

Bulgaria in Spring

Naturetrek Tour Report

10 - 19 May 2019



Calandra Lark



Little Tiger Blue



Tau Emperor



Eurasian Golden Oriole

Report and photos compiled by Andy Harding



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With 14 Naturetrek clients

Day 1

Friday 10th May

Alison and Andy had been able to meet the previous evening and both were able to meet all of the clients travelling from Heathrow's Terminal 5 before we boarded, which is always something of a relief! After a smooth and timely flight, we all met up at baggage reclaim and outside with those who had already arrived in Sofia. Also waiting was Dancho (Yordan's nickname), with whom Andy had worked on this self-same trip for the last two years.

We rapidly loaded up the spacious bus, and supplied with water and a chocolate biscuit, Dancho was able to give a contextual introduction to Sofia and Bulgaria as we moved through the suburbs. At this point in the tour the microphone was working well and this allowed the tour briefing to take place as we drove.

Our first taste of continental birds was of a White Stork on its nest on a lamp standard above the motorway. However our rural leg stretch near Vakarel, after just 40 minutes, was an eye-opener., Corn Buntings singing, and Red-backed Shrikes were very different to the current British country scene, as were four White Storks drifting slowly over. However it was really quite breezy, and we did not stay as long as on previous trips.

Not long before leaving the main road we stopped in a pleasant filling station where snacks could be purchased, and a Black-headed Bunting was the star performer for those who were birding. Of course Nightingales sang constantly and a Crested Lark was most confiding.

We were soon climbing steadily in pine-clad mountains. A little light rain started falling as we drew to a halt at our regular stop, next to Beglika Reservoir. We still ventured forth and very soon not only did the rain stop, but a whole feast of birds put in an appearance. The showy Ring Ouzels and a first-summer Pied Flycatcher were the initial attractions. Crag Martins wheeled overhead and Black Redstarts of the Balkan subspecies perched on the roofs of adjacent buildings. Both of the crests were very well seen, as was Crested Tit. The show was rounded off by a pair of Grey-headed Woodpeckers. Although this stop was designed primarily to break up the journey the group thought it simply brilliant.

We reached Hotel Dabrash beyond Dospat early enough for the group to get an insight into the local birdlife. It could not be resisted, but we will leave that until tomorrow. The dinner was a traditional Bulgarian meal, all the ingredients of which were both local and organic. The huge salad was followed by a huge Chicken Kiev and a very artistic dessert. We will need to do some walking!

Day 2

Saturday 11th May

A beautifully clear, if cool, morning gave superb viewing conditions, and equally superb scenic views of the snow-capped mountains across the border in Greece. From just outside the hotel there was plenty to see and hear. The dawn chorus was the best moment of the tour for Richard, both in itself and the anticipation it created for the next nine days. Red-rumped Swallows competed with Crag Martins for old House Martin nests in the hotel. In the air they were joined about an hour after dawn by Pallid Swifts, whose more wheezy calls made them

fairly easy to separate from Common Swifts. Mistle Thrushes were numerous with some feeding young. Black Redstarts were doing likewise. Cuckoos called endlessly. A superb male Cirl Bunting poked about in the short grass just below the viewing balconies. Crossbills were less numerous than usual, but half a dozen gave excellent views. We took a short walk which added Blackcap, Chiffchaff and Crested Tit to the morning list, followed by a Black Woodpecker, which called repeatedly at the end of the hotel garden, but was seen by just a few. All in all, it was difficult to persuade the group in for breakfast.

Our first stop on our journey along the Rhodope Mountains was at the Roman Bridge, which was much photographed, as well as walked over. A Grey Wagtail behaved atypically, based on UK experience, hopping about in bushes and reeds, while a pair of Hobbies hunted above us, ignoring the tumbling Raven.

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. The bus stopped for a juvenile Dipper, which, unlike a few others, behaved cooperatively. Based on information from the previous few days we missed out a couple of stops which we had made in previous years and headed straight for the Devil's Mouth, the entrance by which Orpheus had disappeared down into the Underworld in search of his beloved Eurydice. Our objective was, of course, Wallcreeper. Many Crag and House Martins as well as Alpine Swifts wheeled around as we scanned the cliffs. An amazing moth, the Tau Emperor provided a major distraction. As a last resort after a decent period of fruitless searching, we walked a few hundred metres down the gorge to look at some previously unsearched cliffs and then...bingo!! One Wallcreeper was seen well by all, before it became clear that there were a pair of birds. Absolute elation! Particularly from Lloyd...his best moment of the trip.

After very lengthy looks at the wonderful Wallcreepers we eventually took the bus a short distance upstream for our excellent Trout lunch.

The bridge over the River Arda near Leska, has been a regular stop in the past but this year we planned something a bit different. So our stop here was simply to give our driver a 15 minute break for legal reasons. However the best laid plans etc..and we were still there 40 minutes later with the best butterflies of the tour so far...among other species Glanville Fritillary and Green Hairstreak commanded attention until the Chequered Blue was found. Andy had seen it here 6 years previously but not since. A Black Stork and a Short-toed Eagle soared above and Kingfisher on the river was a good addition.

The 'new' site of three small reservoirs at Valicovic, excellent two weeks previously, proved very disappointing in comparison although a few Bee-eaters and a Little Owl were found. Ann managed to photograph the Little Owl with a mouse in its beak, so she was not at all disappointed

Moving rapidly on, another new site for us near Plaziszt was more successful. Here a Lesser Spotted Woodpecker seemed much less elusive than usual. Then we realized it was trying to feed its young in their nest. So we pulled back to a respectful distance and could view and photograph both parents at our leisure.

Finally another enforced stop saw us surrounding a small pond, where the nymphs of a large Dragonfly and the exuviae of some already emerged were significant in number, but no flying adults were around to determine the species. A few examples of an unidentified species of China-mark moth were flying around, ready to lay their eggs: their larvae have a completely submarine existence in hollow reed stems.

We checked into the Hotel Via in Krumovgrad, our home for two nights, bang on schedule.

An excellent dinner and lively log and post-log discussion sent everyone off to bed in good spirits and a Scops Owl called before midnight....

Day 3

Sunday 12th May

Singing Nightingales and a calling Scops Owl hit the record books before most woke to a bright morning which allowed a pre-breakfast walk down to the bank of the River Krumovitsa. However a most showy Nightingale delayed the photographers somewhat. Linda thought Nightingale song the best thing about the whole trip. Since this was brilliant on nearly every day, she clearly had a good time. Two male Eastern Olivaceous Warblers were singing at one another in tamarisks in the middle of the river when we arrived. Things got a bit nasty, which meant they moved to trees much closer to us, affording just the views we needed. Crag and House Martins wheeled endlessly, often under the bridge. Golden Orioles showed reasonably well, if distantly, but best of all were the two Barred Warblers in the light scrub and bushes just across the river.

Then to an excellent breakfast and a prompt start on the short ride towards Potochonitsa.

Through the village we drove up to where we normally watch the Vulture feeding station. However this area has become a reintroduction site for Egyptian Vultures, so we were asked not to linger close to the feeding station even though no fresh carcasses had been provided. So while Griffons glided overhead fairly frequently, accompanying the singing Woodlark, there was no feeding. However, a Black Kite was well watched and was an excellent addition to our raptor list: it is not common here. The sunshine lured out a few new species of butterflies. Adonis Blue, Silver Studded Blue and three species of Grizzled Skippers accompanied lots of Glanville Fritillaries.

Back down towards the village there was decent overhead activity, with Honey Buzzard, two Rollers and two Long-legged Buzzards. In the shrubbier habitat, a Subalpine Warbler sang, out of sight, while two Eastern Orphean Warblers showed rather better than usual. Two Woodchat Shrikes did not skulk. Here we engaged with a group of Dutch birders, whom we were to meet on subsequent occasions. They were clearly following a similar itinerary. This was fortuitous because one of them found a simply magnificent Owl-fly, which we all found amazing. Just before returning to the village a pair of Black-eared Wheatears hopped around a rather modest farmstead: the pale grey crown of the male sparking thoughts of just Northern Wheatear at first sight.

Back to the village we drove just up the road to Studen Klavenets to take our picnic in the shade alongside a babbling brook, which immediately offered up a Dipper.

As it became warmer our walk out of the end of the village was not hugely productive, with a couple more Black-eared Wheatears, and a dark phase Long-legged Buzzard being the only birds of note. Several Queen of Spain and Lesser Spotted Fritillaries were lovely, but not the most interesting of the insects. A Keeled Skimmer was outpointed by the enormous Anatolian Predatory Green Bush-cricket and our own Owl-fly. A brief stop on the roadside back through the village was excellent for more good views of Black-eared Wheatear. The little pond offered up two Damselflies and a Broad-bodied Chaser plus a brilliant green Tree Frog, which reminded Mike of the tropics and was thus his best moment of the trip.

Eventually we moved on to Dolna Kula, looking down on the river. Stopping at a rocky outcrop Bee-eaters, Crag Martins and Red-rumped Swallows wheeled around above yet more Black-eared Wheatears, but for many 'bird of the day' was a Chukar which sat on a rock advertising itself for about twenty minutes. As we walked back towards the village we at last obtained good views of Lesser Grey Shrike - probably five of them - with a Woodchat and a pair of Sardinian Warblers. Then the insects took over again, with a fabulous Little Tiger Blue and a magnificent moth, the Geometrician. All this made for a most enjoyable stroll back to the bus, and a list of the birds seen during this walk simply does no justice to the overall experience, of the cacophony of song of Golden Orioles, Nightingales and Eastern Olivaceous Warblers with Rollers and other species flying above.

As planned we arrived back earlier than usual at base to make up a little for the late arrival at the hotel last night. After a splendid dinner a search for the calling Scops Owls by the three leaders and just one client proved singularly unsuccessful.

Day 4

Monday 13th May

There was no organized walk this morning, though one or two ventured to the local park very early. The couple of nights at the Hotel Via had been extremely comfortable so after an excellent breakfast we moved on earlier than scheduled, setting off eastwards along the same road as yesterday.

The edges of the extinct volcano near Madzharovo provided us with two great stops. The first held an active Western Rock Nuthatch nest. Looking through a scope was de rigeur, but we ensured everyone got nice views. While waiting for the Rock Nuthatches to show next to their extraordinary nest, a Blue Rock Thrush was seen, but just as distantly.

The second stop in this area is known as Kovan Kaya and here the usual wheeling species - Crag Martin, Red-rumped Swallow and Alpine Swift - were also accompanied by Blue Rock Thrushes on the crags.

As we headed east good views of a dark phase Booted Eagle were had from the slowly moving bus. Passing through the village of Borislavtsi with its ten White Stork nests also inhabited by Spanish Sparrows in the 'flats' underneath, we stopped a little south by the reservoir, which offered little new - Turtle Doves, Tree Sparrow, Crested Larks, two distant Black Storks and a Black-headed Bunting.

There are always two target species at Yerusalmovo, and this year we succeeded with one of them...the pretty one...Masked Shrike, which eventually performed for all, but it would have been nice if it had been nearer. It would be wrong not to mention just another amazing concert by the commoner birds. New butterflies were Meadow Brown, Mallow Skipper and Eastern Bath White, but they were not as spectacular as the Cream-spot Tiger found in the ditch next to the bus! When half the group was back on the bus, two Lesser Spotted Eagles drifted over prompting a rapid disembarkation.

Just before the village of Leska, the Dutch group were clearly watching something and it proved to be the second target species for this area...Eastern Imperial Eagle. It was some distance away by the time we had all disembarked, but soon it was joined by another individual.

Given that the Lesser Kestrel reintroduction programme project in the village has now ended, we took our chance to picnic up a side-road enabling us to watch Black-headed Buntings singing in bushes just above our

heads, and up to 28 Lesser Kestrels hunting the fields. Clearly the reintroduction programme has worked. Out of the blue, and most unexpected here, another Masked Shrike was found in a hedge and that did show rather better. Finally, we had a stop in the village itself to get much closer views of both male and female Lesser Kestrels.

Then it was a straightforward if lengthy journey to Bourgas. As we got close to the city we started to see water bodies which we would scrutinize more closely tomorrow. Lots of Little Egrets and a couple of Pygmy Cormorants close to the road were overshadowed by a flock of 15 Glossy Ibises.

Then it was in and out of Bourgas and on to our hotel Regata, (yes, one 't') in Pomorie. It is not surprising we have stayed here for a second year with its superbly appointed rooms and excellent food. The dinner was finished with a wonderful cake and indoor fireworks for Ann's birthday.

Day 5

Tuesday 14th May

The early morning dawned windy with a hint of rain, but a Black-throated Diver was recorded before our lengthy walk to the 'Salt Museum'. Water levels were worryingly high, so waders with the shorter legs were little in evidence...just a male Kentish Plover. This did not concern the resident Avocets and Black-winged Stilts with their very long legs. They and Little Terns were nesting on the remnant mini salt-pans while hundreds of Sandwich Terns nested on the concrete islands. Three Mediterranean Gulls sat quietly with the very noisy Terns. On the walk back a Quail lay dead on the pavement. It had not been there on the way out, so presumably it had crashed into the wall of the adjacent football stadium.

After an excellent breakfast, it was only a fairly short move to the southern end of Lake Atanosovosko. A couple of Wood Sandpipers accompanied some Ruff, including one showing definite signs of summer plumage, but a summer plumage Curlew Sandpiper and two Dunlin dropped in only briefly. Great Egrets, Spoonbills and Glossy Ibis drifted over in ones and twos, but 20 White-winged Terns were more distant.

The stop alongside a dual carriageway, but also next to Lake Vaya is always a shock to visitors...but signs indicating this was a wildlife viewing spot were encouraging. Even more encouraging was all the birds on and over the Lake. Most of the Great Crested Grebes in Bulgaria must have been on the lake, but so were many Great White Pelicans and a few of the rarer Dalmatians. Interest soon re-focussed on an amazingly obliging Penduline Tit which was visiting the fronds of tall reeds just in front of us, but showed little inclination to move off. At the same spot a hepatic plumaged female Cuckoo sat almost motionless, also allowing amazing views.

All three 'marsh terns' - Whiskered, Black and White-winged - were joined by a couple of Little Gulls, though all of these were rather distant. Rather closer were single Night Herons, of a variety of ages, drifting by as well as Pygmy Cormorants.

What an incredible array of birdlife at just one fairly brief stop!

We moved just a few kilometres to Lake Mandra, or a corner of it, which was comparatively disappointing. Just one Squacco Heron and a couple of Purple Herons over were of consequence on the heron front. As usual we

crossed the road where Great Reed Warblers were much in evidence, but a Marsh Warbler sang invisibly. Marsh Harriers, a regular feature on every day, were much in evidence here.

A second Lake Mandra stop saw even closer Great Reed Warblers, and an unusual sight, fortuitously close...three Dalmatian Pelicans cruising round on the water with a Great White.

A poor battered Southern Festoon was all there was to show in the butterfly section, but Variable Damselfly was interesting.

We then drove the short distance to take our picnic lunch on the outside tables of a local café in Dimchevo. Unfortunately our usual café was closed due to illness, but fortunately there is another café and this afforded us the same opportunity, with a substantial amount of beer being purchased as a result. Storks' nests, Spanish Sparrows and lots of Bee-eaters, while enjoying our picnic, made this a very different experience to the UK.

We then climbed a small hill to get a different view of the lake and its birds. This, oddly, gave us our best yet views of Black-headed Bunting, with a flotilla of White Pelicans overflowed by two lovely White-winged Terns, and another Lesser Spotted Eagle. Nearby a quite lengthy stop also overlooked an arm of Lake Mandra. This quiet area gave us good views of Night Heron, Ferruginous Ducks and, below us, perched Bee-eaters. A little sun saw Clouded Yellows, Grecian Copper and Marsh Fritillaries emerge to join Common Blues on the wing.

With the evening light now in our favour we stopped at the southern end of Lake Atanosovosko, where screens for wader-watching have been provided. In fact it was very disappointing due to the water levels. Oystercatcher and a few Spoonbills did their best to enliven this rather bleak vista. However, after an otherwise excellent day we also had the Hotel Regata to look forward to.

Day 6

Wednesday 15th May

We took an early, if splendid breakfast and sadly left our quite luxurious Pomorie hotel to take a short coach ride up the Pomorie peninsula. While Little and Sandwich Terns accompanied our walk further up the peninsula, nine Black-necked Grebes in different directions attracted more attention, as did two Kentish Plovers which rapidly disappeared. Distant Turnstones and a Grey Plover did little apart from add to the bird list. So we paid another visit to the Salt Museum, largely because the distance from the hotel was such that the morning before, several of the group had not experienced the brilliant combo of Black-winged Stilts, Avocets and Common and Little Terns nesting, and loudly calling, in the city, while people going to work are walking past. It was certainly worth a second visit.

We had only reached as far as the Pomorie winery when we turned off down a very unpleasant track (fly-tipping) but it was certainly worthwhile. The views of White-winged Terns were fabulous, Little Gulls were very close, while six Garganey and two Ferruginous Ducks could be watched at leisure by all. Only a couple of the group were introduced to the very strange 'Tussock Moth' *Pentathera morio* which was dubbed by a previous group as the 'moth of death'. Fortunately Irene saw this interesting creature and it was the moths and other invertebrates which really made the trip for her. The new road through the salt pans, completed in less than 12 months, is great for traffic flow, but prevented previously enjoyed wader and sea watching, meaning a change in itinerary later today.

As usual our substantial and superb lunch was taken in Goritsa Village. As an example, 'the big pig in potatoes' following a huge salad was a typical repast. Given recent rains, Snails, definitely not cooked a la Francais had been collected in the restaurant garden and nearby gardens and were on the menu. Four members of the group tried them and were delighted. Whatever main course was chosen, accompanied by beer or wine, it was difficult to leave, but leave we must. Those who spent a little time birding in the village were rewarded with a Barred Warbler and three Hawfinches.

Then back in the coach for the few hundred metres into Goritsa Forest proper. The east side of the forest has been largely disappointing in the past three or four years, so we concentrated on the western side where a Swedish ornithologist had been providing dozens of nestboxes for the past several years. Semi-collared Flycatchers do well here, but it was very hard work on this occasion. Normally many birds have young at this time of year, and visit occupied nestboxes regularly. Unfortunately, this year females seemed to be sitting on eggs and males were high in the canopy and very elusive. Eventually everyone saw at least one of this species, but it was still rather disappointing. As always we found compensation. This year a pair of Tawny Owls (Dancho's favourite moment), a Dormouse which shot up a tree from a nestbox where it had been dozing and a superb moth, Lunar Double-stripe, miraculously found in dead oak leaves, but enjoyed by all when moved to the roadside, were simply excellent. A Middle-spotted Woodpecker called repeatedly close to us, but the views were probably even less than fleeting!

Because of limited wader opportunities in the past couple of days we took a diversion around the large city of Varna. Before reaching our goal we stopped at Yayata overlooking some ponds. A mammal caused us some identification problems...it was a Coypu, with Pochards, Gadwall and Glossy Ibises for company. Then on to an industrial area near Polvelyanovo where a few waders of some interest were on the shallow ponds. Temminck's Stints were the star birds as regards rarity, but Little Stints and Curlew Sandpipers were really well seen. A pair of Ruddy Shelducks and a Black-headed Wagtail were also new for the trip and just before we left a flock of eight Spoonbills flew over.

At our Kavarna guesthouse, we were welcomed as usual, by Kostas and his sons. If we expected a small dinner, after a vast lunch, we were disappointed. It was amazing that most people managed the delicious puddings. The homely atmosphere made for a wonderful evening.

Day 7

Thursday 16th May

From daybreak a vigil was kept over the valley outside the guesthouse. While there were Golden Orioles and Bee-eaters by the score, and a pair of Syrian Woodpeckers, there were no sightings of the hoped-for Levant Sparrowhawks. A surprise did fly past, in the shape of a Rosy Starling. This is a very late arriving migrant and this tour is usually too early to see one. The splendid breakfast further lifted spirits.

Today we had a series of relatively short hops on a circular route taking us close to the Romanian border. The ancient (6,000BC) village at Duran Kulak is on an island in the lake of the same name. Accessible by a wooden walkway it is both interesting in itself and an excellent site for birds. Unfortunately, or so it seemed, light drizzle accompanied the first part of our walk. Stonechats and so many Cuckoos initially occupied us, but the capacious shelter which was presumably intended as an information building, but has probably never been used, seemed a good first stop. As well as hearing Savi's Warblers, seeing different herons drifting by and distant Whiskered

Terns, it gave best-ever views of a pair of Golden Orioles, the male singing, the female calling, oblivious to the dozen clicking cameras. Absolutely magical. With the rain now stopped we got up close to one of the four Savi's Warblers and their reeling song, wandered around the ancient village, but to some a male Large Copper butterfly stole the show.

At our main stop at Duran Kulak we can watch both the lake and the sea and there is a nice café. Coffee was taken while watching the sea with telescopes, while a pair of Pied Wheatears hopped on the sea defence rocks a few metres away. Those birds were David's favourite of the trip. Having arranged for our picnic lunch to be prepared under cover, at the café, we set off on a walk between the sea and the lake. We had not gone far when we connected easily with a singing Paddyfield Warbler, which was John A's most pleasing moment of the whole tour. This is often not a straightforward species here, but they seemed to have arrived in good numbers.

The local subspecies of Reed Bunting, sometimes known as Great Reed Bunting because of its overall larger size, showed rather briefly on one of the few bushes in the reedbed. Also on that side of the divide, a Dice Snake was found curled up, 25 Whiskered Terns appeared and disappeared behind the reed tops, and another male Large Copper still drew admiring glances. Three Little Stints flying past were outgunned by a Collared Pratincole, seen well by only a few of the group. Crossing the sandy bar to the sea side, a Ringed Plover, two Little Ringed Plovers and two Curlew Sandpipers accompanied two first-summer Caspian Gulls, identified *inter alia* by their pure white heads. And everywhere there were Painted Ladies, part of a massive invasion reported on Black Sea coast natural history social media. Some were very pallid and tatty, others in pristine condition. Presumably they belonged to different generations in this species' inexorable march to the Arctic Circle...one of the true wonders of the natural world.

Back at the café we bought drinks and ate our picnic lunch under cover. A few Bearded Tits and a Spotted Flycatcher were seen by those who left the lunch tables early, but the big attraction was an Otter fishing very successfully close in. This is surely the best mammal list this trip has ever attracted. The Otter plus the lunch and a glass of rosé combined to give Anita her most enjoyable moment of the trip.

Shabla Lake was our next stop, where some Garganey and a couple of Black-headed Wagtails were the highlight. A short walk encompassing a few sand dunes and beach produced little else.

Just a little further down the coast at Kamen Briag, Calandra Larks, Tawny Pipit and a single Pied Wheatear appeared on cue. Notably the first two species performed better than on any previous occasion and this most enjoyable stop was enhanced by a fly past by a Montagu's Harrier. If anything the density of Painted Ladies had increased further.

Based on information from a Brummie birder to whom Andy had chatted at the café, we changed our itinerary drastically without adding extra kilometres. Bolata Valley had been part of this tour six or seven years earlier, but had been recently dropped. The prospect of an Eagle Owl, seen in the open yesterday, repeating that performance was too good to miss. The apparently precise directions revealed no Owl, but a Hoopoe watched at length on the top of a low cliff was surpassed by a static raptor, also sitting atop the cliff but partially hidden. Eventually, and despite the illusion that it was too big, we were sure it was a Honey Buzzard, confirmed when it eventually decided to fly. Then just as we started to trudge back to the bus, the Eagle Owl was spotted...in full view and much closer than ever seen on this trip before. That and the fact that the change of plan had paid off,

was Andy's best moment of the trip, exceeding both the Owl-fly and the Geometrician. A static Squacco Heron and exceptional views of Great Reed Warbler right outside the bus also need a mention.

Given the hour, we left two other possible stops until the morrow, and returned for another large and lovely dinner.

Day 8

Friday 17th May

Early morning saw the group again looking over the wooded valley next to the guesthouse in the hope of seeing Levant Sparrowhawk, Both Hobby and Kestrel provided brief scares, but no Sparrowhawk. What is presumed to be the same Rosy Starling did another fly-past, one of the Syrian Woodpeckers from yesterday also returned to the same tree and a Roller was close overhead.

Much of the morning was spent concentrating on the two stops omitted yesterday evening. On the steppe area at Balgarevo, the song of larks, including Short-toed, was immediately apparent. Indeed views of the mainly ground-dwelling species here could be had in all directions, but because of the wind viewing of Isabelline Wheatears, Tawny Pipits and Short-toed Larks was tricky. Lesser Grey Shrikes however did sit up and photographing these was Colin's favourite moment. However despite a lengthy search, Stone Curlews were not found, but a young male Montagu's Harrier put on a good show.

Eventually we moved on to Cape Kaliakra where the weather vacillated between bright sunshine and a sea fret. On the sea a couple of large flocks of Yelkouan Shearwater drifted by, as did a sizeable flock of Mediterranean Gulls. A couple of Dolphins broke the surface regularly around the fishing operation underway, joining a few Shags and Cormorants. A couple of the resident Alpine Swifts zoomed about, but passerine migrants which often drop in here were markedly absent. The star species here is Pied Wheatear, present in good numbers and viewable down to a few feet. Sitting on the cliff edge here with David and Irene, watching these delightful birds was John W's favorite moment of the trip. The melon ice-creams were good too.

We then set off north-west and visited a new stop, the Onogur valley, where we had our picnic. A Golden Oriole happily nest-building in a not fully leafed tree was a big attraction, as was the most cooperative Hawfinch of the trip, which chose to sit, close by, in a dead tree. A Grey-headed Woodpecker was harder to see well and a couple of dark phase Long-legged Buzzards patrolled the valley. Some sunshine encouraged some insect life with lots of Silver-studded Blues and a pair of mating Reverdin's Blues. An Azure Damselfly, was bright, but so thin it was hard to track.

Our next valley visit was to Strelkov, but in stark contrast to last year it was very disappointing. Those who climbed up to some of the Thracian tombs probably had most excitement. The whole area was very muddy and there had been some destruction of good habitat to plant rows of small pine trees. That and the drizzle encouraged an early departure.

Getting close to our next accommodation, we made time for a brief stop down on the bank of the Danube, where small groups of all the same large water birds moved both up and down stream. So Pygmy and Great Cormorant, Great White and Little Egrets, Night Heron and Glossy Ibis all succeeded in getting on the

Romanian bird list, if anyone was keeping one. Some Great Cormorants moved downstream by hitching a lift on fallen trees.

We then moved into our two adjacent guesthouses, Pelican and Kalamaritsa, in Vetren, before coming together again in Pelican followed by a lovely meal.

Day 9

Saturday 18th May

You didn't really need to leave the garden with Golden Orioles and Nightingales for loud and lovely company, and this soundscape was Allen's best moment of the trip. Nonetheless we walked out of Vetren village for a pre-breakfast stroll. It was a bit muddy but a delightful revisiting of many of the 'common' birds we had enjoyed so much. Cuckoos and Turtle Doves, so scarce now in the UK, flew over routinely. An Icterine Warbler was in full voice about 30 metres away, but despite a patient wait, not a glimpse was had. Just as we were about to turn back, two Ortolans could be distantly heard, (they sing Beethoven's fifth!) one of which conveniently moved much nearer and gave very decent views.

The travelling part of our day first took in some viewpoints over Srebana Nature Reserve. The views were fabulous with all the various herons as well as Pelicans regularly in the air, with Nightingales and Cuckoos all around and yet another fairly showy Penduline Tit for company. Reverdin's Blues here showed a hindwing upperside variation which can be unnerving, but the underside gives the game away. In addition it was sunny when we moved on to Garvan Marsh, so butterflies were much in evidence. Small colonies of Green Hairstreaks and Grizzled Skippers were evident, but single Green-underside Blue and a couple of Common Gliders were more impressive. Garganey and Ruddy Shelduck were the nicest birds, but Middle-spotted Woodpecker might have been had it decided to show itself rather than tease us by just calling nearby.

A slightly longer drive took us to Malak Preslavets where the constant at this time of year is the large Whiskered Tern colony which nests on the Lily pads. There is a shaded viewing area to watch the activity on the lake but very rarely do any other people visit this wonderful spot, even at the weekend. Hardly had we set up when a female Little Bittern flew round the corner and landed in the reeds close by and disappeared. Those who had not seen it were not ultimately disappointed, because just after the call to lunch a second bird was located a little further along the reed-bed and that promptly flew out onto the Lily pads. A couple of people missed that also because they had sat down for lunch and didn't get back to the lake quickly enough. However all was well after lunch when both a male and female could be seen brilliantly. This was the first time in eight May visits that Little Bitterns, occasionally seen in flight, had graced the Lily pads. A few Night Herons and a Squacco Heron also put in appearances but though they are quite beautiful, the group was becoming blasé. Indeed a Kingfisher and a Common Redstart attracted more attention. This was a superb site for odonata with male Azure, Variable and Blue-tailed Damsels to confuse us, without tackling the females. Red-eyed Damsel was a bit easier and this was a great place for Downy Emeralds, with many males holding territory. On the larger Dragonfly front, Norfolk Hawker and Scarce Chaser showed very well. We were not too surprised to learn that this is one of the very best sites in Bulgaria with, across the seasons a very impressive list of Dragonflies.

It was then back to Srebana to take a walk, taking advantage of the late afternoon sunlight. This took us past Roller City, with Garganey and a few herons punctuating Roller watching. A female Lesser-spotted Woodpecker performed on the nearest large tree and just along from that a Penduline Tit was busy nest-building. The first

Knapweed Fritillaries of the trip were a nice addition, but with the now expected cacophany from species we see rarely or never in the UK, the words 'magical' and 'wonderful' were the most used to describe the end of our final full day.

Dinner was excellent, as expected and before the nightly log of sightings, John A kindly thanked all the leading team in appropriately humorous fashion and everyone declared their best moments of the trip. They may wish to change those tomorrow!

Day 10

Sunday 19th May

There was no planned pre-breakfast walk but most of the group ventured out at some point for a final taste of the early morning song of Nightingale, Golden Oriole and all the other 'common' birds of Vetren. This was the third of our hotels where a great variety of bird song could be heard immediately outside the front door, and that experience was Alison's favourite feature of the week.

Having bade farewell to Dora at Pelican, we left on a very different itinerary to all previous years...and it was much better! Instead of heading on the very long drive to Sofia, we crossed the border into Romania within half an hour, and promptly visited some birding sites. We hope he wasn't joking, but Olly thought the planning of every day was the best thing about the trip.

Ostrov Lake is not very far from the Danube. Unlike many of the lakes we had visited it had open fringes with no significant lakeside vegetation. This allowed easy viewing of several Ruddy Shelducks, some with broods of ducklings. A nearby sandstone cliff had Bee-eaters sharing with a few pairs of Jackdaws and Rollers. There were four White Pelicans close to us on the lake and more briefly a 'kettle' of at least 40 rose up behind a low hill. The Whiskered Terns were feeding very close to us, with some of their calls reminiscent of Corncrake - at least for a few minutes! Penduline Tits are always great, so yet another on one of the few reed fronds was not to be sniffed at. Then at last we got White-tailed Eagles onto the trip list in the shape of two juvenile birds. As always a couple of Great Egrets and Glossy Ibises enhanced the picture.

Not far distant were the Bodjak Fishponds and here we made three stops. Along with the usual Whiskered Terns and a few assorted herons/egrets a female Pochard with ducklings caught the eye as did a superb summer-plumaged Black-necked Grebe. Two singing Marsh Warblers, one of which performed very consistently were the stars of the next spot with a Black-headed Wagtail, also briefly atop the reeds there. There was request to stop at a second Bee-eater colony just along the road and this was enjoyed by all, particularly those with cameras.

We retraced our steps and were able to immediately drive onto the cross-Danube ferry and onwards towards Bucharest. General birding continued from the bus, of course, and this paid particular dividends when, at Calarasi, two Collared Pratincoles flew past the bus and were seen by most of the occupants. It would have been astonishing at the start of the trip that two Long-legged Buzzards were virtually ignored a few miles further on.

We ate our sandwich lunch on the bus and chose not to make a coffee stop in case Sunday road traffic was problematic around Bucharest. In the event we arrived at the Henri Coanda airport in good time and here bade farewell to Ann, Linda, Lloyd and Mike, who were staying in Bucharest for short stays, as well as to Nikolay, our brilliant driver, to Dancho and to Theodora who had been a huge help for the last six days.

Check-in was both delayed and painfully slow, and here we left Alison, who gallantly remained with us until we were all able to move on to security and our flight. Alison was flying to Istanbul, then on, overnight, to Tashkent and another tour. Our flight was problem free, as were the formalities at Terminal 5.

This was a quite disparate group, with very different approaches, and levels of expertise in birding and the rest of natural history watching. However this was no problem at all, as the help which everyone gave to one another, which John T thought the very best aspect of the trip, made for a holiday enjoyed by all, enhanced by the social side of life. So I enjoyed it hugely.

One of you is already booked with me in July! I very much hope that the rest of you will follow this excellent example on future tours.

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Purple Heron



White-winged Tern

Species Lists

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

	Common name	Scientific name	May										
			10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	
1	Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>										2	
2	Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>					✓	✓	✓			✓	
3	Common Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>					6	12					
4	Ruddy Shelduck	<i>Tadorna ferruginea</i>						2	2			4	20
5	Garganey	<i>Spatula querquedula</i>						9	1			6	
6	Northern Shoveler	<i>Spatula clypeata</i>						1					
7	Gadwall	<i>Mareca strepera</i>					3	✓				1	1
8	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓
9	Common Pochard	<i>Aythya ferina</i>					3	10				6	1
10	Ferruginous Duck	<i>Aythya nyroca</i>					3	2	6			12	
11	Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>					1	1					
12	Chukar Partridge	<i>Alectoris chukar</i>			1	h							
13	Common Quail	<i>Coturnix coturnix</i>					1d						
14	Common Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>	✓							1	✓	✓	
15	Black-throated Diver	<i>Gavia arctica</i>					1		2	1			
16	Yelkouan Shearwater	<i>Puffinus yelkouan</i>							✓	70			
17	Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>							1			2	2
18	Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>						✓	✓	3		✓	✓
19	Black-necked Grebe	<i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>							9				1
20	Black Stork	<i>Ciconia nigra</i>		3	1	2							
21	White Stork	<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓
22	Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>				15	15	2	1	12	15	12	
23	Eurasian Spoonbill	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>					15	20				2	
24	Little Bittern	<i>Ixobrychus minutus</i>										4	
25	Black-crowned Night Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>						5			1	7	1
26	Squacco Heron	<i>Ardeola ralloides</i>						3		2	1	12	
27	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>			4	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
28	Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>						2		2		2	1
29	Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>						1			3	1	2

	Common name	Scientific name	May									
			10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
30	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>				✓	✓	✓	2	1	✓	✓
31	Great White Pelican	<i>Pelecanus onocrotalus</i>					✓				4	44
32	Dalmatian Pelican	<i>Pelecanus crispus</i>					10	2		1	✓	
33	Pygmy Cormorant	<i>Microcarbo pygmeus</i>				1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
34	European Shag	<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>							5	✓		
35	Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	3	1	5	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
36	Egyptian Vulture	<i>Neophron percnopterus</i>			4	1						
37	European Honey Buzzard	<i>Pernis apivorus</i>			4		1		1			
38	Griffon Vulture	<i>Gyps fulvus</i>			✓	✓						
39	Short-toed Snake Eagle	<i>Circaetus gallicus</i>		1								
40	Lesser Spotted Eagle	<i>Clanga pomarina</i>				2	2			1	3	
41	Booted Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus pennatus</i>				1					1	
42	Eastern Imperial Eagle	<i>Aquila heliaca</i>				2						
43	Eurasian Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>			1							
44	Northern Goshawk	<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>				1						
45	Western Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	1			3	8	5	✓	3	4	2
46	Montagu's Harrier	<i>Circus pygargus</i>							2	2	1	
47	Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>			1							
48	White-tailed Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i>										2
49	Long-legged Buzzard	<i>Buteo rufinus</i>			3	1				2	2	2
50	Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
51	Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>		1			1	1	h		1	1
52	Eurasian Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>					✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
53	Eurasian Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>					2	3				
54	Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>					✓	✓	2			
55	Pied Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>					✓	✓				
56	Northern Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>						✓	1		2	4
57	Grey Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>						1				
58	Common Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>							1			
59	Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>			4			4	2		1	
60	Kentish Plover	<i>Charadrius alexandrinus</i>						2				
61	Ruddy Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>						4				

	Common name	Scientific name	May									
			10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
62	Ruff	<i>Calidris pugnax</i>					29	20				
63	Curlew Sandpiper	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>					22	3	2			
64	Temminck's Stint	<i>Calidris temminckii</i>						3				
65	Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>					2					
66	Little Stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>					3	12	3			
67	Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>						1				
68	Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>					1	3				
69	Collared Pratincole	<i>Glareola pratincola</i>							2			2
70	Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>					✓	✓			1	✓
71	Little Gull	<i>Hydrocoloeus minutus</i>					4	5	15	6		
72	Mediterranean Gull	<i>Ichthyaeus melanocephalus</i>					4	1		30		
73	Caspian Gull	<i>Larus cachinnans</i>			1					2		2
74	Yellow-legged Gull	<i>Larus michahellis</i>	1	1		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
75	Baltic Gull	<i>Larus fuscus fuscus</i>							1			
76	Sandwich Tern	<i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓		
77	Little Tern	<i>Sternula albifrons</i>					✓	✓				
78	Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>				2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
79	Whiskered Tern	<i>Chlidonias hybrida</i>					✓	1	25	10	✓	✓
80	White-winged Tern	<i>Chlidonias leucopterus</i>					40	12	10			
81	Black Tern	<i>Chlidonias niger</i>					2	2	2	10		
82	Rock Dove	<i>Columba livia</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
83	Common Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>		1	2	2	4	3	✓	✓	✓	✓
84	European Turtle Dove	<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>		h	2	✓	1	1	✓	✓	✓	✓
85	Eurasian Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
86	Common Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>	h	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
87	Eurasian Scops Owl	<i>Otus scops</i>		h	h					h	h	h
88	Eurasian Eagle-Owl	<i>Bubo bubo</i>							1			
89	Tawny Owl	<i>Strix aluco</i>						2				
90	Little Owl	<i>Athene noctua</i>		1	2	1						
91	Alpine Swift	<i>Tachymarptis melba</i>		✓		✓				3		
92	Common Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
93	Pallid Swift	<i>Apus pallidus</i>	✓	✓	✓		3					

	Common name	Scientific name	May									
			10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
94	European Roller	<i>Coracias garrulus</i>			5				6	2	✓	✓
95	Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>		1							4	
96	European Bee-eater	<i>Merops apiaster</i>	✓	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
97	Eurasian Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>			h	h	h		6	2	1	1
98	Eurasian Wryneck	<i>Jynx torquilla</i>			1					1		
99	Middle Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocoptes medius</i>						1			h	
100	Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dryobates minor</i>		2							1	
101	Syrian Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos syriacus</i>							2	2	4	1
102	Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>	1	1	1	1				1		
103	Black Woodpecker	<i>Dryocopus martius</i>		1								
104	European Green Woodpecker	<i>Picus viridis</i>		2	1	1	h					
105	Grey-headed Woodpecker	<i>Picus canus</i>	2							1	1	
106	Lesser Kestrel	<i>Falco naumanni</i>				28						
107	Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>		1	✓	✓	2	✓	✓	1		2
108	Eurasian Hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>		2					1	2	2	
109	Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>				1						
110	Red-backed Shrike	<i>Lanius collurio</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
111	Lesser Grey Shrike	<i>Lanius minor</i>			5				2	6		
112	Woodchat Shrike	<i>Lanius senator</i>			3	2			1	1		
113	Masked Shrike	<i>Lanius nubicus</i>				2						
114	Eurasian Golden Oriole	<i>Oriolus oriolus</i>		1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
115	Eurasian Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
116	Eurasian Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	✓	✓	✓	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
117	Western Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
118	Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	1									20
119	Hooded Crow	<i>Corvus cornix</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
120	Northern Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>	3	✓	✓	3						
121	European Crested Tit	<i>Lophophanes cristatus</i>	1	1								
122	Coal Tit	<i>Periparus ater</i>	4	4								
123	Sombre Tit	<i>Poecile lugubris</i>								6		
124	Marsh Tit	<i>Poecile palustris</i>		4								
125	Eurasian Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>				1		1	1	1	1	

	Common name	Scientific name	May									
			10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
126	Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	1	h	2	2		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
127	Eurasian Penduline Tit	<i>Remiz pendulinus</i>					1				2	1
128	Bearded Reedling	<i>Panurus biarmicus</i>							4			
129	Woodlark	<i>Lullula arborea</i>			1							
130	Eurasian Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>				✓			1	1	1	
131	Crested Lark	<i>Galerida cristata</i>	1		1	✓	1	✓	✓	✓		
132	Greater Short-toed Lark	<i>Calandrella brachydactyla</i>								✓		
133	Calandra Lark	<i>Melanocorypha calandra</i>							5	2		
134	Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>					✓	✓	✓		1	✓
135	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
136	Eurasian Crag Martin	<i>Ptyonoprogne rupestris</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓						
137	Common House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
138	Red-rumped Swallow	<i>Cecropis daurica</i>		2	✓	✓			5	✓	✓	✓
139	Cetti's Warbler	<i>Cettia cetti</i>					h	h	h		h	
140	Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>		h		2				2	2	
141	Common Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	h	1	h					h		
142	Great Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus arundinaceus</i>					6	✓	✓		✓	✓
143	Paddyfield Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus agricola</i>							3			
144	Eurasian Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>						2	2			2
145	Marsh Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus palustris</i>					h					2
146	Eastern Olivaceous Warbler	<i>Iduna pallida</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
147	Icterine Warbler	<i>Hippolais icterina</i>									h	
148	Savi's Warbler	<i>Locustella luscinioides</i>							4		h	
149	Eurasian Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>		1					1	1	5	✓
150	Barred Warbler	<i>Sylvia nisoria</i>			2			1	1			1
151	Lesser Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia curruca</i>	1	1	2			h	5	3	2	
152	Eastern Orphean Warbler	<i>Sylvia crassirostris</i>			4	1						
153	Common Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>	1		2			h	5	3	2	1
154	Subalpine Warbler	<i>Sylvia cantillans</i>			h	h						
155	Sardinian Warbler	<i>Sylvia melanocephala</i>			3							
156	Common Firecrest	<i>Regulus ignicapilla</i>	1	1								
157	Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>	1	h								

	Common name	Scientific name	May										
			10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	
158	Eurasian Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>							2			6	
159	Western Rock Nuthatch	<i>Sitta neumayer</i>				1							
160	Wallcreeper	<i>Tichodroma muraria</i>		2									
161	Rosy Starling	<i>Pastor roseus</i>								1	1		
162	Common Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
163	Ring Ouzel	<i>Turdus torquatus</i>	5										
164	Common Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
165	Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>		2							1	1	
166	Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	✓	✓		2	1						
167	Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>		1		1	1	2	1	1	1		
168	European Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	1	2	h		1						
169	Common Nightingale	<i>Luscinia megarhynchos</i>	1	h	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
170	Pied Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula hypoleuca</i>	1										
171	Semicollared Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula semitorquata</i>						4					
172	Black Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>	1	✓					1	1	1		
173	Common Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>										1	
174	Blue Rock Thrush	<i>Monticola solitarius</i>				3							
175	Whinchat	<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>	2	1					1				
176	European Stonechat	<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>							2	1			
177	Northern Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>		1				1		2			
178	Isabelline Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe isabellina</i>								5			
179	Black-eared Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe hispanica</i>			5	2							
180	Pied Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe pleschanka</i>							6	✓			
181	White-throated Dipper	<i>Cinclus cinclus</i>		1	1								
182	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
183	Spanish Sparrow	<i>Passer hispaniolensis</i>			12	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
184	Eurasian Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>	✓	2	1	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
185	Black-headed Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava feldegg</i>						1	4				1
186	Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>		4									
187	White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>		✓	1	1	3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
188	Tawny Pipit	<i>Anthus campestris</i>							3	4			
189	Common Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	h	✓		✓			

	Common name	Scientific name	May									
			10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
190	Hawfinch	<i>Coccothraustes coccothraustes</i>							3	1	4	
191	Eurasian Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	4	4								
192	European Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>		6	1	1			1	2	1	
193	Common Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>	1	2						6	6	
194	Red Crossbill	<i>Loxia curvirostra</i>	1	6								
195	European Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>		6	4	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
196	Corn Bunting	<i>Emberiza calandra</i>	1	1	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
197	Ortolan Bunting	<i>Emberiza hortulana</i>									2	
198	Cirl Bunting	<i>Emberiza cirlus</i>		2	h	1						
199	Black-headed Bunting	<i>Emberiza melanocephala</i>	1		2	✓	✓			1		✓
200	Common Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>								1		

Mammals

European Hare

Coypu

Red Squirrel

Muskrat

Red Fox

Forest Dormouse

Otter

Common Bottlenose Dolphin

Reptiles and Amphibians

Balkan Green Lizard

Dice Snake

Tree Frog

Common Wall Lizard

European Pond Terrapin

Brown Toad

Slow Worm

Marsh Frog

Fire-bellied Toad

Grass Snake

Agile Frog

Balkan Crested Newt

Butterflies

Scarce Swallowtail

Green-veined White

Clouded Yellow

Small Copper

Silver-studded Blue

Adonis Blue

Red Admiral

Glanville Fritillary

Southern Festoon

Wood White

Brimstone

Grecian Copper

Reverdin's Blue

Green-underside Blue

Painted Lady

Knappweed Fritillary

Common Glider

Eastern Bath White

Green Hairstreak

Lesser Fiery Copper

Brown Argus

Chapman's Blue

Peacock

Lesser Spotted Fritillary

Small White

Orange Tip

Large Copper

Chequered Blue

Little Tiger Blue

Common Blue

Queen of Spain Fritillary

Marsh Fritillary

Small Heath
Grizzled Skipper
Large Skipper

Speckled Wood
Oberthur's Grizzled Skipper

Meadow Brown
Orbed Red-underwing Skipper

Wall Brown
Mallow Skipper

Moths

Pseudogyrodoza conwagana
Transparent Burnet
Fern
Hummingbird Hawk-moth
Knot Grass
Silver Y

Udea lutealis
Tau Emperor
Golden-rod Pug
Pentathera morio
Bordered Straw
Lunar Double-stripe

China Mark sp
Southern Little Emerald
Latticed Heath
Cream-spot Tiger
Spotted Sulphur
Burnet Companion

Forester
Lace Border
Speckled Yellow
White Ermine
Pale Shoulder
Four-spotted

Dragonflies and Damselflies

Azure Damselfly
Featherlegs
Blue-eyed Hawker
Scarce Chaser

Variable Damselfly
Large Red Damselfly
Lesser Emperor
Broad-belled Chaser

Blue-tailed Damselfly
Large Red-eyed Damselfly
Eastern Spectre
Keeled Skimmer

Winter Damselfly
Green-eyed Hawker
Downy Emerald
Red-veined Darter

Other insects

Owl-fly
Firefly larva

Anatolian Predatory Bush Cricket
Violet Carpenter Bee

Conehead Mantis
Hornet

Rose Chafer