

# Southern Portugal

**6-13 May 2017**  
**Laid-back birding**



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## Sunday, 6 May – Arrival and Ria de Alvor

For this “Laid-back” birdwatching week I drove to the airport with nice weather and picked-up Peter and Victor. We travelled back to Cruzinha (A Rocha Portugal field study centre), already seeing a Short-ted Eagle (*Circaetus gallicus*) and White Storks (*Ciconia ciconia*) from the motorway and Bee-eaters (*Merops apiaster*) on the track leading to Cruzinha. There, they met with Bébé and the volunteers (Emil, Bart and Ulf) and we had lunch.

After that, there was time to go the Yellow House (accommodation during the week) to unpack and relax before the first excursion of the week.

We had a look at the map in the exhibition room to have an idea of the area we were going to visit. As we walked past the kitchen, we saw a Serin (*Serinus serinus*) feeding on the ground. Leaving the property, we spotted a Little Owl (*Athene noctua*) perching on a post along the track, a nice sighting. Many Bee-eaters were seen either perched along the track or flying. Victor found a Spotless Starling (*Sturnus unicolor*) in a Fig Tree. A few Barn Swallows (*Hirundo rustica*) were flying above a field full of flowers and 2 Ravens in the distance (*Corvus corax*). A Kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*) was perched on a post in a middle of this field and we had a look at a Bee-eater nest. At this moment, we realized we would have company on this walk: one of Cruzinha’s dogs was following us. We had a good look at an Azure-winged Magpie (*Cyanopica cyanus*) perched on a ruin and 2 Bee-eaters on a bamboo stick. We looked at a row of Almond trees in a field and found a Woodchat Shrike (*Lanius senator*) but this bird was a bit far. Another one was closer, perched on a twig. This shrike flew away and was replaced by a Zitting Cisticola (*Cisticola juncidis*) which stayed there a little while before flying away too. We got closer to the marsh and saw a Crested Lark (*Galerida cristata*) on the track but it flew before we had a good look at it. A Corn Bunting (*Emberiza calandra*) landed in a field by us where a Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*) was feeding.

We looked at the marsh and saw a Flamingo (*Phoenicopterus roseus*), a Black-winged Stilt (*Himantopus himantopus*), a few Dunlins (*Calidris alpina*), a Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*) and a Redshank (*Tringa totanus*). These were not great sightings because of the strong light in the afternoon. Suddenly, the Black-winged Stilts started alarming and several took off. We followed them and realized they were attacking a Marsh Harrier (*Circus aeruginosus*).



We started walking along the dyke. A **Whimbrel** (*Numenius phaeopus*) was pretty close, it flew away and was joined by a few more later. We had a look at the Fiddler Crabs (*Uca tangeri*) on the mudflats. The tide was coming in, so birds were getting concentrated in a few areas. We had a look at gulls roosting on a distant sand bar: Yellow-legged (*Larus michahellis*), Lesser Black-backed (*Larus fuscus*) and 5 Audouin’s Gulls (*Larus audouinii*). These birds were a bit far but we could see they were smaller, lighter grey and their bill looked dark (even

though it is red). A few House Martins (*Delichon urbicum*) were flying around us. A Black-winged Stilt was close to us in the marsh, so we had a good look at it. On another sand bar, a group of waders seemed to be Dunlins, and a bird next to them a Little Tern (*Sternula albifrons*), however, this was a terrible sighting due to heat haze. A Caspian Tern (*Hydroprogne caspia*) landed near the first group of gulls, showing well. Near us, 2 Sanderlings (*Calidris alba*) were running along the water. A flock of waders took off and landed near us, they were mostly Dunlins, with a few Sanderlings, but they did not stay long and moved again. Two Sanderlings, one of them in breeding plumage, remained long enough for us to look at them. A Little Tern was fishing near us. At the same time, a Whimbrel was hunting a crab.

We continued the walk along the river. We had a quick view of a Yellow Wagtail (*Motacilla flava*) on the marsh before it flew away. We stopped a few metres ahead to look at a Kentish Plover (*Charadrius alexandrinus*). A pair of Stonechat (*Saxicola rubicola*) let us have good look at them before they flew and were replaced by a pair of Linnets (*Carduelis cannabina*) and a Corn Bunting appeared. Two Little Terns flew near us. On the river, a Whimbrel was resting on an island. In the marsh, we had nice views of 2 more Linnets and Yellow Wagtails. A Crested Lark flew by us and landed in the marsh where we saw it before it went out of sight.

Reaching the abandoned dried salt pans, we found 2 more Kentish Plovers, a pair, quite close. We walked between the river and the salt pans to look at a group of waders feeding by a big puddle: Dunlins, Sanderlings and Ringed Plovers (*Charadrius hiaticula*). Unfortunately, these birds flew before we had the chance to count them.

We came back to the main track. We saw quite a few **Black-winged Stilts** on small ponds, including one on its nest and some Kentish Plovers. We reached the end of the path and started walking back to Cruzinha. We found a Spotted Flycatcher (*Muscicapa striata*) in one of the gardens along the track and had another look at the Almond trees. The Woodchat Shrikes were still there and Greenfinches (*Carduelis chloris*) were perched on top of some of the trees. A Red-rumped Swallow (*Cecropis daurica*) flew low in front of us. A Hoopoe (*Upupa epops*) was on the track but flew before we had a good look at it. Again, we saw many Bee-eaters.



Dark clouds were gathering in the north and we started hearing thunder. We stopped a bit before Cruzinha. Peter found a Kestrel and while looking at it, we saw some Swifts (*Apus apus*). A Spotless Starling was perched on the broken roof of a nearby house.

There was still time to relax before dinner and it started raining while we were eating. After an excellent meal (the first of a long series), we talked about what was going to happen during the week and came back to the Yellow House under the rain.

## Monday, 7 May – 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; ancient people believed the world ended here.

We saw a Hoopoe on the way from Cruzinha and White Storks on their nests by the road at Odiaxere.

Our first stop was at Boca do Rio, a wetland on the way. We walked along the reedbed and heard a Reed Warbler (*Acrocephalus scirpaceus*) and a Savi's Warbler (*Locustella luscinioides*). We even managed to see both even though the second one



was a bit far. We realized we were standing by a few **Bee orchids** (*Ophrys apifera*) and Small-flowered Tongue-orchid (*Serapias parviflora*). A Cetti's Warbler (*Cettia cetti*) was perched in a nearby bush and let us look at it a few seconds. A Jackdaw (*Corvus monedula*) flew over us, quite high and calling. We walked further to try to see more birds and orchids. That enabled us to find a Bumblebee-orchid (*Ophrys bombyliflora*) still in flower near more Bee-orchids. A White Stork flew over the reedbed and we heard a second Savi's Warbler. This one was closer and we had great views of it, singing from the top of a reed and moving its head from side to side. We walked to a place with a lot of Pyramidal Orchids (*Anacamptis pyramidalis*) and heard an Iberian Chiffchaff (*Phylloscopus ibericus*). We walked back to the car without seeing more birds but we managed to find a few Mirror Orchids (*Ophrys speculum*) which still had

some decent flowers. Peter found a pair of Sardinian Warblers near us which, surprisingly, did not move much so we had good views of them.

At Sagres, we first stopped at Ponta da Atalaia where we had a coffee. At the same time, we had a good look at a Woodchat Shrike perched on a nearby shrub and 2 Red-billed Choughs (*Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*) which flew towards us. As we were leaving, Victor found a male Sardinian Warbler singing from the top of a bush. We started walking and saw a Stonechat at the beginning of the path and then another Woodchat Shrike. Victor found a Thekla Lark (*Galerida theklae*) but it disappeared before we all saw it well. A song caught our attention: a Melodious Warbler (*Hippolais polyglotta*). This bird let us have a quick look at it before we found a second one near a juvenile Stonechat. We stopped by the cliff looking at Sagres fortress (where Henry the Navigator used to have his school) and the surfers in the bay. We walked along the cliff towards a trig point. Four Red-rumped Swallows flew near us; it looked like they were going south! We walked on the boardwalk and a male Black Redstart (*Phoenicurus ochruros*) passed near us and perched on an Agave. We looked at the sea from a platform but it was very quiet. Common and Pallid Swifts (*Apus pallidus*) were flying around us and a Swallowtail (*Papilio*



*machaon*) by some Cistus. As it was very quiet, we went back to the car. On the way, we saw Goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*) and a Woodchat Shrike.

Then, we headed to Cabranosa, one of the best spots to watch raptor migration in autumn. We took a dirt track and from the car we saw another Woodchat Shrike and Corn Buntings. We stopped by a pinewood. We spotted Greenfinches and Bee-eaters as we stepped out of the car. We had a look at Sacred Scarabs (*Scarabeus sacer*) rolling a ball of dung and fighting for it. We walked along the pinewood, found more dung beetles and Bee-eaters. As it was quiet, we walked towards Cabranosa hill. Victor found 2 Tawny Pipits (*Anthus campestris*) in a field. Unfortunately, they walked away and as the field was the same colour as their plumage it was difficult to follow them. Further along the track, Corn Buntings were singing. Peter and Victor found a Turtle Dove (*Streptopelia turtur*) perched on a pine tree, a good sighting. We had great views of Bee-eaters, perched and flying, catching insects. Thekla Larks and Stonechats were quite numerous around us and a Raven flew by. We did not walk further as 2 shepherd dogs were guarding an empty enclosure (even if they looked quite lazy). Also, few birds were around and lunchtime was approaching. We walked back to the car. On the way, we found back the 2 Tawny Pipits and this time had great views of them. A Hare appeared at the same time (*Lepus granatensis*).

We then went to the picnic spot. We had a quiet lunch hearing and seeing Corn Buntings.

We headed to the cape after lunch. The place was fairly busy with tourists. We tried seawatching again but it was quiet. We looked at a Stork on its nest on cliff, quite a unique sighting in Europe! We also had a look at the Yellow-legged Gulls, studying the different plumage and age classes and looking for rings. We had good views of a Thekla Lark which was pretty close. We had another look on the other side of the cape, Victor found several Gannets (*Morus bassanus*) but far away. A Swift was flying around us and we heard a Black Redstart but it was difficult to find. A Shag (*Phalacrocorax aristotelis*) passed the cape but too fast for everybody to see it.

We left the cape and went back to Cruzinha via Vale Santo. We saw a Woodchat Shrike and Corn Buntings at the beginning of the road. Then, we stopped in front of a field where male **Little Bustards** (*Tetrax tetrax*) usually display. We heard 3 and after some research, we saw one but it was a bit far. Another bird was calling near us but stayed invisible. We waited, walked along the road, but this bird remained invisible to us. As we were getting to the car, a Yellow Wagtail flew over us. We resumed our journey. A few Cattle Egrets were feeding in a field with cows and a Little Owl was perched on an old building (but we did not see the "angry farmer"). A Raven was perched on a wire near 2 Woodchat Shrikes. We then had a great view of a Corn Bunting perched by the track and found a non-flying Thekla Lark running along the



road. We stopped to look at a Yellow Wagtail and found a Short-toed Eagle, but it was a bit far. We stopped again further to hear Quails (*Coturnix coturnix*). Three birds were present, one of them fairly close. Just before reaching Vila do Bispo, we saw a Short-toed Lark (*Calandrella brachydactyla*) on the road but it did not stay long. At the village, we decided to go to another spot to try to see an Eagle Owl (*Bubo bubo*).

This attempt was unsuccessful, but we heard a Nightingale (*Luscinia megarhynchos*) singing from the vegetation near a stream.

Back at Cruzinha, there was still time to relax before dinner. We heard a Red-necked Nightjar (*Caprimulgus ruficollis*) from Cruzinha garden before driving back to the Yellow House.

## Tuesday, 8 May – Monchique hills

Monchique offered a different landscape and habitat than the previous days. We left later but the weather was cloudier.

On the way we saw many Storks, some of them on their nests. Driving up to Foia, the highest point (902 m), we realized the weather was misty on the coast and the visibility not great.

When we arrived to the summit, we found straight 2 Rock Buntings (*Emberiza cia*) feeding on the car park. We walked a few metres to a viewpoint but not much was visible. We went along a small road to see more birds and saw our first Stonechat of the morning. We heard a Melodious Warbler and saw it, but it was a bit distant and soon disappeared. A Whitethroat (*Sylvia communis*) was displaying around us but never in sight when it perched. Victor found a Small-flowered Tongue-orchid and a few House Martins and Red-rumped Swallows were flying around us. Linnets were feeding on the ground nearby. As the warblers were not showing, we decided to go higher to look for more species. Not long after, we heard a Rock Bunting and had great views of it, feeding on the ground. We had a glimpse of a **Blue**



**Rock Thrush** (*Monticola solitarius*) perched on a rock, only the head was visible. Unfortunately, it flew and disappeared. Then, it started singing, perched on an antenna, showing well. It moved to another part of the antenna where it remained for a while, singing. Another Blue Rock Thrush appeared. This bird perched on various places around us. It was not as colourful as the first bird so we thought it was a female before having a better look at it. This bird had a blue back but still a lot of brown feather on the head and wings, possibly a second-year male. We went back to the

“warbler spot” while the male Blue Rock Thrush was still singing from the same place.

House Martins and Red-rumped Swallows were collecting materials on the road. We found again the Melodious Warbler singing from a bush. This time, it stayed

long enough for us to look at it. The Whitethroat also appeared and went into a tree where we managed to see it quite well. It flew, came back and was soon joined by the Melodious Warbler. We could see both warblers together and pretty close. We walked down the road. Victor found a distant Wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*) and we saw Goldfinches and Greenfinches. As it was quiet, we decided to come back to the car. We stopped to look at more Small-flowered Tongue-orchids but these ones had no flowers yet. We watched 2 close Stonechats fighting and a Whitethroat singing from a bush. We went back to the car as the weather was getting hotter.

We drove down and had a look at another place, near a lagoon. A Melodious Warbler and a Nightingale were singing. Many Swifts were flying around us and Victor found an Alpine Swift (*Apus melba*). We could see it was bigger than the others and with a white belly. We drove back to Monchique, seeing a Buzzard (*Buteo buteo*) on the way and decided to visit an area with Cork Oaks before lunch.

We heard Great Tit (*Parus major*) and Chaffinch (*Fringilla coelebs*) when we arrived. I found a Crested Tit (*Lophophanes cristatus*) and Victor a Redstart (*Phoenicurus phoenicurus*). We managed to see the Tit but not the Redstart. We walked between the trees, heard a Blackcap (*Sylvia atricapilla*) singing and saw a Blue Tit (*Cyanistes caeruleus*). We stopped by a stream where a Robin (*Erithacus rubecula*) was singing. We walked along the road but it was very quiet, with just the sighting of a Chaffinch. We started walking back to the car and stopped to look at 2 **Spanish Festoons** (*Zerynthia rumina*) showing well. We stopped again by the stream and a Firecrest (*Regulus ignicapilla*) showed-up. This bird came closer and we had great views. As we were walking between the trees again quite a few birds appeared. A male Redstart perched on a branch in front of us, while we were looking at it, a Nuthatch (*Sitta europaea*) was showing well. At the same time, a Firecrest perched near us and a male Serin flew in. This bird was soon joined by a female but it was difficult to see them together.



We then drove to Caldas de Monchique, a small thermal village. We had lunch there under big trees listening to running water. While we were eating, we saw a Nuthatch and a Blackcap. At the end of the meal, we heard a Grey Wagtail (*Motacilla cinerea*) and after a little while, we saw it, it was a juvenile. We waited and saw one of the adults come and feed it.

After lunch, we walked around the town for a bit. We went to a chapel and looked at a stream where birds come to drink. Two Goldfinches appeared, then, 2 Blackbirds (*Turdus merula*), a Chaffinch, 2 Greenfinches and again, Goldfinches, but 4 birds this time. We walked towards a bridge and looked at trees full of woodpeckers holes. Another Grey Wagtail appeared carrying nest materials, and then, another one. We looked at them for a while. The one carrying nest materials moved a lot and seemed to visit several places but did not choose any to start building the nest. We



had a drink looking at the birds around the café. Peter and Victor did an interesting observation of a Nuthatch while I was ordering the drinks.

Driving down the hills, we stopped to take pictures at Storks on their nest. Then, we stopped at a small wetland at the foot of the hills. About 40 Storks, Cattle Egrets and Mallards were there when we arrived. A Waxbill (*Estrilda astrild*) perched on bramble but did not stay long enough for a good view. Many Storks were flying around us, some of them landing with the ones already there. A White Wagtail (*Motacilla alba*) appeared on the road. We also heard a Kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*) but it did not show- up. We came back to Cruzinha and saw a light morph Booted Eagle (*Aquila pennata*) when we left the motorway.

Back at Cruzinha, we heard a Cuckoo (*Cuculus canorus*). As there was still time before dinner, Victor and Peter explored the surroundings and heard again the Cuckoo and a Quail.

### **Wednesday, 9 May – Abicada**

On that day, no visit was planned for the morning so everybody had time to relax and explore more Cruzinha surroundings. We all had lunch at Cruzinha and then went to Abicada. Unfortunately, it was very windy.

When we arrived there, we first looked at the small marsh by the car park: a Flamingo, 2 Black-winged Stilts, an Avocet (*Recurvirostra avosetta*), 2 Mallards and a Grey Heron (*Ardea cinerea*). We also had a look at the lagoon: many Yellow-legged Gulls and a few Spoonbills (*Platalea leucorodia*), one of them feeding with Storks. Two Little Terns flew by.

We walked along the lagoon and went on the dam. As it was low tide, mudflats were visible and a few Whimbrels were feeding there. We found a shelter from the wind to look at the lagoon and had a better view at the Spoonbills. At the end of the dam, we decided to walk on the dyke between the marsh and the river. A Black-winged Stilt was present in the marsh and more Whimbrels on the mudflats while a Cisticola was calling near us. Few birds were showing because of the wind but we still had nice views of a Corn Bunting singing from the top of a bush nearby. We reached an area with more water and vegetation. Many Black-winged Stilts were present with some Mallards and 3 Spoonbills. A Female Mallard disappeared in the vegetation followed by several ducklings. We heard a Savi's Warbler but the wind

made its localisation difficult. Further, we saw more Black-winged Stilts and a male Marsh Harrier a bit distant. We came back to the area with more birds and found 2 Coots (*Fulica atra*). A Reed Warbler was singing. Later, we had great views of a male Marsh Harrier as it flew near us. As we arrived at the dam, we heard a Stone Curlew (*Burhinus oedicnemus*) from the other side of the river. We looked for it, but without success.





Back at the dam, we walked on the dyke between the marsh and the lagoon. Most of our birdwatching spots were on sheltered places as the wind was strong and cold. We had good views of the Spoonbills and discovered one of the birds had a problem at one leg. Many Black-winged Stilts were present on the marsh and a group of waders arrived on the lagoon where the water level was low: Dunlins and Sanderlings, most of them in breeding plumage. We continued, 2 **Shelducks** (*Tadorna tadorna*) flew over us and landed on an area with little water. While looking at them, we realized there were 2 more birds and then found a group of young birds surveyed by 2 adults, a great sighting. An Avocet flew in and joined another one which seemed to be lying on the nest. A Yellow Wagtail perched on a nearby bush. We walked back to the car after these nice observations. We had another look at Spoonbills and flushed a group of 4. Then, a Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*) flew over the lagoon. We came back to the dam. The Peregrine appeared again, mobbed by a Yellow-legged Gull, a great sighting! While Peter and I were looking at the falcon, Victor had found a Bar-tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica*) sleeping at the base of the dam. We saw again the limping Spoonbill, sleeping near 2 Whimbrels.



Back at the car, we looked again at the small marsh where a Spoonbill was now present with a female Mallard with big juveniles. We then came back to Cruzinha a bit tired after spending the afternoon in the wind.

#### **Thursday, 10 May – Open Day at Cruzinha and Lagoa dos Salgados**

As Thursday is Cruzinha's open day, everybody could enjoy the activities occurring at the centre: moth identification and a bird ringing demonstration. Quite a few birds were caught during the morning: Great Tits, Serins, House Sparrows (*Passer domesticus*). The activities stopped at 13:00 and we had a delicious lunch at the centre.

After another good meal, we went to one of the richest but still threatened Algarvian wetlands: Lagoa dos Salgados. This place is usually good for waders, ducks and herons.

When we arrived, we saw that the water level was different between the two parts of the lagoon: a lot of water in the northern part and almost none in the southern part. We parked by the beach and walked to the "blind". We saw a Hoopoe feeding by the path on the way. Management works have been done in the lagoon in order to improve habitats for birds, diminish their disturbance and offer better observation conditions. A big flock of gulls were resting in front of the hide. We found 3 Audouin's Gulls amongst the Yellow-legged and Lesser Black-backed Gulls. We saw them in better conditions than on Sunday. A Black-winged Stilt was feeding in front of the blind and some Spanish Pond Turtle (*Mauremys leprosa*) sunbathing. A

Grey Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*) in breeding plumage walked towards us, a great observation. Two Magpies (*Pica pica*) flew in front of us.

A few ducks were present in the northern part: Mallards, Pochards (*Aythya ferina*), Gadwalls (*Anas strepera*), Shovelers (*Anas clypeata*). Victor found 2 Glossy



Ibises (*Plegadis falcinellus*) feeding. We spotted a male Red-crested Pochard (*Netta rufina*) but it was quite distant. A Purple Swamphen (*Porphyrio porphyrio*), even more distant showed for a few seconds before hiding in the vegetation. It reappeared before hiding again. We found a second one which showed a bit longer. At the same time, Victor found a Spoonbill. Some gulls took off and a Purple Heron (*Ardea purpurea*) flew with them, it then landed in the vegetation where we lost it. Two Bar-tailed Godwits were feeding in the distance.

We decided to walk a bit along the northern part of the lagoon. A Zitting Cisticola was singing near and we had close views of Gadwalls and Pochards. Further, a group of 13 Spoonbills was resting on an island. We found a second male Red-crested Pochard and saw better a couple of Purple Swamphens. We also saw again the Glossy Ibises. Most of the gulls took off and a small group of waders flew over our heads: 6 Grey Plovers and a Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*). While looking at these birds, we spotted a Kestrel. As there was still no sign of the Purple Heron, we came back to the blind. As we were reaching it, the Purple Heron flew off the vegetation. It was a better sighting but again we lost it.

As we still had time, we explored the southern part of the lagoon using the boardwalk. This part was mostly dried except for a stream where most of the birds were: Dunlins, Ringed and Kentish Plovers, Sanderlings, a Black-winged Stilt and 2 Avocets. We realized one of the Avocets was ringed and after taking many pictures, we managed to read the code. A group of school children passed by us and were quite noisy. They all went to the hide so we did not go there. Walking in front of the reedbed, we heard a Reed Warbler. At the end of the lagoon some waders were present besides the low water level: a Turnstone, a Grey Plover, 2 Ringed Plovers and 2 Sanderlings. A Grey Heron remained immobile the whole time we were there. Victor found a Kestrel. We then walked back to the car. We stopped again in front of the stream where Spoonbills were feeding. We had great views of these birds and spotted 2 carrying rings, a Dutch one and a Portuguese one. The Portuguese bird was even equipped with a transmitter. These birds came closer and were joined by Avocets.

Back at Cruzinha, we had dinner and watched a Red-necked Nightjar before leaving.

## Friday, 11 May – Castro Verde

Friday 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 trip went smoothly and quietly and even saw a Jay (*Garrulus glandarius*). As we were getting closer to Castro Verde, we could see the landscape changing.

We arrived at Castro Verde by 9:30 and drove along a small road leading to the LPN (Liga para a Proteção da Natureza) reserve (also called Vale Gonçalinho) centre. We stopped at the beginning of this road to look at a female Montagu's Harrier (*Circus pygargus*). A second one appeared and then a male too. This bird was always going over the same area (maybe a nest?) before perching on a post nearby. We heard a Quail and a Cattle Egret flew in front of us. A Black Kite (*Milvus migrans*) was flying in the distance. A Carrion Crow (*Corvus corone*)



was mobbing a Raven. Many Cattle Egrets and White Storks were perched on several pine trees, some of them looking almost dead. We made use of a higher spot on the road to have a look around. A Coot and a Little Grebe (*Tachybaptus ruficollis*) were swimming in a pond in a field where several Storks were feeding. Several falcons, probably Lesser Kestrels (*Falco naumanni*) were perched together but they were too far away to be identified. A Buzzard flew in front of them. We stopped on another high spot. A male Montagu's Harrier was hunting in front of us, on the other side of the road. We found a Great Bustard (*Otis tarda*) displaying on its own in a field but quite far away. We then turned onto a dirt track leading to the LPN reserve. At the centre, we had a quick chat with the LPN worker and gave a donation. We watched a Lesser Kestrel flying low over the buildings and had a coffee break before exploring the area.

We then started walking in the property around the centre. Our first stop was in front of a tower where Lesser Kestrels nest. Nest-boxes have been installed for this species but it seemed also occupied by Jackdaws (*Corvus monedula*). A herd of cows were feeding in the same field but far away. We had a look at 4 Lesser Kestrels perched in a Eucalyptus, a good sighting with good light. An Oil Beetle (*Berberomeloe majalis*) crossed the path near us. We stopped on a bridge across a stream to put on sunscreen and look around. The weather was cloudy when we arrived and now it was very sunny and hot! We found a Griffon Vulture far away. A couple of birdwatchers asked us what we had seen and when we replied that we had seen a Griffon Vulture, they told us they had identified it as a Red Kite (*Milvus milvus*), we were definitely looking at different birds! We stopped further to look at several Calandra Larks (*Melanocorypha calandra*) singing. A Great Bustard flew by,



and then, an immature Spanish Imperial Eagle (*Aquila adalberti*) started soaring above our heads. Another great sighting! We passed a gate and looked around. A Red Kite was flying over old farm buildings. Another building for Lesser Kestrels had been built nearby. It was also used by Rollers (*Coracias garrulus*) as we found several. With the distance, the heat haze and strong light, it was not a nice observation though. We got closer, and the sighting was better but still not great. Suddenly, some birds started alarming. About 10 Lesser Kestrels, 4 Jackdaws and a Roller were in the air! A Booted Eagle was flying nearby and was attacked mostly by the Roller. What a sighting!

We started walking back to the car, passed the gate and saw a Spanish Imperial Eagle (the same?). Victor found another bird of prey: Booted Eagle. We saw these 2 birds together and the difference in size was obvious, another good sighting. Several Griffon Vultures were soaring in the distance and we realized more were joining them and flying above our heads quite low. One of the vultures was flying with a Red Kite. When the stream of birds seemed to end, we resumed our walk. Back at the centre, we decided to have lunch at a different site. We stopped on the way to look at more Griffon Vultures. Some were perched on a tree and others still flying, there must have been a dead animal around.

We then drove towards Entradas. After the village, we stopped by a lagoon where we had lunch. During the meal we saw a Little Egret (*Egretta garzetta*), Mallards, a male Gadwall, a male Montagu's Harrier and 2 Collared Pratincoles (*Glareola pratincola*) in flight which, unfortunately, quickly disappeared. I had a nap in the car while the rest of the group kept birdwatching.



We resumed our journey, driving slowly. We saw a male **Montagu's Harrier**, flying around the car, pretty close. We stopped in an area with more trees as we spotted a Black Kite. We had a good look at this bird and realized more Griffon Vultures were in the air and going in the direction where we had seen the others. We also heard a Great Tit from there. We passed a river and drove by another lagoon but no birds were in sight.

We flushed a Booted Eagle perched along the road when we arrived at São Marcos da Ataboeira. Then, we spotted 2 more vultures. A look at them through the binoculars revealed they were Cinereous Vultures (*Aegypius monachus*). We tried to see Spanish Sparrows (*Passer hispaniolensis*) looking at Stork nests where they breed. We saw easily a few males while more Griffon Vultures were flying very high and Red-rumped Swallows flew by us.

We resumed our journey, seeing the first Southern Grey Shrike (*Lanius meridionalis*) of the day and a Red-legged Partridge (*Alectoris rufa*) in the middle of the road, enjoying the shade of a small tree. This bird moved reluctantly to the side of the road as we were getting closer and closer. We stopped on the top of a hill and a Buzzard flew over us as we stepped out of the car. We had amazing views of the

surroundings but few birds were around besides Swifts and Barn Swallows. A Buzzard was perched on a trig point.

We left and after driving on a dirt track for a while we finally ended on a tarmac road. We stopped by a stream where Crag Martins (*Ptyonoprogne rupestris*) breed and found one straight away, and then a second one. Several Griffon Vultures were soaring in the distance. A Short-toed Eagle appeared and perched on a pine tree, the 10<sup>th</sup> species of bird of prey of the day! We had nice views and it was even possible to see Bee-eaters at the same time in the frame. It took off and we saw it well in flight. Crag Martins showed-up again and we realized there were 6 birds in total. A pair of Gadwalls was alarming further along the stream and a few storks were on their nest, some of them very impressive.

We drove to the next spot, seeing many stork nests and their Spanish Sparrows along the way. We took another dirt track and stopped by a pond but there were only 2 Moorhens (*Gallinula chloropus*). We also looked at a hill usually good for birds of prey but no birds were in sight on that day. We stopped by a big lagoon. A

first look revealed the presence of Black-winged Stilts, Mallards and 2 Great Crested Grebes (*Podiceps cristatus*). Two Gull-billed Terns (*Gelochelidon nilotica*) were on a dyke and we had good views of them. We decided to walk along the lagoon, looking for more birds. Victor found a Little Ringed Plover (*Charadrius dubius*). When we looked for the terns, we realized they had disappeared. A female Red-crested Pochard was swimming along the opposite bank and we spotted a White Wagtail. Peter found a 3<sup>rd</sup> Great Crested Grebe and



Victor a Hoopoe perched on a wire with food in its beak. A Southern Grey Shrike was perched next to it. Victor found 2 more Little Ringed Plovers and in the distance, a group of Magpies was mobbing a female Montagu's Harrier. When they seemed to have abandoned it, they started again and it lasted for quite a while. We came back to the car and had a look at a Crested Lark perched on a fence. A male Black-eared Wheatear (*Oenanthe hispanica*) was singing from the same fence. It flew and came back to the same spot several times. A female showed-up too but they both disappeared after the passage of a motorcycle. The plan for the rest of the day was to try to have better views of Rollers and Great Bustards and stopping only for special birds. The first stop was just a few metres ahead to look at a Little Owl perched on a pile of rocks.

Back on the tarmac road, we stopped again as a Turtle Dove was in the middle of the way. This bird flew and perched on a wire with Collared Doves (*Streptopelia decaocto*). We could see the differences in size and colourations. A second bird joined this one. A Southern Grey Shrike was also perched on a nearby post. We stopped again before the next village to look at another Spanish Imperial Eagle, a darker bird than the one seen during the morning. We finally took a dirt track

bordered with post where nest-boxes have been set-up for Rollers. We found 2 immediately, perched on a fence. We tried to get closer with the car, but they kept flying away. We heard a Quail and the first Little Bustard of the day. We even managed to see this bird, calling in the middle of a group of cows. We got closer but this bird was out of sight. We turned around and this time managed to get pretty close to a Roller.

The last stop was from a field where Great Bustards had been seen regularly during the last few weeks but no bird was in sight when we arrived. A Calandra Lark was perched on a rock and we had nice views of it. Barn Swallows were flying around us and a Corn Bunting was singing. After a bit of searching, we finally found a male but only its head and neck were visible. A good sighting as it was not too far even if only half of the bird was visible. A little bit further, a second bird, a female was also visible (but just its head and neck too). The lark flew and landed in the grass where it disappeared. A Red-legged partridge was perched on the rock. It was time to go.

We came back to Castro Verde for dinner. We ate at a local restaurant. We had local produce: black pork and Alentejo's wine. Peter even had chocolate mousse (but without a special ingredient this time!). We were back at Mexilhoeira Grande around 22:00, all very tired after an enjoyable day, so everybody went to bed.

### **Saturday, 12 May – Silves**

We left later on that day as the previous day was a long one. The plan for the day was to visit the castle and an area of rice fields nearby.

At Silves, we walked passed Stork nests, several of them with juveniles, by the cathedral and reached the castle. 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 walked around the walls and had a look at some artefacts found during recent excavations. We finished the visit by having a look at an exhibition about the Iberian Lynx in the old cistern. From the castle, we saw Swifts, White Storks and Goldfinches.

After this visit, we drove to a place with picnic tables where we had lunch. As we arrived early, few people were present; the place was getting more crowded as we left. We drove a bit along a track and walked to get to the rice fields. As they were in sight, 2 White Storks flew over us, and then 2 Short-toed Eagles. A call caught our

attention: a male Marsh Harrier flew towards one of the eagles to mob it. As we started walking, a second Marsh Harrier appeared. We walked down to the fields and realized there was very little water. Storks were feeding in a field with a Grey Heron, a Little Egret and a few Cattle Egrets. We flushed Mallards walking by a canal and then a male mimicked an injury in order for the female to disappear with their





young. We walked between several fields but as there were no birds we had a look at a pond. We stood from a high point and saw a few Spanish Pond Turtles which dived. A Purple Swamphen called but did not show. Several storks and 2 Kestrels were flying. We walked around the pond and found the shell of a dead turtle. Victor spotted 2 Little Ringed Plovers feeding by a puddle. We were hoping to see the Swamphen as we heard it again. The only thing we saw were 2 probable juvenile birds going in opposite directions and disappearing in the vegetation. We waited but without any result. We came back to our initial spot and waited more, but without success. Once again a bird had defeated us (after the Little Bustard at Sagres)! We saw a Black Kite on the way back to the car.



We then drove back to Cruzinha and the rest of the afternoon was free for everybody. We had our last dinner at Cruzinha, time to offer some T-shirts. We heard 2 Red-necked Nightjars before going back to the Yellow House.

### **Sunday, 13 April – Ludo and Departure**

For this last day, we left after the traditional goodbyes and listening to a Golden Oriole (*Oriolus oriolus*) at Cruzinha.

We then drove to Ludo, a complex of saltpans and lagoons behind the airport. We first crossed a pinewood before we reached the saltpans. We stopped in front of the first lagoon where a few birds were present: Shelducks, Black-winged Stilts and a Gadwall. Barn Swallows were perched in the wires along the track. The second tank was empty but several Mallards were swimming in the canals along the road. We passed a lagoon where Peter found a Little Grebe. We passed a big pile of salt and looked at more saltpans. A Kentish Plover was close by and Victor found 2 Little Terns on the ground, by a Mallard. A Grey Heron flew past the saltpans. As we were leaving, a call caught our attention: a male Sardinian Warbler. This bird was carrying food and we saw it feeding a young. We waited a bit and it showed-up again to feed the young again, a proof of breeding! We drove between the last tanks. Most of them were empty, except one which had a nice concentration of birds. As we were reaching a shady area to park, a Little Bittern (*Ixobrychus minutus*) flew across the path in front of the car, a quick but nice sighting. We parked in the shade of a big eucalyptus by a golf course and walked back to this lagoon. On the way, we saw a Yellow-bellied Slider (*Trachemys scripta scripta*) sunbathing. Several species of waders were feeding in the lagoon: Avocets, Black-winged Stilts, Black-tailed Godwits (*Limosa limosa*), Ringed Plovers, Redshanks and Dunlins, some of them in full breeding plumage. A closer look at these birds revealed the presence of a Greenshank (*Tringa nebularia*) and several Curlew Sandpipers (*Calidris ferruginea*). However, the last ones were difficult to see because of the many birds present and the heat haze. We walked back to the car looking at the canal where the turtle was.

This time, it was a Spanish Pond Turtle sunbathing. Several young Barn Swallows were perched on a cable, waiting for their parents to feed them. We had lunch by the car.

We walked along the green to go the hide. The first bird seen was an Azure-winged Magpie. We passed by Roman ruins and we reached an area with more flowers, where we had nice views of a Swallowtail. We had a look at the lagoon by the hide. A Spanish Pond Turtle was sunbathing close by. Juveniles Coots were noisy in the vegetation. Several species of ducks were present: Mallard, Gadwall, Pochard and Red-crested Pochard with Little and Great Crested Grebes. Peter found a Black-headed Weaver (*Ploceus melanocephalus*), an exotic species living in the area and Victor found a Purple Swamphen seen feeding. A Little Tern was flying over the lagoon. Two Hoopoes flew in front of us. After a little while, we decided to go into the hide and went to the first floor where the view is better. A group of gulls was resting on the lagoon. We found an Audouin's Gull, soon joined by a few more. We saw again the Weavers with a better view this time. As no new species were appearing, we decided to leave and have a look at the end of the lagoon. We had great views of a Purple Swamphen feeding on the green and Victor spotted a Moorhen with juveniles. We had another look at turtles. Spanish and European Pond Turtles (*Emys orbicularis*) were sunbathing together, allowing us to see the differences: yellow spots for the European and yellow lines for the Spanish. A couple of birders were taking many pictures near us and we found out why when they left as a male **Little Bittern** was standing a few metres away. We had amazing views of this bird as it did not move much. We showed it to another group of birdwatchers and the bird started feeding in front of us. The Swamphen was still on the green and a male Weaver perched on reeds by a couple of nests.



We moved to the next hide but as the tide was high there was no point in going there. We walked along the dyke towards a pond. The first birds we saw were a pair of Kentish Plover (useful to see the differences of plumage between the sexes) and a Ringed Plover. Several Black-winged Stilts were feeding a bit further away. An Avocet was sleeping and another one seemed to be lying on a nest. Another Kentish Plover was with Ringed Plovers A Sanderling was running along the shore and several Dunlins were feeding. One of them had only one leg and was foraging with difficulties. Two Little Terns landed near us. It was possible to see Little Terns, Ringed Plover and Black-winged Silt together.

We walked back and found 2 Turnstone on an island. We spotted a Sardinian Warbler on the ground. This bird was trying to catch a moth, more or less successfully. As it was going to manage, an Azure-winged Magpie arrived and stole its prey before eating it. The warbler alarmed a lot and seemed pretty upset, but this

did not change anything. A great sighting and a nice observation of a bit of behaviour.

We walked past the lagoon but the Little Bittern was not there anymore. Peter found a Purple Swamphen. After, we saw the last bird of the week: a Black-winged Kite (*Elanus caeruleus*). This bird was hunting and hovering a lot so we had good views besides the distance.

Back at the car, we left the area, driving through the saltpans area where the waders were still present.

I left Peter and Victor at the airport after another great birdwatching week.



## List of species

- Common Shelduck (*Tadorna tadorna*): 13 (4 adults and 9 juveniles) at Abicada and 17 at Ludo.
- Gadwall (*Anas strepera*): seen at Lagoa dos Salgados, Castro Verde (Entradas, João Serra), and Ludo.
- Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*): seen at Ria de Alvor, Morgado, Abicada (adults and juveniles), Lagoa dos Salgados, Castro Verde (Entradas, Alvares), Nossa Senhora do Rosario rice fields and Ludo.
- Northern Shoveler (*Anas clypeata*): 4 males at Lagoa dos Salgados.
- Red-crested Pochard (*Netta rufina*): 2 males at Lagoa dos Salgados, 1 female at Castro Verde (Alvares) and 8 birds at Ludo.
- Common Pochard (*Aythya ferina*): seen at Lagoa dos Salgados and Ludo.
- Common Quail (*Coturnix coturnix*): heard at Sagres (3 at Vale Santo), Cruzinha and Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalves, Entradas, Alvares, Apariça).
- Red-legged Partridge (*Alectoris rufa*): seen at Ria de Alvor and Castro Verde (São Marcos da Ataboeira and Rolão).
- Little Grebe (*Tachybaptus ruficollis*): seen at Lagoa dos Salgados, Castro Verde (A at Vale Gonçalves) and Ludo.
- Great Crested Grebe (*Podiceps cristatus*): 3 at Castro Verde (Alvares) and 2 at Ludo.



- Northern Gannet (*Morus bassanus*): 9 from Sagres (cape).
- European Shag (*Phalacrocorax aristotelis*): 1 at Sagres (cape).
- Little Bittern (*Ixobrychus minutus*): 2 at Ludo.
- Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*): seen at Ria de Alvor, Sagres (15 at Vale Santo), Morgado (9), Abicada, Lagoa dos Salgados, Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalves, Apariça, Rolão) and Nossa Senhora do Rosario rice fields.
- Little Egret (*Egretta garzetta*): 1 at Boca do Rio, 4 at Abicada, 1 at Castro Verde (Entradas), 1 at Nossa Senhora do Rosario rice fields and 1 at Ludo.
- Grey Heron (*Ardea cinerea*): 1 at Abicada, 3 at Lagoa dos Salgados, 1 at Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalves), 1 at Nossa Senhora do Rosario rice fields and 1 at Ludo.

- Purple Heron (*Ardea purpurea*): 1 at Lagoa dos Salgados.
- White Stork (*Ciconia ciconia*): seen from the motorway, at Ria de Alvor, Odiaxere, Boca do Rio (1), Sagres (1 at the cape), on the way to Monchique, at Morgado (40), Abicada (8), Lagoa dos Salgados (2), on the way to Castro Verde, at Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalves, Entradas, São Marcos da Ataboeira, João Serra), Silves (adults and juveniles), Nossa Senhora do Rosario rice fields and Ludo.
- Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*): 4 at Lagoa dos Salgados.
- Eurasian Spoonbill (*Platalea leucorodia*): 8 at Abicada, 18 at Lagoa dos Salgados and 9 at Ludo.
- Greater Flamingo (*Phoenicopterus roseus*): 1 at Ria de Alvor and 1 at Abicada.
- Black-winged Kite (*Elanus caeruleus*): 1 at Ludo.
- Black Kite (*Milvus migrans*): seen at Castro Verde (3 at Vale Gonçalves, 1 at Entradas, 1 at João Serra) and Nossa Senhora do Rosario rice fields (1).
- Red Kite (*Milvus milvus*): 2 at Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalves).
- Griffon Vulture (*Gyps fulvus*): at least 71 at Castro Verde (33 at Vale Gonçalves, 32 at Entradas, 3 at São Marcos da Ataboeira, 3 at João Serra).
- Cinereous Vulture (*Aegypius monachus*): 2 at Castro Verde (São Marcos da Ataboeira ).
- Short-toed Snake Eagle (*Circaetus gallicus*): 1 from the motorway, 1 at Sagres (Vale Santo), 1 at Castro Verde (João Serra) and 2 at Nossa Senhora do Rosario rice fields.
- Western Marsh Harrier (*Circus aeruginosus*): 1 at Ria de Alvor, 1 male at Abicada and 2 at Nossa Senhora do Rosario rice fields (pair).
- Montagu's Harrier (*Circus pygargus*): seen at Castro Verde (5 at Vale Gonçalves, 1 at Entradas and 1 at Alvares).
- Common Buzzard (*Buteo buteo*): 1 at Monchique (Foia), 3 at Castro Verde (1 at Vale Gonçalves, 2 at Nossa Senhora de Aracelis) and 1 at Nossa Senhora do Rosario rice fields.
- Booted Eagle (*Aquila pennata*): 1 at the exit of the motorway, 3 at Castro Verde (2 at Vale Gonçalves, 1 at São Marcos da Ataboeira).
- Spanish Imperial Eagle (*Aquila adalberti*): 2 immatures at Castro Verde (1 at Vale Gonçalves and 1 at João Serra).



- Lesser Kestrel (*Falco naumanni*): seen at Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalinho, São Marcos da Ataboeira).
- Common Kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*): 2 at Ria de Alvor, 1 at Sagres (Ponta da Atalaia), 2 at Lagoa dos Salgados and 2 at Nossa Senhora do Rosario rice fields.
- Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*): 1 adult at Abicada.
- Common Moorhen (*Gallinula chloropus*): seen at Abicada, Lagoa dos Salgados and Ludo.
- Purple Swamphen (*Porphyrio porphyrio*): 3 at Lagoa dos Salgados, 3 at Nossa Senhora do Rosario rice fields (adult and juveniles) and 2 at Ludo.
- Eurasian Coot (*Fulica atra*): seen at Abicada, Lagoa dos Salgados, Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalinho, Entradas) and Ludo.
- Little Bustard (*Tetrax tetrax*): 3 at Sagres (Vale Santo) and 1 at Castro Verde (Apariça).
- Great Bustard (*Otis tarda*): 12 at Castro Verde (10 Vale Gonçalinho and 2 at Rolão).
- Eurasian Stone Curlew (*Burhinus oedichnemus*): 1 heard at Abicada.
- Black-winged Stilt (*Himantopus himantopus*): seen at Ria de Alvor (12), Abicada (34), Lagoa dos Salgados, Castro Verde (7 at Alvares) and Ludo (34).
- Pied Avocet (*Recurvirostra avosetta*): seen at Abicada (3), Lagoa dos Salgados and Ludo (8).
- Grey Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*): 8 at Lagoa dos Salgados.
- Little Ringed Plover (*Charadrius dubius*): 3 at Castro Verde (Alvares) and 2 at Nossa Senhora do Rosario rice fields.
- Common Ringed Plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*): seen at Ria de Alvor, Abicada, Lagoa dos Salgados and Ludo.
- Kentish Plover (*Charadrius alexandrinus*): seen at Ria de Alvor, Lagoa dos Salgados and Ludo.



- Whimbrel (*Numenius phaeopus*): seen at Ria de Alvor and Abicada.
- Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*): 80 at Ludo.
- Bar-tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica*): 1 at Abicada and 2 at Lagoa dos Salgados.
- Ruddy Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*): 2 at Lagoa dos Salgados and 2 at Ludo.
- Curlew Sandpiper (*Calidris ferruginea*): 4 at Ludo.



- Sanderling (*Calidris alba*): 16 at Ria de Alvor, 14 at Abicada, 4 at Lagoa dos Salgados and 1 at Ludo.
- Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*): seen at Ria de Alvor (125), Abicada (28), Lagoa dos Salgados and Ludo (350).
- Common Greenshank (*Tringa nebularia*): 1 at Ludo.
- Common Redshank (*Tringa totanus*): 4 at Ria de Alvor, 3 at Abicada and 12 at Ludo.
- Collared Pratincole (*Glareola pratincola*): 2 at Castro Verde (Entradas).
- Little Tern (*Sternula albifrons*): 3 at Ria de Alvor, 2 at Abicada and 10 at Ludo.
- Gull-billed Tern (*Gelochelidon nilotica*): 2 at Castro Verde (Alvares).
- Caspian Tern (*Hydroprogne caspia*): 1 at Ria de Alvor.
- Black-headed Gull (*Larus ridibundus*): 1 at Castro Verde (Vale Gonçálinho).
- Audouin's Gull (*Larus audouinii*): 5 at Ria de Alvor, 3 at Lagoa dos Salgados and 6 at Ludo.
- Lesser Black-backed Gull (*Larus fuscus*): seen at Ria de Alvor, Lagoa dos Salgados and Ludo.
- Yellow-legged Gull (*Larus michahellis*): seen at Ria de Alvor, Sagres (Ponta da Atalaia, cape), Abicada, Lagoa dos Salgados and Ludo.
- Rock Dove (*Columbia livia*): seen at Sagres (cape).
- Common Wood Pigeon (*Columba palumbus*): seen at Castro Verde (Vale Gonçálinho, Alvares).
- Eurasian Collared Dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*): seen at Ria de Alvor, Morgado, Castro Verde (João Serra, Rolão), Nossa Senhora do Rosario rice fields and Ludo.
- European Turtle Dove (*Streptopelia turtur*): 1 at Sagres (Cabranosa) and 2 at Castro Verde (Alvares).
- Common Cuckoo (*Cuculus canorus*): heard at Cruzinha.
- Little Owl (*Athene noctua*): 1 at Ria de Alvor, 1 at Sagres (Vale Santo) and 1 at Castro Verde (Alvares).



- Red-necked Nightjar (*Caprimulgus ruficollis*): 2 at Cruzinha.

- Common Swift (*Apus apus*): seen at Ria de Alvor, Sagres (Ponta da Atalaia, cape), Monchique (Foia), Castro Verde (Nossa Senhora de Aracelis) and Silves.
- Pallid Swift (*Apus pallidus*): seen at Sagres (Ponta da Atalaia).
- Alpine Swift (*Apus melba*): 1 at Monchique (Foia).
- Common Kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*): 1 heard at Morgado.
- European Bee-eater (*Merops apiaster*): seen on the way to Cruzinha, at Ria de Alvor (nests), Sagres (Cabranosa), Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalinho, Entradas, João Serra) and Nossa Senhora do Rosario rice fields.
- European Roller (*Coracias garrulus*): 6 at Castro Verde (3 at Vale Gonçalinho and 3 at Apariça).
- Hoopoe (*Upupa epops*): 1 at Ria de Alvor, 1 on the way to Cruzinha, 2 at Castro Verde (1 at Vale Gonçalinho, 1 at Alvares) and 2 at Ludo.
- European Green Woodpecker (*Picus viridis*): 1 at Monchique (Cerca da Rita).
- Great Spotted Woodpecker (*Dendrocopos major*): 1 Boca do Rio and 1 at Monchique (Cerca da Rita).
- Calandra Lark (*Melanocorypha calandra*): seen at Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalinho, Rolão).
- Greater Short-toed Lark (*Calandrella brachydactyla*): 1 at Sagres (Vale Santo).
- Crested Lark (*Galerida cristata*): seen at Ria de Alvor, Abicada, Lagos dos Salgados, Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalinho, Entradas, Alvares, Rolão) and Ludo.
- Thekla Lark (*Galerida theklae*): seen at Sagres.
- Eurasian Skylark (*Alauda arvensis*): 1 heard at Sagres (Vale Santo).
- Crag Martin (*Ptyonoprogne rupestris*): 6 at Castro Verde (João Serra).
- Barn Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*): seen at Ria de Alvor, Sagres (Ponta da Atalaia, Cabranosa, cape), Abicada, Castro Verde, (Entradas, Nossa Senhora de Aracelis, Rolão) and Ludo.
- Common House Martin (*Delichon urbicum*) seen at Ria de Alvor, Monchique (Foia) and Ludo.
- Red-rumped Swallow (*Cecropis daurica*): seen on the way to Cruzinha, at Ria de Alvor, Sagres (Ponta da Atalaia, Cabranosa, cape), Monchique (Foia), Morgado, Castro Verde (São Marcos da Ataboeira) and Ludo.
- Tawny Pipit (*Anthus campestris*): 2 at Sagres (Cabranosa).



- Yellow Wagtail (*Motacilla flava*): seen at Ria de Alvor, Sagres (Cabranosa, Vale Santo) and Abicada.
- Grey Wagtail (*Motacilla cinerea*): 5 (adults and juveniles) at Monchique (Caldas de Monchique).
- White Wagtail (*Motacilla alba*): 1 at Morgado and 1 at Castro Verde (Alvares).
- Winter Wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*): seen at Boca do Rio, Sagres (Cabranosa) and Monchique (Foia).
- European Robin (*Erithacus rubecula*): heard at Monchique (Cerca da Rita).
- Common Nightingale (*Luscinia megarhynchos*): heard at Figueira and Monchique.
- Black Redstart (*Phoenicurus ochruros*): 2 at Sagres (1 at Ponta da Atalaia, 1 at the cape).
- Common Redstart (*Phoenicurus phoenicurus*): 1 male at Cerca da Rita.
- European Stonechat (*Saxicola rubicola*): seen at Ria de Alvor, Boca do Rio, Sagres (Ponta da Atalaia, Cabranosa, Vale Santo), Monchique (Foia), Morgado, Castro Verde (Entradas, João Serra) and Nossa Senhora do Rosario rice fields.
- Northern Wheatear (*Oenanthe oenanthe*): 1 at Ria de Alvor.
- Black-eared Wheatear (*Oenanthe hispanica*): 2 at Castro Verde (Alvares).
- Blue Rock Thrush (*Monticola solitarius*): 2 males at Monchique (Foia).
- Common Blackbird (*Turdus merula*): seen at Ria de Alvor, Boca do Rio, Sagres (Ponta da Atalaia, Vale Santo), Monchique, Morgado, Abicada, Castro Verde (Nossa Senhora de Aracelis), Nossa Senhora do Rosario rice fields and Ludo.
- Cetti's Warbler (*Cettia cetti*): heard at Boca do Rio, Morgado, Nossa Senhora do Rosario rice fields and Ludo.
- Zitting Cisticola (*Cisticola juncidis*): seen at Ria de Alvor, Boca do Rio, Sagres (Vale Santo), Abicada, Lagoa dos Salgados, Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalves) and Ludo.
- Savi's Warbler (*Locustella luscinioides*): 2 at Boca do Rio and 1 at Abicada.



- Melodious Warbler (*Hippolais polyglotta*): 2 at Sagres (Ponta da Atalaia) and 2 at Monchique (Foia).
- Eurasian Reed Warbler (*Acrocephalus scirpaceus*): seen at Boca do Rio (3), heard at Abicada and Lagoa dos Salgados (1).



- Sardinian Warbler (*Sylvia melanocephala*): seen at Ria de Alvor, Boca do Rio, Sagres (Ponta da Atalaia), Abicada, Nossa Senhora do Rosario rice fields and Ludo.
- Common Whitethroat (*Sylvia communis*): 2 at Monchique (Foia).
- Eurasian Blackcap (*Sylvia atricapilla*): seen at Monchique (Cerca da Rita, Caldas de Monchique).
- Iberian Chiffchaff (*Phylloscopus ibericus*): 1 at Boca do Rio.
- Common Firecrest (*Regulus ignicapillus*): 2 at Monchique (Cerca da Rita).
- Spotted Flycatcher (*Muscicapa striata*) : 1 at Ria de Alvor.
- Eurasian Blue Tit (*Parus caeruleus*): seen at Monchique (Cerca da Rita, Caldas de Monchique).
- Great Tit (*Parus major*): seen at Monchique (Cerca da Rita), Cruzinha (ringing) and Castro Verde (Entradas).
- European Crested Tit (*Lophophanes cristatus*): 1 at Monchique (Cerca da Rita).
- Eurasian Nuthatch (*Sitta europaea*): seen at Monchique (Cerca da Rita, Caldas de Monchique).
- Eurasian Golden Oriole (*Oriolus oriolus*): heard at Cruzinha.
- Southern Grey Shrike (*Lanius meridionalis*): seen at Castro Verde (Nossa Senhora de Aracelis, Alvares).
- Woodchat Shrike (*Lanius senator*): 2 at Ria de Alvor and 6 at Sagres (2 at Ponta da Atalaia, 1 at Cabranosa, 3 at Vale Santo) .



- Eurasian Jay (*Garrulus glandarius*): 1 at Monchique (Caldas de Monchique) and seen on the way to Castro Verde.
- Azure-winged Magpie (*Cyanopica cyanus*): seen at Ria de Alvor, Boca do Rio, Sagres (Ponta da Atalaia) and Ludo.
- Common Magpie (*Pica pica*): 4 at Lagoa dos Salgados and 7 at Castro Verde (Alvares).
- Red-billed Chough (*Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*): seen at Sagres (2 at Ponta da Atalaia, 1 at Vale Santo).
- Western Jackdaw (*Corvus monedula*): seen at Boca do Rioa (1) and Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalinho).
- Carrion Crow (*Corvus corone*): seen at Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalinho, Entradas).

- Northern Raven (*Corvus corax*): 2 at Ria de Alvor, 3 at Sagres (1 at Cabranosa, 2 at Vale Santo) and 2 at Castro Verde (1 at Vale Gonçálinho, 2 at São Marcos da Ataboeira).
- Spotless Starling (*Sturnus unicolor*): seen at Ria de Alvor, Sagres (Ponta da Atalaia) and Castro Verde (Apariça, Rolão).
- House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*): seen at Ria de Alvor, Sagres (Ponta da Atalaia, Vale Santo), Monchique (Caldas de Monchique), Morgado, Cruzinha (ringing), Lagoa dos Salgados, Castro Verde (Vale Gonçálinho, Entradas, São Marcos da Ataboeira, Nossa Senhora de Aracelis, Rolão), Silves, Nossa Senhora do Rosario rice fields and Ludo.
- Spanish Sparrow (*Passer hispaniolensis*): seen at Castro Verde (São Marcos da Ataboeira).



- Black-headed Weaver (*Ploceus melanocephalus*): seen at Ludo.
- Common Waxbill (*Estrilda astrild*): 1 at Morgado and 1 at Nossa Senhora do Rosario rice fields.
- Common Chaffinch (*Fringilla coelebs*): seen at Monchique (Cerca da Rita, Caldas de Monchique).
- European Serin (*Serinus serinus*): seen at Ria de Alvor, Monchique (Cerca da Rita, Caldas de Monchique) and Cruzinha (ringing).
- European Greenfinch (*Carduelis chloris*): seen at Ria de Alvor, Boca do Rio, Sagres (Cabranosa), Monchique (Foia, Caldas de Monchique) and Ludo.
- European Goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*): seen at Sagres (Ponta da Atalaia, Cabranosa), Monchique (Foia, Caldas de Monchique), Morgado, Lagoa dos Salgados, Castro Verde (Vale Gonçálinho, Nossa Senhora de Aracelis), Silves and Ludo.
- Common Linnet (*Carduelis cannabina*): seen at Ria de Alvor, Monchique (Foia) and Abicada.
- Rock Bunting (*Emberiza cia*): 3 at Monchique (Foia).
- Corn Bunting (*Emberiza calandra*): seen at Ria e Alvor, Sagres (Cabranosa, Vale Santo), Abicada, and Castro Verde (Vale Gonçálinho, Entradas, São Marcos da Ataboeira, Nossa Senhora de Aracelis, João Serra, Rolão).

- Fallow Deer (*Dama dama*): seen at Castro Verde (Alvares).
- Iberian Hare (*Lepus granatensis*): 1 at Sagres (Cabranosa) and 1 at Castro Verde (Vale Gonçálinho).
- Perez's Frog (*Pelophylax perezii*): seen at Nossa Senhora do Rosario rice fields.
- Spanish Pond Turtle (*Mauremys leprosa*): seen at Lagoa dos Salgados, Nossa Senhora do Rosario rice fields and Ludo.
- European Pond Turtle (*Emys orbicularis*): seen at Ludo.



- Red-eared Slider (*Trachemys scripta elegans*): seen at Ludo.
- Large Psammmodromus (*Psammmodromus algerus*): 1 at Ludo.
- Fiddler Crab (*Uca tangeri*): seen at Ria de Alvor.
- Camel Spider (*Gluvia dorsalis*): 1 at Abicada.
- Emperor dragonfly (*Anax imperator*): 1 at Monchique (Caldas de Monchique) and 1 at Nossa Senhora do Rosario rice fields.
- Red-veined darter (*Sympetrum fonscolombii*): seen at Lagoa dos Salgados.
- Swallowtail (*Papilio machaon*): 1 at Sagres (Ponta da Atalaia) and 1 at Ludo.
- Spanish Festoons (*Zerynthia rumina*): 2 at Monchique (Cerca da Rita).
- Sacred Scarab (*Scarabeus sacer*): seen at Sagres (Cabranosa).
- Oil Beetle (*Berberomeloe majalis*): seen at Castro Verde (Vale Gonçálinho).
- *Cistanche phelypaea*: seen at Ria de Alvor and Abicada.
- Pyramidal Orchid (*Anacamptis pyramidalis*): seen at Ria de Alvor and Boca do Rio.
- Small-flowered Tongue-orchid (*Serapias parviflora*): seen at Cruzinha, Boca do Rio and Monchique (Foia).
- Mirror-orchid (*Ophrys speculum*): seen at Boca do Rio.
- Bumblebee-orchid (*Ophrys bombyliflora*): seen at Boca do Rio.



- Bee-orchid (*Ophrys apifera*): seen at Cruzinha and Boca do Rio.

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