

Spain's Coto Doñana & Extremadura

Naturetrek Tour Report

18 - 26 April 2013



Iberian Lynx by Peter Dunn



Glossy Ibis by Peter Dunn



Green-striped White by Peter Dunn



Birding at La Rocina by Peter Dunn

Report and images compiled by Byron Palacios and Peter Dunn



Naturetrek Cheriton Mill Cheriton Alresford Hampshire SO24 0NG England

T: +44 (0)1962 733051

F: +44 (0)1962 736426

E: info@naturetrek.co.uk

W: www.naturetrek.co.uk

Tour Leaders:	Byron Palacios	Naturetrek Ornithologist
	Peter Dunn	Naturetrek Ornithologist
Participants:	Terry Thirlwell	
	Jenny Thirlwell	
	David Barker	
	Rita Barker	
	Terry Robson	
	Irene Robson	
	Gordon Morrison	
	Alan Crosswell	
	Gerry Crosswell	
	Graham Harris	
	Chris Harris	
	Ashley Field	
	Rob McColl	
	Debby McColl	

Day 1

Thursday 18th April

London – Seville –El Rocio. Weather: sunny and hot

Peter and eight of the group met up with Byron and six (already in Spain) at Seville airport. Once loaded we soon circumvented the city and headed west towards Huelva. After a short while we stopped at a picnic site under some Mediterranean Stone Pines to have our lunch and to watch our first Spanish bird Iberian or Azure-winged Magpies.

Continuing on we arrived at our hotel in El Rocio where we were quickly allocated rooms and we took advantage of the afternoon heat for a siesta and to regroup at 5pm for a trip to la Rocina. We drove to the car park at La Rocina and walked through the pine woods and scrub looking at and listening to the rich birdlife of this area. Common Nightingales were abundant and some even visible, whilst Melodious Warblers and Iberian Pied Flycatchers could be studied. Overhead we were able to distinguish a dark-phase Booted Eagle from the commoner Black Kites. Down by the water we found both Common and Red-crested Pochard, Eurasian Spoonbills, many Whiskered Terns and brief glimpses of Purple Swamphen (Gallinule). Soon it was time to return to the hotel to freshen up for our ample evening meal after, what was for some, a long but pleasant first day in southern Spain.

Day 2

Friday 19th April

Doñana National Park (Raya Real & Hierba Buena) – Hot and sunny

The morning was painting a beautiful orange line as the sun was rising on the side of the El Rocio's main marisma.

We all gathered together to have an early breakfast and dash to our 4x4 vans straight away in order to set off into Doñana's core area. We entered the reserve through the famous Raya Real (Royal Track), a heavily sanded track, an old link with Seville and one of the most famous tracks in the religious world due to its important role during El Rocio's Virgin festival, main procession. The first bits of the excursion were dedicated to the rare and endemic Iberian Lynx, but we were not lucky, finding just a few of his favourite food, European Rabbit and Red-legged Partridge. We continue driving through the sandy tracks and through the Mediterranean forest and then to the border with the Marisma, where we made a stop to overlook the area and all the birdlife around. Lots of Black Kites were seen soaring around and on top of the telegraph posts, plus Booted Eagle, Corn Bunting, White Stork, Serin, Woodchat Shrike and Glossy Ibis.

We continued our drive checking out some of the man-made rabbit borrows which produced two fantastic Little Owls sitting on top of the eucalyptus stamps. We continued our drive into another flooded heathland area (marisma) and made a stop to see a flock of Greater Flamingos, followed by great views of at least four pairs of the very elusive Pin-tailed Sandgrouse, Whiskered Tern, Crested Lark, Iberian Yellow Wagtail, amongst others. By mid-morning, the heat was rising, as lunch time was getting closer. We decide to split our visit to the park in order to take a short break back in our hotel just before lunch.

We had lunch outside the Palace of El Acebron where we enjoyed the lovely and refreshing shade of the huge tress around and the drumming of a Lesser Spotted Woodpecker. After lunch, we drove back to El Rocio in order to get ready to our second half of the expedition within the core area of the park, this time escorted by park guide Miguel, so we were all determinate to see as much as possible! The afternoon was still a bit hot so we worked mostly along stone pine woodland taking a walk which produced Pied Flycatcher, Crested Tit and Serin.

The afternoon was quite slow due to the temperature, so we decided to move back to la Raya Real and the inevitable had to happen! As soon as we got there, Miguel was informed of the whereabouts of a beautiful Iberian Lynx male, sat very relaxed amongst the tall grass, not far from the track. We were astounded by the encounter, because we knew we only had a remote chance to see the rarest cat in the world, so we were not prepared for such a fantastic close encounter!! We enjoyed it so much that we could not believe our luck when it stood up, walked casually off and crossed the road in front of one of the 4x4's at a leisurely pace!

After this beautiful and unforgettable moment, we drove back along the track and stopped in an area known as Hierba Buena. Many interesting species of wildlife was seen here, such as Iberian Hare, Woodchat Shrike, Short-toed Snake-Eagle, and a single Spanish Imperial Eagle perched on a pylon in the distance. Happy and satisfied with this excellent day, we started to make our way back to the hotel through the bouncy sand tracks in order to arrive in time to get ready for another delicious local dinner overlooking the Marisma during a lovely early evening sunset!

Day 3

Saturday 20th April

La Rocina and La Acebuche. Weather - Hot and sunny

We had a more leisurely breakfast this morning at 8 am, those who checked the marsh beforehand added Avocet to the list and there was a light mist in the distance, which burnt off very quickly.

Following breakfast we returned to La Rocina and visited a different hide overlooking the water. Here we saw a group of Black-crowned Night-herons leaving the pool heading for their daytime roost, good views of a singing Savi's Warbler and more Red-crested and Common Pochard. We then walked the boardwalk which took us out onto the scrubby dehesa where both Thekla Lark and Dartford Warbler were added, together with good views of 'continental' Stonechat and brief glimpses of Sardinian Warbler. Our first male Marsh Harrier was hunting the scrub and European Bee-eaters were constantly around us.

Heading back we loaded up and headed west to the next reserve area of La Acebuche, where a typical Naturetrek lunch was prepared on picnic tables under some shady pines inhabited by Iberian Magpies. Lunch leisurely taken we visited the marsh and pool of Acebuche, initially quiet but some had views of Golden Orioles flying overhead and a Western Bonelli's Warbler was well seen feeding in a Cork Oak. In the heat of the afternoon, cool drinks and/or ice creams were the order of the day back at the visitor's centre, where a pair of Red-rumped Swallows were nesting and flying around the courtyard.

We returned to El Rocio so people could visit the iconic church and explore the town prior to an early 'log' call, and dinner and then head out back to La Rocina at dusk to look for Red-necked Nightjars. The dinner was 'al fresco' with the added entertainment of a parade of a local 'fellowship' lodge led by piper/drummers and a cart pulled by cattle. We headed back to La Rocina at dusk and within a few minutes three Red-necked Nightjars appeared before us, looking like a pair in a territory dispute with another male. A male then began to sing and we were able to see its silhouette in a tree, before it flew past us again in the ever decreasing light. We returned to the hotel in good spirits and retired, looking forward to another full day in the east of the park.

Day 4

Sunday 21st April

Doñana National Park (Isla Mayor – Valverde visitor's centre) – Hot and sunny

We started really early this morning, leaving our hotel taking a packed breakfast with us as we wanted to take advantage of the fresh first hours of the morning. We headed to explore the north-eastern portion of Doñana National Park, accessing it through Villamanrique de la Condesa and Isla Mayor. The journey lasted a good forty-five minutes till we got to our very first stop which produced a beautiful group of Collared Pratincoles in a field adjacent to the dirt road. We also saw several Greater Short-toed Larks, a pair of Lesser Short-toed Lark, Calandra Lark and many Crested Larks. A Eurasian Stone Curlew was spotted in the field next to the Collared Pratincoles. Alongside the track were Eurasian Reed Warblers; together with Zitting Cisticola, Iberian Yellow Wagtail, Whinchat, Corn Bunting, Red-legged Partridge, Gull-billed Tern and Marsh Harrier.

We continued our drive making a stop just by the border of the main marisma which it was full of water and so green! Here, lots of Great Reed Warblers were seen singing on top of the Tamarisk bushes; which housed hundreds breeding Glossy Ibis and Purple Herons and Black-winged Stilts were sharing the flooded area. We took a walk along the gravelled track scanning the borders of the marisma where Greater Flamingos, Black-necked Grebes and Eurasian Spoonbills were seen, as well as Marsh Harrier, Little Grebe, Gadwall, Mallard, Red-crested and Common Pochard, Great-crested Grebe, Great Egret, Booted Eagle, and Black and Red Kites. The temperature was clearly getting higher but yet bearable; we finished our walk by watching two or three pairs of Lesser Kestrels who regularly breed in an old pump building just by the roadside. We had great views of these falcons and also great views of a very obliging Subalpine Warbler.

After this very productive walk, we drove to the J. Valverde visitor's centre where we enjoyed watching all sort of marsh breeding birds, all gathered together in the Tamarisk bushes with communal nests. Many Cattle Egret, Glossy Ibis, Squacco Heron, Little Egret and Black-crowned Night-Heron were packed in the bushes surrounding the building. There were also lovely Greater Flamingos very close and Purple Swamphens walking around the water's edge. Lunch time arrived and we got our tasty picnic lunch all set at the car park which we enjoyed while watching a few goodies such as Griffon Vultures, Booted Eagle, Western Bonelli's and Garden Warblers. After lunch, we left the visitor's centre and went to explore the other side of the flooded marisma where we had fantastic views of Black-necked Grebe, Great Reed Warbler, and a very suspicious "Red-knobbed Coot" which we agreed was not quite right and in the end we decided not to count it. Anyhow, it was quite a distance away which made the ID a bit tougher.

We continued along the loop we started that morning and now going around and heading out of the park on the way to El Rocio. We continued doing some bird watching from the van getting more Greater Short-toed and Crested Larks, Iberian Yellow Wagtail, Woodchat Shrike, Whinchat, Purple and Grey Herons, Eurasian Kestrel, Short-toed Eagle and Booted Eagles, Marsh Harrier, White Storks, and many others. Once the loop was finished, we hit the tarmac road and drove straight to El Rocio, where we had time for a break before we gathered together again to do our daily log and to enjoy our last delicious dinner in this fantastic place!

Day 5

Monday 22nd April

La Rocio – Extremadura. Sunny skies some high cloud, not as hot

We packed and said goodbye to Coto Doñana after breakfast and headed east towards Seville. After about 30 minutes we pulled into the botanic gardens on the Rio Guadiamar at Aznalcázar where we succeeded in finding both Western Olivaceous (or Isabelline) Warbler and Wryneck, with a couple of Kingfishers for good measure.

We then made good progress on the motorway north towards Extremadura, stopping for fuel/comfort and then later lunch on an old road north of Merida. We took the 'plains' road through Campo Lugar where we found at least eight Great Bustards 'strutting their stuff' and then onto the once fertile rice fields which had been developed into a solar power plant. However although the target species wasn't there we did find a nice group of Common Waxbills and Red Avadavat, and as we left this area, a European Roller was seen by some on the road side wires before it flew off over the trees

We arrived at our base for the next four nights (Viña Las Torres) where rooms were quickly allocated in between watching both Booted and Short-toed Eagles overhead. That night our hosts Juan Pedro and Belen, wined and dined us with some lovely homemade cooking and local wine, rounded off with some tasty acorn liquor.

Day 6

Tuesday 23rd April

Monfragüe National Park. Cool in the morning, warm and sunny pm

Beautiful morning light highlighted the view from our rural house over the magical dehesa towards the medieval town of Trujillo. We had a delicious breakfast before another day of our exciting tour, this time exploring the famous Monfragüe National Park, entering the reserve from the southern boundary and making our very first stop at Peña Falcon, an impressive rock formation ideal for nesting raptors and other birds.

Many Griffon Vultures were around compared to the few Cinereous (Black) Vultures. Lots of Crag and House Martins were everywhere and scanning the blue sky was paid off with a couple of Peregrine Falcons and Black Storks soaring around the high cliffs. Other passerines were also catching our attention around the lower rock faces; birds such as Blue Rock Thrush, Black Redstart, Short-toed Treecreeper, Linnet, Blue and Great Tits. The wind was from a chilly northern direction, requiring us wear our fleeces in the shade; but it was still pleasant in the sunlight! We continued our excursion driving further up the road making a stop by the River Tajo bridge where we found hundreds of nesting House Martins and two pairs of Alpine swifts flying amongst them. We managed to get good views of this large species of swift.

Around mid-morning, we used facilities and, why not, a good hot drink in the small village of Villarreal de San Carlos before we continued heading towards the River Tietar basin. We made a short stop in one of the gullies nearby to successfully see Black-eared Wheatear, alongside a beautiful Woodlark. Drifting down the bendy road, we spotted a Bonelli's Eagle, but it was hard to put the group on them as they kept flying well away; we tried to catch up with them but it was difficult and very frustrating too. We eventually arrived to our picnic spot where an Egyptian Vulture was flying amongst several Griffons and Cinereous Vultures. We prepared and ate our lunch while we enjoyed watching the various raptors soaring in and out the massive rock face across the river.

After lunch, we drove a short distance to the point known as Portilla del Tietar, another cliff face also good for raptors, a good place for Eurasian Eagle-Owl but it seems he's been quite elusive this spring as it was impossible to find out his whereabouts on the cliff. More Cinereous and Griffon Vultures together with Black Kites were around and also a nice Spanish Imperial Eagle crossed the sky above us drifting down along the skyline. Another Blue Rock Thrush, and a Rock Bunting was seen very well, singing from the top of a boulder.

After spending some time here, we decided to go for a walk along a nice dehesa located not far from the River Tietar area. It was a beautiful place and here a distant Rock Sparrow was spotted, and also some Corn Buntings, Woodchat Shrikes, Crested Lark, Common Buzzard, Booted Eagle, European Bee-eaters, Iberian Magpies, Chaffinch, Crested Lark and a very noisy Eurasian Cuckoo. Although we were enjoying the walk it was time to move on and start making our way back to our hotel. We made a final stop on the roman bridge of the River Romangordo where we saw a few Stonechat and Spanish Sparrows. Back at Viña Las Torres we enjoyed a delicious dinner and of the night sounds afterwards, having two European Scops Owl flying over our heads just outside our casa rural, a good way to say night-night...

Day 7

Wednesday 24th April

Santa Marta de Magascar Plains. Warm and sunny with a light breeze

We set out for the plains before 9am and entered the area from the old Cáceres road and the landscape changed from a few cork oaks to rolling meadows full of flowers. We made a stop where there were many Spanish Sparrows calling in the cork oaks, which was fortunate, as across the road a splendid male Little Bustard was displaying, expanding its neck and clicking. While watching this bird parties of Pin-tailed Sandgrouse were flying over, calling. A little further along the road we stopped to watch a male Great Bustard displaying to a female, its tail feathers thrown up and wings inverted in what is called a 'foam-bath' display. A bubbling call indicated the presence of Black-bellied Sandgrouse and with careful checking; we found them in the same field, feeding.

We parked up on one of the cross tracks and had a walk to a high point where we watched more Great Bustards, Montagu's Harriers, many Calandra Larks and a brief view of a Spanish Imperial Eagle landing in a nesting tree. All the time, Griffon and Black Vultures were flying overhead. The most obvious things missing were butterflies, with only a few Green-striped Whites and Small Heaths on the wing.

Before lunch we drive onto the old Cáceres road where nest boxes have been erected on power pylons for European Rollers. However Jackdaws also find them suitable! Before long we spotted two Rollers and were able to watch them with 'scopes from the road, whilst in the same area were Spanish Imperial and Short-toed Snake-eagles. We had our picnic lunch in the recreation area of Santa Marta de Magascar, where there was shelter and seats and then went to check out a known area for Bonelli's Eagle. Looking across the valley we saw a large nest in a pylon and there was an adult Bonelli's Eagle with two chicks. The adult later flew onto another pylon allowing good flight views.

We made our way back towards Trujillo stopping to check fields where Montagu's and Marsh Harriers were hunting and called in at the Trujillo bullring to watch the Lesser Kestrels which nest under the tiles. The group were given free time in Trujillo before returning to the hotel, where we enjoyed another home cooked Spanish meal before bed.

Day 8

Thursday 25th April

Saucedilla – Monfragüe National Park. Warm and sunny

Another beautiful morning lit up the new day and many birds were already giving us some cheerful songs to start our day well! We set off heading north towards the village of Saucedilla located next to the Almaraz reservoir, where a remaining marsh and bulrush covered the edges and a vast portion of the dam. We started at the birding point located right in the heart of the village where Sand and House Martins, Red-rumped and Barn Swallows were seen all over the place. Checking the reed beds, a Little Bittern offered very good views by hopping on top of the bullrushes and making some others flying about and moving in amongst the reeds and walking into view. A European Kingfisher was also spotted around the same area. A bit further up the track a Savi's Warbler was singing from the top of the rushes showing off very well and giving us cracking views of this elusive bird. Other birds such as Gull-billed Tern, Purple Heron, Little Egret, Stonechat, Grey Heron, Moorhen, and European Swift were also seen here. After enjoying this spot, we moved to check another patch not far away, where we had good views of Purple Swamphen, a juvenile Purple Heron, a nesting group of Gull-billed Terns, Black Kite, Western Marsh Harrier, and others.

It was time to continue with our loop driving towards Monfragüe National Park. We drove along a small portion of the motorway which leads to Plasencia, leaving at the junction to Serrejon and onto the road which took us straight into the park through lush green dehesas and Mediterranean forest. Once in the park, we made a stop once again at La Potilla del Tietar (River Tietar crags) where we enjoyed watching Blue Rock Thrush, Griffon Vultures, Black Storks, European Jay, and a beautiful Spanish Imperial Eagle, this time getting much closer views of this nice raptor! We then continued our drive towards the hydroelectric station along the river finding a nice picnic area right on top of the bridge, ideal to watch birds while enjoying our lunch. Blue Rock Thrush, Red-rumped Swallow, Griffon, Cinereous and Egyptian Vultures, Long-tailed Tits shared lunch with us here!

After lunch, we continued towards our final stop of the day, Peña Falcon. Once again, we enjoyed the cracking views of the impressive crags, home of many raptors and other interesting birds. We enjoyed watching all the vultures, Griffon, Cinereous and Egyptian; and other birds such as Short-toed Treecreeper, Serin, Raven, Blue Rock Thrush, Crag and House Martins. We said goodbye to Monfragüe and continued driving south towards Trujillo and then to our lovely lodge for a well-deserved break and also to relax and get ourselves ready for the next day, our travelling day which involved an early start. We gathered together again to do our checklist for the day and to enjoy our final delicious dinner, very happy and satisfied we our tour of Spain

Day 9

Friday 26th April

Journey to Madrid – London. Gradually clouding over with some spots of rain in Madrid

Because of the flight times, we had an early departure after breakfast and a quick and easy run on the motorways had us arriving on time at Madrid Airport. However the inbound plane was delayed, but once it arrived we were quickly boarded and a flight time of less than two hours saw us meeting up in the baggage reclaim in no time to say our farewells after a hugely successful Spanish tour, and the memory of Iberian Lynx in particular will remain in our memories for ever!

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Lesser Kestrels at Trujillo Bullring by Byron Palacios

Species Lists

Birds (✓ = recorded but not counted; H = heard only)

			April									
			18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	
1	Red-legged Partridge	<i>Alectoris rufa</i>		✓						1		
2	Common Quail	<i>Coturnix coturnix</i>								H		
3	Gadwall	<i>Anas strepera</i>	1	✓		✓						
4	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
5	Northern Shoveler	<i>Anas clypeata</i>			2	2						
6	Red-crested Pochard	<i>Netta rufina</i>	3		✓	✓						
7	Common Pochard	<i>Aythya ferina</i>	✓	✓	✓	H	✓					
8	Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>			3	✓	1	1			1	
9	Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>		1	2	✓						
10	Black-necked Grebe	<i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>				10						
11	Greater Flamingo	<i>Phoenicopterus roseus</i>		✓	9	✓						
12	Black Stork	<i>Ciconia nigra</i>		2				4			4	
13	White Stork	<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
14	Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>		✓		✓						
15	Eurasian Spoonbill	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>	20	✓	✓	✓						
16	Little Bittern	<i>Ixobrychus minutus</i>									7	
17	Black-crowned Night Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>			20	✓						
18	Squacco Heron	<i>Ardeola ralloides</i>		3	3	✓						
19	Western Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓
20	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	3	✓	✓	✓	2	1	1	1	2	1
21	Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>		2	2	✓					12	
22	Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>		1		8						
23	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	H			2	✓
24	Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>				1					2	
25	Egyptian Vulture	<i>Neophron percnopterus</i>						1				
26	Griffon Vulture	<i>Gyps fulvus</i>	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
27	Cinereous Vulture	<i>Aegypius monachus</i>					1	5	10	5		
28	Short-toed Snake Eagle	<i>Circaetus gallicus</i>		1		1	4	4	3			
29	Booted Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus pennatus</i>	2	4	1	1	2	2	2	2	3	
30	Spanish Imperial Eagle	<i>Aquila adalberti</i>		3	2			1	2	1		
31	Bonelli's Eagle	<i>Aquila fasciata</i>						2	1			
32	Northern Goshawk	<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>		1								
33	Western Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>			1	5	2		1	2		
34	Montagu's Harrier	<i>Circus pygargus</i>					5		5	1	1	
35	Red Kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>				2		1	3	2		
36	Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
37	Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>		1		1	3	2	2	2	1	
38	Lesser Kestrel	<i>Falco naumanni</i>				14	2	10	✓	✓		
39	Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
40	Eurasian Hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>									1	
41	Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>						2				
42	Great Bustard	<i>Otis tarda</i>					8		10			
43	Little Bustard	<i>Tetrax tetrax</i>							1			
44	Water Rail	<i>Rallus aquaticus</i>				H						
45	Purple Swamphen	<i>Porphyrio porphyrio</i>	3		✓	✓					3	
46	Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	
47	Eurasian Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>	1		✓	✓	✓				✓	

			April										
			18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26		
48	Eurasian Stone-Curlew	Burhinus oedicnemus				1							
49	Black-winged Stilt	Himantopus himantopus	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						
50	Pied Avocet	Recurvirostra avosetta			2	1							
51	Northern Lapwing	Vanellus vanellus		✓									
52	Little Ringed Plover	Charadrius dubius				1	2						
53	Whimbrel	Numenius phaeopus			11								
54	Common Redshank	Tringa totanus		✓									
55	Common Greenshank	Tringa nebularia		✓									
56	Wood Sandpiper	Tringa glareola		3									
57	Common Sandpiper	Actitis hypoleucos		1	1								
58	Ruff	Philomachus pugnax		5									
59	Collared Pratincole	Glareola pratincola				50							
60	Black-headed Gull	Chroicocephalus ridibundus	✓	✓									
61	Gull-billed Tern	Gelochelidon nilotica				4						8	
62	Whiskered Tern	Chlidonias hybrida	✓	✓	✓	✓							
63	Pin-tailed Sandgrouse	Pterocles alchata		8							✓		
64	Black-bellied Sandgrouse	Pterocles orientalis									12		
65	Feral Pigeon	Columba livia 'feral'	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
66	Common Wood Pigeon	Columba palumbus	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
67	European Turtle Dove	Streptopelia turtur		6									H
68	Eurasian Collared Dove	Streptopelia decaocto	✓	✓	✓	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
69	Common Cuckoo	Cuculus canorus	1		1		1	3	1	✓			
70	Western Barn Owl	Tyto alba									1		
71	Eurasian Scops Owl	Otus scops					H	2	H				
72	Little Owl	Athene noctua		2									
73	Red-necked Nightjar	Caprimulgus ruficollis			3								
74	Alpine Swift	Tachymartus melba						7					
75	Common Swift	Apus apus	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
76	Pallid Swift	Apus pallidus	4	✓	✓								
77	European Roller	Coracias garrulus					2		2				
78	Common Kingfisher	Alcedo atthis					2					2	
79	European Bee-eater	Merops apiaster	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
80	Eurasian Hoopoe	Upupa epops		4		1	3	3	1	4			
81	Eurasian Wryneck	Jynx torquilla					1						
82	Great Spotted Woodpecker	Dendrocopos major		1	H			H				1	
83	Green Woodpecker (Iberian)	Picus viridis sharpei											H
84	Southern Grey Shrike	Lanius meridionalis		1	1		8		3	3			
85	Woodchat Shrike	Lanius senator	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
86	Eurasian Golden Oriole	Oriolus oriolus			1					2	2		
87	Eurasian Jay	Garrulus glandarius											2
88	Iberian Magpie	Cyanopica cooki	10	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
89	Eurasian Magpie	Pica pica	1	1		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
90	Western Jackdaw	Coloeus monedula		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	4		
91	Carrion Crow	Corvus corone	1									2	
92	Northern Raven	Corvus corax		✓			2	2	4	4			
93	European Crested Tit	Lophophanes cristatus		3									
94	Great Tit	Parus major	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
95	Eurasian Blue Tit	Cyanistes caeruleus	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
96	Calandra Lark	Melanocorypha calandra		✓		✓	10		✓				
97	Greater Short-toed Lark	Calandrella brachydactyla		2		✓				2			
98	Lesser Short-toed Lark	Calandrella rufescens				2							

			April									
			18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	
99	Crested Lark	<i>Galerida cristata</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
100	Thekla Lark	<i>Galerida theklae</i>			4							
101	Woodlark	<i>Lullula arborea</i>			H			3				
102	Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>				2	1				✓	
103	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
104	Eurasian Crag Martin	<i>Ptyonoprogne rupestris</i>						✓	✓	✓		
105	Common House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
106	Red-rumped Swallow	<i>Cecropis daurica</i>	3	2	2	2	5	✓	✓	✓		
107	Cetti's Warbler	<i>Cettia cetti</i>	H	H	1	H	1	H	H	H		
108	Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>										2
109	Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>				2	H				H	
110	Common Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	H	H				H				
111	Western Bonelli's Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus bonelli</i>			1	1						
112	Great Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus arundinaceus</i>			H	✓					H	
113	Eurasian Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>		✓	2	✓						2
114	Western Olivaceous Warbler	<i>Iduna opaca</i>					1					
115	Melodious Warbler	<i>Hippolais polyglotta</i>	3	✓	1	1						
116	Common Grasshopper Warbler	<i>Locustella naevia</i>					H	H				
117	Savi's Warbler	<i>Locustella luscinioides</i>	H		1	H						1
118	Zitting Cisticola	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>	H	2		✓	✓	1				2
119	Eurasian Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	H	1	H			H				1
120	Garden Warbler	<i>Sylvia borin</i>				1						
121	Dartford Warbler	<i>Sylvia undata</i>			4							
122	Subalpine Warbler	<i>Sylvia cantillans</i>				1						
123	Sardinian Warbler	<i>Sylvia melanocephala</i>	H	H	3			H	2	2		
124	Eurasian Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	H		H			1	1	1		
125	Short-toed Treecreeper	<i>Certhia brachydactyla</i>	2	✓	5			3			3	
126	Spotless Starling	<i>Sturnus unicolor</i>	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
127	Common Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	✓	✓	3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
128	Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>						2				
129	European Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>										1
130	Common Nightingale	<i>Luscinia megarhynchos</i>	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			H	
131	Black Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>					1	3				1
132	Common Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>				1						
133	Whinchat	<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>				2						
134	European Stonechat	<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>			✓		✓	6	2	3		
135	Black-eared Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe hispanica</i>						3				
136	Blue Rock Thrush	<i>Monticola solitarius</i>						✓			✓	
137	Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>	1									
138	European Pied Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula hypoleuca</i>	3	2	1			1				
139	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
140	Spanish Sparrow	<i>Passer hispaniolensis</i>				2	2	✓	✓			
141	Eurasian Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>	3									
142	Rock Sparrow	<i>Petronia petronia</i>						2				
143	Common Waxbill	<i>Estrilda astrild</i>					✓					
144	Red Avadavat	<i>Amandava amandava</i>					✓					
145	British Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava flavissima</i>					1					
	Blue-headed Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava flava</i>					1					
	Spanish Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava iberiae</i>		3	1	✓	✓					1
146	White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>						3			2	
147	Common Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

			April								
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148	Hawfinch	<i>Coccothraustes coccothraustes</i>						1			
149	European Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>			H	1	✓	✓	✓	3	
150	Common Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>						✓			
151	European Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
152	European Serin	<i>Serinus serinus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
153	Corn Bunting	<i>Emberiza calandra</i>		✓	1		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
154	Rock Bunting	<i>Emberiza cia</i>						2		1	
155	Cirl Bunting	<i>Emberiza cirlus</i>								1	

Mammals

Granada Hare, *Lepus granatensis*

European Rabbit, *Oryctolagus cuniculus*

Iberian Lynx, *Lynx pardinus*

Red Fox, *Vulpes vulpes*

Red Deer, *Cervus elaphus elaphus*

Butterflies - compiled by Gordon Morrison

Spanish Festoon, *Zerynthia rumina*

Large White, *Pieris brassicae*

Small White, *Artogeia rapae*

Western Dappled White, *Euchloe crameri*

Green-striped White, *Euchloe belemia*

Clouded Yellow, *Colias crocea*

Green Hairstreak, *Callophrys rubi*

Small Copper, *Lycaena phlaeas*

Holly Blue, *Celastrina argiolus*

Brown Argus, *Aricia agestis*

Mazarine Blue, *Cyaniris semiargus*

Adonis Blue, *Lysandra bellargus*

Large Tortoiseshell, *Nymphalis polychloros*

Red Admiral, *Vanessa atalanta*

Painted Lady, *Vanessa cardui*

Small Heath, *Coenonympha pamphilus*

Wall Brown, *Lasiommata megera*

Other Taxa

Iberian Wall Lizard, Moorish Gecko, European Terrapin, Red-eared Slider (introduced); Striped-necked Terrapin, Signal Crayfish (introduced); Red-veined Darter, Iberian Bluetail, Red-striped Oil Beetle, various Ground Beetles,

Plants of Note - Thanks to Rita Barker

Trees

Stone Pine - *Pinus pinea*

Eucalyptus

Cork Oak - *Quercus suber*

Olive - *Olea*

Gleditsia

Robinia *Pseudacacia*

Ceris siliquastrum (The wonderful pink blossom tree by the entrance to Hotel Viña Las Tores)

Tamarix

Flowering Plants

Birthwort - *aristolochia sp.*

Common Poppy - *papaver rhoeas*

Wild Mustard

Lupinus luteus

Grass vetchling - *lathyrus nissolia*

White Clover - *trifolium repens*

Gum cistus - *cistus ladanifer* (The spotted one)

Alexanders & fennel

Cerithe sp.

Borage officinalis

French Lavender - *lavandula stoechus*

Yellow Toadflax - *linaria vulgaris*

Campanula sp.

Anthemis tinctoria

Chicory

Star of Bethlehem - *ornithogalum umbellatum*

Iris - *gynandiris sisynchium*

Campions *silene sp.*

Fumitory

Genistas & brooms

Lupinus blue

Melilotus sp.

Common Mallow - *malva sylvestris*

Annual Rock - rose *tuberaria guttata*

Convolvulus (Pink)

Vipers bugloss - *echium vulgare*

Alkenet

Salvia sp.

Tall Thrift - *armeria sp.*

Chrysanthemum coronarium

Cirsium sp.

Asphodelus sp.

Tussle hyacinth - *muscari comosum*

Orchids

Pink Butterfly Orchid - *orchis papilionacea*

Grass - *briza maxima*

Tongue Orchid

Areas especially lovely for flowers were:

The board walk in La Rocina marshes Coto Doñana; In Extremadura the Mofraque N.P.

Portilla del Tietar had hillsides covered with Cistu,s Gorse and French Lavender, also pretty mini-meadows on the scree leading down to the river.

A small lane near the Hotel Rural Viña Las Torres

There were many meadows which were a haze of blue, yellow and white from Vipers bugloss, Hawkweeds and white Ox-eye Daisies.



Iberian Lynx by Byron Palacios