

Welcome to the 2008 edition of The Adjutant. It is, however, with a touch of sadness that I write this introduction to this excellent, rejuvenated and revised magazine. Let me explain.

Earlier this year it became clear that our sister society, the Royal Air Force Ornithological Society (RAFOS), was not able to guarantee future funding for Osprey, our joint magazine. The Committee of the Army Ornithological Society (AOS) quickly came to the conclusion that it did not have the necessary resources to 'go it alone' and decided that Osprey would no longer be published. I am fully aware that my predecessor, Ian Nason, spent much time and energy on encouraging the start of Osprey, the first edition of which appeared as my tenure as Chairman of the AOS began. Maybe the demise of Osprey is a sign for me to move on, but first I must thank the joint editors of Osprey from inception, Simon Strickland (AOS) and Mike Blair (RAFOS), for their magnificent achievements over the years in providing such a first class magazine.

Actually I am not going to hand over, not yet, as we are certain that the way the AOS Bulletin has progressed under its current editor, Andrew Bray, gives us a cheaper alternative and one which I wish to promote. We therefore have decided, for 2008 at least, to provide a new single publication with two parts reflecting both the differences and the synergy between Osprey and The Bulletin. A vote at our AGM in the Summer confirmed that this new magazine would be entitled The Adjutant (which was last published in 2000), headed with our re-energised logo, the more upright Adjutant Stork.

In wishing this new publication well I commend to you the various more technical articles in the first part and the more fun stories in the second part. Our Army today continues to perform fantastic feats of arms at high tempo and often in great danger. We are proud of our colleagues on operations and let us all hope the new Adjutant flourishes in its new guise too.

Rodney Walker CBE

Chairman AOS



AOS members at Warcop 2008

EDITORIAL

Welcome to the new version of the Adjutant. The title has been resurrected as the magazine of the Army Ornithological Society after a break of 8 years. In the interim period articles were either included in the Osprey, a joint venture with the Royal Air Force, or in the in-house magazine the Bulletin. The Adjutant is split into two parts. Part one will include articles that have a wider ornithological interest whilst part 2 is devoted to member's articles of general interest. I hope that no matter who reads this they will gain something from it even if it is an idea for future holidays. I for one went on my first organised bird watching holiday this year from reading articles on those who had used the services of tour leaders. In part one besides activities of AOS members there is an article on Rainham Marsh RSPB reserve which was built on MOD ranges. There we are training to destroy but that has provided an opportunity to conserve. I am indebted to Ray Marsh for the photographs of North American birds. I am spending more time in Orlanda with work however I am only able to snatch the odd birdwatching opportunity. This year our members have visited many locations around the world as reflected by the articles provided. There are the varied travels of Mark Easterbrook plus two articles on New Zealand. I also spent Christmas 2007 and New Year in New Zealand and though it was a family holiday there were always opportunities to bird. I think that is one of the aspects of birdwatching that makes it so interesting; no matter where you are there is always an opportunity.

Andrew Bray

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ARE INTRODUCED COMMON MYNA *ACRIDOTHERES TRISTIS* A THREAT TO SOOTY TERN *ONYCHOPRION FUSCATA* ON ASCENSION ISLAND, SOUTH ATLANTIC?

(John Hughes)

On Ascension Island the Sooty Tern *Onychoprion fuscata* suffers predation from three exotic species. Predation by cats and rats is well documented but there is little research into predation from the Common Myna *Acridotheres tristis*. Following the successful Feral Cat *Felis silvestris* eradication programme on the island in 2004, conservation managers attempting to restore the seabird population have focused their efforts on reducing predation from Black Rats *Rattus rattus*. However, beside rats and cats, the Sooty Tern suffers predation from two avian predators, the endemic Ascension Frigatebird *Fregata aquila* that takes young chicks and the introduced Common Myna that predated eggs. We report on the extent of nest failures due to Myna predation and on the abundance, distribution and growth of the Myna population. The data we have collected will improve planning for conservation management and facilitate the development of a counter-strategy for Myna predation if deemed necessary.

Ascension (07° 57' S, 14° 24' W, 97 kms²) is one of the volcanic islands that make up the UK Overseas Territories (UKOT) of St Helena and is isolated in the tropical South Atlantic Ocean midway between South America and Africa. The territory is an Important Bird Area (Sanders 2006). Seventy-five per cent of the total breeding population of seabirds is the Sooty Tern. The populations of all seabirds have declined and predation from alien mammalian predators was identified as the primary cause.

Ashmole (1963) examined predation on Sooty Terns in detail over two seasons in the mid-fifties and noted Mynas around the colonies. However, it is clear from his report that Myna predation was not extensive or in any way a serious threat. Walmsley (1991) was the first to suspect that Mynas were significant predators. Hughes (1992) estimated that Mynas had opened 51% of 44,300 eggs found abandoned at the end of the 1992 Sooty Tern breeding season. It was not until when Walmsley (1994) observed two Mynas pecking and eating tern eggs almost immediately after they had been laid that Myna predation was identified as a significant issue. Prior to this point, Mynas on Ascension Island were generally regarded as opportunists who scavenged on abandoned eggs.

Survey

The field research for this study was completed by teams of 6-10 amateur ornithologists from the Army Ornithological Society (AOS) who visited Ascension Island at regular intervals over the last two decades. Expeditions were mounted to coincide with the Sooty Tern breeding season and lasted for about two weeks.

To confirm the field observations of Walmsley (1994), field notes from researchers in different years were consulted to corroborate the evidence that Mynas take live eggs from incubating terns as well as scavenging recently deserted ones (AOS Field Notes 2008, Seargent 2005, Winsloe 2002). The number of Mynas visiting the tern colonies was recorded by counting birds seen in the morning and afternoon during daily visits to the colony.

The monitoring of Sooty Tern nest loss involves marking nests with numbered plastic tags and following the fate of these nests over the period of ten expeditions. Nests adjacent to each other in tight groups were marked in sets of 10-20 nests with sets located on the edge (<7m from edge) or in the middle of the sub-colonies at Waterside and Mars Bay. Nests were monitored on alternative days for the length of the expedition (≈ 2 weeks) out of a laying period of ≈ 3 months. Nest failures in the centre of the colony and edge of the colony were calculated separately. Additional gradients were not needed as 30% of the ≈ 12 ha breeding site was <7m from the edge. The total number of nests that failed each season due to Myna predation was calculated as a percentage of eggs predated on the edge multiplied by number of eggs on the edge plus the percentage of eggs predated in middle multiplied by the number of eggs in the middle. The total number of eggs in the two colonies was determined from area surveys of the breeding colonies and density counts of nests. The area of edge was determined from plotting the colonies on graph paper and using a curvimeter to measure the length of the perimeter and multiplying it by the edge width. Nests that failed were categorised under the following headings: Myna predation; rat predation; desertion; and others. Eggs from pairs that re-lay following the loss of their first egg were not monitored.

Predation is defined as “the killing of the member of one species by members of another for food” (Campbell & Lack 1985). We monitored Mynas predated eggs during the incubation phase. We also recorded Mynas puncturing Sooty Tern egg shells and destroying eggs but not consuming them. We suspect that Mynas were looking for eggs of the preferred consistency but this hypothesis remains to be proven. To obtain the ratio of predated eggs to eggs punctured (destroyed but not eaten) we counted predated and punctured eggs in sample quadrats.

To estimate the level of desertion that could be attributed to Myna predation, sets that contained deserted eggs were divided into two categories, either as sets with Myna-predated eggs or sets without Myna-predated eggs. Egg desertion appears to occur shortly after Mynas start to forage in the tern colony. To avoid the possibility that Mynas were taking eggs after they had been deserted, we used only data where Myna predation and desertion occurred simultaneously. We used Chi-square with the Yates correction to test if the apparent association between nest desertion and egg predation was significant. For each set we also calculated the ratio of predated to deserted eggs and mean value with standard error from all the sets was obtained.

Myna abundance data were collected from 1987 to 2007. A 1km-grid was superimposed onto the topographical map of the island to produce a base map on which to record Myna distribution. The matrix of 116 squares covered all areas of land and gave each 1km-square a unique identity. Counts of Myna seen or heard in each square were recorded usually by two observers. Initially, Mynas were recorded as present or absent but counts of birds were recorded in latter years. The population was surveyed in 1994 and subsequently four times between 2004 and 2006. Historical data were obtained to calculate the trend in the population.

Results

During the survey period 1998 – 2007 the mean breeding population of Sooty Terns was 168 900 pairs \pm 13 318 *se*, ($n = 10$) and the mean nest loss per season from all sources was 48 038 nests \pm 5 290 *se*, ($n = 10$). Survival rate of nests containing single egg clutches varied between a minimum of 59.1% in 2001 and a maximum of 86.7% in 2003. We monitored 1 158 nests across 10 seasons. Of the 820 nests (5706 nest days) monitored <7m from the edge of the colony, 315 failed and, of the 338 nests

(3527 nest days) in the middle of the colony, 16 nests failed. Thus, nest losses at the edge of the colony were significantly greater than in the middle of the colony (mean = 69.3%, $n = 9$, $sd = 32.6\%$ and mean = 17.7%, $n = 9$, $sd = 22.4\%$, respectively; paired t -test; $t = 0.11$, $P = 0.0004$). The mean distance from the middle of the sub-colonies to the edge was 36m ($n = 67$, range 5-110 m). In our sample 331 nests failed during the 10 seasons of monitoring; 82 (25%) were due to Myna predation, 67 (20%) to rat predation, 168 (51%) to desertion and 14 (4%) to unknown factors.

At any one time the maximum number of Mynas seen in the Sooty Tern breeding colony was 21. Mynas were observed in the tern colonies on 128 occasions (61%) of 211 visits. On 67 occasions when Mynas were observed the mean number sighted was 4.49 ± 0.52 *se*, range 1 – 21). We were unable to colour ring Mynas visiting the tern colonies and have been unable to establish if a few Mynas are regular visitors or whether the majority of Mynas visit on occasions.

Mynas puncture the shells of Sooty Tern eggs (Fig 1). Punctured eggs are conspicuous and are unlikely to be confused with predation from rodents. Having punctured eggs, Mynas appear to make a judgement whether it is worthwhile to expend more energy opening eggs so that they can be consumed (Fig 2). For every 14 eggs that are predated, nine are punctured and five eaten (ratio 1:1.83, $n = 5$). Of the 48038 nests lost per season 12 010 (25%) was due to Myna predation. We estimate that Mynas puncture 7 766 eggs per season and puncture and then consume some or all of the contents of further 4 244 eggs.

Nest desertion was not random. Each season zones and on occasion's complete sub-colonies containing many hundreds of deserted nests were found. There were no deserted or predated nests in 51 (57%) of the 90 sets we monitored. In eight sets where Mynas had predated 16% of the nests there was no desertion. In the 31 remaining sets desertion was shown to be significantly higher when Myna predation occurred ($\chi^2 = 4.65$, $df = 1$, $P < 0.05$). The data from the 2005 season were biased because all of the eggs in four of the sets were deserted. We removed all of the seven sets from the 2005 season and re-ran statistical analyses. The association was greater with desertion significantly higher when Myna predation occurred ($\chi^2 = 9.38$, $df = 1$, $P < 0.01$). Every nest destroyed (egg predated or punctured) resulted in the desertion of mean 1.86 nests ± 0.26 *se* ($n = 20$). On the outer edge of the colony accompanying Myna predation was the desertion of $15\ 574$ nests $\pm 2\ 260$ *se* ($n = 10$). In the middle of the colony the Myna interaction was only a quarter of this figure and was unlikely to be the main cause of any desertion that occurred

From June 1998 to August 2006 nests were marked with conspicuous white plastic markers that might attract Mynas and, therefore, inflate incidences of predation. In May 2007 we controlled for this by marking experimental nests with wooden lollipop sticks and control nests with plastic markers. We found little difference in nest predation associated with marking method ($t = 1.46$, $df = 9$, $P = 0.18$).

During our monitoring period Myna predation in the tern colony was six times greater outside the Myna breeding season (mid-December to mid-June) than it was during the Myna breeding season (mean 20.6 eggs $n = 5$, $se = 4.1$ eggs and mean 3.4 eggs $n = 5$, $se = 1.3$ eggs, respectively; t -test; $t = 3.99$, $df = 5$, $P = 0.01$). A causal link between levels of predation and breeding season has not been reliably established.

Mynas were observed in 94% of the 1km² grid squares covering the island with highest densities in squares closest to their roost and furthest from seabird colonies (Fig 3). Our counts of Mynas during and outside the breeding seasons 2004 - 2006 was 629 birds ($se = \pm 6.4$, $n = 4$). The total population is more difficult to

calculate and we have used a probability of detection rate of 79% for this fairly obvious bird in open terrain. The Myna census for 2006 was 800 birds. The trend in the population is of a gradual increase and since the introduction of 105 Mynas in \approx 1880 the population has increased at an annual rate of 1.39%. The growth rate appears to be accelerating. From historical data and our surveys the annual growth rate has increased from 1.23% (1880 -1958) to 1.61% (1959-1994) and to 2.10% (1995-2006). Mynas were imported 1879-82 four consignments a total of 105 birds are known to have arrived. A fifth consignment of 40 pairs were ordered but their arrival was not recorded (Duffey 1994). The current population is low when compared with the initial effort. Predation from rats and cats introduced to the island before the arrival of Myna may have limited the population growth.

In summary our research has established that Mynas are a major predator of Sooty Tern eggs. We estimate that Mynas are predating 4244 Sooty Tern eggs (c. 2.5% of eggs laid), destroy but do not eat a further 7766 (4.6%) eggs and cause 15574 pairs (9.2% of the breeding population) to desert their nest. Each breeding season during the study period Mynas were responsible for the failure of 16.3% Sooty Tern nests.

Acknowledgements

This report could not have been produced without the enthusiasm, energy and sheer hard work that more than fifty members of the Army Ornithological Society contributed and to them I owe a deep debt of gratitude.



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Figure 1 Sooty Tern eggs on Ascension Island predated by Mynas. Note the puncture holes made by Mynas at the blunt end of each egg. Mynas puncture but do not eat 8 000 eggs per season.

Figure 2 Sooty Tern eggs on Ascension Island predated and eaten by Mynas. 4 000 eggs are eaten in addition to eggs that are punctured.

Figure 3 One Km grid showing the abundance and distribution of Common Myna *Acridotheres tristis* on Ascension Island. Records are of individual birds sighted or heard during the breeding season February 2004. The location of the Myna roost and their main foraging site at the Island dump are shown.



Common Myna



Figure 1



Figure 2

A			0	0	0	0								
B		0	0	0	0	0	0	0						
C		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				
D		2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0			
E	18	5	0	0	0	3	2	2	0	0	0			
F	4	5	1	117 dump	12	53	29	12	13	14	6	0	0	
G	0	4	0	5	11	14	12	30 roost	36	17	5	0	0	0
H	0	2	4	0	4	6	3	25	28	12	8	0	0	0
J	0	6	4	4	1	5	5	9	6	0	0	0		
K	0	2	1	0	2	2	1	1	0	0	0			
L		0	3	0	2	9	2	0	0					
M			0	0	0									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14

Figure 3

2003-2007 – FIVE YEARS OF RINGING MIGRATING BIRDS IN GIBRALTAR

(Ray Marsh)

I was a member of the Army Birdwatching Society's 'Exercise Rock Thrush' to Gibraltar and Morocco in 1983 so when I retired to live in Spain nineteen years later I was determined to revisit the Rock. Little did I realise that my return in September 2003 would result in an annual, autumn migration back to Gibraltar to run the ringing at Jew's Gate Observatory on behalf of the Gibraltar Ornithological and Natural History Society (GONHS).

The Rock

Gibraltar is situated on the southernmost tip of the Iberian Peninsula overlooking the Strait of Gibraltar at 36° 8'N 5° 21'W. The rock itself is a huge block of limestone that in a cataclysmic event millions of years ago was picked up from the sea bed and deposited where it now sits, pointing south, upon a bed of younger rock. This chunk of limestone is approximately 3.8 Km long with a maximum width of 1.1Km at the

northern end and 400metres at the southern end, the ridge running north/south is between 370 and 420 metres high with a high point of 424 metres.

The Observatory

The Observatory is an old police post situated 180 metres high on the southwestern tip of the Rock overlooking the Bay of Gibraltar with views west to Algeceris and south to Morocco. The accommodation consists of a main room where ringing takes place and meals are eaten, a small dormitory with one bed and two larger ones with four beds in each. There is also a small kitchen and a bathroom with toilet and shower. The charge for accommodation at ten pounds sterling per night includes full bedding and towels. The observatory can accommodate up to nine people but more comfortably a maximum of five or six. Since 1991 the Observatory and ringing have been under the control of GOHNS and ringing records and statistics are only available from this date.

Ringing Sites

There are three distinctly separate net sites, one below the road leading to the Observatory holding nets 1-9, the second above the observatory holding nets 14-20 (less 19) and thirdly, there are two nets (11 and 12) located in the observatory garden. The net rides above and below the observatory have been cut through the maquis vegetation, consisting mainly of dense Lentisc and Olive scrub. Nets 8, 11, 12 and 15 are 12 metres (40 ft) long with the remainder being 18metres (60 ft) long, they are a mixture of BTO supplied 4 shelf Japanese nets and Polish and Spanish sourced, 5 shelf nets.

The nets were usually opened before dawn and ringing continued until around 1400 hrs each day, but on overcast days with little or no wind, ringing would continue until dusk.

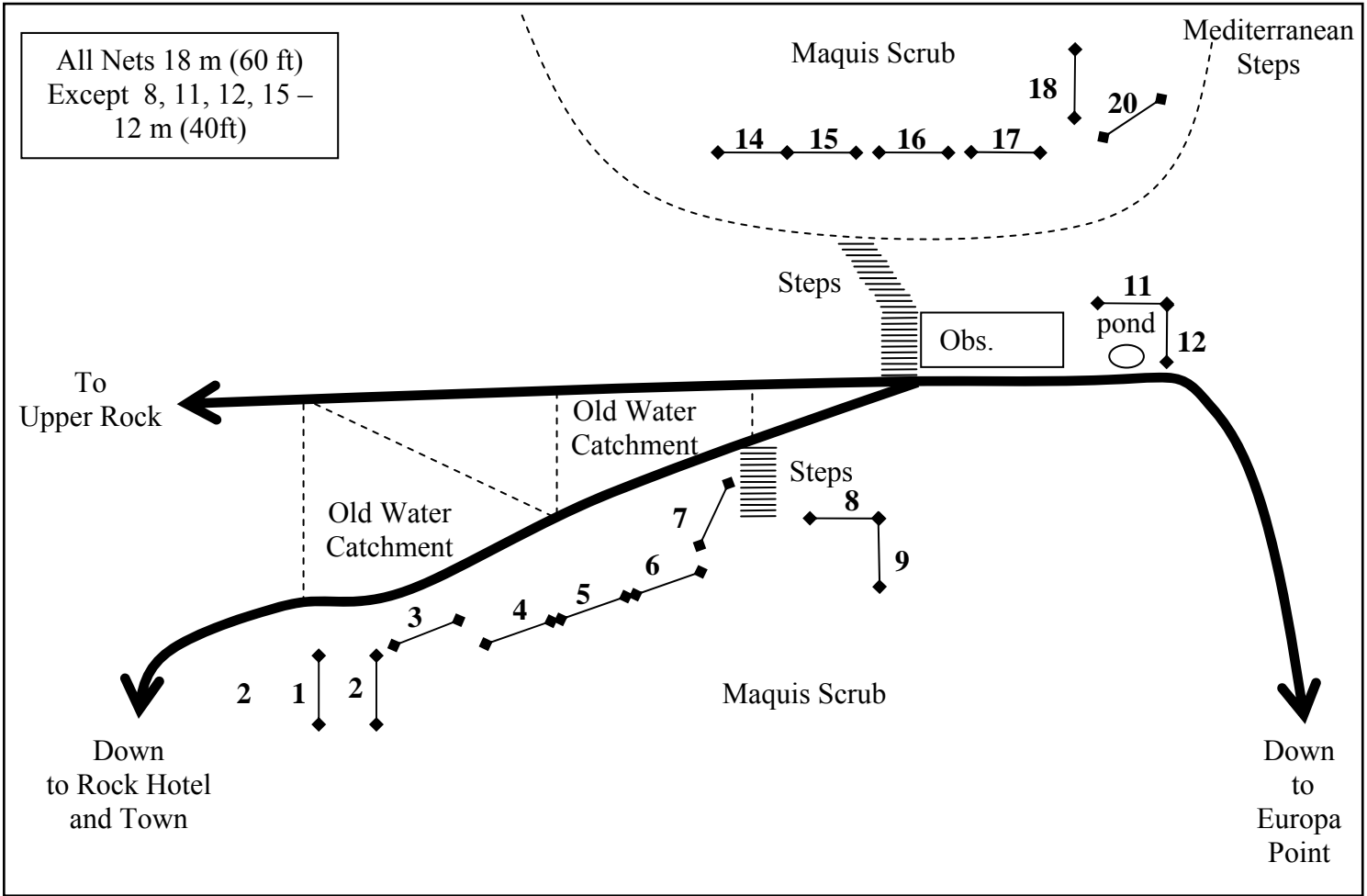
Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the following members of GONHS for their advice, help and friendship over the past 5 years, Charlie Perez, Paul Acolina, John Cortes, Keith Bensusan and Jill Yeoman.

More ringers are required for both Spring and Autumn migration periods, if you are interested more information is available on the GONHS website, www.gonhs.org or by email on Email info@gonhs.org.



Nightingale



Ray with Long-eared Owl



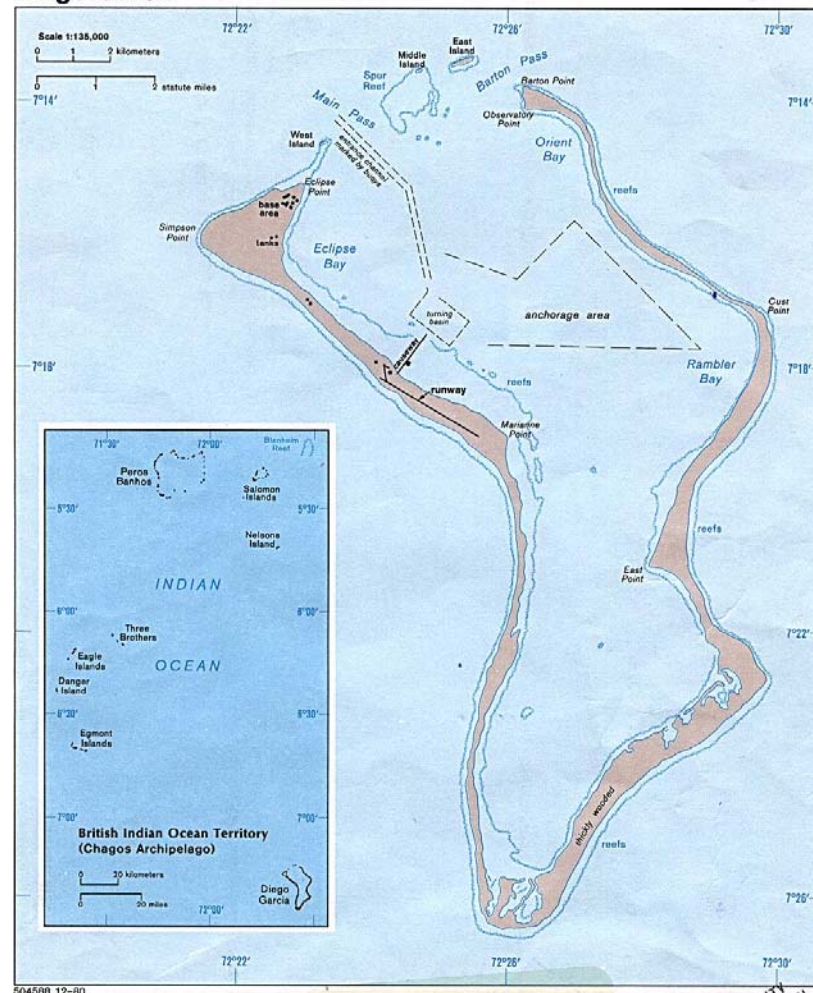
Hoopoe

DIEGO GARCIA

(Andrew Bray)

I was fortunate to join a Royal Navy Bird Watching Society trip to Diego Garcia (DG) to complete a survey of the Barton Point Important Bird Area. Three of us (1 RM and 2 Army) were to carry out the Barton Point survey of the Red-foot Boobies. The other 3 RN personnel were to survey the rest of the atoll for distribution and numbers of birds outside the reserve. We flew to Singapore (12 hrs) where we had planned a day of local bird watching before catching the KC10 (US Airforce transport plane) to DG. In the end we had an additional day in Singapore due to a 24 hr delay on the next flight. During our stay in Singapore we went to the Lower Peirce Reservoir area followed by Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve on Day 1. On Day 2 we took the opportunity of visiting the Chinese Cemetery and Botanical Gardens. For those not wearing long trousers the anti-mossie spray was not very effective.

Diego Garcia



The flight to DG started with an internal shower as all the condensation formed in the aircraft reacted to the acceleration of the aircraft down the runway. Just under 5 hrs later and 2 time zones back we landed at DG. Our accommodation was in the US base and we hired a vehicle for the duration. On the first day we explored the Island getting ourselves used to the many sites that were bird friendly. Key sites were the southern end of the lagoon, the landfill site, the southern end of the runway, both sewage/water

treatment sites and the “swampy” area by the petrol point which turned out to be the premier site during our visit. On the second day the work began in earnest with a 10 mile hike for the survey team. The pattern was a working our way from the end of navigable track to the beach through the overgrown coconut plantation; struggling through the Scaveola bushes *Scaevola taccada* and then a walk along the along the

seaward beach to the survey area. The idea of the survey was to replicate the methodology used during a previous visit in 2005. We were to visit 50 random points selected from a pre-determined list of transect points along a coastline of 14 miles. On arrival we counted the number of Boobies 15 metres in each direction to a depth of 10 metres. They were categorised by age groups of adult, immature, juvenile, chick. It was the rainy season and we were soon drenched in a shower. By midday we had finished the survey on first plot on the seaward side of the island and headed back into the cool of the old plantation to escape the sun and follow the trail back to the drop off point. The trail is blocked in many places! This did not bode well as we had to return to the last point to start the next plot which took us to the northern end of Barton Point. The next day was a 16 mile hike and we were wet from the outset due to the heavy morning rain and never dried off. At the end of 2 days we had surveyed 6 miles of Boobies on the seaward side.



Red-footed Booby
© Chris Patrick

Next task was to survey 8 miles of Boobies on the lagoon side. This meant having to be water borne as the trees and bushes hung over the water and negotiating the coral and rocks on foot would be very difficult and dangerous. We used sea canoes to start the first leg. The lagoon was rather choppy due to the wind and it was hard work maintaining a pace. By the end of the day it was apparent that to carry out the rest of the survey by kayak over the next 2 days would tax our bodies severely which were already feeling the effects of the heat and hikes. We decided to hire a motor boat which meant a course for me including an exam. An hour and half later the next afternoon with a

ticket in my hand we were able to hire a boat. That day we took the opportunity of a morning break for the other team to show us what they had found – more new birds for my list. The day of the survey got off to a bad start with monsoon like rain which stayed with us all morning. Despite clearing up in the afternoon there was no movement allowed in the lagoon. The next day the sun was shining and we were able to take a boat to the other side of the lagoon to complete the survey. The difficulty was negotiating the boat through the coral and rocks but even at slow ahead with lots of reverse we were able to finish the survey within 5 hrs.

This gave us the reserve day to join the others for a full days birding around the Island taking in the many hidden sandy coves, the incinerator, the petrol depot swamp, the fresh water pond near the old leper colony and of course the sewage works. A staggering number of species was identified; many were first proper records for DG as well as for the Chagos group. During our stay on DG we recorded for the first time 12 species for the island and 11 for the Chagos group. The next day saw all 6 of us embark in RM rigid raiders for a survey of the 3 very small islands situated at the entrance to the atoll. The boats took us in close as possible then we had to swim for it. We than had various tasks for the islands survey including collecting DNA samples from the Boobies before swimming back out to the boats. On the last island the rain came with a vengeance and one the boats had to be towed back whilst we carried out our work. It was on this very small island we found evidence of breeding Boobies and Cattle Egrets with eggs and very young chicks. Everywhere else on DG the breeding season seemed to be over. This is going to make the scientific paper interesting to write! The return journey included being transferred to a RIB for a high speed return. Our last day was spent birding in the morning with a final check of the key sites before and afternoon of administration. Our C17 departed at 0130 hrs in the morning and on arrival at Singapore we were transferred directly to Changi Airport for the long flight home.

Species	Totals	Comments
Domestic Fowl <i>Gallus gallus</i>	100+	
Garganey <i>Anas querquedula</i>	4	1st DG, seen on Chagos before
Wedge-tailed Shearwater <i>Puffinus pacificus</i>		picked out on sea watch
Flesh-footed Shearwater <i>Puffinus carneipes</i>		picked out on sea watch
Glossy Ibis <i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>	1	
Black-crowned Night-heron <i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>	3	1st record Chagos
Striated Heron <i>Butorides striata</i>	100+	
Indian Pond-heron <i>Ardeola grayii</i>	2	adult + juvenile, 1st Chagos
Cattle Egret <i>Bubulcus ibis</i>	200+	
Great Egret <i>Casmerodius albus</i>	1	2nd Chagos
Little Egret <i>Egretta garzetta</i>	1	3rd Chagos
White-tailed Tropicbird <i>Phaethon lepturus</i>	8*	breeds in small numbers
Greater Frigatebird <i>Fregata minor</i>	250	numbers have increased
Lesser Frigatebird <i>Fregata ariel</i>	2*	very few seen
Red-footed Booby <i>Sula sula</i>	3500+	
Brown Booby <i>Sula leucogaster</i>	12	expanding
White-breasted Waterhen <i>Amauornis phoenicurus</i>	70+	
Common Moorhen <i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	7	1st Chagos
Pacific Golden Plover <i>Pluvialis fulva</i>	3*	
Grey Plover <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>	26*	
Common Ringed Plover <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	1	1st DG, 2nd Chagos
Kentish Plover <i>Charadrius alexandrinus</i>	4	2nd DG
Lesser Sand Plover <i>Charadrius mongolus</i>	>20	numbers varied day to day
Greater Sand Plover <i>Charadrius leschenaultii</i>	20+	numbers varied day to day
Common Snipe <i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	1	1st Chagos
Bar-tailed Godwit <i>Limosa lapponica</i>	15*	
Whimbrel <i>Numenius phaeopus</i>	100+	
Eurasian Curlew <i>Numenius arquata</i>	1	2nd DG, 3rd Chagos
Far Eastern Curlew <i>Numenius madagascariensis</i>	1	1st Chagos
Marsh Sandpiper <i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>	1	2nd DG

Common Redshank <i>Tringa totanus</i>	2	3rd Chagos
Common Greenshank <i>Tringa nebularia</i>	10+	
Wood Sandpiper <i>Tringa glareola</i>	2	3rd DG
Terek Sandpiper <i>Xenus cinereus</i>	6	highest count
Common Sandpiper <i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	8	highest count
Grey-tailed Tattler <i>Heteroscelus brevipes</i>	1	2nd DG, 4th Chagos
Ruddy Turnstone <i>Arenaria interpres</i>	300+	
Sanderling <i>Calidris alba</i>	>10	
Little Stint <i>Calidris minuta</i>	4	highest 1 day count
Pectoral Sandpiper <i>Calidris melanotos</i>	2	1st Chagos
Curlew Sandpiper <i>Calidris ferruginea</i>	500+	
Ruff <i>Philomachus pugnax</i>	1	1st Chagos
Oriental Pratincole <i>Glareola maldivarum</i>	2	1st DG, 2nd Chagos
Great Crested Tern <i>Sterna bergii</i>	30+	constantly seen
Roseate Tern <i>Sterna dougallii</i>	2	
Black-naped Tern <i>Sterna sumatrana</i>	25	max 5 seen at any one time.
Arctic Tern <i>Sterna paradisaea</i>	4	
Little Tern <i>Sternula albifrons</i>	50+	various roosts
Bridled Tern <i>Onychoprion anaethetus</i>	5*	not seen every day
White-winged Tern <i>Chlidonias leucopterus</i>	>10	
Brown Noddy <i>Anous stolidus</i>	200+	nest across whole atoll
Lesser Noddy <i>Anous tenuirostris</i>	200+	
White Tern <i>Gygis alba</i>	150+	found across the whole atoll
Parastic Jaeger <i>Stercorarius parasiticus</i>	1	1st Chagos
Madagascar Turtle-dove <i>Nesoenas picturata</i>	400+	
Zebra Dove <i>Geopelia striata</i>	100+	
White-throated Needletail <i>Hirundapus caudacutus</i>	2	1st Chagos
Common Swift <i>Apus apus</i>	1	1st Chagos
Fork-tailed Swift <i>Apus pacificus</i>	1	1st Chagos
Common Myna <i>Acridotheres tristis</i>	500+	
Madagascar Red Fody <i>Foudia madagascariensis</i>	700+	
Yellow Wagtail <i>Motacilla flava</i>	2	2nd DG

Key: * = max count



Oriental Pratincole
© Chris Patrick

RAINHAM MARSHES

Rainham Marshes straddles the outskirts of east London and Essex and has long been known as a haven for birds. However, among birders its reputation has been unsavoury, and it has been known to many as ‘that rubbish tip with burnt-out cars, piles of tyres, bubbling chemical pools, rats, guns, motorbikes and whizzing bullets ... oh, and Water Pipits and Short-eared Owls’. But things have changed somewhat over the last six years and the RSPB is set to usher in a new era which combines conservation with engaging the general public with wildlife.

In the beginning

Rainham’s landscape has not always been dominated by open marshes, and the area has undergone some fascinating transformations over thousands of years. Its geomorphological history started with the build-up of silty glacial deposits overlying the Eocene marine London clays and gravels up to about 13,000 BC. After this, the cold, treeless steppe and tundra habitat was replaced with a covering of birch and pine. However, from 6,000 BC sea levels rose and during the Mesolithic and Neolithic epochs, spanning 8,000-2,000 BC, the site saw two periods of inundation, each followed by dense forestation.

The Rainham area has been occupied by man since the Palaeolithic (35,000-10,000BC), with hand tools found in the nearby Aveley shingle terraces, and there is evidence of Bronze and Iron Age (2,200 BC to 43 AD) habitation and Roman occupation (43-140 AD) nearby. Farming in the area began after the Bronze Age, but most of the land remained unreclaimed during the Medieval period (140-1550 AD). Reclamation and the establishment of sea walls began in the 14th century, and Wennington Creek was finally sealed off from the Thames in 1691.

The site provided high-quality grazing and grain production from 1550 until as recently as 1906, when the War Department created first the Purfleet Rifle ranges, and then in 1915 those at the Rainham end of the site. On Aveley Marsh three stop-butts were created (part of one still stands) with a Mantlet bank in front of each. This broken linear feature still divides Aveley and Wennington Marshes. The hundred-yard shooting ridges can still be seen across the marsh, and in the scrub the Cordite store and one of eight anti-aircraft ammunition magazines still stands, testament to the military history of the marsh, which was an important air defence location during both wars.

Most birdwatchers know of the stone barges (and their attendant Rock and Water Pipits) discarded near Coldharbour Point when they became surplus to requirement as a Mulbury Harbour for the D-Day Landings in 1944. The only major changes during the last century were the creation of the Silt Lagoon complex between 1967 and 1987 for Thames dredgings, and the new, elevated A13 and the Channel Tunnel Rail Link in the last 10 years.

Recent history

The RSPB bought Rainham, Wennington and Aveley Marshes from the MoD in July 2000. The reserve covers 352 ha of grazing marsh and silt lagoons and represents 77 per cent of the Inner Thames Marshes SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest). Since the purchase, the RSPB has started the long task of restoring the marshland back to its

former glory. This has been a long and complex process as, apart from habitat management, there was a whole range of issues relating to the site's previous usage to be dealt with prior to the reserve opening to the public.



One of the major priorities has been the removal of the unwanted remains of the site's military occupation. A hundred years' worth of accumulated rubbish has had to be cleared, including any unexploded ordnance remaining on site. In parallel with this work the programme to restore the marshland itself will always be ongoing. The habitat work has concentrated on management of water and grassland. The reserve has a network of some 15 miles of ditches, many of which were largely unmanaged during most of the military's occupation. As a result, many of the ditches were blocked with years of accumulated silt and vegetation and needed major restoration work to enable them to function as water carriers and wet fences. We have restored them to a condition that is beneficial for both the movement of water and for the suite of species that depend upon healthy ditches, such as Water Vole and aquatic invertebrates including Great Silver Diving Beetle and Small Red-eyed and Scarce Emerald Damselfly.

In conjunction with this work, we have installed a network of sluices that will help us to control the water levels across the reserve by operating varying levels in different parts of the site at the same time of year. The new scrape has been designed as three separate hydrological units to accommodate this practice. This will mean we can maximise the available habitat for breeding waders and wintering waterfowl. Cattle on the reserve act as our grass management machines, allowing us to tightly control the sward height to optimum conditions.

We have three habitat-related field-teaching stations across the reserve, which have allowed our education team to bring in school groups before the reserve is fully opened. A network of boardwalk and tarmac trails has been created by co-operation between our contractors and our invaluable teams of volunteers; the trails allow full access to a 2.5mile walk.

The state-of-the-art Environment and Education Centre has been constructed to be as green as possible and aspires to be carbon-neutral and incorporates rain water harvesting, solar and geo-thermal energy and eventually a wind turbine and will no

doubt stand as a benchmark for visitor centres across the country. It affords excellent views across the reserve and Thames. It houses a café, shop, optics, a classroom and offices.

The wildlife

The birdlife of Rainham Marshes has been well documented in the Essex and London Bird Reports since the late 1940s, and the habitat and avifauna have not changed ostensibly since that time, largely thanks to the protracted stay of the MoD. Since the RSPB acquired the site in 2000, wintering wildfowl numbers have increased dramatically, with Wigeon now regularly reaching 1,000 birds (from 250), Common Teal up to a peak of 3,475 (from 1,050) and, most notably from a London context, more than 40 Pintail, with a peak of 88 (from six). The site holds important numbers of breeding Reed Bunting, Little Grebe, Meadow Pipit and Skylark, and Lapwing and Redshank numbers remain stable.

Stonechat, Barn Owl, Grasshopper Warbler and Water Rail are all notable local breeders, and while Common Snipe and Yellow Wagtail do not currently breed, specific habitat management should hopefully aid a return. Cetti's Warblers colonised in 2006, and perhaps Penduline Tit, having wintered, will colonise before Bearded Tit although the latter did breed again in 2007.

The Thames is cleaner now than it has been since the Industrial Revolution and the Inner Thames wader population has increased dramatically (while conversely diving duck numbers have fallen) – Rainham now hosts up to 1,000 wintering Dunlins, 300 Black-tailed Godwits, 30 Curlews and a few Grey Plovers and Turnstones.



More than 250 bird species have been recorded and, during the late 1960s and 1970s, the silt lagoons were attracting rare waders on a regular basis, including such gems as Solitary and Western Sandpipers. Collared Pratincole and Sociable Plover in 2005 suggest that the site's rarity days may be returning. 2007 saw 188 species recorded on site with a myriad of white water birds stealing much of the attention. Two cattle Egrets, a Great White Egret and six different Spoonbills made it interesting. Both Bee-eater and Hoopoe added further Mediterranean flavour while a Blyth's Reed Warbler in early October was undoubtedly the rarest bird of the year. To finish up the 21st December saw a flourish of wild geese with an amazing 88 Barnacles, 12 Tundra Beans and six White-fronts descending on the reserve. These were the first Barnacles of wild origin to be seen in the London area since 1979. Better water control will

allow improved conditions throughout the year to accommodate both breeding and passage migrants, and no doubt the number of good birds and fly-over raptors will increase with more eyes on site.

During the summer the reserve is a riot of colour with banks of Purple Vetch and Marsh Thistles, yellow Bristly Ox-tongue, sky-blue Chicory and red Poppies. We have had 25 species of butterflies and a host of bees, including several nationally scarce species. Dragonflies and damselflies proliferate and 2006 saw the list rise to 21, with Hairy Hawkers increasing year-on-year and both Red-eyed and Emerald Damselfly species (re)colonising in 2006.

Water Voles continue to do well and Rainham is now considered to hold the densest population in the country and accounts for a sizable percentage of the total UK population. Stoat and Weasel are often seen but thankfully no Mink have yet been sighted and a monitoring program is already *in situ*. Marsh, Edible, Pool and Common Frogs are present and Chinese Mitten Crabs have invaded the dykes from the Thames, but apparently make good eating!

The future

This project would have been impossible without the support of our neighbours, local stakeholders and funders. It is hoped that this green oasis among the urban sprawl that is Metropolitan Essex will stand testament to all those who worked hard on the project, from those who helped save the marshes and thwarted the development of Euro-Disney to the government and local and national authorities whose backing made the dream of turning a neglected medieval marsh into a flagship RSPB reserve a reality.

But this is just the beginning for what may eventually become the London Riverside Conservation Park. Cessation of work on the Cleanaway landfill site by 2012(?) and the subsequent landscaping of the 'Rainham Chilterns', along with the creation of a Local Nature Reserve by Havering Council (which RSPB are in negotiations to manage) encompassing the west end of the site, will bring together the rest of the SSSI, the RSPB nature reserve and a new country park beside the Thames. The result will be 600 hectares of internationally important interlinked ecological green leisure space for the wildlife and the people of London and the South-East.



Great White Egret

Exercise Andean Emerald Diary 12th to 26th November 2007

Hilary Nash and Tim Hallchurch

photos Tim Hallchurch unless stated

Monday 12th November.

The party assembled at Terminal 2 Heathrow at 5 am bleary eyed, but full of expectation about the trip and resigned to a tedious flight ahead. Everone would have been much less phlegmatic if they had known what it entailed. We were of course delayed and take off was almost an hour late. We arrived in *Madrid* and were further delayed by another security check which was almost as slow as those in the USA, as a result we almost missed our flight to *Quito*. This flight 10 hours long and very tedious. There were a series of incomprehensible announcements and we were turned off the plane at *Guayaquil* when expecting it to be *Quito*. Earlier that week an *Iberia Airlines A340* had burst a tyre on landing at *Quito* and had overshoot the end of the runway, where it was still parked in a rather bent state. *Quito* airport was closed to *A340s*, but *Iberia* was very coy about arrangements and it was more by chance that we discovered that we had to catch a series of small plane shuttles to *Quito*. Those near the front of the Madrid plane managed to get on an early flight and reached the hotel and into bed by 10:30 pm. Those at the end of the queue didn't get in until 1 am. The position was made worse as our guide **Charlie Hesse** was waiting at International arrivals and not the Domestic hall where we actually arrived.

Tuesday 13th November.

After yesterday's fiasco we planned a leisurely start for 8 am but our guide *Charlie Hesse*, had managed to track us down and we were awakened at 5:30 am for a 7 o'clock start. It was hurried preparation and breakfast before some of us climbed on to the bus. The rest thought it all too early and chose a lie in. We set off for the *Papallacta* and *Antennae Hill* in the *Antisana Reserve* which is in the *Paramour* – grassland above the tree line – at 4,064 m (*below*). This was a bit sudden for our bodies and all of us had great difficulty moving uphill, the air was so thin. We had to stop and pant every few steps and had developed pains in the chest.

It was worth it as we found a **Rufous-bellied Seedsnipe** *Vultur gryphus*, (*right*) with five chicks and we also saw an **Andean Condor** *Vultur gryphus*, which turned out to be the only one of the trip. There were an amazing number of wildflowers and we could have spent all day identifying them (*bottom right* photo Tony Lancaster). Lunch was at the hot springs at **Termas Pallacta**. We continued birding in the afternoon, but it was very quiet, although we had wonderful views of **Mount Antisana** (5758 m). Back at *Hotel Quito*, some had dinner with excellent Chilean wine while others went across the road to a Mexican Restaurant and had a meal



for US\$10 each.

The GPS showed the hotel bar to be at 9391ft above sea level and 0.2036425° south of the Equator.



Wednesday 14th November

After breakfast we checked out of the Hotel and set off for the *Yanacocha Reserve*, where the GPS showed that we were at 11,700ft, 0.11° north of the Equator. We had bright sunlight and good birds including three **Scarlet-bellied Mountain-Tanagers** *Anisognathus igniventris*, bedecked with brilliant colours. We also saw the **Sword-billed Hummingbird** *Ensifera ensifera* (right). After a very substantial pack lunch we headed on to *Jane Lyons' Reserve* centered around **Las Gralarias Guest House**. We travelled via the *Old Mindo Road* through the very spectacular *Tandayapa Valley*, where some saw a **White-capped Dipper** *Cinclus leucocephalus*.



The guest house had feeders awash with hummingbirds including the diminutive **Booted Racket-tail** *Ocreatus underwoodii* and the elegant **Empress Brilliant** *Heliodoxa imperatrix*. It was wonderful to be able to sit on the veranda with a beer, watching these jewels flit around the feeders a few metres away. We had an excellent supper of beef steaks with some really good wine and warmed ourselves by the log fire before we retired to bed. Everybody slept well as *Jane's* idea of a glass was about a third of a bottle.

Thursday 15th November

We were up at dawn. We heard a great deal but saw little and it took 10 minutes of careful watching to see a small bird creeping through grass before we managed to name it as an **Azara's Spinetail** *Synallaxis azarae*. *Charley* then appeared and we did a great deal better with **Blue-capped Tanager** *Thraupis cyanocephala* and **Capped Conebill** *Conirostrum albifrons*. After breakfast we walked round *Las Gralarias Guest House and reserve* where we had excellent views of a **Yellow-vented Woodpecker** *Veniliornis dignus*, a rare bird that was recorded on video. The trail was hard going and we were all pleased when we returned *Las Gralarias* where we saw a **Hook-billed Kite** *Chondrohierax uncinatus*, **Bay-headed Tanager** *Tangara gyrola* and **Blue-necked Tanagers** *Tangara cyanicollis* and a **Bananaquit** *Coereba flaveola*. That afternoon we visited Reserves at *Milpe* and *Mindo Loma* seeing **Powerful Woodpecker** *Campophilus pollens* and six species of Hummingbirds: **White-whiskered Hermit** *Phaethornis yaruqui*, **Green Thorntail** *Discosura conversii*, **Green-crowned Wood Nymph** *Thalurania fannyi* (right), **Green-crowned Brilliant** *Heliodoxa jacula* and **Andean Emerald** *Agyrtria francae*. We totalled 117 species that day.



Friday 16th November

After an early breakfast we visited **Rio Silanche Combo**, a remnant of primary forest at 450 metres above sea level. It was noticeably hotter and stickier (*right*). We birded along the road to the reserve and did very well for raptors with three species of **Kite**: **Grey-headed** *Leptodon cayanensis*, **White-tailed** *Elanus leucurus* and **Hooked-billed** *Chondrohierax uncinatus*. On reaching the reserve we climbed a tower and had excellent views of **Swallow-tailed Kites** *Elanoides forficatus* and a rare **Black Hawk-eagle** *Spizaetus tyrannus*. In spite of the heat our walk through the forest was very productive as we encountered several bird waves. On the way home we stopped at **The Mirador Restaurant** where the owner puts out Hummingbird



feeders and bananas. He attracted an incredible number of **Tanagers** including: **Swallow** *Tersina viridis*, **Blue-necked** *Tangara cyanicollis*, **Bay-headed** *Tangara gyrola*, **Golden** *Tangara arthus* (*Left*), **Blue-grey** *Thraupis episcopus* (*Left*), **Palm** *Thraupis palmarum*, **Lemon-rumped** *Ramp-hocelus icteronotus* Silver-throated *Tangara icterocephala*, Blue-winged Mountain Tanager *Anisognathus somptuosus* and **White-shouldered** *Tachyphonus luctuosus*. We also saw three **Pale-**



mandibled Aracaris *Pteroglossus erythropygius* (*right*) and **White-throated Quail-Dove** *Geotrygon frenata* and **Pallid Dove** *Leptotila pallida*, the last two both rare and difficult to see.



Saturday 17th November

We were up at 4:10 am and en route for **Refugio Paz de Las Aves** where there is a **Andean Cock-of-the-Rock** *Rupicola peruviana* lek. We walked down the dark steep muddy trail just as dawn was breaking. The lek was fantastic with at least a dozen males there and we also two females.



Once they had dispersed we sought "**Maria**" a **Giant Antpitta** *Grallaria ruficapilla*, (*right*) which we watched from about three metres as it was fed worms; some also caught sight of a **Yellow-breasted Antpitta** *Grallaria flavotincta* called **Willy**. We had breakfast at the Reserve at 9:30 am by which time we were all very hungry.

We then drove to the town of

Mindo

where we had lunch by the **Narnbillo River** watching **Torrent Tyrannulets** *Serpophaga cinerea*. It started to rain so we called it a day.



Sunday 18th November



Breakfast was at 6:30 am and we were supposed to leave at 7 o'clock, but farewells with Dr Jane Lyons (*left*) and photo calls delayed us as did a stop at the equator (guided by Tim's GPS) for photographs, which is on the road between *Jane's* place



and the main road though the cloud forest (*right*). Our first bird stop was for a **Roadside Hawk** *Buteo magnirostris*.

We then tried to find a **Tanager Finch** *Oreothraupis arremonops*, a "vulnerable" endemic. We were too late at a known site, but were lucky to pick it up later on. We encountered a bird wave which included **Blue-and-Black** *Tangara vassorii*, **Rufous-chested** *Thlypopsis ornata* and **Grass Green Tanagers** *Chlorornis riefferii*. We also saw a **Red-headed Barbet** *Eubucco bourcierii* and two **Plate-billed Mountain Toucans** *Andigena laminirostris*, the latter also a rare endemic species. We then headed down the **Tandayapa Valley** via the **Old Mindo Road** then onto the new one. Here *Charley* left us to return to *Jane's* whilst we headed for the **Hotel Quito**. As it was a Sunday, the Mexican restaurant was closed so some went to *Hunter's* for a steak, while some stayed for the **Hotel Quito's** excellent buffet.

Monday 19th November

One of the few day when we had a lie in as the coach for the airport was departing at 9 am. Habits die hard though and some of us were up in time to have a gentle bird-watch in the hotel gardens (*Right*) which added **Hooded Siskin** *Carduelis magellanica*, **Black Flower-piercer** *Diglossa humeralis* and **Summer Tanager** *Piranga rubra* to our trip list. We reached the **Quito** Domestic Departure Terminal at 9:30 am for the 11:30 am flight, which was then delayed an hour as the **VIP** aircraft was un-



serviceable. Time to spare – Travel by air! Once

airborne we passed over **Mt Cayambe** (*left*) a snow covered volcano.

After landing at **Coca** we transferred to a motorised canoe for a two and a half hour journey down the Napa River and



were landed only to have to walk for a further 20 minutes and then travel in a paddled canoe for another 40 minutes before we reached **Las Selvas** lodge.

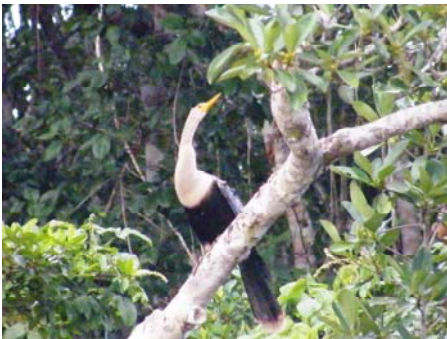


Las Selvas. (Right with Patricia Davies on the boardwalk) was made of local material but very comfortable in the circumstances but always damp, making it impossible to dry clothes even when the sun shone. Here we had a long winded briefing and were issued with Wellington boots. Just before supper we went to look for a **Crested Owl** *Lophotrix cristata* which we heard calling but did not see. We also heard an **Ocelot** *Leopardus pardalis*. We split into two groups. 'A' with the guide **José** comprising of **Tony, Lynne & Julian** and **Hilary**. 'B' mustered **Ray, Tim & Jan, Tricia** and **Kate** and was guided by **Rodrigo**.



Tuesday 20th November

Group A were up at 4:30 am for a half past five start for the **Forest Reserve**, which was on the far bank of the **River Napa**. Group B started later as they were to bird locally. En route Group A heard a **Sun Bittern** *Eurypyga helias*, but none of them could pick it out in the fallen tree at the waters edge, in spite if **José's** directions. Across the **River Napa** they saw a pair of **Blue-and-Yellow Macaws** *Ara ararauna* as well as **Chestnut-fronted** *Ara severa* and **Red-bellied Macaws** *Orthopsittaca manilata*. Other good birds were the **Magpie Tanager** *Cissopis leveriana* and **Anhinga** (Snake Bird) *Anhinga anhinga* (left).



They also saw four species of **Manakin**, including the **Striped** *Machaeropterus regulus*, and the **Dwarf Tyrant-Manakin** *Tyrannetes stolzmanni*. **José** proved quite exceptional at finding the birds. They also did very well for mammals with a herd of c.30 **White-Collared Peccaries** *Tayassu tajacu*, **Red Howler Monkeys** *Alouatta seniculus*, **Capuccino Monkeys** and a **Black-Mantled Tamarind**. It rained hard on the way back so everyone got soaked. After supper the diehards again went owling with **José** and saw a **Tawny-Bellied Screech-Owl** *Otus watsonii*.



Ray Marsh had a disaster when his video camera fell 45m from the tree top observation platform. (Right See picture of members bird watching over the canopy).

Some of the birds seen from the tower included **Bat Falcon** *Falco ruficularis*, **Black-fronted Nunbirds** *Monasa nigrifrons* and the **Lineated Woodpecker** *Dryocopus lineatus* (below).



Wednesday 21st November



Group A were up the tower this morning whilst the Group B went on a **River Napa** trip. The tower had its observation platform some 45 metres up in the crown of a **Ciba Tree**. It meant that we could look down on the canopy and we saw many of the tree top species. We were unlucky with the weather as it rained quite a lot and we had only one bird wave pass through but it produced a variety of stunning **Tanagers**:- **Green-and-Gold** *Tangara schranki*, **Paradise** *Tangara chilensis*, **Turquoise** *Tangara mexicana* and **Yellow-Bellied** *Tangara xanthogastra*. It rained heavily over lunch and the early part of the afternoon which delayed our outing to the lake until 4 pm but we stayed there till dark. We had good views of

both the **Spot-Backed** *Hylophylax naevia* and **Dot-Backed Antbirds**. **Hylophylax punctulatus** and a number of **Aracari** (left)

Thursday 22nd November

Group A were on a **River Napa** trip which headed downstream. Our first sighting was an **Amazonian Umbrella Bird** *Cephalopterus ornatus*. Other good birds seen on the river were **Green-and-rufous Kingfisher** *Chloroceryle inda*, **White-eared Jacamar** *Galbancyrhynchus leucotis*, **Swallow-winged Puffbirds** *Chelidoptera tenebrosa*. We also saw some river specials such as **Parker's or White-breasted Spinetail** *Spinetail Cranioleuca vulpecula*, which specialises living in newly vegetated sand islands as well as **Collared Plovers** *Charadrius collaris* on the open dunes. We returned in time for lunch. The early afternoon



looked wet but we set out for the second lake. The other group saw **Black Skimmers** *Rynchops niger* the previous day (above). On arrival the heavens opened so we sheltered for some time before paddling out to see **Yellow-Shouldered Grosbeaks** *Parkerthraustes humeralis* and **Red-Capped Cardinals** *Paroaria gularis*, **Masked Crimson Tanager** *Ramphocelus nigrogularis* (below) and several **Azure Gallinules** *Porphyrio flavirostris* in the invading **Water Hyacinth** *Eichornia crassipes*. That evening we had a Thanksgiving Supper with turkey thanks to the US owners of the lodge



Friday 23rd November

We were due to set off for **Coca** at 10 o'clock. **Rodrigo** took all of us to the Tower (right photo A Lancaster) at 8 am after breakfast. The visit started slowly as everywhere was shrouded in mist which limited visibility. As it dispersed we began to see birds such as **Gilded Barbets** *Capito auratus*, a **White-tailed Trogon** *Trogon viridis*, both **Ivory-billed** *Pteroglossus azara* and **Many-banded Araçaris** *Pteroglossus pluricinctus* and a **Scaly-bellied Woodpecker** *Picus squamatus*. Just before we left, **Rodrigo** spotted a **Harpy Eagle** *Harpia harpyja* a long way off (only the second he had seen in six years). Unfortunately he was so excited that he failed to give any understandable instructions, so most people missed catching a glimpse of it. Once down **José** took us to see a **Wire-tailed Manakin** *Pipra filicauda*, a brilliantly coloured bird in scarlet, black and yellow. Back at the Lodge we discovered that our flight was delayed by 2½ hours, so we birded around the camp and saw the **Ferruginous Pigmy-owl** *Glauucidium brasilianum*, a bird we had heard every night but not seen. The journey back **Coca** took about 20 minutes longer as we were going upstream against a 2 knot current. En route we saw a

Rufescent Tiger Heron *Tigrisoma lineatum* and an **Ornate Hawk Eagle** *Spizaetus ornatus*. The transfer from the boat to the airport was in an old truck with wooden benches. More hanging around before flying and we finally returned to the **Hotel Quito** around 6:30 pm.

Saturday 24th November

Another early start as we had to be on the road by 7 o'clock to reach the Native Market in **Otavalo**, some 2 hours drive to the north of **Quito**. It was very crowded, full of stalls selling brightly coloured cloth, carvings and woven hangings. Many items



were locally made including knitted alpaca jumpers. Hilary bought a stone owl carved in Inca style, a CD of Andean music and a weaving of a parrot. On the way there we passed acres of plastic tunnels, for growing roses and other flowers that are sent round the world.



After the market we went on to lunch at the **Hacienda Cusin**, which was founded in the 17th century with an attached monastery. We saw a few new birds, including a **White-crested Elaenia** *Elaenia albiceps* and **Southern Yellow-Grossbeak** *Pheucticus chrysogaster* (left). Before returning to **Hotel Quito** we looked at some of the old parts of **Quito**. There is not much of it



left, a combination of earthquakes and redevelopment. Supper was had in the Mexican Restaurant where **Charley** joined us.

Sunday 25th November

Another early start as we to visit the **Paramo** region of the **Ante Sana Reserve** which lies at over 4,000 metres. We had hoped to see Andean Condors on their roosting cliffs but they were not there. We did very well for other raptors with a **Cinereous Harrier** *Circus cinereus*, two **Aplo-modo Falcons** *Falco femoralis* (above centre) and two **Black-chested Buzzard Eagles** *Geranoaetus melanoleucus*. We also saw the very rare **Black-faced Ibis** *Theristicus melanopsis*, **Giant Hummingbirds** *Patagona gigas*, **Black-tailed Trainbearer** *Lesbia victoriae*, (above right) **Paramo Pipits** *Anthus bogotensis*, **Andean Lapwing** *Vanellus resplendens* (above left) and a pair of **Silvery Grebes** *Podiceps occipitalis*. We had lunch in an old hacienda complete with period furniture (above left and right) which was in the middle of the **Paramo**. It started with an excellent soup washed down with herbal tea which was supposed to help with altitude acclimatization, especially when laced with the local fire water! It proved an excellent day's birding. That evening we had supper in **Hunter's** and were joined by **Justin Kerr-Smiley**, who had flown out to look after his sick father. He spoke good Spanish and was a great help translating the menu.

Monday 26th November

Tony and **Hilary**, the UK party, said good bye to the Galapagos party. The pair then packed their kit and took a taxi to the Cable Car on the other side of the city. This went up to 4,000+ metres and had wonderful views across **Quito**. They had a good search for a Condor but only spotted a **Variable Hawk** *Buteo polyosoma*. There were very few birds on the summit. On their way back to the hotel they called into the **Clinica Pinchincha** to see **Simon Kerr-Smiley**, who was looking better, but had been very ill. The high altitude and thin air did nothing to help his condition.

The UK party left for **Quito Airport** where Iberian A340s had again been granted permission to land even though the runway is too short to cope with emergencies. There they had a 3+ hour wait before boarding. They flew via **Guayaquil**, where they had to get off the plane whilst it refuelled; this involved all the tedium of security again and another wait of an hour.

The Galapagos party flew to the islands also via **Guayaquil**.

We saw or heard 289 species in the Andes and 280 species in the Amazon and 57 on the Galapagos Islands. A total of nearly 600 species (some species were seen in the Amazon and Andes), a record for an AOS expedition.

Participants - Photograph below



Front row—Tony Lancaster, Hilary Nash, Timothy Hallchurch, Patricia Davies, Simon Kerr-Smiley, Catherine Shephard,
Back row—Charles Hesse, Jan Stokes Carter, Lynne Millard, Julien Crisp, Ray Marsh
Driver – Jorge Ledesma (took picture)

Sadly Simon became ill in the early part of the

and was only able to take part expedition



Menu at the cable car to the top of the mountain in Quito. We decided to lunch elsewhere!

Galapagos Islands

Jan Stokes Carter and Tim Hallchurch

With Hilary on his way home Jan kept a diary with the events of the Galapagos trip.

Monday 25th November 2007

A lie in until 6am, what a treat. Bad nights sleep again. Aeroplanes, disco, traffic etc. Charley joined us at 8am and we took the coach to the airport to get on an A320 for the Galapagos via Guayaquil on the Pacific coast. Aircraft cannot take off from Quito with a full fuel load due to the height of nearly 10,000 ft and have to stop to refuel. We were met by our guide, an arrogant man who firstly did not know how long we had come for but also knew very little about birds. However Charley, despite his first trip to the islands was able to identify anything we saw.

We were then shocked at the size of the boat we had chartered. I had booked a 25 berth boat that we were to share with another group but I received an email just as we were leaving the UK saying that we had a boat to ourselves. It turned out to be originally a five berth yacht with 10 bunks crammed in with absolutely no room for kit. Julian and Lynn decided to stay on land and join us each day that meant that we had to reorganise the schedule and that required getting new authority to visit islands. The good thing was that the guide, that the Galapagos authorities make you take with you, also stayed on land. All he seemed to want to do was to fleece us of money at any excuse, but that is another story.



The plane landed at the airport on Baltra Island and we transferred by bus to the jetty where we boarded the yacht. Galapagos Doves were seen round the café at the jetty while seals had taken over all the seats in the shelter. After our disappointment and phone calls to Jane Lyons on the mainland for help we decided to make the most of it and enjoy the rest of the trip. At least mobile phones work in the Galapagos whereas they will not connect on the mainland.

Tuesday 27th November

After breakfast of fruit, pancakes and maple syrup to took off for the small island of **Mosquera** having the island to ourselves and our first experience of the very tame wildlife. We were introduced to **Lava Lizards** probably *Tropidurus grayi*, **Marine Iguana** *Amblyrhynchus cristatus*, **Galapagos Sea-lion** *Zalophus wollebaeki*, **Fur Seal** *Arctocephalus galapagoensis*, **Pacific Green**



Turtle *Chelonia mydas agassi*, **Sally Lightfoot Crabs** *Grapsus grapsus* and **Manta Rays** *Manta birostris*.

The birds included **Lava Heron** *Butorides Sundevalli*, **Lava Gull** *Larus fuliginosus*, **Semipalmated Sandpiper** *Calidris pusilla*, **Whimbrel** *Numenius phaeopus*, **Wandering Tattler** *Tringa incana*, **Sanderling** *Calidris alba*, **Yellow Warbler** *Dendroica petechia*, while at sea we had a first sightings of **Blue-footed Boobies** *Sula nebouxii*, **Magnificent Fregata** *magnificens* and **Great Fregata** *minor*, **Frigate Birds**, **Red-billed Tropicbird** *Phaethon aethereus*, **Brown Noddy** *Anous stolidus*, **Galapagos Pterodroma** *phaeopygia* and other **Petrels** and **Shearwaters**.

Our guide Charley Hesse from Yorkshire (above)

The island is about 500 by 200 yards and is mostly lava rock with beautiful pale sand. It was very peaceful and with no restrictions as to where we could go was very relaxing.

Pictures of some of the Mosquera Island wildlife:



Lava Heron *Butorides Sundevalli*,



Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*,



Yellow Warbler *Warbler Dendroica petechia*



Lava Gull *Larus fuliginosus*,



Sally Lightfoot Crab *Grapsus grapsus*



Galapagos Seal pup *Zalophus wollebaeki*.

The Lava Gull is the worlds rarest gull.

On the 28th November we also went ashore on a beach on Santa Cruz to see a small lagoon that held a few **Greater Flamingos** *Phoenicopterus ruber*, **White-cheeked Pintail** *Anas bahamensis* duck and a few more waders including the ones we had seen on **Masquera**. Plus **Sanderling** *Calidris alba*, **Ruddy Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres* and **Semipalmated Plover** *Haematopus palliatus*. While walking along the beach we saw our first close up flights of **Brown Pelican** *Pelecanus occidentalis*, **Magnificent Frigatebirds** *Fregata magnificens* and other seabirds. Jan sat quietly by a lagoon where a **Great Blue Heron** *Ardea herodias* walked within a couple of feet of her as she sat while those of us the beach had to almost duck when the Pelicans flew over our heads.

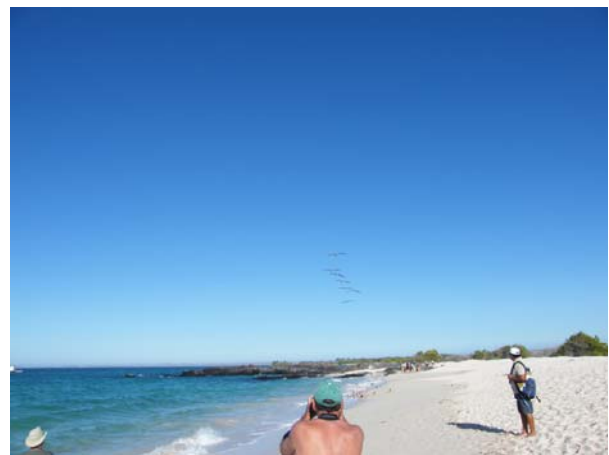


Greater (Caribbean) Flamingo *Phoenicopterus ruber* **Ruddy Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres* and **Sanderling** *Calidris alba*



Semipalmated Plover *Charadrius semipalmatus*

Our boat and home for a week.



American Oystercatcher *Haematopus palliatus*

Members of the party watching a squadron of Pelicans.

Wednesday 28th November

We sailed round to North Plaza and then landed at South Plaza to snorkel with the seals. Then a walk on a path marked by black and white posts between huge cacti plants and fascinatingly shaped volcanic rocks. Here were **Land** and **Marine Iguanas** as well as the other wildlife that we had seen the day before. We had close encounters with nesting **Red-billed Tropicbirds** and **Swallow-tailed Gulls**.



Red-billed Tropicbird *Phaethon aethereus* on its nest.



Prickly Pear Cactus Trees *Opuntia spp*



The rugged coast of North Plaza.



Land Iguana *Conolophus subcristatus*



Marine Iguanas *Amblyrhyncus cristatus*



Jan, Patricia and Lynne posing with a **Lava Gull** *Larus fuliginosus*

Thursday 29th November

North Seymour Island

A very different landscape, covered in leafless **Scent Trees** as it was the dry season for this island. This is the best place to get acquainted with the nesting **Blue-footed Boobies**, **Great** and **Magnificent Frigate** birds and our first close encounters with a Darwin finch. First the **Cactus Finch** and then the **Medium Ground Finch**. It was actually the Mockingbird species differences that inspired Charles Darwin and not the finches. When Darwin returned to London none of the finch skins had been labelled so he didn't know which Island they have come from.



Cactus Finch *Geospiza scandens*



Medium Ground Finch *Geospiza fortis*



Great Frigatebird *Fregata minor*



Blue-footed Booby *Sula nebouxii* displaying



Blue-footed Booby *Sula nebouxii* on nest



Magnificent Frigatebird *Fregata magnificens* displaying

On the afternoon of 29th November we also visited **Black Turtle Cove** on Santa Cruz. It was one of the few islands that Darwin did not visit but the island now has the capital of the islands, Puerto Ayora, and most of the population. The cove is surrounded by three species of mangrove trees (red, white and black) and the shallow water is home to **Spotted Eagle Rays** *Aetobatus narinari* and **White-tipped Sharks** *Triaenodon obesus*.



Here a harmless **White-tipped Reef Shark** *Triaenodon obesus* swims just beneath the surface while a Brown Pelican *Pelecanus accidentalis* roosts on the mangroves.

30th November 2007

Spent the day on Santa Cruz first walking along another black and white post marked path. The trees were bigger as there is more precipitation on Santa Cruz due to the volcano that is hidden by clouds most of the day and the water is mostly from the mist. Saw a **Woodpecker Finch** *Camarhynchus pallidus* and a noisy **Mockingbird** *Geopiza fortis* that was very inquisitive and wanted to show us that we were in his territory and called within inches of us. There were more Iguanas but no more bird species.



Santa Cruz Mockingbird *Geopiza fortis*



Part of Santa Cruz showing the green vegetation due to the mist that descends on this part of the island (*above*).

Whereas the next island is a virtual desert. A **Medium Ground Finch** *Geopiza fortis* visited us on the boat (*right*).

There are only about 55 species of birds regularly seen on the Galapagos, mostly sea birds and migrant waders. On the land there are few passerines: 13 species of Darwin finches, **Yellow Warbler** *Dendroica petechia*, **Galapagos Flycatcher** *Myiarchus magnirostris*, **Vermillion Flycatcher** *Pyrocephalus rubinus* and **Galapagos Martin** *Progne modesta*, 4 species of Mockingbirds *Nesomimus spp* and finally **Galapagos Dove** *Zenaidura macroura galapagoensis*. There are two raptors **Galapagos Barn Owl** *Tyto punctatissima* and **Galapagos Hawk** *Buteo galapagoensis*. The Darwin finches are difficult to tell apart especially the ground finches where the bill size is the only way of telling them apart.

1st December 2007

The day was spent on Santa Cruz touring in a bus. Our first stop was the volcano crater in the Scalesia Forest. Here the long extinct volcano is normally clouded in mist with a wet drizzle giving lush vegetation compared with near desert like vegetation less than two miles away. We saw possibly four species of Darwin finches including **Warbler** *Certhidea olivacea* and **Vegetarian Finch** *Camarhynchus crassirostris*.



Looking into the extinct volcano on Santa Cruz



Warbler Finch *Certhidea olivacea*



Vermillion Flycatcher *Pyrocephalus rubinus*



Galapagos Dove *Zenaida galapagoensis*

We then drove on to the Reserva Tortugas el Chato at Rancho Premicias or Tortoise reserve. More Darwin finches and a number of **Galapagos Flycatchers** *Myiarchus magnirostris* but mostly tortoises.



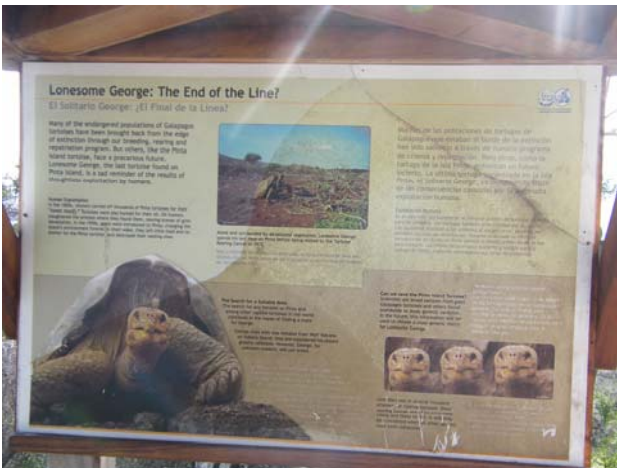
Then on to the capital that houses the Charles Darwin Research Centre for lunch is a very indifferent back street café that was designed to give the tour guide the maximum profit by paying for the cheapest food when there are good cafes and restaurants a few streets away.

Charles Darwin Research Centre and Galapagos National Park Headquarters

The Centre is a short walk from the town centre and has breeding programmes for the islands tortoises and lizards as well as carrying out research on the evolution of the island species. Here is the home of the last Pinto Island tortoise *Geochelone elephantopus abingdoni* called “Lonesome George” although since our visit he has bred with one of two females from a neighbouring island so at last some of his genes may have been saved.



The Centre also has displays showing the evolution of the Galapagos species in English and Spanish and has walks round the breeding pens of the various land animals.



Not far from the Research Centre fish are landed, gutted and sold. This draws an amazing number of sea birds and one can see most of the islands species without having to travel any further. The birds included **Brown Pelican** *Pelicanus occidentalis*, **Great Blue Heron** *Ardea Herodias*, **Lava Gull** *Larus fuliginosus* and **Magnificent Frigate Birds** *Frigata Magnificens*.



2nd December 2007

Today we sailed to the Bartolomé Island. This area is especially beautiful and is the area used in many films and travel programmes. Here we were to swim with the **Galapagos Penguin** *Spheniscus mendiculus*. The sea is very cold, despite being less than 20 miles from the equator due to the cold south Pacific currents and it was necessary to wear wet suits.



Bartolomé Island and Pinnacle Rock



Members snorkelling near a Galapagos Penguin



Galapagos Penguin *Spheniscus mendiculus*



Kate Shephard examining the lava flows

The lava flows are fairly recent and have not yet been covered with vegetation. The volcano last erupted about 171 years ago and is a minefield for walkers with deep fissures and uneven surfaces. It is starting to be populated with a lava cactus (*right*).



a barracuda from a Nazca (Masked) Booby *Sula dactylatra* (*above*). Many **Brown Noddies** *Anous stolidus* were pictured flying alongside the boat (*right*).

On the boat ride back to Santa Cruz we saw rafts of Petrels, Shearwaters and both **Red-necked** *Phalaropus lobatus* and **Red (Grey)** *Phalaropus fulcarius* **Phalaropes**. A **Magnificent Frigatebird** tried to steal



3rd December 2007

After our last night on the boat we flew back to mainland Ecuador and back to our Hotel Quito in Quito and a comfortable bed.

Next morning we had time to take the ski lift up the mountain to look down on the city and to admire the snow capped peaks that surround the city. Tim Hallchurch and Jan Stokes Carter relax at the top of the ski lift.



We then flew back to London via Madrid. Despite the problems of the boat and our guide, it was a trip of a lifetime.

We only saw 57 species of birds on the Galapagos but most were unique to the islands as were the mammals, tortoises and iguanas.



Darwin Finches.

During the week's voyage, we saw 10 of the 13 species. The 13 species of finch, belong to 4 genera. These finches all evolved from a single species similar to the **Blue-Black Grassquit Finch** *Volatina Jacarina* commonly found along the Pacific Coast of South America. Once in the Galapagos Islands the finches adapted to their habitat and the size and shape of their bills reflect their specialisations. **Vegetarian Finch** *Camarhynchus crassirostris* and Ground Finches all have crushing bills while the tree finches have a grasping bill and **Cactus Finch** *Geospiza scandens*, **Warbler Finch** *Certhidea olivacea* and **Woodpecker Finch** *Camarhynchus pallidus* have probing bills.

Woodpecker Finch *Camarhynchus pallidus* using tool

All of *Darwin's Finches* are sparrow sized and similar in appearance with grey, brown, black or olive feathers. They have short rounded wings and a rounded tail that often appears cocked to one side. Most male finches mature to a black colour, while the females mature to a drab greyish colour. Exceptions are made for the **Vegetarian** *Camarhynchus crassirostris* and tree finches. The males never become completely black rather they have a black head, neck and upper breast. **Warbler** *Certhidea olivacea*, **Woodpecker** *Camarhynchus pallidus* and **Mangrove Finches** *Camarhynchus heliobates* have more of an olive colour. The Darwin finches show how "bill adept" the **Cactus Finch**, *geospiza scandens* can be when seen extracting the pulp from a prickly pear cactus, using their long, slender bills. While the **Large Ground Finch**, *Geospiza magnirostris* has the biggest bill that cracks hard seed, the **Warbler Finch**, *Certhidea olivacea*, uses its small bill to eats insects.

The most cunning display comes from the **Sharp Beaked Ground Finch**, *Geospiza difficilis*, that steals the booby's eggs from unguarded nests. To crack open the egg, the finch uses its beak to anchor its body then slams the egg into a rock repeatedly like a powerful kick boxer. They are also crafty enough to roll eggs downhill to achieve the same results. The **Vampire Finch**, *Geospiza difficilis septentrionalis* often attacks the boobies, puncturing the skin beneath the feathers with its sharp beak and then drinking the oozing blood.

The talented bird among Darwin's finches is the **Woodpecker Finch**, *Camarhynchus pallidus*. Nicknamed the "carpenter finch" the bird uses twigs to dislodge grubs or insects from trees. The finch selects a twig or a cactus spine according to shape and size. Either way, a bird will carry its "tool" around if it does a particularly good job. We observed this finch using a "tool" on Santa Cruz.

Darwin's **Large Ground-finch**, *Geospiza magnirostris magnirostris* is possibly extinct and would be the 14th. There is a 15th finch, the **Cocos Island Finch**, *Pinaroloxias inornata* found on Cocus Island miles from the Galapagos.

Birds seen on the Galapagos Islands

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>Galapagos Penguin <i>Spheniscus mendiculus</i>
 Cape Petrel <i>Daption capense</i>
 Galapagos Petrel <i>Pterodroma phaeopygia</i>
 Wedge-tailed Shearwater <i>Puffinus pacificus</i>
 Galapagos Shearwater <i>Puffinus subalaris</i>
 White-vented Storm-Petrel <i>Oceanites gracilis</i>
 Wedge Rumped Storm Petrel <i>Oceanodroma tethys</i>
 Dark Rumped Petrel <i>Pterodroma phaeopygia</i>
 Madeiran (Band Rumped) Storm Petrel <i>Oceanodroma castro</i>
 Red-billed Tropicbird <i>Phaethon aethreus</i>
 Brown Pelican <i>Pelicanus occidentalis</i>
 Blue-footed Booby <i>Sula nebouxii</i>
 Nazca Booby <i>Sula dactylatra</i>
 Brown Noddy <i>Anous stolidus</i>
 Magnificent Frigatebird <i>Fregata magnificens</i>
 Great Frigatebird <i>Fregata minor</i>
 Great Blue Heron <i>Ardea herodias</i>
 Yellow-crowned Night Heron <i>Nycticorax violaceus</i>
 Cattle Egret <i>Bubulcus ibis</i>
 Great Egret <i>Ardea alba</i>
 Striated Heron <i>Butorides striata</i>
 Lava Heron <i>Butorides sundevalli</i>
 Caribbean (Greater) Flamingo <i>Phoenicopterus ruber</i>
 Black-bellied Whistling-Duck <i>Dendrocygna autumnalis</i>
 White-cheeked Pintail <i>Anas bahamensis</i>
 Common Moorhen <i>Gallinula chloropus</i>
 American Oystercatcher <i>Heamatopus paliatas</i>
 Black-necked Stilt <i>Himantopus mexicanus</i>
 Least Sandpiper <i>Calidris minutilla</i>
 Spotted Sandpiper <i>Actitis macularia</i>
 Semipalmated Plover <i>Charadrius semipalmatus</i>
 Black Bellied (Grey) Plover <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>
 Whimbrel <i>Numenius phaeopus</i>
 Wandering Tattler <i>Heteroscelus incanus</i>
 Ruddy Turnstone <i>Arenaria interpres</i>
 Sanderling <i>Calidris alba</i></p> | <p>Red-necked Phalarope <i>Phalaropus lobatus</i>
 Red (Grey) Phalarope <i>Phalaropus fulicarius</i>
 Lava Gull <i>Larus fuliginosus</i>
 Swallow-tailed Gull <i>Larus furcatus</i>
 Common Tern <i>Sterna hirundo</i>
 Galapagos Dove <i>Zenaida galapagoensis</i>
 Smooth-billed Ani <i>Crotophaga ani</i>
 Vermilion Flycatcher <i>Pyrocephalus rubinus</i>
 Galapagos Flycatcher <i>Myiarchus magnirostris</i>
 Galapagos Mockingbird <i>Nesomimus parvulus</i>
 Yellow Warbler <i>Dendroica petechia</i>
 Large Ground-Finch <i>Geospiza magnirostris</i>
 Medium Ground-Finch <i>Geospiza fortis</i>
 Small Ground-Finch <i>Geospiza fuliginosa</i>
 Common Cactus-Finch <i>Geospiza scandens</i>
 Vegetarian Finch <i>Camarhynchus (Platyspiza) crassirostris</i>
 Large Tree-Finch <i>Camarhynchus psittacula</i>
 Small Tree-Finch <i>Camarhynchus parvulus</i>
 Medium Tree-Finch <i>Camarhynchus pauper</i>

 Woodpecker Finch <i>Camarhynchus (Cactospiza)</i>
 Warbler Finch <i>Certhidea olivacea</i></p> |
|--|--|

Galapagos Itinerary

- 26th November - Balta Island & Bachas Beach
- 27th November - Mosquera Island
- 28th November - Plazas
- 29th November - Seymore North Island & Black Turtle Cove, Santa Cruz Island
- 30th November - Cerro Dragon, Santa Cruz Island
- 1st December - Highlands, El Chato & Charles Darwin Research Centre, Santa Cruz
- 2nd December - Santiago Island & Bartolome Island
- 3rd December - Baltra Island to Quito



Galapagos Shearwater *Puffinus subalaris* **Least Sandpiper** *Calidris minutilla*, **Great Blue Heron** *Ardea herodias*

Galapagos

26th November - Balta Island & Bachas Beach

27th November - Mosquera Island

28th November - Plazas

29th November - Seymore North Island & Black Turtle Cove, Santa Cruz Island

30th November - Cerro Dragon, Santa Cruz Island

1st December - Highlands, El Chato & Charles Darwin Research Centre, Santa Cruz

2nd December - Santiago Island & Bartolome Island

3rd December - Baltra Island to Quito

Common Name	Scientific Name	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	23	24	2	3	4
Rufous-bellied Seedsnipe	<i>Attagis gayi</i>		P										
Andean Gull	<i>Larus serranus</i>												A
Rock Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>								Z				
Band-tailed Pigeon	<i>Patagioenas fasciata</i>			-Y	G				Z	I	B		
Plumbeous Pigeon	<i>Patagioenas plumbea</i>				Gh				Zh		B		
Ruddy Pigeon	<i>Patagioenas subvinacea</i>						S						
Eared Dove	<i>Zenaida auriculata</i>	Q		Y								O	A
Black-winged Ground-Dove	<i>Metriopelia melanoptera</i>												A
White-tipped Dove	<i>Leptotila verreauxi</i>					Mh	S				B		
Pallid Dove	<i>Leptotila pallida</i>							R					
White-throated Quail-Dove	<i>Geotrygon frenata</i>							R			Bh		
Maroon-tailed Parakeet	<i>Pyrrhura melanura</i>						S			I			
Pacific Parrotlet	<i>Forpus coelestis</i>						S						
Red-billed Parrot	<i>Pionus sordidus</i>				G				Z		B		
Bronze-winged Parrot	<i>Pionus chalcopterus</i>						S			I			
Squirrel Cuckoo	<i>Piaya cayana</i>						S			I	B		
Smooth-billed Ani	<i>Crotophaga ani</i>									I			
Striped Cuckoo	<i>Tapera naevia</i>						Sh						
Common Potoo	<i>Nyctibius griseus</i>				Gh								
Rufous-bellied Nighthawk	<i>Lurocalis rufiventris</i>				G				Z				
Spot-fronted Swift	<i>Cypseloides cherriei</i>				G								
White-collared Swift	<i>Streptoprocne zonaris</i>	P	-Y		G	M	S	R			B		A
Gray-rumped Swift	<i>Chaetura cinereiventris</i>					M	S						
White-whiskered Hermit	<i>Phaethornis yaruqui</i>					M	S	R					
Tawny-bellied Hermit	<i>Phaethornis syrmatorophorus</i>				G								
Stripe-throated Hermit	<i>Phaethornis strigularis</i>						S						
White-necked Jacobin	<i>Florisuga mellivora</i>									I			
Green Violet-ear	<i>Colibri thalassinus</i>		P										
Sparkling Violet-ear	<i>Colibri coruscans</i>								Z			O	A
Green Thorntail	<i>Discosura conversii</i>					M		R					
Green-crowned Woodnymph	<i>Thalurania fannyi</i>					M		R					
Violet-bellied Hummingbird	<i>Damophila julie</i>					M							
Rufous-tailed Hummingbird	<i>Amazilia tzacatl</i>				G	M		R	Z	I	B		
Andean Emerald	<i>Agyrtia franciae</i>					M		R	Z	I			
Speckled Hummingbird	<i>Adelomyia melanogenys</i>				G				Z		B		
Fawn-breasted Brilliant	<i>Heliodoxa rubinoides</i>				G				Z				
Empress Brilliant	<i>Heliodoxa imperatrix</i>				G				Z				
Green-crowned Brilliant	<i>Heliodoxa jacula</i>					M		R					
Buff-tailed Coronet	<i>Boissonneaua flavescens</i>				G						B		
Velvet-purple Coronet	<i>Boissonneaua jardini</i>				G				Z				
Shining Sunbeam	<i>Aglaeactis cupripennis</i>		P	Y									A
Ecuadorian Hillstar	<i>Oreotrochilus chimborazo</i>		P										A
Brown Inca	<i>Coeligena wilsoni</i>				G				Z				
Collared Inca	<i>Coeligena torquata</i>										B		
Buff-winged Starfrontlet	<i>Coeligena lutetiae</i>			Y									
Sword-billed Hummingbird	<i>Ensifera ensifera</i>			Y									
Great Sapphirewing	<i>Pterophanes cyanopterus</i>		P	Y									
Giant Hummingbird	<i>Patagona gigas</i>												A
Sapphire-vented Puffleg	<i>Eriocnemis luciani</i>			Y									
Golden-breasted Puffleg	<i>Eriocnemis mosquera</i>			Y									
Purple-bibbed Whitetip	<i>Urosticte benjamini</i>								Z				
Booted Racket-tail	<i>Ocreatus underwoodii</i>				G				Z				
Black-tailed Trainbearer	<i>Lesbia victoriae</i>	Q											A
Tyrian Metaltail	<i>Metallura tyrianthina</i>			Y									A
Viridian Metaltail	<i>Metallura williami</i>		P										
Violet-tailed Sylph	<i>Agelaiocercus coelestis</i>				G				Z				
Purple-crowned Fairy	<i>Heliothryx barroti</i>					M							
Purple-throated Woodstar	<i>Calliphlox mitchellii</i>				G				Z				
Little Woodstar	<i>Chaetocercus bombus</i>								Z				

Common Name	Scientific Name	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	23	24	2	3	4
Masked Trogon	<i>Trogon personatus</i>				Gh				Zh				
Golden-headed Quetzal	<i>Pharomachrus auriceps</i>				G				Z				
Green Kingfisher	<i>Chloroceryle americana</i>						S						
Rufous Motmot	<i>Baryphthengus martii</i>					M							
Broad-billed Motmot	<i>Electron platyrhynchum</i>					M							
Red-headed Barbet	<i>Eubucco bourcierii</i>										B		
Toucan Barbet	<i>Semnormis ramphastinus</i>				Gh				Z		Bh		
Crimson-rumped Toucanet	<i>Aulacorhynchus haematopygus</i>								Z				
Plate-billed Mountain-Toucan	<i>Andigena laminirostris</i>										B		
Choco Toucan	<i>Ramphastos brevis</i>					Mh							
Olivaceous Piculet	<i>Picumnus olivaceus</i>						S						
Black-cheeked Woodpecker	<i>Melanerpes pucherani</i>						S	R					
Yellow-vented Woodpecker	<i>Veniliornis dignus</i>				G								
Smoky-brown Woodpecker	<i>Veniliornis fumigatus</i>				G	M							
Red-rumped Woodpecker	<i>Veniliornis kirkii</i>						S						
Crimson-mantled Woodpecker	<i>Piculus rivolii</i>			Y	G						B		
Powerful Woodpecker	<i>Campephilus pollens</i>				G								
Guayaquil Woodpecker	<i>Campephilus guayaquilensis</i>						Sh						
Bar-winged Cinclodes	<i>Cinclodes fuscus</i>		P										A
Stout-billed Cinclodes	<i>Cinclodes excelsior</i>		P										A
Pacific Hornero	<i>Fumarius cinnamomeus</i>		P				S						
Andean Tit-Spinetail	<i>Leptasthenura andicola</i>		P										
Rufous Spinetail	<i>Synallaxis unirufa</i>										B		
Azara's Spinetail	<i>Synallaxis azarae</i>				Gh						B		Ah
Slaty Spinetail	<i>Synallaxis brachyura</i>				Gh		Sh		Z				
Red-faced Spinetail	<i>Cranioleuca erythroptera</i>								Z		B		
Many-striped Canastero	<i>Asthenes flammulata</i>		P										A
Spotted Barbtail	<i>Premnoplex brunnescens</i>										B		
Pearled Treerunner	<i>Margarornis squamiger</i>				G						B		
Streaked Xenops	<i>Xenops rutilans</i>						S						
Scaly-throated Foliage-gleaner	<i>Anabacerthia variegaticeps</i>				G								
Streaked Tuftedcheek	<i>Pseudocolaptes boissonneautii</i>				G						B		
Lineated Foliage-gleaner	<i>Syndactyla subalaris</i>				Gh	M			Zh		B		
Buff-fronted Foliage-gleaner	<i>Philydor rufus</i>					M							
Tyrannine Woodcreeper	<i>Dendrocincla tyrannina</i>				G								
Wedge-billed Woodcreeper	<i>Glyphorhynchus spirurus</i>						S						
Strong-billed Woodcreeper	<i>Xiphocolaptes promeropirhynchus</i>								Z		B		
Black-striped Woodcreeper	<i>Xiphorhynchus lachrymosus</i>						S						
Spotted Woodcreeper	<i>Xiphorhynchus erythrogygius</i>				G		S						
Montane Woodcreeper	<i>Lepidocolaptes lacrymiger</i>				G				Z		B		
Western Slaty-Antshrike	<i>Thamnophilus atrinucha</i>						Sh						
Checker-throated Antwren	<i>Myrmotherula fulviventris</i>						S						
White-flanked Antwren	<i>Myrmotherula axillaris</i>						S						
Dot-winged Antwren	<i>Microrhopias quixensis</i>						S						
Chestnut-backed Antbird	<i>Myrmeciza exsul</i>						Sh						
Rufous-breasted Antthrush	<i>Formicarius rufipectus</i>										B		
Giant Antpitta	<i>Grallaria gigantea</i>								Z				
Chestnut-crowned Antpitta	<i>Grallaria ruficapilla</i>			Yh							B		
Yellow-breasted Antpitta	<i>Grallaria flavotincta</i>				Gh				Z				
Rufous Antpitta	<i>Grallaria rufula</i>			Yh									
Tawny Antpitta	<i>Grallaria quitensis</i>		P	Yh									Ah
Elegant Crescent-chest	<i>Melanopareia elegans</i>						S						
Blackish Tapaculo	<i>Scytalopus latrans</i>			Yh							B		
Nariño Tapaculo	<i>Scytalopus vicini</i>				Gh				Zh				
Spillman's Tapaculo	<i>Scytalopus spillmanni</i>				Gh						B		
Paramo Tapaculo	<i>Scytalopus canus</i>		Ph										
Yellow Tyrannulet	<i>Capsiempis flaveola</i>									I			
Greenish Elaenia	<i>Myiopagis viridicata</i>									I			
Yellow-bellied Elaenia	<i>Elaenia flavogaster</i>					M	S						

Common Name	Scientific Name	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	23	24	2	3	4
White-crested Elaenia	<i>Elaenia albiceps</i>										B	O	
Lesser Elaenia	<i>Elaenia chiriquensis</i>								Z				
Torrent Tyrannulet	<i>Serpophaga cinerea</i>									I			
Streak-necked Flycatcher	<i>Mionectes striaticollis</i>				G	M					B		
Slaty-capped Flycatcher	<i>Leptopogon superciliaris</i>						S						
Sooty-headed Tyrannulet	<i>Phyllomyias griseiceps</i>						S						
Golden-faced Tyrannulet	<i>Zimmerius chrysops</i>					M							
White-throated Tyrannulet	<i>Mecocerculus leucophrys</i>			Y									
White-tailed Tyrannulet	<i>Mecocerculus poecilocercus</i>				G						B		
Rufous-winged Tyrannulet	<i>Mecocerculus calopterus</i>										B		
Tufted Tit-Tyrant	<i>Anairetes parulus</i>												A
Scale-crested Pygmy-Tyrant	<i>Lophotriccus pileatus</i>					Mh	Sh			I			
Common Tody-Flycatcher	<i>Todirostrum cinereum</i>						S						
Ornate Flycatcher	<i>Myiobicus ornatus</i>					M			Z				
Flavescent Flycatcher	<i>Myiophobus flavicans</i>				G								
Ruddy-tailed Flycatcher	<i>Terentotriccus erythrurus</i>						S						
Sulphur-rumped Flycatcher	<i>Myiobius sulphureipygius</i>						S						
Cinnamon Flycatcher	<i>Pyrrhomyias cinnamomea</i>										B		
Smoke-colored Pewee	<i>Contopus fumigatus</i>				G				Z		B		
Western Wood-Pewee	<i>Contopus sordidulus</i>									I			
Black Phoebe	<i>Sayornis nigricans</i>			-Y						I	B		
Vermilion Flycatcher	<i>Pyrocephalus rubinus</i>	Q											
Brown-backed Chat-Tyrant	<i>Ochthoeca fumicolor</i>		P										A
Paramo Ground-Tyrant	<i>Muscisaxicola alpina</i>		P										A
Masked Water-Tyrant	<i>Fluvicola nengeta</i>						S						
Bright-rumped Attila	<i>Attila spadiceus</i>				Gh								
Dusky-capped Flycatcher	<i>Myiarchus tuberculifer</i>					M							
Social Flycatcher	<i>Myiozetetes similis</i>						S						
Golden-crowned Flycatcher	<i>Myiodynastes chrysocephalus</i>				G				Z				
Tropical Kingbird	<i>Tyrannus melancholicus</i>			-Y	G	M	S			I	B		
Black-and-white Becard	<i>Pachyramphus albogriseus</i>										B		
One-colored Becard	<i>Pachyramphus homochrous</i>						S			I			
Masked Tityra	<i>Tityra semifasciata</i>						S						
Red-crested Cotinga	<i>Ampelion rubrocristata</i>								Z		B		
Andean Cock-of-the-rock	<i>Rupicola peruviana</i>								Z				
White-bearded Manakin	<i>Manacus manacus</i>						S						
Golden-winged Manakin	<i>Masius chrysopterus</i>				G								
Club-winged Manakin	<i>Machaeropterus deliciosus</i>				G								
Blue-and-white Swallow	<i>Notiochelidon cyanoleuca</i>	Q			G	M	S		Z	I	B		
Brown-bellied Swallow	<i>Notiochelidon murina</i>		P	Y									A
Southern Rough-winged Swallow	<i>Stelgidopteryx ruficollis</i>						S			I			
White-capped Dipper	<i>Cinclus leucocephalus</i>			-Y									
Rufous Wren	<i>Cinnycerthia unirufa</i>			Y									
Sepia-brown Wren	<i>Cinnycerthia olivascens</i>										B		
Plain-tailed Wren	<i>Thryothorus euophrys</i>										B		
Bay Wren	<i>Thryothorus nigricapillus</i>						Sh			I			
House Wren	<i>Troglodytes aedon</i>				G		S		Zh		B		
Mountain Wren	<i>Troglodytes solstitialis</i>				Gh								
Grass Wren	<i>Cistothorus platensis</i>		P										A
White-breasted Wood-Wren	<i>Henicorhina leucosticta</i>					M							
Gray-breasted Wood-Wren	<i>Henicorhina leucophrys</i>				G	M			Zh		B		
Southern Nightingale-Wren	<i>Microcerculus marginatus</i>						Sh						
Andean Solitaire	<i>Myadestes ralloides</i>				Gh				Zh				
Slaty-backed Nightingale-Thrush	<i>Catharus fuscater</i>				Gh								
Swainson's Thrush	<i>Catharus ustulatus</i>				G						B		
Great Thrush	<i>Turdus fuscater</i>		P	Y							B		A
Glossy-black Thrush	<i>Turdus serranus</i>										B		
Ecuadorian Thrush	<i>Turdus maculirostris</i>							R					
Turquoise Jay	<i>Cyanolyca turcosa</i>										B		

Common Name	Scientific Name	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	23	24	2	3	4
Brown-capped Vireo	<i>Vireo leucophrys</i>				G						B		
Red-eyed Vireo	<i>Vireo olivaceus</i>					M				I	B		
Tropical Parula	<i>Parula pitiayumi</i>					M		R					
Blackburnian Warbler	<i>Dendroica fusca</i>				G	M		R	Z		B		
Blackpoll Warbler	<i>Dendroica striata</i>					M		R			B		
Olive-crowned Yellowthroat	<i>Geothlypis semiflava</i>				Gh								
Slate-throated Whitestart	<i>Myioborus miniatus</i>				G	M		R	Z		B		
Spectacled Whitestart	<i>Myioborus melanocephalus</i>		P	Y							B		
Choco Warbler	<i>Basileuterus chlorophrys</i>					M							
Black-crested Warbler	<i>Basileuterus nigrocristatus</i>			Y									
Russet-crowned Warbler	<i>Basileuterus coronatus</i>				Gh						B		
Three-striped Warbler	<i>Basileuterus tristriatus</i>								Z				
Buff-rumped Warbler	<i>Basileuterus fulvicauda</i>						S						
Bananaquit	<i>Coereba flaveola</i>					M	S						
Cinereous Conebill	<i>Conirostrum cinereum</i>			Y									A
Capped Conebill	<i>Conirostrum albifrons</i>				G						B		
Grass-green Tanager	<i>Chlorornis riefferii</i>										B		
Dusky Bush-Tanager	<i>Chlorospingus semifuscus</i>				G						B		
Yellow-throated Bush-Tanager	<i>Chlorospingus flavigularis</i>					M							
Western Hemispingus	<i>Hemispingus ochraceus</i>										B		
Rufous-chested Tanager	<i>Thlypopsis ornata</i>										B		
White-shouldered Tanager	<i>Tachyphonus luctuosus</i>						S						
Tawny-crested Tanager	<i>Tachyphonus delatrii</i>						S						
White-lined Tanager	<i>Tachyphonus rufus</i>						S	R					
Summer Tanager	<i>Piranga rubra</i>						S						
Lemon-rumped Tanager	<i>Ramphocelus icteronotus</i>					M	S	R		I	B		
Blue-gray Tanager	<i>Thraupis episcopus</i>					M		R		I	B		
Blue-capped Tanager	<i>Thraupis cyanocephala</i>				G								
Palm Tanager	<i>Thraupis palmarum</i>					M	S	R					
Hooded Mountain-Tanager	<i>Buthraupis montana</i>			Y									
Scarlet-bellied Mountain-Tanager	<i>Anisognathus igniventris</i>			Y									
Blue-winged Mountain-Tanager	<i>Anisognathus somptuosus</i>				G				Z		B		
Fawn-breasted Tanager	<i>Pipraeidea melanonota</i>										B		
Thick-billed Euphonia	<i>Euphonia laniirostris</i>					M		R					
Orange-bellied Euphonia	<i>Euphonia xanthogaster</i>				Gh	M	S		Z				
Gray-and-gold Tanager	<i>Tangara palmeri</i>						S						
Golden Tanager	<i>Tangara arthus</i>				G	M		R	Z		B		
Silver-throated Tanager	<i>Tangara icterocephala</i>					M	S	R					
Flame-faced Tanager	<i>Tangara parzudakii</i>				G	M		R	Z				
Rufous-throated Tanager	<i>Tangara rufigula</i>					M		R					
Bay-headed Tanager	<i>Tangara gyrola</i>					M	S						
Golden-naped Tanager	<i>Tangara ruficervix</i>				G				Z				
Blue-necked Tanager	<i>Tangara cyanicollis</i>					M	S	R					
Beryl-spangled Tanager	<i>Tangara nigroviridis</i>				G				Z		B		
Blue-and-black Tanager	<i>Tangara vassorii</i>										B		
Green Honeycreeper	<i>Chlorophanes spiza</i>					M	S	R					
Swallow-Tanager	<i>Tersina viridis</i>					M							
Tanager Finch	<i>Oreothraupis arremonops</i>										B		
Plumbeous Sierra-Finch	<i>Phrygilus unicolor</i>		P										A
Blue-black Grassquit	<i>Volatinia jacarina</i>						S		Z				
Variable Seedeater	<i>Sporophila corvina</i>					M	S						
Black-and-white Seedeater	<i>Sporophila luctuosa</i>								Z				
Yellow-bellied Seedeater	<i>Sporophila nigricollis</i>				G		S		Z	I	B		
Plain-colored Seedeater	<i>Catamenia inornata</i>												A
Yellow-faced Grassquit	<i>Tiaris olivacea</i>								Z				
White-sided Flowerpiercer	<i>Diglossa albilatera</i>				G								
Glossy Flowerpiercer	<i>Diglossa lafresnayii</i>		P	Y									
Black Flowerpiercer	<i>Diglossa humeralis</i>			Y									A
Masked Flowerpiercer	<i>Diglossopsis cyanea</i>			Y	G						B		

Le Selva Lodge Amazon Rain Forest – November 2007
(Compiled by Tim Hallchurch)

Species	20	21	22	23	24	25
Gray Tinamou <i>Tinamus tao</i>		H				
Cinereous Tinamou <i>Crypturellus cinereus</i>		1	1			
Varigated Tinamou <i>Crypturellus variegatus</i>				H		
Anhinga <i>Anhinga anhinga</i>				4		4
Zigzag Heron <i>Zebrilus undulatus</i>				H		
Snowy Egret <i>Egretta thula</i>		5			2	1
Green Heron <i>Butorides virescens</i>				2		
Striated Heron <i>Butorides striatus</i>			1		3	
Black - Crowned Night <i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>			1	1		
Boat-billed Heron <i>Cochlearius cochlearius</i>		1				
Cattle Egret <i>Bubulcus ibis</i>	1			3	7	1
Cocoi Heron <i>Ardea cocoi</i>		2		2		
Great Egret <i>Ardea Alba</i>				1	1	1
Rufescent Tiger - Heron <i>Tigrisoma lineatum</i>		1			1	
Silvery Grebe <i>Podiceps occipitalis</i>		1				
Green Ibis <i>Mesembrinibis cayennensis</i>		2				
King Vulture <i>Sarcoramphus papa</i>		2				
Greater Yellow – Headed Vulture <i>Cathartes melambrotus</i>		4	2	4	3	
Turkey Vulture <i>Cathartes aura</i>						2
Black Vulture <i>Coragyps atratus</i>	20	20	20	30	30	30
Osprey <i>Pandion Haliaetus</i>			1	1		
Plumbeous Kite <i>Ictinia plumbea</i>						1
Double-toothed Kite <i>Harpagus bidentatus</i>		1				
Slender - Billed Kite <i>Rostrhamus hamatus</i>			1			
Slate – Colored Hawk <i>Leucopternis schistacea</i>		1	1	1	1	
Roadside Hawk <i>Buteo magnirostris</i>			4	1		
Variable Hawk <i>Buteo polyosoma</i>	1					4
Harpy Eagle <i>Harpia harpyja</i>					1	
Ornate Hawk Eagle <i>Spizaetus ornatus</i>					1	
Barred Forest – Falcon <i>Micrastur ruficollis</i>						H
Black Caracara <i>Daptrius ater</i>			1	3		
Yellow - Headed Caracara <i>Milvago chimachima</i>	1			1	2	
Laughing Falcon <i>Herpetotheres cachinnans</i>			1			
Bat Falcon <i>Falco rufigularis</i>		1	1			
Speckled Chachalaca <i>Ortalis guttata</i>		1	3	2	1	
Common Piping - Guan <i>Pipile pipile</i>				1		
Grey - Breasted Crake <i>Laterallus exilis</i>					H	
Azure Gallinule <i>Porphyrola flavirostris</i>					4	
Sunbittern <i>Eurypyga helias</i>		H		H		
Collared Plover <i>Charadius collaris</i>			2	10		
Spotted Sandpiper <i>Actitis macularia</i>		2	12	7	2	
Greater Yellowlegs <i>Tringa melanoleuca</i>						
Lesser Yellowlegs <i>Tringa flavipes</i>			1			
Yellow - Billed Tern <i>Sterna superciliaris</i>	1		4	4		

Species	20	21	22	23	24	25
Black Skimmer <i>Rynchops niger</i>			2			
Plumbeous Pigeon <i>Columba plumbea</i>		4	4			
Ruddy Pigeon <i>Columba subvinacea</i>		5	3			
Pale - Vented Pigeon <i>Columba cayennensis</i>			15	12		
Sapphire Quail – Dove <i>Geotrygon saphirina</i>						
Ruddy Quail – Dove <i>Geotrygon montana</i>			1	1		
Grey-fronted Dove <i>Leptotila rufaxilla</i>		1	1	1		
Eared Dove <i>Zenaida auriculata</i>	8				4	40
Chestnut – Fronted Macaw <i>Ara severa</i>		2	5			
Blue & Yellow Macaw <i>Ara ararauna</i>		1				
Red-bellied Macaw <i>Orthopsittaca manilata</i>		5		5	3	
Blue - Winged Parrotlet <i>Forpus xanthopterygius</i>			4	7		
Cobalt-Winged Parakeet <i>Brotogeris cyanoptera</i>		10	12		7	
Maroon -tailed Parakeet <i>Pyrrhura melanura</i>			1	3		
Black - Headed Parrot <i>Pionites melanocephala</i>		2	3	3	1	
Scarlet-fronted Parakeet <i>Aratinga wagleri</i>				2		
Dusky - Headed Parakeet <i>Aratinga weddellii</i>		4				
Blue - Headed Parrot <i>Pionus menstruus</i>			4			
Orange – Winged Amazon Parrot <i>Amazona amazonica</i>			11	8		
Mealy Amazon Parrot <i>Amazona farinosa</i>		8	22	2	1	
Golden Collard Toucanette <i>Selenidera reinwardtii</i>		1				
Squirrel Cuckoo <i>Piaya cayana</i>		2	2			
Greater Ani <i>Crotophaga major</i>		15	50	10	12	
Smooth - Billed Ani <i>Crotophaga ani</i>						
Hoatzin <i>Opisthocomus hoazin</i>	1	8	30	12	5	
Tawny-Bellied Screech – Owl <i>Otus watsonii</i>		2				
Ferruginous Pygmy – Owl <i>Glaucidium brasilianum</i>	H	H	3		1	
Crested Owl <i>Lophotrix cristata</i>	H	H				
Great Potoo <i>Nyctibius grandis</i>			2			
Lesser Nighthawk <i>Chordeiles acutipennis</i> (?)				1		
Sand – Coloured Nighthawk <i>Chordeiles rupestris</i>	10	100	100	100	100	100
Pauraque <i>Nyctidromus albicollis</i>	H	1	2	1		
Rufous Nightjar <i>Caprimulgus rufus</i>		5		1		
Ladder - Tailed Nightjar <i>Hydropsalis climacocerca</i>				1		
Grey - Rumped Swift <i>Chaetura cinereiventris</i>	20		8			
Short - Tailed Swift <i>Chaetura brachyura</i>		8	15	8	4	
Palm – Swift <i>Tachornis squamata Neotropical</i>	2	12	40	52	15	
Pale - Tailed Barbthroat <i>Threnetes niger</i>				1		
Band-tailed Barbthroat <i>Threnetes ruckeri</i>			1			
Great-billed Hermit <i>Phaethornis malaris</i>		2	1			
Rufus Brested Hermit <i>Glaucis hirsute</i>			1			
Straight - Billed Hermit <i>Phaethornis bourcieri</i>				1		
Reddish Hermit <i>Phaethornis ruber</i>					H	
Grey – Breasted Sabrewing <i>Compylopterus largipennis</i>			1			
Black - Tailed Trogon <i>Trogon melanurus</i>		3			2	
Amazonian White –Tailed Trogon <i>Trogon viridis</i>		1	2		1	

Species	20	21	22	23	24	25
Ringed Kingfisher <i>Megaceryle torquata</i>	1	1	2	4	2	
Green - and - Rufous Kingfisher <i>Chloroceryle inda</i>		1		1		
AmericaPygmy Kingfisher <i>Chloroceryle aenea n</i>			1			
Broad - Billed Motmot <i>Electron platyrhynchum</i>		1				
Blue - Crowned Motmot <i>Momotus momota</i>		H	2	2		
Violaceous Jay <i>Cyanocorax violaceus</i>	1	5		17		
White - Eared Jacamar <i>Galbalcyrhynchus leucotis</i>			2	1		
Brown Jacamar <i>Brachygalba lugubris</i>				1		
Purplish Jacamar <i>Galbula chalcothorax</i>		H				
Red-headed Barbet <i>Eubucco bourcierii</i>	1					
Scarlet - Crowned Barbet <i>Capito aurovirens</i>		2	2			
Gilded Barbet <i>Capito auratus</i>		10	5		2	
Lemon - Throated Barbet <i>Eubucco richardsoni</i>		1	2			
White- Chested Puffbird <i>Malacoptila fusca</i>		2				
Black - Fronted Nunbird <i>Monasa nigrifrons</i>		2	4	4		
White - Fronted Nunbird <i>Monasa morphoeus</i>		10	2		1	
Swallow - Winged Puffbird <i>Chelidoptera tenebrosa</i>			10	10	20	
Many - Banded Araçari <i>Pteroglossus pluricinctus</i>		2		4	3	
Ivory - Billed Araçari <i>Pteroglossus azara</i>		3	4	2	2	
Chestnut - Eared Araçari <i>Pteroglossus castanotis</i>			3		1	
Lettered Araçari <i>Pteroglossus inscriptus</i>		2	1			
White Throated Toucan <i>Ramphastos Tucanus</i>		2	2			
Channel Billed Toucan <i>Ramphastos vitellinus</i>			1			
Golden - Collared Toucanet <i>Selenidera reinwardtii</i>	1					
Lineated Woodpecker <i>Dryocopus lineatus</i>		2	1	2	1	
Crimson - Crested Woodpecker <i>Campephilus melanoleucos</i>			1			
Spot-breasted Woodpecker <i>Colaptes punctigula</i>			2			
Golden - Green Woodpecker <i>Piculus Chrysochloros</i>		1				
Chestnut Woodpecker <i>Celeus elegans</i>		5		2		
Scale - Breasted Woodpecker <i>Celeus grammicus</i>		2			1	
Cream - coloured Woodpecker <i>Celeus flavus</i>		4		2		
Rufous Headed Woodpecker <i>Celeus spectabilis</i>				1	1	
Lafresnaye's Piculet <i>Picumnus lafresnayi</i>		1				
Little Woodpecker <i>Veniliornis passerinus</i>			4			
Red - Stained Woodpecker <i>Veniliornis affinis</i>		3	1			
Yellow - Tufted Woodpecker <i>Melanerpes cruentatus</i>		3	4		2	
Wedge - billed Woodcreeper <i>Glyphorhynchus spirurus</i>		1				
Cinnamon - Throated Woodcreeper <i>Dendrexetastes rufigula</i>		2	1		1	
Amazonian Barred Woodcreeper <i>Dendrocolaptes certhia</i>		1		1		
Straight Billed Woodcreeper <i>Xiphorhynchus picus</i>				1		
Buff - Throated Woodcreeper <i>Xiphorhynchus guttatus</i>		1				
Striped Woodcreeper <i>Xiphorhynchus obsoletus</i>				1		
Long – Billed – Woodcreeper <i>Nasica longisrostris</i>			1	1		
White - Bellied Spinetail <i>Synallaxis propinqua</i>			4	2		

Species	20	21	22	23	24	25
Parker's Spinetail <i>Cranioleuca vulpecula</i>				1		
Orange - Fronted Plushcrown <i>Metopothrix aurantiacus</i>		2				
Plain Xenops <i>Xenops minutus</i>		1				
Chestnut - Winged Hookbill <i>Ancistrops strigilatus</i>		3				
Lesser Hornero <i>Furnarius minor</i>				2		
Black - Tailed Leaf Tosser <i>Sclerurus caudacutus</i>		1				
Fasciated Antshrike <i>Cymbilaimus lineatus</i>		1				
Barred Antshrike <i>Thamnophilus doliatus</i>				1		
Plain-Winged Antshrike <i>Thamnophilus schistaceus</i>		1		1		
Cinereous Antshrike <i>Thamnomanes caesius</i>		1				
Dusky - Throated Antshrike <i>Thamnomanes ardesiacus</i>		1				
Gray Antwren <i>Myrmotherula menetriesii</i>		1				
White-Flanked Antwren <i>Myrmotherula axillaris</i>		1				
Ornate Antwren <i>Myrmotherula ornata</i>				1		
Plain-Throated Antwren <i>Myrmotherula hauxwelli</i>			2			
Yellow - Browed Antbird <i>Hypocnemis hypoxantha</i>		1				
Black Antbird <i>Cercomacra serva</i>		1				
Spot - Winged Antbird <i>Schistocichla - leucostigma</i>				1		
Black - Faced Antbird <i>Myrmoborus myotherinus</i>			1	2		
Black And White Antbird <i>Myrmochanes hemileucus</i>				1		
Silvered Antbird <i>Sclateria naevia</i>		2				
Plumbeous Antbird <i>Myrmeciza hyperythra</i>			1	2		
White-Shouldered Antbird <i>Myrmeciza melanoceps</i>			2			
Sooty Antbird <i>Myrmeciza fortis</i>				2	1	
Hairy - Crested Antbird <i>Rhegmatorhina melanostieta</i>			2			
Scale - Backed Antbird <i>Hylophylax poecilinota</i>		1				
Spot - Backed Antbird <i>Hylophylax naevia</i>			1			
Dot - Backed Antbird <i>Hypophylax punctulata</i>			1			
Black - Faced Antthrush <i>Formicarius analis</i>		1				
Rusty-belted Tapaculo <i>Liosceles thoracicus</i>				1		
Black - Spotted Bare – Eye <i>Phlegopsis nigromaculata</i>				1		
Ash - Throated Gnateater <i>Conopophaga peruviana</i>		2				
Chestnut - Belted Gnateater <i>Conopophaga aurita</i>				2		
Southern Beardless Tyrannulet <i>Camptostoma obsuletum</i>			1			
Yellow – Crowned Tyrannulet <i>Tyrannulus elatus</i>		1		3		
Slender - Footed Tyrannulet <i>Zimmerius gracilipes</i>			1			
Ochre - Bellied Flycatcher <i>Mionectes oleagineus</i>				1		
Sepia - Capped Flycatcher <i>Leptopogon amaurocephalus</i>			1			
Willow Flycatcher <i>Empidonax traillii</i>			1			
Yellow - Margined Flatbill <i>Tolmomyias flavotectus</i>		1				
Gray - Crowned Flatbill <i>Tolmomyias poliocephalus</i>		1				
Olive Faced Flatbill <i>Tolmomyias viridiceps</i>					1	
Forest Elaenia <i>Myiopagis gaimardii</i>				1		

Species	20	21	22	23	24	25
White-crested Elaenia <i>Elaenia albiceps</i>						2
Rusty Fronted Tody Flycatcher <i>Todirostrum latirostris</i>			1			
Yellow - Browed Tody - Flycatcher <i>Todirostrum chrysoncrotaphum</i>		1				
Black Headed Tody Flycatcher <i>Todirostrum chrysocrotaphum</i>		1				
River Tyrannulet <i>Serpophaga hypoleuca</i>				1		
Eastern Wood Pewee <i>Contopus virens</i>			1	1		
Gray-breasted Flycatcher <i>Lathrotriccus griseipectus</i>		1				
Fuscous Flycatcher <i>Cnemotirccus fuscatus</i>				2		
Drab Water - Tyrant <i>Ochthornis littoralis</i>			1	10	20	
Cinnamon Attila <i>Attila cinnamomeus</i>		1	2		1	
Grayish Mourner <i>Rhytipterna simplex</i>			1			
Screaming Piha <i>Lipaugus vociferans</i>		1				
Short - Crested Flycatcher <i>Myiarchus ferox</i>				2		
Slaty Capped Flycatcher <i>Laptopogon superciliaris</i>			1			
Dusky - Capped Flycatcher <i>Myiarchus tuberculifer</i>		2				
Eastern Sirystes <i>Sirystes sibilator</i>		1				
Tropical Kingbird <i>Tyrannus melancholicus</i>			2	4	1	
White - Throated Kingbird <i>Tyrannus albogularis</i>				1		
Piratic Flycatcher <i>Legatus leucophaeus</i>		1	1	1	2	
Sulphur-Bellied Flycatcher <i>Myiodynastes luteiventris</i>				1		
Dusky Chested Flycatcher <i>Myiozetetes luteiventris</i>				1		
Boat - Billed Flycatcher <i>Megarhynchus pitangua</i>		1		1	2	
Great Kiskadee <i>Pitangus sulphuratus</i>	1	2	2	8	1	
Lesser Kiskadee <i>Philohidor lictor</i>		1	3	3	2	
Social Flycatcher <i>Myiozetetes similis</i>		1	2	2	3	
Grey - Capped Flycatcher <i>Myiozetetes granadensis</i>		1	2			
Cinnamon Becard <i>Pachyramphus cinnamomeus</i>			1			
White - Winged Becard <i>Pachyramphus polychopterus</i>			1			
Black - Tailed Tityra <i>Tityra cayana</i>		3			1	
Purple-Throated Cotinga <i>Porphyrolaema porphyrolaema</i>			2			
Plum - Throated Cotinga <i>Cotinga maynana</i>		1			1	
Purple - Throated Fruitcrow <i>Querula purpurata</i>		2	1	1		
Amazonian Umbrellabird <i>Cephalopterus ornatus</i>				1		
Bare - Necked Fruitcrow <i>Gymnoderus foetidus</i>		2		1	1	
Golden - Headed Manakin <i>Pipra erythrocephala</i>		1				
Blue - Crowned Manakin <i>Lepidothrix coronata</i>		1		2		
Wire - Tailed Mankin <i>Pipra filicauda</i>				1	1	
Striped Manakin <i>Machaeropterus regulus</i>		3				
Dwarf Tyrant – Manakin <i>Tyranneutes stolzmanni</i>		1				
Brown - Chested Martin <i>Progne tapera</i>			7	2		
Gray - Breasted Martin <i>Progne chalybea</i>			4	2	2	

Species	20	21	22	23	24	25
White - Winged Swallow <i>Tachycineta albiventer</i>	3	30	22	40	30	
White - Banded Swallow <i>Atticora fasciata</i>	5		10	10	10	
Southern Rough-Winged Swallow <i>Stelgidopteryx ruficollis</i>					2	
Sand Martin <i>Riparia riparia</i>		12	300			
Barn Swallow <i>Hirundo rustica</i>			10			
Thrush - Like Wren <i>Campylorhynchus turdinus</i>		2				
White - Breasted Wood - Wren <i>Henicorhina leucosticta</i>		1	1	1		
Southern Nightingale Wren <i>Microcerculus marginatus</i>			1			
Black - Capped Donacobius <i>Donacobius atricapillus</i>				1		
Long - Billed Gnatwren <i>Ramphocaenus melanurus</i>		1		4		
Brown-capped Vireo <i>Vireo leucophrys</i>			1			
Red - Eyed Vireo <i>Vireo olivaceus</i>		4	3	2		
Yellow - Green Vireo <i>Vireo flavoviridis</i>		5	2	2		
Dusky - Capped Greenlet <i>Hylophilus hypoxanthus</i>					1	
Swainson's Thrush <i>Catharus ustulatus</i>			1	2	2	
Black - Billed Thrush <i>Turdus ignobilis</i>				5		
Lawrence's Thrush <i>Turdus lawrencii</i>		H				
Great Thrush <i>Turdus fuscater</i>					1	
Blackpoll Warbler <i>Dendroica striata</i>		2	2		1	
Purple Honeycreeper <i>Cyanerpes caeruleus</i>		2	2			
Green Honeycreeper <i>Chlorophanes spiza</i>		2				
Blue Dacnis <i>Dacnis cayana</i>		2	1			
Black - Faced Dacnis <i>Dacnis lineata</i>		2	1		1	
Yellow - Bellied Dacnis <i>Dacnis flaviventer</i>				1		
Orange - Bellied Euphonia <i>Euphonia xanthogaster</i>		1	2			
White - Vented Euphonia <i>Euphonia minuta</i>				1	3	
Rufous - Bellied Euphonia <i>Euphonia rufiventris</i>		1	1			
White - Lored Euphonia <i>Euphonia chrysopasta</i>		1	1		2	
Green-and Gold Tanager <i>Tangara schrankii</i>			2		1	
Opal - Crowned Tanager <i>Tangara callophrys</i>		1			1	
Paradise Tanager <i>Tangara chilensis</i>		5	1			
Gray and Gold Tanager <i>Tangara palmeri</i>		1				
Yellow - Bellied Tanager <i>Tangara xanthogastra</i>		2	7		1	
Turquoise Tanager <i>Tangara mexicana</i>		3	2			
Swallow Tanager <i>Tersina viridis</i>		1	1	2		
Blue - Gray Tanager <i>Thraupis episcopus</i>				2		
Palm Tanager <i>Thraupis palmarum</i>		2	2	2		
Masked Crimson Tanager <i>Ramphocelus nigrogularis</i>						
Silver - Beaked Tanager <i>Ramphocelus carbo</i>			1	4		
Grey - Headed Tanager <i>Eucometis penicillata</i>			1			
Scarlet Tanager <i>Piranga olivacea</i>	1	1	2			
Magpie Tanager <i>Cissopis leveriana</i>		2		1		
Flame - Crested Tanager <i>Tachyphonus cristatus</i>		2			1	
Orange - Headed Tanager <i>Thlypopsis sordida</i>				4		
Buff - Throated Saltator <i>Saltator maximus</i>				1		
Grayish Saltator <i>Saltator coerulescens</i>			2	2		

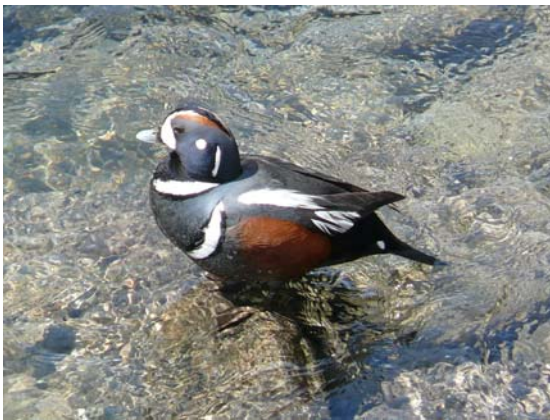
Species	20	21	22	23	24	25
Slate Coloured Grosbeak <i>Saltator grossus</i>		1		5		
Yellow - Shouldered – Grosbeak <i>Parkerthrouster humeralis</i>		3	5			
Red - Capped Cardinal <i>Paroaria gularis</i>				4		
Caqueta Seed eater <i>Sporophila murallae</i>				2		
Chestnut - Bellied Seed eater <i>Sporophila castaneiventris</i>				2		
Yellow - Browed Sparrow <i>Ammodramus aurifrons</i>			2	1		
Rufous-collared Sparrow <i>Zonotrichia capensis</i>					30	
Yellow - Rumped Cacique <i>Cacicus cela</i>		20	20	50	50	
Solitary Cacique <i>Cacicus solitarius</i>			1			
Crested Oropendola <i>Psarocolius decumanus</i>				1	1	
Russet - Backed Oropendola <i>Psarocolius angustifrons</i>	1	15	50	50	50	50
Olive Oropendola <i>Psarocolius yuracares</i>		4	2	4	2	
Oriole Blackbird <i>Gymnomystax mexicanus</i>			8			
Great-tailed Grackle <i>Quiscalus mexicanus</i>	1					
Shiny Cowbird <i>Molothrus bonariensis</i>		4	2	4	2	
Giant Cowbird <i>Molothrus oryzivorus</i>			20	4	1	
280 SPECIES						



Bald Eagle © Ray Marsh



Clark's Nutcracker © Ray Marsh



Harlequin Duck © Ray Marsh



American Robin © Ray Marsh



Wilson's Phalarope © Ray Marsh



Western Meadowlark © Ray Marsh



Ring-billed Gull © Ray Marsh



Black-capped Chickadee © Ray Marsh



Willet © Ray Marsh



Snail Kite © Andrew Bray



Barred Owl © Andrew Bray



Osprey © Andrew Bray

AOS TRIP TO SOUTH AFRICA 3 – 12TH MARCH 2008

(Anne Nason)

Team: (Leader)	Ian Nason	Rosie Haworth-Booth
	Nick Ansell	Anne Nason
	Vivien Ansell	Tom Walcot
	Hugh Guillebaud	Judy Walcot
	Chris Haworth-Booth	Judy White

3rd March The team of ten members assembled at Gatwick Airport to fly to Johannesburg on Nationwide Airways, a private South African Airline. Four members of the team, the Ansell and the Haworth-Booths, experienced a rather hair-raising journey to the airport as their taxi had broken down on the M25. The situation was made worse by the damaged tyre being on the outside, only eighteen inches from the traffic roaring past. However, with able assistance from his passengers, the taxi driver managed to change the tyre and get them to the airport in time for the flight. Thankfully, this turned out to be the only major drama of the whole trip.

4th March However, on arriving at Oliver Tambo International Airport in Johannesburg after an eleven hour flight, it began to look as if two members of the team would be without their luggage for the trip, but after rumour and counter-rumour and a delay of nearly an hour, the final container of luggage arrived and the whole team were able to meet up with the two guides, Leon Marais and Nic Squires. The itinerary had been organized for the AOS by Lawson's Birding and Wildlife Tours, based in Nelspruit, and owing to their efficiency, we had no further problems for the whole trip.

Escorted to two comfortable micro-buses with radio communications, we set off for a dam only a few kilometers from Johannesburg where birding began in pleasantly sunny weather, lifting everyone's spirits after the cold English winter we had left behind. The dam was teeming with birdlife; **White-winged Terns** and **Grey-headed Gulls** circled above, and on the water there were **Southern Pochard**, **Maccoa Duck**, **Little Grebe** and **Red-knobbed Coot**. **Yellow-crowned Bishops** were flitting around the waterside vegetation, still in their bright breeding plumage, and Cisticolas called noisily. After a short stop we boarded our buses for the four hour journey to Dullstroom in the Highveld grassland north east of Johannesburg, along the N12 and N4 motorways. At a brief stop at a roadside café, the ubiquitous **House Sparrow** was spotted! From the turn-off near Belfast, the road began climbing into the highveld and we finally checked into the Dullstroom Inn for a late lunch, Bus A having managed to dissuade the occupants of Bus B from dashing into a Burger Bar for a quick meal at our motorway stop.

After settling in, at 4.30 we joined our guides for an evening walk to a dam where we had an excellent view of a **Rufous-chested Sparrowhawk** circling overhead with sun shining on its breast. A Long-crested Eagle was sitting on the telephone wires, and several **Olive (Rameron) Pigeons** were perching on the tops of trees, but the Cape Eagle Owl we had hoped to see emerging from its roost on the rocky hillside as dusk fell, proved elusive. However, the compensation was to see a family of Cape Clawless Otters playing at the edge of the lake. The garden of the Inn also yielded

Speckled Mousebird, Cape White-eye, Amethyst (Black) Sunbird and Dark-capped Bulbul amongst others. That evening we dined at the Duck and Trout and enjoyed a good dinner complemented by excellent South African wine.

5th March Up at 5.15 we set off to the Veloren Valei Nature Reserve where we saw several species of birds specific to mountain grasslands. Our first stop was at a hillside dotted with protea bushes where **Malachite Sunbird** and **Gurney's Sugarbird** were feeding on the nectar. Next we stopped near a rocky outcrop to see **Buff-streaked Chat, Mountain Wheatear** and **Grey-headed Bush shrike**. **Denham's Bustard** were seen at a distance stalking across the grassland and **Jackal Buzzard** on the wing. **Cape Vultures** were circling overhead as the park had a large amount of game, including a herd of Blesbok, Mountain Reedbuck, Grey Rhebok and the rare Oribi which we were fortunate to see too.

Returning to the Dullstroom Inn for brunch, we were out again at 11.30 to Lakenvlei, where the Grey Crowned Cranes refused to show themselves, but on the way back we had good views of **Steppe Buzzard** and the endangered **Southern Bald Ibis**. After another evening stroll to the dam we dined at 'Fibs,' a local restaurant popular with anglers, hence its name!

6th March. The team left Dullstroom at 6.0 and drove to the Mount Sheba Hotel in a forested valley where we stopped to see forest species. Because of the topography, the valley receives a higher rainfall than the surrounding area, which accounts for its unusual birdlife. On our arrival the guides heard the call of the **Emerald Cuckoo** but were uncertain whether it was the bird itself or an impersonation by a Chorister Robin-Chat. Ian proved that it was indeed an Emerald Cuckoo when he took a photograph for identification whilst the rest of the team were on a forest walk. The guttural calls of the endemic **Knysna Turaco** resounded through the bush and we had good views of their crimson wing patches as they flew across the path. They flew into nearby trees where they hopped agilely through the branches. In the forest we saw a **Yellow-throated Woodland Warbler** and around the hotel gardens there were **Greater and Lesser Double-collared Sunbirds**. On the grassland above the hotel, an endemic **Drakensberg Prinia** was spotted.

After an excellent breakfast at the Mount Sheba Hotel we drove on towards the Blyde River Canyon, stopping at various interesting birding sites en route. At a grove beside a small mountain stream there were **Swee Waxbill, Dark-capped Yellow Warbler** and **Lesser Striped Swallow**. After a picnic lunch at a shady grove beside a trout hatchery, we continued on to a viewpoint overlooking the spectacular Blyde River Canyon, the third largest canyon in the world. The viewpoint looks out onto massive rock pillars known as the Three Rondavels. Far below, the waters of a large dam reflected the blue of the cloudless sky. The roof of a building at the Information Centre was a convenient perch for **Red-winged Starling** and **Familiar Chat**.



Familiar Chat © Ian Nason

Driving on a couple of miles to the Blydepoort Ventura Resort, we settled into comfortable chalets, and had time for an evening birdwalk in the grounds to see **Lanner Falcon, Cardinal Woodpecker, Olive Woodpecker** and **Bar-throated Apalis**. After a buffet style dinner at the restaurant, we retired to our chalets to prepare for another early start.

7th March Up again at 5.15 for a birdwalk along the lower road in the resort where we saw **Black Cuckooshrike, Cape Rock Thrush, Striped Pipit** and **Yellow-breasted Apalis**. From the viewpoint, Dassie (Rock Hyrax) were spotted on a rocky ledge below. After breakfast we drove towards Kruger, stopping just short of the Strijdom Tunnel near a tall cliff face, where Michael, a local guide, pointed out to us the rare **Taita Falcon** which breeds here. The female was sitting on a ledge hundreds of feet above us and obligingly took a short flight to a lower ledge, but the bird was still difficult to see, even with a scope. Driving on through the tunnel we descended to the lowveld where the weather was much hotter but some distance before entering the Park we stopped at a small 'oasis' amongst the acacia scrub, at a restaurant called 'Ann's Place' where the team enjoyed a very good lunch at tables set out on a green lawn under shady trees. Whilst eating our meal, one sharp-eyed member of the team spotted a green boomslang snake in the branches above us. We kept a wary eye on it as it slithered from tree to tree, hoping that it didn't drop on our heads. Just before reaching the restaurant we had spotted an **Acacia Pied Barbet** in a thornbush and a **Woodland Kingfisher** sat nearby in the shade as we ate.

Entering the Kruger National Park through the Orpen Gate, we immediately saw an uncommon **Senegal Lapwing** and several **Crowned Lapwing** (Plover). A lone male elephant was loitering not far from the gate and we made constant stops for interesting birds and animals. The Park is 200 miles long and borders Zimbabwe in the north, Mozambique to the east and extends almost as far as Swaziland in the south. There are five or six large public camps for visitors which are very well set out with trees and gardens which attract many birds. Because the camp gates close punctually at 6 pm and drivers locked out have to pay heavy fines, we eventually had to hurry on, arriving just before six at Satara Camp, in the dry bushveld area of the Park. We settled into our rondavels and had an excellent braai provided for us by the daughter and son-in-law of Peter Lawson, the owner of the Company. The two nights spent at Satara were probably the highlight of the trip, and it was much appreciated that we ate as a group sitting out in the open near our huts, rather than using the camp restaurant. In the evenings the stars twinkled with amazing clarity in the clear night sky, and the **African Scops Owl** could be heard calling.



Amur Falcon © Ian Nason

8th March We soon became used to the routine of getting up at 5 am and out birding at 5.30 after coffee and rusks. On this morning we saw at least 60 **Amur (Eastern Red-footed) Falcons, Greater Kestrel, Lesser Kestrel**, and several **Montagu's Harriers** picking up dead prey from a recent burnt patch of scrub. **European Roller** were so common, soon they

were barely mentioned; **Lilac-breasted Roller** and **Red-backed Shrike** too, but the occasional **Lesser Grey Shrike** and **Purple Roller** were also seen. The occupants of Bus B were lucky to see a **Bulbul** feeding a juvenile **Jacobin Cuckoo**, but at least in Bus A we had the photographer who got a good picture of the young bird. Game in the park is abundant, with herds of buffalo, wildebeest, impala and zebra. We also came across giraffe, elephant (but no breeding herds, in spite of the over-population of elephant in Kruger) kudu, waterbuck and warthog amongst others. Returning to Satara, after breakfast we had a very productive walk round the camp. Our guides were searching for a roosting African Scops Owl and just outside Reception a guard told Nic of an owl roosting about 2 feet from the ground in a euphorbia bush,



African Scops Owl © Ian Nason

presumably safe from predators so close to human activity. We had to crouch down to see it but another **Scop's Owl** was roosting against the trunk of a tree which was brown rather than the usual grey, so the bird stuck out like a sore thumb against the background, making it an easy photograph for the Expedition leader.

In the afternoon, four members went out with Nic for an extra drive and before we had gone half a mile from Satara, two lionesses crossed the road in front of us, with two cubs, heading for a 'kill' made obvious by a large number of **White-backed Vultures** perched in a tree 500 yards away. We spared a fleeting thought for the six team members having their siesta!

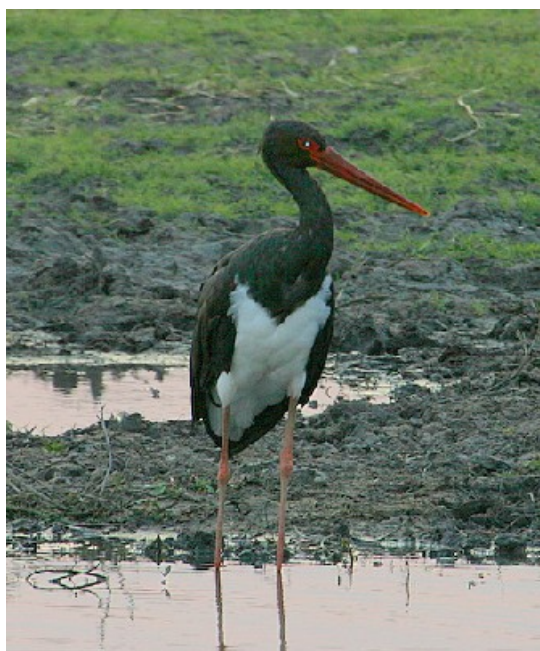
In the evening we were taken on a private drive in one of the camp's open Safari vehicles and had an excellent view of a **Martial Eagle** before light faded. With the help of a spotlight we saw many **Square-tailed (Mozambique) Nightjar**, two **Fiery-necked Nightjar** and a **Bronze-winged Courser**. Using searchlights to pick out the reflections from eyes in the dark, two old buffalo bulls were seen, very close to the vehicle, 'mud boys' expelled from the herd by younger bulls, and at such close range the immense power of the beasts was alarmingly evident. Two old hippo bulls were grazing near a river. Incredibly, Leon spotted a chameleon on a bush with the spotlight and brought it into the truck for us to inspect, but one of the most beautiful sightings was of a serval, using the light from the spotlight to follow its prey, pouncing at intervals as it gracefully pursued a small mammal in the long grass. Arriving back for a late supper, once more provided by our hosts, we fell into bed after a long, but fascinating day.

9th March Up before 5 am again, we set off for another morning drive and almost immediately we spotted an injured lion under a bush only two metres from the road. Further on two young lions were lying out in the open and on our return about an hour later, we watched the injured lion limping slowly off. **Bateleur Eagles** are not uncommon in the park and during our expedition, no less than 32 species of raptor were seen, including **Tawny** and **Steppe Eagles**.

Meals in Satara were accompanied by flocks of tame birds trying to snatch food from the tables; starlings and hornbills being the most frequent visitors, but **Mourning Doves** came and sunbathed beside us too, providing good photo opportunities. **African Hoopoes** were often seen, prodding with their long beaks as they searched for grubs on the ground, and **Green Wood-hoopoes** called noisily as they flew from tree to tree.

After breakfast we set off for Pretoriuskop Camp, further south, where the area is more wooded. The park speed limit is 50 kph on tarred roads and 40 kph on untarred tracks, so progress is always slow, but with constant stops for interesting species, we took most of the day to get there. Stopping beside a dam where elephant were bathing and a group of hippo lying semi-submerged in the water, we had good views of **Goliath Heron**, **Kittlitz Plover** and two **Woolly-necked Storks**. One of the best sightings was of a rare **Dwarf Bittern** skulking in the waterside vegetation. Another pan yielded a family of **Pygmy Geese** almost concealed by the water lilies.

Lunch was at Skukusa, the Park Headquarters, and inside the eating places with their conical thatched roofs, epauletted bats were roosting, hanging down like decorations on a Christmas tree. Some of us ate our sandwiches by the river, watching elephant feeding on the tall grasses. En route a **Whalberg's Eagle** was spotted perching low down in a tree right beside the road.



Black Stork © Ian Nason

As we arrived at Pretoriuskop, the first birds we saw were **Purple Crested Turaco** in the trees beside Reception. The accommodation in comfortable rondavels was again of a high standard, and the small herd of impala inside the camp added further interest to our stay. One young impala had its leg in a splint, but was able to get about freely. Callover in the Restaurant in the evenings must have surprised the other diners, as it proved to be a fairly noisy affair!

10th March As usual we set out on a bird and game drive at 5.30 after coffee and rusks. The morning proved tantalizing as there were rhino middens all along the tracks, but none of the perpetrators were in sight. Raptors were in plentiful supply and **Brown Snake Eagle**, **Dark Chanting Goshawk** and **Cuckoo Falcon** were seen. At a small pan a **Giant Kingfisher** was seen in the distance but an immature **Gabar Goshawk** gave Ian excellent photo opportunities from a nearby tree. On closer inspection, no less than 5 water monitors were seen lying motionless in the branches. On returning to Pretoriuskop we had a guided walk around camp after breakfast where several interesting birds were seen, including **Golden-tailed Woodpecker**, **Black-collared Barbet**, **Retz's (Red-billed) Helmet Shrikes** and **Black-headed Oriole**. Two dwarf mongoose were seen inside

the perimeter fence. The evening drive on untarred roads around the camp yielded four **Black Storks** and a **Saddle-billed Stork** beside a small dam.

11th March Peter Lawson, the owner of the Company, joined us as guide and driver for the day in place of Nic who had to attend a meeting in Nelspruit. Our final morning in the Kruger National Park achieved good sightings of the elusive rhino at last. Bus A spotted a single rhino heading off into the bush, but Bus B came across three adults and a calf and generously radioed Bus A the location, so everyone had good views. During the trip a friendly rivalry had developed between the two buses, and a certain amount of banter took place on occasions! One of the most interesting sightings that morning, apart from the rhino and bird species like the **White-crested Helmet Shrike** and **Black**



White-crested Helmet Shrike

© Ian Nason

Sparrowhawk, was a dwarf mongoose family playing round a termite mound, popping in and out of the holes. A leopard tortoise crossed the road in front of our vehicle and hid his head in the grass, obviously believing he was invisible. Elephant, kudu and giraffe were also seen, but the klipspringer only revealed itself to Bus B, who watched it boldly standing on the top of a kopje, guarding its territory.

Sadly we said goodbye to the Kruger National Park and headed out of the Nimba Gate for Nelspruit. Arriving at The Arches Guest House, we all enjoyed a swim and then headed out to a Garden Restaurant for lunch before driving to the Lowveld Botanical Gardens where there are 150 acres of bush and garden along the Crocodile and Nel Rivers, with a waterfall tumbling at least 75m into a pool. Strangely, with a threatened storm hanging in the air, there was hardly a bird to be seen, but plenty of interesting trees and plants. Finally the sun came out and sunbirds and a party of **Ashy Flycatchers** were spotted, but the Finfoot was nowhere to be seen. Returning to the Guest House for another swim, in the evening we enjoyed an excellent farewell dinner.

12th March We left Nelspruit at 6.45 (the author having nearly lost her name by forgetting to wake one of the team!) and headed into the hills for Kaapsehoop for a final birding session, hoping to see the endangered Blue Swallow. Unfortunately, as the two pairs in this location had finished breeding, we didn't manage to spot them, but on the drive back to town we had good views of a **Crowned Eagle** circling above us. We finally left Nelspruit at 11.30 and set off for Johannesburg and the airport. Most of the journey was along major roads and motorways but the restaurant where we stopped for lunch was next to a dam and we had good views of **White-throated Swallow** and **Brown-throated Martin**. Throughout our trip we had seen huge numbers of **Barn Swallow**, some of them still in moult before heading north to Europe, and these were certainly the commonest hirundines. Having not seen Ostrich in the Kruger, some farmed Ostrich were gleefully spotted from the Motorway, and

within the city of Johannesburg, Leon and Ian spotted the first **Darter** of the trip on a lake in a roadside park.

Arriving at Oliver Tambo Airport, the team said goodbye to the guides, Leon and Nic, who had been outstanding in their knowledge of good birding sites, birds and their calls, but also for their organization in making the trip run so smoothly. Lawson's Birding and Wildlife Tours can be thoroughly recommended, and their website, for other members of AOS considering travelling to South Africa, is info@lawsons.co.za Ian and I then caught the SAA plane to Harare to see our family and the rest of the team returned to the UK, arriving at Gatwick on the morning of the 13th March, after a thoroughly successful expedition, with over 270 species seen.

Birdlist for AOS Trip to South Africa 3rd – 12th March 2008

Common Name	Scientific Name
Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>
Reed Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax africanus</i>
African Darter	<i>Anhinga rufa</i>
Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>
Black-headed Heron	<i>Ardea melanocephala</i>
Goliath Heron	<i>Ardea goliath</i>
Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>
Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>
Green-backed Heron	<i>Butorides striatus</i>
Dwarf Bittern	<i>Ixobrychus sturmii</i>
Hamerkop	<i>Scopus umbretta</i>
Black Stork (4)	<i>Ciconia nigra</i>
Woolly-necked Stork	<i>Ciconia episcopus</i>
Saddle-billed Stork	<i>Ephippiorhynchus senegalensis</i>
Marabou Stork	<i>Leptoptilos crumeniferus</i>
African Sacred Ibis	<i>Threskiornis aethiopicus</i>
Southern Bald Ibis (E) (3)	<i>Geronticus calvus</i>
Hadedda Ibis	<i>Bostrychia hagedash</i>
White-faced Duck	<i>Dendrocygna viduata</i>
Egyptian Goose	<i>Alopochen aegyptiacus</i>
Yellow-billed Duck	<i>Anas undulata</i>
African Black Duck	<i>Anas sparsa</i>
Cape Teal	<i>Anas capensis</i>
Red-billed Teal	<i>Anas erythrorhyncha</i>
Southern Pochard	<i>Netta erythrophthalma</i>
Comb Duck	<i>Sarkidiornis melanotos</i>
Spur-winged Goose	<i>Plectoperus gambensis</i>
Maccoa Duck	<i>Oxyura maccoa</i>
African Pygmy Goose	<i>Nettapus auritus</i>
Hooded Vulture	<i>Necrosyrtes monachus</i>
Cape Vulture (E)	<i>Gyps coprotheres</i>
(African) White-backed Vulture	<i>Gyps africanus</i>
Lappet-faced Vulture	<i>Torgos tracheliotus</i>
White-headed Vulture	<i>Trigonoceps occipitalis</i>
Black-shouldered Kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>
African Cuckoo Hawk	<i>Aviceda cuculoides</i>

Common Name	Scientific Name
Tawny Eagle	<i>Aquila rapax</i>
Steppe Eagle	<i>Aquila nipalensis</i>
Wahlberg's Eagle	<i>Aquila wahlbergi</i>
Long-crested Eagle	<i>Lophaetus occipitalis</i>
Martial Eagle	<i>Polemaetus bellicosus</i>
African Crowned Eagle	<i>Stephanoaetus coronatus</i>
Brown Snake Eagle	<i>Circaetus cinereus</i>
Bateleur	<i>Terathopius ecaudatus</i>
African Fish Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus vocifer</i>
Steppe Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>
Jackal Buzzard (E)	<i>Buteo rufofuscus</i>
Lizard Buzzard	<i>Kaupifalco monogrammicus</i>
Rufous-chested Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter rufiventris</i>
Little Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter minullus</i>
Black Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter melanoleucus</i>
African Goshawk	<i>Accipiter tachiro</i>
Gabar Goshawk	<i>Micronisus gabar</i>
Dark Chanting Goshawk	<i>Melierax matabetes</i>
African Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus ranivorus</i>
Montagu's Harrier	<i>Circus pygargus</i>
Lanner Falcon	<i>Falco biarmicus</i>
Eurasian Hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>
Taita Falcon	<i>Falco fasciinucha</i>
Amur Falcon	<i>Falco amurensis</i>
Rock Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>
Greater Kestrel	<i>Falco rupicoloides</i>
Lesser Kestrel	<i>Falco naumanni</i>
Crested Francolin	<i>Francolinus sephaena</i>
Red-winged Francolin	<i>Scleroptila levaillantii</i>
Natal Francolin (NE)	<i>Pternistes natalensis</i>
Swainson's Spurfowl (NE)	<i>Pternistes swainsonii</i>
Helmeted Guineafowl	<i>Numida meleagris</i>
Black Crake	<i>Amaurornis flavirostris</i>
African Purple Swamphen	<i>Porphyrio madagascariensis</i>
Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>
Red-knobbed Coot	<i>Fulica cristata</i>
Denham's Bustard	<i>Neotis denhami</i>
African Jacana	<i>Actophilornis africanus</i>
Kittlitz Plover	<i>Charadrius pecuarius</i>
Three-banded Plover	<i>Charadrius tricollaris</i>
Crowned Lapwing	<i>Vanellus coronatus</i>
Senegal Lapwing	<i>Vanellus lugubris</i>
Blacksmith Lapwing	<i>Vanellus armatus</i>
African Wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus senegallus</i>
Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>
Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>
Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>
Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>
Spotted Thick-knee	<i>Burhinus capensis</i>
Water Thick-knee	<i>Burhinus vermiculatus</i>
Bronze-winged Courser	<i>Rhinoptilus chalcopterus</i>

Common Name	Scientific Name
Grey-headed Gull	<i>Larus cirrocephalus</i>
White-winged Tern	<i>Chidonius leucopterus</i>
Speckled Pigeon	<i>Columba guinea</i>
African Olive Pigeon	<i>Columba arquatrix</i>
Red-eyed Dove	<i>Streptopelia semitorquata</i>
African Mourning Dove	<i>Streptopelia decipens</i>
Cape Turtle (Ring-necked) Dove	<i>Streptopelia capicola</i>
Laughing Dove	<i>Streptopelia senegalensis</i>
Namaqua Dove	<i>Oena capensis</i>
Emerald-spotted Dove	<i>Turtur chalcospilos</i>
African Green Pigeon	<i>Treron calva</i>
Brown-headed Parrot	<i>Poicephalus cryptoxanthus</i>
Grey Go-away Bird	<i>Corythaixoides concolor</i>
Levaillant's Cuckoo	<i>Clamator levaillantii</i>
Jacobin (Black & White) Cuckoo	<i>Oxylopus jacobinus</i>
African Emerald Cuckoo	<i>Chrysococcyx cupreus</i>
Diederik Cuckoo	<i>Chrysococcyx caprius</i>
Burchell's Coucal (NE)	<i>Centropus burchellii</i>
African Scops Owl	<i>Otus senegalensis</i>
Pearl-spotted Owlet	<i>Glaucidium perlatum</i>
Fiery-necked Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus pectoralis</i>
Mozambique Nightjar (Square-tailed)	<i>Caprimulgus fossii</i>
African Black Swift	<i>Apus barbatus</i>
White-rumped Swift	<i>Apus caffer</i>
Little Swift	<i>Apus affinis</i>
Alpine Swift	<i>Apus melba</i>
African Palm Swift	<i>Cypsiurus parvus</i>
Speckled Mousebird	<i>Colius striatus</i>
Red-faced Mousebird	<i>Urocolius indicus</i>
Pied Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle rudis</i>
Giant Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle maxima</i>
Malachite Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo cristata</i>
Woodland Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon senegalensis</i>
Brown-hooded Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon albiventris</i>
Striped Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon chelicuti</i>
Eurasian Bee-eater	<i>Merops apiaster</i>
Southern Carmine Bee-eater	<i>Merops nubicoides</i>
Little Bee-eater	<i>Merops pusillus</i>
European Roller	<i>Coracias garrulus</i>
Lilac-breasted Roller	<i>Coracias caudata</i>
Purple (Rufous-crowned) Roller	<i>Coracias naevia</i>
African Hoopoe	<i>Upupa Africana</i>
Green Wood-hoopoe	<i>Phoeniculus purpureus</i>
African Grey Hornbill	<i>Tockus nasutus</i>
Red-billed Hornbill	<i>Tockus erythrorhynchus</i>
Southern Yellow-billed Hornbill	<i>Tockus leucomelas</i>
Southern Ground Hornbill	<i>Bucorvus leadbeateri</i>
Black-collared Barbet	<i>Lybius torquatus</i>
Acacia Pied Barbet (NE)	<i>Tricholaema leucomelas</i>
Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird	<i>Pogonolius chrysoconus</i>
Crested Barbet	<i>Trachyphonus vaillantii</i>

Common Name	Scientific Name
Lesser Honeyguide	<i>Indicator minor</i>
Bennett's Woodpecker	<i>Campethera bennettii</i>
Golden-tailed Woodpecker	<i>Campethera abingoni</i>
Cardinal Woodpecker	<i>Dendropicus fuscescens</i>
Bearded Woodpecker	<i>Thripias namaquus</i>
Olive Woodpecker	<i>Dendropicus griseacephalus</i>
Rufous-naped Lark	<i>Mirafrā Africana</i>
Sabota Lark (NE)	<i>Mirafrā rufocinnamomea</i>
Chestnut-backed Sparrowlark	<i>Eremopterix leucotis</i>
Barn (European) Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>
White-throated Swallow	<i>Hirundo albigularis</i>
Red-breasted (Rufous-chested) Swallow	<i>Hirundo semirufa</i>
Greater Striped Swallow (E)	<i>Hirundo cucullata</i>
Lesser Striped Swallow	<i>Hirundo abyssinica</i>
Rock Martin	<i>Hirundo fuligula</i>
Brown-throated Martin	<i>Riparia paludicola</i>
Banded Martin	<i>Riparia cincta</i>
Black Cuckooshrike	<i>Campephaga flava</i>
Fork-tailed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus adsimilis</i>
Eurasian Golden Oriole	<i>Oriolus oriolus</i>
Black-headed Oriole	<i>Oriolus larvatus</i>
Cape Crow	<i>Corvus capensis</i>
Pied Crow	<i>Corvus albus</i>
Southern Black Tit	<i>Parus niger</i>
Arrow-marked Babbler	<i>Turdoides jardineii</i>
Dark-capped Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus barbatus</i>
Sombre Bulbul	<i>Andropadus importunus</i>
Kurrichane Thrush	<i>Turdus libonyana</i>
Groundscraper Thrush	<i>Turdus litsitsirupa</i>
Cape Rock-Thrush (E)	<i>Monticola rupestris</i>
Sentinel Rock-Thrush (E)	<i>Monticola explorator</i>
Mountain Wheatear (Chat) (NE)	<i>Oenanthe monticola</i>
Buff-streaked Chat (E)	<i>Oenanthe bifasciata</i>
Familiar Chat	<i>Cercomela familiaris</i>
Mocking Cliff-Chat	<i>Thamnolaea cimmamomeiventris</i>
African Stonechat	<i>Saxicola torquata</i>
White-browed Robin-Chat	(Heuglin's) <i>Cossypha heuglini</i>
Cape Robin-Chat	<i>Cossypha caffra</i>
Icterine Warbler	<i>Hippolais icterina</i>
Dark-capped Yellow Warbler	<i>Chloropeta natalensis</i>
Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>
Yellow-throated Woodland-Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus ruficapillus</i>
Bar-throated Apalis	<i>Apalis thoracica</i>
Yellow-breasted	<i>Apalis Apalis flavida</i>
Long-billed	<i>Crombec Sylvieta rufescens</i>
Yellow-bellied Eremomela	<i>Eremomela icteropygialis</i>
Burnt-necked	<i>Eremomela Eremomela usticollis</i>
Green-backed Cameroptera	<i>Cameroptera brachyuran</i>
Zitting Cisticola	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>

Common Name	Scientific Name
Wailing Cisticola	<i>Cisticola lais</i>
Rattling Cisticola	<i>Cisticola chiniana</i>
Red-faced Cisticola	<i>Cisticola erythrops</i>
Levaillant's Cisticola	<i>Cisticola tinniens</i>
Croaking Cisticola	<i>Cisticola natalensis</i>
Lazy Cisticola	<i>Cisticola aberrans</i>
Neddicky	<i>Cisticola fulvicapillus</i>
Tawny-flanked Prinia	<i>Prinia subflava</i>
Drakensberg Prinia (E)	<i>Prinia hypoxantha</i>
Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>
Ashy Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapacaerulescens</i>
Southern Black Flycatcher	<i>Melaenornis pammelaina</i>
Pale Flycatcher	<i>Melaenornis pallidus</i>
Cape Batis (E)	<i>Batis capensis</i>
Chin-spot	<i>Batis Batis molitor</i>
African Paradise Flycatcher	<i>Terpsiphone viridis</i>
African Pied Wagtail	<i>Motacilla aguimp</i>
Cape Wagtail	<i>Motacilla capensis</i>
African Pipit (Grassveld)	<i>Anthus cimmamomeus</i>
Striped Pipit	<i>Anthus lineiventris</i>
Bushveld Pipit	<i>Anthus caffer</i>
Yellow-breasted Pipit (E)	<i>Hemimacronyx chloris</i>
Cape Longclaw (E)	<i>Macronyx capensis</i>
Yellow-throated Longclaw	<i>Macronyx croceus</i>
Lesser Grey Shrike	<i>Lanius minor</i>
Common Fiscal Shrike	<i>Lanius collaris</i>
Red-backed Shrike	<i>Lanius collurio</i>
Magpie Shrike	<i>Corvinella melanoleuca</i>
Southern Boubou (E)	<i>Laniarius ferrugineous</i>
Black-backed Puffback	<i>Dryoscopus cubla</i>
Brubru	<i>Nilaus afer</i>
Brown-crowned Tchagra	<i>Tchagra australis</i>
Black-crowned	<i>Tchagra Tchagra senegala</i>
Bokmakierie (E)	<i>Telophorus zeylonus</i>
Grey-headed Bush-Shrike	<i>Malaconotus blanchoti</i>
White-crested Helmet-Shrike	<i>Prionops plumatus</i>
Retz's Helmet-Shrike	<i>Prionops retzii</i>
Common myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>
Wattled Starling	<i>Creatorphora cinerea</i>
Pied Starling (E)	<i>Spreo bicolor</i>
Violet-backed Starling	<i>Cinnyrinclus leucogaster</i>
Burchell's Starling (NE)	<i>Lamprotornis australis</i>
Cape Glossy Starling	<i>Lamprotornis nitens</i>
Greater Blue-eared Starling	<i>Lamprotornis chalybaeus</i>
Red-winged Starling	<i>Onychognathus morio</i>
Red-billed Oxpecker	<i>Buphagus erythrorhynchus</i>
Gurney's Sugarbird (E)	<i>Promerops gurneyi</i>
Malachite Sunbird	<i>Nectarinia famosa</i>
Southern Double-collared Sunbird (E)	<i>Nectarinia chalybea</i>
Greater Double-collared Sunbird (E)	<i>Nectarinia afra</i>
White-bellied Sunbird	<i>Nectarinia talatala</i>

Common Name	Scientific Name
Amethyst Sunbird (Black)	<i>Nectarinia amethystina</i>
Collared Sunbird	<i>Anthreptes collaris</i>
Cape White-eye (E)	<i>Zosterops pallidus</i>
Red-billed Buffalo-weaver	<i>Bubalornis niger</i>
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>
Cape Sparrow (NE)	<i>Passer melanurus</i>
Southern Grey-headed Sparrow	<i>Passer diffusus</i>
Yellow-throated Petronia	<i>Petronia supercilarius</i>
Spectacles Weaver	<i>Ploceus ocularis</i>
Southern Masked Weaver	<i>Ploceus velatus</i>
Village Weaver (Spotted-backed Weaver)	<i>Ploceus cucullatus</i>
Red-billed Quelea	<i>Quelea quelea</i>
Southern Red Bishop	<i>Euplectes orix</i>
Yellow-crowned Bishop	<i>Euplectes afer</i>
Yellow Bishop	<i>Euplectes capensis</i>
Fan-tailed Widowbird	<i>Euplectes axilaris</i>
White-winged Widowbird	<i>Euplectes albonotatus</i>
Red-collared Widowbird	<i>Euplectes ardens</i>
Long-tailed Widowbird	<i>Euplectes progne</i>
Green-winged Pytilia	<i>Pytilia melba</i>
African Firefinch	<i>Lagonosticta rubricata</i>
Southern Blue Waxbill	<i>Uraeginthus angolensis</i>
Common Waxbill	<i>Estrilda astrild</i>
Sweet Waxbill (E)	<i>Estrilda melanotis</i>
Bronze Mannikin	<i>Spermestes cucullatus</i>
Pin-tailed Whydah	<i>Vidua macroura</i>
Long-tailed Paradise Whydah	<i>Vidua paradisaea</i>
Village Indigobird	<i>Vidua chalybeata</i>
Yellow-fronted Canary	<i>Serinus mozambicus</i>
Cape Canary	<i>Serinus canicollis</i>
Streaky-headed Seed-Eater	<i>Serinus gularis</i>
Golden-breasted Bunting	<i>Emberiza flaviventris</i>
Cinnamon-breasted Bunting	<i>Emberiza tahapisi</i>



Chestnut-backed Sparrow Lark

© Ian Nason

NORTHERN FRANCE

(Andrew Bray)

The expedition to the areas of northern France around Boulogne was an enjoyable 3 days with plenty of species each day. Every new site added to the species list with a total of 125 species noted over the trip, all but one seen. In the end there were six members who took part and once again the weather was kind though there was chill in the air. We drove overnight to the Somme Estuary area and parked up for first light. We started at Saily-Bray wrapped up as the east wind blew and finished the day there as well with over 40 species seen starting with a **Great White Egret** and finishing with a **Marsh Harrier**. Most of the day was spent at Marquenterre with 66 species including **Spoonbill**, **Night Heron** and **Spotted Redshank** in full summer plumage. Late afternoon we visited the nearby Crecy Wood and after a disappointing walk we found all the best species were by the mini-bus especially **Crested Tit**. That night was spent at a Formule 1 hotel in Boulogne and visited the local pizza restaurant. Expecting the worst on Saturday we set off for Portel by the port for the drizzle to stop in time and stay away for the remainder of the day. After checking the huge flocks of gulls we headed south for a stop at St Cecile before arriving at our main target of the nature reserves at Camier. Parking is at the British War Cemetery at Etaples which allowed us a walk around the reserve and access to the la Canche estuary with 43 species recorded. There was only a glimpse of a **Nightingale** but still a glimpse. Over the period we heard various **Nightingales** sing but they were normally well hidden in the growth. A **Grasshopper Warbler** however decided to reel from the top of a small bush. We also visited the nearby wood and climbed up to a watch point but any self respecting bird would not be soaring that day. We walked around a woodland path at St Pierre followed by a trip to the beach picking up new species as we went. Unfortunately the reputed Woodlarks were not around but we did hear a **Black Woodpecker** in the distance. Our final stop was at Hardelet by a very smart golf club with very swish houses nearby; we dipped on Serins. That night was a 3 course meal with wine for less than a tenner. On Sunday we drove to Cap Gris-Nez which promised so much despite the heavy mist however, it is undergoing a major facelift and most places were barricaded off. We did get good views of a **Cuckoo** and oh for the sun! We then drove to Marais de Guines where a **Bluethroat** finally put in appearance in the glorious sunshine. All too soon we were on the ferry for the return trip but before closing the list a **Corry Shearwater** and some **Eider** put in an appearance.

France List

Species	18/04	19/04	20/04
Mute Swan <i>Cygnus olor</i>	x		
Whooper Swan <i>Cygnus cygnus</i>	x		
Greylag Goose <i>Anser anser</i>	x		
Greater Canada Goose <i>Branta canadensis</i>	x		
Barnacle Goose <i>Branta leucopsis</i>	x		
Common Shelduck <i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	x	x	
Eurasian Wigeon <i>Anas penelope</i>	x		
Gadwall <i>Anas strepera</i>	x		
Eurasian Teal <i>Anas crecca</i>	x		

Species	18/04	19/04	20/04
Mallard <i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	x	x	x
Northern Pintail <i>Anas acuta</i>	x		
Garganey <i>Anas querquedula</i>	x		x
Northern Shoveler <i>Anas clypeata</i>	x	x	
Red-crested Pochard <i>Netta rufina</i>	x		
Common Pochard <i>Aythya ferina</i>	x		
Tufted Duck <i>Aythya fuligula</i>	x	x	x
Common Eider <i>Somateria mollissima</i>			x
Common Scoter <i>Melanitta nigra</i>		x	x
Velvet Scoter <i>Melanitta fusca</i>		x	
Common Pheasant <i>Phasianus colchicus</i>	x	x	x
Little Grebe <i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	x	x	
Great Crested Grebe <i>Podiceps cristatus</i>	x		
Slavonian Grebe <i>Podiceps auritus</i>	x		
Cory's Shearwater <i>Calonectris diomedea</i>			x
Northern Gannet <i>Morus bassanus</i>		x	x
Great Cormorant <i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	x	x	x
Night Heron <i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>	x		
Little Egret <i>Egretta garzetta</i>	x	x	
Cattle Egret <i>Bubulcus ibis</i>	x		
Great Egret <i>Ardea alba</i>	x		
Grey Heron <i>Ardea cinerea</i>	x	x	x
White Stork <i>Ciconia ciconia</i>	x		
Eurasian Spoonbill <i>Platalea leucorodia</i>	x		
Eurasian Marsh Harrier <i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	x		
Eurasian Sparrowhawk <i>Accipiter nisus</i>	x		x
Common Buzzard <i>Buteo buteo</i>	x	x	x
Common Kestrel <i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	x	x	x
Peregrine Falcon <i>Falco peregrinus</i>			x
Common Moorhen <i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	x	x	x
Common Coot <i>Fulica atra</i>	x	x	x
Common Crane <i>Grus grus</i>	x		
Eurasian Oystercatcher <i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	x	x	
Black-winged Stilt <i>Himantopus himantopus</i>	x		
Pied Avocet <i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>	x		
Ringed Plover <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	x	x	
Northern Lapwing <i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	x	x	x
Red Knot <i>Calidris canutus</i>		x	
Sanderling <i>Calidris alba</i>		x	
Dunlin <i>Calidris alpina</i>		x	
Ruddy Turnstone <i>Arenaria interpres</i>		x	
Common Snipe <i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	x		
Black-tailed Godwit <i>Limosa limosa</i>	x		
Bar-tailed Godwit <i>Limosa lapponica</i>		x	
Whimbrel <i>Numenius phaeopus</i>	x	x	
Eurasian Curlew <i>Numenius arquata</i>	x	x	
Spotted Redshank <i>Tringa erythropus</i>	x		
Common Redshank <i>Tringa totanus</i>	x	x	
Common Greenshank <i>Tringa nebularia</i>	x		
Great Skua <i>Stercorarius skua</i>		x	
Mediterranean Gull <i>Larus melanocephalus</i>	x		x

Species	18/04	19/04	20/04
Little Gull <i>Larus minutus</i>		X	X
Black-headed Gull <i>Larus ridibundus</i>	X	X	X
Mew Gull <i>Larus canus</i>	X	X	X
Lesser Black-backed Gull <i>Larus fuscus</i>	X	X	X
Herring Gull <i>Larus argentatus</i>	X	X	X
Great Black-backed Gull <i>Larus marinus</i>	X	X	X
Black-legged Kittiwake <i>Rissa tridactyla</i>			X
Black Tern <i>Chlidonias niger</i>			X
Sandwich Tern <i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>	X	X	X
Common Tern <i>Sterna hirundo</i>			X
Stock Pigeon <i>Columba oenas</i>	X		
Common Wood Pigeon <i>Columba palumbus</i>	X	X	X
Eurasian Collared Dove <i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	X	X	X
Common Cuckoo <i>Cuculus canorus</i>	X	X	X
Common Kingfisher <i>Alcedo atthis</i>			X
Black Woodpecker <i>Dryocopus martius</i>		X	
Green Woodpecker <i>Picus viridis</i>	X	X	X
Great Spotted Woodpecker <i>Dendrocopos major</i>	X	X	X
Sky Lark <i>Alauda arvensis</i>	X		X
Sand Martin <i>Riparia riparia</i>	X	X	
Barn Swallow <i>Hirundo rustica</i>	X	X	X
House Martin <i>Delichon urbicum</i>	X	X	
Meadow Pipit <i>Anthus pratensis</i>	X	X	X
Yellow Wagtail <i>Motacilla flava</i>		X	
White / Pied Wagtail <i>Motacilla alba</i>	X	X	
Winter Wren <i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	X	X	X
Hedge Accentor <i>Prunella modularis</i>	X	X	X
European Robin <i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	X	X	X
Common Nightingale <i>Luscinia megarhynchos</i>	X	X	
Bluethroat <i>Luscinia svecica</i>			X
Stonechat <i>Saxicola torquata</i>			X
Northern Wheatear <i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	X		
Common Blackbird <i>Turdus merula</i>	X	X	X
Song Thrush <i>Turdus philomelos</i>		X	
Redwing <i>Turdus iliacus</i>	X		
Mistle Thrush <i>Turdus viscivorus</i>		X	
Cetti's Warbler <i>Cettia cetti</i>	X	X	X
Common Grasshopper Warbler <i>Locustella naevia</i>	X	X	
Sedge Warbler <i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>	X	X	
Eurasian Reed Warbler <i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>	X		
Blackcap <i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	X	X	X
Common Whitethroat <i>Sylvia communis</i>		X	
Common Chiffchaff <i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	X	X	X
Willow Warbler <i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>	X	X	X
Long-tailed Tit <i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>	X	X	X
Blue Tit <i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	X	X	X
Great Tit <i>Parus major</i>	X	X	X
Crested Tit <i>Lophophanes cristatus</i>	X	X	
Coal Tit <i>Pariparus ater</i>	X	X	X
Marsh Tit <i>Poecile palustris</i>	X	X	

Species	18/04	19/04	20/04
Wood Nuthatch <i>Sitta europaea</i>	x	x	
Short-toed Treecreeper <i>Certhia brachydactyla</i>	x	x	
Eurasian Jay <i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	x	x	
Black-billed Magpie <i>Pica pica</i>	x	x	x
Eurasian Jackdaw <i>Corvus monedula</i>	x		
Rook <i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	x	x	x
Carrion Crow <i>Corvus corone</i>	x	x	x
Common Starling <i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	x	x	x
House Sparrow <i>Passer domesticus</i>	x	x	x
Chaffinch <i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	x	x	x
European Greenfinch <i>Carduelis chloris</i>	x	x	
European Goldfinch <i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	x	x	x
Common Linnet <i>Carduelis cannabina</i>	x	x	
Yellowhammer <i>Emberiza citrinella</i>	x		
Reed Bunting <i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>	x	x	



Whooper Swan © Andrew Bray

WINTER SUN IN HURGHADA

(Hilary Nash)

In early January I flew to Hurghada in the Gulf of Suez to act as a last-minute Sub-Aqua Diving Supervisor as the one originally appointed had dropped out. It was a shore based trip, which is not my choice, but the terms were generous. Hurghada is a real tourist trap, so much so that it is in a restricted zone and I was told off-limits to those Egyptians without a work permit! January is also the month that all the Russians who can, escape their winter. They formed about 80% of our hotel's guests and en masse tend to be pushy and dour.

The dive sites were not chosen for their ornithological merit and I saw only 6 species. **Cormorant** and **Herring Gull sp** were new to me in Egypt and I presume they must be winter visitors. The other 4 were **Sooty** and **White-eyed Gulls** and **Caspian Terns**. We also moored up near a rocky islet which held a pair of **Ospreys** with 2 fully fledged flying young.

On our de-gassing day I opted to visit Luxor and the Valley of the Kings. It proved a reasonable good trip for birds provided you could identify them from a moving coach, which rather ruled out all the LBJs. Stopping was not an option as we travelled in a convoy of about 50 vehicles. The more interesting sightings were **Montagu's Harrier**, **Black-winged Kites**, **Spur-winged Plovers**, **Pied Kingfishers** and **Brown-necked Ravens**. A set of red lights allowed **Crested Larks** to be identified. The Valley of the Kings produced a small group of **Trumpeter Finches** outside the Tomb of Tutanhamun and **African Rock Martins** were seen at the Temple of Queen Hatchepsut. The full list is below.

English Name	Scientific Name	Notes
Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	One seen on a rocky islet at El Fanadir Reef.
Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>	Common in Nile Valley near Luxor.
Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	Common in Nile Valley near Luxor.
Black-winged Kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>	Several in the in Nile Valley near Luxor.
Montagu's Harrier	<i>Circus pygargus</i>	One "ringtail" in the in Nile Valley near Luxor.
Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	2 with 2 fully fledged young seen an on a rocky islet at El Fanadir Reef.
Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	3 seen in Hurghada
Spur-winged Plover	<i>Hoplopterus spinosus</i>	Several in the in Nile Valley near Luxor.
Sooty Gull	<i>Larus hemprichii</i>	Fairly common off shore around Hurghada
White-eyed Gull	<i>Larus leucophthalmus</i>	Fairly common off shore around Hurghada
Herring Gull sp	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	One seen an on a rocky islet at El Fanadir Reef. I was unable to get good enough views to see if it was an eastern species
Caspian Tern	<i>Sterna caspia</i>	Fairly common off shore around Hurghada
Palm (Laughing) Dove	<i>Streptopelia senegalensis</i>	Fairly common around Hurghada and Luxor
Swift/Pallid Swift	<i>Apus apus/pallidus</i>	Seen in Luxor
Pied Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle rudis</i>	Seen around Luxor
Crested Lark	<i>Galerida cristata</i>	2 seen in Luxor
African Rock Martin	<i>Ptyonoprogne fuligula</i>	2 seen at the Temple of Queen Hatchepsut.
Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	Seen around Luxor
White Wagtail	<i>Moacilla alba</i>	2 or 3 seen around Hurghada
Hooded Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>	Seen around Hurghada
Brown-necked Raven	<i>Corvus ruficollis</i>	Seen en route between Hurghada and Luxor
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	Seen in Luxor
Trumpeter Finch	<i>Bucantetes githaginerus</i>	4 seen in the Valley of the Kings

Bird names taken from **Birds of the Middle East and North Africa** by PAD Hollom, RF Porter, S Christensen and Ian Wallis. T & AD Poyser 1988

EGYPT – THE NILE VALLEY

(Nicholas Beswick)

Itinerary Our trip was a week's cruise from Luxor to Aswan and back, with a day in Luxor at the end. Birdwatching was incidental to visits to temples and tombs but the cruise itself afforded excellent opportunities for observing riverine species. Our tour, provided by Kuoni aboard the Nile Romance, was first rate.

- 15 Jan 08 Early start from Luxor (having arrived from UK overnight) arriving at Edfu in the afternoon to visit the temple and stay overnight
- 16 Jan 08 Sailed to Kom Ombo, visited the temple, and on to Aswan arriving during the evening
- 17 Jan 08 Visits to Philae Island, Aswan High Dam and granite quarries
- 18 Jan 08 Visits to Kitchener Island, Cataract Nature Reserve and Nubian Village. Sailed late afternoon, arriving at Esna overnight
- 19 Jan 08 Sailed from Esna to Luxor in the morning, visited Luxor and Karnak temples
- 20 Jan 08 Visited the West Bank: Queen Hatshepsut's Temple, Valley of the Kings and Valley of the Queens
- 21 Jan 08 Disembarked and transferred to Luxor Sheraton
- 22 Jan 08 Visited Crocodile Island; flew to Sharm-el-Sheikh late afternoon

Weather Conditions could be compared to a typical English summer. Settled sunny weather on the first four days gave way to cool, breezy conditions on 19 Jan and unsettled weather thereafter. A shower at the Valley of the Kings was reputed to have been the first rain there in 15 years. There was heavy rain overnight in Luxor on 21/22 Jan.

Highlights

The Boat Observation was possible from about 0630 to 1730. There are birds to be seen the whole time, with the greatest numbers and variety associated with sand bars, islands and backwaters. Dusk is a good time for seeing large flocks heading to roost. A telescope is valuable though occasionally vibrations in the movement of the boat made its use difficult.

Kom Ombo There were a couple of hours free after the visit to the temple, during which I visited an area of sugar cane plantations immediately to the south of the boat mooring.

Aswan Various islands, sand bars and muddy shores close to the boat moorings hold good numbers of birds and may be viewed from the roadside on the east bank of the river. We were fortunate to have a local expert on the boat visit to Kitchener Island, an arboretum, and the Cataract Nature Reserve. He was able to show us a breeding site for Senegal Thick-knees and to find Little Bitterns and Green Herons along the reedy shores of the reserve. Regrettably, time at Kitchener Island was very short, with birds frustratingly elusive in the trees.

Crocodile Island The site has changed ownership and is now designated “Maritim Jolly Ville Luxor Island Resort”. The access road, signposted thus, is about ½ mile south of the petrol station on the Aswan road out of Luxor. It was a rush to cover the site in a half-day and I met two birding couples who were using the resort as their base. The agricultural area to the east of the causeway is probably worth investigating as well as the island itself. A dawn or dusk visit is recommended for Painted Snipe on the fringes of the channel below the causeway.

Luxor West Bank Trumpeter Finches showed well at both the Valley of the Kings and the Valley of the Queens, with the addition of Blue Rock Thrush and Hooded Wheatear at the latter.

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Egypt trip reports collated by FBRIS.

Egypt List

Species	Comment
African Rock Martin <i>Ptyonoprogne obsoleta</i>	Widespread in small numbers over the river and at archaeological sites
Avadavat <i>Amandava amandava</i>	Group of eight at Crocodile Island on 22 Jan
Black Kite <i>Milvus migrans</i>	Seen daily: 13 near Phylae Island on 17 Jan; two perched on a mast in the centre of Luxor on 21 Jan.
Black Stork <i>Ciconia nigra</i>	One at Aswan Cataract reserve on 18 Jan.
Black-headed Gull <i>Larus ridibundus</i>	Common along the river; hundreds at Aswan on 17 Jan
Black-necked Grebe <i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>	Three in a large raft of ducks between Esna and Edfu on 15 Jan
Black-tailed Godwit <i>Limosa limosa</i>	40 between Esna and Edfu on 15 Jan; 20 at Aswan on 17 Jan

Species	Comment
Black-winged Kite <i>Elanus caeruleus</i>	One between Esna and Edfu on 15 Jan; two at Kom Ombo on 16 Jan; two between Esna and Luxor on 19 Jan; two at Crocodile Island on 22 Jan.
Black-winged Stilt <i>Himantopus himantopus</i>	Common along the river; 20+ at Aswan on 17 Jan
Blue Rock Thrush <i>Monticola solitarius</i>	One at the Valley of the Queens on 20 Jan
Bluethroat <i>Luscinia svecica</i>	Two at Kom Ombo on 16 Jan; one at Aswan cataract reserve on 18 Jan
Brown-necked Raven <i>Corvus ruficollis</i>	Three between Esna and Luxor on 19 Jan; one at the Valley of the Kings on 20 Jan
Buzzard <i>Buteo buteo</i>	One between Esna and Edfu on 15 Jan; one in Aswan area on 17 and 18 Jan
Cattle Egret <i>Bubulcus ibis</i>	Flock of 150 between Edfu and Kom Ombo on 16 Jan; 52 at the Colossi of Memnon on 20 Jan; 19 at Crocodile Island on 22 Jan
Chiffchaff <i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	Present at Kom Ombo, Luxor and Crocodile Island
Clamorous Reed Warbler <i>Acrocephalus stentorius</i>	One at Crocodile Island on 22 Jan
Common Bulbul <i>Pycnonotus barbatus</i>	Present in areas of trees and bushes; two on Luxor waterfront on 21 Jan
Common Sandpiper <i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	Four between Edfu and Kom Ombo on 16 Jan; one at Aswan on 17 Jan; one on Crocodile Island on 22 Jan
Common Tern <i>Sterna hirundo</i>	Common along the river; 100 at Aswan at dusk on 18 Jan
Coot <i>Fulica atra</i>	Common along the river; 1000+ total between Esna and Edfu on 15 Jan.
Cormorant <i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	Common. Flock of 40 fishing in tight formation between Edfu and Kom Ombo on 16 Jan. 50 at Aswan on 17 Jan
Crested Lark <i>Galerida cristata</i>	One at Esna on 19 Jan; seven at Crocodile Island on 22 Jan
Egyptian Goose <i>Alopochen aegyptiacus</i>	Around 300 between Edfu and Kom Ombo on 16 Jan; 30 at Aswan on 17 Jan
Fan-tailed Cisticola <i>Cisticola juncidis</i>	Five at Crocodile Island on 22 Jan
Ferruginous Duck <i>Aythya nyroca</i>	Two on the lake near Phylae Island on 17 Jan; 50 on the river near Kitchener Island on 18 Jan.
Glossy Ibis <i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>	A group of 60 between Esna and Edfu on 15 Jan; 150 flying to roost near Kom Ombo on 16 Jan; 90 feeding in shallows at Aswan boat mooring on 17 Jan.
Graceful Prinia <i>Prinia gracilis</i>	One at Kom Ombo on 16 Jan; one at Luxor on 21 Jan
Great White Egret <i>Egretta alba</i>	One between Luxor and Esna on 15 Jan; two at Aswan Cataract reserve on 18 Jan.

Species	Comment
Greenshank <i>Tringa nebularia</i>	One between Esna and Edfu on 15 Jan; two between Edfu and Kom Ombo on 16 Jan; one at Crocodile Island on 22 Jan
Grey Heron <i>Ardea cinerea</i>	Very common along the river though not in flocks
Gull-billed Tern <i>Gelochelidon nilotica</i>	Common along the river; 20 between Edfu and Kom Ombo on 16 Jan
Hooded Crow <i>Corvus corone</i>	Common and widespread
Hooded Wheatear <i>Oenanthe monacha</i>	One at Phylae Island on 17 Jan
Hoopoe <i>Upupa epops</i>	Widespread; 11 at Crocodile Island on 22 Jan
House Sparrow <i>Passer domesticus</i>	Common and widespread; pre-roosting flock of 300 at Luxor Temple on 20 Jan
Imperial Eagle <i>Aquila heliaca</i>	One adult between Esna and Kom Ombo on 16 Jan
Kentish Plover <i>Charadrius alexandrinus</i>	Group of 11 between Edfu and Kom Ombo on 16 Jan
Kestrel <i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	Seen most days in ones or twos; four at Kom Ombo on 16 Jan.
Kingfisher <i>Alcedo atthis</i>	One between Luxor and Esna on 15 Jan; two at Aswan cataract reserve on 18 Jan; one at Crocodile Island on 22 Jan
Lapwing <i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	One group between Luxor and Edfu on 15 Jan
Lesser Whitethroat <i>Sylvia curruca</i>	One at Kom Ombo on 16 Jan; one on Kitchener Island on 18 Jan; one on Crocodile Island on 22 Jan
Little Bittern <i>Ixobrychus minutus</i>	Three in Aswan Cataract reserve on 18 Jan. One at Crocodile Island on 22 Jan
Little Egret <i>Egretta garzetta</i>	Very common along the river though not in flocks
Little Green Bee-eater <i>Merops orientalis</i>	Five at Kom Ombo on 16 Jan; two at Luxor waterfront on 19 Jan; three at Crocodile Island on 22 Jan
Little Stint <i>Calidris minuta</i>	Two between Edfu and Kom Ombo on 16 Jan; 3 at Aswan on 17 Jan
Long-legged Buzzard <i>Buteo rufinus</i>	One at Luxor on 22 Jan
Mallard <i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	Three domestic breed birds at Crocodile Island on 22 Jan
Marsh Harrier <i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	Seen daily along the river in ones and twos.
Marsh Sandpiper <i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>	Three between Edfu and Kom Ombo on 16 Jan; two at Aswan on 17 Jan; one at Crocodile Island on 22 Jan
Moorhen <i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	Common along the river
Night Heron <i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>	One between Luxor and Esna on 15 Jan; one at Phylae boat mooring on 17 Jan; 15 in Aswan Cataract reserve on 18 Jan
Nile Valley Sunbird <i>Nectarenea osea</i>	One at Kitchener Island on 18 Jan; one at Luxor on 21 Jan and one on Crocodile Island on 22 Jan
Osprey <i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	One near Phylae Island on 17 Jan; one near Kitchener Island on 18 Jan

Species	Comment
Painted Snipe <i>Rostratula benghalensis</i>	One between Edfu and Kom Ombo on 16 Jan; two at Crocodile Island near the causeway on 21 Jan
Pallid Swift <i>Apus pallidus</i>	30 between Luxor and Esna on 15 Jan; 40 at Esna on 19 Jan; 50 over Karnak Temples on 19 Jan; flocks over West Bank sites on 20 Jan
Palm Dove <i>Streptopelia senegalensis</i>	Very widespread
Pied Kingfisher <i>Ceryle rudis</i>	Common along the river; 25 in one clump of bushes between Edfu and Kom Ombo on 16 Jan
Pintail <i>Anas acuta</i>	23 at Aswan on 18 Jan; 56 between Esna and Luxor on 19 Jan.
Pochard <i>Aythya ferina</i>	Roughly 2000 between Esna and Edfu on 15 Jan.
Purple Gallinule <i>Porphyrio porphyrio</i>	Common along the river; group of 48 between Esna and Luxor on 19 Jan
Purple Heron <i>Ardea purpurea</i>	Widespread but much scarcer than Grey Heron; four at Aswan Cataract reserve on 18 Jan.
Redshank <i>Tringa totanus</i>	10 between Esna and Edfu on 15 Jan; two at Aswan on 17 Jan
Redstart <i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>	One at Kom Ombo on 16 Jan
Ringed Plover <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	Two at Aswan on 17 Jan
Rock Dove <i>Columba livia</i>	Feral birds common in towns
Ruff <i>Philomachus pugnax</i>	27 between Edfu and Kom Ombo on 16 Jan; 3 at Aswan on 17 Jan
Sand Martin <i>Riparia riparia</i>	One group between Esna and Edfu on 15 Jan
Sardinian Warbler <i>Sylvia melanocephala</i>	One at Kom Ombo on 16 Jan; one at Aswan on 17 Jan; one on Kitchener Island on 18 Jan
Senegal Thick-knee <i>Burhinus senegalensis</i>	Group of 6 near Kitchener Island on 18 Jan; 9 at Crocodile Island on 22 Jan
Shoveler <i>Anas clypeata</i>	Around 1000 between Esna and Edfu on 15 Jan; 150 at Aswan on 17 Jan
Snipe <i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	Eight at Aswan on 17 Jan
Sparrowhawk <i>Accipiter nisus</i>	One between Edfu and Kom Ombo on 16 Jan; one between Esna and Luxor on 19 Jan.
Spoonbill <i>Platalea leucorodia</i>	40 in a backwater between Luxor and Esna on 15 Jan; 55 in a backwater between Edfu and Kom Ombo on 16 Jan; 14 over the boat at Aswan on 18 Jan.
Spur-winged Plover <i>Hoplopterus spinosus</i>	Common along the river; 110+ between Edfu and Kom Ombo on 16 Jan; 20 at Aswan on 17 Jan
Squacco Heron <i>Ardeola ralloides</i>	Common along the river but never in large numbers. One at the sacred pond at Karnak Temple on 19 Jan.
Striated Heron <i>Butorides striatus</i>	One at Kom Ombo on 16 Jan; four at Aswan Cataract reserve on 18 Jan
Swallow <i>Hirundo rustica</i>	Large flocks of red-bellied race, <i>savignii</i> , over the river; flock of 40+ pink-bellied race, <i>transitiva</i> , at Crocodile Island on 22 Jan

Species	Comment
Teal <i>Anas crecca</i>	Small numbers along the river; 15 at Aswan on 17 Jan
Trumpeter Finch <i>Bucanetes githagineus</i>	Three at the Valley of the Kings and three at the Valley of the Queens on 20 Jan
Tufted Duck <i>Aythya fuligula</i>	Roughly 2000 between Esna and Edfu on 15 Jan; 50 on the lake near the Aswan Dam on 17 Jan.
Western Reef Heron <i>Egretta gularis</i>	Several along the river between Luxor and Edfu on 15 Jan. I have traced no record of this species in the Nile valley but these birds showed clear distinguishing features from Little Egrets.
Whiskered Tern <i>Chlidonias hybridus</i>	Common along the river
White Pelican <i>Pelecanus onocrotalus</i>	One with a flock of Spoonbills between Luxor and Esna on 15 Jan
White Wagtail <i>Motacilla alba</i>	Common and widespread; flock of 70 in pre-roosting flight at Aswan on 17 Jan
White-crowned Black Wheatear <i>Oenanthe leucopyga</i>	One at Queen Hatsepsut's Temple and two at the Valley of the Queens on 20 Jan
White-winged Black Tern <i>Chlidonias leucopterus</i>	Common along the river
Wigeon <i>Anas penelope</i>	50 between Esna and Edfu on 15 Jan; 300 between Edfu and Kom Ombo on 16 Jan; 10 at Aswan on 17 Jan.
Wood Sandpiper <i>Tringa glareola</i>	One at Crocodile Island on 22 Jan
Yellow Wagtail <i>Motacilla flava</i>	20 between Luxor and Esna on 15 Jan; 40 at Crocodile Island on 22 Jan
Zebra Waxbill <i>Amandava subflava</i>	Group of eight at Kom Ombo on 16 Jan

EGYPT – SOUTHERN SINAI

(Nicholas Beswick)

Itinerary We added a short stay at the Hyatt Regency at Naama Bay to our Nile cruise. Two day trips were organised by Kuoni Travel.

- 23 Jan Local area, having arrived overnight from Luxor
- 24 Jan Local area, including visits to the Sharm sewage farm and water treatment plant
- 25 Jan Boat trip to Ras Mohammed National Park
- 26 Jan Trip to St Catherine's Monastery. Early flight to Cairo on 27 Jan.

Weather Conditions were hot and sunny for the first three days; the weather turned cloudy, cool and windy on 26 Jan, with a little drizzle

Main Sites After the abundance of birds on the Nile, their relative scarcity at Sharm came as a great disappointment. Both numbers and variety were low compared with records drawn from FBRIS trip reports. The coastal strip heading north from Sharm is now heavily developed for about ten miles. Birds are reliant on the artificial habitats created around the resorts with undeveloped areas totally barren and devoid of plants or other life. More surprising was the near-absence of seabirds, given the abundance of marine life.

Hotels Hotel gardens provide havens for small passerines, including Bluethroats that were as tame as British garden Robins. Regular insecticide spraying at the Hyatt may have had an adverse effect.

Sharm Sewage Farm This site is on the east side of Tower Road about a mile from the junction with the main Sharm-Naama Bay highway. The four settling ponds have long dried out: no water, no birds. There were a few birds in the adjacent woodland, though nothing of note.

Water Treatment Plant The ponds are about three miles inland from the north end of the Naama Bay strip and adjacent to the quad bike trail. Omar's Riding Stables are a short distance away. The intervening land is desert, intersected by two highways that run inland from Sharm. The principal feature at the plant was the flock of White Storks, though there was also a worryingly large number of corpses.

Nabq A shallow pool in an area of waste ground, probably caused by a leaking pipe, provided a good but temporary haven for a variety of water birds at the north end of Nabq.

Ras Mohammed National Park Our boat trip took us along the east coast of the peninsula to its tip, with several stops for snorkelling. Birds were conspicuous by their absence, with just a few gulls in Sharm harbour.

St Catherine's Monastery The bus took the east coast route through spectacular mountain and desert scenery, with a few birds identified en route. At our destination, Tristram's Grackles showed well and one Sinai Rosefinch gave a brief view.

Dahab Returning from St Catherine's Monastery, our tour paused at Dahab for a late lunch. This resort, about 60 miles along the coast from Sharm has not yet been heavily developed and has areas of mud along the shore. There is a large lagoon at the south end of the town that looks well worth investigating but it was too far from the town or road for any exploration during our visit.

Transport Taxis, though readily available, are now much more expensive than previously reported. A very cheap alternative within the general Sharm area are the micro-buses used by the local workers, though their routes can be unpredictable. The tour to St Catherine's Monastery offered virtually no opportunity for exploration en route. Car hire could be a good option for those prepared to brave the local motorists.

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 Egypt trip reports collated by FBRIS

Sinai List

Species	Comments
African Rock Martin <i>Ptyonoprogne obsoleta</i>	Widespread in small numbers
Black Kite <i>Milvus migrans</i>	14 en route to St Catherine's on 26 Jan.
Black-winged Stilt <i>Himantopus himantopus</i>	One at Nabq on 24 Jan
Bluethroat <i>Luscinia svecica</i>	Three at Hyatt Regency hotel on 23 Jan; very tame
Bonelli's Eagle <i>Hierataeus fasciatus</i>	One between the camel station and water treatment plant on 24 Jan
Brown-necked Raven <i>Corvus ruficollis</i>	Pair at Ras Mohammed National Park on 25 Jan
Buzzard <i>Buteo buteo</i>	One over Sharm on 24 Jan
Cattle Egret <i>Bubulcus ibis</i>	A few feeding on lawns around the developments; three at the camel station on 24 Jan
Chiffchaff <i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	Widespread; at least 10 at Hyatt Regency hotel and gathering of 20 at a patch of reeds in Naama Bay on 23 Jan
Collared Dove <i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	Six at Sharm sewage ponds on 24 Jan
Common Sandpiper <i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	Two at the water treatment plant on 24 Jan
Dunlin <i>Calidris alpina</i>	Two at Nabq on 24 Jan
Greenshank <i>Tringa nebularia</i>	Three at Nabq on 24 Jan
Grey Heron <i>Ardea cinerea</i>	One at the water treatment plant and one at Nabq on 24 Jan
Grey Plover <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>	One at Nabq on 24 Jan
Hooded Wheatear <i>Oenanthe monacha</i>	One at the camel station on 24 Jan
House Crow <i>Corvus splendens</i>	One at Old Sharm on 24 Jan
House Sparrow <i>Passer domesticus</i>	Common around developments
Kentish Plover <i>Charadrius alexandrinus</i>	Three at Nabq on 24 Jan
Kestrel <i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	Pair resident at Hyatt Regency hotel and others in Sharm area
Kingfisher <i>Alcedo atthis</i>	Two at Dahab on 26 Jan, one providing the figurehead to a dinghy
Little Egret <i>Egretta garzetta</i>	One at Sharm on 25 Jan
Little Grebe <i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	One at the water treatment plant on 24 Jan
Little Stint <i>Calidris minuta</i>	Two at the water treatment plant on 24 Jan
Mallard <i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	Three at the water treatment plant on 24 Jan
Palm Dove <i>Streptopelia senegalensis</i>	Very widespread
Redshank <i>Tringa totanus</i>	Three at the water treatment plant and six at Nabq on 24 Jan

Species	Comments
Red-throated Pipit <i>Anthus cervinus</i>	Three at a patch of reeds at Naama Bay on 23 Jan
Rock Dove <i>Columba livia</i>	Feral birds common in towns; some pure breed birds in the desert hinterland; 14 pure breed birds at St Catherine's on 26 Jan
Sardinian Warbler <i>Sylvia melanocephala</i>	Four at Hyatt Regency hotel on 23 Jan
Scrub Warbler <i>Scotocerca inquieta</i>	One at St Catherine's on 26 Jan
Sinai Rosefinch <i>Carpodacus synoicus</i>	One female at St Catherine's on 26 Jan
Spanish Sparrow <i>Passer hispaniolensis</i>	Six at Delta Resort on 24 Jan
Spur-winged Plover <i>Hoplopterus spinosus</i>	Two at the water treatment plant on 24 Jan
Stonechat <i>Saxicola torquata</i>	Pair at Hyatt Regency hotel and one at Delta Resort on 24 Jan
Teal <i>Anas crecca</i>	12 at the water treatment plant on 24 Jan
Tristram's Grackle <i>Onychognathus tristramii</i>	12 at St Catherine's on 26 Jan
Western Reef Heron <i>Egretta gularis</i>	Two on the foreshore at Dahab on 26 Jan
White Stork <i>Ciconia ciconia</i>	150 at the water treatment plant on 24 Jan, also 28 dried-out and scavenged remains.
White Wagtail <i>Motacilla alba</i>	Pre-roost gathering of about 2000 on barren ground near Hyatt Regency hotel on 24 Jan; roosted on roofs in the complex
White-crowned Black Wheatear <i>Oenanthe leucopyga</i>	One en route and four at St Catherine's on 26 Jan
White-eyed Gull <i>Larus leucophthalmus</i>	Six in Sharm harbour on 25 Jan
Yellow-legged Gull <i>Larus cachinnans</i>	One in Sharm harbour on 25 Jan

LIBYA

(Mark Easterbrook)

References

Collins Guide to the *Birds of Britain & Europe with N. Africa & The Middle East*.

INTRODUCTION

My wife and I visited Libya for the 2007 New Year (27 Dec 07 – 3 Jan 08). The intention was to visit the Greco Roman sites and see a country that is not visited by many British tourists, whilst birding where possible within the tour itinerary. 52 species were seen without much effort with **Fulvous Babbler** or **Greater Sand Plover** being the stars.

DAILY ITINEARIES

Day One

We arrived in Tripoli at about 4 pm. We quickly met our guide and headed for our hotel in the centre of Tripoli. **Hoopoe**, **Southern Grey Shrike** and **Palm Dove** were

seen along the road but nothing remarkable. Later that evening we walked in to Tripoli centre and found a local restaurant; the roasted chicken with lots of harissa was excellent.

Day Two

A quick walk before breakfast revealed that Sardinian Warbler was the most common bird around the hotel area. After breakfast we headed east out of Tripoli towards the ruins at Sebratha. The harbour held a **Little Egret**, several **Cormorants** and a few **Baltic Gulls**. During the journey many **Southern Grey Shrikes** were seen, closer inspection revealed a mixture of *elegans* and *algeriensis* sub species.

The ruins at Sebratha were impressive and a little birding time produced **Serins**, good numbers of **Black Redstarts**, a **Hoopoe**, **Little Owl** and two **Blue Rock Thrushes**. A quick look at the sea brought several **Sandwich Terns**, a loafing **Gannet** and a **Cory's Shearwater**, presumably Scipoli's. A **Blackcap** was seen later at the catacombs near Janzour.

Day Three

A visit to the Arch of Marcus Aurelius in Tripoli started the day followed by visits to the museum and the souk. **Southern Grey Shrike** was a surprisingly common bird in the centre of Tripoli and later a walk along the harbour road produced a **Common Sandpiper**, **Kingfisher**, several **Baltic Gulls**, 2 **Audouin's Gulls** and a **Pallid Swift** drifted over the city.

Day Four

We travelled west today to the fantastic ruins at Lepcis Magna. A **Chiffchaff** was noted with **Blue Rock Thrush** and **Black Redstarts** being fairly common. Two **Green Sandpipers** and an **Osprey** put in an appearance whilst **Sardinian Warblers** scolded from most bushes. The birds of the trip were a group of nine **Fulvous Babblers** working their way along the acacias and tamarisk in the wadi. A little patience was rewarded with fantastic view of these birds as they fed under a bush.

Day Five

An internal flight from Tripoli to Benghazi at a cost of £40 was excellent value. We arrived at about 1400 and began to travel to our hotel in Appolonia via the ruins at Potalamais, Here I connected with the North African race of **Chaffinch**, several **Goldfinches** and a few **Crested Larks**, with numerous **Corn Buntings** lining the wires adjacent to the fields. We arrived at Appolonia in the late evening after having added **Cattle Egret** and **Starling** to the list.

Day Six

We initially visited Cyrene and the Temple of Zeus with the only new bird being several **Meadow Pipits**. Later at the town ruins a **Long-legged Buzzard** was seen and another **Blue Rock Thrush**.

During the afternoon we returned to the site at Appolonia near the coast. After becoming "all ruined out", I detached myself from the main body of the group and headed off to the harbour where some birds on the rocks had caught my attention earlier that morning. A productive half and hour ensued where another two **Kingfishers** were seen, three **Common Sandpipers**, a **Redshank**, three **Kentish Plover**, two **Ringed Plover**, a **Grey Plover** and the star of the show a **Greater Sand Plover** of the *columbinus* race; which I had previously experienced in Cyprus.

Day Seven

During the return trip to Benghazi for our evening flight we stopped at Qasr Libya to view many well preserved mosaics. Three **Ravens** were noted near here along with several more **Starlings**, a **Southern Grey Shrike** and in fields adjoining the site about sixty **Golden Plover**. Approximately 80Km east of Benghazi in coastal lagoons a flock of **Greater Flamingo** were noted.

Day Eight

Before flying home another **Southern Grey Shrike**, **Palm Dove** and two **House Sparrows** were seen from the coach. I usually conclude with a comment about an uneventful flight. Unfortunately on this occasion I am unable to end in the familiar way. A gentleman sitting next to my wife caused a bit of a stir and a little amusement when his glass eye fell out and a search around the floor took place. Several tasteless/amusing (depending on your point of view) comments were heard and of course, I contributed a few.

SUMMARY

Libya was completely safe with no trouble at all. People we met, even in the Tripoli medina, exploring by ourselves, were very friendly, helpful and polite. There are some excellent restaurants serving both local and international cuisine that are reasonably priced. The archaeological sites are fantastic and birding in and around them produced some good birds. The country is worthy of further exploration, although travelling alone and not as part of an organised tour appears very problematic.



Cattle Egret

MOROCCO - ATLAS TO SAHARA (THE MATING TOUR)

13 – 23 Feb 08

(Mark Easterbrook)

References:

1. Collins Guide to the *Birds of Britain & Europe with N. Africa & the Middle East*.

Leader: Josele J Sais – Boletas Birdwatching Centre.

The Group:

Dave Ramsden
David Wadding
Jan Turner
Jayne Barnard

Hugh Davidson
Mark Easterbrook
Gerry Turner
Harry Barnard

Lance Cawthorn
Richard Birchman
Dave Barnard

Introduction

It started with five **House Buntings** at Marrakech Airport and ended with two more in the airport departures lounge, in between many sought after species were seen. The group saw 163 species collectively with a few more heard, as is the norm, not everyone saw everything; however nobody missed any of the specialities of Southern Morocco. The tour became known as the "mating tour" on account of the numerous species witnessed displaying and copulating. It was also known by some as the "must go to the loo" tour for reasons that must be obvious to seasoned travellers.

Common Species

The following table contains a list of common species that can be easily seen in good numbers in suitable habitat throughout Southern Morocco.

Common Name	Scientific Name
Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>
Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>
Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo maroccanus</i>
Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>
Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>
Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>
White Stork	<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>
Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>
Eurasian Spoonbill	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>
Greater Flamingo	<i>Phoenicopterus ruber</i>
Long-legged Buzzard	<i>Buteo rufinus cirtensis</i>
Eurasian Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>
Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>
Eurasian Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>
Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>
Eurasian Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>
Common Redshank	<i>Tringa tetanus</i>
Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>
Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>

Common Name	Scientific Name
Audouin's Gull	<i>Larus audouinii</i>
W Yellow-legged Gull	<i>Larus cachinnans michahellis</i>
Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus graellsii</i>
Black-headed Gull	<i>Larus ridibundus</i>
Sandwich Tern	<i>Sterna sandvicencis</i>
Eurasian Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>
Laughing Dove	<i>Streptopelia senegalensis</i>
Pallid Swift	<i>Apus pallidus</i>
Little Swift	<i>Apus affinis</i>
Eurasian Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>
Bar-tailed Desert Lark	<i>Ammomanes cincturus arenicolor</i>
Desert Lark	<i>Ammomanes deserti payni monody</i>
Hoopoe Lark	<i>Alaemon alaudipes</i>
Lesser Short-toed Lark	<i>Calandrella fufescens minor</i>
Crested Lark	<i>Galerida cristata randonii</i>
Thekla Lark	<i>Galerida theklae aguirrei</i>
Temminck's Lark	<i>Eremophila alpestris bilopha</i>
Eurasian Crag Martin	<i>Hirundo rupestris</i>
Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>
White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>
Common Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus barbatus</i>
Blue Rock Thrush	<i>Monticola solitarius</i>
Eurasian Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula mauretanicus</i>
Zitting Cisticola	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>
Common Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>
Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>
Subalpine Warbler	<i>Sylvia cantillans</i>
Sardinian Warbler	<i>Sylvia melanocephala</i>
Black Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros gibralteriensis</i>
Moussier's Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus moussieri</i>
Common Stonechat	<i>Saxicola torquata</i>
White-crowned Black Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe leucopyga augra</i>
Black Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe leucura</i>
Desert Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe deserti homochroa</i>
Southern Grey Shrike	<i>Lanius meridionalis algeriensis</i>
Southern Grey Shrike	<i>Lanius meridionalis elegans</i>
Spotless Starling	<i>Sturnus unicolor</i>
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus tingitanus</i>
European Greenfinch	<i>Carduelis chloris</i>
European Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>
Eurasian Linnet	<i>Carduelis cannabina</i>
European Serin	<i>Serinus serinus</i>
Trumpeter Finch	<i>Rhodopechys githaginea zedlitzii</i>
House Bunting	<i>Emberiza striolata sahari</i>

Day by Day Itineraries with highlights

Day 1 - 13 Feb 08

Departing Heathrow and Gatwick at about 0900 the group fused at Marrakech Airport at about 1430 where the first **House Buntings** were noted. The journey to Agadir was punctuated with several stops which produced **Black Kites**, **Common Bulbuls**, **Sardinian Warblers** and a perched **Short-toed Eagle** at the side of the road. A brief stop at the Oued Sousse produced an **Osprey**, many **Greater Flamingos** and a **Red-necked Nightjar** (heard). Arrival at the hotel in Agadir was at about 1830 and

everyone enjoyed a shower before dining at 2000. Refreshed, fed and watered everyone eagerly awaited the first dawn chorus.

Day 2 – 14 Feb 08

We awoke to the sound of **Common Bulbuls** and **Blackcaps**. **Yellow-legged** and **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** loitered around the swimming pool with **Pallid** and **Little Swift** performing overhead. We drove to the Sousse Massa National Park stopping at Commune Sidi Wassay, which produced several **Moussier's Redstarts**, a **Little Owl** and the ubiquitous **House Bunting**. Further along the road a Moroccan race **White Wagtail** (*subpersonata*) was noted, which proved to be rarer than expected and was only witnessed by a few of the group.

At the Sousse Massa two **Black-crowned Tchagras** performed well for the group, with one in display flight, whilst at least six were heard calling. **Marbled Ducks** were present along with **Ferruginous** and a group of forty-one **Common Crane** lifted off over the **Greater Flamingos**. Several **Plain Martins** eventually gave themselves up and provided good flyby views. On the way to a café by the coast at least three early **Cream-coloured Coursers** were seen on the plateaux and a brief seawatch produced **Gannets**, **Shag**, **Balearic** and **Sooty Shearwaters**.

Stopping at the Oued Sousse before retiring for the night added **Stone Curlews**, **Grey Plover** and at least another **Red-necked Nightjar** heard which would not play the game and come closer.



A male Moussier's Redstart admires himself in the village of Commune Sidi Wassi

Day 3 – 15 Feb 08

The group journeyed to the famous Tamri area in search of Bald Ibis, stopping at the beach to view **Audouin's**, **Lesser Black-backed** and **Yellow-legged Gulls**. The only **Sanderling** and **Little Ringed Plover** were also seen here whilst we were also treated to the site of 13 **Bald Ibis's** drifting over us from the direction of the communications masts on the hill. We travelled a short distance to the cliffs where we encountered a breeding colony of 43 birds some of which were noted copulating and displaying.

En route to Tadourante the group stopped in the mountains at a place known as Paradise Valley, which was known to the leader. After a slow start the area provided good views of a pair of displaying and mating **Golden Eagles** and shortly after a pair

of **Bonelli's Eagles** displayed also. A pair of **White Stork** greeted us on our arrival at Tadourante, before we headed for the hotel and a cool beer.

Day 4 – 16 Feb 08

We departed Tadourante sighting what had become common birds and headed towards Ouzarzate. Stopping on the way for **Black Kites** and a **Long-legged Buzzard**. A stop at a river valley near Aoulouz ensured we encountered another **Tchagra**, **Peregrine**, two **Red-rumped Swallow** and our first male **Blue Rock Thrush**. At a café a little further along the road a pair of **Black Wheatears** was seen. **Southern Grey Shrikes** (*algeriensis*), lined the road and a further two opportunistic stops produced a first year **Golden Eagle**, **Spectacled Warbler** and a **Desert Wheatear**. By the time we arrived at Ouzarzete Reservoir, **White-crowned Black Wheatear** had become the most common bird at the roadside. Ouzarzete Reservoir was an interesting place but didn't produce that many birds. Another **Osprey** was seen, a flock of **Shoveller**, two **Great Crested Grebe** and the highlight for many at least three **Moroccan White Wagtails**. It would appear from previous trip reports that this is a good place to see this, at times difficult to see species. We finally arrived at our hotel in El Kelaa, where we took dinner and awaited the early morning start for the Tadrart Track.

Day 5 – 17 Feb 08

For many a visit to the Tadrart Track is one of the highlights of a birdwatching trip to Southern Morocco and this proved to be no exception. Upon our arrival a pair of **Red-rumped Wheatears** were seen, later at least three pairs were seen in the steppe area, however were not seen anywhere else during the tour. After this initial good fortune, the group settled down to getting to grips with the content of the many flocks of **Larks** that were in the area. Soon enough a female **Thick-billed Lark** was spotted accompanied shortly after by the male. During the course of the day at least 25 of these fantastic Larks were seen, with one flock of 18 being a particular highlight.

Day 6 – 18 Feb 08

The journey to the Todra Gorge and the desert was interrupted with several stops. At a site known to the leader, the group found itself peering at a **Pharaoh Eagle Owl** roosting in the open. Several **Temminck's Larks**, a group of **Trumpeters**, a **Short-toed Eagle** and a pair of **Red-rumped Wheatears** kept morale high. Another stop at an unlikely looking scree slope produced the target bird; a pair of **Mourning Wheatears** with a singing male. The nearby area also held our first "grillable" **Desert Larks**, with **Trumpeters**, a male **Black Wheatear** and a fly by **Crag Martin** putting in an appearance. A lunch break at Todra Gorge ensured the group was well fed and watered before successfully teasing out a male **Tristram's Warbler**, **Rock Bunting**, **Rock Sparrow** as well as the commoner **Crag Martins**, including a **House Martin** and **Grey Wagtails**. We arrived at the hotel in the dark and had failed to realise what a fantastic setting it was.

Day 7 – 19 Feb 08

In the morning we awoke to the site of the extensive sand dunes of Erg Chebbi and travelled towards the Café Jasmine. The lake behind the café was fairly extensive following heavy rains and unusually held **Greater Flamingos**, **Ruddy Shelducks** and a single **Ruff**. Unfortunately due to the rains the target Desert Sparrows were not feeding in their usual tamarisks. A **Brown-necked Raven** passed overhead before our quarry was located on some nearby out buildings; a cracking male and female **Desert Sparrow** performed well for their admirers. Nearby a pair of **Greater Short-toed Larks** with their distinctive rusty caps and a pair of **Hoopoe Lark** was admired.

We headed off into the extensive Merzouga desert in search of Houbara and Sandgrouse. Stopping for a pair of displaying **African Desert Warblers** was a good find. The obviously different **Southern Grey Shrike** (*Ssp elegans*) and **Cream-coloured Coursers** were seen in small numbers as we traversed the area but no Houbara. With the Houbara and local wardens being uncooperative we headed to a secluded area adjacent to the sand dunes for a rustic lunch prepared by our local Berber drivers. A singing *Sylvia* Warbler distracted the group and eventually a stunning male **Tristram's** showed fantastically well in perfect light conditions. A small group of 5 more **Desert Sparrows** was a real bonus whilst we ate lunch. Nearby the group paused after lunch to view a small flock of **Bar-tailed Desert Larks** and a pair of displaying **Hoopoe Larks**.

Having failed with the Houbara and Sandrouse our last stop was at Merzouga Lake that held a large flock of **Greater Flamingos**, circa 60 **Ruddy Shelduck**, a pair of **Marsh Harrier** and an unlikely group of 12 **Kentish Plovers**. Too much rain had beaten the group once more. With the lake being expanded and there being a lack of muddy fringes the expected waders were absent.

Day 8 – 20 Feb 08

Before departing the desert a pair of **Subalpine Warblers** and a recently arrived **Woodchat Shrike** bade us farewell whilst a **Brown-necked Raven** looked on. The long journey to Ouzarzate was made enjoyable by several birding opportunities. The first stop was made at Alfif that to our surprise produced the species we thought we were going to dip on. Near to the village a family group of **Fulvous Babblers** performed and another **Hoopoe** was noted. After consulting with a local Houbara warden we headed off into the plains in search of one. Unfortunately again we had no luck, however better views of more groups of **Babblers** displaying and a **Tristram's Warbler** provided slight compensation.

The second stop was in the Draa Valley where a **Greenshank**, **Green Sandpiper**, several **Song Thrush**, **Snipe** and female **Sparrowhawk** were recorded. We arrived at Ouzarzate tired after a hot day in the sun and ready for a shower, beer and bed.

Day 9 – 21 Feb 08

The penultimate day had the group heading towards Marrakech via the Tiz-n-Tichka pass, punctuated with several birding stops. Many birds we had already seen were noted until we reached a café at Amergane, in the mountains. Here, new birds were

Mistle Thrushes, Great Tits and a Corn Bunting. Two **Red-billed Choughs** passed above us while a handsome male North African race **Chaffinch** showed well.

Later at Toofiat a Pine and mixed woodland area looked birdless. However the sun came out briefly and a good hours birding ensued. A pair of **Hawfinches** fed low down and showed well, a **Short-toed Treecreeper**, several **Coal Tits**, 2 **Crossbills** and a pair of **Great Spotted Woodpeckers** were very obliging. However the undoubted highlight was a pair of **Goshawks** with the male performing display flight that captured the group's attention. Further along the pass, at a site known to Josele, we stopped and scanned. Soon a female **Barbary Falcon** was noted and shortly after the male, with yet more copulating being witnessed. A **Long-legged Buzzard** put in an appearance and **Serins** could be heard everywhere.

Day 10 – 22 Feb 08

There were two species to find on the final day. On the journey to Oukaineden Ski Resort, as suggested by many guidebooks we stopped and listened. Almost immediately a **Levaillant's Woodpecker** was heard. On a bare dead tree directly in front of us a cracking male called and fed, and was soon joined by the female – a great result! Having had good luck with the Woodpecker it appeared our look had run out with the Crimson-winged Finch. Despite hours of searching in the snow, which was extensive for this time of year, the birds could not be found in their usual places of residence. This was probably as a result of the more than usual amount of snow and a lack of suitable feeding areas. Despite this several good species were seen including **Alpine** and **Red-billed Choughs** in good numbers, **Shore Lark**, **Rock Sparrows**, **Rock Buntings** and a pair of unexpected **Brambling**. On the way down the mountain a male Atlas race **Black Redstart** was seen briefly.

Day 11 – 23 Feb 08

We departed on an early morning flight but not before seeing our final two confiding House Buntings in the departure lounge. The flight was via Casablanca but uneventful and we arrived at Heathrow at about 1400.

Selective Species List

Common Name	Scientific Name	Location
Balearic Shearwater	<i>Puffinus yelkouan mauretanicus</i>	1 flying S at the mouth of the mouth of the Sousse Massa
Sooty Shearwater		1 flying N at the mouth of the mouth of the Sousse Massa
Northern Gannet	<i>Morus bassanus</i>	Several from coastal locations
European Shag	<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>	1 flying N at the mouth of the Sousse Massa
Squacco Heron	<i>Ardeola ralloides</i>	1 or 2 at Sousse Massa
Bald Ibis	<i>Geronticus eremita</i>	13 over the beach at Tamri and 30 at the breeding cliffs
Ruddy Shelduck	<i>Tadorna ferruginea</i>	1 at Sousse Massa and numerous at Merzouga Lake and behind Café Jasmine

Common Name	Scientific Name	Location
Common Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>	1 or 2 at Sousse Massa and 1 at Ouzarzate Res
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	A large flock only at Sousse Massa
Northern Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>	A few at Sousse Massa
Northern Shoveler	<i>Anas clypeata</i>	Small numbers at Ouzarzate Res and Merzourga Lake
Marbled Teal	<i>Marmaronetta angustirostris</i>	C20 at Sousse Massa
Common Pochard	<i>Aythya farina</i>	2 only at Sousse Massa
Ferruginous Duck	<i>Aythya nyroca</i>	Several only at Sousse Massa
Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>	Several only at Sousse Massa
Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	1 at Oued Sousse on both nights and 1 at Ouzarzate Res
Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>	Good numbers of migrating birds SW of Marrakesh near Chichaoua on the first day with 1s and 2s elsewhere
Short-toed Eagle	<i>Circaetus gallicus</i>	Singletons seen throughout near the Tadlit Track and along the roadside
W Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus harterti</i>	A couple of pairs at Sousse Massa and Merzouga Lake
Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus punicus</i>	A pair in the Draa River Valley
Northern Goshawk	<i>Accipiter gentiles</i>	A pair with the male displaying at Toofiat
Golden Eagle	<i>Aquila chrysaetos homeyeri</i>	A pair mating with the male displaying at "Paradise Valley" between Tamri and Agadir and one at Tizi ikc Nante
Bonelli's Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus fasciatus</i>	A pair with the male displaying at "Paradise Valley" between Tamri and Agadir
Lesser Kestrel	<i>Falco naumanni</i>	3 or 4 birds at Sousse Massa
Lanner	<i>Falco biarmicus erlangeri</i>	1 over the plains near the Tadlit Track
Barbary Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus pelegrinoides</i>	A mating pair beyond Toofiat at a roadside stop and 1 flyby near the Tadlit Track
Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus minor</i>	1 at Aoulouz and on chasing larks at Oukaineden
Barbary Partridge	<i>Alectoris Barbara spatzi</i>	2 at Sousse Massa and 1 heard at a roadside stop
Common Crane	<i>Grus grus</i>	41 at Sousse Massa
Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus himantopus</i>	4 or 5 at Oued Sousse
Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>	2 on the beach at Tamri
Stone Curlew	<i>Burhinus oedicephalus saharae</i>	4 or 5 at Oued Sousse on consecutive nights and 1 calling near Commune Sidi Wassay

Common Name	Scientific Name	Location
Cream-coloured Courser	<i>Cursorius cursor</i>	3 on the plateaux above the Sousse Massa, at least 40 on in the areas surrounding the Tadlit Track and other small numbers in desert areas
Northern Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	Several at Oued Sousse and Sousse Massa
Grey Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>	Several at Oued Sousse
Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	Several at Oued Sousse
Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>	1 bird on the beach at Tamri
Kentish Plover	<i>Charadrius alexandrinus</i>	1 or 2 at Sousse Massa and at least 12 at Merzouga Lake
Common Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	1 at Sousse Massa and 1 at the Draa River Valley
Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa</i>	1 at Sousse Massa and several at Oued Sousse
Bar-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>	At least five at Oued Sousse
Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos hypoleucos</i>	3 at the Oued Sousse
Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>	1 bird on the beach at Tamri
Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>	Several birds at Oued Sousse
Ruff	<i>Philomachus pugnax</i>	1 at the lake behind Café Jasmine and 1 Sousse Massa
Black-bellied Sandgrouse	<i>Pterocles orientalis</i>	18 near the Tadlit Track with several heard in suitable habitat
Rock Dove	<i>Columba livia</i>	3 genuine birds seen between Ouzarzate and Marrakech beyond the Draa River Valley
Woodpigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	Common in the mountains with small numbers seen elsewhere
Pharaoh Eagle Owl	<i>Bubo ascalaphus</i>	1 seen very well at roost on a rockface at an undisclosed site in the Draa River valley
Little Owl	<i>Athene noctua saharae (solitudinis)</i>	2 near Commune Sidi Wassay and 1 at Oukaineden
Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	1 at the Sousse Massa and 1 at Aoulouz
Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>	2 and 1 heard at Toofiat
Levaillant's Woodpecker	<i>Picus viridis vaillantii</i>	A pair at KM54 on the way to Oukaineden
Thick-billed Lark	<i>Ramphocoris clotbey</i>	At least 25 present in the area of the Tadlit track
Greater Short-toed Lark	<i>Calandrella cinerea rubiginosa</i>	Several at the Tadlit track and throughout & 2 seen well near Café Jasmin
Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis harterti</i>	A small flock at the Tadlit track only

Common Name	Scientific Name	Location
Horned Lark	<i>Eremophila alpestris atlas</i>	At least 30 present at Oukaineden in the Atlas mountains
Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>	1 at Sousse Massa
Plain Martin	<i>Riparia paludicola mauretunica</i>	Several at Sousse Massa bridge
Red-rumped Swallow	<i>Hirundo daurica rufula</i>	2 near Sousse Massa and 2 at Aoulouz
House Martin	<i>Delichon urbica</i>	1 at Sousse Massa and 1 in the Todra Gorge with Crag Martins
Moroccan Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba subpersonata</i>	1 near Sousse Massa and 3 seen well at Ouzarzete Res
Blue-headed Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>	1 flyby - not ID'd to race at Sousse Massa
Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	Numerous in the Todra Gorge
Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	1 at Aoulouz
Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	Several at Draa Valley and 2 at Ait Ben Hadou
Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus bonapartei</i>	2 at Amergane café and one at Oukaineden
Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>	2 seen at Sousse Massa
Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>	Not as common as Chiffchaff but small numbers seen at Sousse Massa
African Desert Warbler	<i>Sylvia nana deserti</i>	A pair displaying in the Merzouga desert with at least 5 in total seen during the day
Spectacled Warbler	<i>Sylvia conspicillata</i>	Singletons seen throughout – never easy or numerous
Tristram's Warbler	<i>Sylvia deserticola moroccana</i>	4 birds seen, 1 in the Todra Gorge, 2 Merzouga Desert and 1 near Alfif plains
Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	Heard and seen singly in the Todra Gorge and the mountains
Northern Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	1 near the Tadrat Track and one in the Merzouga desert
Mourning Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe lugens halophila</i>	A pair seen on a scree slope between the Tadrat track and Ouzarzate
Red-rumped Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe moesta</i>	At least 4 pairs seen in the vicinity of the Tadrat track only
Fulvous Babbler	<i>Turdoides fulvus moroccanus</i>	Groups of 8, 7 & 3 seen around Alfif and surrounding plains with acacias
Coal Tit	<i>Periparus ater atlas</i>	Common in the Atlas mountains only
Great Tit	<i>Parus major excelsus</i>	Common in the Atlas mountains
African Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistess ultramarinus</i>	Numerous in the mountains and

Common Name	Scientific Name	Location
		Is seen and heard elsewhere
Short-toed Treecreeper	<i>Certhia brachydactyla mauretanic</i>	1 at the mountain stop in Amergane
Woodchat Shrike	<i>Lanius senator</i>	1 seen outside the hotel at Erg Chebbi
Black-crowned Tchagra	<i>Tchagra senegala cucullata</i>	2 seen and 6 heard at the Sousse Masa. 1 displaying and 1 heard at Aoulouz.
Magpie	<i>Pica pica mauretanic</i>	Ones and twos seen throughout easy and common at Sousse Masa
Red-billed Chough	<i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax barbarus</i>	Only in the mountains and most common at Oukaineden
Alpine Chough	<i>Pyrrhocorax graculus</i>	Only in Oukaineden where they were numerous
Brown-necked Raven	<i>Corvus ruficollis</i>	7 or 8 seen only in the Merzouga Desert area
Common Raven	<i>Corvus corax tingitanus</i>	Pairs seen travelling and 6 at Oukaineden
Desert Sparrow	<i>Passer simplex</i>	2 near Café Jasmine and 5 in the Merzouga desert
Rock Sparrow	<i>Petronia petronia Barbara</i>	1 in the Todra Gorge and numerous at Oukaineden
Crossbill	<i>Loxia curvirostra</i>	2 at Toofiat in the mountains
Brambling		A male & female at Oukaineden Ski Resort
Siskin	<i>Carduelis spinus</i>	3 in the Todra Gorge
Hawfinch	<i>Coccothraustes coccothraustes burryi</i>	2 at Toofiat in the mountains
Cirl Bunting	<i>Emberiza cirlus</i>	1 male seen at Aoulouz
Rock Bunting	<i>Emberiza cia Africana</i>	1 male at Todra Gorge, 1 in the Tiz-n-Tichka pass and 2 at Oukaineden
Corn Buntin	<i>Emberiza calandra</i>	1 along the road near Tizi ikc Nante and 1 singing at Amergane cafe

Summary

An excellent tour; a fantastic location with a knowledgeable leader, knowing the sites and a keen group all contributed to an enjoyable ten days. The trip was made all the more enjoyable due to the friendships forged and the camaraderie that the group generated with everyone's opinions and comments being accepted and respected. Despite the fact that Houbara, Crowned Sandgrouse (both always going to be difficult) and Crimson-winged Finch were not seen, it was not for the want of searching especially in the case of Houbara and the Finch. The Sandgrouse was heard and perhaps could have been located with further searching, however the group decided to get to grips with grilling the various Larks. All the specialities were seen

remarkably well and as a group we were all happy with the collective decisions that were made.



Cream-coloured Courser

FINLAND May 21st - 25th 2008

(Keith Cherry)

When the idea of a trip to Finland was put forward I had to think long and hard whether to go or not. The trip was primarily to see the Owls, which are easier to observe there than some other destinations. Apart from the Owls, there were only a few other species available that would be new birds, so working on the 'pounds for birds' theory the value would be limited.

Five of the North Herts Bird Club were keen, namely Richard Pople, John Tomkins, Dave Beer, Steve Lane and Tony Hukin, but they needed one more for the ideal number. Having dragged my feet for long enough, I finally raised my hand. Richard set about organizing the trip and contacted Hannu Jannes, the Managing Director of Early Bird Tours. The trip would consist of 5 days (4 full days birding) at three different locations. The price was to be a hefty 840 Euros per person, excluding flights, to cover accommodation on a half board basis, ground transportation in a minibus, services of a bird guide throughout and local guides where necessary. The return flights worked out to be £72-53 per person for an overall cost of £752.

Finland is a country that is primarily covered in forest. The Taiga Forest, the Circum-Boreal Zone stretches right across Finland, throughout Russia and into China. One tenth of Finland is covered by water. Hence the expression 'The Land of a Thousand Lakes'.

In the far north the sun does not set for around ten weeks during the White Nights of summer, while in winter it does not rise for nearly eight weeks. It has borders with Sweden to the west, Russia to the east, Norway to the north and Estonia lies to the south across the Gulf of Finland.

Wednesday 21st May 2008

We set off by minibus for our early evening flight from Stansted. After check in and someone having their shaving equipment and other liquid items confiscated we made the 2hr 30min flight, with Ryanair, to Tampere, landing at 22.35 local time. Bag collection was reasonably quick and we set about finding our guide Pekka Saikko. He was finally tracked down as he was the only person wearing binoculars. To be brutally honest our guide seemed thoroughly underwhelmed on meeting us and polite communication was not forthcoming. Positive communication, or rather the lack of it, was to be a disappointing feature of the trip.

It was assumed by us that we would be birding en route to our first nights accommodation but when this question was put to our guide, a curt “no” was the answer. It turned out that we would be making straight for the Guesthouse Iloranta, Hauho. This was a complex of small cabins set in amongst woodland and are very comfortable.

Thursday 22nd May 2008

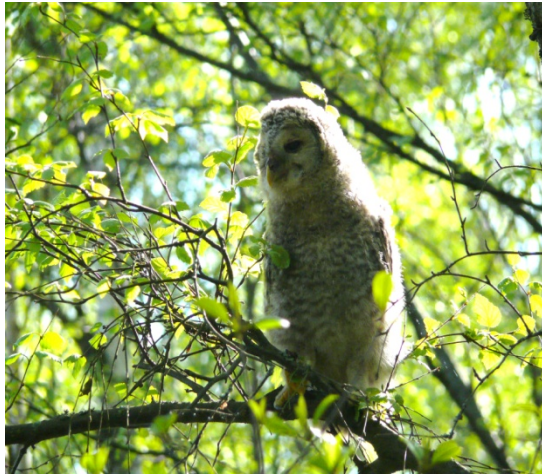
A 6:00 am start was intended but most of us were out before then as sleep had been light and infrequent. A pair of **Pied Flycatchers** were actively feeding young in a nest box and we all enjoyed watching the birds go about their business. Other birds noted included, **Cuckoo**, **Willow Warbler**, **Great Spotted Woodpecker** and summer plumaged **Fieldfare**. Pekka joined us and after a considerable uneasy silence we finally asked him what our itinerary was going to be. It seemed we were going to wait for a local guide who would be taking us to various Owl sites in and around the Hauho Forest.

The other guide arrived on time and we introduced ourselves. His name was Pekka Poutto, another Pekka and we hoped he would be more amicable towards us. We set off in the minibus and drove to a fairly open site with some trees and low vegetation. The spot was a reliable site for **Grey-headed Woodpecker** and we were not disappointed. We had not been there long when a male flew in to the top of a tree that was quite close to us. Unfortunately the sun was badly positioned in relation to the tree so photography was not possible. Also a posing **Wryneck** was appreciated by everyone.

Our next stop was to be a known nest site for **Black Woodpecker**. While we waited a pair of **Crested Tit** were busily feeding in the pine trees above our heads. The **Black Woodpecker** was heard drumming quite close by, so it was no surprise when it flew into the tree opposite our position. It was now 08:00 so we headed back for breakfast. A typical Scandinavian

breakfast of various cheeses, cold meats, fruit and various breads was on offer and eagerly enjoyed by everyone. The first stop after breakfast was to be a wooded area that is a known nest site for **Ural Owl**. This Owl is naturally one of the groups target species so we were all hoping our luck would continue. As we walked through the forest Pekka Poutto pointed out a young Ural Owl sitting on a branch that over hung

the path. It's mother was sitting in a tree about 50 yards away and Pekka Poutto advised us not to try to get any closer to her as she was a very aggressive mother and would attack us if we got too close as her chick was near.



Ural Owl Chick



Its watching mother

As we left the site we disturbed a **Tree Pipit** from some low vegetation and on checking we discovered its nest with several eggs. We moved on swiftly to allow the Pipit to return to the nest. Some **Red-necked Grebes** were heard calling from a nearby lake but we failed to locate them on this occasion. We did manage to add **Black-throated Diver** and **Reed Bunting** to our trip list. We moved on to another wooded site and our target this time was for **Three-toed Woodpecker**. Our guide Pekka used a taped call and in no time at all an adult male flew in and gave everyone great views as it drummed away.



Moving on again we arrived at another nest site, this time of a **Pygmy Owl**.

Pekka Poutto parked the minibus at a friend's house and we wandered into the rather large back garden. Pekka Poutto examined a nest box and the female Pygmy Owl was found sitting on eggs. With the aid of a ladder we all took turns to peep into the box and see the sitting female. She stared back at us nervously but was content to stay exactly where she was. Another nest box in the garden was examined and Pekka Poutto removed a **Tawny Owl** chick for us to see and photograph.

Our next owl site was hopefully to be for **Tengmalm's** or **Boreal Owl**. On route to the site we saw a flock of 10 **Common Cranes** and a flock of 30 **Whooper Swans**.

We drove to an open grassy area where we could see a nest box on a tall wooden post. Hopefully there would be a **Tengmalm's Owl** inside. The idea was for us to form a line at the edge of the area and watch the nest box hole. Pekka Poutto walked over and tapped the wooden post holding the nest



box. The female immediately popped her head out to see what was happening.

White-backed Woodpecker was the next bird to be found. We set off for Padastoki Farm where a pair is known to have nested. On approaching the farmhouse we noticed the front wall of it had several holes where **Great Spotted Woodpeckers** were nesting. Pekka Poutto took us a short distance to a part flooded wooded area, where we had to navigate a stream in order to get close to the nest site. One or two of us got wet feet but we all crossed it safely. It all seemed worth it when the **White-backed Woodpecker** was located as it visited its nest site in one of the Birch trees. **Whitethroat** and **Lesser Whitethroat** were also picked up here.

We were to move north now so we bid farewell to Pekka Poutto and set off for Oulu. This was to be a journey of six hours, 500 kilometers. On route we had a stop in a place called Karisamakie where we saw our first **Arctic Hares**, several of which still had their pure white winter coats.

We arrived safely in Oulu and our accommodation was to be the Hotel Cumulus and this is a very comfortable hotel. After an extremely nice dinner and a long awaited introduction to Finnish beer, Pekka suggested we have a chance of seeing **Eagle Owl** at the local waste disposal site. A time was set of 10:45 pm. We travelled the fairly short distance and wandered into the waste site complex. After setting up our scopes we looked across the site and noticed numerous rats running around, hopefully good prey for Owls. A **Short-eared Owl** put in a brief appearance before flying off. Shortly after this the local security guard arrived at the main gate. Pekka suggested that we leave this area as we were inside the complex. We moved further along to another viewing spot but outside the fenced area.

This proved to be very fortuitous as an Eagle Owl flew in and perched on a fairly distant lamp post, which would have been out of sight from our original position. It was close to midnight and we were watching the Eagle Owl in almost perfect light. It was a very memorable evening. We returned to the hotel and tried to get good nights sleep, which is not so easy when it is almost broad daylight outside.

Friday 23rd May 2008

A 6:00 am start today with a short drive to a coastal wetland site. A high platform has been erected to enable birders to overlook the bay and mudflats.

The site was very active and provided a mixed bag of waders, wildfowl, gulls and terns, including **Temminck's Stint**, **Ringed Plover**, **Snipe** (drumming overhead), **Greenshank**, **Wood Sandpiper**, **Red-breasted Merganser**, **Common Tern** and **Caspian Tern**.



After spending quite a while here we moved to another site named Oritkari, where it was hoped we would see **Terek Sandpiper**, which is known to breed there. We all stood on a raised bank which allowed us to view most of the site. Here we saw **Arctic Tern**, **Northern Wheatear**,

Oystercatcher, Yellowhammer, Little Ringed Plover, Sand Martin and finally a distant **Terek Sandpiper**. As we were leaving the site Pekka heard a **Common Rosefinch** calling on the other side of the road. Everyone searched for the bird in a line of willow trees and it was finally located and we all had uninterrupted views. Breakfast beckoned. After a superb breakfast we loaded up the minibus and headed for another wetland site named Liminganlahti Reserve. Fortunately another high platform has been erected here and provides excellent views across this area of extensive mudflats. Birds recorded here included **Marsh Harrier, Common Buzzard, Raven, Pintail, Smew, Garganey, Shoveler, Curlew, Ruff, Dunlin, Sedge Warbler** and **Spotted Flycatcher**. We left here and undertook a two to three hour drive of about 300 kilometers north to Kuusamo. We stopped en-route in a lay-by, for a stretch of our legs, at an area called Hirbvisouo. The lay-by overlooks a large area of marshes and we saw **Taiga Bean Goose, Common Crane** and **Arctic Hares**. As we travelled north we became aware of the trees becoming sparser with only Pine and Silver Birch with an understory of Juniper.

We were all pleased when Pekka turned off the main road and drove through an area of outstanding natural beauty. It was a really quite road which enabled us to stop frequently and admire the area and observe **Reindeer** going about their business. As we drove on Pekka made a rapid stop as he thought he had seen a bird. And what a bird was! It was a **Siberian Jay**, which was on every ones wish list and other groups had failed to see. There were two birds and we all had good views.



A little further on it was decided to park the minibus and walk along the road as there was a chance of seeing **Pine Grosbeak** in this type of habitat. It was nice to walk and appreciate the snow covered landscape, fresh air and sunshine of this beautiful northern area.

Siskins continually flew over our heads and **Waxwings** were very evident as their calls filled the air. Stunning **Brambling**, in their full breeding plumage, were very pleasing to the eye. We walked on until we reached an area of shallow pools that held breeding **Green Sandpiper**. We decided to stay here for a while and enjoy the scenery before setting off for Kuusamo and our accommodation at the Hotel Sokos.



When we arrived at the hotel we lost no time in checking out Lake Torinka, which is situated directly behind the hotel. It was a bit disappointing to find the majority of the lake was still frozen over. The spring thaw was late this year and this would adversely affect the variety of species that would be on the lake.

Having said that, **Wood Sandpiper, Arctic Tern, Widgeon** and **Pochard** could be seen. When we made our way

back to our room we noticed that the offside front tyre was a bit flat and we let Pekka know.

After dinner which consisted of shredded Reindeer meat and vegetables, unusual but quite pleasant, we retired to the bar. After one or two I felt like a walk, so I went down to the lake for a bit of midnight birding. The lake was fairly quiet but it was still a memorable experience.

Saturday 24th 2008

Pekka had intended that we would have a 05:30 start to drive around the local area and look for **Willow Grouse**, but unfortunately we found the tyre was completely flat. After a fairly lengthy wheel change we set off searching the woodland bordering residential areas, situated along the shores of Lake Torinka. Despite continually playing a tape of its call we had no luck locating our quarry. We did however add **Common Redstart** and a flying **Little Gull** to the trip list. We tried another area away from the lake but again we failed to locate **Willow Grouse** but a male **Black Grouse** and a female **Capercaillie** were seen well. Time for breakfast.

After breakfast we went to a site known locally as the “Lay By” but apart from **Goldcrest** and the chance to study **Willow Tit** there was very little activity.

Compared to our **Willow Tit**, the wings and mantle was much darker, which allowed the pale patch on the wing to be more pronounced. We moved on to a wooded area called Oivanki for another target species, the **Siberian Tit**. Soon after arriving, Pekka played a tape of its call. It responded well by flying into trees above our heads, giving great views. I did manage a fairly distant photograph.



We moved on to another wetland site called Ronkarisenieni. We spent some time here as the track gave us good views over this extensive lake. There were a lot of species available including **Black-throated Diver**, **Red-necked Grebe**, **Spotted Redshank**, **Greenshank**, **Temmink’s Stint**, **Goosander**, **Mealy Redpoll** and **Bluethroat**. We also had our first sighting of a **Muskrat**, a large rat- like mammal.

From here we drove on to another wood fringed lake, and en-route we came across a pair of **Hazel Hen** and watched them as they made their way through the wood. At the lake a very distant flying **White-tailed Eagle** was identified with the use of our telescopes. Pekka received a phone call and as a result we made our way to a woodland track where a **Rustic Bunting** had been seen earlier in the week. As we walked the track we saw a flock of 30 **Common**

Crossbill, a female **Capercaillie**, another pair of **Hazel Hen** and a further **Bluethroat**, but despite continual use of a tape there was no sign of the **Rustic Bunting**. The last site of the day was to be the waste disposal site on the outskirts of Kuusamo. Here we found **Common Sandpiper**, **Whimbrel**, **Yellow Wagtail**, (Grey Headed Race), **Back-headed**, **Common** and **Herring Gulls** and with Pekka's help we separated the race of **Heuglin's Gull** from **Lesser Black-backed Gull**.

Sunday 25th 2008

05:30. Another early start so that we could check out the residential areas again for **Willow Grouse**. A quick scan of Lake Torinka produced 36 **Velvet Scoter** and a male **Scaup**.

Not long after we started our search for **Willow Grouse**, John spotted one in amongst the trees. It stayed quite still so we all managed to see it well. None of us can really understand why these birds are not a separate species to the **Red Grouse** due to the obvious differences in their plumage and their individual preference for different habitats.



After breakfast Pekka tried unsuccessfully to arrange for our tyre to be repaired, so we now faced a 10-hour return journey to Tampare with no spare. We all hoped for the best as we had left the **Great Grey Owl** site, which is close to Tampare, until the end of the trip and another puncture would ruin this. Thankfully the return journey was uneventful, apart from picking up a **Common Scoter** on one of our rest breaks. We finally left the main road and headed towards the **Great Grey Owl** site, seeing a young **Badger** on the way. Pekka parked the minibus and we walked a short distance towards the nest site. Pekka suggested we have a look for the male in the area where it normally hunts. It was not very long before it appeared, flying through the trees and perched not very far from where we were standing. It is indeed a magnificent bird. We all had great views before it flew to another perch further down the track before flying off and out of sight. We then made our way to the nest sight where we could observe the female sitting on the nest. As we watched we managed to see that there were two chicks in the nest.



Great Grey Owl



Female on the nest

I am sure you will agree that seeing this magnificent bird is a special way to bring the trip to a close. We happily made our way to the airport.

Trip Summary

Overall we considered the trip to be a success. The total distance driven was 2400 kilometers. We saw most of the birds, with the exception of the difficult to see **Pine Grosbeak** and regrettably the **Hawk Owl**, which was late arriving due to the late spring.

Our guide did find us the birds but his lack of communication skills detracted from his overall abilities. Having said that, the trip was well arranged by Hannu Jannes of Earlybird Tours.



Finland List

Species
Black-throated Diver <i>Gavia arctica</i>
Great Crested Grebe <i>Podiceps cristatus</i>
Red-necked Grebe <i>Podiceps grisegena</i>
Grey Heron <i>Ardea cinerea</i>
Whooper Swan <i>Cygnus cygnus</i>
Greylag Goose <i>Anser anser</i>
Bean Goose <i>Anser fabalis</i>
Mallard <i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>
Northern Pintail <i>Anas acuta</i>
Northern Shoveler <i>Anas clypeata</i>
Eurasian Wigeon <i>Anas penelope</i>
Eurasian Teal <i>Anas crecca</i>
Garganey <i>Anas querquedula</i>
Common Pochard <i>Aythya ferina</i>
Greater Scaup <i>Aythya marila</i>
Tufted Duck <i>Aythya fuligula</i>

Species
Common Scoter <i>Melanitta nigra</i>
Velvet Scoter <i>Melanitta fusca</i>
Common Goldeneye <i>Bucephala clangula</i>
Smew <i>Mergellus albellus</i>
Goosander <i>Mergus merganser</i>
Red-breasted Merganser <i>Mergus serrator</i>
White-tailed Eagle <i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i>
Eurasian Marsh Harrier <i>Circus aeruginosus</i>
Eurasian Sparrowhawk <i>Accipiter nisus</i>
Common Buzzard <i>Buteo buteo</i>
Common Kestrel <i>Falco tinnunculus</i>
Willow Grouse <i>Lagopus lagopus</i>
Western Capercaillie <i>Tetrao urogallus</i>
Black Grouse <i>Tetrao tetrix</i>
Hazel Grouse <i>Bonasa bonasia</i>
Common Pheasant <i>Phasianus colchicus</i>
Common Moorhen <i>Gallinula chloropus</i>
Common Coot <i>Fulica atra</i>
Common Crane <i>Grus grus</i>
Eurasian Oystercatcher <i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>
Little Ringed Plover <i>Charadrius dubius</i>
Ringed Plover <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>
Northern Lapwing <i>Vanellus vanellus</i>
Dunlin <i>Calidris alpina</i>
Temminck's Stint <i>Calidris temminckii</i>
Wood Sandpiper <i>Tringa glareola</i>
Green Sandpiper <i>Tringa ochropus</i>
Common Sandpiper <i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>
Terek Sandpiper <i>Xenus cinereus</i>
Common Redshank <i>Tringa totanus</i>
Spotted Redshank <i>Tringa erythropus</i>
Common Greenshank <i>Tringa nebularia</i>
Bar-tailed Godwit <i>Limosa lapponica</i>
Eurasian Curlew <i>Numenius arquata</i>
Whimbrel <i>Numenius phaeopus</i>
Eurasian Woodcock <i>Scolopax rusticola</i>
Common Snipe <i>Gallinago gallinago</i>
Ruff <i>Philomachus pugnax</i>
Black-headed Gull <i>Larus ridibundus</i>
Mew Gull <i>Larus canus</i>
Herring Gull <i>Larus argentatus</i>
Lesser Black-backed Gull <i>Larus fuscus</i>
Little Gull <i>Larus minutus</i>
Common Tern <i>Sterna hirundo</i>
Arctic Tern <i>Sterna paradisaea</i>
Caspian Tern <i>Sterna caspia</i>
Feral Pigeon <i>Columba livia domesticus</i>
Common Wood Pigeon <i>Columba palumbus</i>
Common Cuckoo <i>Cuculus canorus</i>
Tawny Owl <i>Strix aluco</i>
Eagle Owl <i>Bubo bubo</i>

Species
Great Grey Owl <i>Strix nebulosa</i>
Ural Owl <i>Strix uralensis</i>
Tengmalm's Owl <i>Aegolius funereus</i>
Pygmy Owl <i>Glaucidium passerinum</i>
Short-eared Owl <i>Asio flammeus</i>
Common Swift <i>Apus apus</i>
Black Woodpecker <i>Dryocopus martius</i>
Grey-headed Woodpecker <i>Picus canus</i>
Great Spotted Woodpecker <i>Dendrocopos major</i>
White-backed Woodpecker <i>Dendrocopos leucotos</i>
Three-toed Woodpecker <i>Picoides tridactylus</i>
Eurasian Wryneck <i>Jynx torquilla</i>
Sky Lark <i>Alauda arvensis</i>
Sand Martin <i>Riparia riparia</i>
Barn Swallow <i>Hirundo rustica</i>
House Martin <i>Delichon urbicum</i>
Meadow Pipit <i>Anthus pratensis</i>
Tree Pipit <i>Anthus trivialis</i>
White / Pied Wagtail <i>Motacilla alba</i>
Yellow Wagtail <i>Motacilla flava</i>
Waxwing <i>Bombycilla garrulus</i>
Dunnock <i>Prunella modularis</i>
European Robin <i>Erithacus rubecula</i>
Bluethroat <i>Luscinia svecica</i>
Black Redstart <i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>
Northern Wheatear <i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>
Whinchat <i>Saxicola rubetra</i>
Song Thrush <i>Turdus philomelos</i>
Redwing <i>Turdus iliacus</i>
Mistle Thrush <i>Turdus viscivorus</i>
Fieldfare <i>Turdus pilaris</i>
Common Blackbird <i>Turdus merula</i>
Lesser Whitethroat <i>Sylvia curruca</i>
Common Whitethroat <i>Sylvia communis</i>
Sedge Warbler <i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>
Willow Warbler <i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>
Common Chiffchaff <i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>
Goldcrest <i>Regulus regulus</i>
Spotted Flycatcher <i>Muscicapa striata</i>
Pied Flycatcher <i>Ficedula hypoleuca</i>
Great Tit <i>Parus major</i>
Blue Tit <i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>
Crested Tit <i>Lophophanes cristatus</i>
Willow Tit <i>Poecile montanus</i>
Siberian Tit <i>Parus cinctus</i>
Black-billed Magpie <i>Pica pica</i>
Eurasian Jay <i>Garrulus glandarius</i>
Siberian Jay <i>Perisoreus infastus</i>
Eurasian Jackdaw <i>Corvus monedula</i>
Rook <i>Corvus frugilegus</i>
Hooded Crow <i>Corvus cornix</i>

Species
Common Raven <i>Corvus corax</i>
Common Starling <i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>
House Sparrow <i>Passer domesticus</i>
Eurasian Tree Sparrow <i>Passer montanus</i>
Chaffinch <i>Fringilla coelebs</i>
Brambling <i>Fringilla montifringilla</i>
Common Redpoll <i>Carduelis flammea</i>
European Greenfinch <i>Carduelis chloris</i>
Eurasian Siskin <i>Carduelis spinus</i>
Common Crossbill <i>Loxia curvirostra</i>
Two-barred Crossbill <i>Loxia leucoptera</i>
Common Rosefinch <i>Carpodacus erythrinus</i>
Yellowhammer <i>Emberiza citrinella</i>
Reed Bunting <i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>

CROATIA, MONTENEGRO & BOSNIA

4 – 10 May 2008

(Mark Easterbrook)

References:

- A. Surfbirds: Croatia 8-15 July 03 by Jon Hornbuckle.
- B. The Collins Guide to birds of Britain & Europe, with N Africa and the Middle East by Hermann Heinzel, Richard Fitter & John Parslow.

INTRODUCTION

A last minute.com holiday to Croatia with my wife resulted in some enjoyable if not brief birding. Trips to Montenegro and Bosnia were interesting with a few good birds seen; however there was only one possible target bird, which was Rock Partridge. I had read the article at Reference A, however this had resulted in an unsuccessful outcome, so I departed UK and wasn't very hopeful.

Car hire was £32 a day; it would have been cheaper if I had booked it for longer and petrol was about 80p a litre. Beer was about £1.80 and lunchtime snacks were about £6. The aim of the trip was a family quick break to the sun prior to me departing alone on a Birdseekers' tour to Russia in June.

DAY 1 – 4 May

We arrived in Croatia near Dubrovnik mid morning to brilliant sunshine and a refreshing sea breeze. Quickly heading off to the hotel in Mlini about 11Km east of Dubrovnik and 8Km from the airport at Chilipi; it was ideally situated and just below the hills described by Jon Hornbuckle; where the Partridges could be. En route **Alpine Swifts**, **Swallows** and **House Martins** hawked above us. After booking into our room, an hour or so on the balcony delivered a migrating **Honey Buzzard**, several **Yellow-legged Gulls** and various species of common bird.

DAY 2 – 5 May

An early morning bus journey to Dubrovnik produced a **Golden Eagle** moving along the escarpment, whilst **Blackcap**, **Sardinian Warbler** and a **Wood Warbler** moved about the vegetation. Later in Dubrovnik **Pallid Swifts** were present in good numbers along with 2 **Alpine Swifts** and a male **Red-backed Shrike**, **Eastern Olivaceous Warbler**, **Lesser Whitethroat** and **Sedge Warbler** were present in the eastern moat. On returning to the hotel a **Little Egret** flew by and a **Common Sandpiper** was on the beach. From the hotel balcony a male **Golden Oriole** was seen flying to roost.

DAY 3 – 6 May

A sea taxi to Cavtat took about 20 minutes and 4 **Oystercatchers** were seen roosting on some exposed rocks in the bay. A walk around Cavtat produced a **Spanish Sparrow**, **Spotted Flycatcher**, **Whinchat**, **Sand Martin** and a **Peregrine Falcon** above the hills. A relaxing lunch and a few beers at the harbour restaurants brought the day to a close.

Day 4 – 7 May

A trip to Montenegro, Kotor and Budva started with a brief stop in the village of Chilipi where several **Nightingales** and **Golden Orioles** were heard whilst a migrating group of 7 **Honey Buzzards** made steady progress North. The only **Cuckoo** of the trip was also seen here although several others were heard during the week. Near Kotor 2 **Subalpine Warblers** were noted singing and later in Kotor a **Grey Wagtail** was seen feeding young. Along the coast at Budva a **Hooded Crow** was seen scavenging food near a local restaurant.

DAY 5 – 8 May

This was the first day that I had hired a car and we headed to the mountain plateaux above Cavtat in search of migrants, summer visitors and Rock Partridges. Whilst driving around the numerous tracks in the area at least 11 **Black-eared Wheatears** were seen (Eastern form) along with **Spotted Flycatchers**, 2 **Short-toed Eagles**, 3 **Honey Buzzards**, a **Western Rock Nuthatch**, 2 **Black-headed Buntings**, several **Cirl Buntings**, numerous **Whinchats**, **Red-backed Shrikes**, 2 **Woodchat Shrikes**, many **Nightingales** and a single **Hoopoe**. Later we drove the road to Velji Do ending at the restaurant at Konoba Konavoshi Konim and the information board described in Reference A.

Directions:

“Follow the main Dubrovnik to the Airport road drive past Mlini towards Cavtat. After approximately 400m past the Kurem Supermarket on your left turn left signed Duba 14Km. Continue uphill and take a hairpin bend to the right, there is a large white house with balconies on your left, just after here turn left again up a hill signed Velji Do & Konoba Knavoshi Konim or Kona Vinica 4Km – the signs are on your right and may not be immediately obvious. Continue uphill to the summit; turn left at the top signed Velji Do. Continue along the road past a viewpoint until you see a

track on the left with an obvious information board as described at Reference A. Walk along the track for about 200m named the Ronald Brown Pathway. As it bends left and starts downhill, stop here and listen for partridges. Look half right and there is a line of small trees about 200m away in the valley running diagonally to you. There are many rocks below the trees, I saw a male **Rock Partridge** calling from a rock under a tree with a female stood below, along with another male calling from elsewhere in the valley which was not seen. There is a very good local restaurant in the village, which is good for a drink or lunch, (I recommend the grilled chicken and octopus salad)". Later that day a **Whitethroat** and another male **Golden Oriole** were seen from the balcony of the hotel.

DAY 6 – 9 May

An early morning walk along the previously discovered Ronald Brown Pathway and the surrounding habitats brought an interesting couple of hours. There had obviously been a massive fall of migrants, with at least 200 **Whinchats** being present with many more passing over. In amongst them a **Wryneck**, numerous **Whitethroats** and **Lesser Whitethroats**, **Spotted Flycatchers** and the commoner residents that had been seen the previous day. Interestingly another **Rock Partridge** was heard calling from the same location as the previous day.

As I drove towards the main road once more, I stopped at a wooded area about 100m short of the junction, as I had heard a call that was interesting. Here a **Woodchat** was noted and the only **Sombre Tit** of the trip as 3 migrating **Honey Buzzards** passed overhead. Returning to the hotel to collect my wife we headed off west along the coast to the arboretum at Trsteno and later Ston. At Trsteno at least 12 **Nightingales** sang and 7 were seen well, whilst in the coastal scrub 3 **Sardinian warblers** sang and flitted about.

As we arrived at Ston and drove a little further on, I could hear the familiar racket of **Great Reed Warblers** and one was seen well atop a reed. A **Serin** was also noted along with a **Cetti's Warbler** and I flushed a male **Little Bittern** from a water channel. More **Whinchats** were seen in good numbers plus a single **Fan-tailed Warbler**. On the estuary were an **Oystercatcher**, **Great Crested Grebe**, 7 **Grey Herons** and 2 **Great White Egrets**. A male **Spanish Sparrow** was also seen whilst departing. Shortly after reaching the main road and heading towards Dubrovnik, 2 **Ravens** flew over the road in front of me.

DAY 7 – 10 May

A day trip to Mostar added some interesting birds, at Neum a **Honey Buzzard** drifted overhead and a **Subalpine Warbler** sang and was seen in scrub. Whilst once again transiting the Mediterranean Delta in Croatia near Metrovica a **Hooded Crow** was noted. Of interest is an Ornithological museum in the town of Metrovica, easily located on the main street.

Once again in Bosnia during a short stop at Pocitelj (a village of Turkish origin), the only **Red-rumped Swallow**, 11 **Jackdaws** and a **Magpie** were seen. Approaching Mostar from the South 6 **European Bee-eaters** were seen on wires along with 2 **European Starlings** and in Mostar, 3 **Grey Wagtails** were seen, from the famous

(rebuilt) bridge. During the return journey, south of Metrovica 3 **Pygmy Cormorants** sat in a dead tree next to the road and later a **Red-backed Shrike** was seen in Dubrovnik. A final few moments at the hotel, ended the trip with 2 more **Golden Orioles**, a **Wood Warbler** and a singing **Nightingale**. An early morning return flight to Gatwick saw us back home in London for about 1230.

SUMMARY

This trip was a really enjoyable week, in picturesque and relaxing surroundings. It is an ideal destination to combine a family holiday in the sun, with sightseeing and birdwatching for a relatively small cost.

SIBERIA – LAKE BAIKAL 31 May – 15 Jun 08

(Mark Easterbrook)

I travelled as a member of a Birdseekers tour of Siberia - Lake Baikal (31May – 15 Jun 08). Despite a last minute weather hitch on attempting to return from Nizhneangarsk (Northern edge of Lake Baikal) to Irkutsk due to low cloud and the 50 seater - Antonov 23 being unable to land, causing a delay and many expensive phone calls to the UK, the trip was extremely productive and enjoyable.

Siberia is a vast wilderness, with plenty of suitable varying habitat and lots of ticks, desperate to clamber on board and extract some blood. Several migratory species were missed as they probably hadn't yet arrived at the time of the trip; however, numerous other much sought after Western Palaearctic species were seen. To see species that occur on Fair Isle and the Shetlands in the autumn as juveniles, adorning pristine adult breeding plumage in Siberia was a real treat. Hearing species like Red-flanked Bluetail and Siberian Chiffchaff sing was very educational.

The food was "interesting", the Babushkas frightening, the women charming (I can see why Russianwives.com is a popular site) and the beer/vodka extremely cheap – no wonder they have a problem. All in all, quite an enjoyable place to be!

List of species seen: (Species annotated in **RED** were lifers (*unique for Mark! ed*))

Common Name	Scientific Name
Black-throated Diver	<i>Gavia artica</i>
Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>
Black-necked Grebe	<i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>
Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>
Great Bittern	<i>Botaurus stellaris</i>
Ruddy Shelduck	<i>Tadorna ferruginea</i>
Eurasian Wigeon	<i>Anas Penelope</i>
Falcated Duck	<i>Anas falcate</i>
Gadwall	<i>Anas strepera</i>

Common Name	Scientific Name
Common Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>
Northern Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>
Garganey	<i>Anas querquedula</i>
Northern Shoveler	<i>Anas clypeata</i>
Common Pochard	<i>Aythya farina</i>
Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>
Asian (Stejneger's) Scoter	<i>Melanitta stejnegeri</i>
Common Goldeneye	<i>Bucephala clangula</i>
Smew	<i>Mergellus albellus</i>
Red-breasted Merganser	<i>Mergus serrator</i>
Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>
White-tailed Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i>
Great Spotted Eagle	<i>Aquila clanga</i>
Steppe Eagle	<i>Aquila nipalensis</i>
Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>
Black-eared Kite	<i>Milvus migrans lineatus</i>
Eastern Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus spilonotus</i>
Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>
Steppe Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo japonicus</i>
Oriental (Crested) Honey Buzzard	<i>Pernis ptilorhynchus</i>
Northern Goshawk	<i>Accipiter gentiles</i>
Eurasian Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>
Eurasian Hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>
Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>
Daurian Partridge	<i>Perdix dauurica</i>
Baillon's Crake	<i>Porzana pusilla</i>
Common Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>
Common Crane	<i>Grus Grus</i>
Demoiselle Crane	<i>Anthropoides virgo</i>
Oriental Pratincole	<i>Glareola maldivaurm</i>
Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>
Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>
Pacific Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis fulva</i>
Northern Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>
Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina alpina</i>
Little Stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>
Long-toed Stint	<i>Calidris subminuta</i>
Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>
Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>
Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>
Marsh Sandpiper	<i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>
Eurasian Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>
Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>
Common Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>
Grey-tailed Tattler	<i>Heterosceles brevipes</i>
Black-headed Gull	<i>Larus ridibundus</i>
Common Gull	<i>Larus canus heinei</i>
Mongolian (Caspian) Gull	<i>Larus cachinnans mongolicus</i>
Little Gull	<i>Larus minutus</i>
Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo longipennis</i>
White-winged Black Tern	<i>Chlidonias leucopterus</i>
Caspian Tern	<i>Sterna caspia</i>
Hill Pigeon	<i>Columba rupestris</i>
Oriental Turtle Dove	<i>Streptopelia orientalis</i>

Common Name	Scientific Name
Common Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>
Oriental Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus saturatus</i>
Northern Hawk Owl	<i>Surnia ulula</i>
White-throated Needletail	<i>Hirundapus caudacutus</i>
Common Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>
Pacific Swift	<i>Apus pacificus</i>
Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>
Eurasian Wryneck	<i>Jynx torquilla</i>
Black Woodpecker	<i>Dryocopus martius</i>
Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>
Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos minor</i>
White-backed Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos leucotos</i>
Eurasian Three-toed Woodpecker	<i>Picoides tridactylus</i>
Eurasian Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>
Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>
Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica tytleri</i>
Common House Martin	<i>Delichon urbica</i>
Richard's Pipit	<i>Anthus richardi</i>
Blyth's Pipit	<i>Anthus godlewskii</i>
Olive-backed Pipit	<i>Anthus hodgsoni</i>
Tree Pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>
Pechora Pipit	<i>Anthus gustavi</i>
Alaskan Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava tuchenensis</i>
Green-backed Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava taivana</i>
Baikal White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba baicalensis</i>
Citrine Wagtail	<i>Motacilla citreola</i>
Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>
White-throated Dipper	<i>Cinclus cinclus</i>
Siberian Accentor	<i>Prunella montanella</i>
Red Spotted Bluethroat	<i>Luscinia svecica svecica</i>
Red-flanked Bluetail	<i>Tarsiger cyanurus</i>
Siberian Rubythroat	<i>Luscinia calliope</i>
Siberian Blue Robin	<i>Luscinia cyane</i>
Common Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>
Daurian Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus aureus</i>
Northern Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>
Isabelline Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe isabellina</i>
Siberian Stonechat	<i>Saxicola torquata maurus</i>
Redwing	<i>Turdus iliacus</i>
Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>
Siberian Lesser Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia curruca blythi</i>
Lanceolated Warbler	<i>Locustella lanceolata</i>
Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler	<i>Locustella certhiola</i>
Dusky Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus fuscatus</i>
Radde's Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus schwarzi</i>
Arctic Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus borealis</i>
Two-barred Greenish Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus plumbeitarsus</i>
Yellow-browed Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus inornatus</i>
Pallas's Yellow-browed Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus proregulus</i>
Siberian Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita tristis</i>
Asian Brown Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa dauurica</i>
Dark-sided (Siberian) Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa sibirica</i>
Mugimaki Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula mugimaki</i>
Taiga Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula albicilla</i>
Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>
Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>

Common Name	Scientific Name
Coal Tit	<i>Parus ater</i>
Willow Tit	<i>Parus montanus</i>
Eurasian Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>
Eurasian Treecreeper	<i>Certhia familiaris</i>
Brown Shrike	<i>Lanius cristatus</i>
Eurasian Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>
Siberian Jay	<i>Perisoreus infaustus</i>
Spotted Nutcracker	<i>Nucifraga caryocatactes</i>
Eurasian Jackdaw	<i>Corvus monedula</i>
Daurian Jackdaw	<i>Corvus dauuricus</i>
Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>
Oriental Carrion Crow	<i>Corvus corone orientalis</i>
Hooded Crow	<i>Corvus cornix</i>
Common Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>
European Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>
White-cheeked Starling	<i>Sturnus cineraceus</i>
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>
Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>
Brambling	<i>Fringilla montifringilla</i>
Eurasian Siskin	<i>Carduelis spinus</i>
Baikal Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula cineracea</i>
Hawfinch	<i>Coccothraustes coccothraustes</i>
Common Crossbill	<i>Loxia curvirostra</i>
Two-barred Crossbill	<i>Loxia leucoptera</i>
Common Rosefinch	<i>Carpodacus erythrinus</i>
Long-tailed Rosefinch	<i>Carpodacus roseus</i>
Common Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>
Black-faced Bunting	<i>Emberiza spodocephala</i>
Pine Bunting	<i>Emberiza leucocephalos</i>
Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citronella</i>
Siberian Meadow Bunting	<i>Emberiza cioides</i>
Little Bunting	<i>Emberiza pusilla</i>
Yellow-browed Bunting	<i>Emberiza chrysophrys</i>
Yellow-breasted Bunting	<i>Emberiza aureola</i>

SUMMARY

Outstanding and well worth while, with generally friendly and welcoming people. Seeing species that are relevant to the UK is always an enjoyable experience. Whilst the concentration of birds was not prolific, probably due to the vast expanses of suitable habitat, the species that were encountered were well worth the wait. Birding in the taiga forests is a demanding and frustrating experience. At times extremely quiet, punctuated by snippets of bird song, once the birds are located it is extremely rewarding and a fantastic warm up for the forthcoming Kazakhstan expedition.

Quote from Birdseekers Web Page – <http://www.birdseekers.co.uk>

Our first visit to the Siberian shores around Lake Baikal turned up a ‘who’s who’ of those sought after vagrants that turn up in Britain on occasion. We began with a visit to the Novo-Leninsky marshes on the edge of Irkutsk, where several Yellow-breasted Buntings sang from exposed perches. There was also Baillon’s Crane, Eastern Marsh Harrier, Oriental Honey Buzzard, Marsh Sandpiper, Mongolian Gull, several Citrine

*Wagtails, Brown Shrike and Little Bunting. Later that same day a large park opposite our hotel appeared to be a true migrant trap with both Asian Brown and Dark-sided Flycatchers, Brown Shrike, 10+ Arctic Warblers, Siberian Chiffchaff, Radde's and Yellow-browed Warblers, Hawfinch and both Black-faced and Yellow-breasted Buntings seen well. We spent a lot of time birding amidst the vast Siberian Taiga forest where species such as Mugimaki Flycatcher, Siberian Blue Robin and Olive-backed Pipits were very common. Several Taiga Flycatchers were also seen, along with Oriental Cuckoos, Northern Red-flanked Bluetails, Two-barred Greenish and Dusky Warblers, Long-tailed Rosefinches and Yellow-browed Bunting. The marshes and steppes near Arshan were very productive and our birding against a backdrop of clear blue skies and snow-capped mountains was complimented by a good selection of species. Pride of place and certainly one of the most popular birds was a very cooperative Northern Hawk Owl, with a White-backed Woodpecker visiting its nesting hole nearby. Not far away a Siberian Meadow Bunting posed nicely as it sang from a bush with a pair of Pallas's Warblers below it! A pair of Daurian Partridges fed beside the road and a pair of White-cheeked Starlings we found nest-building in a small village was only the second record for this region! Out in the steppe a colony of 20+ singing Blyth's Pipits was found thanks to Krister Mild – and were well outside there normal or recognised breeding range. Several stately Demoiselle Cranes were also seen, along with a group of 5 Common Cranes and Pine Buntings. Several Lanceolated Warblers were also seen very well, some in the marshes and one extremely obliging individual in a small clearing in the forest. We also took a short flight 650 kms to the northern shores of Lake Baikal and continued birding in earnest. Amongst the highlights were Falcated Duck, Stejneger's Scoter, Grey-tailed Tattler, Long-toed Stints, Pacific Golden Plover, an out of range Oriental Pratincole, Three-toed Woodpecker, White-throated Needletails, Oriental Turtle Dove, Siberian Jay, and Siberian Accentor. Just a couple of Pallas's Grasshopper Warblers were seen, but several Pechora Pipits gave excellent views. Garden birds here included **Siberian Rubythroat**, Radde's, Two-barred greenish and Arctic Warblers, and even a pair of Two-barred Crossbills!*

Next year we plan to stay in the south, visiting the Selenga Delta for waders and Pallas's Reed Bunting, as well as an extremely good area for thrushes and exploring the area close to the Mongolian border for Swan Goose, Azure Tit and Mongolian Lark amongst others.

TRIP TO NEW ZEALAND

(Keith Cherry)

My wife had never envied my bird watching trips as she did not relish the idea of spending hours on an aeroplane. When she called me at work to tell me she had decided that she wanted to visit New Zealand, you can imagine I was both surprised and delighted. We set about comparing the numerous companies that provide holidays to there and finally decided on Always Pacific as their brochure seemed to stand out from the others. We chose their Magic of New Zealand tour. It included a

two night stop-over in Singapore on the outward journey and a variety of options for the return journey. We decided we would spend a further three nights in Singapore at the Sentosa Island Resort and Spa.

As this trip was a fairly lengthy one (18 Jan – 15 Feb 08) I will refer mainly to the locations that had an ornithological interest and restricted within the scope of our itinerary.

We flew with Singapore Airlines and the journey was uneventful, but 13 hours is a long time whoever you fly with. The aircrew looked after us very well and we arrived in good spirits. Our guide was there to meet us and after chatting with some of our travelling companions we all set off to transfer to the Intercontinental Hotel in Singapore City. The hotel is excellent and this was to be the case in all of the hotels that we were to stay in. After settling in we all attended a welcome drink which gave the group an opportunity to meet one another

Sunday 20th-Monday 21st January

We spent these two days leisurely discovering Singapore City including a half day city tour and river trip. A trip to this lovely city would not be complete without a visit to Raffles Hotel and enjoy a Singapore Sling in the Long Bar. Although this trip was not strictly a birding trip I did manage to see some including, **White-vented Myna, Common Myna, Yellow-vented Bulbul, White-bellied Sea Eagle, Brahminy Kite, Yellow-eared Spiderhunter** and **Brown-throated Sunbird**. We had a late check out and joined our flight to **Christchurch** on The South Island. This flight was to take 12 hours so now knowing what to expect, we made the best of it that we could.

Tuesday 22nd January

We arrived safely and were met by our Tour manager, Gail Kirkham and our coach driver Wayne, who would look after us while we were on the South Island.

Wednesday 23rd January

Today there was a choice of optional excursions. Marie decided to have a day of leisure and relaxation, while I had booked to go Whale watching from Kaikoura. In transit I picked up **Australasian Harrier, Red-billed Gull, Australian Magpie** and **White-faced Heron**. I really recommend this trip. We encountered two Sperm Whales and it gave me a chance to add my first albatross to my list. Birds seen included **Wandering Albatross, Shy Mollymawk, Great Northern Petrel, Cape Petrel** and **Flesh-footed Shearwater** amongst others. On my return to the hotel I found Marie sitting in the foyer. She had been unwell all day due in most part to the affects of the flights, so a good nights rest was called for.

Thursday 24th January

Marie was still not one hundred percent but we set off for Franz Joseph hoping that her general health would soon start to improve. We caught the Tranz Alpine Express from Christchurch across the Canterbury Plains to Arthurs Pass where the coach met us and we continued on to Franz Joseph. After settling in to the Franz Joseph Glacier

Hotel, Marie felt the need for a further rest and with her blessing I went for a short walk. This proved to be very productive as I saw **Silvereye, Tomtit, Fantail, Grey Warbler** and my first encounter with the **Tui** and its varied and remarkable metallic call. Another unusual and musical call had me chasing around until I located a **Bellbird**.

Friday 25th January

Today we travelled on, crossing the Haast Pass and along the shores of Lakes Wanaka and Hawea before reaching our destination of Queenstown, which is a very picturesque town on the shores of Lake Wakatipu. Birds seen on route included **Grey Duck, Little Black Shag and Pokeka (Purple Swamp Hen)**.

Saturday 26th January

With Marie feeling better we joined the sightseeing tour of this beautiful area. This included the original Bungy Jumping Centre at Kawarau and a visit to the historic mining town of Arrowtown. A short walk in Arrowtown produced **Grey Warbler, Brown Creeper, Chaffinch, Yellowhammer and Redpoll**. This evening was taken up with a very enjoyable and relaxing cruise across Lake Wakatipu to Walter Peak for a special evening dinner.



Red-billed Gull



Black-billed Gull

The **Red-billed Gull** is to be found on coastal waters while the **Black-billed Gull** is only found on inland waterways. They are both stunning Gulls in their own right. Some of the other birds that are resident on Lake Wakatipu include **Paradise Shelduck, New Zealand Scaup, Grey Duck** and **Great Crested Grebe**. We made a worthwhile visit to the Paradise Bird Park, which is situated at the top of Queenstown, near the Gondola Car station. The park holds many of the rarer endemic birds in secure pens but does give you the opportunity to observe **Kiwi** going about their business, in large glass observation houses. These houses are kept in darkness during the day so the birds can be seen behaving as they would in the wild.

Monday 28th January

Today was one we had been looking forward to as we were to travel through Fiordland and the Homer Tunnel before arriving at Milford Sound for a spectacular

cruise of the Fiord. Although the weather was on the damp side it still lived up to our expectations. It goes without saying that a cruise on Milford Sound is a must do when visiting this beautiful country. The towering mountains that frame the Fiord are magnificent both in their size and beauty. We saw a colony of New Zealand Fur Seals basking on rocky outcrops and **White-fronted Tern, Southern Black-backed Gull** and **Sooty Shearwater** were also seen.



Kea



Bellbird

At the entrance to the Homer Tunnel we had our first meeting with the mischievous and sometimes destructive **Kea**. These mountain Parrots are well known to strip the rubber from around the sun roofs and windscreens of any vehicle that takes their fancy. The melodious call of the **Bellbird** rang out and echoed around the mountain side and it posed for the camera.

Thursday 31st January

We had now moved on to Dunedin via the lovely lakeside town of Te Anau. The morning was taken up with an enjoyable trip on the Taieri Gorge Railway. The train takes you from the centre of Dunedin and its beautiful Edwardian Station, to the rugged interior of Central Otago, crossing numerous stone and wrought iron bridges that span deep ravines with sheer drops to the river below. Construction of the railway began in 1897 but progress was slow due to various reasons and it was finally completed in 1921. This afternoon we were going to visit the Otago Peninsula with its abundance of wildlife including the Royal Albatross Colony and the Yellow-eyed Penguin Conservation Reserve. I was not disappointed. On the way to the Albatross colony **Little Shag, Pied Shag, Black Shag, Pied** and **Variable Oystercatcher** were seen. At the albatross colony there were four sitting **Royal Albatross** birds which could be viewed from inside an enclosed viewing point. The birds are kept under constant observation with strategically placed cameras. At the foot of their cliff nesting site there is a thriving colony **Stewart Island Shag**, as well as a number of **Spotted Shag**.



Royal Albatross

From here we moved on to the Yellow-eyed Penguin Reserve, which is only a short ride away. When inside the centre we were given a talk, outlining the work that the reserve is doing. The reserve is situated in a secluded cove. The land was donated by a local land owner. The reserve is an area of low lying scrub and is interspersed with a network of covered tunnels that enable the visitor to walk into the heart of the reserve at ground level which keeps disturbance to the Penguins to a minimum. From these tunnels you have marvellous views of the **Yellow-eyed Penguin** as they make their way, to and from the sea to their burrows. Not to be missed!

The **Yellow-eyed Penguins** are a species that come and go alone. They do not congregate in large numbers, which makes the monitoring of them easier and identification of individuals much simpler. Each penguin has its own nickname which lifts the individual birds on to a more intimate level with the wardens. This Penguin is known as 'Mac'.



The visit to the reserve, for me, was an unforgettable experience but I feel one that would be enjoyed by anyone fortunate to witness it. As we drove away from the reserve, six **Royal Spoonbills** flew over.

Friday 01 February

Our next destination was to be the Mount Cook National Park. A magnificent place if ever there was one. We were staying at the Hermitage Hotel which has been described

by some, as the best hotel in New Zealand, and I would not argue with that. The hotel has a superb view overlooking Mount Cook and the vast river valley at the foot of the mountains. Unfortunately for us the weather worsened the closer we got to the hotel. By the time we arrived the mountains were covered by low cloud and we were met by fine, misty rain. Not to be out done, Marie and I went for a short walk when the rain stopped and produced a few birds that are familiar to us, such as **Song Thrush** and **Blackbird** as well as **Tomtit** and the diminutive **Rifleman**. We were only scheduled to stay here for one night which was a shame as it would be a great place for a longer stay as there seems to be further potential in the area.

Saturday 02 February

The next morning, a walk before breakfast produced **Tomtit**, **Rifleman**, **Silvereye** and I was delighted when a **New Zealand Falcon**, a hard to find endemic, flew through quite close to me. We left Mount Cook in spectacular style aboard a Convair 580 aircraft. After bidding farewell to our very popular driver Wayne and just before we boarded, the clouds finally lifted and we saw Mount Cook in all its splendour. A champagne lunch aboard the aircraft made the one hour flight to Blenheim very pleasant. Today was proving to be one of those special days that we will always remember. We transferred from the aircraft, by coach, to a jetty on the Marlborough Sound. There waiting for us was our launch the “Odyssea”. We went on a lovely cruise through the Sounds and enjoyed a great lunch on board before returning to complete our journey with another short flight to the capital city of Wellington. Luckily for Marie, she was picked out of the hat to sit on the “jump seat” in the cockpit along side the pilots during take off. The birds that I saw on the Sound included **Pied Stilt**, **Pied Shag** and **Australian Gannet**. Unfortunately no **King Shag** which are known to frequent the coastal waters of the Marlborough Sound. We were met at the airport by our driver for the North Island, Peter, and we proceeded to the Duxton Hotel, overlooking Wellington Harbour.

Sunday 3rd February

After a day of leisure, we had booked to go on an evening excursion to Karori Wildlife Sanctuary, which is only a short drive outside Wellington, in the hope of seeing a **Kiwi**, several of which roam free in the sanctuary. As you arrive you will notice **Kaka**, the forest equivalent of the **Kea**, flying noisily about. During the guided walk other birds including **Weka** and the very rare **Brown Teal** were seen. Unfortunately for us, only the two people at the rear of the line and the back marker guide saw a **Kiwi**. If I had a choice now, I would have gone earlier in the day because you have a great opportunity to see hard to find endemics such as **New Zealand Robin**, **Stitchbird** and **Saddleback**.

Thursday 7th February

After staying in Napier with its attractive Art Deco architecture and then spending a very enjoyable few days in Rotorua, which is steeped in the Maori culture and tradition we had moved on through the lush Waikato farmland to Cambridge, continuing on through the city of



Sacred Kingfisher

Auckland and followed the Pacific Ocean drive to Pahia in the beautiful Bay of Islands. We would be staying at the Copthorne Waitangi Resort, which is close by the Waitangi Treaty House and Grounds where the treaty was signed in 1840 between the Maori Chiefs and the British Crown.

The resort is extremely nice with views overlooking the bay with attractive grounds and pool area. A walk around the area proved to be productive **Variable Oystercatcher, Pied Shag, Caspian Tern** and a pair of **Sacred Kingfisher's** flying to and from their nest in the trunk of a large Palm Tree.

Friday 8th February

A walk before breakfast proved to be very worthwhile. A **Reef Heron** flew across my path and disturbed a **White-faced Heron** from its leisurely feeding. A few yards further on a movement to left caught my attention. It was a **New Zealand Dotterel**. There turned out to be a roost of about twenty of these uncommon endemics, which delighted me no end. The rocky waters edge around Waitangi was obviously ideal for roosting as there were also roosts of 20 plus **Caspian Terns**, 50 plus **White-fronted Terns** and an even greater number of **Variable Oystercatchers**.



White-fronted Tern



New Zealand Dotterel

This morning we went on a cruise from Waitangi, via the historic town of Russell, which is across the bay, out to the 'Hole in the Rock'. The 'Hole in the Rock' is a large rock out in the bay which, believe it or not, has a very large hole through it. If the sea is calm enough, the hole can be navigated by your boat. We were all hoping to see Dolphins and we were not disappointed. Before we had even reached Russell a large pod of Bottle-nosed Dolphins was swimming around us. Everyone had great views as they put on a great performance for us. I found that getting a good photograph of them was being hampered by the delay on my digital camera. By the time we left Russell the dolphins had moved on, not to be seen again, so we were very fortunate. At the 'Hole in the Rock' the sea was too rough to navigate through the hole so while everyone observed the sea surging through the hole I watched the **Australasian Gannet** that was sitting on top of the rock. On the return journey the skipper slowed down the boat so that we could observe a flock of **Buller's Shearwaters** feeding on top of the water. A little further on we came across several

small groups of **Blue Penguin**, but as we got closer to them they insisted on swimming further away.

Sunday 10th February

After having spent the previous day relaxing around the resort and the Treaty Grounds we departed the Bay of Islands for our final destination , Auckland, referred to locally as the 'City of Sails'. It was going to be a fairly long drive, across to the West Coast so we made a stop at Waipoua Kauri Forest Reserve. The wood from the Kauri tree is reckoned to be the most dense and longest lasting wood from any tree on the planet. Pride of place in the reserve is a particular tree, known as Tane Mahuta, the 'Lord of the Forest'. It is the largest living Kauri tree in New Zealand with a trunk girth of 13.8 metres and is thought to be 2000 years old. Our final two days were to be spent in the luxurious Club Rooms of the excellent Langham Hotel. It was a very special place in which to end a fantastic trip to this beautiful country. The trip was concluded with a sumptuous farewell dinner in the hotel with everyone going to different destinations the following day.

Tuesday 12th February

We left Auckland and arrived safely in Singapore. We met our representative and transferred to the Sentosa Resort and Spa along with three other couples from the tour.

Wednesday 13th February

The resort is a very comfortable and picturesque place of the highest standard and proved to be an ideal place to relax. The birds in and around the resort were varied and exotic including **Asian Glossy Starling, Common and White-vented Myna, Oriental Magpie Robin, Common Koel, Spotted Dove, Brahminy Kite, Common Tailorbird, Coppersmith Barbet, Collared Kingfisher** and the stunning **Common Flameback**.

The more you walk around the resort the more birds there are to be seen. Other species which are local to the resort include **Red-whiskered Bulbul, Olive-backed Sunbird, Long-tailed Crow, House Swift, Peaceful Dove** and **Asian Palm Swift**.



Collared Kingfisher



Common Flameback



Oriental Magpie Robin

Thursday 14th February

Today being Valentines Day is the anniversary of the day Marie and I met so it has a special meaning for us. A special day produced more special birds in the shape of **Blue-throated Bee-eater, Pacific Swallow, White-breasted Waterhen, Pink-necked Green Pigeon, Blue-winged Leafbird, Scaly-breasted Munia** and one of the most spectacular the **Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker**.



Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker

I think you will agree a stunning bird to bring the article to a close. A very small bird, but very big on impact. All in all this was a fabulous trip. Endemic species in New Zealand will need to be researched for their locations as they are not easy to come across. Although the itinerary limited my access to some sites, I am more than happy with what I saw without having to work too hard.

Bird List

Singapore City

Brahminy Kite	Yellow-vented Bulbul	Common Myna
White-bellied Sea Eagle	Olive-backed Sunbird	White-vented Myna
Common (Asian) Koel	Yellow-eared Spiderhunter	Black-naped Oriole
Asian Palm Swift	Eurasian Tree Sparrow	House Crow

New Zealand

Great Crested Grebe	Royal Spoonbill	Bar-tailed Godwit
Royal Albatross	Black Swan	Black-backed Gull
Wandering Albatross	Paradise Shelduck	Red-billed Gull
Shy Mollymawk	Mallard	Black-billed Gull
Northern Giant Petrel	Grey Duck	Caspian Tern
Buller's Shearwater	Brown Teal	White-fronted Tern
Sooty Shearwater	New Zealand Scaup	New Zealand Pigeon
Flesh-footed Shearwater	Australasian Harrier	Kea
Cape Petrel	New Zealand Falcon	Kaka
Yellow-eyed Penguin	Wild Turkey	Sacred Kingfisher
Blue Penguin	Californian Quail	Welcome Swallow
Australasian Gannet	Weka	Rifleman

Black Shag	Takahe	Silvereye
Pied Shag	Pukeko	Grey Warbler
Little Black Shag	Australian Coot	Brown Creeper
Little Shag	Pied Oystercatcher	Whitehead
Spotted Shag	Variable Oystercatcher	Fantail
Stewart Island Shag	Spur-winged Plover	Tomtit
White-faced Heron	Pied Stilt	Tui
Reef Heron	New Zealand Dotterel	Bellbird

Introduced Passerines

Blackbird	Redpoll	Starling
Song Thrush	Greenfinch	Common Myna
House Sparrow	Yellowhammer	Australian Magpie
Chaffinch		

Sentosa Island New Birds

Peacock (feral)	House Swift	Red-whiskered Bulbul
White-breasted Waterhen	Collared Kingfisher	Large-billed Crow
Pink-necked Green Pigeon	Blue-throated Bee-eater	Asian Magpie Robin
Spotted Dove	Coppersmith Barbet	Common Tailorbird
Peaceful Dove	Laced Woodpecker	Asian Glossy Starling
Yellow-crested Cockatoo (feral)	Common Flameback	Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker
Tanimbar Corella (feral)	Pacific Swallow	Scaly-breasted Munia
	Blue-winged Leafbird	

VISIT TO NEW ZEALAND - MARCH 2008

(Ken Wright)

For many years my wife has been talking about a very long standing friend of hers who she had not seen for about 50 years. She knew that she was living in New Zealand and had married a “Kiwi” and apart from the new surname, she knew of no more. I started trying to trace her friend about 2 years ago and was eventually successful (with lots of help from Anne Nason). The next thing was making contact and this was made regularly by mail, email and the telephone but I wanted to do more and it seemed logical that we had to make a visit to NZ.

Following some secretive emails to the friend and some equally secretive visits to a travel agent in Andover, I made the booking and we set off for Auckland on 2nd March with an overnight stop in Singapore on the way. We were travelling with Singapore Airlines – our stay in Singapore was very welcome and the only problem was the weather – it was awful and very wet. We took the same route back home and again, Singapore was very wet.

So on to NZ we flew late on in the evening of 4th March and arrived about lunch time on the 5th at Auckland, to be met by Barrie and Bette (as it so happened, the first time for Meg in 47 years – for me the first time ever). We were to stay for just 2 weeks on

Herald Island which is attached to the mainland by a causeway and up at the top of Auckland Bay – an absolutely fabulous location it is.

The next day we were taken over to the other coast to Maori Bay and Muriwai Beach where we took in the Gannetry at Motutara Island Rock Stack. Regrettably the majority of the **Australasian Gannets** were out at sea so although the Stack was pretty enough in its own right, it was devoid of many Gannets and I did not get my camera out. We also saw **White-faced Heron, Red-billed Gull** and **Black-headed Gull** before departing for Mount Eden in Auckland. The following day we visited the Museum in Auckland and generally stayed around the area where Barrie and Bette were living.

The 9th March saw us off for a 2 day visit to the Bay of Islands with an overnight stay in Paihia. On the way up we visited Waipu where incidentally, Barrie and Bette met about 50 years previously. Bette was serving in the NZ WAAF, having previously served in the WRNS. With a father who had been a Lt Col in the Black Watch, she really became Tri-Service! In the centre of the village is a monument that was erected to record the arrival of the 6 ships and crews from Scotland on their journey as settlers. Apparently they had stopped off in Nova Scotia but did not stay there, and sailed on to NZ – landing at Waipu. This had some meaning for Bette, because she is also a Scot. From there we went on up to Whangarai and Kawakawa before arriving at Paihia for our evening stay in a motel. There was a very interesting interlude in Kawakawa where we were shown the public toilets in the centre of the village – as they were so picturesque I took a couple of photographs and include one with this article – if only we had such conveniences here in the UK! The following day saw us off by ferry to Russell. Whilst in Russell we went into the Museum where there is a scaled model of HMS Endeavour of Captain Cook fame. The oldest church in New Zealand is also in Russell and in the grounds is a tombstone erected to honour the members of the crew of HMS Hazard who fell in the defence of Kororareka in on 11th March 1845. We then went to Waitangi Beach to go to the Treaty House where the treaty was signed between the Maori and the mother country (England). Whilst there we had a good look around, both inside the Treaty House and outside. We also saw the very majestic Maori War Canoe down by the beach. On the way back to Herald Island we called in at Orewas Beach for a stop. Whilst up at the bay, I recorded seeing **Australasian Harrier, Californian Quail, Brown Skua, Black-headed Gull, Red-billed Gull and Australasian Tree Martin** in amongst a group of **Welcome Swallows**.

Since I came home I have carried out some research into HMS Herald and HMS Hazzard on the internet with some success – the results of which I sent off to Barrie for his interest. HMS Herald was a frigate under Captain Joseph Nias which had sailed the world from England to South America, Africa, Asia and into the Pacific between 1838 and 1842. The crew were to take a major part in the signing of The Treaty of Waitangi in 1840, widely regarded as New Zealand's founding document. She also took part in the signing of The Treaty of Nanking and the cession of the island of Hong Kong in 1842. HMS Hazard was involved in the New Zealand wars 1845 to 1847.

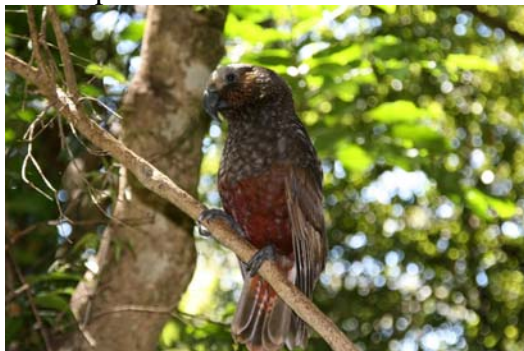
The 11th and 12th saw us staying around the areas of Henderson and Whenuapai. We also went up to Titirangi and the Waitakere Ranges where Barrie and I went off into

the forest tracks in search of the **Tui** – without any close sightings also we did see them in the distance high up in the trees.

On the 13th we set off down south for Auckland, Hamilton, Huntley, where we had a coffee stop by the River Waikato and then on to Rotarua. We stopped at Rainbow Springs to visit the “Kiwi Encounter” – a very interesting visit it was. The Kiwi is an endangered species and of course is nocturnal. We therefore entered their world of artificial darkness and quiet to meet up with them. Once we became accustomed to the dark, the birds were quite visible and as readers will appreciate – photography was banned. However, out in the foyer there were displays which could be photographed and I include one of them now.

From there we moved into the town to find a motel for the evening and have a wander down to the lake. On the lake were **Australasian Black Swan** (about 10) and very large raft (well over 100) **New Zealand Scaup**. There were also a couple of **Feral Goose** on the shoreline. The next day we visited Te Puia (Te Whakarewarewatanga) where there are the hot mud wallows and the geysers which were very active. It was a very interesting visit where one of the visitors (not me) was selected as the King for the day and we were treated to a fascinating display of the Maori welcoming ceremony, dancing and other activities, wood carving and cloth making. The following day saw us driving up north to stay overnight at Tauranga. The journey included Katikati, Waihi (Karanahake Gorge), Paeroa, Kopu Bridge and into Thames for lunch where there was an old time fayre taking place. We then went on to the Coromandel Peninsular before continuing to Kawakawa Bay and Clevedon on the way back to Herald Island. On the journey from Rotarua we saw **Pied Shag, Royal Spoonbill, Paradise Shelduck, Pukeko, Australasian Coot, Australasian Magpie, Myna, Kingfisher and Black-backed Gull**.

On the 16th we were taken to Mount Victoria and the North Coast Beaches of Devenport, Milford, Mairangi and Takepuna and on the 17th we had lunch up in the Skytower in Auckland. Our penultimate day was spent on Herald Island, where I had been out walking every morning we were there. It really is a beautiful part of the North island of New Zealand and joined to the mainland by a causeway. Whilst on Herald Island, my sightings were **Mallard, Myna, House Sparrow, Song Thrush, Starling, Kingfisher, Pied Shag, White-faced Heron, Barbary Dove, Welcome Swallow, Darter, Pukeko, Variable Oystercatcher, Spur-winged Plover, Silvereye, Australasian Magpie, Pied Stilt, Fantail and North Island Tomtit**. It was altogether a wonderful visit with some spectacular scenery, many new birds, some great photography opportunities and most important of all, some wonderful friendship.



Kaka © Andrew Brav

AUSTRALIA TRIP REPORT

04 Sep – 24 Oct 2007

(Dave Foley)

On 1st September 2007 my wife and I left Heathrow bound for our holiday in Australia, my 'retirement treat'! We had an overnight stay in Hong Kong and then flew on to Melbourne on 4th, arriving late in the evening. On our first morning we visited Melbourne Zoo and almost immediately the camera was brought into use, with so many different new bird species to see and try to identify, and all seemingly very colourful and exotic! The next couple of days were spent doing the 'tourist' things and a couple of further visits to the Botanic Gardens, which were very productive on the birding front, with such species as **Superb Fairy Wren**, **Bell Miner** and **Black Swan** amongst others.



Superb Fairy Wren



Bell Miner



Black Swan

On the 8th we picked up a hire car and drove to Phillip Island for an overnight stay in order to see the **Little Penguin** Parade, a well known tourist attraction, and were not disappointed as they performed brilliantly for the assembled crowd. As the smallest penguins in the world they are really photogenic and were, like most penguins, highly amusing. One point though, it was absolutely freezing during the evening even though we were wearing fleeces!!



Little Penguin



Little Penguin



Little Penguin

Leaving Phillip Island on 09th we drove North (for eight hours!) to stay with a relative at a beautiful town called Merimbula, roughly halfway between Melbourne and Sydney, where we were able to stay for a week, sampling the local hospitality with quite a number of 'ex-pats', and also further increase our trip list, with **Rainbow Lorikeets**, **King Parrots**, **Rosellas** and plenty of further new species.



Rainbow Lorikeet



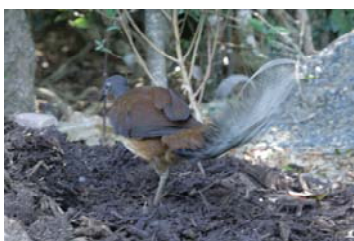
Australian King Parrot



Eastern Rosella

We left Merimbula on the 16th and drove to Sydney, staying overnight in Kiama, where there is a famous 'blowhole' which was quite spectacular. In Sydney we again did our 'tourist' thing, including a whale-watching trip, on which we were able to see some good seabirds, a visit to Sydney Aquarium, and a couple of visits to the Botanic Gardens, again a very good birding spot.

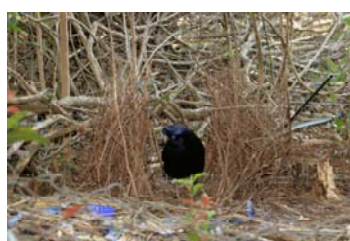
We left Sydney on the 21st and flew to Brisbane, where we picked up another hire car in order to drive to O'Reillys Rainforest Retreat, a most wonderful hotel on top of a mountain with a quite hair-raising 32 kilometre drive up a winding narrow road, especially as the first time we did it was at night! There were lots of rainforest walks through fantastic scenery, evening talks, the food was superb, and all the staff were exceptionally friendly and helpful. Among the highlights of our stay there were seeing **Alberts Lyrebird**, **Whites Thrush** (known as Bassian Thrush in Australia), and the fact that in the garden just outside our room, a **Satin Bowerbird** had a bower and was quite successful in attracting females, displaying there regularly.



Alberts Lyrebird



Whites Thrush

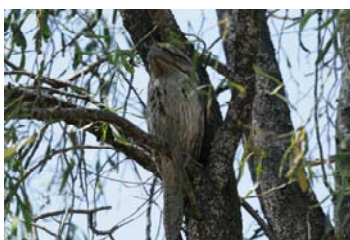


Satin Bowerbird

After a fantastic stay we left there on the 25th and drove back into Brisbane, feeling very rested and relaxed. In Brisbane we spent some time in the Botanic Gardens (again) and Roma Street Parklands, a small piece of rainforest set in a reclaimed (at a cost of AD28 million) railway yard in the heart of the city, and another fantastic spot for birds, including **Blue-faced** and **Brown Honeyeaters**. On Saturday 29th we had a guided bird trip with Roy Sonnenburg of Brisbane Birding Services, who took us out for the day to many different locations and saw lots of new species, including a Tawny Frogmouth roosting and a Diamond Dove, which even he was quite surprised to find.



Blue-faced Honeyeater



Tawny Frogmouth



Diamond Dove

We left Brisbane on Sunday 29th and drove to a small coastal town named Tin Can Bay, where we managed to see some of the more exotic species, such as **Rainbow Bee-eater**, **Striated Heron** and **Double-barred Finch**. There were also river dolphins which came in to the riverside in the mornings in order to be fed. Unfortunately I was also bitten to pieces by mosquitoes while birding in the mangroves around the bay early in the morning, but this was the only time this happened throughout the whole trip.



Rainbow Bee-eater



Striated Heron



Double-barred Finch

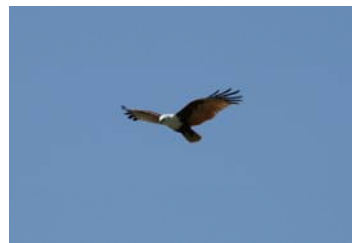
On 02nd October we left Tin Can Bay and made our way to our next stop at Emu Park, another fairly small town just on the coast, and one of the places where Captain Cook made a landfall in Australia. Yet again there were new species to see and among them were such gems as **Red-capped Plover**, **Australian Darter** and **Brahminy Kite**.



Red-capped Plover



Darter



Brahminy Kite

Leaving Emu Park on 05th we drove on to Mackay, quite a large city and not what we had become used to in the way of quiet accommodation for the past few weeks, but nonetheless with a fantastic Botanic Gardens and a riverside walk. From here we were able to visit Eungella National Park, where incidentally we managed to see wild platypus at Broken River, and to get even more species for the list, including **Silvereye** and **Scarlet Honeyeater**, and even managing to get views, but no photographs of, the **Eungella Honeyeater**, quite a rare species.



Scarlet Honeyeater

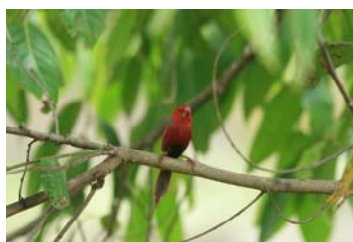


Silvereye



Platypus

On the way to our next overnight stop we visited a wonderful site, Tyto Wetlands, where we saw more new species, including **Crimson Finch**, **Yellow Honeyeater**, **White-necked Heron** and many others. This site was fairly new and featured a purpose-built visitor centre and interpretive boards, and was really the most 'birder friendly' place we had yet come across.



Crimson Finch



Yellow Honeyeater



White-necked Heron

We arrived at a most wonderful place, Balgal Beach, which had amazing gardens which led down to the beach. Once again we were exceedingly lucky with our choice of location as our hosts were very pleasant and very helpful in telling us where to find birds, and indeed there was a family of **Blue-winged Kookaburras** which came to the garden every evening to be fed. The highlight of the stay here however, was a **Beach Stone Curlew** on the beach which was very shy but a fantastic bird to see, and one of my real target species. I was also lucky enough to add another species of Fairy Wren, the **Lovely Fairy Wren**.



Blue-winged Kookaburra



Beach Stone Curlew



Lovely Fairy Wren

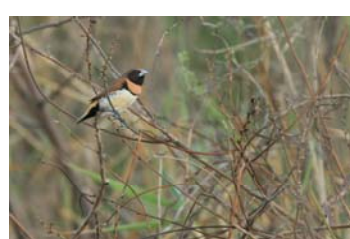
We left Balgal Beach on the 12th and moved on further North to another beachside motel at a place called Bramston Beach, where again we had some great birding, with great views of further species including **Metallic Starling**, **Chestnut-breasted Mannikin** and **Olive-Backed Sunbird** with one of the latter actually having a nest in the dining area!



Metallic Starling



Olive-backed Sunbird



Chestnut-breasted Mannikin

Leaving Bramston Beach on the 15th we drove up to Kuranda and our stay at Cassowary House, set in the rainforest about 8 km from the town. This was another idyllic location and shortly after settling in to our room we went down to the garden and were greeted by 'Missy', the resident female **Cassowary**! Another fabulous place for birds with species such as **Macleays Honeyeater**, **Victorias Riflebird** and **Red-necked Crake**. A trip to Michaelmas Caye on the Great Barrier Reef from here added **Lesser Frigate Bird**, **Brown Booby** and **Lesser Crested Tern**, among others, while a drive to Mareeba Wetlands saw us add **Emu** and **Brown Treecreeper** to our fairly impressive trip list.



Southern Cassowary

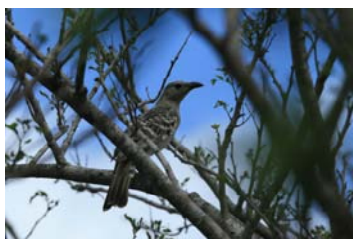


Macleays Honeyeater



Victorias Riflebird

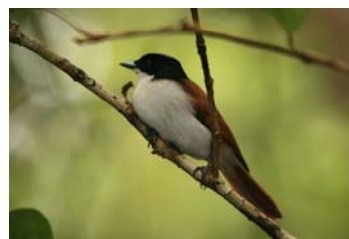
We left Cassowary House on the 19th and drove further North again via Mount Molloy, where we managed to add **Great Bower Bird** and a 16 km detour to Maryfarms to add **Australian Bustard**, finally arriving at our destination, Red Mill House in Daintree, another specialist birders lodge. In the garden in the first few minutes we saw **Azure Kingfisher** and **Olive-backed Oriole**, while on an early-morning river trip on the Daintree River we also managed to get **Great-billed Heron**, **Black Bittern** and **Shining Flycatcher** among the sightings. A walk later gave us **Goulds Bronze Cuckoo** and **Brown Cuckoo-dove** and many other species which were by now becoming quite familiar!



Great Bowerbird



Australian Bustard



Shining Flycatcher {F}

We left Red Mill House on the 19th and made our way back to Cairns, where we visited the Botanic Gardens before booking into our seafront hotel. The esplanade at Cairns is well known as a birding 'hotspot' and there were usually a number of birders at various points along its 3.5 km length. The main species in evidence were **Australian Pelican** and **Royal Spoonbill**, together with many varied species of wader.



Australian Pelican



Royal Spoonbill



Grey-tailed Tattler

After a couple of very satisfying days in Cairns we left on the 24th and flew home via Singapore, where we visited the Sungei Buloh Wetlands Reserve, which was featured in a report in the 2007 Bulletin, and as was stated in that report, a most wonderful place to visit. In summary, a trip to Australia is highly recommended for birding, butterflies and many very interesting reptiles, as well as the weather and the laid-back attitude of the locals!! The driving was easy in spite of the distances involved and I would recommend the use of a hire car, as the price of fuel was very reasonable compared to the U.K. I would dearly love to return at some time in the future and further increase my world bird list.

Systematic List of Species

Emu	<i>Dromaius novae-hollandiae</i>
Southern Cassowary	<i>Casuarius casuarius</i>
Orange-footed Scrubfowl	<i>Megapodius reinwardt</i>
Australian Brush Turkey	<i>Alectura lathami</i>
Wandering Whistling Duck	<i>Dendrocygna arcuata</i>
Plumed Whistling Duck	<i>Dendrocygna eytoni</i>
Australian Wood Duck	<i>Chenonetta jubata</i>
Black Swan	<i>Cygnus atratus</i>
Magpie Goose	<i>Anseranas semipalmata</i>
Radjah Shelduck	<i>Tadorna radjah</i>
Australian Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadornoides</i>
Cotton Pygmy Goose	<i>Nettapus coromondelianus</i>
Green Pygmy Goose	<i>Nettapus pulchellus</i>
Hardhead	<i>Aythya australis</i>
Pacific Black Duck	<i>Anas superciliosa</i>
Pink-eared Duck	<i>Malachorynchus membranaceus</i>
Grey Teal	<i>Anas gracilis</i>
Chestnut Teal	<i>Anas castanea</i>
Hoary-headed Grebe	<i>Poliocephalus poliocephalus</i>
Australasian Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus novaehollandiae</i>
Little Penguin	<i>Eudyptula minor</i>
Wedge-tailed Shearwater	<i>Puffinua pacificus</i>
Shy Albatross	<i>Diomedea cauta</i>
Australasian Gannet	<i>Morus serrator</i>
Brown Booby	<i>Sula leucogaster</i>
Darter	<i>Anhinga melanogaster</i>
Little Black Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax sulcirostris</i>
Pied Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax varius</i>
Little Pied Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax melanoleucos</i>
Lesser Frigatebird	<i>Fregata ariel</i>
Great-billed Heron	<i>Ardea sumatrana</i>
Black-necked Stork	<i>Ephippiorhynchus asiaticus</i>
Australian Pelican	<i>Pelicanus conspicillatus</i>
White-necked Heron	<i>Ardea pacifica</i>
White-faced Heron	<i>Egretta novaehollandiae</i>
Pied Heron	<i>Ardea picata</i>
Cattle Egret	<i>Ardea ibis</i>
Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>
Eastern Reef Egret	<i>Egretta sacra</i>
Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>
Intermediate Egret	<i>Ardea intermedia</i>

Nankeen Night Heron	<i>Ncticorax caledonicus</i>
Striated Heron	<i>Butorides striatus</i>
Black Bittern	<i>Ixobrychus flavicollis</i>
Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>
Straw-necked Ibis	<i>Threskiornis spinicollis</i>
Australian White Ibis	<i>Threskiornis molucca</i>
Royal Spoonbill	<i>Platalea regia</i>
Yellow-billed Spoonbill	<i>Platalea flavipes</i>
Black-shouldered Kite	<i>Elanus axillaries</i>
Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>
Brahminy Kite	<i>Haliastur indus</i>
Whistling Kite	<i>Haliastur sphenurus</i>
Square-tailed Kite	<i>Lophoictinia isura</i>
Red Goshawk	<i>Erythrotriorchis radiatus</i>
Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>
White-bellied Sea-eagle	<i>Haliaeetus leucogaster</i>
Wedge-tailed Eagle	<i>Aquila audax</i>
Swamp Harrier	<i>Circus approximans</i>
Black Falcon	<i>Falco subniger</i>
Brown Falcon	<i>Falco berigora</i>
Nankeen Kestrel	<i>Falco cenchroides</i>
Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>
Sarus Crane	<i>Grus antigone</i>
Brolga	<i>Grus rubicundus</i>
Red-necked Crake	<i>Rallina tricolor</i>
Buff-banded Rail	<i>Gallirallus phillipensis</i>
Spotless Crake	<i>Porzana tabuensis</i>
Dusky Moorhen	<i>Gallinula tenebrosa</i>
Purple Swamphen	<i>Porphyrio porphyrio</i>
Eurasian Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>
Australian Bustard	<i>Ardeotis australis</i>
Bush Stone-curlew	<i>Burhinus grallarius</i>
Beach Stone-curlew	<i>Esacus neglectus</i>
Little Button-quail	<i>Turnix velox</i>
Lathams Snipe	<i>Gallinago hardwickii</i>
Bar-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa laponica</i>
Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa</i>
Eastern Curlew	<i>Numenius madagascariensis</i>
Whimbrel	<i>Numenius arquata</i>
Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>
Grey-tailed Tattler	<i>Heteroscelus brevipes</i>
Terek Sandpiper	<i>Xenus cinereus</i>
Ruddy Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>
Temmincks Stint	<i>Calidris temminckii</i>
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	<i>Calidris acuminata</i>
Curlew Sandpiper	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>
Comb-crested Jacana	<i>Irediparra gallinacean</i>
Pied Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus longirostris</i>
Sooty Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus fuliginosus</i>
Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>
Red-necked Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra novaehollandiae</i>
Pacific Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis fulva</i>
Red-capped Plover	<i>Charadrius ruficapillus</i>
Lesser Sand Plover	<i>Charadrius mongolus</i>
Red-kneed Dotterel	<i>Erythrogonys cinctus</i>
Black-fronted Dotterel	<i>Elseyornis melanops</i>
Masked Lapwing	<i>Vanellus miles</i>
Banded Lapwing	<i>Vanellus tricolor</i>
Great Skua	<i>Carharacta skua</i>
Pacific Gull	<i>Larus pacificus</i>
Silver Gull	<i>Larus novaehollandiae</i>

Gull-billed Tern	<i>Sterna nilotica</i>
Crested Tern	<i>Sterna bergii</i>
Lesser Crested Tern	<i>Sterna bengalensis</i>
Sooty Tern	<i>Sterna fuscata</i>
Common Noddy	<i>Anous stolidus</i>
Spotted Turtle Dove	<i>Streptopelia chinensis</i>
Feral Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>
Diamond Dove	<i>Geopelia cuneata</i>
Peaceful Dove	<i>Geopelia striata</i>
Bar-shouldered Dove	<i>Geopelia humeralis</i>
Brown Cuckoo-Dove	<i>Macropygia amboinensis</i>
Topknot Pigeon	<i>Lopholaimus antarcticus</i>
Emerald Dove	<i>Chalcophaps indica</i>
Common Bronzewing	<i>Phaps chalcoptera</i>
Wonga Pigeon	<i>Leucosarsia melanoleuca</i>
Crested Pigeon	<i>Ocyphaps lophotes</i>
Pied Imperial Pigeon	<i>Ducula bicolor</i>
White-headed Pigeon	<i>Columba leucomela</i>
Wompoo Fruit Dove	<i>Ptilinopus magnificus</i>
Red-tailed Black Cockatoo	<i>Calyptorhynchus banksii</i>
Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo	<i>Calyptorhynchus funereus</i>
Galah	<i>Cacatua roseicapilla</i>
Little Corella	<i>Cacatua sanguinea</i>
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	<i>Cacatua galerita</i>
Rainbow Lorikeet	<i>Trichoglossus haematodus</i>
Scaly-breasted Lorikeet	<i>Trichoglossus chlorolepidotus</i>
Little Lorikeet	<i>Glossopsitta pusilla</i>
Double-eyed Fig Parrot	<i>Cyclopsitta diophthalma</i>
Australian King Parrot	<i>Alisterus scapularis</i>
Red-winged Parrot	<i>Aprosmictus erythropterus</i>
Crimson Rosella	<i>Platycercus elegans</i>
Pale-headed Rosella	<i>Platycercus adscitus</i>
Eastern Rosella	<i>Platycercus eximius</i>
Golden-shouldered Parrot	<i>Psephotus chrysopterygius</i>
Shining Bronze-cuckoo	<i>Chrysococcyx lucidus</i>
Goulds Bronze-cuckoo	<i>Chrysococcyx russatus</i>
Common Koel	<i>Eudynamys scolopacea</i>
Channel-billed Cuckoo	<i>Scythrops novaehollandiae</i>
Barn Owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>
Tawny Frogmouth	<i>Podargus strigoides</i>
Papuan Frogmouth	<i>Podargus papuensis</i>
White-rumped Swiftlet	<i>Collocalia spodiopygius</i>
Azure Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo azurea</i>
Laughing Kookabura	<i>Dacelo novaeguineae</i>
Blue-winged Kookaburra	<i>Dacelo leachii</i>
Forest Kingfisher	<i>Todiramphus macleayii</i>
Sacred Kingfisher	<i>Todiramphus sanctus</i>
Buff-breasted Paradise Kingfisher	<i>Tanysiptera sylvia</i>
Rainbow Bee-eater	<i>Merops ornatus</i>
Dollarbird	<i>Eurystomus orientalis</i>
Alberts Lyrebird	<i>Menura alberti</i>
White-throated Treecreeper	<i>Cormobates leucophaeus</i>
Brown Treecreeper	<i>Climacteris picumnus</i>
Superb Fairy-Wren	<i>Malurus cyaneus</i>
Lovely Fairy-Wren	<i>Malurus amabilis</i>
Red-backed Fairy-Wren	<i>Malurus melanocephalus</i>
Striated Pardalote	<i>Pardalotus striatus</i>
White-browed Scrubwren	<i>Sericornis frontalis</i>
Yellow-throated Scrubwren	<i>Sericornis citreogularis</i>
Large-billed Scrubwren	<i>Sericornis magnirostris</i>
Brown Gerygone	<i>Gerygone mouki</i>
Large-billed Gerygone	<i>Gerygone magnirostris</i>
Brown Thornbill	<i>Acanthiza pusilla</i>
Yellow-rumped Thornbill	<i>Acanthiza chrysorrhoa</i>

Weebill	<i>Smicrornis brevirostris</i>
Little Wattlebird	<i>Anthochaera chrysoptera</i>
Red Wattlebird	<i>Anthochaera carunculata</i>
Little Friarbird	<i>Philemon citreogularis</i>
Noisy Friarbird	<i>Philoemon corniculatus</i>
Helmeted Friarbird	<i>Philemon buceroides</i>
Striped Honeyeater	<i>Plectorhyncha lanceolata</i>
Regent Honeyeater	<i>Xanthomyza Phrygia</i>
Blue-faced Honeyeater	<i>Entomyzon cyanotis</i>
Bell Miner	<i>Manorina melanophrys</i>
Noisy Miner	<i>Manorina melanocephala</i>
Lewins Honeyeater	<i>Meliphaga lewinii</i>
Yellow-spotted Honeyeater	<i>Meliphaga notata</i>
White-gaped Honeyeater	<i>Lichenostomus unicolor</i>
Eungella Honeyeater	<i>Lichenostomus hindwoodi</i>
Yellow-faced Honeyeater	<i>Lichenostomus chrysops</i>
Yellow Honeyeater	<i>Lichenostomus flavus</i>
Singing Honeyeater	<i>Lichenostomus virescens</i>
Varied Honeyeater	<i>Lichenostomus versicolor</i>
Mangrove Honeyeater	<i>Lichenostomus fasciogularis</i>
White-eared Honeyeater	<i>Lichenostomus leucotis</i>
White-throated Honeyeater	<i>Melithreptus albogularis</i>
New Holland Honeyeater	<i>Phylidoyris novahollandiae</i>
Eastern Spinebill	<i>Acanthorhynchus tenuirostris</i>
Brown-backed Honeyeater	<i>Ramsayornis modestus</i>
Macleays Honeyeater	<i>Xanthotis macleayana</i>
Dusky Honeyeater	<i>Myzomela obscura</i>
Scarlet Honeyeater	<i>Myzomela sanguinolenta</i>
Brown Honeyeater	<i>Lichmera indistincta</i>
Lemon-bellied Flycatcher	<i>Microeca flavigaster</i>
Jacky Winter	<i>Microeca fascinans</i>
Eastern Yellow Robin	<i>Eopsaltria australis</i>
Pale-yellow Robin	<i>Tregellasia capito</i>
Mangrove Robin	<i>Eopsaltria pulverulenta</i>
White-browed Robin	<i>Poecilodryas superciliosa</i>
Grey-headed Robin	<i>Heteromyias albispecularis</i>
Logrunner	<i>Orthonyx temminckii</i>
Chowchilla	<i>Orthonyx spaldingii</i>
Grey-crowned Babbler	<i>Pomatostomus temporalis</i>
Eastern Whipbird	<i>Psophodes olivaceus</i>
Red-whiskered Bulbul	<i>Pyconotus jocosus</i>
Golden Whistler	<i>Pachycephala pectoralis</i>
Rufous Whistler	<i>Pachycephala rufiventris</i>
Grey Shrike-thrush	<i>Colluricincla harmonica</i>
Little Shrike-thrush	<i>Colluricincla megarhyncha</i>
Spectacled Monarch	<i>Monarcha trivirgatus</i>
Leaden Flycatcher	<i>Myiagra rubecula</i>
Satin Flycatcher	<i>Myiagra cyanoleuca</i>
Shining Flycatcher	<i>Myiagra alecto</i>
Willie Wagtail	<i>Rhipidura leucophrys</i>
Rufous Fantail	<i>Rhipidura rufifrons</i>
Grey Fantail	<i>Rhipidura fuliginosa</i>
Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	<i>Coracina novahollandiae</i>
White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike	<i>Coracina papuensis</i>
Barred Cuckoo-shrike	<i>Coracina lineata</i>
Varied Triller	<i>Lalage leucomela</i>
Olive-backed Oriole	<i>Oriolus sagittatus</i>
Yellow Oriole	<i>Oriolus flavocinctus</i>
Figbird	<i>Sphecotheres viridis</i>
White-breasted Woodswallow	<i>Artamus leucorhynchus</i>
Black Butcherbird	<i>Cracticus quoyi</i>
Grey Butcherbird	<i>Cracticus torquatus</i>
Pied Butcherbird	<i>Cracticus nigrogularis</i>

Magpie-Lark	<i>Grallina cyanoleuca</i>	
Australian Magpie	<i>Gymnorhina tibicen</i>	
Pied Currawong	<i>Strepera graculina</i>	
Grey Currawong	<i>Strepera versicolor</i>	
Victorias Riflebird	<i>Ptilotis victoriae</i>	
Spangled Drongo	<i>Dicrurus bracteatus</i>	
Australian Raven	<i>Corvus coronoides</i>	
Little Raven	<i>Corvus mellori</i>	
Torresian Crow	<i>Corvus orru</i>	
White-winged Chough	<i>Corcorax melanorhamphos</i>	
Spotted Catbird	<i>Ailuroedus melanotis</i>	
Green Catbird	<i>Ailuroedus crassirostris</i>	
Tooth-billed Bowerbird	<i>Scenopoeetes dentirostris</i>	
Regent Bowerbird	<i>Sericulus chrysocephalus</i>	
Satin Bowerbird	<i>Ptilonorhynchus violaceus</i>	
Great Bowerbird	<i>Chlamydera nuchalis</i>	
Richards Pipit	<i>Anthus novaeseelandiae</i>	
Double-barred Finch	<i>Taeniopygia bichenovii</i>	
Black-throated Finch	<i>Poephila cincta</i>	
Red-browed Finch	<i>Neochmia temporalis</i>	
Crimson Finch	<i>Neochmia phaeton</i>	
Zebra Finch	<i>Taeniopygia guttata</i>	
Chestnut-breasted Mannikin	<i>Lonchura castaneothorax</i>	
Nutmeg Mannikin	<i>Lonchura punctulata</i>	
Yellow-bellied Sunbird	<i>Nectarinia jugularis</i>	
Mistletoebird	<i>Dicaeum hirundinaceum</i>	
Welcome Swallow	<i>Hirundo neoxena</i>	
Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	
Tree Martin	<i>Hirundo nigricans</i>	
Fairy Martin	<i>Hirundo ariel</i>	
Clamorous Reed-Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus stentoreus</i>	
Brown Songlark	<i>Cincloramphus cruralis</i>	
Golden-headed Cisticola	<i>Cisticola exilis</i>	
Silvereye	<i>Zosterops lateralis</i>	
Russet-tailed Thrush	<i>Zoothera heinei</i>	
Bassian Thrush	<i>Zoothera lunulata</i>	
Metallic Starling	<i>Aplonis metallica</i>	
Common Myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>	Total – 267 species

SINGAPORE

Common Flameback	<i>Dinopium javanense</i>	
Collared Kingfisher	<i>Todiramphus chloris</i>	
Red Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia chinensis</i>	
Pink-necked Pigeon	<i>Treron vernans</i>	
White-breasted Waterhen	<i>Amaurornis phoeniceus</i>	
Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>	
Common Redshank	<i>Tringa tetanus</i>	
Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>	
Grey-tailed Tattler	<i>Heteroscelus brevipes</i>	
Pacific Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis fulva</i>	
Mongolian Plover	<i>Charadrius mongolus</i>	
Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	
Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	
Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>	
Great Egret	<i>Casmerodius albus</i>	
Chinese Pond Heron	<i>Ardeola bacchus</i>	
Common Myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>	
Pacific Swallow	<i>Hirundo tahitica</i>	
Ashy Tailorbird	<i>Orthotomus ruficeps</i>	Total – 19 species

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