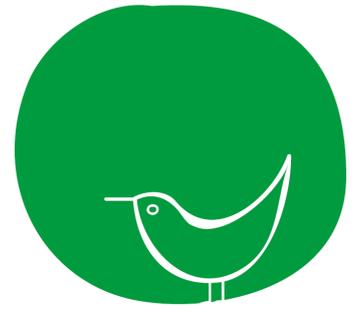


Southern Portugal

12th-19th April, 2015
Birds, birds, birds!



Apartado 41
8501-903 Mexilhoeira Grande
(+351) 282 968 380
info@arochalife.pt
www.arochalife.pt



Participants: Valerie Lambert, Bernard Volet

Leader: Guillaume Réthoré

Sunday 12th April- Arriving and Santa Luzia salt pans

For this “Birds, birds, birds!” spring trip, I picked-up Bernard and Valerie at Faro airport. Bernard had been there for a little while and we waited for Valerie together.

Then, we headed to Tavira and saw the first species of the week when we arrived at the village: House Martins (*Delichon urbicum*) and Red-rumped Swallows (*Cecropis daurica*). Many birds were waiting for us at the salt pans. We heard a Sardinian Warbler (*Sylvia melanocephala*) as we left the car and Bee-eaters (*Merops apiaster*) were perched on a wire. Even though the first lagoon was almost empty, there were several waders present: Black-winged Stilts (*Himantopus himantopus*), Avocets (*Recurvirostra avosetta*), a Greenshank (*Tringa nebularia*), Dunlins (*Calidris alpina*) and Kentish Plovers (*Charadrius alexandrinus*). A male Sardinian Warbler perched on top of a bush and we had a good look at it. At the same time, a Northern Wheatear (*Oenanthe oenanthe*) flew by and we heard a Crested Lark (*Galerida cristata*). In the second tank, a few waders were feeding close to the path: Little Stints (*Calidris minuta*), wrongly identified at the beginning but a Dunlin landing near them helped the identification. A Kentish Plover was also pretty close and a Crested Lark landed nearby but not long enough for a good look at it. Bernard spotted 3 Spoonbills (*Platalea leucorodia*) in flight. We walked quickly in front of the other lagoons as they were dried and no birds were in sight. House Sparrows (*Passer domesticus*) and a Sardinian Warbler appeared on a fence lining more salt pans.



We passed a gate and Valerie spotted a Little Egret (*Egretta garzetta*) fishing in a canal. In the nearby lagoon, a group of Flamingos (*Phoenicopterus roseus*) were feeding. While we were looking at these birds, a Crested Lark landed on a pile of earth and started singing. Another male Sardinian Warbler, showing very well on that day, was perched on a cable holding a post. A Serin (*Serinus serinus*) was singing from a wire and we flushed a few more from the bushes along the track. In the last saltpan, a group of gulls was resting:

Yellow-legged (*Larus michahellis*), Lesser Black-backed (*Larus fuscus*) and a few Audouin's Gulls (*Larus audouinii*), the 3 species being visible in the same telescope frame. While we were looking at these birds, a Caspian Tern (*Hydroprogne caspia*) flew above us. We did not have great views of this bird but Bernard found a few Grey Plovers (*Pluvialis squatarola*). We had close views of Kentish Plovers in the same salt pans as the gulls. We walked on and reached the end of the track from where we could see across the channel to Tavira Island. A Grey Plover and a Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*) were on the beach on the other side of the channel. Valerie

found another Turnstone closer to us and Bernard a Sandwich Tern (*Sterna sandvicensis*) in flight. A Few Audouin's Gulls were getting closer to us, so we had nice views and tried to take some pictures.

As nothing new was appearing, we decided to walk back to the car. On the way, Bernard spotted 3 Slender-billed Gull (*Larus genei*) and 2 Shelducks (*Tadorna tadorna*) in flight. We walked in front of the salt pans, looking at Avocets, a Greenshank and Dunlins. Back at the car, we had another look at the first lagoon where a Redshank (*Tringa totanus*) was now with the Black-winged Stilts and Mallards (*Anas platyrhynchos*) appeared. Bernard spotted a group of Redshanks in flight with a few Whimbrels (*Numenius phaeopus*) and a Ringed Plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*) in the second tank. A Curlew Sandpiper (*Calidris ferruginea*) flew above us, giving nice views and Bernard found a Wheatear perched in a bush while a White Stork (*Ciconia ciconia*) was soaring in the distance. We also heard a Zitting Cisticola (*Cisticola juncidis*).

We then left for Cruzinha, where we arrived after a quiet journey. On the way, we saw more birds: Collared Dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*), Azure-winged Magpie (*Cyanopica cyanus*) and Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*). The birdwatching group was introduced to team members: Paula, Marcial, Amy and Jens. We then had the first of a long series of good meals!

Monday 13th April- Sagres

After a good night's sleep, the birdwatching group headed to the end of the world! As Sagres peninsula is the most south westerly point of Europe, ancient people believed that the world ended there. We left at 8:00 on a nice sunny day.

On the way, we saw many Stork nests at Odiaxere and a Kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*) before reaching Sagres. There, a group of Cattle Egret flew above the road while we were crossing the village.

At Sagres, our first stop was at Ponta da Atalaia. Two Pallid Swifts (*Apus pallidus*) flew in our direction as we left the car and Azure-winged Magpies and Greenfinches (*Carduelis chloris*) were in the bushes around the car park. We started walking toward a trig point looking at the birds around us. A Corn bunting (*Emberiza calandra*) was singing from the top of a bush and a Zitting Cisticola landed in a bare plant, allowing us nice views. A Stonechat (*Saxicola rubicola*) was perched in the vegetation bordering the path. We stopped to look at 2 Wheatears and Bernard found a Thekla Lark (*Galerida theklae*) quite close. Common Swifts (*Apus apus*) were flying in the distance in a mixed flock with Alpine Swifts (*Apus melba*). We reached the trig point but had to move away a little as workers were finishing a boardwalk nearby. From there, we could see the



fortress where Henry the Navigator had his school. We had a look at the sea. Few birds were passing but we saw a Great Skua (*Stercorarius skua*) quite close and some Gannets (*Morus bassanus*). A shag (*Phalacrocorax aristotelis*) was also fishing nearby. Since few birds were showing, we went back to the car, using a different path. We had good views of a male and female Sardinian Warbler (*Sylvia melanocephala*). Further, a Thekla Lark was showing, but not well enough for good views. Back at the car, we saw a Corn Bunting and House Martins were flying around.

We then went to Cabranosa, one of the best spots to watch raptor migration in autumn. Just after leaving Ponta da Atalaia, we saw a male Blue Rock Thrush (*Monticola solitarius*) perched on a dead Agave (*Agave americana*) but it flew away before we had a good look at it. Bernard also found a Woodchat Shrike (*Lanius senator*), seen well from the car. Further, we had a look at 2 Jackdaws (*Corvus monedula*). Then, we took a dirt track. Right at the beginning, we saw a Stonechat and stopped to look at 2 passerines on a small pine tree: a Goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*) and an Ortolan Bunting (*Emberiza hortulana*). They both flew away and were replaced by a Southern Grey Shrike (*Lanius meridionalis*). We spotted a Woodchat Shrike driving along the track before stopping for our coffee break.

Besides the passerines already seen from the car, we had close views of 2 Choughs (*Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*) flying near us and heard a Tree Pipit (*Anthus trivialis*). We then walked to the migration spot on the sheltered side of the pine hedge. We heard only a Wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*) until Valerie found a Thekla Lark showing well. At the same time, Bee-eaters appeared and we found a Buzzard (*Buteo buteo*) soaring in the distance. We reached a place where a lot of pines have been cut and managed to see a Thekla Lark and a Woodchat Shrike in the same



telescope frame! We also found a Short-toed Eagle (*Circaetus gallicus*) and Azure-winged Magpies showed-up. Before reaching the migration spot, we flushed a Hoopoe (*Upupa epops*) feeding on the ground. We had a look around and even if few birds were showing, we could see the place visited earlier and the one where we planned to go later. We walked around the sheep enclosure and came back on the other side of what was left of the pinewood. That is when the Short-toed Eagle

appeared again, this time closer. We had close views of Bee-eaters and heard a Sardinian Warbler. An unidentified warbler showed in the bushes but was blown away by the wind getting stronger. We tried to find it again, but were unsuccessful. We came back by a path between pine trees. That is where we found and had great views of a Bonelli's Warbler (*Phylloscopus bonelli*), a new species for Valerie! When

we left the pinewood, 2 Hoopoe appeared and Bernard found a Spectacled Warbler (*Sylvia conspicillata*), a bit far but seen well. At the same time, we heard another Tree Pipit. Just as we started walking, Bernard spotted a Short-toed Eagle, much closer this time. The trip back to the car was quiet and a Tawny Pipit (*Anthus campestris*) was there when we arrived but not everybody saw it.

We then moved to the picnic site and as we left, Bernard found a Yellow Wagtail (*Motacilla flava*) of the nominate subspecies. This bird had a yellow throat while Iberian birds have a white throat. We had a delicious lunch in a more or less sheltered place. During the meal, Bernard saw a few Spectacled Warblers and when we were trying to find a close one after lunch, we spotted a Wryneck (*Jynx torquilla*)!

We then headed to Cape St Vincent where it was also windy. We started with a bit of seawatching on the southern side but no birds were at sea. A couple of birds were on the cliff: a Black Redstart (*Phoenicurus phoenicurus*) and a passerine hiding in a bush. When this bird decided to show up, we could see it was a female Subalpine Warbler (*Sylvia cantillans*), seen closely even if it was not showing a lot. On the northern side, a few Gannets were flying and Bernard found 2 Sandwich Terns.

We left and stopped at Beliche fort for more birds. From the car park, we looked for the Blue Rock Thrush but did not find it so we moved to the other side of the fort. Just as we arrived, a male Blue Rock Thrush flew in front of us and landed on a rock, showing very well for several minutes before flying away. We stayed a bit longer. A male Black Redstart also appeared and the Blue Rock Thrush flew above us. Before leaving, we spotted 2 Bottle-nosed Dolphins (*Tursiops truncatus*) not far from the coast and had a good look at them just with binoculars. We came back to the car. Valerie had a last look around, searching for the Blue Rock Thrush and found it, perched on a rock, very close. We went to a local café for a drink before continuing.



We went back to Cruzinha *via* Vale Santo. Right at the beginning of the trip, we stopped to look for Little Bustards (*Tetrax tetrax*). One was quickly spotted displaying but we could not hear it because of the wind. These birds are usually easier to see in spring as the males are displaying and make a very characteristic noise. We found a second one and in the distance, a White Stork was feeding. We drove to old farm buildings, seeing Cattle Egrets and Choughs closely along the road. The second stop was short as no birds were in sight because of the strong wind. We saw more Stonechats, Corn Buntings, Thekla Larks and House Sparrows during the rest of the journey to Vila do Bispo.

We then headed back to Cruzinha. On the national road, shortly after passing Budens, we saw 2 Short-toed Eagles flying by the road. Back at Cruzinha, since we still had time before dinner, Bernard and Valerie explored the garden. Bernard re-found the Yellow-browed Warbler (*Phylloscopus inornatus*), which had been present for a few days. We all had great views of this bird as it was perched on a branch for about 15 minutes without moving!

Tuesday 14th April- Monchique Hills

After spending a day on the coast, Monchique offered a totally different landscape and habitat. We left Cruzinha early to get to Foia, the highest point (902 m), before the tourists and be able to see birds.

When we got there, the place was deserted but it was probably also due to the weather: cloudy and windy. The first bird seen was a female Blue Rock Thrush as we arrived. The view to the coast was not great either, very misty. We walked a bit and found a Stonechat. We heard a warbler, but it did not sound like a Sardinian Warbler: a Dartford Warbler (*Sylvia undata*)! Unfortunately, this bird did not show. A Blue Rock

Thrush flew over our heads and perched on a rock: a male, seen well with binoculars as it was gone before we had set up the telescopes. We stopped in a sheltered place where a Wren was singing and managed to see 2 Dartford Warblers. That is when it started raining so we came back to the car, but, of course, the rain stopped before we arrived at the car park! At that point, it was difficult to know if the rain would come back or not, and after some hesitation, we decided to carry on. Walking along the road, we heard more Wrens, a



Blackcap (*Sylvia atricapilla*), Red-rumped Swallows (*Cecropis daurica*) were flying around and the rain came back! We waited for it to stop and resumed our journey. The rest of the walk was interrupted a few times by more showers and therefore, we did not see many birds: Stonechats, Blackcaps and Wrens. Back at the car park, we had a well appreciated coffee in a sheltered place.

We went down the hill and stopped a few minutes by the road, looking for more birds. There, the weather was better. We heard more Wrens and a Chaffinch (*Fringilla coelebs*). Bernard also found a Great Tit (*Parus major*).

We went back to Monchique, seeing 2 Jays on the way and headed to an area rich in big and old Cork Oaks (*Quercus suber*). Several Firecrests (*Regulus ignicapilla*) and a Nuthatch (*Sitta europaea*) were calling when we arrived. We had great views of the Firecrest, showing well and Bernard heard an Iberian Chiffchaff (*Phylloscopus ibericus*) but this bird was a bit far away. We walked a few metres away from the car. We saw a female Chaffinch in a tree, soon joined by a Serin and a Blue Tit (*Parus caeruleus*) was calling in another Oak. We went on a track going

away from the road. Bernard spotted a Great Spotted Woodpecker (*Dendrocopos major*) making a hole in a tree but we scared it and it flew away. The path reached an area covered with Eucalyptus so we came back to the car as this kind of area is usually empty of birds. When we reached the road, many birds started calling so we heard Chaffinches, Nuthatches, and Short-toed Treecreepers (*Certhia brachydactyla*). We saw 2 birds of this last species, showing pretty well. Along the road, Chaffinches and Chiffchaffs were feeding. A male Blackcap appeared and crossed the road. One of the Chiffchaffs flew to a tree where it started singing, allowing us to identify it: a Common Chiffchaff (*Phylloscopus collybita*). Bernard spotted a Crested Tit (*Parus cristatus*), but not everybody managed to see it so we went closer to the tree where it was but this bird did not show up again. It was time to go back to the car. There, the Iberian Chiffchaff was still singing, a bit closer, but still out of sight.

We then drove to Caldas de Monchique, a small thermal village, where we had lunch. As we stepped out of the car, we saw Red-rumped Swallows. During our picnic, we saw a Grey Wagtail (*Motacilla cinerea*). Lunch was under the shade of big trees (even if it was not really needed) and listening to running water.

During the afternoon we walked around Caldas de Monchique. We heard Nuthatches, Blackcaps and Firecrests but failed to see them because of the abundant foliage of the trees. However, we did manage to see a Blue Tit! We went to a small chapel and stayed there a little while. There was no bird activity when we arrived but it suddenly changed. A Nuthatch appeared; we heard a Blackcap and a Nightingale (*Luscinia megarhynchos*) and saw Chaffinch, Great and Blue Tit. A Short-toed Treecreeper was going up and down a close by tree and a Cuckoo (*Cuculus canorus*) started calling as we left. We walked to the centre of the town but we had a last look at the trees near the chapel and spotted a Crested Tit but again it was a quick sighting. We had to stop again as we started walking because a Green Woodpecker (*Picus viridis*) was calling. We found it in a dead pine tree which indeed looked good for Woodpeckers! This time we managed to walk away from the chapel and went for a drink before going back to Cruzinha.



As we still had time, we made a last halt to look at a pond where Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*) had been regular the previous weeks. Unfortunately, none were present. However, Red-rumped Swallows and House Martins were flying around while a Nightingale was singing. We had close views of Storks flying by until an Ibis appeared but it did not stop. As it seemed to have chosen another area to land, we decided to have a look there; it was actually not far from a golf course (Morgado)! Two Glossy Ibis were by a small pond. Since the vegetation was high, we only

realized there were more birds when they flew away and counted 8 in total. Mallards and a Moorhen (*Gallinula chloropus*) were also using the pond. In the distance, an impressive flock of gulls was leaving Portimão rubbish dump. Bernard wanted to see Waxbills and we found a flock moving between the grass and bramble as free-range pigs disturbed them. Cattle Egrets joined the Ibis and it was quite funny seeing one following a pig everywhere, catching the insects disturbed by the mammal.

After these nice additions to the day list, we came back to Cruzinha. We were lucky again as we saw a Cuckoo before reaching the centre. Back there, a school was visiting and we came back on time to see the ringing demonstration, with an unexpected bird: a male Redstart (*Phoenicurus phoenicurus*). The rest of the afternoon was free and we planned the next day after dinner since the weather did not seem to be good.

Wednesday 15th April- Ponta da Piedade and Alvor Dunes

After changing Wednesday's plans on Tuesday night, we changed them again in the morning since the forecasted rain did not come: we headed to Ponta da Piedade after breakfast.

It rained a bit on the way but it was sunny when we arrived. Yellow-legged Gulls were flying above the car park and we spotted a different bird among them: a Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*) which passed close to us. While getting ready, we also saw 2 Kestrels and Jackdaws.



We started birdwatching next to the lighthouse and looked at the sea but few birds were present. We could see Sagres, the place visited on Monday, in the distance. As seawatching was disappointing, we went behind the lighthouse. There we enjoyed the scenery. Usually, there is a mixed colony of Cattle and Little Egrets on an island but this time, it was deserted. Only a few pairs were nesting on a different island. Sandwich Terns were passing at sea and Yellow-legged Gulls, Cormorants (*Phalacrocorax carbo*), Rock Doves

(*Columba livia*) and Spotless Starlings (*Sturnus unicolor*) were resting on the islands. Ponta da Piedade is in theory one of the only places in Portugal where the wild variety of Rock Dove still breeds. We then walked to another spot, hearing Zitting Cisticola and Sardinian Warbler on the way. From this spot, Bernard found 2 Red-legged Partridges (*Alectoris rufa*) on the cliff. Two Kestrels flew close to us. At sea, Bernard found a group of Scoters (*Melanitta nigra*) and while looking at them, we saw Whimbrels and spotted 2 Gannets. On the cliff, Valerie found a flock of Azure-winged Magpies in a bush. We walked towards Praia do Camilo, seeing Goldfinches and Blackbirds in the shrub along the track. I went to get the minibus and left Bernard and

Valerie enjoying the birds and landscape. When I came back, they were looking at Sandwich Terns. In the meantime, they also had seen 13 Mediterranean Gulls (*Larus melanocephalus*), a Black Redstart and a Blackcap.

We stopped at Lagos on the way back for some pictures. Bernard and Valerie did some sightseeing while I stayed near the car and looked at Mediterranean Gulls. One of them was carrying a red ring with white digits (Hungarian scheme).

We had lunch outside at Cruzinha, in the company of young Barn Swallows perched above us (which can be dangerous!).

We headed to Alvor beach after lunch, where we explored the dunes along the boardwalk. The first birds seen were House Sparrows, Crested Larks and a Kestrel hunting over the dunes. We had a glimpse of a Zitting Cisticola which landed in a bush but disappeared in the vegetation. From the boardwalk, we had a different view of Quinta da Rocha and at the same time, a Zitting Cisticola landed near us, showing very well. From there, we saw 4 Hoopoes in the distance and tried to get closer, but without success. However, we met Keith and Rosy, regular volunteers at A Rocha. We had a look at the Ria de Alvor estuary. As the tide was still low, we looked for waders but only saw Sanderlings (*Calidris alba*) and 4 Oystercatchers (*Haematopus ostralegus*) in flight. A Little Tern (*Sternula albifrons*) appeared, we saw it well, fishing in the estuary. A flock of about 120 Whimbrels was flying above the sea. In the dunes, a Short-toed Lark (*Calandrella brachydactyla*) was feeding on the ground while another one was singing in flight. Valerie spotted another group of Whimbrels at sea, and more were flying above the estuary with other smaller waders unidentified. In total, more than 200 birds were in flight! As we approached the break water wall, we met again Keith and Rosy and looked at a male Kentish Plover in the dunes.



We came back along the beach. A few Mediterranean Gulls were flying at sea and Bernard found another flock of Whimbrels. They came closer to the beach but never landed there. They flew away where they joined with another group and flew north-west. We came back to the boardwalk and did the last part of the walk near the mudflats of the Ria de Alvor estuary. More sandbars were out of the water but still few birds feeding: a Little Egret, a Greenshank and a Whimbrel. On a distant mudflat, Bernard found a gull which looked good for a Great Black-backed Gull (*Larus marinus*). This sighting was pretty bad due to heat haze and the distance but the bird flew in the direction where we were heading, so there was hope for better views! We indeed found it again and managed to have better views. That is where things got more complicated, there were 2 gulls looking like Great Black-backed Gull, which seemed unlikely to happen! After several minutes looking at these birds (thank you

Valerie for your patience!), we confirmed the identification. While we were looking at these birds, several waders flew by: 3 Turnstones and a Ringed Plover. We resumed our walk and stopped again to look at another wader in flight: a Stone-curlew (*Burhinus oedicanus*). A walker stopped and asked us what we were looking at. While we were chatting with him, one of the gulls took off and flew away. When we arrived nearer to the harbour, we saw a very close Little Egret and a Whimbrel feeding. We came back to the car and Cruzinha without seeing any new species.

Thursday 16th April- Open Day at Cruzinha and Lagoa dos Salgados

As Thursday is Cruzinha's open day, everybody was able to enjoy the activities set up at the centre: moth identification and bird ringing demonstration, all this with coffee and cake in the middle. Despite the good weather, not many birds were caught for ringing: only 11. However, Valerie and Bernard could have close views of Blackbirds (*Turdus merula*), Serins and a Wren. The activities stopped at 13:00 and we had another good lunch, at the centre this time, and outside.

Then, we went to one of the richest but still threatened Algarvian wetlands: Lagoa dos Salgados. This place is usually good for waders, ducks, herons, Flamingos and sometimes more unusual species. Again, we were not disappointed as we saw a good range of species. From the path leading to the lagoon we saw that the water level was good and many birds seem to be present.

We parked by the beach and walked to the "bird hide". On the way, we saw Greenfinches, Crested Larks and a Yellow Wagtail. This last bird seemed different than the ones usually seen and after consulting the guide, it looked as if it could belong to the *feldegg* subspecies, pretty rare in Portugal, but we needed to confirm that. As we arrived at the hide, a flock of about 100 Whimbrels flew away. Many gulls were resting on the dyke in front of us and on the water: Lesser Black-backed, Yellow-legged and an Audouin's Gull. Black-winged Stilts and Avocets were using



the islands with a group of terns. All of them were Sandwich Terns, except one, correctly identified by Bernard as a Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*). Many ducks were also present: Shovelers (*Anas clypeata*), Gadwalls (*Anas strepera*), Mallards, Pochards (*Aythya ferina*), a pair Red-crested Pochard (*Netta rufina*) with Little Grebes (*Tachybaptus ruficollis*) and Coots (*Fulica atra*). We spotted a Collared Pratincole (*Glareola pratincola*) in flight. This bird landed on one of the islands by a gull which looked different from the

other present. This bird seemed to be a good candidate for Common (*Larus canus*) or Ring-billed Gull (*Larus delawarensis*). A group of Spoonbills also landed on this island, giving us nice views. Another flock of Whimbrels passed in flight but we also

heard Curlew (*Numenius arquata*) and spotted 2. That is when the Yellow Wagtail reappeared and we managed a bad picture! A Purple Heron (*Ardea purpurea*) was seen in flight, but briefly since it landed in a reedbed and did not show up again.

After all these great sightings, we decided to walk along the lagoon using the boardwalk. On the way, we had excellent views of a Red-rumped Swallow flying above us and a Magpie (*Pica pica*) landed in the vegetation bordering the lagoon. From the boardwalk, we had a different view of the lagoon and saw more species. We found the mysterious gull again and had better view even if not great. A couple of Audouin's Gulls were also around but much closer. Before reaching the end of the lagoon, we had a frustrating sighting of Purple Swamphen (*Porphyrio porphyrio*) hiding in the vegetation. As no birds were showing, we came back to the car.

We looked again at the island where the unidentified gull was but it had disappeared. Two Audouin's Gulls were still there, we heard a Cetti's Warbler (*Cettia cetti*) and Bee-eaters were flying around. As we still had time, we came back to the hide for an extra 30 minutes of birdwatching. No new birds had arrived but we had better views of the Collared Pratincole. We scanned again the gulls and terns without finding anything new. A Spoonbill flew by.



We then returned to Cruzinha. After dinner, we tried to identify the mysterious gull and decided it was probably a Ring-billed Gull. Then, everybody went to bed early because we had a long birdwatching day on Friday.

Friday 17th April- 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 very early (about 6:00) to be in the field at sunrise. Fog appeared during the journey and it was thicker when we arrived at Castro Verde. Though, this did not stop us from seeing a Black Kite (*Milvus migrans*) on the way, the first bird of prey of the day.

We arrived at Castro Verde by 7:30 and on the way to the LPN (Liga para a Proteção da Natureza) reserve (also called Vale Gonçalinho), we stopped for breakfast (tea, coffee, croissant, bread, jam) by a field with interested cows. Because of the fog, the birds present were all identified by call or song: Corn Buntings and Zitting Cisticolas. As the reserve only opened at 9:00, we started birdwatching on the way but the visibility was very bad on some of the spotting places. We still saw Crested Larks, Goldfinches and Collared Doves on the way. The second halt was at a higher place and the visibility was better since the fog was disappearing. Carrion Crows (*Corvus corone*) and Cattle Egrets were in the field in front of us while a Quail (*Coturnix coturnix*) was calling. We found the first Roller (*Coracias garrulus*) of the

day on a tree a bit far. On a closer one, a Woodchat Shrike was perched. We also had great views of a Fox (*Vulpes vulpes*) resting on a rock. Bernard found a Little Bustard in a field, pretty far, before we left.

Then, we turned onto a dirt track leading to the LPN reserve. A little falcon on the ground, quite close, caught our attention: a female Merlin (*Falco columbarius*). We had good views of this bird even if it flew away shortly after we had stopped. Bernard located a Tawny Pipit on a rock in the same field, showing well and a Calandra Lark (*Melanocorypha calandra*) was singing high in the sky above our heads. We parked the car by the centre and had a look around as it was still closed. A few Lesser Kestrels (*Falco naumanni*) were flying around, a Peregrine Falcon appeared and we flushed a Roller! In a field near the centre, a rock seemed to move. A look through the telescope confirmed it was not a rock but a Great Bustard (*Otis tarda*). We had nice views of the bird, not too far and in good light until it flew away; proving that despite its heavy weight (heaviest males can reach 17kg), it can fly! Bernard also found 2 Red-legged partridges nearby.



We started walking in the property and our first stop was in front of a tower where Lesser Kestrels nest thanks to nest boxes set up. We saw a few of them but also Roller and Black-bellied Sandgrouses (*Pterocles orientalis*) in flight, pretty close. We continued walking and stopped on a bridge crossing a stream. Valerie found Bee-eaters perched on a fence. Another Tawny Pipit showed up, closer than the first one and Bernard spotted a singing Short-toed Lark. Before passing the property gates, we

had a look at Short-toed Larks feeding on the ground and a Calandra Lark perched on a post, nice to see this species closer! Valerie found a Raven (*Corvus corax*) flying in the distance. In the property, we stopped and had a chat with an English couple, looking at distant Great Bustard and displaying Little Bustards. They also found a Short-toed Eagle hunting. We stopped again by another structure built for Lesser Kestrel to nest and had a coffee there. More Black-bellied Sandgrouses passed in flight while we were looking at the structure. We could see Lesser Kestrel, Roller and Spotless Starling perched on the building in the same telescope frame! Temperatures started rising and more birds of prey appearing: 2 Buzzards, the Short-toed Eagle again and 2 males Montagu's Harrier (*Circus pygargus*). In the distance, Bernard found a Spoonbill, soon joined by another one. We resumed our walk and stopped on an elevation of the terrain to look at a Calandra Lark and scan the surroundings. Valerie found a Black Kite and we spotted Great Bustards in various fields around us. In one of them, it was even possible to see the 2 species of bustards together! Near old farm buildings, a male was displaying (also called foam

bath) near a female which did not look very interested... We went closer to have a better view of these birds. Quite a few people were already present and looking at these nearby Great Bustards when we arrived. However, besides a Black Kite above us and a Raven behind us, few birds were around so we did not stay very long. Before leaving the property, we had nice views of a Whinchat (*Saxicola rubetra*) and a pair of Lesser Kestrels.

Back at the centre, as it was opened, we had a quick chat with the LPN workers and left a donation to help them keep on doing their great work in the area. We had lunch by the centre in the shade.

After lunch, we went to Entradas to a spot in the shade of a eucalyptus and near a reservoir and a stream. Black-winged Stilts were feeding along the stream with a Greenshank when we arrived, soon joined by a Spoonbill. I had a nap in the car while the rest of the group explored the surroundings. After that, we had a look at the lagoon but few species were present: Mallards, Little Grebes, a Grey Heron (*Ardea cinerea*), a family of Coots and a Common Buzzard was perched on a post along the pool. Bernard and Valerie had also seen a family of Stonechat while I was resting. We drove towards another village but stopped shortly after crossing the stream to look at males and a female Montagu's Harrier. Further on, Bernard located a male Little Bustard displaying by the road. Passing farm buildings, we saw a Roller and Cattle Egrets with sheep, some of the egrets even perched on the sheep's back. We stopped again by a river where a Black-winged Kite (*Elanus caeruleus*) was hunting. We disturbed 2 Little Ringed Plovers (*Charadrius dubius*) when we arrived



but they stayed around, allowing us to have nice views. A Cetti's Warbler and a Nightingale were singing in the vegetation and Bee-eaters flying around. A Booted Eagle (*Aquila pennata*) was perched on a dead tree and flew away while we were looking at a Melodious Warbler (*Hippolais polyglotta*). Shortly before reaching the other village, we heard a Woodlark (*Lullula arborea*) while driving so we stopped to try to see it, without success. However, we heard 2 Golden Oriole (*Oriolus oriolus*) and saw one.

We crossed the village and had a look at the many Stork nests along the road. Spanish Sparrows (*Passer hispaniolensis*) use these nests to make their own so we looked for them. We saw several characteristic males, with their brown head, white cheek and a lot of black on the chest. We also met the English couple we talked to in the morning; they were driving with the trunk of their car opened! We drove towards a vantage point. On the way, we saw a male Black-eared Wheatear (*Oenanthe hispanica*) but it flew away. We stopped to look for it, but did not find it again, but we

did find a new species of bird of prey for the day: a Black (or Cinereous) Vulture (*Aegypius monachus*). We also had great views of a male Montagu's Harrier flying close by. Further on, we saw a Southern Grey Shrike on a post. When we arrived on top of the hill, everybody was impressed with the view as we were at one of the few high places of the area. A light morph Booted Eagle flew over the place and Bernard found several distant birds of prey: a Black and a Red Kite (*Milvus milvus*) and 2 Griffon Vultures (*Gyps fulvus*).



We went down the hill on a different track. Valerie spotted a female Marsh Harrier (*Circus aeruginosus*) but it was a quick sighting as we could not stop. Further on, a Little Owl (*Athene noctua*) was on its regular pile of rocks. We drove towards another village, Alvares, south of the places visited during the day, seeing many Southern Grey Shrikes perched on the wires along the way. Then, we took a dirt track. We stopped to look at a small cliff and spotted an immature Spanish Imperial Eagle (*Aquila adalberti*), this

was our lucky day! Despite the distance, we saw it well and for quite a while, at least until the passage of 5 Black-bellied Sandgrouses distracted us! We stopped again near a small lagoon. From the car, we saw a male Black-eared Wheatear, and this time, this bird stayed around, allowing us to nice views. Two Little Ringed Plover flew away when we stepped out of the car. A couple of Collared Pratincoles were on an island and by the lagoon, so we had better views than the previous day. Red Deer (*Cervus elaphus*) were on the field on the other side of the track. We had another look at the Wheatear when we left. We came back to Castro Verde, seeing a Short-toed Eagle and a Montagu's Harrier on the way.

For dinner, we had local food (black pork) in a restaurant in Castro Verde. We were back around 22:30, all very tired, so everybody went to bed.

Saturday 18th April- Abicada

As Friday was a long day, Saturday morning was free so everybody could rest. Bernard and Valerie used part of this time to have great views of the Yellow-browed Warbler, still in the Cruzinha garden. Again, we had lunch outside as the weather was great and left after for Abicada.

The first observation took place at the car park as we arrived. A few Black-winged Stilts, a Greenshank, a Little Egret and a Yellow-legged Gull were feeding or resting on a small marsh. The water level of the lake was quite high so few birds were in sight.

We walked to the dam along the lake. The tide was high so no birds were present on the Alvor side. We walked along the dyke and Bernard spotted a Common

Sandpiper (*Actitis hypoleucos*) flying above the lagoon. Many Black-winged Stilts were feeding on the marsh with Mallards and Redshanks. A Ringed Plover was on its own on a vegetation raft on the lake. A Yellow Wagtail flew in front of us and a couple of Stonechats was on the marsh. Two Marsh Harriers were soaring in the distance and a Kestrel was hunting over the marsh. A Cormorant was drying its wings perched on a log on the lake. We looked at the marsh before walking along the river: 2 Avocets were resting in company of a Greenshank and a Little Egret and Valerie found a Common Sandpiper.

The path went across farmland habitat. A Woodchat Shrike, typical bird of this environment, was perched on a small tree and many House Martins and Red-rumped Swallows were flying in the distance. We also flushed 2 Red-legged Partridges and 3 Cattle Egrets by a pond. Then, we arrived at a higher point from where we could see a big reedbed and heard a Cetti's Warbler and a Nightingale. Before reaching the ruins, we heard a Quail.



From the ruins, we looked towards the small marsh nearby, and few birds were present as there was still water: 8 Spoonbills resting, Black-winged Stilts, Mallards (adults and juveniles) and a Coot. As there was not much movement, we thought about walking back to the car. That is when a female Marsh Harrier appeared. This bird was first mobbed by a Kestrel. Then, we waited to see if it flushed any bird from the marsh, but it did not. We had a last look on the marsh before leaving and found a Purple Heron in the vegetation. We had nice views of this bird and a 2nd one landed in the marsh but disappeared straight away. We finally left, flushed a Hoopoe and then a Green Sandpiper (*Tringa ochropus*), the only new species for the trip seen during the day. We only saw a group of Yellow-legged Gulls before reaching the car.

Back at Cruzinha, we still had some time to relax before our last dinner.

Sunday 19th April- Ludo and departure

For the group's last day, we had a more relaxed breakfast and after the traditional goodbyes, we left.

Shortly after leaving Cruzinha, before we entered the motorway, we spotted a big bird in flight. The shape and wing beat of this bird did not match with a Stork and a look through the binoculars confirmed it: a Great Bustard! Seeing this species in the Algarve is very rare.

At Ludo, we first crossed a pinewood area where no birds were seen. We stopped by salt pans which had water this time. In the first tank, 2 Avocets and 6 Shelducks were feeding together. On the other side of the road, Bernard found a

Gadwall. Only Black-winged Stilts were in the 2nd lagoon. We stopped further since Bernard had found an Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) which flew above the road, giving us good views. The next halt was by another lagoon, usually abundant in ducks, but this time, it was quite empty. The only birds present were Little and Great Crested Grebes (*Podiceps cristatus*), a pair of Red-crested Pochard (*Netta rufina*) and Coots. On the way to the next stop, we drove past a big pile of salt and in the middle of more saltpans but with few birds.

We parked next to a golf course in a shady place. We first walked along a lagoon to see better the birds there. On the way, we heard a Wryneck but did not manage to see it, even if it seemed pretty close. Quite a few birds were on the lagoon: Avocets, Pochards, Gadwalls, Coots, a Flamingo and 2 Spoonbills. One of these birds was carrying colour rings and had been ringed in the Netherlands. Bernard found a flock of Flamingos in flight. A bird came out of the bushes next to us and perched on a branch: the Wryneck! We came back to the car where we had a coffee before walking to the bird hide.

We walked along the green where we saw a few birds: a Mistle Thrush (*Turdus viscivorus*), and further 2 Hoopoes with a male Serin together. We stopped near Roman ruins and finally reached our destination. The lagoon next to the golf course is usually a very good spot and has a good bird hide. A first look from outside the hide already revealed the presence of many birds: Gadwalls, Coots and 2 Red-

crested Pochards. From the hide, we found several Purple Swampheens, one of them walking on the green. Bernard found a male Black-headed Weaver (*Ploceus melanocephalus*), an exotic species, a bit far away, but we saw more and closer. A pair of Shovelers also showed up. Again, as it was quiet, we thought about leaving and that is when a male Little Bittern (*Ixobrychus minutus*) landed right in front of the hide. We had great views of this bird, really close. A Little Egret flew over the lagoon, showing red feet (instead of yellow) characteristic of breeding birds.



Lunchtime was approaching so we left the hide and I went to the car to get the food. However, passing by the hide, I found another Little Bittern, a female this time, very close and in the open. I called Valerie and Bernard who looked at it and even showed it to other birders. We had lunch by the hide and saw a Purple Heron flying over our heads.

While I went back to the car, Valerie and Bernard went to the other hide. I met them there. We all had heard a Short-toed Treecreeper on the way. This second hide overlooks mudflats and some waders were visible: Greenshanks, Redshanks, Dunlins, Sanderlings, Grey and Ringed Plovers. A few more birds were visible in a pond along the track so we went closer. Sheltered from the wind, we saw 8 Black-

tailed Godwits (*Limosa limosa*), one of them in breeding plumage, Avocets, Black-winged Stilts, Kentish Plovers and Sanderlings. It was then time to go back to the car. We saw another Hoopoe before getting there.

We drove back between the saltpans and this time, more waders were present. Black-winged Stilts, Sanderlings, Little Stints, Dunlins and a Curlew Sandpiper were feeding together. These were the last birds we saw before going to the airport where I dropped Valerie and Bernard. Then, it was time to say goodbye after another great birdwatching week, where a record breaking 155 species were spotted!

List of species

- Common Shelduck (*Tadorna tadorna*): 2 at Santa Luzia salt pans and 6 at Ludo.
- Gadwall (*Anas strepera*): seen at Lagoa dos Salgados, Castro Verde (2 at Vale Gonçalves) and Ludo.
- Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*): seen at Santa Luzia salt pans (1 male and 3 females), Morgado, Alvor dunes (3 males and 1 female), Lagoa dos Salgados, Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalves, Entradas), Abicada (adult and juveniles) and Ludo.
- Shoveler (*Anas clypeata*): seen at Lagoa dos Salgados and Ludo (1 male and 1 female).
- Red-crested Pochard (*Netta rufina*): 2 at Lagoa dos Salgados (1 male and 1 female) and 6 at Ludo (4 males and 2 females).
- Pochard (*Aythya ferina*): seen at Lagoa dos Salgados and Ludo.
- Common Scoter (*Melanitta nigra*): 11 seen from Ponta da Piedade.
- Red-legged Partridge (*Alectoris rufa*): seen at Monchique (2 at Foia), Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalves, Alvares) and Ponta da Piedade (2).
- Common Quail (*Coturnix coturnix*): heard at Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalves, Entradas) and Abicada.
- Little Grebe (*Tachybaptus ruficollis*): seen at Lagoa dos Salgados, Castro Verde (Entradas) and Ludo.
- Great Crested Grebe (*Podiceps cristatus*): seen at Ludo.
- Northern Gannet (*Morus bassanus*): seen from Sagres (Ponta da Atalaia, cape) and Ponta da Piedade.
- Great Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*): 1 at Alvor dunes, 2 at Lagoa dos Salgados, 3 at Abicada and 5 at Ponta da Piedade.
- European Shag (*Phalacrocorax aristotelis*): seen at Sagres (Ponta da Atalaia, cape).
- Little Bittern (*Ixobrychus minutus*): at least 2 (1 male and 1 female) at Ludo.
- Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus Ibis*): seen on the way to Cruzinha, at Sagres (15 at Vale Santo), Morgado (4), Lagoa dos Salgados, Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalves, Entradas) and Ponta da Piedade (nests).



- Little Egret (*Egretta garzetta*): seen at Santa Luzia salt pans, Ponta da Piedade (nests), Alvor dunes (1), Lagoa dos Salgados, Castro Verde (1 at Entrada), Abicada and Ludo (1).
- Grey Heron (*Ardea cinerea*): 1 at Lagoa dos Salgados, 3 at Castro Verde (1 at Vale Gonçalvesinho, 1 at Entradas, 1 at Alvares) and 2 at Abicada.
- Purple Heron (*Ardea purpurea*): 1 at Lagoa dos Salgados, 2 at Abicada and 1 at Ludo.
- White Stork (*Ciconia ciconia*): seen at Santa Luzia salt pans, Sagres (Cabranosa, Vale Santo), Morgado, Lagoa dos Salgados (5), Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalvesinho, Entradas, São Marcos da Ataboeira, Alvares), Abicada (1) and Ludo.
- Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*): 8 at Moragdo and 1 at Lagoa dos Salgados.
- Eurasian Spoonbill (*Platalea leucorodia*): 3 at Santa Luzia salt pans, 9 at Lagoa dos Salgados, 3 at Castro Verde (2 at Vale Gonçalvesinho and 1 at Entradas) and 2 at Ludo.
- Greater Flamingo (*Phoenicopterus roseus*): 31 at Santa Luzia salt pans and 22 at Ludo.
- Black-winged Kite (*Elanus ceruleus*): 1 at Castro Verde (Entradas).



- Black Kite (*Milvus migrans*): seen at and Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalvesinho, 1 at Nossa Senhora de Aracelis).
- Red Kite (*Milvus milvus*): 1 at Castro Verde (Nossa Senhora de Aracelis).
- Griffon Vulture (*Gyps fulvus*): 2 at Castro Verde (Nossa Senhora de Aracelis).
- Cinereous Vulture (*Aegypius monachus*): 1 at Castro Verde (Nossa Senhora de Aracelis).
- Short-toed Snake Eagle (*Circaetus gallicus*): 1 at Sagres (Cabranosa), 2 at Budens and 2 at Castro Verde (1 at Vale Gonçalvesinho and 1 at Alvares).
- Western Marsh Harrier (*Circus aeruginosus*): 2 females at Castro Verde (1 at Corte Pequena, 1 at Alvares) and 2 females at Abicada.
- Montagu's Harrier (*Circus pygargus*): seen at Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalvesinho, Entradas, Nossa Senhora de Aracelis).
- Common Buzzard (*Buteo buteo*): 1 at Sagres (Cabranosa) and Castro Verde (3 at Vale Gonçalvesinho, 1 at Entradas).

- Spanish Imperial Eagle (*Aquila adalberti*): 1 immature at Castro Verde (Alvares).
- Booted Eagle (*Aquila pennata*): 2 at Castro Verde (1 at Entradas and 1 light morph at Nossa Senhora de Aracelis).
- Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*): 1 at Ludo.
- Lesser Kestrel (*Falco naumanni*): seen at Castro Verde (Vale Gonçálinho).
- Kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*): seen at Sagres, Ponta da Piedade (2), Alvor dunes (1) and Abicada.
- Merlin (*Falco columbarius*): 1 female at Castro Verde (Vale Gonçálinho).
- Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*): 1 at Castro Verde (Vale Gonçálinho) and 1 at Ponta da Piedade.
- Common Moorhen (*Gallinula chloropus*): seen at Morgado, Lagoa dos Salgados and Ludo.
- Purple Swamphen (*Porphyrio porphyrio*): seen at Lagoa dos Salgados (2) and Ludo.
- Eurasian Coot (*Fulica atra*): seen at Lagoa dos Salgados, Castro Verde (Entradas), Abicada (3) and Ludo.
- Little Bustard (*Tetrax tetrax*): seen at Sagres (2 males displaying at Vale Santo) and Castro Verde (Vale Gonçálinho, Entradas, Nossa Senhora de Aracelis, Alvares).
- Great Bustard (*Otis tarda*): 14 at Castro Verde (Vale Gonçálinho) and 1 in flight in Alvor (entrance to the highway).
- Eurasian Oystercatcher (*Haematopus ostralegus*): 4 at Alvor dunes.
- Black-winged Stilt (*Himantopus himantopus*): seen at Santa Luzia salt pans, Lagoa dos Salgados, Castro Verde (2 at Entradas), Abicada, and Ludo.
- Pied Avocet (*Recurvirostra avosetta*): seen at Santa Luzia salt pans, Lagoa dos Salgados and Ludo.
- Eurasian Stone-curlew (*Burhinus oedicnemus*): 1 at Alvor dunes and 1 at Castro Verde (Alvares).
- Collared Pratincole (*Glareola pratincola*): 2 at Lagoa dos Salgados and 3 at Castro Verde (Alvares).



- Little Ringed Plover (*Charadrius dubius*): 4 at Castro Verde (2 at Entradas, 2 at Alvares).
- Common Ringed Plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*): seen at Santa Luzia salt pans (1), Alvor dunes (1), Abicada (1) and Ludo.
- Kentish Plover (*Charadrius alexandrinus*): seen at Santa Luzia salt pans, Alvor dunes (2), Lagoa dos Salgados and Ludo.
- Grey Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*): seen at Santa Luzia salt pans and Ludo.
- Sanderling (*Calidris alba*): seen at Alvor dunes (40) and Ludo.
- Little Stint (*Calidris minuta*): 8 at Santa Luzia salt pans and 5 at Ludo.
- Curlew Sandpiper (*Calidris ferruginea*): 1 at Santa Luzia salt pans and 1 at Ludo.
- Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*): seen at Santa Luzia salt pans and Ludo.
- Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*): 8 at Ludo.
- Whimbrel (*Numenius phaeopus*): seen at Santa Luzia salt pans (4), Ponta da Piedade, Alvor dunes (250-300) and Lagos dos Salgados.
- Eurasian Curlew (*Numenius arquata*): 2 at Lagoa dos Salgados and 1 at Ludo.
- Common Sandpiper (*Actitis hypoleucos*): 1 at Santa Luzia salt pans, 1 at Lagoa dos Salgados and 3 at Abicada.
- Green Sandpiper (*Tringa ochropus*): 1 at Abicada.
- Common Greenshank (*Tringa nebularia*): seen at Santa Luzia salt pans (2), Alvor dunes (1), Lagoa dos Salgados (2), Castro Verde (1 at Entradas), Abicada and Ludo (1).
- Common Redshank (*Tringa totanus*): seen at Santa Luzia salt pans (30), Abicada and Ludo.
- Ruddy Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*): seen at Santa Luzia salt pans (2), Alvor dunes (3) and Ludo.
- Great Skua (*Stercorarius skua*): 1 seen from Sagres (Ponta da Atalaia).
- Mediterranean Gull (*Larus melanocephalus*): seen at Ponta da Piedade (33), Alvor dunes (6), Lagoa dos Salgados and Ludo.
- Black-headed Gull (*Larus ridibundus*): seen at Lagoa dos Salgados.
- Slender-billed Gull (*Larus genei*): 3 at Santa Luzia salt pans.
- Audouin's Gull (*Larus audouinii*): 9 at Santa Luzia Salt pans, 2 at Lagoa dos Salgados and 1 at Ludo.



- Ring-billed Gull (*Larus delawarensis*): 1 at Lagoa dos Salgados.
- Lesser Black-backed Gull (*Larus fuscus*): seen at Santa Luzia salt pans, Alvor dunes, Lagoa dos Salgados and Ludo.
- Yellow-legged Gull (*Larus michahellis*): seen at Santa Luzia salt pans, Sagres (Ponta da Atalaia, cape), Ponta da Piedade, Alvor dunes, Lagoa dos Salgados, Abicada (13) and Ludo.
- Great Black backed Gull (*Larus marinus*): 2 at Alvor dunes.
- Caspian Tern (*Hydroprogne caspia*): 1 at Santa Luzia salt pans.
- Sandwich Tern (*Sterna sandvicensis*): seen at Santa Luzia salt pans (1), Sagres (2 at the cape), Ponta da Piedade (47), Alvor dunes (1) and Lagoa dos Salgados (30).
- Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*): 1 at Lagoa dos Salgados.
- Little Tern (*Sternula albifrons*): 1 at Alvor dunes.
- Black-bellied Sandgrouse (*Pterocles orientalis*): seen at Castro Verde (25 at Vale Gonçalvesinho and 5 at Alvares).
- Rock Dove (*Columbia livia*): seen at Sagres (Cabranosa, cape) and Ponta da Piedade.
- Common Wood Pigeon (*Columba palumbus*): seen at Castro Verde (Nossa Senhora de Aracelis).
- Eurasian Collared Dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*): seen on the way to Cruzinha, at Sagres (Ponta da Atalaia), Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalvesinho, São Marcos da Ataboeira, Corte Pequena) and Ludo.
- Common Cuckoo (*Cuculus canorus*): heard at Monchique (Caldas de Monchique) and seen at Cruzinha.



- Little Owl (*Athene noctua*): 2 at Castro Verde (1 at Vale Gonçalvesinho, 1 at Corte Pequena).
- Common Swift (*Apus apus*): seen at Santa Luzia salt pans (1), Sagres (Ponta da Atalaia, Cabranosa) and Castro Verde (2 at Vale Gonçalvesinho).
- Pallid Swift (*Apus pallidus*): seen at Sagres (Ponta da Atalaia, Cabranosa) and Castro Verde (1 at Nossa Senhora de Aracelis).
- Alpine Swift (*Apus melba*): seen at Sagres (Ponta da Atalaia, Cabranosa).

- European Bee-eater (*Merops apiaster*): seen at Santa Luzia saltpans, Sagres (12 at Cabranosa), Lagoa dos Salgados, Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalves, Entradas, Nossa Senhora de Aracelis, Alvares) and Ludo.
- European Roller (*Coracias garrulus*): seen at Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalves, Entradas).



- Hoopoe (*Upupa epops*): 3 at Sagres (Cabranosa), 4 at Alvor dunes, 1 at Abicada and at least 4 at Ludo.
- Eurasian Wryneck (*Jynx torquilla*): 1 at Sagres (Cabranosa) and 1 at Ludo.
- European Green Woodpecker (*Picus viridis*): 1 at Monchique (Caldas de Monchique).
- Great Spotted Woodpecker (*Dendrocopos major*): 1 at Monchique (Picota).
- Calandra Lark (*Melanocorypha calandra*): seen at Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalves, Entradas).
- Greater Short-toed Lark (*Calandrella brachydactyla*): seen at Alvor dunes (2) and Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalves).
- Crested Lark (*Galerida cristata*): seen at Santa Luzia saltpans, Alvor dunes, Lagoa dos Salgado, Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalves, Entradas), Abicada and Ludo.
- Thekla Lark (*Galerida theklae*): seen at Sagres (Ponta da Atalaia, Cabranosa, Vale Santo) and Castro Verde (Nossa Senhora de Aracelis).
- Woodlark (*Lullula arborea*): 1 at Castro Verde (Entradas).
- Skylark (*Alauda arvensis*): heard at Sagres (Vale santo).
- Barn Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*): seen at Santa Luzia saltpans, Sagres (Ponta da Atalaia), Cruzinha, Morgado, Ponta da Piedade (1), Alvor dunes, Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalves, Entradas) and Ludo.
- Common House Martin (*Delichon urbicum*) seen at Santa Luzia saltpans, Sagres (Ponta da Atalaia), Morgado, Alvor dunes, Castro Verde (Entradas), Abicada and Ludo.
- Red-rumped Swallow (*Cecropis daurica*): seen at Santa Luzia saltpans, Sagres (Ponta da Atalaia), Monchique (Foia, Caldas de Monchique), Morgado, Lagoa dos Salgados (1), Castro Verde (2 at Nossa Senhora de Aracelis), Abicada and Ludo.

- Tawny Pipit (*Anthus campestris*): 1 at Sagres (Cabranosa) and 2 at Castro Verde (Vale Gonçálinho).
- Tree Pipit (*Anthus trivialis*): 2 at Sagres (Cabranosa).
- Yellow Wagtail (*Motacilla flava*): seen at Santa Luzia saltpans (1), Sagres (1 *flava* at Cabranosa), Lagoa dos Salgados (4, including 1 *feldegg*) and Ludo (1).
- Grey Wagtail (*Motacilla cinerea*): 4 at Monchique (Caldas de Monchique).
- White Wagtail (*Motacilla alba*): 1 at Castro Verde (Entradas).
- Winter Wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*): seen at Sagres (Cabranosa), Monchique and Cruzinha (ringing).
- Common Nightingale (*Luscinia megarhynchos*): 2 at Monchique (1 at Picota and 1 at Caldas de Monchique), 3 at Morgado, 2 Castro Verde (Entradas) and 2 at Abicada.
- Black Redstart (*Phoenicurus ochruros*): 3 at Sagres (2 male and 1 female at the cape) and 1 at Ponta da Piedade.
- Common Redstart (*Phoenicurus phoenicurus*): 1 at Cruzinha (ringing).
- Whinchat (*Saxicola rubetra*): 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) and Abicada.
- Northern Wheatear (*Oenanthe oenanthe*): 1 at Santa Luzia saltpans and 2 at Sagres (Ponta da Atalaia).
- Black-eared Wheatear (*Oenanthe hispanica*): 2 at Castro Verde (1 at Nossa Senhora de Aracelis and 1 at Alvares).
- Blue Rock Thrush (*Monticola solitarius*): 2 at Sagres (1 male at Ponta da Atalaia and 1 male at the cape) and 2 at Monchique (Foia).



- Common Blackbird (*Turdus merula*): seen at Sagres (Cabranosa, Vale Santo), Monchique, Morgado, Ponta da Piedade, Alvor dunes (1), Cruzinha (ringing), Lagoa dos Salgados, Castro Verde (Alvares), Abicada and Ludo.
- Mistle Thrush (*Turdus viscivorus*): 1 at Sagres (Cabranosa) and 1 at Ludo.
- Cettis's Warbler (*Cettia cetti*): heard at Morgado, Lagoa dos Salgados (1), Castro Verde (1 at Entradas), Abicada and Ludo.

- Zitting Cisticola (*Cisticola juncidis*): seen at Santa Luzia salt pans (1), Sagres (Ponta da Atalaia), Morgado, Ponta da Piedade, Alvor dunes, Lagoa dos Salgados, Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalinho, Entradas, São Marcos da Ataboeira), Abicada and Ludo.
- Melodious Warbler (*Hippolais polyglotta*): 1 at Castro Verde (Entradas).
- Dartford Warbler (*Sylvia undata*): seen at Monchique (Foia).
- Spectacled Warbler (*Sylvia conspicillata*): 3 at Sagres (Cabranosa).



- Subalpine Warbler (*Sylvia cantillans*): 1 female at Sagres (cape).
- Sardinian Warbler (*Sylvia melanocephala*): seen at Santa Luzia salt pans, Sagres (Ponta da Atalaia, Cabranosa), Monchique (Foia), Ponta da Piedade, Alvor dunes (1), Castro Verde (1 at Entradas) and Ludo.
- Eurasian Blackcap (*Sylvia atricapilla*): seen at Monchique, Ponta da Piedade (1 male) and heard at Ludo.
- Yellow-browed Warbler (*Phylloscopus inornatus*): 1 at Cruzinha.
- Western Bonelli's Warbler (*Phylloscopus bonelli*): 1 at Sagres (Cabranosa).
- Common Chiffchaff (*Phylloscopus collybita*): 1 at Monchique (Picota).
- Iberian Chiffchaff (*Phylloscopus ibericus*): 1 singing at Monchique (Picota).
- Firecrest (*Regulus ignicapillus*): 3 at Monchique (2 at Picota, 1 at Caldas de Monchique).
- European Crested Tit (*Parus cristatus*): 2 at Monchique (1 at Picota, 1 at Caldas de Monchique).
- Eurasian Blue Tit (*Parus caeruleus*): seen at Monchique (Picota, Caldas de Monchique).
- Great Tit (*Parus major*): seen at Monchique (Foia, Caldas de Monchique), Castro Verde (Entradas) and Ludo.
- Eurasian Nuthatch (*Sitta europaea*): seen at Monchique (Picota, Caldas de Monchique).
- Short-toed Treecreeper (*Certhia brachydactyla*): 3 at Monchique (2 at Picota, 1 at Caldas de Monchique) and 1 at Ludo.
- Eurasian Golden Oriole (*Oriolus oriolus*): 2 at Castro Verde (Entradas).

- Southern Grey Shrike (*Lanius meridionalis*): seen at Sagres (1 at Cabranosa) and Castro Verde (Nossa Senhora de Aracelis, Alvares).



- Woodchat Shrike (*Lanius senator*): seen at Sagres (2 at Ponta da Atalaia, at least 5 at Cabranosa, 1 at Vale Santo) and Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalves, Entradas, Alvares).
- Eurasian Jay (*Garrulus glandarius*): 3 at Monchique (2 at Foia, 1 at Picota).
- Azure-winged Magpie (*Cyanopica cyanus*): seen on the way to Cruzinha, at Sagres (5 at Ponta da Atalaia, 1 at Cabranosa), Monchique (3 at Caldas de Monchique), Ponta da Piedade (7), Castro Verde (Corte Pequena) and Ludo.
- Common Magpie (*Pica pica*): seen at Santa Luzia salt pans (1), Lagoa dos Salgados (1) and Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalves, Alvares).
- Red-billed Chough (*Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*): seen at Sagres Cabranosa, Vale Santo).
- Western Jackdaw (*Corvus monedula*): seen at Sagres (cape), Ponta da Piedade and Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalves).
- Carrion Crow (*Corvus corone*): seen at Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalves, Entradas).
- Northern Raven (*Corvus corax*): seen at Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalves, Entradas).
- Spotless Starling (*Sturnus unicolor*): seen at Sagres (Ponta da Atalaia), Ponta da Piedade, Lagoa dos Salgados and Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalves, Entradas).
- House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*): seen at Santa Luzia salt pans, Sagres (Vale Santo), Morgado, Cruzinha (ringing), Ponta da Piedade, Alvor dunes, Lagoa dos Salgados, Castro Verde (Vale Gonçalves), Abicada 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*): seen at Morgado.
- Common Chaffinch (*Fringilla coelebs*): seen at Monchique and Castro Verde (Entradas).
- European Serin (*Serinus serinus*): seen at Santa Luzia salt pans, Sagres (Cabranosa), Monchique (Picota), Cruzinha (ringing), Abicada and Ludo.

- European Greenfinch (*Chloris chloris*): seen at Sagres (Ponta da Atalaia, Cabranosa), Lagoa dos Salgados, Castro Verde (São Marcos da Ataboeira) and Abicada.
- European Goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*): seen at Sagres (Cabranosa), Monchique (Foia), Ponta da Piedade, Lagoa dos Salgados, Castro Verde (Vale Gonçálinho), Abicada and Ludo.
- Common Linnet (*Carduelis cannabina*): seen at Santa Luzia saltpans, Sagres (Cabranosa), Monchique (Foia), Alvor dunes, Lagoa dos Salgados, Castro Verde (Entradas) and Abicada.
- Ortolan Bunting (*Emberiza hortulana*): 1 male at Sagres (Cabranosa).
- Corn Bunting (*Emberiza calandra*): seen at Sagres (Ponta da Atalaia, Cabranosa, Vale Santo), Castro Verde (Vale Gonçálinho, Entradas, Alvares) and Abicada.
- Clouded Yellow (*Colias croceus*): seen at Santa Luzia saltpans.
- Small Copper (*Lycaena phlaeas*): 1 at Castro Verde (Vale Gonçálinho).



- Red Fox (*Vulpes vulpes*): 1 at Castro Verde (Vale Gonçálinho).
- Bottle-nosed Dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*): 2 at Sagres (cape).
- Red Deer (*Cervus elaphus*): seen at Castro Verde (Alvares)

Photos

© G. Réthoré except p. 7 © S. Martin and p.25 © P. Hatherley.

Bird names according to Crochet P.-A., Joynt G. (2012). AERC list of Western Palearctic birds. December 2012 version.