

Go Slow in Extremadura

Naturetrek Tour Report

22nd – 29th April 2026



Black Kite



Blue Rock Thrush



Griffon Vulture



Little Bittern

Tour report by Keith Hamilton
Photos by Annie Burdett



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Tour participants: Keith Hamilton and Dominic Couzens (leaders) with 11 Naturetrek clients

Summary

During this, the second Go Slow in Extremadura tour of the spring, we enjoyed some great weather, which brought out the best of this fabulous landscape. Our group enjoyed the comfort and hospitality of our wonderful hosts Iva and Paul at Finca Flores Amarillas, and we saw some great birds, including Great and Little Bustards displaying, Black-winged Kite, Golden Orioles and Egyptian Vultures, to name just a few. The meals were exceptional, and we had a wonderful group.

Day 1

Wednesday 22nd April

Sevilla – Almoharin

A beautiful warm day in Sevilla was the perfect start to this Extremadura Go Slow tour. The flight was on time, and with no real delays at the airport we were soon heading north out of Andalucia, towards Extremadura. Having stopped off on the way for a short break, we still arrived in good time for our evening meal, with a little time set aside to go over the plans for the coming week.

Day 2

Thursday 23rd April

Arrocampo – Trujillo

Our first full day started with a very pleasant warm and dry morning. Following breakfast, we left Finca Flores Amarillas just after 9.15am and called in at “Nightingale Corner” to get a feel for some of the local birds, picking up Nightingales, Serin and Cetti’s Warbler. On our way to our main birding event of the day, we called in for fuel and had the luck to get a Short-toed Snake Eagle flying over.

At the Embalse de Arrocampo, an hour’s drive to the north, we soon picked up a male Little Bittern, which gave us some great views. Common Reed and Savi’s Warblers were singing from the reedbed and various raptors were overhead, while two Purple Herons dropped in quite close by and showed well.

Our day was moving rapidly by, and after a coffee we went in search of Black-winged Kite, unfortunately to no avail, but we did find a cracking Squacco Heron fishing from a branch close to the water. Lunch comprised sandwiches from a local bar, after which the group were able to spend some time in the historic town of Trujillo while we stocked up on groceries for the coming al fresco picnics. We arrived back at the hotel just after 5.00pm to rest, before a lovely meal.

Day 3

Friday 24th April

Campo Lugar – Embalse de Alcollarín

We had a slightly earlier breakfast at 7.30am to get to Campo Lugar at a reasonable time. We called in for fresh bread, and arrived just after 9.00am: a Little Ringed Plover on the pond at Campo Lugar was a nice start. We

scanned around as we went along, stopping to view some of the fields, and not too far along we spotted two scorable Great Bustards, while Rollers bickered with Lesser Kestrels on the pylons. There were many of the latter hawking over the fields too. A fabulous Montagu's Harrier flew by, and Calandra Larks sang above our heads.

Heading towards Madrigalejo, we called in to look for Black-winged Kite, and saw one flying by, but could not get decent views. We then found another perched in a tree, so we did in the end get great views of this iconic bird. On the way to coffee, we could see that the rice paddies were starting to fill up, and that there were Glossy Ibises and Black-winged Stilts by the roadside. Comfort break over, we worked our way back up on to the grasslands, and a fly-by Great Bustard was good to see. Up on the higher area, Greater Short-toed Larks were singing, and we could get some good views of these and another cracking Montagu's Harrier quartering a field.

It was very close to lunchtime: we would picnic at the Embalse de Alcollarín. This site is always a great favourite, and we picked up a few more bird species, the highlight being a pair of Great Spotted Cuckoos which were found after we had finished our lunch and were taking a detour back from the picnic spot. After stopping on the way back to view some Red-rumped Swallows, we got back to the hotel at around 5.00pm, in plenty of time to get ready for another home-cooked supper.

Day 4

Saturday 25th April

Santa Marta de Magasca – Santiago del Campo

Today was a day to go and look for bustards, and then visit the vulture hide. After breakfast at 7.15am, we took the road north via Zarza de Montanechez and Ruanes to Los Cerralbos, on the Santa Marta road. As we approached the lane, a Common Cuckoo was on a fence; we had been hearing them all week, but this was the first we had seen. At our first stop along the lane, we found seven Great Bustards, including two males, one of which was obligingly displaying. Calandra Larks were in song overhead, joined by a Greater Short-toed Lark.

Further down the track, there were two more Great Bustards and a displaying Little Bustard in the same field; two more Great Bustards displayed just a little further away, while a single Spanish Imperial Eagle was seen flying slightly to the west of us.

We were just considering leaving the area when we picked up on two Pin-tailed Sandgrouse: we had been hearing them most of the time, but now thankfully we found two on the ground. Time was moving on, so we headed towards Santa Marta for a well-deserved break, before continuing towards Cáceres. On the way there, we got some great views of Rollers, and an obliging Little Owl on a pole.

The vulture hide was booked for 12.30pm: around half a mile from the site, we spotted another Spanish Imperial Eagle, which appeared to be nesting close by. Arriving just in time, we prepared the picnic while the group watched the spectacle of Cinereous and Griffon Vultures, joined by lots of Black Kites, having their own feast only a few metres away while we tucked into our picnic. When the vultures had dispersed and our picnic had been eaten, we slowly made our way back to the hotel, arriving at 4.15pm to enjoy the facilities before supper.

Day 5

Sunday 26th April

Medellín – Alange

The day started really well with a Short-toed Snake Eagle on the rocks opposite the hotel. It was a beautiful sunny morning, with the prospect that it would be warm all day. After a later breakfast, we headed south towards Medellín, a lovely old town on the Rio Guadiana. We always enjoy this location: it has so much to offer. As soon as we arrived, we could hear Golden Orioles calling, and as we walked up onto the bridge there were quite a few Western Swamphens in the reeds; a Purple Heron flew over and a Golden Oriole flew across to the island. These orioles were quite frustrating: they were calling all the time, but were very difficult to see. We found a roosting juvenile Black-crowned Night Heron, and the Common and Pallid Swifts provided a good opportunity to pick out the differences between them.

After coffee, we took a walk down the riverbank, and got amazing views of Nightingale and fleeting views of more Golden Orioles, plus many hirundines over the water. While we made the picnic, the group enjoyed soaking up the atmosphere beside the old bridge. Following our picnic, we headed down to Alange, where we saw a cracking pair of Black Wheatears, Rock Bunting, Blue Rock Thrush and many Alpine Swifts, while Gull-billed Terns floated across the reservoir. We worked our way back to the hotel via Merida, where we stopped off by the Rio Guadiana for a quick look, before continuing to the hotel, where we rested and prepared for the evening meal

Day 6

Monday 27th April

Monfragüe

We arose to another fabulous sunny morning, which made a perfect start to our day in the National Park of Monfragüe. After another hearty breakfast, we left the finca at just before 8.30am and headed north. Having called in at Trujillo for some picnic things, we arrived at our first stop at around 9.40am. A Woodlark was singing as we got out of the van, and Golden Orioles were calling from across in the woodland. A dark-morph Booted Eagle floated by, as did an Egyptian and four Cinereous Vultures. We moved along to Salto de Gitano, where there was another Egyptian Vulture, but the stars of the show here were the Black Storks: six of these fabulous, elegant birds were present. A Peregrine Falcon was flying over the top of the crag. Blue Rock Thrush and Rock Bunting are always good here too: one of the former showed really well just a few metres away.

We moved on for a break, before going to look for Bonelli's Eagle; while we were waiting, Dartford Warblers were heard singing, and a couple of Short-toed Snake Eagles flew over. Finally, our patience was rewarded, and a fabulous adult Bonelli's Eagle soared above us. We stopped off at a known nest site for Egyptian Vulture, and sure enough a vulture was incubating eggs just across the river. Heading back towards, Villarreal de San Carlos, we made the picnic at a lovely site, La Tajadilla. We looked for Western Black-eared Wheatear, but to no avail, so we slowly worked our way back to the hotel via the same, very picturesque road on which we had come, the fields full of wild flowers: the *debesa* woodland is a wonderful sight at this time of the year. Supper tonight was a traditional *paella*, which was enjoyed by everyone

Day 7

Tuesday 28th April

Campo Lugar – rice fields

Today was our last full day in Extremadura: the region is great not only for the birds, but for wild flowers, butterflies, landscape and general topography. This area has everything. Today, we would revisit some areas that we had already been to, and try some new areas too. For the early part of the day, we split the group into those happy to start early, and those who preferred a slower start to the day. My group breakfasted at 6.45am and left at 7.15am, arriving at Campo Lugar shortly before 8.00am. The air was beautifully clear, the sun having just popped its head over the horizon. At our first stop we could hear a Little Bustard, but it kept so well hidden that we could not find it. The Rollers were busy around their nesting sites, bickering with the Lesser Kestrels as usual. A Short-toed Snake Eagle perched on a pylon in beautiful light, giving us the best views of this majestic bird. We spotted a Great Bustard in great light, which allowed some of the group to get good photos. Then we continued down the track and, apart from the cacophony of Calandra Larks, we still did not see the Little Bustard that we were especially looking for.

Stopping the vehicle every hundred metres or so, we finally heard one calling, and thankfully we could get the views that we were after. Further down the road, we found another male Great Bustard, while three others flew over. This time we got great views of them. We continued, and found one of the iconic birds of the area, the Black-winged Kite, perched in a tree not too far away.

While we were doing this, the other group, after their later start, had been viewing a similar area, and they had had great views of Black-bellied Sandgrouse. We met up for coffee, after which we all went down to the rice fields. Shortly after we reached the first paddies, we spotted some Collared Pratincoles and were able to get some photographs. Lunch was had in a local bar, before we headed back to the hotel via a very scenic route, on which we saw Booted Eagle, Common Cuckoos and shrikes, among many other birds. We arrived back at our accommodation shortly before 5.00pm, in plenty of time to prepare for our last evening meal together.

Day 8

Wednesday 29th April

Almoharin – Sevilla

We woke to rain for the first time on this week's tour, after some pretty spectacular *tormentas* the previous night. Following breakfast at 8.00am we leisurely prepared for our departure to the airport at Sevilla, and left just after 10.00am, stopping off at El Culebrin for a snack half-way. We arrived with perfect timing for the group to catch the flight for their homeward journey.

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Species lists

Birds (H=heard only)

N=Near-endemic, I=Introduced		April 2026					
Common name	Scientific name	23	24	25	26	27	28
Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>						✓
Egyptian Goose - I	<i>Alopochen aegyptiaca</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Common Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>		✓				
Gadwall	<i>Mareca strepera</i>		✓				✓
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	✓	✓		✓		✓
Northern Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>						✓
Ferruginous Duck	<i>Aythya nyroca</i>	✓					
Common Quail	<i>Coturnix coturnix</i>		H	✓			H
Red-legged Partridge	<i>Alectoris rufa</i>	✓	H			H	✓
Alpine Swift	<i>Tachymartus melba</i>			✓	✓		
Common Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>	✓	✓		✓		✓
Pallid Swift	<i>Apus pallidus</i>	✓			✓		
Great Bustard	<i>Otis tarda</i>		✓	✓			✓
Little Bustard	<i>Tetrax tetrax</i>			✓			✓
Great Spotted Cuckoo	<i>Clamator glandarius</i>		✓				
Common Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>	H	H	✓	H	H	✓
Pin-tailed Sandgrouse	<i>Pterocles alchata</i>			✓			
Black-bellied Sandgrouse	<i>Pterocles orientalis</i>						✓
Common Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Eurasian Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Water Rail	<i>Rallus aquaticus</i>	H					
Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	✓	✓		✓		✓
Eurasian Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>		✓				
Western Swampen	<i>Porphyrio porphyrio</i>		✓		✓		
Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>		✓				
Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>		✓				✓
Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>		✓				✓
Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>		✓		✓		✓
Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>		✓		✓		✓
Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>						✓
Collared Pratincole	<i>Glareola pratincola</i>						✓
Gull-billed Tern	<i>Gelochelidon nilotica</i>				✓		
Whiskered Tern	<i>Chlidonias hybrida</i>		✓				
Black Stork	<i>Ciconia nigra</i>					✓	
White Stork	<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	✓			✓	✓	✓
Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>						
Little Bittern	<i>Botaurus minutus</i>	✓					
Black-crowned Night Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>				✓		
Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	✓	✓		✓		✓
Squacco Heron	<i>Ardeola ralloides</i>	✓					
Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>	✓					
Western Cattle Egret	<i>Ardea ibis</i>	✓			✓		✓
Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>	✓	✓		✓		✓
Black-winged Kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>		✓				✓
Egyptian Vulture	<i>Neophron percnopterus</i>	✓				✓	

N=Near-endemic, I=Introduced		April 2026					
Common name	Scientific name	23	24	25	26	27	28
Cinereous Vulture	<i>Aegypius monachus</i>	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Griffon Vulture	<i>Gyps fulvus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Short-toed Snake Eagle	<i>Circaetus gallicus</i>	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Booted Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus pennatus</i>	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Spanish Imperial Eagle - N	<i>Aquila adalberti</i>			✓			
Bonelli's Eagle	<i>Aquila fasciata</i>					✓	
Montagu's Harrier	<i>Circus pygargus</i>	✓	✓	✓			✓
Western Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Red Kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>	✓		✓		✓	
Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	✓	✓			✓	✓
Little Owl	<i>Athene noctua</i>			✓			
Eurasian Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
European Roller	<i>Coracias garrulus</i>		✓	✓			✓
Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	✓			✓		✓
European Bee-eater	<i>Merops apiaster</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Lesser Kestrel	<i>Falco naumanni</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>					✓	
Eurasian Golden Oriole	<i>Oriolus oriolus</i>	✓			✓	✓	✓
Iberian Grey Shrike	<i>Lanius meridionalis</i>	✓	✓	✓			✓
Woodchat Shrike	<i>Lanius senator</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Iberian Magpie - N	<i>Cyanopica cooki</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Eurasian Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Western Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>	✓		✓	✓		✓
Northern Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Eurasian Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	✓	✓			✓	✓
Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Woodlark	<i>Lullula arborea</i>				✓	H	
Thekla's Lark	<i>Galerida theklae</i>		✓			✓	
Crested Lark	<i>Galerida cristata</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Greater Short-toed Lark	<i>Calandrella brachydactyla</i>		✓	✓			
Calandra Lark	<i>Melanocorypha calandra</i>		✓	✓			✓
Eurasian Crag Martin	<i>Ptyonoprogne rupestris</i>	✓			✓	✓	✓
Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Western House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
European Red-rumped Swallow	<i>Cecropis rufula</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cetti's Warbler	<i>Cettia cetti</i>	✓	H		✓		✓
Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>				✓		
Great Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus arundinaceus</i>				H		
Sedge Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus Schoenobaenus</i>		✓				
Common Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>	H	✓		✓		✓
Melodious Warbler	<i>Hippolais polyglotta</i>		✓				
Savi's Warbler	<i>Locustella luscinioides</i>	H					
Zitting Cisticola	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Eurasian Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	✓			✓	H	✓
Sardinian Warbler	<i>Curruca melanocephala</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Dartford Warbler	<i>Curruca undata</i>					H	
Eurasian Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>					✓	✓
Spotless Starling	<i>Sturnus unicolor</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>					✓	✓
Common Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

N=Near-endemic, I=Introduced		April 2026					
Common name	Scientific name	23	24	25	26	27	28
Common Nightingale	<i>Luscinia megarhynchos</i>	✓	H	H	✓	H	H
Black Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>					✓	
Blue Rock Thrush	<i>Monticola solitarius</i>				✓	✓	
European Stonechat	<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Black Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe leucura</i>				✓		
Eurasian Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>						✓
Spanish Sparrow	<i>Passer hispaniolensis</i>	✓	✓				
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Common Waxbill - I	<i>Estrilda astrild</i>				✓		✓
Western Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>		✓				
White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>		✓		✓	✓	✓
Eurasian Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Hawfinch	<i>Coccothraustes coccothraustes</i>			✓			✓
European Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>		✓		✓	H	
Common Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>		✓	✓		✓	
European Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
European Serin	<i>Serinus serinus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Corn Bunting	<i>Emberiza calandra</i>	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Rock Bunting	<i>Emberiza cia</i>				✓	✓	
Cirl Bunting	<i>Emberiza cirlus</i>		✓				

Mammals

N=Near-endemic		April 2026					
Common name	Scientific name	23	24	25	26	27	28
Granada Hare - N	<i>Lepus granatensis</i>	✓					
Red Deer	<i>Cervus elaphus</i>					✓	
Egyptian Mongoose	<i>Herpestes ichneumon</i>			✓			
Red Fox	<i>Vulpes vulpes</i>			✓			

Butterflies

		April 2026					
Common name	Scientific name	23	24	25	26	27	28
Cleopatra	<i>Gonepteryx cleopatra</i>					✓	
Clouded Yellow	<i>Colias croceus</i>		✓				✓
Western Dappled White	<i>Euchloe crameri</i>		?				✓
Small Copper	<i>Lycaena phlaeas</i>			✓			
False Ilex Hairstreak	<i>Satyrium esculi</i>					✓	✓
Southern Brown Argus	<i>Aricia cramera</i>		✓				
Painted Lady	<i>Vanessa cardui</i>	✓	✓				✓
Small Heath	<i>Coenonympha pamphilus</i>		✓		✓		
Speckled Wood	<i>Pararge aegeria</i>		✓				
a marbled white	<i>Melanargya</i> sp.				✓		
Meadow Brown	<i>Maniola jurtina</i>		✓		✓		