



Birding Two Continents

10th October - 17th October 2019

www.ingloriousbustards.com



Day 1 - 10th October 2019

The group arrived into respective airports at Gibraltar and Malaga where they were met by Niki & Simon. We were soon settling in at our eco-lodge accommodation at Huerta Grande, where we met with Jan and Peter who had already arrived a couple of days earlier.

After settling in, unpacking and chilling out with a light lunch, we travelled out to the west to the valley of Santuario de la Luz. Here we found groups of Griffon Vultures, Booted Eagles and Short-toed Eagles and spent some time getting to grips with Thekla Lark identification. Moving back towards Huerta Grande we stopped at the Mirador del Estrecho, where we could enjoy the spectacular vista out towards the North Coast of Africa. We scanned the coastal valleys where yet more raptors were present, before returning to base to relax before dinner.

Day 2 - 11th October 2019

Today we headed further to the west and to the Salinas de Barbate, an area of disused salt pans now converted into a nature reserve. Here we were surrounded by buzzing Calandra Larks, Crested Larks and Corn Buntings. We watched Greater Flamingoes, Black-winged Stilts, Kentish and Common Ringed Plovers wade in the shallows. We found a single Curlew Sandpiper among the Dunlin and Sanderling and a single Iberian Chiffchaff foraging amongst the shoreline scrub.

We took our picnic among the pines at the edge of the salinas where we found Common Redstart, Western Osprey and Caspian Tern.

Moving on, we searched fields near Manzanete and eventually we found at least twenty of the super-rare Northern Bald Ibis. The birds in this area are the outcome of a successful reintroduction project started in 2007, and now number around 80 pairs. We had super views of them feeding among the cows and Jackdaws and discussed the conservation work being done for this species both in Spain and Morocco.

Nearby we entered the farmland of La Janda where we watched bouncing Zitting Cisticolas. Three Egyptian Mongoose ran across our path as a Black-winged Kite doubled back on us. Nearby we found a further two Black-winged Kites and got excellent views of this little raptor.



Day 3 - 12th October 2019

Today local knowledge came even more into play, allowing us to make some judgements involving weather and wind. We headed for the raptor watchpoint of Cazalla, where we judged that wind direction and strength along with the remaining cloud cover should deliver us some concentrations of raptors, which it did!

The first groups of Griffon Vultures soon came. Several hundreds were observed drifting in and out of the cloud as well as over 265 Short-toed Eagles, hundreds of Booted Eagles, several Black Kites, two Black Storks and two Honey Buzzards.

Our friend and colleague Javi Notario of Fundación Migres was also on hand to point out any interesting sightings with his hawk eyes! Niki put her equally sharp eyes into action and locked on to a Buteo species which the three of us deliberated over due to the possibility in this area of Common and Atlas Long-legged Buzzard hybrids. However all the features looked good for Atlas Long-legged Buzzard, a nice find!



After picnic back at Huerta Grande, some of the group opted to wander the picturesque streets of Tarifa's old town. The rest of us met with our friend Aurelio and journeyed out into Algeciras Bay and beyond on his private boat. Here we were treated to the throng of life in The Straits but also its fragility. First we came across Bottle-nosed Dolphins, a large pod of which drifted right alongside us! We found rafts of hundreds of Cory's Shearwaters being raided by Great Skuas as Northern Gannet passed by. Further off the coast we found Common Dolphins, which also chose to swim with us right alongside the boat! We were breathless with joy at this incredibly close encounter, which allowed us to observe their smaller size and striking patterning. But mostly we just enjoyed their whistles and clicks and their company!

Due to the seeming never-ending tide of single use plastics that many people use without a second thought these animals are threatened, and we as a group ensured (as we do with all trips) that our use of single use plastics is kept to an absolute minimum.

Day 4 - 13th October 2019

Today we caught our ferry to Morocco to go birding on a whole *nother* continent! Once on board and having dispensed with passport formalities, we were soon out of harbour and into the thick of Cory's Shearwaters, Great Skuas and Northern Gannets. In addition we found Striped Dolphins cruising in the sea.

We stopped for our second breakfast at a truck stop café of Oued El Marsa, where we enjoyed our first kick-ass mint tea and an assortment of local breads, cheese and honey. As we looked back over The Straits to Spain and Europe we saw African Blue Tits, African Chaffinch and Common Bulbuls around us.

Moving on we soon arrived at the seaside town of Moulay Bouselham. We watched over the famous Merja Zerga lagoon while we took tea amongst Common Bulbuls and Laughing Doves. Then it was time to head out with our local guide Hassan on a tiny traditional fishing vessel onto the lagoon itself. Here we enjoyed close views of Audouin's and Slender-billed Gulls and a selection of waders and terns.

After our boat trip we took our picnic then moved to a farmed area of the lagoon's shores and the fresh marsh. Sadly, this area is being ravaged by intensive berry production which is eating up the area of grazing marsh. As we searched the remaining and fragmented areas of marsh we waited patiently as dusk approached. Soon enough a gorgeous Moroccan Marsh Owl rose up and landed on the edge of the fields where we were thrilled to get fantastic views. Later over dinner we lamented just how threatened this species is due to agricultural expansion.

We drove to our hotel in the bustling and vibrant town of Larache, where after our delicious dinner of locally-caught seafood we visited the delightful colony of Little Swifts in the town square.

Day 5 - 14th October 2019

We spent a relaxed start to the day enjoying the Little Swifts over the plaza and coming in and out of their nesting colony. and following breakfast we journeyed the very short distance to the Loukkos wetland. Here we got our first views of Brown-throated Martins and *algeriensis* Grey Shrike. On the concealed flashes of water, we found Green Sandpipers and Black-winged Stilts as numerous Marsh Harriers quartered the marshlands.

Moving onto the main lagoon area, myriads of Yellow Wagtails of both *flava* and *iberiae* races flitted around us. We found a perched Western Osprey and heard then located seven Western Swampheas. Twenty-eight Eurasian Spoonbills passed overhead and Little Ringed Plovers, Common Ringed Plovers, three Little Stints, Ruff, Wood Sandpiper, Spotted Redshanks and Greenshanks waded the shallows.

We headed on across the area's sweeping plains, with their patchwork of low intensity agriculture. En route we took a comfort break but just as we did so the heavens opened! Some of us braved the elements such as Michael, but were soon disappointed to find others hadn't quite got the same drenching! However, an Atlas Long-legged Buzzard had and was drying off atop a tree which gave us great views as a second bird spiralled along the hillside behind us.

We stopped for lunch in the village of Beni Arouss gateway to the Rif Mountains. The group loved eating our traditional, totally real Moroccan lunch alongside the local herdspeople and farm workers. It featured spiced beans, lentils, chickpeas and the biggest flat breads ever!

Soon it was time to climb up into the mystical woods of the Bouachem Forest. The swirling mist made visibility difficult but we soon came across troops of Barbary Macaques feeding amongst the leaves on the forest floor, getting close views of this endemic species.

As we continued the forest opened out to give magnificent views of the mountains of the Rif with their semi-subsistent farming and sustainable agriculture.

Arriving at our traditional hotel at Dardara – built into a lovingly-restored watermill - we were shown to our rooms and took our delightful traditional meal under candlelight.



Day 6 - 15th October 2019

A relaxed start to the day saw us meeting up with our 4x4 drivers and ascending the steep bumpy roads into the Talassamtane National Park. We soon emerged above the coniferous treeline and out among the high peaks where Northern Ravens croaked through the valley.

It wasn't long until we spotted our first Moussier's Redstart which flashed off the rocks and away to the valley below. Queue a game of "now you see it, now you don't" as two males sang sub-song and bounced off rocks and bushes with seconds to spare, making our views frustratingly brief. So we decided to move onto another area and sure enough a glorious male Moussier's Redstart awaited! This guy didn't disappoint as he alighted in the mastic bushes just next to us and sat for his admiring crowd. In the end we found a total of nine individuals, both males and females. Also thrilling were a pair of Black Wheatears and exceptional views of Blue Rock Thrush as they alighted onto rocks, and Rock Buntings as they drank at a spring.

We met again with our 4x4 driver Ibrahim who took us to his mother Aisha's house for



lunch. It was a special experience for many to eat alongside these semi-subsistent farmers and herders and share time with these kind, generous people so linked to the elements and nature.

The afternoon was spent exploring the historic town of Chefchouen and its narrow blue streets and shops before heading back for Dardara and relaxing time!

Day 7 - 16th October 2019

Today we explored the river valley next to our accommodation which yielded Cirl Buntings, Black-winged Kite and *algeriensis* Grey Shrikes. Even a Common Kingfisher put in an appearance. We also heard a Black-crowned Tchagra but despite searching we could not find it - this was an extremely northerly record of the species but by listening we were able to pick out it's distinct calls.

We headed back to the north after loading up our bags and bidding farewell to friends at Dardara. As we headed north, we had time to stop at the coast and spy North African Chaffinch, African Blue Tit and Cirl Buntings. We soon arrived at the ferry terminal, checking through the various checkpoints with ease and boarding our ferry.

We were back "home" at Huerta Grande in time for dinner, and time to relive and reflect on memories from our adventure across two continents!



Day 8 - 17th October 2019.

Today the group bade farewell to Huerta Grande and Niki and Simon, and were taken headed to respective airports for journeys home full of tales of what we had seen and experienced together.



			Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8
	Species	Scientific Name								
1	Cory's Shearwater	<i>Calonectris diomedea</i>			600	20		√		
2	Balearic Shearwater	<i>Puffinus mauretanicus</i>				4		5		
3	Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>		1						
4	Northern Gannet	<i>Morus bassanus</i>			10	3			√	
5	Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>		20	2	10	√		√	
6	Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>	√	√	√	√	√		√	
7	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>		5		√	10			
8	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>		20		37	15			
9	Black Stork	<i>Ciconia nigra</i>		10	10					
10	White Stork	<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>	5	20		15	30		439	√
11	Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>					20			
12	Northern Bald Ibis	<i>Geronticus eremita</i>		17						
13	Eurasian Spoonbill	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>		10			28			
14	Greater Flamingo	<i>Phoenicopterus ruber</i>		200		50				
15	Common Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>		4						
16	Red-legged Partridge	<i>Alectoris rufa</i>		5						
17	Common Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>				2				
18	Gadwall	<i>Anas strepera</i>				4				
19	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>		15		600	√			
20	Northern Shoveler	<i>Anas clypeata</i>				√				

21	Marbled Teal	<i>Marmaronetta angustirostris</i>				2				
22	Ferruginous Duck	<i>Aythya nyroca</i>				1				
23	Western Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>		1		2		1		
24	European Honey Buzzard	<i>Pernis apivorus</i>			2					
25	Black-shouldered Kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>		3		2		1	1	
26	Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>			6					
27	Griffon Vulture	<i>Gyps fulvus</i>	50	20	150			32	50	20
28	Short-toed Snake Eagle	<i>Circaetus gallicus</i>	5		265			15	5	2
29	Western Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>		8		15		20		
30	Eurasian Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	3	2	5	3		2	3	2
31	Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>		1	2					
32	Long-legged Buzzard	<i>Buteo rufinus</i>			1	1		3	1	1
33	Booted Eagle	<i>Hieraetus pennatus</i>	10	5	50	3		2	3	5
34	Lesser Kestrel	<i>Falco naumanni</i>		2	1					
35	Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	2	4	3	2		2	1	
36	Eurasian Hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>			1					
37	Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>						1		
38	Purple Swamphen	<i>Porphyrio porphyrio</i>						7		
39	Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>		1				10		
40	Eurasian Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>				√				
41	Eurasian Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>				20				
42	Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>		30				20		

43	Pied Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>		20						
44	Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>					25			
45	Common Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>		100		200	10			
46	Kentish Plover	<i>Charadrius alexandrinus</i>		50		10				
47	Grey Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>				30				
48	Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>		50		√				
49	Little Stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>					3			
50	Curlew Sandpiper	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>		1						
51	Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>		80		√				
52	Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa</i>		4						
53	Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>		1	1	38				
54	Spotted Redshank	<i>Tringa erythropus</i>					2			
55	Common Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>		5		√	2			
56	Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>		2		20	6			
57	Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>		3			4			
58	Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>					1			
59	Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>		1	2	3	2			
60	Ruddy Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>		1	6	10				
61	Great Skua	<i>Catharacta skua</i>			10	3				
62	Mediterranean Gull	<i>Larus melanocephalus</i>		10	1	1				
63	Common Black-headed Gull	<i>Larus ridibundus</i>		√	2	√	√			
64	Slender-billed Gull	<i>Larus genei</i>				2				

65	Audouin's Gull	<i>Larus audouinii</i>		20		50				
66	Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>		4		√	√		√	
67	Yellow-legged Gull	<i>Larus cachinnans</i>	√	√	√	√	√		√	√
68	Caspian Tern	<i>Sterna caspia</i>		1		1				
69	Sandwich Tern	<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>		15	2	10	2		√	
70	Little Tern	<i>Sterna albifrons</i>				10				
71	Common Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>		3		10	5	20	√	√
72	Rock Dove / Feral Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
73	Eurasian Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
74	Laughing Dove	<i>Streptopelia senegalensis</i>				2				
75	Tawny Owl	<i>Strix aluco</i>	1	1	2		1	1	1	1
76	Moroccan Marsh Owl	<i>Asio capensis tingitanus</i>				1				
77	Little Swift	<i>Apus affinis</i>				2	5			
78	Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>				1	1			
79	Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>		2						
80	Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>		1			2	1		
81	Calandra Lark	<i>Melanocorypha calandra</i>		50						
82	Crested Lark	<i>Galerida cristata</i>	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
83	Thekla Lark	<i>Galerida theklae</i>	4		2					
84	Woodlark	<i>Lullula arborea</i>						2	6	
85	Plain Martin	<i>Riparia paludicola</i>					20			
86	Common Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>		4	6					

87	Red-rumped Swallow	<i>Cecropis daurica</i>	10	20	100					
88	Eurasian Crag Martin	<i>Ptyonoprogne rupestris</i>					√	√	√	
89	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
90	Common House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>	√	√	20		√			
91	Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>		3	2		√			
92	Iberian Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava iberiae</i>				4	√	√		
93	Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	1	2	2		1	1		
94	White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>							√	
95	Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>		3		√	√	√	√	
96	Common Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus barbatus</i>				15	20	10	20	
97	Winter Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	2	3	2		3	2	2	1
98	European Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	2	5	3	4	2	3	√	√
99	Black Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>						2	√	
100	Common Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>		2			1			
101	Moussier's Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus moussieri</i>						9		
102	Common Stonechat	<i>Saxicola torquatus</i>	√	√	√	√	√	1	√	√
103	Black Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe leucura</i>						5		
104	Northern Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>		2			2			
105	Blue Rock Thrush	<i>Monticola solitarius</i>						4		
106	Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	2	3	1				2	
107	Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>					2			
108	Eurasian Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√

109	Cetti's Warbler	<i>Cettia cetti</i>	2	2	2	3	2	1	2	
110	Iberian Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus ibericus</i>		1						
111	Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	√	√	√	√	√	√		
112	Sardinian Warbler	<i>Sylvia melanocephala</i>	√	√	√	√	√	√		
113	Firecrest	<i>Regulus ignicapilla</i>	2	3	3		20	√	√	√
114	Zitting Cisticola	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>		4		√	3			
115	Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>					2			
116	European Pied Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula hypoleuca</i>			1					
117	Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	√	2	3	2	√	1	√	√
118	Eurasian Blue Tit	<i>Parus caeruleus</i>	3	3	3					2
119	African Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes teneriffae</i>				4	√	√	√	
120	European Crested Tit	<i>Lophophanes cristatus</i>	2	2	4					2
121	Short-toed Treecreeper	<i>Certhia brachydactyla</i>	2	3	2		√	√	√	√
122	Eurasian Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>	2	2	1		3			
123	Desert Grey Shrike	<i>Lanius algeriensis</i>				3	6	1	3	
124	Common Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>	4	2	2	4		30		
125	Western Jackdaw	<i>Corvus monedula</i>		√		√	√			
126	Eurasian Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	2	2	2					
127	Moroccan Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius whitakeri</i>					2		5	
128	Red-billed Chough	<i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i>					6H			
129	Spotless Starling	<i>Sturnus unicolor</i>	√	√	√	√	√	√		
130	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	√	√	√	√	√	√		

131	Spanish Sparrow	<i>Passer hispaniolensis</i>	√	√			√			
132	Common Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	√	√	√					
133	North African Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs africana</i>				2	√	√		
134	European Serin	<i>Serinus serinus</i>	2	5		2	√	√		
135	European Greenfinch	<i>Carduelis chloris</i>		3	2	√	√			
136	European Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	√	√	√	√	√			
137	Common Linnet	<i>Carduelis cannabina</i>		14		10		√		
138	Hawfinch	<i>Coccothraustes coccothraustes</i>	2		3			5	4	2
139	Rock Bunting	<i>Emberiza cia</i>						15		
140	Cirl Bunting	<i>Emberiza cirlus</i>	1			1	2			
141	Corn Bunting	<i>Miliaria calandra</i>	3	√	4	√	√			

Butterflies			
Common Name	Scientific name	Spain	Morocco
Moroccan Orange- tip	<i>Anthocharis belia</i>		
Monarch	<i>Danaus plexippus</i>	√	
Large White	<i>Pieris brassicae</i>	√	
Small White	<i>Pieris rapae</i>	√	
Common Swallowtail	<i>Papilio machaon</i>		
Cleopatra	<i>Gonepteryx cleopatra</i>	√	
Speckled Wood	<i>Pararge aegeria</i>	√	
Painted Lady	<i>Vanessa cardui</i>	√	√
Red Admiral	<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>	√	
Clouded Yellow	<i>Colias croceus</i>	√	
Lang's Short-tailed Blue	<i>Cupido argiades</i>	√	
Long-tailed Blue	<i>Lampides boeticus</i>	√	
Geranium Bronze	<i>Cacyreus marshalli</i>	√	
Wall Brown	<i>Lasiommata megera</i>		√
Bath White	<i>Pontia daplidice</i>		√

Marine Life			
Common Name	Scientific name	Spain	Morocco
Bottle-nose Dolphin	<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>	√	
Common Dolphin	<i>Delphinus delphis</i>	√	
Striped Dolphin	<i>Stenella Coeruleoalba</i>		√
Ocean Sunfish	<i>Mola mola</i>		√

Reptiles and Amphibians			
Common Name	Scientific name	Spain	Morocco
Moorish Gecko	<i>Tarentola mauritanica</i>	√	
Iberian Wall Lizard	<i>Podarcis hispanicus</i>	√	
Common Toad	<i>Bufo bufo</i>	√	√
Mediterranean Tree Frog	<i>Hyla meridionalis</i>	√	
Mammals			
Egyptian Mongoose	<i>Herpestes ichneumon</i>	√	
European Rabbit	<i>Oryctolagus cuniculus</i>	√	
Barbary Macaque	<i>Macaca sylvanus</i>		20
Other Insects			
Southern Hawker	<i>Aeshna cyanea</i>	√	√
Red-veined Darter	<i>Sympetrum fonscolombii</i>	√	√
Lesser Emperor	<i>Anax parthenope</i>		√
Blue Emperor	<i>Anax imperator</i>		√
Vagrant Emperor	<i>Anax ephippiger</i>		√
Willow Emerald	<i>Chalcolestes viridis</i>		√
Blue-winged Grasshopper	<i>Oedipoda caerulea</i>	√	√
European Mantis	<i>Mantis religiosa</i>	√	