

Bulgaria in Spring

Naturetrek Tour Report

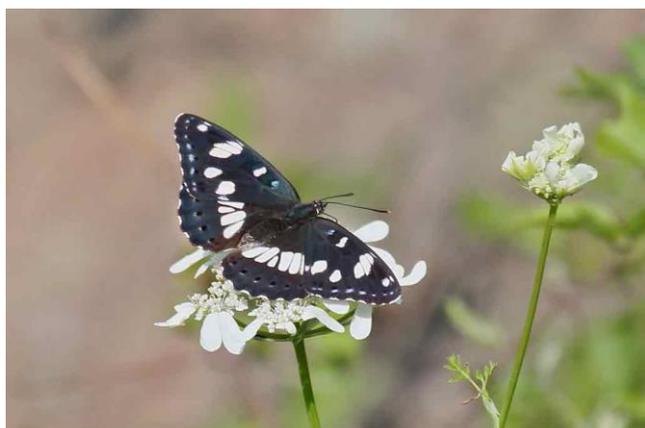
6 - 15 May 2016



Black-headed Bunting, Lefka Bulgaria



Marsh Fritillary ssp *bulgarica* ups Bourgas Bulgaria



Southern White Admiral, Kovan Kaya



Pied Wheatear, Cape Kaliakra

Report and images by Andy Harding



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Tour participants: Andy Harding (leader) and Lyubo Profirov (local guide) with 12 Naturetrek clients

Day 1

Friday 6th May

Group members flying from Heathrow all met up with Andy before embarkation. The flight from Terminal 5 was problem free with a slightly early arrival at Sofia airport, which was anything but busy. Baggage reclaim was straightforward and we soon met up with Lyubo, our local guide. The temperature in Sofia was 16°C. Lyubo was able to give us a contextual introduction to Sofia and Bulgaria as we moved through the suburbs in our spacious bus. The excellent microphone also allowed the tour briefing to take place as we drove.

Our first taste of continental birds was a White Stork on its nest on a lamp standard above the motorway. However our rural leg stretch near Vacarel was a real eye-opener. Corn Crake and Common Quail were calling, Common Nightingales were singing, Red-backed Shrikes were in all directions and Red-rumped Swallows wheeled around. We saw Eurasian Tree Sparrow and Yellowhammer, now scarce in England - but not here! A distant Short-toed Snake Eagle passed overhead. We didn't know which way to look!

The sunshine disappeared as we re-embarked and we continued heading south into the Besaparski Hills in heavy rain. After a pleasant coffee stop the rain dried up and we were able to exercise the binoculars again on Black-headed Wagtails in a crop and a Northern Goshawk overhead. A number of butterflies, mainly Common and Silver-studded Blues, were clinging with wings closed on the wet grass stems.

We were soon climbing steadily in pine-clad mountains. A stop next to Beglika Reservoir produced a wonderful fly-by from a Black Stork in beautiful light, as well as four migrating Whinchats. A few of the group were lucky enough to see a couple of Wild Boar from the bus. Otherwise the final highlight was two occupied White Storks nests on the same church in Batak.

We reached Hotel Dabrash beyond Dospat town at dusk, but still early enough for us to get an insight into the local birdlife. Dinner was a traditional Bulgarian meal, all the ingredients of which were both local and organic.

Day 2

Saturday 7th May

A beautifully clear, if cold, morning gave superb viewing conditions and there was plenty to see. Red-rumped Swallows competed with Eurasian Crag Martins for old Common House Martin nests at the hotel. In the air they were joined by both Common and Pallid Swifts. A superb male Black Redstart popped up occasionally, while a Cirl Bunting sang from the top of a pine tree. Both Song and Mistle Thrushes were seen and Common Cuckoos called endlessly. Probably most enjoyed, particularly by Gordon, were the Red Crossbills; at least 40 of them, including some superb males, which sat for minutes on end at head height, not crawling round the tops of lofty pines. Several adults and juveniles clung to a wall taking minerals from whatever was 'painted' on its surface. It was difficult to call the group inside for our breakfast!

After breakfast, our first stop was at the Roman bridge which was much photographed. It was in a sufficiently rural situation to allow observation of a Black-headed Wagtail and Eurasian Crag Martins picking up mud from the edge of a puddle.

As we drove up the valley into Trigrad Gorge it became increasingly obvious that this was a serious gorge and not just a rocky valley. White-throated Dippers and Grey Wagtails were periodically seen in the fast-flowing river, and males of the latter were seen singing from trees which seemed unusual compared with their behaviour in the UK. Many martins wheeled around as we scanned the cliffs. Unfortunately all our hard work came to naught as this normally very reliable site yielded no Wallcreeper. The terrible weather in the run-up to our visit was probably the cause and other groups this week were equally unsuccessful. Nonetheless a beautiful endemic flower, *Haberlea rhodopensis*, and an obliging Dingy Skipper butterfly were enjoyed as we anticipated the trout we were to have at lunch - and a very fine lunch it was. It coincided with a deterioration in the weather and it continued to rain as we headed off eastwards along the Rhodope Mountains.

A fortunately dry stop near Nasdan at an Alpine Swift colony was instantly successful with a splendid Black Stork as a bonus. We then stopped for both fuel and coffee at Smolnya. Although the stop was in the town, we still managed to see Common Sandpiper, White-throated Dipper, Black Redstart and Eurasian Tree Sparrow. A second coffee stop at Kardzhali added a few species to our list: Great Egret, Pygmy Cormorant and Common Tern, but all were quite distant.

We arrived at Krumovgrad and checked into the Hotel Via, our home for the next two nights. We enjoyed an excellent dinner and lively log, and post-log discussion sent everyone off to bed in good spirits.

Day 3

Sunday 8th May

Today was sunny with a maximum temperature of 25°C. A bright morning allowed a pre-breakfast walk down to the bank of the River Krumovitsa. An Eastern Olivaceous Warbler showed off while we were still in the town. Common Nightingales were in evidence in town, but absolutely cacophonous at the river itself, with three showing well enough for a few photographs! The first well-seen Eurasian Golden Orioles of the trip were much enjoyed, bringing relief to those who doubted they would ever see one. Two Syrian Woodpeckers were a little difficult to see well. A Black Stork fishing in the river was oblivious to us peeping through the vegetation. As always, Red-backed Shrikes were plentiful and a Little Ringed Plover rested briefly on the shingle bank.

Then to an excellent breakfast and a prompt start on the short ride to Potochonitsa. Firstly we stopped short of the village to view a bushy bank which held three Subalpine Warblers, of which one showed well. A Beautiful Marbled moth was fittingly named and obligingly stayed in view on a grass stem. Once through the village, we drove a short distance and parked the bus, intending to walk up to view the vulture feeding station. The feeding area was visible before setting off and we could see that only a single Egyptian Vulture seemed interested. We waited a while and had excellent views of four of that species and rather more Griffon Vultures without having to walk uphill. Instead we explored the rather open area nearby. This proved a good move with a pair of Lesser Grey Shrikes nesting close by, three Woodchat Shrikes were present, and there was Woodlark song up above with the occasional flyover European Bee-eater. Barred Warbler showed fleetingly but the normally elusive Olive-tree Warbler sat out on the same branch for several minutes allowing detailed examination by telescope for everybody - a real highlight. Green Hairstreak, Silver-studded Blue and Glanville Fritillary were plentiful for the butterfly enthusiasts.

We went back to the village for celebratory beer and/or ice cream, then to Studen Klavenetz for a picnic lunch. We were able to scan the hillside where 16 resting Griffon Vultures could be picked out. There were a few more

in the air with a single Cinereous (Black) Vulture and a Short-toed Snake Eagle. Then the heavens opened and showed no signs of brightening in the short term. Rather than sit in the bus, we went back to the hotel for 90 minutes before setting off for Dolna Kula and bright skies. Soon we were enjoying Black-eared Wheatears, four Lesser Grey Shrikes, brilliant yellow male Black-headed Buntings, a couple of Chukar Partridges which sat calling obligingly in full view, and three Great Egrets cruising back and forth along the river valley. The top bird, though, was a female Lesser Spotted Woodpecker which seemed less inclined to hide than they do in the UK where they are now extremely scarce.

After another excellent dinner and the log, many of us retired but a few hardy souls ventured out to try to see a Eurasian Scops Owl which had been heard calling on both our evenings here. We met another local guide who knew of an area with up to seven birds and with a powerful torch he was able to locate a couple. It was a big surprise and thrill for those who had stayed up.

Day 4

Monday 9th May

No early morning walk was planned for today which enabled us to make a slightly earlier start on a long day with some excellent birding stops in prospect. The dull misty early morning confirmed that as a good decision. The couple of nights at the Hotel Via had been extremely comfortable so after an excellent breakfast, we moved on somewhat reluctantly, setting off eastwards along the same road as yesterday.

Our first stop was not far away at Moryanci and it enabled us to watch Cirl Buntings on a rocky cliff, while an Eastern Bonelli's Warbler sang only briefly and invisibly. Soon after, we noted from the bus the large heronry on the reservoir at Studen Klavenets and stopped to view an Egyptian Vulture nest.

The edges of the extinct volcano near Madzharovo provided us with two great stops. The first held Blue Rock Thrushes and an active Western Rock Nuthatch nest. Looking through a telescope was *de rigueur*, but we ensured everyone got nice views. Another Chukar Partridge was seen and Rock Bunting and Middle Spotted Woodpecker were great new additions. As the sun grew warmer, three Griffon Vultures patrolled closely overhead. The second stop in this area is known as Kovan Kaya and the raptors soon put on a great show. Over twenty Griffon Vultures, two Egyptian Vultures and a Short-toed Snake Eagle were joined by a dark-phase Booted Eagle and a Peregrine Falcon; both new for the trip. A Black Stork circled with them. Passerines were not to be ignored: Ortolan, Rock and Cirl Buntings made up a singing bunting trio. Red-rumped Swallows and Eurasian Crag Martins perched just above head height on the cliff next to us. Two stunning butterflies were found. The scarce Blue Argus was perhaps one for the connoisseur and didn't hang around, but the gaudy Sothern White Admiral in immaculate condition was photographed by everyone. This was a simply wonderful area and we were starting to drop well behind schedule! Even so, we couldn't resist a brief break at Borislatsi where Black-headed Buntings and a couple of White Storks in the road were our rewards.

Our final stop before what might become a very late lunch was at Yerusalemovo, with the specific target of Masked Shrike. These had become tricky in the last couple of years but luck was with us, and very rapid connection with a pair was made with the male seen displaying. A couple of Woodchat Shrikes and a Short-toed Snake Eagle were a splendid accompaniment during a somewhat truncated stop.

So on to Lefka to see the Lesser Kestrel reintroduction programme. At this now successful project we, of course, had wonderful views of these birds while the local Eastern Imperial Eagles put in an appearance disrupting our picnic lunch. They were not always close but usually visible. There was no need for further specific Spanish Sparrow stops as there were dozens in the buildings occupied by the kestrels. Financial contributions to the project from the group were most welcome. We took a short bus ride with one of the reserve centre staff to a nearby hill top for even more views of the magnificent eagles and a very distant view of their nest. We probably saw four different eagles in this entire area. A noisy Olive-tree Warbler showed briefly while Black-headed Buntings sang in full view.

We still had a good few kilometres to travel but more stops were essential. Bulgarska Polyana provided us with a pale-phase Booted Eagle, Lesser Spotted Eagle, Marsh Harrier, some very watchable Cirl Buntings and our first Isabelline Wheatear. More Isabelline Wheatears were in evidence at Topolovograd as well as Oberthur's Grizzled Skipper. From the moving bus, Montagu's Harrier and Black Kite were well seen as we hurtled towards Bourgas.

We were still running a little late but could not resist a preliminary look at Bourgas Salinas from a hide with the light absolutely perfect. Three Black-crowned Night Herons, eight Eurasian Spoonbills, a Common Greenshank and a Wood Sandpiper were the highlights for the group, but two Eurasian Oystercatchers were the highlight for Lyubo!

As we looked forward to our pre-dinner drinks, just three kilometres from our hotel in Pomorie, the bus simply cut out. A local minibus firm was swiftly called and we and our luggage were relayed to the Hotel Pavel and Petar. We awaited developments on the repair front with more than a little interest.

Day 5

Tuesday 10th May

Our stricken bus was outside the hotel in the morning, but we walked a few hundred metres to the reserve centre where water levels were worryingly high. This did not concern the resident Pied Avocets and Black-winged Stilts with their very long legs, but a couple of Curlew Sandpipers were feeding from a floating plank and some delightful Kentish Plovers were clinging to a tiny strip of beach. Large numbers of Sandwich Terns and a few Little Terns fished offshore.

After breakfast we were ferried about a kilometre up the seaward side of Pomorie Lagoon and this was not without its reward. A Black-throated Diver and three Black-necked Grebes were not to be sniffed at. Twenty-five Mediterranean Gulls were viewable, if rather distantly, on their nesting island. An Eastern Olivaceous Warbler jousted with a Eurasian Reed Warbler alongside the telescopes trained on the sea, and a couple of slow flying Black-veined White butterflies showed nicely. A new bus then appeared to take us on. It was rather cramped but at least we were birding while the old vehicle was assessed.

We were a little late back so departure through Bourgas for Lake Vaya was at 9.15am. In the meantime a rather better bus was negotiated, so we had a fifteen minute stop en route to change buses again. Now for some more birding! The first stop at Lake Vaya was only a few metres from a busy dual carriageway. 300 Great White Pelicans and a flight of 180 Black Terns were spectacular, if rather distant. Pigmy Cormorants were flying by regularly, and one of several Great Reed Warblers was often visible. A Eurasian Bittern was almost past us

before we realized what it was. Five Dalmatian Pelicans, mainly at rest on floating concrete islands, were a new species for most of the group.

We moved just a few kilometres to Lake Mandra, or a corner of it, where a dozen Glossy Ibis were visible in front of us and a couple of Purple and Squacco Herons decided that they didn't want to be watched by us. A little way further on and we walked an attractive causeway on a stretch of the same lake. Here a Black-crowned Night Heron was fishing unconcerned, while a White-tailed Eagle, probably a local bird, was accompanied in the air by over twenty European Honey Buzzards migrating through. Part of a very long European Legless Lizard was visible on a short piece of fencing, with the rest hidden in the undergrowth. Nearby, a small example of the Blotched Snake came onto the road for us all to see. Both male and female Grecian Coppers and Knapweed Fritillary were there for the butterfly enthusiasts, very close to the point at which we rejoined the bus.

We then drove a short distance to take our picnic lunch on the outside tables of the local café in Dimchevo, with a substantial amount of beer being purchased as a result. Our next objective was to return to the hide overlooking the Bourgas Salinas. It was less productive than yesterday with fewer birds, and only three Spotted Redshanks and a solitary Eurasian Curlew to add to our list. We had been told of a number of Collared Pratincoles in fields north of Bourgas but when we arrived at the designated spot, it seemed rather unlikely. However eventually a few pratincoles did appear over a distant field and some deigned fit to come a lot nearer giving decent views of this strange, if exotic, bird. We then tried a nearby marsh, where the highlight was a fly-over by two and then another five Gull-billed Terns, so that the clear distinctions between this and Sandwich Tern were obvious.

Then it was back to the hotel for another very traditional meal, during which our new bus arrived from Sofia. We said a sad farewell to Christo, our first driver, who was thanked by Peter M for looking after us so well, and hello to Toni, who was to drive us for the rest of the trip.

Day 6

Wednesday 11th May

There was no formal per-breakfast walk today but several of the group sallied forth in different directions. Some of those who went back to the Reserve Centre heard an unfamiliar song coming from a derelict area, so after breakfast our departure only lasted a few hundred metres as the whole group were able to listen to the song of a River Warbler, which was briefly seen by a few.

Our next stops were not very far distant either, since there were more opportunities to view saltpans to the north of Bourgas. The first sighting of consequence was of a beautiful mixed flock of White-winged Black and Whiskered Terns hunting over the water. A single Gull-billed Tern and several Mediterranean Gulls also drifted past. Walking on a little further, the area became much more saline. Black-winged Stilts nested just in front of us. 100 Little Stints and 40 Curlew Sandpipers accompanied by a couple of Ruff looked terrific in the morning sunshine. Returning to where the bus was parked, we crossed the road and walked down a track between more pans. Here a couple of Great Egrets and Squacco Herons patrolled the banks, and a solitary Common Greenshank joined the many Pied Avocets. Lesser Grey Shrikes and European Rollers watched us from a good distance, with the latter shining very blue, even at range. Much larger numbers of distant waders could just be made out to be Curlew Sandpipers with three Black-tailed Godwits. A superb male Large Copper was dazzlingly orange while in one area there had clearly been an emergence of a rather odd blackish, but semi-transparent moth: *Penthophera morio*, a relative of the Burnet moths.

After about an hour we had moved north into mixed woodland in the foothills of the Balkan Range. The birdlife, though quite exotic to visitors from the UK, was composed of the usual suspects. Mazarine Blue was a new butterfly, while some Lackey caterpillars and a huge Longhorn Beetle also attracted attention.

We enjoyed a huge, superb lunch in Goritsa Village, just a short distance from Goritsa Forest. After lunch we explored the mature Oak woods to the east of the main road. Here, singing Yellowhammers were a surprise, but Eurasian Nuthatch and Great Spotted Woodpecker were more expected. We then took the bus two kilometres to the western side where a Swedish ornithologist had been providing dozens of new nestboxes. This clearly did the trick with two males and a female Semicollared Flycatcher being seen, though the foliage and lack of leafless snags in these much younger trees made viewing difficult. Those who had early views retreated to explore elsewhere and saw a Black Woodpecker.

Then it was on to the city port of Varna where significant roadworks made progress slow, and a further 60 kilometres to a family guest house in Kavarna, with its homely atmosphere and more huge meals. Nobody ate the whole four courses!

Day 7

Thursday 12th May

An early start saw us at Lake Durankulak. Lesser Grey Shrike, Marsh Harrier and Pigmy Cormorant were in evidence before the bus had stopped. Over the next couple of hours we enjoyed some nice views of Purple Heron and Marsh Harrier supplemented by small numbers of White-winged Black and Whiskered Terns. Ferruginous Duck gave a couple of fly-pasts, occasionally close by. A couple of male Common Reed Buntings of an eastern subspecies were definitely of interest, and a male European Stonechat was so clearly brighter than its British cousin that it provoked a discussion about subspeciation, if not speciation. Against all this, the background noise of Great Reed Warblers and Marsh Frogs was cacophonous. This brings us to the main issue: Paddyfield Warbler. One was definitely seen and heard in one place, even if the situation was confused by a Eurasian Reed Warbler in the same general area. Nonetheless some of the group made no satisfactory contact with this iconic if unspectacular species. This was a very similar situation to last year and subsequent investigation suggests a population crash based on factors much further south. Finally, some Bearded Reedlings (Tits) showed splendidly to those who ultimately didn't take a coffee or ice cream in the seaside café where the tameness of the local swallows and a very bright green Tree Frog were enjoyed.

We then moved to Shabla Marsh where Spotted Flycatcher was one of the star birds. About fourteen Ferruginous Ducks were on the lake with three Garganey. Another Black-throated Diver on the sea was much closer inshore than the one at Pomorie. The picnic lunch was taken in our delightful surroundings.

Moving up the coast to Kamen Briag the group obtained its first views of Tawny Pipit on an ornamental pyramid, a female Pied Wheatear, and three Lesser Grey Shrikes squabbling. More obvious and showing really well were numbers of Calandra Larks with their black underwings visible.

We then moved to three different points around the village of Balgarevo. At two of them the sward was long due to lack of grazing. We saw a Long-legged Buzzard on the ground, a Greater Short-toed Lark showed well on a track, and another Tawny Pipit was spotted.

An adjustment to our itinerary allowed us the possibility of two evening visits to cliff sites where occasionally Eurasian Eagle-Owl has been seen. We only needed one. Two birds, one very obscure but the other in the open, were visible. The latter then moved to the top of a dead tree in full view. We eventually had to leave for dinner, and what a celebratory dinner!

Day 8

Friday 13th May

Early morning saw us looking over the wooded valley next to the guesthouse in the not unreasonable hope of seeing Levant Sparrowhawk which usually nest here, but without success. Breakfast was still hugely enjoyed.

Loaded up for our next transfer, we again visited Balgarevo and this time found a more grazed area. Up to four Isabelline Wheatears hovering and perching on dead plant tops were lovely and augured well for other species. Eventually two Eurasian Stone-curlews were found and watched at length in full view. Tawny Pipits and Greater Short-toed Larks were not difficult to see.

It was only a short distance to Cape Kaliakra where we were able to enjoy things without too many other tourists. Perhaps ten Pied Wheatears were seen, giving wonderful views, as did the Black-headed Buntings including the much duller, but often more elusive females. Alpine Swifts breed at the Cape and made many low passes at close range, while European Bee-eaters probably showed better than on any other day. Andrew C was able to give us a short seminar on identifying Bottle-nosed Dolphins and Harbour Porpoises, both of which were interested in the local inshore fishing. Apparently seeing both species in close proximity to one another is very unusual. A sea fret suddenly moved in, an event for which we were singularly unprepared, so back to Balgarevo for a coffee.

We then had quite a long journey to our next guesthouse, which we interrupted with a nice general birding and picnic stop near Onogur where the most prolonged view of a perched male Eurasian Golden Oriole was obtained. Only a little way short of our final destination we made two lengthy stops overlooking the Srebarna Reserve. A European Roller remained perched just above the road in front of the bus giving us our best view of this brilliant species. Nesting Dalmatian Pelicans are the main rationale for the reserve and they did not disappoint. A couple of rather distant Red-footed Falcons mixed in with at least six Eurasian Hobbies were hunting quite high. All the heron species were noted at least once, while European Honey Buzzard and Booted Eagle represented the larger raptors. Eurasian Golden Orioles and Common Cuckoos abounded, while Black Hairstreaks were the most notable butterfly.

We then moved into our two adjacent guesthouses in Vetren before coming together for a lovely meal. Golden Jackals called loudly as we finished dinner.

Day 9

Saturday 14th May

You didn't really need to leave the garden when you have Eurasian Golden Orioles and Common Nightingales for company, but we walked down to the bank of the Danube before breakfast, spotting a nice Syrian Woodpecker on the way. Small groups or singles of Eurasian Spoonbill, Black-crowned Night Heron, Great Egret and Pigmy Cormorant followed the river. Finally we recorded our first Common Kingfisher of the trip. The bus picked us up and took us back to breakfast and such an excellent breakfast deserves a special mention, but the options and highlights are too many to record. Thank you Dora!

The second guesthouse, Choro, had attracted a small number of moths to its upper storey. While Elephant Hawk-moth was the most striking, The Fern and Feathered Beauty were arguably more interesting.

During the luggage loading process a River Warbler was heard and seen, again only very briefly, a couple of hundred metres along the road. Finally on our way, we pulled up in the centre of Srebarna Village to pick up a few additions to our picnic but stayed for a while to enjoy the preliminaries for a folk dance and music contest. The community spirit involved is something to be envied. It was then only a short distance to some well-wooded lakes on the outskirts of the village where European Rollers showed beautifully and we all were able to watch a female Little Bittern in full view.

Malak Preslavets is a modest lake whose lily pads host a colony of Whiskered Terns, and rather more this year. An adult and an immature White-tailed Eagle glided sedately over us as we had stunning views of a singing Icterine Warbler, which stayed on the same spot in the open for several minutes.

To the surprise of the group we made our next stop miles from anywhere; alongside a European Bee-eater colony. The views were simply wonderful, so long as we stayed in the bus. We took our picnic lunch at a pleasant picnic area with tables and ponds - all very relaxing until greasy fingers grabbed binoculars and cameras as two Grey-headed Woodpeckers decided to move into the trees above our heads. This is always a tricky species to find, so it was another highlight on a superb day.

Nova Cherna Reserve, comprised of a vast complex of overgrown fish ponds from the communist era, was our next point of call. We stopped at the Kalimok fishponds and, in truth, it was not as exciting as in previous years. Something rather serious seemed to have happened to part of the reedbed which appeared quite dead. There was no tern colony and some other species were absent. The expected herons flew over and there was the usual passerine din, but the visit was rescued on our way back to the bus by the discovery of an active Penduline Tit nest, at which everyone eventually saw at least one of the pair of birds. Two Ortolan Buntings with a Black-headed Wagtail bathing and feeding in the corner of a small field provided the second highlight of this stop.

We judged we had enough time for a final birding stop at Dryanousi Monastery, but instead of a few other visitors there were hundreds, if not more, there for a re-enactment of an unsuccessful Bulgar uprising against the Ottomans. We rapidly retreated to our hotel in Etara for some fabulous local cuisine: the starters were as big as any main course, followed by amazing flatbreads accompanying a pork and mushroom dish served in gondolas. An excellent and jolly last night!

Day 10

Sunday 15th May

We took the opportunity for a final short early morning walk after a short drive into the nearby forest. A Great Spotted Woodpecker was the best woodpecker we managed to find. A White-throated Dipper in the stream next to the hotel seemed somehow emblematic of the whole holiday, before we packed for the drive to Sofia airport. A Long-legged Buzzard was perhaps the best sighting on the journey south, but one of two snack and comfort stops was alongside a huge flower-packed meadow occupied by a single cow. It was a beautiful image on which to end our trip.

At the airport we said farewell to Lyubo and our driver Toni. Peter M eloquently expressed our grateful thanks to them, with appropriate envelopes to mark their efforts. Sofia airport was comparatively uncrowded and check-in and security were very smooth, as was the return flight to Heathrow.

Many thanks to all for the uncomplaining way you dealt with the inevitable lengthy bus journeys to cover all the necessary habitat to make this such a bird-filled trip. Your good humour made this a good trip in every way. Thank you.

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Griffon Vultures, Kovan Kaya

Species Lists

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

	Common name	Scientific name	May										
			6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
1	Chukar Partridge	<i>Alectoris chukar</i>			2	1							
2	Grey Partridge	<i>Perdix perdix</i>								1			
3	Common Quail	<i>Coturnix coturnix</i>	h										
4	Corn Crake	<i>Crex crex</i>	3h										
5	Common Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>	h							h	1	h	
6	Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>						2					
7	Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓		4	
8	Common Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>				✓	100	12	✓				
9	Ruddy Shelduck	<i>Tadorna ferruginea</i>										1	
10	Gadwall	<i>Anas strepera</i>					5	6	2			2	
11	Eurasian Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>					1						
12	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	1	4		5	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
13	Garganey	<i>Anas querquedula</i>							3	2	2		
14	Common Pochard	<i>Aythya ferina</i>					✓	5		3			
15	Red-crested Pochard	<i>Netta rufuna</i>										2	
16	Ferruginous Duck	<i>Aythya nyroca</i>							17	6	4		
17	Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>					1						
18	Black-throated Diver	<i>Gavia arctica</i>					1		1	2			
19	Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>						2	1	h			
20	Black-necked Grebe	<i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>					3						
21	Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>					10		✓	✓	✓		
22	Black Stork	<i>Ciconia nigra</i>	2	1	8	6	2			1			
23	White Stork	<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>	✓	2	✓	✓	✓	6	2	40	30	✓	
24	Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>					24		10	40	✓		
25	Eurasian Spoonbill	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>				8	20			5			
26	Eurasian Bittern	<i>Botaurus stellaris</i>					1						
27	Little Bittern	<i>Ixobrychus minutus</i>								2	1		

	Common name	Scientific name	May										
			6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
28	Black-crowned Night Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>				3	10				10	✓	
29	Western Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>					1						
30	Squacco Heron	<i>Ardeola ralloides</i>				1	10	3	✓	✓	✓	✓	
31	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>			3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
32	Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>					6			6	3	2	
33	Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>		1	3	1		3	3	3	2	6	
34	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
35	Great White Pelican	<i>Pelecanus onocrotalus</i>					300			2		10	
36	Dalmatian Pelican	<i>Pelecanus crispus</i>					14				60	4	
37	Pygmy Cormorant	<i>Microcarbo pygmeus</i>		3		1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
38	European Shag	<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>									15		
39	Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>		1			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
40	European Honey Buzzard	<i>Pernis apivorus</i>					28	2	1	2	2		
41	Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>				2							
42	White-tailed Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i>				1	2					2	
43	Cinereous Vulture	<i>Aegypius monachus</i>			1								
44	Egyptian Vulture	<i>Neophron percnopterus</i>			4	2							
45	Griffon Vulture	<i>Gyps fulvus</i>			26	27							
46	Short-toed Snake Eagle	<i>Circaetus gallicus</i>	1		2	2	1	1					
47	Western Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>				3	12	7	10	3	4	2	
48	Montagu's Harrier	<i>Circus pygargus</i>				1							
49	Eurasian Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>							1				
50	Northern Goshawk	<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>	1										
51	Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	2	1	
52	Long-legged Buzzard	<i>Buteo rufinus</i>	2		1	1			1	1		1	
53	Lesser Spotted Eagle	<i>Clanga pomarina</i>				1	6			1			
54	Eastern Imperial Eagle	<i>Aquila heliaca</i>				5							
55	Booted Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus pennatus</i>				2	4	1		1			
56	Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		2	✓	
57	Lesser Kestrel	<i>Falco naumanni</i>				10							
58	Red-footed Falcon	<i>Falco vespertinus</i>				1			1	4			
59	Eurasian Hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>			1	1				8	1		

	Common name	Scientific name	May									
			6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
60	Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>				1			1			
61	Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>					2				1	
62	Eurasian Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>					4	2	6	✓	✓	
63	Eurasian Stone-curlew	<i>Burhinus oediconemus</i>								2		
64	Eurasian Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>				2						
65	Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>					8	✓	3			
66	Pied Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>				20	✓	✓	2			
67	Northern Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>				1	4		3		3	
68	Common Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>				3						
69	Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>			3	2	1	1	2		1	
70	Kentish Plover	<i>Charadrius alexandrinus</i>					9	12				
71	Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa</i>						3				
72	Eurasian Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>					1					
73	Spotted Redshank	<i>Tringa erythropus</i>					3					
74	Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>				1	h	1				
75	Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>				1			1			
76	Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>		1	1							
77	Ruddy Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>					4					
78	Little Stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>						100				
79	Curlew Sandpiper	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>					2	40+	4			
80	Ruff	<i>Philomachus pugnax</i>						4				
81	Collared Pratincole	<i>Glareola pratincola</i>					20	1	2			
82	Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>				1	8	2	1			
83	Little Gull	<i>Hydrocoloeus minutus</i>					4		1		2	
84	Mediterranean Gull	<i>Ichthaetus melanocephalus</i>					25	7				
85	Yellow-legged Gull	<i>Larus michahellis</i>		1	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
86	Gull-billed Tern	<i>Gelochelidon nilotica</i>					7	4				
87	Sandwich Tern	<i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓		
88	Little Tern	<i>Sternula albifrons</i>					✓	✓				
89	Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>		3		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
90	Whiskered Tern	<i>Chlidonias hybrida</i>					3	15	16	✓	✓	
91	White-winged Tern	<i>Chlidonias leucopterus</i>					1	33	14	1		

	Common name	Scientific name	May									
			6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
92	Black Tern	<i>Chlidonias niger</i>					180			30		
93	Rock Dove	<i>Columba livia</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
94	Stock Dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>		1							5	
95	Common Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	1	2	1	3	1	2	2	✓	2	
96	European Turtle Dove	<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>	2	3	10	✓	2	2	✓	✓	✓	✓
97	Eurasian Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
98	Common Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
99	Eurasian Scops Owl	<i>Otus scops</i>		h	2+6h	h					h	
100	Eurasian Eagle-Owl	<i>Bubo bubo</i>							2			
101	Alpine Swift	<i>Tachymarptis melba</i>	1	2	✓	✓			10	20	✓	
102	Common Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>	1	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
103	Pallid Swift	<i>Apus pallidus</i>		✓	2	6						
104	European Roller	<i>Coracias garrulus</i>				2	2	5	6	6	7	
105	Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>					h				1	
106	European Bee-eater	<i>Merops apiaster</i>		9	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
107	Eurasian Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>			1 + h	3		1	2	3	1	1
108	Eurasian Wryneck	<i>Jynx torquilla</i>									h	
109	Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dryobates minor</i>			2				1	1		
110	Middle Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos medius</i>				1		h				
111	Syrian Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos syriacus</i>			2	1	h		2	3		
112	Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>				1		3			1	2
113	Black Woodpecker	<i>Dryocopus martius</i>						1				
114	European Green Woodpecker	<i>Picus viridis</i>			4	h		1		1	h	
115	Grey-headed Woodpecker	<i>Picus canus</i>								h	2	
116	Red-backed Shrike	<i>Lanius collurio</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
117	Lesser Grey Shrike	<i>Lanius minor</i>			8		3	1	✓	2	2	
118	Woodchat Shrike	<i>Lanius senator</i>			6	6				2		
119	Masked Shrike	<i>Lanius nubicus</i>				2						
120	Eurasian Golden Oriole	<i>Oriolus oriolus</i>	2	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
121	Eurasian Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	4	✓	✓	2	1	2	✓	✓	✓	✓
122	Eurasian Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
123	Western Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

	Common name	Scientific name	May										
			6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
124	Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	1								6		
125	Hooded Crow	<i>Corvus cornix</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
126	Northern Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>	1	3	4	4	2					1	
127	Coal Tit	<i>Periparus ater</i>	h	✓									
128	European Crested Tit	<i>Lophophanes cristatus</i>		h									
129	Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	2	✓	✓	✓
130	Eurasian Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	✓	✓					2	1	1	2	
131	Eurasian Penduline Tit	<i>Remiz pendulinus</i>					h					2	
132	Bearded Reedling	<i>Panurus biarmicus</i>								3			
133	Calandra Lark	<i>Melanocorypha calandra</i>				2				50	✓		
134	Greater Short-toed Lark	<i>Calandrella brachydactyla</i>							1	2	4		
135	Crested Lark	<i>Galerida cristata</i>			4	6	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
136	Woodlark	<i>Lullula arborea</i>			1+h	2		2					
137	Eurasian Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	✓					1		h			
138	Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>	1		3	✓	✓			✓			
139	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
140	Eurasian Crag Martin	<i>Ptyonoprogne rupestris</i>	1	✓	✓	✓							
141	Common House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
142	Red-rumped Swallow	<i>Cecropis daurica</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
143	Cetti's Warbler	<i>Cettia cetti</i>						h	h				
144	Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>							1		3	7	
145	Common Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	h	1					1	h	2	h	h
146	Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>						1	2	1			
147	Eastern Bonelli's Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus orientalis</i>				h							
148	Great Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus arundinaceus</i>						3+	✓	✓	✓	✓	
149	Paddyfield Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus agricola</i>								1			
150	Eurasian Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>						1		1			
151	Marsh Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus palustris</i>								h		h	
152	Eastern Olivaceous Warbler	<i>Iduna pallida</i>			3	2	1+	2	h	2			
153	Olive-tree Warbler	<i>Hippolais olivetorum</i>			2	2h							
154	Icterine Warbler	<i>Hippolais icterina</i>										1	
155	River Warbler	<i>Locustella fluviatilis</i>							1			1	

	Common name	Scientific name	May										
			6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
156	Savi's Warbler	<i>Locustella luscinioides</i>								1			
157	Eurasian Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>		✓		h			h	h	1	1	1
158	Garden Warbler	<i>Sylvia borin</i>							2h	h	2		
159	Barred Warbler	<i>Sylvia nisoria</i>			1				h				
160	Lesser Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia curruca</i>			h						6	2h	
161	Eastern Orphean Warbler	<i>Sylvia crassirostris</i>			2								
162	Common Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>	1+		1	2	1	2	2	2	3	1	
163	Subalpine Warbler	<i>Sylvia cantillans</i>			3								
164	Sardinian Warbler	<i>Sylvia melanocephala</i>			1								
165	Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>	h	1+									
166	Eurasian Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>		2	h				h				1
167	Eurasian Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>							4				1
168	Western Rock Nuthatch	<i>Sitta neumayer</i>				2							
169	Short-toed Treecreeper	<i>Certhia brachydactyla</i>							1				
170	Common Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
171	Common Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
172	Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	3	3		2			2		h	1	
173	Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	✓	✓		h							
174	European Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>		1	1	1			1			1	
175	Common Nightingale	<i>Luscinia megarhynchos</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
176	Black Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>		6	1				1		1	1	1
177	Whinchat	<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>	4	1								1	
178	European Stonechat	<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>								1			
179	Isabelline Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe isabellina</i>				4					4		
180	Northern Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	1		1	1	2			10	4		
181	Pied Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe pleschanka</i>								1	10		
182	Black-eared Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe hispanica</i>			4	2							
183	Blue Rock Thrush	<i>Monticola solitarius</i>				2							
184	Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>				1			1	1		1	1
185	Semicollared Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula semitorquata</i>							5				
186	White-throated Dipper	<i>Cinclus cinclus</i>		5									1
187	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

	Common name	Scientific name	May									
			6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
188	Spanish Sparrow	<i>Passer hispaniolensis</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	2	
189	Eurasian Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>	12	1	1	1			✓	✓	✓	✓
190	Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>		2								
191	Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>							1			
191a	Black-headed Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava feldegg</i>	4	1			1				2	
192	Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	1	✓	1						1	1
193	White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
194	Tawny Pipit	<i>Anthus campestris</i>							2	2		
195	Common Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
196	European Serin	<i>Serinus serinus</i>		5								
197	European Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	3	1	✓	3	
198	Eurasian Siskin	<i>Spinus spinus</i>		1								
199	European Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
200	Common Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>			2							
201	Red Crossbill	<i>Loxia curvirostra</i>		60								
202	Hawfinch	<i>Coccothraustes coccothraustes</i>						2	2	2	1	
203	Corn Bunting	<i>Emberiza calandra</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
204	Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>	3		1			h				
205	Rock Bunting	<i>Emberiza cia</i>				2						
206	Ortolan Bunting	<i>Emberiza hortulana</i>	h		1	2					2	
207	Cirl Bunting	<i>Emberiza cirius</i>	1	1	2	4				1		
208	Black-headed Bunting	<i>Emberiza melanocephala</i>			4	10			3	6	1	
209	Common Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>					1		3	3	1	

Mammals & Cetaceans

Fallow Deer

European Hare

Red Squirrel

Bottle-nosed Dolphin

Harbour Porpoise

Reptiles and amphibians

Balkan Green Lizard

European Green Lizard

European Legless Lizard

Eastern Copper Skink

Grass Snake

Blotched Snake

Spur-thighed Tortoise

European Pond Terrapin

Marsh Frog

European Tree Frog

Fire-bellied Toad

Yellow-bellied Toad

Butterflies

Scarce Swallowtail

Black-veined White

Large White

Small White

Southern Small White

Green-veined White

Eastern Wood White

Orange Tip

Clouded Yellow

Brimstone

Green Hairstreak

Black Hairstreak

Large Copper

Grecian Copper

Small Copper

Sooty Copper

Chequered Blue

Silver-studded Blue

Brown Argus

Blue Argus

Mazarine Blue

Chapman's Blue

Common Blue

Southern White Admiral

Red Admiral

Painted Lady

Queen of Spain Fritillary

Glanville Fritillary

Knapweed Fritillary

Heath Fritillary

Marsh Fritillary

Small Heath

Speckled Wood

Wall Brown

Meadow Brown

Woodland Ringlet

Grizzled Skipper

Oberthur's Grizzled Skipper

Orbed Red Underwing Skipper

Dingy Skipper

Large Skipper

Moths

Burnet type moth

Lackey (larva only)

Poplar Lutestring

Grass Emerald

Yellow Shell

Fern

Speckled Yellow

Feathered Beauty

Black-veined Moth

Yellow Belle

Elephant Hawk-moth

White Ermine

Beautiful Marbled

Spotted Sulphur

Pale Shoulder

Silver Y

Four-spotted



Black Stork, Krumovgrad



Red-rumped Swallows, Kovan Kaya



Squacco Heron, Durankulak