151 Spotless Starling  
 152 Grey Wagtail  
 153 Western Yellow Wagtail  
 154 White Wagtail  
 155 Meadow Pipit

*Ptyonoprogne rupestris*  
*Hirundo rustica*  
*Cecropis daurica*  
*Delichon urbicum*  
*Periparus ater*  
*Cyanistes teneriffae*  
*Parus major*  
*Certhia brachydactyla*  
*Troglodytes troglodytes*  
*Cinclus cinclus*  
*Pycnonotus barbatus*  
*Regulus ignicapilla*  
*Scotocerca inquieta*  
*Cettia cetti*  
*Phylloscopus bonelli*  
*Phylloscopus collybita*  
*Iduna opaca*  
*Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*  
*Cisticola juncidis*  
*Sylvia atricapilla*  
*Sylvia deserti*  
*Sylvia deserticola*  
*Sylvia cantillans*  
*Sylvia melanocephala*  
*Sylvia communis*  
*Sylvia conspicillata*  
*Turdoides fulva*  
*Phoenicurus moussieri*  
*Phoenicurus phoenicurus*  
*Phoenicurus ochruros*  
*Monticola solitarius*  
*Saxicola rubicola*  
*Oenanthe leucopyga*  
*Oenanthe leucura*  
*Oenanthe oenanthe*  
*Oenanthe seebohmi*  
*Oenanthe lugens halophila*  
*Oenanthe moesta*  
*Oenanthe hispanica*  
*Oenanthe deserti*  
*Oenanthe isabellina*  
*Turdus viscivorus*  
*Turdus merula*  
*Sturnus unicolor*  
*Motacilla cinerea*  
*Motacilla flava*  
*Motacilla alba*  
*Anthus pratensis*

156 Red-throated Pipit  
 157 African Chaffinch  
 158 Hawfinch  
 159 Crimson-winged Finch (African)  
 160 Trumpeter Finch  
 161 European Greenfinch  
 162 Common Linnet  
 163 Common Crossbill  
 164 Siskin  
 165 European Serin  
 166 Rock Bunting  
 167 Cirl Bunting  
 168 House Bunting  
 169 House Sparrow  
 170 Spanish Sparrow  
 171 Desert Sparrow  
 172 Rock Sparrow

Other taxa

Great Grey Shrike (desert race)  
 Moroccan Wagtail  
 British Yellow Wagtail  
 Iberian Yellow Wagtail  
 Ashy-headed Wagtail

Anthus cervinus  
 Fringilla spodiogenys  
 Coccothraustes coccothraustes  
 Rhodopechys sanguineus alienus  
 Bucanetes githagineus  
 Chloris chloris  
 Linaria cannabina  
 Loxia curvirostra  
 Spinus spinus  
 Serinus serinus  
 Emberiza cia  
 Emberiza cirulus  
 Emberiza sahari  
 Passer domesticus  
 Passer hispaniolensis  
 Passer simplex  
 Petronia petronia

Lanius excubitor elegans  
 Motacilla (alba) subpersonata  
 Motacilla flava flavissimma  
 Motacilla flava iberiae  
 Motacilla flava cinereocapilla