

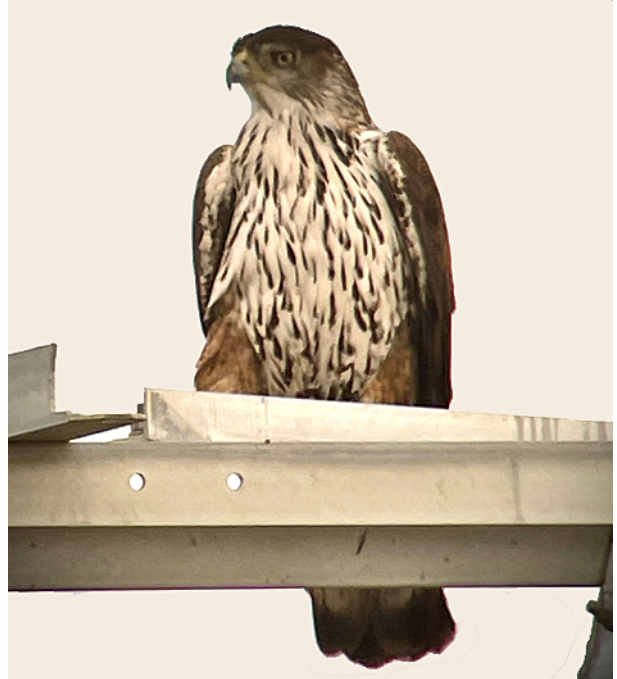
Extremadura - a Vegetarian/Vegan tour

Naturetrek Tour Report

28th October – 4th November 2025



Griffon Vulture



Bonelli's Eagle



Spanish Imperial Eagle



Red-footed Falcon

Tour report by Keith Hamilton
Photos by Keith Hamilton and Katherine Richards



Naturetrek

Mingledown Barn

Wolf's Lane

Chawton

Alton

Hampshire

GU34 3HJ

UK

T: +44 (0)1962 733051

E: info@naturetrek.co.uk

W: www.naturetrek.co.uk

Tour participants: Keith Hamilton (leader) with six Naturetrek clients

Summary

The vegetarian/vegan tour is always popular, not only for those who like to be sure of the meal plan, but for omnivorous clients too. Situated at Finca Flores Amarillas near Almoharín, our hotel was in a fabulous natural landscape, with nature right on the doorstep. The weather forecast during the run up to this week had not been great but, as is often the case, the weather proved to be much better than expected, with some lovely warm days.

Considering this is a transitional time of the year for birding, our total of 120 bird species was impressive, and included eagles, bustards, sandgrouse and a very surprising juvenile Red-footed Falcon.

Day 1

Tuesday 28th October

Transfer day

The flight arrived on time and we left the airport around an hour later; soon we were out of the metropolis of Madrid, and heading west towards Extremadura; the weather was cool but dry. A flock of Monk Parakeet flew by; these introduced birds are now very numerous here. Unfortunately, the weather forecast was correct, and the rain started as we continued west, accompanied by some spectacular electrical activity.

We arrived at Finca Flores Amarillas at around 7.30pm to a lovely welcome by Iva and Sara, who had produced a great evening meal. After a brief talk about the plan for the coming week, we went to bed in anticipation of the days ahead.

Day 2

Wednesday 29th October

Arrocampo

After a very rainy night, the day started grey, and it soon started to rain again; it was forecast to be that way all day, so we headed up to Arrocampo to be in the relative comfort of the bird hides. At our first viewing point, the first bird was a Little Bittern, which flew out from the near bank; then another was seen in the reedbed. Cetti's Warblers were calling, and there must have been an influx of Chiffchaffs, as they seemed to be everywhere. Bearded Reedling could be heard too. There were a few Marsh Harriers around, braving the incessant rain, and a Kingfisher passed in front of the hide.

Following coffee, we went up to Casatejada and were lucky enough to get great views of three Black-winged Kite, Iberian Grey Shrike also showing well towards hide 3, a Water Pipit, a Glossy Ibis, and the highlight in the form of a cracking female Hen Harrier, which floated through just as we were about to leave. The weather had improved greatly, and it was time to leave and take the E90 back south to Las Amarillas, where we ended the day with another of Sara and Iva's delicious home-cooked meals.

Day 3

Thursday 30th October

Campo Lugar, Alcollarín

It was a foggy start to the day, with no wind and a mild temperature. Our first stop of the day was at the grassland area of Campo Lugar. Calandra Larks were calling in what was by now quite a fine mist, and as we scanned the fields we saw a male Hen Harrier. At a pool there were some ducks, mainly Mallard, but also Shoveler and Teal. A single Kentish Plover was at the water's edge. Along a track, around twelve Black-bellied Sandgrouse flew up, followed by six Pin-tailed Sandgrouse, and then two more Black-bellied. Back on the main track, we found fifteen Little Bustards feeding not far from the roadside, and another male Hen Harrier quartered the field in front of us, as a cracking Merlin passed through. It had been a successful morning by any standard.

Following a coffee and comfort break, we headed towards the Embalse de Alcollarín. Around the top pond there were a few waders, including Spotted Redshank, Greenshank, Green Sandpiper, and Black-winged Stilt. Kingfishers showed well after lunch, and we visited the other side of the *embalse*, before finally starting the journey back to Las Amarillas. Five minutes into our journey, we spotted a Bonelli's Eagle on a pylon; thankfully, it stayed perched while we got some photos. It made a fitting end to a good birding day, and we arrived back in good time to get some rest before dinner.

Day 4

Friday 31st October

Madrigalejo, Medellín

We had another bright start to the day, again with no wind and mild temperatures; it felt like a great day for birding. We left Las Flores Amarillas after breakfast, our first venue of the day being the *arrozales nortes* (northern rice fields) near Palazuelo. It was a quiet start as far as new species were concerned, but the abundance of birds in the rice fields was impressive, with flocks of hundreds of House Sparrows, and Spanish Sparrows too. The Red Avadavat is an introduced and spectacular species which is doing well in the rice fields; we got great views. In one of the fields there were around 200 Glossy Ibises, and as we followed the track a little further, another of the rice paddies held at least 200 Black-winged Stilts, together with around forty Ruffs, two Kentish Plovers and a Little Ringed Plover.

We moved a little further north to Madrigalejo for a very welcome coffee, before having lunch at a nearby picnic area. After lunch, we headed south to the wonderful town of Medellín, always a favourite location. We viewed the reedbed from the bridge before taking a walk around the castle; it was an all-round pleasant experience. The day had by now passed us by, and it was time to leave Medellín to go back to the hotel for another warm welcome from Iva, and a little free time before dinner.

Day 5

Saturday 1st November

Santa Marta de Magasca, Santiago del Campo, Monroy Road

We took an early breakfast today because we had a busy day ahead; we were out on the steppe at Santa Marta de Magasca not long after dawn. Seven Great Bustards flew overhead before we had a chance to leave the vehicle,

and soon after we spotted three more not too far away, which allowed us to get some great views. Moments later, we spotted seven Little Bustards on the other side of the lane. The sky was filled with the sound of Calandra Larks, and a stunning Iberian Grey Shrike perched up nicely for everyone to see.

The next stop was our regular coffee stop at Santa Marta de Magasca, before we followed the road towards Cáceres, a Little Owl posing nicely for us by the roadside. The vulture hide was booked for noon, so we left the steppe and set off for Santiago del Campo, arriving right on time. All was quiet when we arrived, but soon, one or two Griffon Vultures came down, and a Spanish Imperial Eagle flew in and landed just in front of the hide: what a treat. By now there were many vultures, including four Cinereous Vultures. The Spanish Imperial Eagle flew up to a nearby pylon where another was waiting. Another great lunch was prepared while the spectacle unfolded, and everyone was very happy.

Following lunch, we worked our way back via the Monroy road; at our first stop we could hear Cirl Bunting, but unfortunately it would not show itself. While we were searching for the bunting, a Golden Eagle floated into view. Heading towards Trujillo, we stopped by the roadside and found around fifty Little Bustards and seventy Pin-tailed Sandgrouse feeding together; we watched them for around fifteen minutes.

Thinking that things could get no better, no sooner had we set off again when a juvenile Red-footed Falcon (a very scarce migrant in Spain) gave us an amazing show for five minutes or so; we could not believe our luck. As the day was progressing quickly, we made our way back to the hotel, but not before stopping at the Plaza Major in Trujillo for some light refreshment. All in all, it had been a great day, with some star birds.

Day 6

Sunday 2nd November

Embalse de Burdalo, cookery demonstration

After such an intense day yesterday, we delayed breakfast a little and then set off for the Embalse de Burdalo. Three stops were planned in this area, and they produced some great birds. The Embalse de Burdalo is a relatively new reservoir set in a fantastic natural landscape, and a new stop for our tour. It proved to be very good for waders, with Greenshank, Redshank, Little Ringed Plover, and Green and Common Sandpipers. Seven Spoonbills were at the top of the *embalse*, and three Black Storks were flying overhead; it was quite late in the year for these storks to be around, although recently the odd bird has wintered in the area. Surprisingly, a juvenile Black-crowned Night Heron gave us a good display, flying out from the banking and perching up for us to see its cryptic plumage. A Blue Rock Thrush which had been calling at the hotel earlier had not shown itself, but thankfully we did get to see one here, on the 'presa' (dam wall) of the reservoir.

We had a special treat in store for the clients today, in the form of a cookery demonstration, and lunch was a selection of homemade vegetarian Spanish tapas: delicious! Mid-afternoon, we all left the Finca to enjoy a six-kilometre walk through the local countryside, an opportunity to soak up some general nature, and to take some exercise after a lovely meal. A Cirl Bunting in a tree on the lane was a lovely bonus. For our meal tonight, Sara had prepared an amazing vegetarian paella, marking a great end to another wonderful day.

Day 7

Monday 3rd November

Monfragüe National Park

We had another early start, and we were travelling north from Finca Las Flores Amarillas by 8.15am. Our destination was the national park of Monfragüe. It was a beautiful sunny morning, and we were anticipating a great day ahead. When we arrived at Salto De Gitano, our first stop, it was still a little chilly, and although Rock Buntings were giving very brief views, it was difficult to get everyone on them; there was some Griffon Vulture activity, but it was still a little early for them. We moved on to Villareal de San Carlos for a comfort break and coffee, but with an ulterior motive in the form of Hawfinches; straight out of the van we could hear them, and we got some great views.

We headed on to Portilla del Tietar; as we were getting out of the van, an adult Golden Eagle flew overhead. Firecrests were calling from the small holm oaks on the riverbank, and they showed well for us. When we arrived at the crag, a flock of Rock Doves flew over the river, and we waited a while to try for views of Eagle-Owl, sadly without success. But we did see a slightly out of season Pied Flycatcher. A bonus came as we walked back to the van: a Rock Bunting perched up in a close tree, and finally we were all able to see it. We made a final stop at Salto de Gitano on the way back to the hotel, and a Peregrine showed around the crag just as we were about to leave. It had been a great day of birdwatching.

Day 8

Tuesday 4th November

Transfer day

It is always a sad day when we have to pack our bags and leave the hotel for the homeward journey: it had been an amazing week. The journey to the airport was uneventful, which is a good thing when you have a plane to catch. We stopped off at a service station for a break around half way, before arriving in reasonable time for our journeys home.

Receive our e-newsletter

Join the Naturetrek email list and be the first to hear about new tours, additional departures and new dates, tour reports and special offers.

naturetrek.co.uk/e-newsletter-signup

Scan to
sign up!



Social Media

We're social! Follow us on Instagram, Facebook, Bluesky and X and be the first to hear about the launch of new tours, offers, exciting sightings and photos from our recently returned holidays.



[instagram.com/naturetrek_wildlife_holidays](https://www.instagram.com/naturetrek_wildlife_holidays)



[facebook.com/naturetrekwildlifeholidays](https://www.facebook.com/naturetrekwildlifeholidays)



naturetrek.bsky.social



x.com/naturetrektours (formerly Twitter)

Species lists

Birds (H = Heard only)

N=near-endemic, I=introduced		October-November 2025						
Common name	Scientific name	28	29	30	31	1	2	3
Egyptian Goose - I	<i>Alopochen aegyptiaca</i>			✓	✓		✓	
Northern Shoveler	<i>Spatula clypeata</i>			✓			✓	
Gadwall	<i>Mareca strepera</i>			✓			✓	
Eurasian Wigeon	<i>Mareca penelope</i>			✓				
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Eurasian Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>			✓			✓	
Red-legged Partridge	<i>Alectoris rufa</i>			✓			✓	
Great Bustard	<i>Otis tarda</i>					✓		
Little Bustard	<i>Tetrax tetrax</i>			✓		✓		
Pin-tailed Sandgrouse	<i>Pterocles alchata</i>			✓		✓		
Black-bellied Sandgrouse	<i>Pterocles orientalis</i>			✓				
Rock Dove	<i>Columba livia</i>							✓
Common Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Eurasian Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Water Rail	<i>Rallus aquaticus</i>		H		H			
Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>		✓		✓			
Eurasian Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>						✓	
Western Swamphen	<i>Porphyrio porphyrio</i>		H		H			
Common Crane	<i>Grus grus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>		✓	✓			✓	
Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>						✓	
Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>			✓	✓		✓	
European Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>					✓		
Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>				✓		✓	
Northern Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Kentish Plover	<i>Anarhynchus alexandrinus</i>			✓	✓			
Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa</i>			✓			✓	
Common Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>		✓	✓	✓		✓	
Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>		✓	✓	✓		✓	
Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>		✓	✓	✓		✓	
Common Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>			✓			✓	
Spotted Redshank	<i>Tringa erythropus</i>			✓				
Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>			✓			✓	H
Ruff	<i>Calidris pugnax</i>				✓			
Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</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>		✓		✓			
Eurasian Spoonbill	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>						✓	
Little Bittern	<i>Botaurus minutus</i>		✓		✓			
Black-crowned Night Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>						✓	
Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>			✓	✓		✓	✓
Western Cattle Egret	<i>Ardea ibis</i>		✓	✓	✓		✓	
Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

N=near-endemic, I=introduced		October-November 2025						
Common name	Scientific name	28	29	30	31	1	2	3
Black-winged Kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>		✓					
Cinereous Vulture	<i>Aegypius monachus</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Griffon Vulture	<i>Gyps fulvus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Spanish Imperial Eagle - N	<i>Aquila adalberti</i>					✓		
Golden Eagle	<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>					✓		✓
Bonelli's Eagle	<i>Aquila fasciata</i>			✓				
Eurasian Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>					✓		
Hen Harrier	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>		✓	✓				
Western Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Red Kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Little Owl	<i>Athene noctua</i>				✓	✓		✓
Eurasian Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>		✓	✓	✓			✓
Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Red-footed Falcon	<i>Falco vespertinus</i>					✓		
Merlin	<i>Falco columbarius</i>			✓		✓		
Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>							✓
Iberian Grey Shrike - N	<i>Lanius meridionalis</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Eurasian Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</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>			✓	✓	✓	✓	
Crested Tit	<i>Lophophanes cristatus</i>							✓
Eurasian Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Eurasian Penduline Tit	<i>Remiz pendulinus</i>				✓			
Bearded Reedling	<i>Panurus biarmicus</i>		✓					
Woodlark	<i>Lullula arborea</i>			H			✓	
Thekla's Lark	<i>Galerida theklae</i>		✓				✓	
Crested Lark	<i>Galerida cristata</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>		✓		✓			
Cetti's Warbler	<i>Cettia cetti</i>		✓	H	H		H	
Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>							✓
Common Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Zitting Cisticola	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓		
Eurasian Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>			✓			✓	✓
Sardinian Warbler	<i>Curruca melanocephala</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Dartford Warbler	<i>Curruca undata</i>				✓			
Common Firecrest	<i>Regulus ignicapilla</i>							✓
Eurasian Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>							H
Eurasian Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>							✓
Spotless Starling	<i>Sturnus unicolor</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>							✓
Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>					✓		
Common Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
European Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>			✓		✓	✓	✓

N=near-endemic, I=introduced		October-November 2025						
Common name	Scientific name	28	29	30	31	1	2	3
European Pied Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula hypoleuca</i>					✓		
Black Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Blue Rock Thrush	<i>Monticola solitarius</i>						✓	✓
European Stonechat	<i>Saxicola rubicola</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>			✓	✓			
Red Avadavat - I	<i>Amandava amandava</i>				✓			
Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>				✓	✓		✓
White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Water Pipit	<i>Anthus spinoletta</i>		✓					
Eurasian Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Hawfinch	<i>Coccothraustes coccothraustes</i>							✓
European Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>			✓				✓
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>					H	✓	

Mammals

		October-November 2025						
Common name	Scientific name	28	29	30	31	1	2	3
European Rabbit	<i>Oryctolagus cuniculus</i>					✓		
Red Deer	<i>Cervus elaphus</i>							✓
Western Roe Deer	<i>Capreolus capreolus</i>					✓		
Wild Boar	<i>Sus scrofa</i>							✓
Egyptian Mongoose	<i>Herpestes ichneumon</i>			✓				
Red Fox	<i>Vulpes vulpes</i>							✓

Amphibians & reptiles

		October-November 2025						
Common name	Scientific name	28	29	30	31	1	2	3
Spiny Toad	<i>Bufo spinosus</i>			✓				
Natterjack Toad	<i>Epidalea calamita</i>							✓
Red-eared Slider	<i>Trachemys scripta</i>			✓	✓			

Butterflies

		October-November 2025						
Common name	Scientific name	28	29	30	31	1	2	3
Cleopatra	<i>Gonepteryx cleopatra</i>							✓
Clouded Yellow	<i>Colias croceus</i>			✓				✓
Small White	<i>Pieris rapae</i>			✓				
Red Admiral	<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>							✓
Speckled Wood	<i>Pararge aegeria</i>							✓

Moths

		October-November 2025						
Common name	Scientific name	28	29	30	31	1	2	3
Crimson Speckled	<i>Utetheisia pulchella</i>				✓			