

Southern Portugal

13 - 21 March 2016
Easter Special



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Townsend, Linda Adenis-Lamarre (Sagres, Monchique), Robin
Harvey (Monchique)

Leader: Guillaume Réthoré

Sunday, 13 March – Arrival and Ludo

For this Easter Special birdwatching week, I left Cruzinha (A Rocha Portugal's field study centre), with Linda who had arrived earlier, under a clear blue sky and went to Ludo (a complex of salt pans and lagoons behind Faro airport) before picking the rest of the party at the airport. Charles and Eileen, who had arrived the previous day, explored the area around Cruzinha.

We passed quickly next to the salt pans as they were dried and few birds were in sight. We parked near a golf course with difficulty and walked along it to the hide. On the way, we saw a Barn Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*). From outside the hide, we looked at the lagoon. A Purple Swamphen (*Porphyrio porphyrio*) was pretty close and



a male Black-headed Weaver (*Ploceus melanocephalus*), an introduced exotic species, showed well. Some ducks were also visible: Shovelers (*Anas clypeata*) and Pochards (*Aythya ferina*) and Coots (*Fulica atra*). We entered the hide where noisy people left just after we arrived. A group of Lesser Black-backed Gulls (*Larus fuscus*) was resting. Some Little Egrets (*Egretta garzetta*) were standing on small islands with ducks and turtles sunbathing. A mixed group of

Pochards, Tufted Ducks (*Aythya fuligula*) and Shovelers was showing well, allowing us to compare them. Little Grebes (*Tachybaptus ruficollis*) were noisy and showing of. We also saw many Purple Swamphen (at least 12), some of them feeding on the golf course. A male Teal (*Anas crecca*) appeared near the hide and a Common Sandpiper (*Actitis hypoleucos*) was feeding nearby. Unfortunately, it was time to go. We still stopped near the green to have a closer look at the Swamphens.

Back at the minibus, we drove to the airport, stopping a couple of time to look at waders and Flamingos (*Phoenicopterus roseus*).

John and Barbara had already arrived and were waiting for us. Then, as they agreed, we went back to Ludo for a bit more birdwatching. We drove by the salt pans again but this time a few waders were feeding in the first one. Sanderlings (*Calidris alba*), Dunlins (*Calidris alpina*) and 2 Kentish Plovers (*Charadrius alexandrinus*) were together, allowing us to compare them: light grey plumage and straight bill for the Sanderling, brown plumage and longer bill for the Dunlin. The next stop was near a lagoon with many Coots, some Flamingos and Black-tailed Godwits (*Limosa limosa*). While we were watching these birds, some Cormorants (*Phalacrocorax carbo*) and White Storks (*Ciconia ciconia*) flew over our position. A duck among the Flamingos caught our attention: a male Red-crested Pochard (*Netta rufina*)! After these nice sightings, we moved forward, drove past the big pile of salt and stopped near a couple of lagoons with many waders and a gull roost. An Audouin's Gull (*Larus*

audouinii) was resting with Lesser Black-backed and Yellow-legged Gulls (*Larus michahellis*). The bird was easy to spot with its smaller size and red bill. A few Kentish Plovers were also resting near the gulls. Many waders were present in the other lagoon; Black-winged Stilts (*Himantopus himantopus*), Avocets (*Recurvirostra avosetta*), Dunlins, Redshanks, Black-tailed Godwits and 7 Ruffs (*Calidris pugnax*), these last ones pretty close to the road.

A group of waders landed in this lagoon, some of them close enough for us to have a good look at them. Several Little Stints (*Calidris minuta*) were feeding near a Sanderling. This was a good opportunity to see how much smaller Little Stints are. They also have a smaller bill and are browner than the Sanderlings. At the same time, a Flamingo and a Spoonbill (*Platalea leucorodia*) flew over us. The light was going down so it was time to go. We went towards the golf course to turn



around, but still looking at the ponds on both sides of the road. John found a Common Chiffchaff (*Phylloscopus collybita*) and looking at the last pool which had a few waders, I saw something looking interesting but we had to park because a car was coming behind us. We left the minibus by the golf course and walked back to the pool. The interesting wader was a Spotted Redshank (*Tringa erythropus*). We saw this bird well and next to Redshanks so we could compare them. The Spotted Redshank had a longer beak and was more elegant. Black-winged Stilts, Sanderlings, Dunlins, a Black-tailed Godwit and a Green Sandpiper (*Tringa ochropus*) were also feeding in this pond.

It was then time to leave. We came back to the minibus and started driving back to Cruzinha. Leaving the area, we had a look at big trees where Storks and Cormorants were roosting together. We enjoyed a nice sunset on the road.

Back at Cruzinha, John and Barbara met with Charles and Eileen and with the A Rocha staff and we had the first of a long series of good dinners.

Monday, 14 March – Sagres

After a good night's sleep, the birdwatching group headed to the end of the world! Cape St Vincent, in Sagres, is the most south-western point of Europe so ancient people believed the world ended here. We left at 8:30 under a nice blue sky.

On the way, we saw some Storks on their nest and a Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*) on the back of a cow.

Our first stop was at Sagres, at Ponta da Atalaia. The first species seen was a White Wagtail (*Motacilla alba*) on the car park. After a "comfort stop", we started walking towards the land mark. Some Sawfly Orchids (*Ophrys tenthredinifera*) were growing on the side of the track. While Charles was photographing these plants, John

found 2 males and a female Stonechat (*Saxicola rubicola*). Charles spotted a Kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*) hunting in the distance and closer to us, a Zitting Cisticola (*Cisticola juncidis*) perched on a bush. A Linnet (*Carduelis cannabina*) flew in front of us and landed on a rock. While we were enjoying the views of this bird, 2 Thekla Larks (*Galerida theklae*) appeared nearby and we had great views of these birds too. Suddenly, all the passerines started alarming and flying away. The reason for this panic was a Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*) flying low and showing well. Before going on the boardwalk, we looked at a small bird perched on it: a Black Redstart (*Phoenicurus ochruros*). We continued towards the trig point looking at Thekla Larks and a Kestrel.

From there, we saw many Gannets (*Morus bassanus*) passing at sea and a group of 9 Scoters (*Melanitta nigra*). A Cormorant flew over our position and a Shag (*Phalacrocorax aristotelis*) was heading towards the harbour. A Sardinian Warbler (*Sylvia melanocephala*) showed for a few seconds, as usual, in the bushes nearby.

As few species were showing up, we starting walking back to the car park. The Peregrine flew near us again and a couple of butterflies were in the air as the temperatures warmed up: a Clouded Yellow (*Colias crocea*) and a Swallowtail (*Papilio machaon*). While looking at these insects, a Sardinian Warbler perched on top of a bush long enough for us to see it well.

Then, we headed to Cabranosa, one of the best spots to watch raptor migration in autumn. We took a dirt track and saw more Thekla Larks and Linnets on the way. We stopped to have a coffee break and looked at a Buzzard (*Buteo buteo*) soaring in front of the minibus.

We walked to the view point along the sheltered side of the pine hedge and heard a Wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*) singing. When we reached the pinewood, we looked around but only saw a Stonechat while a Robin (*Erithacus rubecula*) was calling. Two Choughs (*Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*) flew over us but quite high. A bit further, a Stonechat was singing and Greenfinches (*Carduelis chloris*) feeding on the ground. We spotted 4 Red-rumped Swallows (*Cecropis daurica*) in flight and a Short-toed Snake Eagle (*Circaetus gallicus*) but this one was a bit far. A male Sardinian Warbler showed up only a few seconds, but this was enough for Charles to take a

couple of picture. When we reached the view point, the Red-rumped Swallows were flying closer and we even saw a Crag Martin (*Ptyonoprogne rupestris*). The Short-toed Snake Eagle showed up again, this time nearer. A big flock of Goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*) was flying around with a few Chaffinches (*Fringilla coelebs*). We stayed a little while but since nothing else was appearing, we started walking back to the minibus. On the way, we saw some Hoop Petticoat Daffodils



(*Narcissus bulbocodium*) and a flock of about 30 Choughs in the distance.

We drove to the picnic place and had our lunch in a sheltered spot, along the pine hedge leading to Cabranosa. We saw several Goldfinches during our copious and delicious meal. We looked around before leaving and found a Little Owl (*Athene noctua*) perched on an unfinished building in the distance

We then went to Cape St Vincent. We had a look at the sea where more Gannets were flying and found another group of Scoters but distant. Some of us used this stop to do some shopping. John, Barbara and I looked at a small group of Yellow-legged Gulls interested in food leftovers and found a bird carrying a plastic coded ring. This bird came from Gibraltar, according to the code.

We stopped at Beliche fort where we saw more Yellow-legged Gulls on the car park. We went behind the fort and found a Blue Rock Thrush (*Monticola solitarius*). Unfortunately this bird was a bit far and we could not get closer.

We had a drink in a local café before continuing. We went back to Cruzinha via Vale Santo. We stopped at the beginning of the track to look at a Buzzard and a Kestrel and then at a flock of Spotless Starlings (*Sturnus unicolor*). Many Corn Buntings (*Emberiza calandra*) were feeding a few metres ahead, and some of them were perched closed to the road. This was a great opportunity for pictures and Charles made good use of it while we waited for tourists to move their car from the middle of the track where it was parked! We also looked for Little Bustards (*Tetrax tetrax*) but could not find any. We passed by an old farm where a Little Owl was perched on the roof. We had great views of this bird but when we were in a good position for pictures, it flew away! We stopped a bit further on. A Skylark (*Alauda arvensis*) was singing and White Wagtails and Thekla Larks were feeding on the ground. We found a male Northern (Hen) Harrier (*Circus cyaneus*) which showed well and spotted a second one when we left. Passing in front of the old farm, the Little Owl was back on the roof. This time, it was possible to take some pictures of this bird.



We resumed our trip and stopped to look at Thekla Larks and Linnets. The rest of the trip towards Vila do Bispo was quiet until we found another male Northern Harrier quite close to the car and a group of 10 Cattle Egrets feeding near an excavator.

We drove back to Cruzinha but stopped at Odiaxere to take pictures of the Storks nesting close to the road. Looking at the nests, we found a different bird. It took us a little while to realize it was a Griffon Vulture (*Gyps fulvus*) sitting on a Stork nest! We got closer to the tree where the nest was and everybody managed to see

this bird. After a moment, it flew away, mobbed by Storks and landed on another nest.

The rest of the trip to Mexilhoeira Grande was slow due to road works but we were all on time for a great dinner.

Tuesday, 15 March – Monchique Hills

After spending a day on the coast, Monchique offered a totally different landscape and habitat. We left around 10:00 under a grey sky but Monchique was out of the clouds. Our party was one member larger on that day as Robin accompanied us.

We went to Foia, the highest point (902 m) and saw many Storks on the way. At the top, the sky was still grey and it was windy when we arrived. We spotted a male Blue Rock Thrush as soon as we stepped out of the minibus. This bird showed well, perched on a rock and we had much better views than the previous day. We walked a few metres away from the car park to a viewpoint but the visibility was bad.

We started walking along a small road and found a Ring Ouzel (*Turdus torquatus*) perched on a fence but it flew away before everybody saw it, so we went after this bird. Unfortunately, every time we got closer to this bird, it flew further away, until it landed in an open space between bushes where it started feeding. That way, we all had good views of it, feeding on the ground. From the same spot, we heard a Wren and saw a Stonechat. After this nice sighting, we went back to the top because a Rock Bunting (*Emberiza cia*) was calling when we first found the Ring Ouzel. First, we spotted 3 Meadow Pipits (*Anthus pratensis*) but the Rock Bunting was still hiding. It was still calling so it could not be very far. Finally, Charles found 2 very close to us, but they flew away after a few seconds. We stayed around a little while in case they came back but without success.

We drove down the mountain and checked another area for Ring Ouzel and Rock Bunting near a big pond. There, a Wren was singing and more Stonechats were flying around. Robin found a Buzzard soaring and 2 noisy Jays (*Garrulus glandarius*) flew into a pinewood. We heard a Green Woodpecker (*Picus viridis*) and

a flock of Spotless Starlings flew over our heads. Just after that, a flock of 10 House Martins (*Delichon urbicum*) appeared. Two Red-rumped Swallows were also part of the flock so we could see the differences between the two species: long tail streamers for the red-rumped Swallow and orangey rump.

As not many birds were around, we decided to explore a new area, more opened. However, this place was very quiet besides a Jay calling. A Short-toed Treecreeper (*Certhia brachydactyla*) appeared briefly but we heard it well. A



Great Spotted Woodpecker was also drumming nearby. We started feeling drops of water so we decided to move on but at the same time, we found 2 Green Woodpeckers on a dead trunk. We had great views of them through the telescope and 2 Crested Tits (*Lophophanes cristatus*) flew near us but we only had a glimpse of them.

We went to Caldas de Monchique, a small thermal village for lunch, but the weather was getting worse. Fortunately, the rain stopped as we reached the town.

On the way to the picnic table, we spotted a Grey Wagtail (*Motacilla cinerea*). We had lunch under big trees, listening to the running water of the stream, Blackcaps (*Sylvia atricapilla*) and Great Tits (*Parus major*). By the end of the meal, it started raining again.

After lunch, we walked towards the chapel as it is a sheltered spot but few birds were around so we went to the centre of the town for a well-deserved drink at a café. We sat inside not far from the fire place and enjoyed a hot drink.

Then, we came back to Cruzinha, stopping at a pottery shop on the way. While some were purchasing, others looked at the birds around. We saw a Blue Tit and heard a Great Tit (*Cyanistes caeruleus*).

On the way, we stopped at another place looking for Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*). We saw 21 in total; some of them quite close besides the rain. A Cattle Egret, 7 Storks and 2 Mallards (*Anas platyrhynchos*) were also present.

Back at the Yellow House, everybody warmed and dried up. We had dinner at Cruzinha and everybody got ready for the coming big day.

Wednesday, 16 March – Castro Verde

Wednesday was the longest day of the week in terms of time spent on the field. The Castro Verde area has a totally different landscape from the Algarve and different birds as well...

We left quite early (about 8:00) to be in the field early. The sky was blue and the day seemed to be good. We saw some Jays and many Storks and nests before reaching Castro Verde. The first bird of prey of the day was a Black Kite (*Milvus migrans*) seen before reaching Ourique. We were controlled by the police before getting to Castro Verde and as everything was in order, we resumed our trip.

When we arrived at Castro Verde, we drove along a small road leading to the LPN (Liga para a Proteção da Natureza) reserve (also called Vale Gonçalves) centre. The first species seen on that track were Storks and Corn Bunting (Eileen's favourite bird). We made use of a higher spot on the road to have a look around. A Crested Lark (*Galerida cristata*) was singing and we saw more Corn Buntings. A Carrion Crow (*Corvus corone*) was sitting in a tree on



the other side of the road. I found a female Northern Harrier but it landed and disappeared before everybody saw it. A flock of small falcons was hunting in the distance, possibly Lesser Kestrels (*Falco naumanni*). As few birds were around, we decided to move on but Charles found a Raven (*Corvus corax*). We had good views of this bird flying and perched. A Crow mobbed it and we could see the difference in size between the two species. It flew to an electric pole where it started calling. After that, a Red Kite appeared and flew by us before we found a Cinereous Vulture (*Aegypius monachus*). This bird was a bit distant but we had good views. With all these birds appearing in a few minutes, things were warming-up! A female Northern Harrier showed-up and flushed the one seen earlier, leading to some fight in the air between these 2 birds.

After these great observations, we moved to the next stop, seeing Stonechats, Corn Bunting and a Magpie (*Pica pica*) on the way. The second stop was from a high spot overlooking a pond but it was less productive so we continued towards Vale Gonçalves. On the dirt track leading to the centre, we saw House Sparrows (*Passer domesticus*), Meadow Pipits, Carrion Crows and more Corn Buntings. At the centre, we had a quick chat with the LPN workers and friends and gave a donation to help them to continue with their great work in the area.

We had a coffee before walking around the land at the centre. John and I saw a male Marsh Harrier (*Circus aeruginosus*) during the coffee break. We started walking and our first stop was in front of a tower where Lesser Kestrels nest. Nest-boxes have been installed for this species and we had good views of them sitting and flying and even heard them. A flock of Jackdaws (*Corvus monedula*) arrived at the tower and tried to occupy the nests but were chased by the Kestrels. We walked further and stopped again to look at a Corn Bunting and met with another group of birdwatchers. We shared our sightings and resumed our walk, stopping for millipedes and caterpillars. A Stork was feeding in a field and a flock of Linnets flew past us. Several Calandra Larks were singing in the air and sometimes difficult to see. However, we saw the distinct characteristics of this species: big size, black underwing with a white trailing edge. A Southern Grey Shrike (*Lanius meridionalis*) sitting on a fence let us have a good look at it. We stopped next to 2 big Eucalyptus

where a big charm of Goldfinches was very noisy but we hardly saw any. We stopped near old farm buildings. Many Lesser Kestrels and Barn Swallows were flying around and calling. We looked at the field nearby but no birds were in sight, however we spotted a Great Bustard (*Otis tarda*) in the distance. Only the bird's head was visible and we hoped for better views later during the day. Scanning the other fields, we found a big flock of Linnets and Goldfinch and a Hoopoe



(*Upupa epops*) while looking at a Buzzard. We decided to come back to the centre to have lunch. We saw few species but passing by the tower, we heard a Quail (*Coturnix coturnix*). At the same time, a Red Kite flew near us. A few metres ahead, a Chiffchaff was singing.

We had lunch at one of the picnic tables listening to the Quail. After lunch, we drove towards Entradas and stopped by a lagoon. Unfortunately it was dry so we moved on. From a high spot, we scanned the surroundings and found a group of 18 Great Bustards. When we stepped out of the minibus, 2 Short-toed Eagles flew over us. The Bustards were a bit far away but it was a better view than in the morning. Some males were displaying. While looking at these birds, a flock of 30 more passed in flight and then another group of 9! What a stop! We resumed the trip and tried to have better views of this flock which turned out to be 25 birds instead of 18. We

drove on a dirt track, hoping for more of these big birds. We found a small group which disappeared quickly. We stopped on another high point and saw 2 Little Bustards in the distance. We came closer with the minibus but they flew, landed on the same spot but were not visible anymore. Looking for a place to turn around, we flushed a Great Spotted Cuckoo (*Clamator glandarius*). This bird perched on a fence in front of the minibus where it stayed for a few minutes, letting us enjoy its sight. It then flew and landed on a pile of rocks. Two Lesser Kestrels were flying around.



We turned around and headed towards the main road. Driving past the field where we saw the Great Bustards, 2 Little Bustards were displaying. It was a closer view than earlier and we flushed a male Northern Harrier pretty close. Back on the tarmac road, a bird in a field caught our attention: another male Northern Harrier which took off and flew near the minibus. Further, 2 Red-legged Partridges (*Alectoris rufa*) flew from the road side but not everybody saw them. As we were driving further from the village, the landscape started changing, with more trees. We stopped near a river where we flushed 2 more Partridges and a Green Sandpiper when we arrived. A Short-toed Eagle flew over and a male Sardinian Warbler perched in view and started singing. We continued our journey but when we crossed the bridge, the Green Sandpiper appeared again and stayed a couple a minutes, time for everybody to have a look at it. A Greenshank (*Tringa nebularia*) was feeding in another pond ahead and a flock of Azure-winged Magpies (*Cyanopica cyanus*) flew across the road in front of us. Barbara found 2 more Red-legged Partridges before we reached another village and this time everybody saw them. We also saw another Green Sandpiper in a pond at the entrance of the village.



There, we stopped to look at the many Stork nests along the road. We looked for Spanish Sparrows (*Passer hispaniolensis*) but did not manage to see any. We had a drink looking at Stonechats, Storks and a Red Kite which was flying low. As we left, 2 Pallid Swifts (*Apus pallidus*) appeared our first of the year!

We drove towards a vantage point, seeing many Spotless Starlings, Corn Buntings and Southern Grey

Shrikes perched on the wires on the way. Half-way through our journey, we stopped to look at 6 Great Bustards and 6 Cattle Egrets in a field with cattle.

From the hill, the view was great and we enjoyed it. Scanning the fields, we found 28 more Great Bustards. As few other birds were around, we started going down the hill. We drove past a pond where 2 Mallards and a Grey Heron (*Ardea cinerea*) flew away as we approached. A Little Owl was perched on an old farm building and we found a Southern Grey Shrike sitting on a fence before reaching the national road and coming back to Castro Verde. Even though stopping on this road is difficult, we had to as we found another flock of about 20 Great Bustards.

We came back to Castro Verde for dinner, seeing flocks of Cattle Egrets going to roost on the way. We ate at a local restaurant where we had local produce: black pork and Alentejo's wine. We had a quick sighting of a Hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*) on the drive back. We arrived at the Yellow House around 22:30, all very tired after an enjoyable day, so everybody went to bed.

Thursday, 17 March – Open Day at Cruzinha and Lagoa dos Salgados

As Thursday is Cruzinha's open day, everybody could enjoy the activities taking place at the centre: moth identification and bird ringing demonstration. A good variety of birds were caught in the morning: Greenfinch, House Sparrow, Blackcap, Serin (*Serinus serinus*), Goldfinch, Blackbird (*Turdus merula*) and Hoopoe. The activities stopped at 13:00 and we had a delicious meal outside.

After lunch, we went to one of the richest but still threatened Algarvian wetlands: Lagoa dos Salgados. It is usually good for waders, ducks and herons. When we arrived, we saw that the lagoon had been drained a few days before so it was good for waders and a rare species had been spotted a few days before too!

We parked by the beach, in front of a patch of Mirror Orchids (*Ophrys speculum*). We walked to the "bird hide" and were soon joined by Barbara and Riley, regular volunteers at A Rocha and by a local birdwatcher.

We sat in front of the hide and started looking at the many birds present. As the southern part of the lagoon was almost dry, many waders, ducks and gulls were using it. In front of the hide, in a mixed flock of Lesser Black-backed, Yellow-legged and Black-headed Gulls (*Larus ridibundus*), we found 2 Audouin's Gulls. Several

species of wading ducks were feeding in the puddles: Mallards, Shovelers and Teals. A good diversity of waders was also present: Common Sandpiper, Redshank, Sanderling, Kentish and Ringed Plovers (*Charadrius hiaticula*), Black-winged Stilt, Avocet and Black-tailed Godwit. Charles found a Bluethroat (*Luscinia svecica*) near the hide which was going back and forth between the vegetation and the edge of a puddle. Unfortunately, it was not a breeding male and this bird had almost no blue on the throat. A few Chiffchaffs were feeding in the bushes near the hide and Blackbirds and Corn Buntings were singing. We had great views of Spoonbills and White Storks and saw many Coots and Moorhens (*Gallinula chloropus*). A Little Grebe was feeding in front of the hide and looking at this bird Charles found a Snipe (*Gallinago gallinago*). A Yellow-legged Gull was carrying a red ring but unfortunately was too far to be read. A female Marsh Harrier flying over the lagoon flushed most of the birds. This was the occasion for us to see Glossy Ibis and one landed near the reedbed in the open. Two Sandwich Terns (*Sterna sandvicensis*) were sitting with Black-headed Gulls. Looking at these birds, we found the Marsh Harrier sitting on an island.

The water level in the northern part of the lagoon was higher, so more diving species were present: Little Grebes and Pochards mostly. Some Flamingos were also bathing there. Many Barn Swallows were perched in the bushes near the lagoon and even on the fence in front of the hide. After a lot of searching, we finally found the rare species seen the previous days: a male Ring-necked Duck (*Aythya collaris*). Unfortunately this bird was diving all the time and its observation was difficult. However, we also found a female which let us have a better look at. As we were leaving for the boardwalk, a group of about 10 Flamingos appeared in front of the hide, feeding. They stayed a little while and walked away.



After this great sighting, we went to the boardwalk to have a different view of the lagoon. Barbara stayed at the minibus to rest and Charles and Eileen went to see the sea before joining us. John and I saw a couple of Crested Larks by the side of the boardwalk. Further on we looked again at the lagoon but the only new species spotted was a Grey Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*). In the reedbed, a Cetti's Warbler (*Cettia cetti*) was singing and then 2 Sandwich Terns flew over us. By the end of the lagoon, we looked for Purple Swamphen but without success. A Kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*) flew along the opposite bank of the lagoon. This bird perched in a bush but its observation was a bit difficult. A Snipe was feeding near us and John saw a Southern Water Vole (*Arvicola sapidus*) for a few seconds before it disappeared in the vegetation. We walked a bit more to see the area in front of us from a different angle and we found 2 Purple Swamphens walking on the opposite bank. We had found

another bird we were looking for so we could go back to the car park. On the way, we met with Charles and Eileen. We showed them the Kingfisher which was more visible and a Purple Swamphen walking towards the golf course. Before reaching the car park, we stopped to look again at a Grey Plover and an Ibis and saw more Crested Larks.

On the dirt track leaving the lagoon, we stopped to look at a couple of Cattle Egrets on the roadside when Barbara found a Little Owl perched on a bush. This bird did not move the all time we were staring at it.

We came back to Cruzinha, after this great birding afternoon, and had a lovely dinner.

Friday, 18 March – Silves

This day was more cultural and we did less birdwatching. We headed to Silves, the old capital of the Algarve under a grey sky.

In Silves, we parked behind the castle and saw several Storks on nest on the way. While looking at these birds, we heard a Blackcap singing in an Almond Tree and managed to have good views of this bird. We passed the cathedral on the way to the castle. There, a big statue of Don Sancho I stands in front of the entrance door. He conquered Silves from the Moors in 1189.

In the castle, we first walked around the wall. Then we had a look at the exhibition about the Iberian Lynx in the old cistern. After this visit, we walked to the archaeological museum. It keeps items from different periods, mostly from Moorish times (the ceramics collection being one of the largest in Portugal). The museum was built along the Medina quarter wall and is organized around the Arabic cistern-well. This was part of a construction built to provide water to the city and is quite unique as there is only a similar one in Egypt. We finished the visit by having a look at the city from the Medina quarter wall. From there, we saw many other White Storks, some quite close.

We came back to the minibus, and drove to a viewpoint on the Iberian Lynx Breeding Centre in the hills north of Silves. We had our picnic there but again it started raining before the end of the meal.

Walking towards the viewpoint, we looked at the many plants: 3 species of Cistus, Lavender, Cork Oak (*Quercus suber*), Strawberry Tree (*Arbutus unedo*) and Cornflag (*Gladiolus communis*). John found an Iberian Lynx (*Lynx pardinus*) almost as soon as we entered the “hide”. We saw it pretty well as it was walking around the enclosure. During the next minutes, we saw 2 more.



We came back to Cruzinha driving along the river where we saw more Storks. Azure-winged Magpies showed-up while we were driving on the track to Cruzinha.

Saturday, 19 March – Ria de Alvor



I picked-up the party around 8:30 and the weather was sunny but threatening clouds were in sight. We drove to the Ria de Alvor marsh. From the car park, we looked at the Flamingos and Black-winged Stilts, quite close. One of the Flamingos was carrying a coded plastic ring, from Spain. Around us, many Barn Swallows were flying and we heard a Robin and a Sardinian Warbler.

We started walking on the dyke but stopped quickly as a bird flying low over the marsh caught our attention: a Short-eared Owl (*Asio flammeus*)! Soon, a second one

appeared and they interacted in flight before landing. One was a bit far, the other, found by Barbara, much closer. The tide was coming in so the chance of seeing many birds was getting bigger. A few people were cockling in the estuary. In the marsh, John found a Stonechat perched on a bush and we heard a Yellow Wagtail (*Motacilla flava*). It showed a few seconds before hiding behind a bush. This bird was playing hide and seek with us but everybody saw it. At the same time, an Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) flew over the marsh and we all had great views of it. The Yellow Wagtail we had difficulties in seeing decided to perch on top of a bush and showed up very well! That is when it started raining but it seemed to be much worse over Lagos. Three Sandwich Terns flew near us, their white plumage contrasting with the dark clouds. In the estuary a mixed group of Yellow-legged and Lesser Black-backed Gulls was sharing a sand bar with Cormorants. On another one, slowly disappearing, 8 Oystercatchers, a Sandwich and a Caspian Tern (*Hydroprogne caspia*) were getting closer and closer. The Caspian Tern was showing well, and we could see it was much bigger than the Sandwich Tern, almost the same size as an Oystercatcher. On a close by sandbar, a male and a female Kentish Plover were resting, allowing us to see their sexual dimorphism. We also compared their plumage with the Ringed Plover as a lonely one was in the marsh.

Near a seashell farm, we looked on the other side of the river where many waders were resting: Dunlins, Sanderlings, Ringed and a Grey Plover. We walked along the river. Sandwich Terns were sitting on posts out of the water each one had its own. We found more Flamingos and 2 Glossy Ibis in the marsh but they were distant so we went closer. We had good views of a group of Little Egrets, Grey Plovers and Dunlins resting as the tide was coming in. We reached old saltpans which were dry. From there, we could see Mexilhoeira Grande which was in the sun.

The last bit of track was a bit muddy. No birds were in sight in the field north of the marsh but on the other track of the path, we had close views of a Redshank. We got closer of the Ibis and Flamingos and had great views. The Ibis was feeding with a Black-winged Stilt. After a while, it flew away and came back to the same spot. By the end of the track, a bird perched on the fence made us stop: a Woodchat Shrike

(*Lanius senator*), the first of the season! Unfortunately it flew before everybody had a good look at it but Charles found it back on a bush. Everybody had good views and it flew again back on the fence but a bit further. Two Linnets (a male and a female) sat near the shrike before being substituted by a Meadow Pipit. As we reached the end of the track, 2 cars passed carrying a groom and a bride for a photo shoot, a rare sighting at the marsh!



Back at the minibus, while some were cleaning their shoes, others had a quick look at a Robin or at the future married couple. We came back to Cruzinha on a different road. We saw 2 Partridges and a Kestrel on the way. Driving by the fish farms, we looked at all the Cormorants perched on wires. Further, a Hoopoe landed in front of the minibus with its prey and fought a bit with it before swallowing it, and then 2 more flew over the track. Before reaching Cruzinha, we saw Spotless Starlings and Azure-winged Magpies. There, people were getting ready for the wedding.

We had a light lunch and came back to Mexilhoeira where the birdwatching party would have a free afternoon, while I would be attending the wedding. They even had the chance to see their guide dressed in a fancy way (and without his binoculars)!

Sunday, 20 March – Free day

No activities were planned for this day.

Monday, 21 March – Ludo and departure

For the last day, I picked up the group at the Yellow House and we all went to Cruzinha for a last breakfast. We left Cruzinha after the traditional goodbyes and watching Pallid Swifts flying above the garden. Mel, the famous A Rocha film maker, accompanied us to Faro where she had a plane to catch, like John and Barbara. I dropped them at the airport and went to Ludo with Charles and Eileen.

There, we first crossed a pinewood and we passed quickly next to the saltpans as they were dried and no birds were in sight. We did a short halt near a lagoon usually good for sighting ducks. On one side of the road, Coots, a male Red-crested Pochard, Little Grebes, Gadwalls (*Anas strepera*), Shovelers and a Purple Swamphen were visible. Many Storks were in the nearby trees and some in flight. Barn Swallows were flying above the lagoon and a Cetti's Warbler was singing in the reedbed. On the other side of the road Flamingos, Coots and 2 Great Crested Grebes (*Podiceps cristatus*) were sharing a lagoon. While scanning the vegetation on the bank, we found a Purple Heron (*Ardea purpurea*) which showed well.

We passed a big pile of salt and more saltpans where we stopped. Many waders were feeding in one of the tanks. We found 6 species: Curlew Sandpiper

(*Calidris ferruginea*), Little Stint, Sanderling, Dunlin, Redshank and Ruff. The Curlew Sandpipers showed well. We could see they were taller than the Dunlins, with a longer and more curved bill. Also it was pretty obvious the Little Stints were smaller than the other species present. We walked along the next tanks which hold the same species. On the other side of the track, a male Kentish Plover was alarming and let us look at it. The others tanks were empty of birds but we had nice views of a group of Iberian Pond Turtles (*Mauremys leprosa*) sunbathing. I went back to the minibus and met with Charles and Eileen near the golf course.

We walked along a track between big eucalyptuses to another lagoon. There, many Coots were present. On the near bank, a Grey Heron was resting with Black-winged Stilts and Gadwalls. Charles spotted a Cetti's Warbler but it flew away before everybody saw it. We walked back to the minibus and decided to go to the hide before lunch.



We walked along the golf course to the hide. We passed in front of roman ruins and reached a spot with interesting flowers. However, we heard thunder and a heavy shower was possible so we moved to the hide to be sheltered. On the way, Charles found a small flock of Serins feeding on the green. At the hide, the weather was not so threatening anymore so we looked at the lagoon from outside the hide. A Purple Swamphen and a Glossy Ibis were feeding close by, allowing us amazing views. Many Iberian Pond Turtles were sunbathing. Many ducks were visible from this point:

Mallards, Gadwalls, Shovelers, Common and Red-crested Pochards, Tufted Ducks. We entered the hide and tried both the ground and first floor. We had a nice view of a male Black-headed Weaver by its nest. Many Purple Swamphens were in sight as well as Coots and Moorhens. Both species of Grebes were present, some of them displaying. Red-crested Pochards were displaying too, some of them even mating. Males Mallards were very active. At some point, 9 males were displaying around a single female. Three Audouin's Gulls were resting in a flock of Yellow-legged and Lesser Black Backed Gulls. Several times Azure-winged Magpies flew in front of the hide. In the distance, we saw a Stork nest on top of an antenna disguised as a pine tree. Lunch time was approaching and I went back to the minibus to get our lunch.

I looked at the lagoon when I came back and found a Little Bittern (*Ixobrychus minutus*) showing well. I ran into the hide to call Charles and Eileen but when we arrived, this bird was hidden in the reeds. We waited a little while and it showed again, hunting. We had lunch by the lagoon, hearing Cetti's Warbler and watching Azure-winged Magpies and Chiffchaffs flying around.

We went back into the hide after lunch. Many Purple Swamphens were feeding on the green. We saw again the Little Bittern, flying from a patch of reeds to another before disappearing. Many Iberian and European Pond Turtles (*Emys orbicularis*) were sunbathing near ducks. We watched closely a Glossy Ibis trying to eat a crayfish. It took this bird a little while but it eventually managed! A male and female Little Bittern showed up on top of a patch of reeds. The female flew just after we found them but the male stayed longer, preening. A male Black-headed Weaver appeared nearby and it was possible to see Little Bittern, Black-headed Weaver and Purple Swamphen in the same frame! At that time, we had seen all the birds present so we decided to walk back to the minibus.



We stopped again near the lagoon outside the hide. We had close views of a Yellow Wagtail, a Snipe and an Ibis. Another Ibis arrived with a Common Sandpiper. Further away, we saw Waxbills (*Estrilda astrild*) feeding on the green with House Sparrows and stopped again near the interesting flowers.

Back at the minibus, we drove past the salt pans where some Flamingos were still present and then back to Cruzinha after another great birdwatching week.

List of species

- Gadwall (*Anas strepera*): seen at Lagoa dos Salgados and Ludo.
- Eurasian Teal (*Anas crecca*): seen at Lagoa dos Salgados and Ludo.
- Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*): seen at Morgado (2), Castro Verde (2 at Vale Gonçalvesinho, 2 at Nossa Senhora de Aracelis), Lagoa dos Salgados, Ria de Alvor and Ludo.
- Northern Shoveler (*Anas clypeata*): seen at Lagoa dos Salgados and Ludo.
- Red-crested Pochard (*Netta rufina*): seen at Ludo.
- Common Pochard (*Aythya ferina*): seen at Lagoa dos Salgados and Ludo.
- Ring-necked Duck (*Aythya collaris*): 2 (1 male and 1 female) at Lagoa dos Salgados.
- Tufted Duck (*Aythya fuligula*): seen at Ludo.
- Common Scoter (*Melanitta nigra*): seen at Sagres (9 from Ponta da Atalaia and 30 from cape St Vincent).
- Common Quail (*Coturnix coturnix*): heard at Castro Verde (1 at Vale Gonçalvesinho and 1 at Entradas).
- Red-legged Partridge (*Alectoris rufa*): seen at Castro Verde (2 at Entradas, 1 at São Marcos da Ataboeira), Lagoa dos Salgados (2) and Ria de Alvor (2).
- Little Grebe (*Tachybaptus ruficollis*): seen at Lagoa dos Salgados and Ludo.
- Great Crested Grebe (*Podiceps cristatus*): seen at Ludo.
- Northern Gannet (*Morus bassanus*): seen from Sagres (Ponta da Atalaia, cape St Vincent).
- Great Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*): seen at Sagres (2 from Ponta da Atalaia), Lagoa dos Salgados, Ria de Alvor and Ludo.
- European Shag (*Phalacrocorax aristotelis*): 1 at Sagres (Ponta da Atalaia).
- Little Bittern (*Ixobrychus minutus*): 4 (3males and 1 female) at Ludo.



- Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*): seen at Raposeira, Sagres (10 at Vale Santo), Morgado (1), Castro Verde (3 at Nossa Senhora de Aracelis), Lagoa dos Salgados (5) and Silves.

- Little Egret (*Egretta garzetta*): seen at Lagoa dos Salgados (2), Ria de Alvor and Ludo.
- Grey Heron (*Ardea cinerea*): seen at Sagres (1 at Vale Santo), Castro Verde (1 at Nossa Senhora de Aracelis), Lagoa dos Salgados and Ludo.
- Purple Heron (*Ardea purpurea*): 1 at Ludo.
- White Stork (*Ciconia ciconia*): seen at Sagres (2 at Vale Santo), Odiaxere, on the way to Monchique, at Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalves, Entradas, São Marcos da Ataboeira), Lagoa dos Salgados, Silves and Ludo.
- Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*): seen at Morgado (21), Lagoa dos Salgados, Ria de Alvor (2) and Ludo (2).
- Eurasian Spoonbill (*Platalea leucorodia*): seen at Lagoa dos Salgados and Ludo.
- Greater Flamingo (*Phoenicopterus roseus*): seen at Lagoa dos Salgados, Ria de Alvor and Ludo.
- Black Kite (*Milvus migrans*): 1 on the way to Castro Verde.
- Red Kite (*Milvus milvus*): seen at Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalves, Entradas, São Marcos da Ataboeira).
- Griffon Vulture (*Gyps fulvus*): 1 at Odiaxere.



- Cinereous Vulture (*Aegypius monachus*): 1 at Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalves).
- Short-toed Snake Eagle (*Circaetus gallicus*): 1 at Sagres (Cabrasosa) and 2 at Castro Verde (Entradas).
- Western Marsh Harrier (*Circus aeruginosus*): 1 male at Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalves) and 1 female at Lagoa dos Salgados.
- Northern Harrier (*Circus cyaneus*): 3 males at Sagres (Vale Santo) and 4 at Castro Verde (2 females at Vale Gonçalves and 2 males at Entradas).
- Common Buzzard (*Buteo buteo*): 3 at Sagres (1 at Cabranoa, 2 at Vale Santo), 1 at Monchique (Foia) and 2 at Castro Verde (1 at Vale Gonçalves and 1 at Entradas).
- Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*): 1 at Ria de Alvor.
- Lesser Kestrel (*Falco naumanni*): seen at Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalves, Entradas).

- Kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*): 5 at Sagres (2 at Ponta da Atalaia, 1 at Cabranosa, 2 at Vale Santo), 1 at Castro Verde (1 at Entradas), 1 at Lagoa dos Salgados and 1 at Ria de Alvor.
- Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*): 1 at Sagres (Ponta da Atalaia).
- Moorhen (*Gallinula chloropus*): seen at Lagoa dos Salgados and Ludo.
- Purple Swamphen (*Porphyrio porphyrio*): seen at Lagoa dos Salgados (2) and Ludo.
- Coot (*Fulica atra*): seen at Lagoa dos Salgados and Ludo.
- Little Bustard (*Tetrax tetrax*): seen at Castro Verde (4 at Entradas).
- Great Bustard (*Otis tarda*): seen at Castro Verde (1 at Vale Gonçálinho, 64 at Entradas and 34 at Nossa Senhora de Aracelis).



- Black-winged Stilt (*Himantopus himantopus*): seen at Lagoa dos Salgados, Ria de Alvor, and Ludo.
- Pied Avocet (*Recurvirostra avosetta*): seen at Lagoa dos Salgados and Ludo.
- Eurasian Oystercatcher (*Haematopus ostralegus*): 8 at Ria de Alvor.
- Grey Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*): seen at Lagoa dos Salgados and Ria de Alvor.
- Common Ringed Plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*): seen at Lagoa dos Salgados and Ria de Alvor.
- Kentish Plover (*Charadrius alexandrinus*): seen at Lagoa dos Salgados, Ria de Alvor and Ludo.
- Whimbrel (*Numenius phaeopus*): 1 at Ria de Alvor.
- Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*): seen at Lagoa dos Salgados (2) and Ludo.
- Ruff (*Calidris pugnax*): 7 at Ludo.
- Curlew Sandpiper (*Calidris ferruginea*): seen at Ludo.
- Sanderling (*Calidris alba*): seen at Lagoa dos Salgados, Ria de Alvor and Ludo.
- Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*): seen at Ria de Alvor and Ludo.
- Little Stint (*Calidris minuta*): seen at Ludo.
- Common Sandpiper (*Actitis hypoleucos*): seen at Lagoa dos Salgados, Ria de Alvor and Ludo

- Green Sandpiper (*Tringa ochropus*): 2 at Castro Verde (1 at Entradas, 1 at São Marcos da Ataboeira), 1 at Ludo.
- Spotted Redshank (*Tringa erythropus*): 1 at Ludo.
- Common Greenshank (*Tringa nebularia*): 1 at Casto Verde (Entradas).
- Common Redshank (*Tringa totanus*): seen at Lagoa dos Salgados, Ria de Alvor, and Ludo.
- Common Snipe (*Gallinago gallinago*): seen at Lagoa dos Salgados and Ludo. (1) and Ludo (1).
- Caspian Tern (*Hydroprogne caspia*): 1 at Ria de Alvor.
- Sandwich Tern (*Sterna sandvicensis*): 2 at Lagoa dos Salgados and 7 at Ria de Alvor.
- Black-headed Gull (*Larus ridibundus*): seen at Lagoa dos Salgados and Ludo.
- Audouin's Gull (*Larus audouinii*): seen at Lagoa dos Salgados (3) and Ludo.
- Mediterranean Gull (*Larus melanocephalus*): 2 at Lagoa dos Salgados.
- Lesser Black-backed Gull (*Larus fuscus*): seen at Sagres (Ponta da Atalaia, cape St Vincent), Lagoa dos Salgados, Ria de Alvor and Ludo.
- Yellow-legged Gull (*Larus michahellis*): seen at Sagres (Ponta da Atalaia, cape St Vincent), Lagoa dos Salgados, Ria de Alvor and Ludo.
- Common Wood Pigeon (*Columba palumbus*): seen at Castro Verde (Entradas).
- Eurasian Collared Dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*): seen at Castro Verde (Entradas, São Marcos da Ataboeira), Silves, Ria de Alvor and Ludo.
- Great Spotted Cuckoo (*Clamator glandarius*): 1 at Castro Verde (Entradas).



- Little Owl (*Athene noctua*): 2 at Sagres (1 at Cabranosa and 1 at Vale Santo), 2 at Castro Verde (1 at Vale Gonçalvesinho, 1 at Nossa Senhora de Aracelis) and 1 at Lagoa dos Salgados.
- Short-eared Owl (*Asio flammeus*): 2 at Ria de Alvor.
- Pallid Swift (*Apus pallidus*): 2 at Castro Verde (São Marcos da Ataboeira).
- Common Kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*): 1 at Lagoa dos Salgados.
- Hoopoe (*Upupa epops*): 1 at Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalvesinho), 1 at Cruzinha (ringing) and 3 at Ria de Alvor.

- European Green Woodpecker (*Picus viridis*): 2 at Monchique (Foia).



- Great Spotted Woodpecker (*Dendrocopos major*): 1 at Monchique (Foia).
- Calandra Lark (*Melanocorypha calandra*): seen at Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalves, Nossa Senhora de Aracelis).
- Crested Lark (*Galerida cristata*): seen at Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalves, Entradas), Lagoa dos Salgados, Ria de Alvor and Ludo.
- Thekla Lark (*Galerida theklae*): seen at Sagres (Ponta da Atalaia, Cabranosa, Vale Santo).
- Eurasian Skylark (*Alauda arvensis*): heard at Sagres (Vale Santo).
- Eurasian Crag Martin (*Ptyonoprogne rupestris*): 1 at Sagres (Cabranosa).
- Barn Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*): seen at Sagres (Ponta da Atalaia, Cabranosa, Vale Santo), Morgado, Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalves, Entradas), Lagoa dos Salgados, Silves, Ria de Alvor and Ludo.
- Common House Martin (*Delichon urbicum*) seen at Monchique (10 at Foia), Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalves, Entradas) and Ludo.
- Red-rumped Swallow (*Cecropis daurica*): seen at Sagres (4 at Cabranosa), Monchique (2 at Foia), Ria de Alvor and Ludo.
- Meadow Pipit (*Anthus pratensis*): seen at Sagres (Ponta da Atalaia, Cabranosa, Vale Santo), Monchique (Foia), Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalves, Entradas), Lagoa dos Salgados and Ria de Alvor.
- Yellow Wagtail (*Motacilla flava*): seen at Ria de Alvor (2) and Ludo.
- Grey Wagtail (*Motacilla cinerea*): 2 at Monchique (Caldas de Monchique).
- White Wagtail (*Motacilla alba*): 7 at Sagres (1 at Ponta da Atalaia and 6 at Vale Santo), 1 at Monchique (Caldas de Monchique) and 2 at Lagoa dos Salgados .
- Winter Wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*): heard at Sagres (1 at Cabranosa), Monchique and Silves (1).
- European Robin (*Erithacus rubecula*): 1 at Sagres (Cabranosa) and 1 at Ria de Alvor.
- Bluethroat (*Luscinia svecica*): 1 at Lagoa dos Salgados.

- Black Redstart (*Phoenicurus ochruros*): 1 at Sagres (Ponta da Atalaia) and 1 at Castro Verde (Vale Gonçálinho).
- European Stonechat (*Saxicola rubicola*): seen at Sagres (Ponta da Atalaia, Cabranosa, Vale Santo), Monchique (Foia), Castro Verde (Vale Gonçálinho, Entradas, São Marcos da Ataboeira) and Ria de Alvor.
- Blue Rock Thrush (*Monticola solitarius*): 1 male at Sagres (cape) and 1 male at Monchique (Foia).
- Ring Ouzel (*Turdus torquatus*): 2 at Monchique (Foia).
- Common Blackbird (*Turdus merula*): seen at Sagres (1 at Cabranosa), Monchique (Foia), Castro Verde (Vale Gonçálinho), Cruzinha (ringing), Lagoa dos Salgados and Ludo.
- Cetti's Warbler (*Cettia cetti*): heard at Lagoa dos Salgados and Ludo.
- Zitting Cisticola (*Cisticola juncidis*): seen at Sagres (Ponta da Atalaia, Vale Santo), Lagoa dos Salgados and Ria de Alvor.



- Sardinian Warbler (*Sylvia melanocephala*): seen at Sagres (Ponta da Atalaia, Cabranosa), Castro Verde (1 male at Entradas), Silves, Ria de Alvor and Ludo.
- Eurasian Blackcap (*Sylvia atricapilla*): seen at Monchique, Cruzinha (ringing) and Silves.
- Common Chiffchaff (*Phylloscopus collybita*): seen at Sagres (Ponta da Atalaia, Cabranosa), Castro Verde (1 at Vale Gonçálinho, 1 at Entradas), Lagoa dos Salgados and Ludo.
- Eurasian Blue Tit (*Cyanistes caeruleus*): seen at Monchique.
- Great Tit (*Parus major*): seen at Monchique (Caldas de Monchique) and Castro Verde (Entradas).
- European Crested Tit (*Lophophanes cristatus*): 2 at Monchique (Foia).
- Short-toed Treecreeper (*Certhia brachydactyla*): 1 at Monchique (Foia).
- Southern Grey Shrike (*Lanius meridionalis*): seen at Castro Verde (Vale Gonçálinho, São Marcos da Ataboeira, Nossa Senhora de Aracelis).
- Woodchat Shrike (*Lanius senator*): 1 at Ria de Alvor.

- Eurasian Jay (*Garrulus glandarius*): 2 at Monchique (Foia) and seen on the way to Castro Verde.
- Azure-winged Magpie (*Cyanopica cyanus*): seen at Castro Verde (Entradas), Ria de Alvor, on the way to Cruzinha and Ludo.
- Common Magpie (*Pica pica*): 1 at Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalvesinho).
- Red-billed Chough (*Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*): seen at Sagres (1 at Ponta da Atalaia, 32 at Cabranosa and 30 at Vale Santo).
- Western Jackdaw (*Corvus monedula*): seen at Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalvesinho).
- Carrion Crow (*Corvus corone*): seen at Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalvesinho, Entradas, São Marcos da Ataboeira).
- Northern Raven (*Corvus corax*): 3 at Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalvesinho).
- Spotless Starling (*Sturnus unicolor*): seen at Sagres (Vale Santo), Monchique (Foia), Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalvesinho, Entradas, São Marcos da Ataboeira), Ria de Alvor and Ludo.
- House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*): seen at Sagres (Vale Santo), Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalvesinho, São Marcos da Ataboeira), Cruzinha (ringing), Silves, Ria de Alvor and Ludo.
- Black-headed Weaver (*Ploceus melanocephalus*): seen at Ludo (nests).
- Common Waxbill (*Estrilda astrild*): seen at Ludo.
- Common Chaffinch (*Fringilla coelebs*): seen at Sagres (Cabranosa) and Monchique (Caldas de Monchique).
- European Serin (*Serinus serinus*): seen at Cruzinha (ringing) and Ludo.
- European Greenfinch (*Carduelis chloris*): seen at Sagres (Cabranosa), Monchique (Caldas de Monchique), Cruzinha (ringing) and Silves.
- European Goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*): seen at Sagres (Cabranosa), Monchique (Foia), Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalvesinho, Entradas), Cruzinha (ringing), Silves and Ludo.



- Common Linnet (*Carduelis cannabina*): seen at Sagres (Ponta da Atalaia, Cabranosa, Vale Santo), Monchique (Foia), Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalvesinho, Nossa Senhora de Araceis) and Ria de Alvor.

- Rock Bunting (*Emberiza cia*): 2 at Monchique (Foia).
- Corn Bunting (*Emberiza calandra*): seen at Sagres (Cabranosa, Vale Santo), Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalves, Entradas, Nossa Senhora de Aracelis), Lagoa dos Salgados and Ria de Alvor.

- Cork Oak (*Quercus suber*): seen at Monchique, Castro Verde and Silves.
- Strawberry Tree (*Arbutus unedo*): seen at Silves.
- Gum Cistus (*Cistus ladanifer*): seen at Silves.
- Hoop Petticoat Daffodil (*Narcissus bulbocodium*): seen at Sagres.
- Barbary Nut (*Gymandris sisyrinchium*): seen at Sagres.
- Cornflag (*Gladiolus communis*): seen at Silves.
- Cistanche (*Cistanche phelypaea*): seen at Ria de Alvor.
- Mirror Orchid (*Ophrys speculum*): seen at Lagoa dos Salgados.
- Sawfly Orchid (*Ophrys tenthredinifera*): seen at Sagres.



- Swallowtail (*Papilio machaon*): seen at Sagres.
- Clouded Yellow (*Colias crocea*): seen at Sagres.

- European Pond Turtle (*Emys orbicularis*): seen at Ludo.
- Spanish Pond Turtle (*Mauremys leprosa*): seen at Ludo.
- Large Psammmodromus (*Psammmodromus algirus*): seen at Sagres.

- Western Hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*): 1 on the way from Castro Verde.
- Southern Water Vole (*Arvicola sapidus*): 1 at Lagoa dos Salgados.

Photos

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Bird names according to Crochet P.-A., Joynt G. (2015). AERC list of Western Palearctic birds. July 2015 version.