

Extremadura - a Vegetarian/Vegan tour

Naturetrek Tour Report

24th February – 3rd March 2026



Great Bustard



Spoonbill



Western Swamphen



White Storks

Tour report by Keith Hamilton
Photos by Dave Jones



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 and Jasper Boerma (leaders) with nine Naturetrek clients

Summary

This vegetarian tour is always popular: we were blessed with lovely warm weather all week, and we got to see all of the species that we hoped for. There were also some early arrivals from Africa as the season was moving ahead quickly. Our accommodation, Finca Flores Amarillas, is always enjoyed by clients, and this wonderful group was no exception. It was a great week, with great company.

Day 1

Tuesday 24th February

Transfer day

After an afternoon pick up from T4 at Madrid Barajas airport, on a lovely February day, we were on the road by 4.00pm. As always, the initial part of the journey was a little slow, but we were soon on the R5 heading west towards Extremadura, and the metropolis soon turned to agricultural land. One of the highlights of the journey was a second-year Golden Eagle, which flew very close to the road as we entered the region of Castilla La Mancha.

Our first stop was just as we reached Extremadura, a welcome coffee and comfort break. During the second leg of the journey, the landscape changed from agricultural to open *dehesa* woodland, with rolling hills and river valleys. We arrived at the fabulous Finca Las Flores Amarillas at 7.00pm, which was perfect timing to get unpacked and ready for our first meal, in anticipation of the days ahead.

Day 2

Wednesday 25th February

Arrocampo – Trujillo

Following a hearty breakfast, we headed out towards the Embalse de Arrocampo, first stopping off at the bridge over the Rio Burdalo where we were able to get our first taste of the birds of the area. It was nice to see our first Hoopoe, and White Storks busy with their nest building on a nearby building, while there were numerous Cetti's Warblers singing from cover. Then we made the journey up the E90 to Saucedilla and the Embalse de Arrocampo. One of the first birds we saw was Western Swamphen, and there were also three Black-crowned Night Herons close by. Two Cinereous Vultures drifted over, and Marsh Harriers continually quartering the reed bed.

After coffee, we made a loop to the north of the village, picking up a large group of Iberian Magpies and a very confiding Iberian Grey Shrike. Our lunch today was at a local bar, before we headed to Trujillo where, while the leaders went to the supermarket, the clients got to look around the town and watch the Lesser Kestrels over the Plaza Major. Around the old buildings they also saw their first Crag Martins. As was the case most days, time had flown by, so we returned to Finca Las Flores Amarillas in good time to prepare for the daily checklist and another fabulous home cooked meal.

Day 3

Thursday 26th February

Monfragüe National Park

Making an early start, we left Finca Las Flores Amarillas at daybreak after our normal sumptuous breakfast, briefly calling in at the local bakery for fresh bread, and then heading off north towards Monfragüe. Before we got to Salto de Gitano, we made a stop in some *dehesa* and quickly ticked off a flyover Spanish Imperial Eagle; there were Woodlarks singing (it is always great to hear their lovely song).

At Salto de Gitano, the resident Peregrines made their presence known, and we watched them displaying over the crag. There were many Griffon Vultures floating above the crag, and for a few minutes they were joined by a juvenile Golden Eagle. Blue Rock thrushes gave us some great views, and Rock Buntings seemed more abundant than usual.

After a brief stop at Villareal de San Carlos, we made a stop just a little further along the road, where we saw Dartford Warbler and Egyptian Vulture near the Fuente de Los Tres Caños. Two Black Storks were gliding up the valley, and two Bonelli's Eagles flew through. At our next stop, Crested Tits, Nuthatch, Short-toed Treecreeper were seen, and Lesser Spotted Woodpecker was heard.

The next stop was for lunch, at a great place for both picnicking and birding at the same time. There were two more Egyptian Vultures here, and a Short-toed Snake Eagle: not bad birds to see while having lunch! There were also Hawfinches in the surrounding trees. At Portilla del Tietar we saw more vultures and Blue Rock Thrush, but the highlight was an Otter swimming up the river.

Day 4

Friday 27th February

Campo Lugar – Alcollarín

After two early starts, breakfast was at a more leisurely 8.00am, and after picking up fresh bread for lunch we went up to Campo Lugar. One of the first birds to see was a Great Bustard, a little distant but still good to see; then another flew through, giving better views. Down at the first pond there were still Teals and Shovelers present, and then twelve Spoonbills flew right over our heads in formation. There was also quite a movement of Common Cranes: at this time of the year, they are preparing to return to their breeding grounds in Scandinavia.

We moved up to high ground: Calandra Larks were in full song all around us, and after a few minutes we spotted some Black-bellied Sandgrouse in the next field, which were flushed by a roving Marsh Harrier. We drove on to Madrigalejo for a coffee stop, after which we took a side road to find Black-winged Kite. Just when we thought we were out of luck, one appeared flying not too far away, and we got good scope views. A few moments later, some of us got good views of another one close by.

Lunch by now was now distinctly overdue, but the birding had been so good that it was worth the wait. At the Embalse de Alcollarín, while we prepared the lunch, the clients got to explore this rich area looking, seeing not only birds but also plants and butterflies. After lunch, we had a walk and saw Booted and Short-toed Snake Eagles,

as well as many other good birds, such as Iberian Magpies and Iberian Grey Shrike. It was a really pleasant experience in the warm Spanish sunshine.

Day 5

Saturday 28th February

Santa Marta de Magasca – Monroy

We started the day early to be on the steppes not long after daybreak. We called in for fresh bread along the way at Trujillo, and the sun was just over the horizon as we parked at Los Cerralbos. We soon picked up five female Great Bustards, and scanned across the hillside, finding around fifteen Black-bellied Sandgrouse. The small group of bustards was joined by another group, including four males: there were now twenty-one in total. Along the track we could hear Pin-tailed Sandgrouse, and sure enough a group of about forty flew in and settled where we could see them.

Further along the track, we picked up a pair of Spanish Imperial Eagles on their favourite tree, and down by the pond a Stone-curlew showed really well. Time was marching on, and we were wondering whether we should be moving on for coffee, but decided to try a field where we have seen Little Bustard before. It turned out to be a good call, because there was a group feeding in the grass. After a little while, they flew across in front of us in the mid-morning sunlight: fabulous. Calandra Larks were in full song. What a great place it was to be on a wonderful sunny morning.



Griffon Vulture (and Crag Martin!)



Red Kite

We worked our way around to Santiago del Campo, where another Spanish Imperial Eagle was in with a group of Griffon Vultures. Close to Monroy, a Short-toed Snake Eagle flew over the van. Once we had navigated our way through Monroy, a site which can produce Rock Sparrows did not let us down: a group of birds was feeding around some Holm Oaks.

On our way back to the hotel, we called in at the bridges over the Rio Almonte: it was a lovely place to be in the warm early evening sunshine. The journey back to the hotel was via the scenic route to Almoharin; we arrived in good time to get ready for another lovely meal.

Day 6

Sunday 1st March

Local 'patch birding'

After a couple of long birding days, today was billed as a local 'patch birding' day. Following a slightly later breakfast, we first went to the Presa de Burdalo, just a couple of miles up the road. There were around six hundred Shovelers and a hundred Pintails on the lake, along with Little Ringed Plover and Greenshank on the fringe of the water. We moved on to the north end of the lake and saw around fifty Snipes, three Spoonbills, Black-winged Stilt, Green Sandpiper and many Great Crested Grebes. On the way back to the hotel, we had Woodlark singing and Rock Sparrow calling, and an Iberian Green Woodpecker close by.

We were back at Las Flores Amarillas by 1.00pm for a special lunch, including a demonstration of how to cook a traditional Spanish omelette (*tortilla de patatas*). This was followed by a selection of homemade hot vegetarian tapas. The weather was glorious and not too hot, so we ditched the vans for the afternoon and walked around the local countryside. It was great to stretch our legs, and we got to see Sparrowhawks displaying, Cirl Bunting, Hen Harrier and Bonelli's Eagle. Today, there were also more butterflies on the wing.

Day 7

Monday 2nd March

Arrozales nortes – Medellín

For our last full day, we would be going to visit the rice fields, and then the historic town of Medellín, on the banks of the Rio Guadiana. So, after yet another banquet of a breakfast, we left Las Flores Amarillas at just after 8.00pm, heading to Casar de Miajadas. We made a brief stop to see some Red Avadavat; I also spotted a Bluethroat but unfortunately it disappeared before we could get anyone else to see it. As we worked our way towards Pizzaro and Palazuelo, a Stone-curlew flew over to the next field, and there were around fifteen Yellow Wagtails of the Iberian subspecies. In the region of fifty Little Ringed Plovers were dotted around the same rice paddy. Among the hundred or so White Wagtails, there were also four or five Water Pipits.

Although we had left our accommodation quite early, it was already time to move on, and our morning coffee was had at Villar de La Rena on the way to Medellín. On arrival at Medellín, our first job was to prepare lunch, which we had down by the Rio Guadiana. While we were prepared the food, the clients found Western Swamphen, Penduline Tit and our first Black Kite of the year. A group of twenty Glossy Ibises flew over, and there were at least three Kingfishers flying up and down the river. Even though the area had been devastated by the recent flooding, there were still birds to see, and an added bonus came in the form of three Otters hunting on the river's edge. Following a riverside walk we headed back to the accommodation, in preparations for our last supper together.

Day 8

Tuesday 3rd March

Transfer day

It is always a sad day when we have to pack the van up to return home. We left Finca Las Flores Amarillas after saying goodbye to our wonderful hosts for the week. We passed the 'Big Tomato' for the last time, and took the E90/A5 northbound, on yet another lovely, warm Extremaduran morning. I had one last surprise in store: taking advantage of the time of year, we called in at a wonderful site for orchids. It was just a brief stop, but we got to see around five or six species, so it was definitely worth the visit. We called in near Talavera de la Reina for a snack, before continuing the journey to the airport. Having arrived with perfect timing, we said our goodbyes and the clients set off on their onward journeys.

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)

Common name	Scientific name	February - March 2026						
		24	25	26	27	28	1	2
Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>				✓			
Egyptian Goose - I	<i>Alopochen aegyptiaca</i>			✓	✓		✓	
Northern Shoveler	<i>Spatula clypeata</i>				✓	✓	✓	
Gadwall	<i>Mareca strepera</i>				✓		✓	
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Northern Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>			✓			✓	
Eurasian Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>				✓			
Common Quail	<i>Coturnix coturnix</i>							H
Red-legged Partridge	<i>Alectoris rufa</i>			H	✓	✓		✓
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>		✓		✓			✓
Western Swamphen	<i>Porphyrio porphyrio</i>		✓		✓			✓
Common Crane	<i>Grus grus</i>		✓		✓			
Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>				✓	✓	✓	
Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>				✓		✓	
Eurasian Stone-curlew	<i>Burhinus oedicnemus</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>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Common Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>						✓	
Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>						✓	
Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>				✓		✓	✓
Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</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>				✓		✓	
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>		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Black-winged Kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>				✓			
Egyptian Vulture	<i>Neophron percnopterus</i>			✓				
Cinereous Vulture	<i>Aegypius monachus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Griffon Vulture	<i>Gyps fulvus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Common name	Scientific name	February - March 2026						
		24	25	26	27	28	1	2
Short-toed Snake Eagle	<i>Circaetus gallicus</i>			✓	✓	✓		
Booted Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus pennatus</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>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>							✓
Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Little Owl	<i>Athene noctua</i>			H	✓		✓	
Eurasian Scops Owl	<i>Otus scops</i>				H			
Eurasian Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>		✓			✓	✓	✓
Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dryobates minor</i>			H				
Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>			H				✓
Iberian Green Woodpecker - N	<i>Picus sharpei</i>						H	
Lesser Kestrel	<i>Falco naumanni</i>		✓		✓	✓		✓
Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>						✓	
Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>			✓				
Monk Parakeet - I	<i>Myiopsitta monachus</i>	✓						
Iberian Grey Shrike - N	<i>Lanius meridionalis</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>							✓
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>				✓	✓		
Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</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		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>			✓		✓		
Eurasian Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>			✓				
Short-toed Treecreeper	<i>Certhia brachydactyla</i>			✓		H		

Common name	Scientific name	February - March 2026						
		24	25	26	27	28	1	2
Spotless Starling	<i>Sturnus unicolor</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓	
Common Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
European Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Black Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Blue Rock Thrush	<i>Monticola solitarius</i>			✓			✓	
European Stonechat	<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Rock Sparrow	<i>Petronia petronia</i>					✓	H	
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>							✓
Western Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava iberiae</i>							✓
Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>			✓		✓		
White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba alba</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>		H		✓	✓	✓	✓
Water Pipit	<i>Anthus spinoletta</i>							✓
Eurasian Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>		H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
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>						✓	

Mammals

Common name	Scientific name	February - March 2026						
		24	25	26	27	28	1	2
Eurasian Otter	<i>Lutra lutra</i>							
Eurasian Red Squirrel	<i>Sciurus vulgaris</i>						✓	
European Rabbit	<i>Oryctolagus cuniculus</i>			✓	✓			
Kuhl's Pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus kuhlii</i>			✓				
Nathusius Pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus nathusii</i>			✓				
Red Deer	<i>Cervus elaphus</i>			✓				
Western Roe Deer	<i>Capreolus capreolus</i>					✓		

Amphibians & reptiles

Common name	Scientific name	February - March 2026						
		24	25	26	27	28	1	2
Iberian Water Frog	<i>Pelophylax perezi</i>		✓					
Guadarrama Wall Lizard	<i>Podarcis guadarramae</i>					✓	✓	
Large Psammmodromus	<i>Psammmodromus algirus</i>					✓		
Southern Smooth Snake	<i>Coronella girondica</i>				✓			
Spanish Terrapin	<i>Mauremys leprosa</i>					✓		

Butterflies

Common name	Scientific name	February - March 2026						
		24	25	26	27	28	1	2
Spanish Festoon	<i>Zerynthia rumina</i>						✓	
Common Brimstone	<i>Gonepteryx rhamni</i>					✓		
Cleopatra	<i>Gonepteryx cleopatra</i>			✓				
Clouded Yellow	<i>Colias croceus</i>						✓	
Small White	<i>Pieris rapae</i>						✓	
Green-veined White	<i>Pieris napi</i>						✓	
Green-striped White	<i>Euchloe belemia</i>			✓	✓		✓	
Western Dappled White	<i>Euchloe crameri</i>						✓	
Small Copper	<i>Lycaena phlaeas</i>					✓		
Holly Blue	<i>Celastrina argiolus</i>			✓				
Southern Brown Argus	<i>Aricia cramera</i>					✓		
Red Admiral	<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>							✓
Large Tortoiseshell	<i>Nymphalis polychloros</i>			✓	✓			
Nettle-tree Butterfly	<i>Libythea celtis</i>			✓				
Small Heath	<i>Coenonympha pamphilus</i>				✓	✓	✓	

Grasshoppers

Common name	Scientific name	February - March 2026						
		24	25	26	27	28	1	2
Egyptian Grasshopper	<i>Anacridium aegyptium</i>						✓	