



ROCKJUMPER

Worldwide Birding Adventures

Georgia & Armenia

Birding the Caucasus

23rd April to 6th May 2019 (14 days)

Trip Report



Güldenstädt's Redstart by Nigel Redman

Tour leaders: Nigel Redman and Attila Steiner

Trip Report compiled by Nigel Redman

(Amphibians & reptiles, invertebrates and orchids lists compiled by Attila Steiner)

Tour Summary

It was pleasing that we had a full group to experience the many delights of our second trip to Georgia and Armenia. An excellent itinerary encompassed a wide range of habitats, from the rugged peaks and steep valleys of the high Caucasus to rolling steppe grasslands in the south of Georgia, and from lush woodlands and dry rocky gorges to extensive wetlands in Armenia. In addition, a range of ancient churches, some excellent hospitality and wonderful food and wine all contributed to make this a tour to remember.

The principal highlights of the tour were undoubtedly the high-altitude specialities of the region, namely Caucasian Snowcock, Caucasian Grouse, Great Rosefinch, Gldenstdt's Redstart and Radde's Accentor, as well as the more widespread Wallcreeper and Bearded Vulture. But the supporting cast was excellent too, featuring a number of range-restricted species such as White-headed Duck, Pygmy Cormorant, Levant Sparrowhawk, White-tailed Lapwing,



Black-headed Bunting by Nigel Redman

Black-winged Pratincole, Armenian Gull, Syrian Woodpecker, Sombre Tit, Mountain Chiffchaff, Green, Moustached, Paddyfield, Booted, Upcher's, Eastern Orphean and Mntries's Warblers, Krper's Nuthatch, Western and Eastern Rock Nuthatches, White-throated Robin, Semicollared Flycatcher, Finsch's and Red-tailed Wheatears, Desert Finch, Red-fronted Serin, and Grey-necked and Black-headed Buntings. Impressive numbers of migrating raptors and several large flocks of Demoiselle Cranes were also a feature of the tour.



Semicollared Flycatcher by Nigel Redman

Our Georgian adventure began in Tbilisi, when the entire group opted for the optional pre-tour excursion to the extraordinarily scenic Botanical Gardens. In cooler weather than is normal for this time of year, we wandered around the steep paths, marvelling at the breathtaking views over the city while all around us the trees and bushes were bursting into life after the long cold winter. Common European garden birds were the main fare here, but the highlight of the afternoon was undoubtedly the many migrant Red-breasted Flycatchers, together with a few very smart Semicollared Flycatchers. A pair of White-throated Dippers on the stream

gave repeated views as they collected underwater prey to carry back to their nest. Our first speciality of the trip was Mountain Chiffchaff, distinct in plumage even if its song is rather similar to its more widespread congener. Overhead, we saw Short-toed Snake Eagle and Steppe Buzzard (a race of Common Buzzard). Other interesting species included Eurasian Jay and Long-tailed Tit (both of distinct races somewhat different from the more familiar western European forms), and a group of Eurasian Siskins quietly feeding in the canopy. It was a good start to our Caucasian birding adventure.

Leaving Tbilisi, we headed north towards the high Caucasus along the Georgian Military Highway. Our first stop was at the 6th-century church at Ananuri. Here, we saw our first Common Redstarts of the eastern race (*samamisticus*), as well as a migrant male of the nominate race. We also found Eurasian Nuthatch, Mountain Chiffchaff and Eurasian Bullfinch, but the highlight was three very tame Ortolan Buntings. Moving on, we had lunch near Gudauri and made a stop at the Georgia-Russia Friendship Monument. Horned Larks and Ring Ouzels were quickly found, as well as both Red-billed and Alpine Choughs. A Golden Eagle put in a brief appearance, but an Alpine Accentor disappeared before most people could see it. We descended from the Jvari pass to Kazbegi (now called Stepantsminda) and, after checking in to our hotel, we explored the lower slopes east of the town. Red-fronted Serins showed really well, and Ring Ouzels, Black Redstarts and Water Pipits were common as usual. There was some impressive raptor migration, with good numbers of Steppe Buzzards and Black Kites, and a few harriers including a couple of Pallid. Both Cinereous and Griffon Vultures appeared overhead, as did a flock of 70 Demoiselle Cranes. Somewhat frustratingly, we saw Great Rosefinches twice on this first excursion, but both times in flight only. And our only Gldenstdt's Redstart was a female.



Ortolan Bunting by Nigel Redman

Our three-night stay at Kazbegi got off to a flying start with a spectacular pre-breakfast excursion, where we had great views of many Great Rosefinches in the bushes close to the town. For some, the Dunnocks came a close second! The conditions were not easy, with almost continuous snow, but eventually it cleared and we followed our success with prolonged views of a group of four Caucasian Snowcocks running uphill in the snow. After breakfast, we explored an area of dense bushes north of town. A brief sighting of a Wallcreeper near the hydro dam nearly caused an international incident, but when we



Great Rosefinch by Nigel Redman

reached the bushes we were rewarded with large numbers of Gldenstdt's Redstarts, and most of them were males. We estimated at least 30 birds. At one time, 17 males were in view in one small area. Great Rosefinches were also in evidence here, and we had some great views of at least 15 birds. It soon transpired that there were good migrants here too, and we added Eurasian Hoopoe, Red-throated and Meadow Pipits, Whinchat, Bluethroat and Greater Short-toed Lark to the list. Several Western Yellow Wagtails were also present, of three different subspecies. Overhead, our first Steppe Eagle flew over, but raptor passage was generally quiet. A

distant herd of 18 Eastern Turkeys on the rocky cliffs was a welcome diversion. We returned to Kazbegi for a delicious home-cooked lunch involving numerous Georgian specialities. In the afternoon, we explored the bushes on the south side of town. These were quieter than the bushes to the north, but notable species

included Citrine Wagtail and Siberian Stonechat, both of which gave close prolonged views, as well as Little Ringed Plover and a male Pallid Harrier. Later we visited Kobi, where we quickly saw a close female Wallcreeper which showed well for some time. Other species here included several Eurasian Crag Martins, a large flock of Twites, a few Alpine Swifts and an obliging Eurasian Wryneck.

We returned to the east slopes on our second morning, and were quickly rewarded with multiple views of two Caucasian Grouse running on the snow and repeatedly flying across the distant slopes. A pair of Caucasian Snowcocks was in the same area, and later three more flew in much closer, giving prolonged views in great light. On our way back for breakfast, we made a short stop in the pine woods where we saw several Coal Tits and a pair of Eurasian Bullfinches. We spent a bit of time in another patch of bushes north of town, where we had great views of Mountain Chiffchaff, before driving up to Gergeti Trinity Church for some fabulous



Citrine Wagtail by Nigel Redman

views of Kazbegi and the valley far below us. It was a perfect sunny and cloudless day, without any wind. A Bearded Vulture soared low overhead, but there was little else of avian interest, although we did find another small herd of Eastern Turs. After another scrumptious lunch of magnificent Georgian food, we visited Sno Valley. An extensive area of bushes and trees held good numbers of migrant Willow Warblers, and our patient searching revealed several other migrants, including Booted Warbler, Lesser Whitethroat, Bluethroat, Cetti's Warbler, Whinchat, Red-breasted Flycatcher and Eurasian Wryneck. In the village, we found a flock of Rock and Ortolan Buntings, and on our way back a small lake held three Garganey, a pair of Little Grebes, a Purple Heron and a Green Sandpiper.



Alpine Accentor by Gary Starr

It was another glorious and sunny day for our final morning here, and we headed back to the bushes north of the town. It was much quieter than two days earlier. On the high slopes we scoped two distant Caucasian Grouse, and there were at least two Gldenstdt's Redstarts in the scrub. But there were few migrant passerines. As the morning warmed up, we saw a few soaring raptors, including a Golden Eagle and a Bearded Vulture. Leaving Kazbegi, heading south, we made a stop at Kobi, where we saw nothing new, and another stop at the Friendship Monument. Here, we enjoyed spectacularly close views of Alpine Accentor. At our usual lunch spot,

two Bearded Vultures soared overhead and then we drove straight to Tbilisi. We continued up into the pine forests west of the city for our final stop, and after a short time we were rewarded with great views of a pair of Krper's Nuthatches, a new species for this tour and a bird at the extreme eastern edge of its range. It was a fitting end to the high Caucasus part of the trip.

From Tbilisi, we took a day-trip south-eastwards to the Azerbaijan border. We made our first stop in an arable area, where we saw many Corn Buntings, a male Montagu's Harrier, a soaring Black Stork and a pair of Eurasian Penduline Tits. We continued along the road until the well-wooded countryside gave way to more barren, rolling hills. We made several more short stops for a variety of species, including Chukar Partridge, Little Owl, European Bee-eater, Calandra Lark, Black-eared and Isabelline Wheatears, Woodchat Shrike, Blue Rock Thrush and Tawny Pipit. A small lake held a pair of Ruddy Shelducks and three swimming Red-necked Phalaropes, and three Eurasian Spoonbills flew overhead. There was a moderate raptor passage throughout the morning, which included Egyptian, Cinereous and Griffon Vultures, Short-toed Snake Eagle, Lesser Spotted and Golden Eagles, and Eurasian Hobby. Eventually, we reached David Gareja monastery where the highlight was a pair of Pied Wheatears which were seeking out a suitable nest site amongst the many nooks and crannies in the stonework. Our final destination of the day was Jandari Lake, where we found good numbers of waterbirds. A flock of distant gulls included a single Slender-billed and several Armenian, and tern species included Gull-billed, Whiskered and a large flock of White-winged. Ducks comprised a few Eurasian Teal, Garganey and a single male Red-crested Pochard. Waders included a Grey Plover and three Spotted Redshanks, all in full breeding plumage. A Great Reed Warbler sang from the reeds but would not show itself, and a small flock of Spanish Sparrows was noteworthy.



Eurasian Scops Owl by Nigel Redman

Leaving Tbilisi, we headed to the Armenian border, stopping only once briefly for some soaring Griffon Vultures and a single Egyptian Vulture. A displaying Isabelline Wheatear also put on a fine display for us. After crossing the border without any delay, we continued to Haghpat monastery. An enforced stop on the way up due to the bus breaking down produced several butterflies and an incredibly obliging male Semicollared Flycatcher. After a sumptuous Armenian lunch, we visited the monastery, and a pair of Eurasian Scops Owls at roost in a fairly bare tree was a bonus – they were perfectly camouflaged and showed no interest in our long lenses. There was little of note as we pressed on to Yerevan, other than a small flock of migrating Demoiselle Cranes.



Ménétries's Warbler by Rob Cox

It was another early start as we headed south from Yerevan, en route to the southernmost part of Armenia. Our first stop was at Armenia's premier wetland, Armash fish ponds. We were greeted on arrival by a number of obliging White-tailed Lapwings, together with a few lingering Northern Lapwings. We spent all morning working several of the better ponds on foot. Some held good numbers of ducks, including Garganey and Red-

crested Pochard, as well as smaller numbers of Ferruginous Ducks and various northern species. Ten White-headed Ducks were particularly well appreciated. There were many Pygmy Cormorants and Glossy Ibises, and various herons, including many Purples and a couple of Squaccos. Small flocks of pratincoles flew overhead, and we were able to distinguish both Collared and the rarer Black-winged. Other species seen at the ponds included an immaculate Slender-billed Gull, truly huge numbers of White-winged Terns, all in full summer plumage, several Blue-cheeked Bee-eaters, Common Kingfisher, Black-necked Grebe, Great White Pelican, Lesser Short-toed Lark, Red-backed Shrike and Common Reed Bunting. Two pools with extensive muddy edges held a good variety of waders, including Kentish Plover, Temminck's Stint, Marsh and Terek Sandpipers, and Whimbrel – the latter is a bit of a rarity in Armenia, with fewer than ten previous records. In the reedbeds, Bearded Reedlings were common and easy to see. We also had good views of Cetti's, Moustached, Eurasian Reed, Paddyfield, Sedge, Great Reed, Savi's and Ménétries's Warblers. After a picnic lunch and some final birding at the fish ponds, we headed to the dry hills near Vedi. There were many Isabelline Wheatears as we approached the impressive dry, rocky gorge which held Eastern Rock Nuthatch, White-throated Robin, Blue Rock Thrush, and both Finsch's and Black-eared Wheatears. It was our first opportunity to see these two superficially similar wheatears almost side by side. A special highlight was a pair of Desert Finches, a species only recently discovered in Armenia. It was just after dark when we finally reached Yeghegnadzor, our destination for the night, after a long but rewarding day.



White-throated Robin by Nigel Redman

While loading the bus at Yeghegnadzor, a Syrian Woodpecker in nearby trees was a welcome start to the day. Our long drive south to Meghri was punctuated by a few stops. A stop near Zedea proved a resounding success, with brilliant multiple views of several White-throated Robins, both Western and Eastern Rock Nuthatches, Woodlark, Eastern Orphean and Eastern Olivaceous Warblers, and Black-headed Bunting. On the plateau near Gorayk, we found Long-legged Buzzard, Grey Partridge, Common Rock Thrush and several stunning Whinchats and Bluethroats. At the huge Spandarian Reservoir, we enjoyed watching many Lesser Kestrels hunting over the hillside and at their nests. At Carahunge, we caught up with Rock Sparrow and saw several Short-toed Snake Eagles. South of Goris, the woodlands were only just beginning to bud, but we had little time to stop, saving them for the return journey. In Meghri, spring was noticeably more advanced, and the extensive orchards were in full leaf.



Black Francolin on Iranian border fence by Nigel Redman

Most of our birding in the Meghri area was done within sight of the magnificent mountains of northern Iran across the Araks River. First, we explored an old quarry and a scenic gorge east of Meghri, where we quickly encountered our top target bird, Red-tailed Wheatear. Nearby, both species of rock nuthatch were encountered almost side by side. We also saw good numbers of Black-eared Wheatears, many Eastern Orphean Warblers, a few Ménétries's Warblers, an Ortolan Bunting and several Black-headed Buntings. Chukar Partridges called frequently, and we had great views of several birds. A highlight was finding two pairs of Sombre Tits, one of which was feeding a fledged youngster. In the afternoon, we visited the nearby village of Alvank. Birding was very slow here, and there was an almost complete absence of passerines; a Levant Sparrowhawk was only seen by one person. Later, we explored the orchards along the Araks River, seeing a few European Rollers as well as a Lesser Grey Shrike and a Eurasian Golden Oriole. After hearing several Black Francolins, we eventually had great views of one perched on the Iranian border fence.



Rock Bunting by Nigel Redman

We needed an early start and a fine day for our attempt to see Caspian Snowcock. Fortunately, we managed both, and our fleet of 4x4s was waiting for us at the prescribed time. On the journey up, the front vehicle counted an incredible 60 Rock Buntings along the roadsides, mostly in pairs. The muddy track beyond the last village eventually halted further progress by car at around 2,300m, and we walked up to a point where we could scope the mountain. Unfortunately, there was an exceptional amount of snow on the mountain, much more than normal, and it was cold and windy. It seemed that the snowcocks had moved on to a less harsh environment. During the entire time we were there, we heard just a single call of a snowcock, and had no sightings. The supporting cast included many Whinchats, five pairs of Grey Partridges and an adult Bearded Vulture, as well as the usual mountain species such as Ring Ouzels and Water Pipits. We returned to Meghri for lunch and, in the afternoon, we explored a valley close to Meghri. Here, we had great views of Ménétries's Warbler, Red-tailed Wheatear, Red-fronted Serin, Black-headed Bunting, Sombre Tit and a pair of Woodchat Shrikes. On the towering cliffs, we found Peregrine Falcon and Egyptian Vulture, and a Booted Eagle nearby was the first of the trip. Later, we paid a brief return visit



Red-tailed Wheatear by Nigel Redman

to Alvank valley, to the east of Meghri, where we quickly found a male Levant Sparrowhawk display-flying. On the way back, we encountered more Black Francolins; this localised species is clearly doing well in Meghri.

We awoke on our penultimate day to persistent rain. It rained for most of the day for our journey back to Yerevan, resulting in rather few stops. A short stop at the pond in Meghri produced a presumably newly-arrived Little Bittern and a singing Great Reed Warbler. Finally, in the fresh green

deciduous woodlands near Kapan, we caught up with several Green Warblers, which had recently arrived back in the Caucasus from their winter sojourn in southern India. In the same woods, we briefly saw a few Hawfinches and heard Middle Spotted Woodpecker and Tawny Owl. Several species of orchids were also in full bloom. We made several more short stops for orchids before reaching Goris, where we had lunch. The afternoon was spent travelling, with only a short rest stop in Vayk.

We set off early for our ascent of Mt Aragats, but heavy cloud over the summit encouraged us to first spend some time in the foothills at the base of the mountain. Here, we found an obliging Ménétries Warbler, several Eurasian Penduline Tits and Red-backed Shrikes, many Black-headed Buntings and also a few White-throated Robins. A male Levant Sparrowhawk showed well, and a Rufous-tailed Scrub Robin was a welcome addition to the trip list. When we ascended the mountain, we found ourselves above the clouds in the juniper scrub, but there was much more snow than usual. Familiar high-altitude species were in evidence as usual, such as Horned Lark, Woodlark, Ring Ouzel, Water Pipit and Twite, and a couple of male Bluethroats showed themselves readily. Our key target, Radde's Accentor, was a little more elusive, but eventually we all saw two birds well. Overhead, an adult Bearded Vulture put on a good display. We returned to Yerevan for lunch and, in the afternoon, we made a final visit to the Vedi hills. Here, in the silent splendour of these vast rugged hills, we found a good flock of Desert Finches, more Finsch's Wheatears and Grey-necked Buntings, a flock of Greater Short-toed Larks, and a few migrants including an elusive Upcher's Warbler. Back in Yerevan, we enjoyed a final celebratory meal at another of the city's wonderful restaurants before we all made our way home by a variety of routes. It had been a memorable tour, ably organised by our agents in both Georgia and Armenia, and with invaluable help from our wonderful drivers and our delightful Armenian guide, Astghik.



Radde's Accentor by Steve Joyner



Group photo on Mount Chgnavor by Gary Starr

Annotated List of Birds Recorded

(231 in total: 225 seen, 6 heard)

Nomenclature and taxonomy follow Gill, F. & Donsker, D. (eds). 2018. IOC World Bird List (v 8.2).

Status codes: **E** = Endemic, **NE** = Near-endemic, **I** = Introduced, **H** = Heard only

IUCN codes: **CR** = Critically endangered, **EN** = Endangered, **VU** = Vulnerable, **EW** = Extinct in the Wild, **NT** = Near Threatened, **DD** = Data Deficient

Ducks, Geese & Swans *Anatidae*

- Ruddy Shelduck** *Tadorna ferruginea*
2 on Kapatadze Lake on the journey to David Gareja 28.4 and 2 at Jandari Lake 28.4.
- Garganey** *Spatula querquedula*
3 on the small lake in Sno Valley 26.4, 1 on Jandari Lake 28.4 and 10 at Armash fish ponds 30.4.
- Northern Shoveler** *Spatula clypeata*
2 males at Armash fish ponds 30.4.
- Gadwall** *Mareca strepera strepera*
At least 6 at Armash fish ponds 30.4.
- Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos platyrhynchos*
2 on the small lake in Sno Valley 26.4 and 10 at Armash fish ponds 30.4.
- Eurasian Teal** *Anas crecca*
3 at Jandari Lake 28.4 and 4 at Armash fish ponds 30.4.
- Red-crested Pochard** *Netta rufina*
1 at Jandari Lake 28.4 and at least 40 at Armash fish ponds 30.4.
- Common Pochard** *Aythya ferina*
At least 60 at Armash fish ponds 30.4.
- Ferruginous Duck (NT)** *Aythya nyroca*
At least 15 at Armash fish ponds 30.4.
- Tufted Duck** *Aythya fuligula*
2 at Armash fish ponds 30.4.
- White-headed Duck (EN)** *Oxyura leucocephala*
10 birds (mostly males) were counted at Armash fish ponds 30.4.

Pheasants, Grouse, and Allies *Phasianidae*

- Caucasian Grouse (NT)** *Lyrurus mlokosiewiczi*
2 males were seen repeatedly on distant slopes at Kazbegi on 26.4 and another 2 on 27.4.
- Caucasian Snowcock** *Tetraogallus caucasicus*
5 at Kazbegi on 25.4 and 5 again on 26.4.
- Caspian Snowcock (H)** *Tetraogallus caspius*
1 was heard on Mount Chgnavor 3.5.
- Chukar Partridge** *Alectoris chukar*
4 on the journey to David Gareja 28.4, 1 at the Zedea junction 1.5, and up to 6 each day in the Meghri area.
- Black Francolin** *Francolinus francolinus*
Several great sightings in the Meghri area and others heard. They liked to stand on the Iranian border fence in the mornings and evenings.
- Grey Partridge** *Perdix perdix canescens*
2 near Gorayk 1.5 and 5 pairs on Mount Chgnavor 3.5.

Grebes *Podicipedidae*

- Little Grebe** *Tachybaptus ruficollis*
2 on the small lake in Sno Valley 26.4, 1 heard at Jandari Lake 28.4 and 6 at Armash fish ponds 30.4.
- Great Crested Grebe** *Podiceps cristatus cristatus*
12 at Jandari Lake 28.4 and 40 at Armash fish ponds 30.4.
- Black-necked Grebe** *Podiceps nigricollis nigricollis*
1 at Armash fish ponds 30.4 and 2 distant birds at Spandarian Reservoir 1.5.

Storks *Ciconiidae*

- Black Stork** *Ciconia nigra*
1 was seen in flight on the journey to David Gareja 28.4.
- White Stork** *Ciconia ciconia ciconia*
Small numbers were seen on three days, mainly in the Armash–Vedi area.

Ibises, Spoonbills *Threskiornithidae*

- Glossy Ibis** *Plegadis falcinellus*
About 30 at Armash fish ponds 30.4.
- Eurasian Spoonbill** *Platalea leucorodia leucorodia*
3 flew over on the journey to David Gareja 28.4 and 3 more at Armash fish ponds 30.4.

Hérons, Egrets, and Bitterns *Ardeidae*

- Little Bittern** *Ixobrychus minutus minutus*
1 was seen briefly on Meghri pond 4.5.
- Black-crowned Night Heron** *Nycticorax nycticorax nycticorax*
Many birds were roosting in trees beside the Kura River in Tbilisi, and about 20 were seen at Armash fish ponds 30.4.
- Squacco Heron** *Ardeola ralloides*
2 at Armash fish ponds 30.4.
- Western Cattle Egret** *Bubulcus ibis*
A flock of 10 flew over at Armash fish ponds 30.4.
- Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea cinerea*
1 at Kazbegi 25.4, 1 at Jandari Lake 28.4 and at least 15 at Armash fish ponds 30.4.
- Purple Heron** *Ardea purpurea purpurea*
1 in Sno Valley 26.4, 11 at Jandari Lake 28.4, 25 at Armash fish ponds 30.4 and up to 3 on Meghri pond 2-4.5.
- Great Egret** *Ardea alba alba*
About 10 at Armash fish ponds 30.4.
- Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta garzetta*
Many were roosting in trees beside the Kura River in Tbilisi, 12 at Jandari Lake 28.4 and 15 at Armash fish ponds 30.4.

Pelicans *Pelecanidae*

- Great White Pelican** *Pelecanus onocrotalus*
1 distant bird at Armash fish ponds 30.4.

Cormorants and Shags *Phalacrocoracidae*

- Pygmy Cormorant** *Microcarbo pygmeus*
2 at Jandari Lake 28.4 and around 100 at Armash fish ponds 30.4.

Osprey *Pandionidae***Western Osprey***Pandion haliaetus haliaetus*

1 was seen at Jandari Lake 28.4.

Kites, Hawks & Eagles *Accipitridae***Bearded Vulture (NT)***Gypaetus barbatus barbatus*

Singles at Kazbegi 26.4 and 27.4, 2 at the Friendship Monument 27.4, 1 near Meghri 2.5, 1 on Mount Chgnavor 3.5 and 1 on Mount Aragats 5.5.

Egyptian Vulture (EN)*Neophron percnopterus percnopterus*

3 on the journey to David Gareja 28.4, 1 between Tbilisi and the Armenian border 29.4, 1 between Goris and Meghri 1.5, 1 at Gesi Dzor 3.5 and 1 at Vedi 5.5.

Griffon Vulture*Gyps fulvus fulvus*

Small numbers were seen on 9 days, in both Georgia and Armenia, with a peak daily count of 8 birds.

Cinereous Vulture (NT)*Aegypius monachus*

2 at Kazbegi 24.4, 3 on the journey to David Gareja 28.4 and 2 at Armash fish ponds 30.4.

Short-toed Snake Eagle*Circaetus gallicus gallicus*

1 at Tbilisi 23.4, 1 at Ananuri 24.4, 3 on the journey to David Gareja 28.4, 3 at Carahunge 1.5 and 1 between Meghri and Yerevan 4.5.

Lesser Spotted Eagle*Clanga pomarina*

A single on the journey to David Gareja 28.4 was the only record.

Booted Eagle*Hieraetus pennatus*

A light morph bird at Meghri 3.5 and another between Meghri and Yerevan 4.5.

Steppe Eagle*Aquila nipalensis orientalis*

2 singles at Kazbegi 25.4.

Golden Eagle*Aquila chrysaetos*

Singles were seen on 6 days: 1 at the Friendship Monument 24.4, 1 at Kazbegi 26.4, 1 at Kazbegi 27.4, 1 on the journey to David Gareja 28.4, 1 at Meghri 2.5 and 1 on Mount Chgnavor 3.5.

Levant Sparrowhawk*Accipiter brevipes*

Single birds were seen on 5 days: 1 near Tbilisi 28.4, 1 between Vedi and Yeghegnadzor 30.4, 1 at Alvank 2.5, 1 at Alvank 3.5 and 2 on Mount Aragats 5.5.

Eurasian Sparrowhawk*Accipiter nisus nisus*

1 at Kazbegi 24.4, 2 at Kazbegi 25.4, 1 on the journey to Yerevan 29.4 and 1 on Mount Aragats 5.5.

Western Marsh Harrier*Circus aeruginosus aeruginosus*

1 at Kazbegi 24.4, 2 at Jandari Lake 28.4 and 12 at Armash fish ponds 30.4.

Pallid Harrier (NT)*Circus macrourus*

2 ringtails at Kazbegi 24.4, 1 male at Kazbegi 25.4 and 1 male on the journey to David Gareja 28.4.

Montagu's Harrier*Circus pygargus*

2 on the journey to David Gareja 28.4.

Black Kite*Milvus migrans migrans*

About 200 migrants were seen at Kazbegi 24.4, but there were always some around the rubbish dump at Kazbegi. Small numbers were also seen elsewhere in both Georgia and Armenia on several days.

Long-legged Buzzard*Buteo rufinus rufinus*

4 on the plateau near Gorayk 1.5 and 1 on Mount Aragats 5.5.

Common Buzzard*Buteo buteo vulpinus*A common migrant throughout, mostly in small numbers but a peak of around 50 at Kazbegi on 24.4. All birds were of the rufescent Steppe Buzzard form, *B. b. vulpinus*.

Rails, Crakes & Coots Rallidae**Water Rail (H)***Rallus aquaticus aquaticus*

2 were heard at Armash fish ponds 30.4.

Common Moorhen*Gallinula chloropus chloropus*

2 at Jandari Lake 28.4, 2 at Armash fish ponds 30.4 and singles on Meghri pond on three days.

Eurasian Coot*Fulica atra atra*

1 on the small lake in Sno Valley 26.4, 10 at Jandari Lake 28.4 and about 300 at Armash fish ponds 30.4.

Cranes Gruidae**Demoiselle Crane***Grus virgo*

Flocks were seen on three occasions: 70 at Kazbegi 24.4, 150 at Jandari Lake 28.4 and 40 on the journey to Yerevan 29.4.

Oystercatchers Haematopodidae**Eurasian Oystercatcher***Haematopus ostralegus*

2 birds were seen at Armash fish ponds 30.4.

Stilts and Avocets Recurvirostridae**Black-winged Stilt***Himantopus himantopus*

8 at Jandari Lake 28.4 and 2 at Armash fish ponds 30.4.

Plovers and Lapwings Charadriidae**Northern Lapwing***Vanellus vanellus*

4 at Armash fish ponds 30.4.

White-tailed Lapwing*Vanellus leucurus*

About 10 at Armash fish ponds 30.4.

Grey Plover*Pluvialis squatarola squatarola*

1 at Jandari Lake 28.4 and 1 at Armash fish ponds 30.4, both in full summer plumage.

Common Ringed Plover*Charadrius hiaticula tundrae*

About 50 at Armash fish ponds 30.4.

Little Ringed Plover*Charadrius dubius curonicus*

1 at Kazbegi 25.4 and 2 at Armash fish ponds 30.4.

Kentish Plover*Charadrius alexandrinus alexandrinus*

1 at Armash fish ponds 30.4.

Sandpipers and Allies Scolopacidae**Whimbrel***Numenius phaeopus*

1 at Armash fish ponds 30.4. This species is a rarity in Armenia, with only a handful of previous records.

Black-tailed Godwit (NT)*Limosa limosa limosa*

3 at Jandari Lake 28.4 and about 100 in the distance at Armash fish ponds 30.4.

Ruff*Calidris pugnax*

1 at Jandari Lake 28.4 and 2 at Armash fish ponds 30.4.

Temminck's Stint*Calidris temminckii*

2 at Armash fish ponds 30.4.

Dunlin*Calidris alpina alpina*

1 at Armash fish ponds 30.4.

Little Stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>
About 50 at Armash fish ponds 30.4.	
Common Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago gallinago</i>
4 at Armash fish ponds 30.4.	
Terek Sandpiper	<i>Xenus cinereus</i>
1 at Armash fish ponds 30.4.	
Red-necked Phalarope	<i>Phalaropus lobatus</i>
3 were swimming on Kapatadze Lake on the journey to David Gareja 28.4.	
Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>
Small numbers were seen on 7 days in both countries. Mostly seen singly but about 40 at Armash fish ponds on 30.4.	
Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>
1 in Sno Valley 26.4 and 1 at Armash fish ponds 30.4.	
Common Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>
6 at Armash fish ponds 30.4.	
Marsh Sandpiper	<i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>
1 at Armash fish ponds 30.4.	
Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>
2 at Jandari Lake 28.4 and 10 at Armash fish ponds 30.4.	
Spotted Redshank	<i>Tringa erythropus</i>
3 at Jandari Lake 28.4 were in full breeding plumage.	
Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>
2 on the journey to David Gareja 28.4, 7 at Jandari Lake 28.4 and 2 at Armash fish ponds 30.4.	

Pratincoles and Coursers *Glareolidae*

Collared Pratincole	<i>Glareola pratincola pratincola</i>
5 at Armash fish ponds 30.4, including a pair seen mating.	
Black-winged Pratincole (NT)	<i>Glareola nordmanni</i>
Two groups totalling 12 birds at Armash fish ponds 30.4.	

Gulls, Terns & Skimmers *Laridae*

Slender-billed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus genei</i>
1 distant bird at Jandari Lake 28.4 and 1 in flight at Armash fish ponds 30.4.	
Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>
About 30 at Jandari Lake 28.4 and at least 20 at Armash fish ponds 30.4.	
Caspian Gull	<i>Larus cachinnans</i>
2 were seen at Armash fish ponds 30.4.	
Armenian Gull	<i>Larus armenicus</i>
3 on the Kura River at Tbilisi 24.4, 15 at Jandari Lake 28.4 and 20 at Armash fish ponds 30.4.	
Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus heuglini</i>
1 adult at Armash fish ponds 30.4.	
Gull-billed Tern	<i>Gelochelidon nilotica nilotica</i>
7 at Jandari Lake 28.4 and 1 at Armash fish ponds 30.4.	
Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo hirundo</i>
2 at Jandari Lake 28.4.	
Whiskered Tern	<i>Chlidonias hybrida hybrida</i>
4 at Jandari Lake 28.4.	
White-winged Tern	<i>Chlidonias leucopterus</i>
About 30 at Jandari Lake 28.4 and many hundreds at Armash fish ponds 30.4.	

Pigeons and Doves *Columbidae***Rock Dove***Columba livia*

Common throughout; the usual feral birds in towns and cities, but most birds in the mountains were genuine wild ones.

Common Wood Pigeon*Columba palumbus palumbus*

1 at Tbilisi Botanical Gardens 23.4, 8 at Alvank 2.5, 2 at Alvank 3.5 and 1 between Meghri and Yerevan 4.5.

Eurasian Collared Dove*Streptopelia decaocto decaocto*

4 on the journey to David Gareja 28.4 and up to 2 each day in the Meghri area.

Laughing Dove*Spilopelia senegalensis*

Up to 10 each day in Tbilisi and up to 4 each day in the Meghri area. Also a single in Yerevan.

Cuckoos *Cuculidae***Common Cuckoo***Cuculus canorus canorus*

Singles were seen or heard at Jandari Lake, Vedi Hills, Meghri, Mount Chgnavor and Mount Aragats, but the species was most prominent at Armash fish ponds with up to 15 birds there.

Owls *Strigidae***Eurasian Scops Owl***Otus scops scops*

2 were seen well during the day at Haghpat 29.4, and a single was heard outside the hotel at Yeghegnadzor 30.5.

Tawny Owl (H)*Strix aluco willkenskii*

2 were heard in woodland between Kapan and Goris 4.5.

Little Owl*Athene noctua indigena*

1 on the journey to David Gareja 28.4 and 1 between Vedi and Yeghegnadzor 30.4.

Swifts *Apodidae***Alpine Swift***Tachymarptis melba melba*

5 at Kobi 25.4, 6 at Kazbegi 27.4, and 4 at the Friendship Monument 27.4.

Common Swift*Apus apus apus*

Common throughout and seen most days. Particularly common in Tbilisi and Yerevan.

Rollers *Coraciidae***European Roller (NT)***Coracias garrulus garrulus*

3 in the Meghri area 2.5.

Kingfishers *Alcedinidae***Common Kingfisher***Alcedo atthis atthis*

1 at Armash fish ponds 30.4, and up to 2 at Meghri pond 2-4.5.

Bee-eaters *Meropidae***Blue-cheeked Bee-eater***Merops persicus persicus*

About 12 showed well at Armash fish ponds 30.4.

European Bee-eater*Merops apiaster*

Seen or heard on 10 days with the largest numbers on the journey to David Gareja and at Vedi Hills.

Hoopoes *Upupidae***Eurasian Hoopoe***Upupa epops epops*

Frequent sightings, mostly singles or pairs. Most commonly encountered at Armash fish ponds and Vedi.

Woodpeckers *Picidae*

- Eurasian Wryneck** *Jynx torquilla torquilla*
One was seen very well at Kobi 25.4 and another in Sno Valley 26.4.
- Middle Spotted Woodpecker (H)** *Dendrocoptes medius caucasicus*
1 was heard between Kapan and Goris 4.5.
- Syrian Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos syriacus transcaucasicus*
2 at Yeghegnadzor 1.5, singles at Meghri 2.5 and 3.5, and 1 at Mount Aragats 5.5.
- Great Spotted Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos major*
2 at Tbilisi Botanical Gardens 23.4, 1 at Ananuri 24.4, 2 at Kazbegi 27.4 and 1 between Kapan and Goris 4.5.
- European Green Woodpecker (H)** *Picus viridis karelini*
1 was heard on the journey to David Gareja 28.4.

Falcons and CaracAraks *Falconidae*

- Lesser Kestrel** *Falco naumanni*
5 on the journey to David Gareja 28.4, 1 at Armash fish ponds 30.4 and about 20 at Spandarian Reservoir 1.5.
- Common Kestrel** *Falco tinnunculus tinnunculus*
Singles or pairs were seen on 9 days.
- Eurasian Hobby** *Falco subbuteo subbuteo*
1 on the journey to David Gareja 28.4 and 1 on Mount Chgnavor 3.5.
- Peregrine Falcon** *Falco peregrinus*
1 was perched on the cliffs at Gesi Dzor, Meghri 3.5.

Shrikes *Laniidae*

- Red-backed Shrike** *Lanius collurio*
1 at Armash fish ponds 30.4, 1 at Vedi 30.4, 1 on Mount Chgnavor 3.5, 1 at Meghri 3.5, 3 on Mount Aragats 5.5 and 1 at Vedi 5.5.
- Lesser Grey Shrike** *Lanius minor*
2 singles were seen near Meghri on 2.5 and 4.5.
- Woodchat Shrike** *Lanius senator niloticus*
4 on the journey to David Gareja 28.4, 1 at Vedi 30.4, 1 between Goris and Meghri 1.5, 2 at Gesi Dzor 3.5, and 4 at Vedi 5.5.

Old World Orioles *Oriolidae*

- Eurasian Golden Oriole** *Oriolus oriolus*
1 was seen briefly along the Araks River, Meghri 2.5.

Crows, Jays, and Magpies *Corvidae*

- Eurasian Jay** *Garrulus glandarius krynicki*
Singles or pairs were seen on 11 days in a variety of habitats.
- Eurasian Magpie** *Pica pica bactriana*
Commonly encountered throughout except in the high Caucasus.
- Red-billed Chough** *Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax docilis*
Small numbers were seen daily in the high Caucasus (Kazbegi and Friendship Monument) and also in southern Armenia (Mount Chgnavor and Meghri).
- Alpine Chough** *Pyrrhocorax graculus graculus*
Up to 500 were seen each day in the Kazbegi area 24-26.4.

- Western Jackdaw** *Coloeus monedula soemmerringii*
About 30 in Aparan (en route to Yerevan) 29.5 and around 50 at Armash fish ponds 30.4.
- Rook** *Corvus frugilegus frugilegus*
10 at Kazbegi 24.4, 60 at Jandari Lake 28.4, and at least 20 nesting in trees opposite the hotel in Yerevan 4-5.5.
- Hooded Crow** *Corvus cornix sharpii*
Common throughout and seen every day.
- Northern Raven** *Corvus corax*
Singles or pairs were seen on 10 days.

Tits, Chickadees Paridae

- Coal Tit** *Pariparus ater*
6 at Kazbegi 26.4, 4 at Kiketi 27.4, 2 at Haghpat 29.4 and 1 between Kapan and Goris 4.5.
- Sombre Tit** *Poecile lugubris anatoliae*
Two pairs (one pair was feeding a fledgeling) in Ikis Dzor near Meghri 2.5 and a single bird in Gesi Dzor 3.5.
- Eurasian Blue Tit** *Cyanistes caeruleus satunini*
Singles or pairs seen on 7 days, mostly in Georgia.
- Great Tit** *Parus major major*
Commonly encountered throughout and seen almost every day in small numbers.

Penduline-Tits Remizidae

- Eurasian Penduline Tit** *Remiz pendulinus*
2 in farmland on the journey to David Gareja 28.4 and 3 in bushes at the base of Mount Aragats 5.5.

Bearded Reedling Panuridae

- Bearded Reedling** *Panurus biarmicus*
Many good sightings at Armash fish ponds 30.4, perhaps around 30 in total.

Larks Alaudidae

- Woodlark** *Lullula arborea pallida*
1 at Zedea junction 1.5, 1 at Ikis Dzor 2.5 and 2 on Mount Aragats 5.5.
- Eurasian Skylark** *Alauda arvensis*
Locally common: 20 on the journey to David Gareja 28.4, 20 at Carahunge 1.5, 6 on Mount Chgnavor 3.5 and 20 on Mount Aragats 5.5.
- Crested Lark** *Galerida cristata*
Commonly encountered: 10 on the journey to David Gareja 28.4, 4 between Tbilisi and the Armenian border 29.4, 4 at Armash fish ponds 30.4, 6 at Vedi 30.4, 2 at Meghri 2.5, 20 at Mount Aragats 5.5 and 10 at Vedi 5.5.
- Horned Lark** *Eremophila alpestris penicillata*
4 at the Friendship Monument 24.4, 2 on Mount Chgnavor 3.5 and 4 on Mount Aragats 5.5.
- Greater Short-toed Lark** *Calandrella brachydactyla artemisiana*
A flock of 30 at Kazbegi 25.4 and a single bird was seen well on the same day, 5 on the journey to David Gareja 28.4, 1 at Carahunge 1.5 and 10 at Vedi 5.5.
- Calandra Lark** *Melanocorypha calandra calandra*
About 8 were seen well on the journey to David Gareja 28.4.
- Lesser Short-toed Lark** *Alaudala rufescens*
2 at Armash fish ponds 30.4.

Swallows *Hirundinidae***Sand Martin***Riparia riparia riparia*

About 140 at Jandari Lake 28.4 and 50 at Armash fish ponds 30.4.

Barn Swallow*Hirundo rustica rustica*

Commonly encountered and seen every day.

Eurasian Crag Martin*Ptyonoprogne rupestris*

Small numbers were seen on 6 days: 6 at Kobi at 25.4, 6 at Carahunge 1.5, 2 near Meghri 2.5, 2 on Mount Chnavor 3.5, 8 at Gesi Dzor 3.5 and 10 between Meghri and Yerevan 4.5.

Common House Martin*Delichon urbicum*

Small numbers were seen on 8 days.

Cettia Bush Warblers and allies *Cettiidae***Cetti's Warbler***Cettia cetti orientalis*

1 was seen briefly in Sno Valley 26.4 and about 20 were seen and heard at Armash fish ponds 30.4.

Long-tailed Tits *Aegithalidae***Long-tailed Tit***Aegithalos caudatus major*

Singles or pairs were seen on 6 days, at Tbilisi, Kazbegi, Sno Valley, Haghpat and Meghri.

Leaf warblers and allies *Phylloscopidae***Willow Warbler***Phylloscopus trochilus acredula*

A common migrant encountered most days, with a peak count of 30 in Sno Valley 26.4.

Mountain Chiffchaff*Phylloscopus sindianus lorenzii*

Singles or pairs were seen on 10 days in both Georgia and Armenia, including at Tbilisi, Ananuri, Kazbegi, Sno Valley, Kiketi, Armash fish ponds and Mount Chnavor.

Common Chiffchaff*Phylloscopus collybita*

Singles were recorded at Tbilisi 23.4, Armash fish ponds 30.4, Zedea junction 1.5 and Mount Aragats 5.5.

Green Warbler*Phylloscopus nitidus*

At least 10 were seen or heard between Kapan and Goris on 4.5.

Reed warblers and allies *Acrocephalidae***Great Reed Warbler***Acrocephalus arundinaceus arundinaceus*

1 heard at Jandari Lake 28.4, about 10 seen and heard at Armash fish ponds 30.4 and 1 heard at Meghri pond 4.5.

Moustached Warbler*Acrocephalus melanopogon*

3 at Armash fish ponds 30.4.

Sedge Warbler*Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

1 at Armash fish ponds 30.4.

Paddyfield Warbler*Acrocephalus agricola septimus*

4 at Armash fish ponds 30.4.

Eurasian Reed Warbler*Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

About 20 at Armash fish ponds 30.4.

Booted Warbler*Iduna caligata*

1 was seen in dense bushes in Sno Valley 26.4.

Eastern Olivaceous Warbler*Iduna pallida elaeica*

1 at Armash fish ponds 30.4 and 1 at Zedea junction 1.5.

Upcher's Warbler*Hippolais languida*

A migrant at Vedi on 5.5 was rather elusive.

Grassbirds and allies *Locustellidae***Savi's Warbler***Locustella luscinioides*

At least 8 at Armash fish ponds 30.4.

Sylviid Babblers *Sylviidae***Eurasian Blackcap***Sylvia atricapilla dammholzi*

2 at Tbilisi 23.4, 1 at Ananuri 24.4, 1 on the journey to David Gareja 28.4, 2 at Haghpat 29.4 and 1 between Kapan and Goris 4.5.

Lesser Whitethroat*Sylvia curruca curruca*

Singles or pairs were recorded on 9 days.

Eastern Orphean Warbler*Sylvia crassirostris crassirostris*

1 at Zedea junction 1.5, about 8 at Ikis Dzor near Meghri 2.5 and 1 at Gesi Dzor 3.5.

Common Whitethroat*Sylvia communis*

1 on the journey to David Gareja 28.4, 1 at Vedi 30.4, 2 near Meghri 2.5 and 1 on Mount Aragats 5.5.

Ménétries's Warbler*Sylvia mystacea*

4 at Armash fish ponds 30.4, 4 at Ikis Dzor 2.5, 2 at Gesi Dzor 3.5, 1 on Mount Aragats 5.5 and 1 at Vedi 5.5.

Wrens *Troglodytidae***Eurasian Wren***Troglodytes troglodytes hyrcanus*

Singles or pairs were recorded on 7 days.

Nuthatches *Sittidae***Eurasian Nuthatch***Sitta europaea caucasica*

A single bird at Ananuri 24.4 was the only record.

Krüper's Nuthatch (NT)*Sitta krueperi*

2 seen near Kiketi, to the west of Tbilisi on 27.4.

Western Rock Nuthatch*Sitta neumayer neumayer*

1 at Zedea junction 1.5 and 2 at Ikis Dzor 2.5.

Eastern Rock Nuthatch*Sitta tephronota obscura*

2 at Vedi 30.4, 1 at Zedea junction 1.5, 1 at Ikis Dzor 2.5 and 2 at Vedi 5.5.

Wallcreeper *Tichodromidae***Wallcreeper***Tichodroma muraria muraria*

1 was seen briefly at Kazbegi and another was seen well at Kobi, both on 25.4.

Starlings *Sturnidae***Common Starling***Sturnus vulgaris*

Commonly encountered, mainly on journeys in the lowlands.

Thrushes and Allies *Turdidae***Ring Ouzel***Turdus torquatus amicornum*

Common in the Kazbegi area, with up to 20 per day; also 10 on Mount Chgnavor 3.5 and 2 on Mount Aragats 5.5.

Common Blackbird*Turdus merula aterrimus*

Common throughout, especially in Georgia.

Song Thrush*Turdus philomelos philomelos*

1 at Kazbegi 25.4, 2 at Kazbegi 26.4 and 2 in Sno Valley 26.4; also three singles heard in Armenia.

Mistle Thrush*Turdus viscivorus viscivorus*

1 at Tbilisi 23.4, up to 3 at Kazbegi 24-26.4 and 1 on Mount Aragats 5.5.

Chats, Old World Flycatchers *Muscicapidae***Rufous-tailed Scrub Robin***Cercotrichas galactotes familiaris*

1 was seen well at the base of Mount Aragats 5.5.

European Robin*Erithacus rubecula*

1 in Tbilisi Botanical Gardens 23.4, 2 at Ananuri 24.4 and 2 between Kapan and Goris 4.5.

Bluethroat*Luscinia svecica*2 at Kazbegi 25.4, 2 in Sno Valley 26.4, 6 near Gorayk 1.5 and 2 on Mount Aragats 5.5. Breeding birds were of the race *luristanica* (formerly called *magna*).**Common Nightingale (H)***Luscinia megarhynchos africana*

2 were heard at the base of Mount Aragats 5.5.

White-throated Robin*Irania gutturalis*

1 female at Vedi 30.4, two pairs and a single male at the Zedea junction 1.5 and 3 on Mount Aragats 5.5.

Semicollared Flycatcher (NT)*Ficedula semitorquata*

4 were seen well in Tbilisi Botanical Gardens 23.4 and 2 more at Haghpat 29.4.

Red-breasted Flycatcher*Ficedula parva*

About 15 in Tbilisi Botanical Gardens 23.4, 1 at Ananuri 24.4, 1 at Kazbegi 25.4, 1 in Sno Valley 26.4, 6 on the journey to David Gareja 28.4 and 1 on Mount Aragats 5.5.

Black Redstart*Phoenicurus ochruros ochruros*

Up to 30 in the Kazbegi area 24-27.4, 6 in Sno Valley 26.4, 2 at Kobi 27.4, 2 at the Friendship Monument 27.4, 1 in Tbilisi 29.4, 2 between Goris and Meghri 1.5, 4 on Mount Chgnavor 3.5 and 2 on Mount Aragats 5.5.

Common Redstart*Phoenicurus phoenicurus*6 at Ananuri 24.4, 1 at Kazbegi 25.4, 1 at Kiketi 27.4, 2 on the journey to David Gareja 28.4, 1 at Haghpat 29.4, 6 at Vedi 30.4, 2 between Goris and Meghri 1.5 and 2 on Mount Aragats 5.5. Both migrant nominate birds and local breeding race *samamisticus* were seen.**Güldenstädt's Redstart***Phoenicurus erythrogastrus erythrogastrus*

At least 35 were seen in Kazbegi on 25.4, mostly at a single site; only 2 at this site on 27.4.

Common Rock Thrush*Monticola saxatilis*

2 near Gorayk 1.5, 1 at Ikis Dzor 2.5, 1 on Mount Chgnavor 3.5 and 1 on Mount Aragats 5.5.

Blue Rock Thrush*Monticola solitarius*

2 at David Gareja monastery 28.4, 2 at Vedi 30.4 and 6 at Ikis Dzor, near Meghri.

Whinchat*Saxicola rubetra*

Small numbers recorded on 8 days: 1 at Kazbegi 25.4, 1 in Sno Valley 26.4, 1 on the journey to David Gareja 28.4, 2 at Vedi 30.4, 10 on the plateau near Gorayk 1.5, 2 at Meghri 2.5, 6 on Mount Chgnavor 3.5 and 2 on Mount Aragats 5.5.

European Stonechat*Saxicola rubicola rubicola*

1 at Kazbegi 27.4, 1 at Haghpat 29.4 and 4 on Mount Chgnavor 3.5.

Siberian Stonechat*Saxicola maurus*

3 at Kazbegi 25.4 and 1 at Kazbegi 27.4.

Northern Wheatear*Oenanthe oenanthe libanotica*

Small numbers were seen on 9 days, mainly in the Kazbegi area, on Mount Chgnavor and on Mount Aragats.

Isabelline Wheatear*Oenanthe isabellina*

4 on the journey to David Gareja 28.4, 1 between Tbilisi and the Armenian border 29.4, 6 at Vedi 30.4, 1 at Carahunge 1.5, 2 on Mount Aragats 5.5 and 2 at Vedi 5.5.

Black-eared Wheatear*Oenanthe hispanica melanoleuca*

Frequent sightings, mainly in Armenia, with peak counts of 10 in both Ikis Dzor and Gesi Dzor (near Meghri).

Pied Wheatear*Oenanthe pleschanka*

A pair was seen well in David Gareja monastery 28.4, prospecting for a nest site.

Finsch's Wheatear*Oenanthe finschii barnesi*

4 at Vedi 30.4, 2 on Mount Aragats 5.5 and 6 at Vedi 5.5.

Red-tailed Wheatear*Oenanthe chrysopygia*

4 in Ikis Dzor 2.5 and 3 in Gesi Dzor 3.5, both close to Meghri.

Dippers Cinclidae**White-throated Dipper***Cinclus cinclus caucasicus*

A pair was seen well in Tbilisi Botanical Gardens 23.4 and a single bird was seen briefly in Sno Valley 26.4.

Old World Sparrows Passeridae**House Sparrow***Passer domesticus*

Common throughout in towns and villages, and seen almost every day.

Spanish Sparrow*Passer hispaniolensis*

About 20 at Jandari Lake 28.4.

Eurasian Tree Sparrow*Passer montanus transcaucasicus*

Small numbers were seen on 6 days, including at Haghpat, Armash fish ponds, Meghri and Vedi.

Rock Sparrow*Petronia petronia exigua*

1 at Carahunge 1.5 was the only sighting.

Accentors Prunellidae**Alpine Accentor***Prunella collaris montana*

1 at the Friendship Monument 24.4 and 3 at the same site on 27.4.

Radde's Accentor*Prunella ocularis*

2 were seen well on Mount Aragats 5.5.

Dunnock*Prunella modularis obscura*

Up to 10 per day in the Kazbegi area 24-27.4.

Wagtails, Pipits Motacillidae**Western Yellow Wagtail***Motacilla flava*

2 at Kazbegi 24.4, 10 at Kazbegi 25.4, 20 in Sno Valley 26.4, 6 at Kazbegi 27.4, 2 at Jandari Lake 28.4, 20 at Armash fish ponds 30.4 and 2 on Mount Chgnavor 3.5. Most were nominate *flava*, where identified subspecifically, but a flock in Kazbegi on 25.4 contained single *lutea* and *feldegg*, and on the following day a single *thunbergi* was identified in a different flock.

Citrine Wagtail*Motacilla citreola citreola*

1 was seen well in Kazbegi 25.4.

Grey Wagtail*Motacilla cinerea cinerea*

2 at Tbilisi 23.4, 1 at Ananuri 24.4, 1 in Sno Valley 26.4, 3 at the Friendship Monument 27.4, 2 at Meghri 2.5 and 1 at Meghri 3.5.

White Wagtail*Motacilla alba alba*

Common throughout and seen almost every day.

Tawny Pipit*Anthus campestris*

2 on the journey to David Gareja 28.4, 1 at Vedi 30.4, 1 near Gorayk 1.5 and 1 on Mount Aragats 5.5.

Meadow Pipit*Anthus pratensis*

3 at Kazbegi 25.4 and 1 near Gorayk 1.5.

Tree Pipit*Anthus trivialis trivialis*

1 heard at Armash fish ponds 30.4, 4 near Gorayk 1.5, 4 on Mount Chgnavor 3.5 and 1 on Mount Aragats 5.5.

Red-throated Pipit*Anthus cervinus*

3 at Kazbegi 25.4, 2 at Armash fish ponds 30.4, 1 near Gorayk 1.5, and 1 on Mount Chgnavor 3.5.

Water Pipit*Anthus spinoletta coutellii*

Very common in upland areas with up to 50 per day in the Kazbegi area 24-27.4. Good numbers also on Mount Chgnavor and Mount Aragats.

Finches *Fringillidae***Common Chaffinch***Fringilla coelebs*

Small numbers were seen in woodland areas on 9 days, including Tbilisi, Ananuri, Kazbegi, Kiketi, Vedi, and between Kapan and Goris.

Hawfinch*Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

3 birds were seen briefly in woods between Kapan and Goris 4.5.

Eurasian Bullfinch*Pyrrhula pyrrhula rossikowi*

2 at Ananuri 24.4, 2 in Sno Valley 26.4 and 2 at Kazbegi 26.4.

Common Rosefinch*Carpodacus erythrinus kubanensis*

1 was seen briefly by the first car on the way up Mount Chgnavor 3.5.

Great Rosefinch*Carpodacus rubicilla rubicilla*

9 in flight at Kazbegi 24.4 and around 30 in bushes at Kazbegi 25.4, at two different sites.

European Greenfinch*Chloris chloris*

2 at Tbilisi 23-24.4, 4 at Ananuri 24.4, 2 on the journey to David Gareja 28.4 and 1 at Haghpat 29.4.

Desert Finch*Rhodospiza obsoleta*

2 at Vedi 30.4 and 10 at Vedi 5.5. This species is a recent addition to the Armenian list.

Twite*Linaria flavirostris brevirostris*

A flock of 30 at Kobi 25.4, and 8 there on 27.4, 2 near Gorayk 1.5 and 10 on Mount Aragats 5.5.

Common Linnet*Linaria cannabina bella*

Small numbers on 6 days, all in Armenia, including at Vedi, Carahunge, Meghri, Mount Chgnavor and Mount Aragats.

European Goldfinch*Carduelis carduelis*

Common throughout and seen every day.

Red-fronted Serin*Serinus pusillus*

Up to 20 per day in the Kazbegi area 24-26.4, up to 10 at Kobi 25.4 and 27.4, 2 on Mount Chgnavor 3.5 and 8 at Gesi Dzor 3.5.

Eurasian Siskin*Spinus spinus*

6 at Tbilisi Botanical Gardens 23.4 and 1 heard in Kazbegi 26.4.

Old World Buntings *Emberizidae***Corn Bunting***Emberiza calandra calandra*

Many on the journey to David Gareja 28.4, about 10 between Vedi and Yeghegnadzor 30.4, 2 at Zedea junction 1.5, 6 on Mount Aragats 5.5 and 4 at Vedi 5.5.

Rock Bunting*Emberiza cia prageri*

About 15 in Sno Valley 26.4, 2 at Haghpat 29.4, 2 between Goris and Meghri 1.5, 2 at Ikis Dzor 2.5, and 4 on Mount Aragats 5.5, but the peak count was 60 seen by the first car on the way up to Mount Chgnavor 3.5.

Grey-necked Bunting*Emberiza buchanani cerrutii*

4 at Vedi 30.4 and 2 at Vedi 5.5.

Ortolan Bunting*Emberiza hortulana*

Small numbers were seen on 7 days: 3 at Ananuri 24.4, 2 in Sno Valley 26.4, 2 on the journey to David Gareja 28.4, 3 at Vedi 30.4, 1 at Ikis Dzor 2.5, 1 at Gesi Dzor 3.5, 4 on Mount Aragats 5.5 and 2 at Vedi 5.5.

Black-headed Bunting*Emberiza melanocephala*

2 at Zedea junction 1.5, 6 at Ikis Dzor 2.5, 2 at Gesi Dzor 3.5 and about 15 at base of Mount Aragats 5.5.

Common Reed Bunting*Emberiza schoeniclus caspia*

2 at Armash fish ponds 30.4. Both were of the resident, thick-billed race *caspia*.

Annotated List of Mammals Recorded (7 species in total)

Hamsters, New World Rats and Mice, Voles *Cricetidae*

Muskrat (I)*Ondatra zibethicus*

1 at Armash fish ponds 30.4.

Altai Vole*Microtus obscurus*

At least one was seen on the slopes of Mount Chgnavor in Arevik NP on 3.5. This species is sometimes lumped in Common Vole *M. arvalis*.

Squirrels *Sciuridae*

Caucasian Squirrel*Sciurus anomalus*

1 at Tbilisi Botanical Gardens 23.4.

Eurasian Red Squirrel (I)*Sciurus vulgaris*

1 at Kazbegi 26.4.

Wolves, Coyote, Foxes, Jackals *Canidae*

Red Fox*Vulpes vulpes*

1 at Kazbegi 24.4 and 2 in Sno Valley 26.4.

Weasels, Skunks, Otters *Mustelidae*

Least Weasel*Mustela nivalis*

1 was seen at the lunch stop near Gudauri 24.4 and a probable at Kazbegi 26.4.

Cattle, Antelopes, Sheep, Goats *Bovidae*

Eastern Tur*Capra cylindricornis*

A herd of 18 at Kazbegi 25.4 and another group of 6 above the Gergeti Church, Kazbegi 26.4.

List of Amphibians and Reptiles Recorded (11 species in total)

Variable Toad *Bufo variabilis* – Kazbegi, Ikis Dzor (Meghri)
Caucasian Toad *Bufo verrucosissimus* – Sno Valley
Caucasian Brown Frog *Rana macrocnemis* – Sno Valley
Marsh Frog *Pelophylax ridibundus* – Jandari Lake, Armash
Spur-thighed Tortoise *Testudo graeca* – Jandari Lake
Caspian Turtle *Mauremys caspica* – Meghri pond
Caucasian Agama *Paralaudakia caucasica* – David Gareja, Haghpat, Kaler
Caucasian Lizard *Darevskia caucasica* – Gergeti Church
Unisexual Lizard *Darevskia unisexualis* – Zedea road
Strauch's Stepperunner *Eremias strauchi* – Meghri, Vedi
Caspian Green Lizard *Lacerta strigata* – David Gareja, Armash

List of Butterflies and Moths Recorded (37 species in total)

Dingy Skipper *Erynnis tages* – Haghpat
Swallowtail *Papilio machaon* – David Gareja
Orange-tip *Anthocharis cardamines* – Tbilisi Botanical Gardens, Haghpat
Grüner's Orange-tip *Anthocharis grueneri* – Meghri
Black-veined White *Aporia crataegi* – Meghri
Eastern Bath White *Pontia edusa* – David Gareja
Small White *Pieris rapae* – Tbilisi Botanical Gardens, Haghpat
Large White *Pieris brassicae* – Tbilisi Botanical Gardens, Haghpat
Green-veined White *Artogeia napi* – Haghpat
Berger's Clouded Yellow *Colias alfacariensis* – Haghpat
Clouded Yellow *Colias crocea* – Haghpat
Brimstone *Gonepteryx rhamni* – Kiketi, Haghpat
Powdered Brimstone *Gonepteryx farinosa* – Meghri
Small Copper *Lycaena phlaeas* – Kiketi, Haghpat
Sooty Copper *Heodes tityrus* – Haghpat
Little Tiger Blue *Tarucus balcanicus* – Meghri
Short-tailed Blue *Everes argiades* – Haghpat
Green-underside Blue *Glaucopsyche alexis* – Meghri
Brown Argus *Aricia agestis* – Haghpat
Adonis Blue *Lysandra bellargus* – Haghpat
Common Blue *Polyommatus icarus* – Meghri
Wall Brown *Lasiommata megera* – David Gareja
Large Wall Brown *Lasiommata maera* – Meghri
Small Heath *Coenonympha pamphilus* – Haghpat
Dalmatian Ringlet *Proterebia afra* – Meghri
Red Admiral *Vanessa atalanta* – Kazbegi
Painted Lady *Vanessa cardui* – Tbilisi Botanical Gardens

Peacock *Inachis io* – Kazbegi
Camberwell Beauty *Nymphalis antiopa* – Kazbegi, Sno Valley
Small Tortoiseshell *Aglais urticae* – Kazbegi
Queen of Spain Fritillary *Issoria lathonia* – Kiketi, Haghpat
Spotted Fritillary *Melitaea didyma* – Meghri
Knapweed Fritillary *Melitaea phoebe* – Meghri
Southern Knapweed Fritillary *Melitaea abbas* – Meghri

Humming-bird Hawk-moth *Macroglossum stellatarum* - Tbilisi Botanical Gardens
Cream-spot Tiger *Arctia villica* – Meghri
Yellow Shell *Camptogramma bilineata* – Meghri
Diamond-backed Moth *Plutella xylostella* – Vedi
Grey Carpet *Lithostege griseata* – Vedi
Blemished Moth *Gnopharmia stevenaria* – Vedi

List of Dragonflies Recorded (2 species in total)

Common Bluetail *Ischnura elegans* – Armash
Lesser Emperor *Anax parthenope* – Meghri

List of Orchids Recorded (5 species in total)

Georgian Orchid *Dactylorhiza flavescens* – Kapan–Goris road (inside forest)
Elderflower Orchid *Dactylorhiza sambucina* – Kapan–Goris road
Lady Orchid *Orchis purpurea* – Kapan–Goris road
Monkey Orchid *Orchis simia* – Kapan–Goris road
Punctate Orchid *Orchis punctulata* – Kapan–Goris road

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