

Georgia in Spring

Naturetrek Tour Report

21st – 29th April 2023



Lammergeier by Clive Watts



Krüper's Nuthatch by Richard Bashford



Monkey Orchid by Clive Watts



Davit-Gareja Monastery, Clive Watts

Tour report by Richard Bashford



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Day 1

Friday 21st April

London to Tbilisi via Istanbul

Our tour began at an acceptable 8:30 at Heathrow for our 11:30 flight to Istanbul. All went to plan and we arrived at the colossal Istanbul airport for a rather long stop over allowing a number of coffees and snacks to be bought, and for the group to get to know each other before our onward but short flight to Tbilisi, just before midnight.

Day 2

Saturday 22nd April

Tbilisi to Kazbegi

A long day but an exciting one. Our flight landed in the small hours with our guide and driver a few minutes away. We changed money (Istanbul airport had completely run out of Georgian currency) and walked the short distance to the bus and onward to the scenic Kolapa Hotel overlooking the lights of Tbilisi. It was time for some sleep – “some” being the key word here but heads down and alarms set for an 8:00 breakfast.

At the scenic breakfast table overlooking the old city, we saw many hundreds of Common Swifts and a couple of Night Herons along the river. Our final two members had arrived earlier and were welcomed by the rest of the group – a round of singing Happy Birthday to Leo was suitably embarrassing...

Onward, we loaded up the bus and got on the road just after 9:00 and set off through the city. Heading north, we had 45 minutes at a small meadow on the roadside where we saw Short-toed Eagle and Peregrine, a Raven visiting a nest and two migrating male Montagu's Harriers.

We drove a short distance further and checked out a piece of roadside woodland, eventually seeing a Red-breasted Flycatcher after hearing one or two singing alongside a fair range of woodland birds.

As the road climbed higher and the surrounding mountains became snow-capped, we noticed roadside Water Pipits and Black Redstarts. A quick comfort stop was followed by a stop off at the Gudauri viewpoint – we were not alone with many tourists admiring the view. But we did see some great wildlife here including close views of Ring Ouzel and a small passage of Black Kites. Both Red-billed and Alpine Chough were seen. Short snatches of Alpine Accentor song and a brief flyover were all we could manage despite scanning the rocks.

Our aim was to reach our Kazbegi hotel for a late lunch. There was perhaps more emphasis on the “late” than we were hoping for, as the infamous alternating one way system through the mountain pass was in full effect. We stopped to wait our turn as lorries from across the region filed by. Our attention was drawn to a small bird on the adjacent snow which Henning pointed out – a fine summer plumaged Water Pipit (our first good view of the species which was an almost constant companion for the next few days), then a glorious Caucasian Shore Lark. As we were in the bus, the birds were close and confiding. We endured 45 minutes waiting here but this sort of compensation was welcome alongside Ring Ouzels, Wheatear, Dipper, more Shore Larks and migrating Swallows.

Finally, we got going and reached our hotel – the first building in the town. Lunch was more of a mid-afternoon meal but welcome and satisfying. We then went for a walk behind the hotel starting with a herd of over 30 East Caucasian Tur found by Nika. We were relieved that one of the first birds we saw (found by Anne-Marie), was a male Gldenstdt's Redstart. Wow! Then another, then another, then a female – four together. After a few minutes, they melted into the scrub. We continued and re-found them a few minutes later. But there were more, and more – in total we saw eleven! Great to see and we were thankful they had not left for higher ground as they are due to do about this time of year. Nika displayed his talent for scanning the mountainsides and came up with our first Caucasian Black Grouse. A few more birds were seen in the meadows over the road including a pair of very close Ring Ouzels and active Water Pipits, before we returned to the hotel to freshen up before checklist and dinner.

Day 3

Sunday 23rd April

Kazbegi area

We woke early for a pre breakfast visit to the outskirts of Kazbegi near Elia Mountain with a view of the scenic Gergeti Trinity Church in one direction. In the opposite direction, you stare up at one of many surrounding snow-capped mountains. We took a short walk to a raised grassy area and set up our telescopes. This is the best-known location to search for Caucasian Snowcock – a large mountain dwelling game bird with a Curlew-like call. It seemed an impossible task. We kicked off with a pair of Golden Eagles circling against the scree – a good start. Now it was time to scan. Within a few minutes, two large birds with white in the wing had been seen in flight. With all telescopes trained on the general area it wasn't long before Nika picked out the birds among the rocks. At some distance, it was remarkably difficult to see the birds unless they moved. But thankfully, over the course of the next hour and a half, they moved a fair bit and we managed to pick them up in several places with everyone seeing them in the telescopes. The odd call was heard too, echoing across the mountainsides. We think there were probably four, maybe six birds in total. Wonderful! Other birds included a small group of Red-fronted Serins, a couple of fly over Chukars, many singing Wheatears and a Ring Ouzel. A great excursion but now it was time to warm our fingers and toes and return to the hotel for 9:00 breakfast.

At 10:00, we headed out again to a park off the main square in Kazbegi. Here we saw a smart male Redstart and before too long, a male Semi-collared Flycatcher. Then we moved on to a cliff face with a few Griffon Vulture nests. Although we could see the whitewash below their ledges, there were no birds on the cliff but one or two gave us a fly past. Best here was an impressive adult Lammergeier which Edwin spotted as it flew overhead. It circled the cliffs making use of the updraft and then headed off overhead into the distance. Just brilliant!

We headed onward to the Georgian border point and had a short walk around Dariali Monastery seeing our first Dipper and some confiding Grey Wagtails and Black Redstarts. A quick photographic stop from the viewpoint overlooking the Terek River was welcomed.

Time to return to the hotel for lunch before retracing our steps to the village of Kobi. A rock face here is home to Wallcreepers and we did very well in waiting just ten minutes before Henning picked out a bird right at the top of the cliff – Wallcreeper! It was surprisingly easy to pick this out in the scopes – most being angled and therefore easier on the neck! The bird was very active and soon came lower and appeared to be flycatching every now and then. A couple of times it fluttered around and came lower offering even better views.

Our final stop was the adjacent broad based valley where we scanned the surrounding snow fields picking up a few Caucasian Black Grouse. Exploring the valley bottom, we found Spring Meadow Crocus, a secretive group of Twite which eventually gave themselves up, and a smart Whinchat among the many Wheatears and Water Pipits.

We returned to the hotel just before 18:00 for a breather followed by the checklist and dinner – with thanks to Charles for sharing a bottle of the hotel's homemade vodka! The forecast tomorrow looking challenging....

Day 4

Monday 24th April

Kazbegi area

Well, the forecast was correct! Having rained all night, it was still raining heavily when we awoke and sat down for our 8:00 breakfast. Nika's weather app showed rain easing at 10:00 and a largely dry afternoon. Accordingly, we spent some time after breakfast in the shelter next to the hotel overlooking the bushes. In the light rain, we amassed about 15 species including Gldenstdt's Redstart, Common Redstart and Bullfinch. At 10:00 we hopped on the bus to try for our final Georgian speciality – Great Rosefinch – a species which breeds at high altitudes but can come lower in bad weather to feed. By 10:15, we were positioned at the base of the mountains at the back of the town with another tour party. They had weathered the weather (!), but were watching a Caucasian Black Grouse and had just found a Caucasian Snowcock. We settled in and started scanning. Clive played a blinder and announced he had a Wallcreeper – we all managed to see this bird feeding on rocks in a grassy slope. Small numbers of Red-fronted Serins flew over and one or two perched. A large herd of Tur were found on a snowfield – around 50 animals. Nika was patiently scanning the rocks up the slope then found some rosefinches. With much excitement and positioning of 'scopes, we all managed to see a male and a small number of females perched. They were not close. But over the next hour or so, we had these birds move around, coming a bit lower and offering reasonable views. We willed them to come closer, but this didn't happen – around 25 birds in total. Far closer was a glorious Lammergeier overhead – close enough to see the beard and red eye. Another then flew over and as we were watching it, a Goshawk flew nearby and high overhead.

Back for 13:15 lunch and to warm up – although the rain had stopped, the temperature meant hats and gloves were popular this morning.

Out again at 14:15 to the small rock face below Gergety Trinity Church. As we walked up, a Wallcreeper at eye level greeted us! Amazing views for several minutes and no neck ache! A colossal flock of Alpine Choughs (perhaps as many as 500 birds), circled against the adjacent hillside. Another Lammergeier flew over and then a beautifully rufous Steppe Buzzard flew low over the rock face. We're not sure who mobbed who, but the Wallcreeper reappeared and had a brief tussle with the Buzzard!

Next was a side road to a small wet woodland area alongside a river. Yellow Wagtails showed well, a pair of Dippers appeared to be nesting in a drainage pipe, a few Chiffchaffs and then the distinctive three note chiffing of the Mountain (or Caucasian) Chiffchaff could be heard. A few seconds later it appeared and showed its subtle features – no hint of yellow or green. It looked to be good for migrants with Lesser Whitethroats, several Red-breasted Flycatchers as well as Rock Buntings, a Wryneck and a Hoopoe.

Our day of bad weather had actually been fine – a slightly delayed start and light rain starting as we walked back to the bus at the end of the day.

Back by 17:30 following the usual pattern of checklist and dinner – and a bit more vodka...

Day 5

Tuesday 25th April

Kazbegi to Tbilisi

Today we leave the mountains. But not before another short excursion behind the town in the vastly improved weather. But 7:15 we were standing at the base of the slopes in our favoured spot and hearing the evocative whistle of the snowcock – and a singing Mountain Chiffchaff – clearly they had recently arrived. We stayed here until 9:00 enjoying many more views of Caucasian Snowcock and Caucasian Black Grouse (sometimes lekking), Caucasian Tur on the hill tops posing for photos, and a very kind Red-fronted Serin which perched in a nearby tree singing. We also saw our first Red Squirrel.

After our final breakfast, we thanked our hosts (they had been fabulous) and got on the road. Our thoughts were now on the mountain pass one way system... having had to wait on the way into Kazbegi, we were much relieved to pass through with no delays. We had a little stop en route looking at an old Snowfinch nesting area, but they have been absent for a couple of years – worth a few minutes though. Onward to the Gudauri viewpoint which had far more snow around and less people. Here we saw our first Alpine Swifts alongside a few raptors which looked amazing with the snow reflecting on their undersides – particularly the Buzzards and Sparrowhawk. Ring Ouzels perched on the snow-capped rocks were asking for photos!

Nika had ordered a lunch at a restaurant near Tbilisi. We'd requested a light lunch knowing that we were going out in a Tbilisi restaurant later tonight. Well...it was a light lunch to start with. In typical Georgia fashion, we had several courses of great food. We needed a walk!

At 15:00 we drove a few minutes back up the road to a woodland area. It was quite quiet with the footprint of a Golden Jackal, a male Redstart and a singing Nightingale. The sunny weather brought out a few species of butterflies including Scarce and Common Swallowtail, Clouded Yellow, Dingy Skipper and Queen of Spain Fritillary.

We then headed into Tbilisi and a bit of traffic – including a man on a horse galloping at speed alongside the traffic. Not a usual thing to see according to Nika. We arrived at our hotel at 17:15 and checked in.

At 18:45, we headed back into town for the most wonderful and enormous meal most of us had ever seen. We were expecting it, but I don't think we managed half of what we were offered. As usual, it was a wide variety of local Georgian food with a few glasses of Georgian beer and local wine chosen by our group expert Charles. When the Khinkali (Georgian dumplings) came, we were so full, we didn't touch it. After half an hour, the plates were removed and fried dumplings returned – thinking they might be apple or some sort of desert, one or two were tried only to find they were the original meat filled dumplings.

Day 6

Wednesday 26th April

Tbilisi to Signaghi

This morning, we transferred to new vehicles – three Mitsubishi 4x4s and away by 9:15. We drove north out of the city to the higher pine forests to spend some time looking for Krüper's Nuthatch. About forty minutes later, we were getting out of the bus to the sound of calling Krüper's Nuthatch – sounding a little like a distant car alarm. We walked towards the sound and found at least two birds perched at the top of a pine. They left almost immediately so we thought we could do better for views. Waiting and listening just off the road in the same area, we picked up a few other species – Mistle Thrush, Cuckoo, singing Tree Pipit, Short-toed Eagle. A few more distant Krüper's calls encouraged us but aside from a flyover, we didn't manage more views. Nika suggested we should walk into the wood and wait among the pines. We successfully saw one within a few minutes but ten minutes later, we were treated to an amazing display by a feeding adult, calling often. Superb!

Back to the minibuses and a roadside coffee and snack.

Next it was back towards the city and out to the east, covering some miles with a comfort stop and a late picnic lunch.

Nearing the Azeri border, we needed a permit, so stopped by the administrative office to collect it and then ten more minutes further on to Eagle Gorge. Well, what a beautiful place! We saw two Egyptian Vultures and a Blue Rock Thrush soon after arriving. We walked along the path to view the cliffs with nesting Griffon Vultures – great to be above them and look down upon flying vultures! We also found one on a ledge and another to the right and a third nest with just an egg showing. We watched as the adult came in and started to incubate. The late afternoon got better and better with an Eastern Imperial Eagle, a Black Stork, two Booted Eagles and two Steppe Eagles! What a great place to end the day. With an eye on the time, we then drove to Signaghi arriving at dusk in this beautiful town perched high in the limestone ridge.

Shortly afterwards, we drove down the road to our favoured restaurant for a fine Georgian meal. A birthday party was just warming up in the next room with an accordion, a drum and much singing. As curious Naturetrekkers peered through the curtain separating the two groups, the inevitable happened and some joined in with the dancing! Well why not... Our checklist had to be done in-between songs!

Day 7

Thursday 27th April

Vashlovani National Park

Today was to be a very full day – a fascinating and a rare opportunity to immerse ourselves in the Georgia steppe of Vashlovani National Park.

After a 7:30 breakfast, we got on the road to an area of open scrub forest which gave us good views of a Woodlark singing from a telegraph pole and a singing Nightingale. We then followed the road into an area of massive rolling fields with cereal crops, stopping to admire an Ortolan Bunting on a roadside bush. We scanned all the time for Pallid Harrier but only saw Montagu's and Marsh. There were many singing Skylarks as the fields turned to steppe.

Frequent stops produced a changing suite of birds with Spanish Sparrows, Rock Sparrows, Rollers and Bee-eaters. At one point, Nika dashed out of the minibus and grabbed a snake for us to see – it was a Urartian Rat Snake (*Elaphe urartica*) recently described as a distinct species following a split from Four-lined Snake.

Stopping for lunch, we noted an active Isabelline Wheatear which was collecting food and then disappeared into a hole in the ground. Onward to a more rugged steppe landscape with roadside Lesser Grey Shrikes, Lesser Short-toed Larks, and a fortunate stop for our first (of many) Spur-thighed Tortoises, we found a pair of Finsch's Wheatear – a much sought after wheatear in this part of the world. Chukar, Red-backed Shrike, Syrian Woodpecker, Black Vulture – the birds just kept coming. A real treat was a small group of Goitered (or Persian) Gazelle – a restricted range species mainly found in Georgia and Azerbaijan. Although this species has been reintroduced from Azerbaijan in the last ten years, it seems to be doing well in this wild landscape and we saw several groups totalling 15 animals. Another treat came when Nika again jumped out of the minibus and caught another 'snake' – this time however, it was the amazing European Glass Lizard – a big legless lizard which essentially looks like a snake. We all had a great look at this amazing animal. By now, it was around 17:30 and the sun was getting lower. As we drove on, we saw another 15 or so Glass Lizards at least as many Spur-thighed Tortoises – the former, shining in the low sun – a good time of day to spot them!

We headed into a more hilly landscape and into a canyon, following the dry river bed. Although every 10 miles of so, there were small signs indicating a route, we were glad our guide and drivers knew where we were – it wasn't all that obvious to the group! As the canyon narrowed, Nika suggested a stop. It was a beautiful place with our target species singing above us – a Pied Wheatear – in fact a pair. Walking up the valley we found our second target species - a Western Rock Nuthatch – wonderful!

So, this was always going to be a long day – we took the opportunity in the early evening to have a cuppa and a snack before carrying on up the canyon and eventually, completed our steppe land circuit and re-joined the road we came in on. Between us on the drive back to Signaghi, we saw Nightjar, Short-eared Owl and a European Hedgehog. We drove through the evening arriving back at our restaurant for our late dinner – and what an amazing meal it was – as usual.

Phew!

Day 8

Friday 28th April

Signaghi to Tbilisi via David Geraji Monastery and Jandari Lake

We had to make our way back to Tbilisi today, but with a number of key stops and hopefully key species. A short stop at a small orchard at the roadside added Lesser Spotted Eagle, Tree Sparrow, Spotted and Red-breasted Flycatcher. Next we had a great stop by a river gorge where we saw at least three active Penduline Tits nest building, and a great view of a Syrian Woodpecker. On route to the lakes on the David Geraji Monastery road, we had the windows open and heard the distinctive song of Green Warbler. We stopped and scanned the small trees. It took some time and a short excursion into the trees, but we all managed to get views of several Green Warblers. On to the first roadside lake, we saw our first Ruddy Shelducks, a Calandra Lark or two, two flyover Demoiselle Cranes and a huddle of Red-necked Phalaropes feeding in the water. Next, we left the road to drive over the adjacent ridge and view the second lake. A Demoiselle Crane on the ground was popular but distant, an equally distant Fox was

our first, alongside Jackdaws and a few larks. Leaving the site, one bus picked up on a bunting right next to the track. Initially thought to be an Ortolan Bunting, it was actually the far rarer Grey-necked Bunting! Within seconds, it had flown but quite a good record as it is a species on the edge of its range here.

We made it to David Geraji in good time for our packed lunch where we found a fine Praying Mantis (*Empusa pennata*), Red-fronted Serins, Eastern Black-eared and Pied Wheatears. We had about an hour to look around the site with its famous rock carvings.

After this, we took the off-road route to Lake Jandari, but had a couple of stops for Short-toed Lark and a pair of Woodchat Shrikes. Into the town and viewing an area with a couple of carcasses – an attentive group of around 65 Griffon Vultures had gathered, watching closely as a dog fed first. Nearby, a Steppe Eagle was feeding. Scanning the skies, more Griffons, another Steppe Eagle and one or two Black Vultures were moving in. A female harrier turned out to be a Pallid – our only one of the trip.

Onward to the lake where we spent around 90 minutes seeing some wetland species – Garganeys, Whiskered Terns, Kingfisher, Grey-headed Swamp Hen, Great-crested and Little Grebe. Of most significance here was a colony of Armenia Gulls – this smart inland breeding gull is a bit of a “birder’s bird” but great to see so well.

But we had some miles to cover and so back on the buses and on to Tbilisi where we arrived at 19:15. A quick check in and freshen up before heading out to a fabulous restaurant for our final meal. It was a good one. After eating, we said a big thank you to Nika who had done such a great job for us over the last week. A little while later, we said goodbye to Anne-Marie and Edwin who were travelling on an earlier flight to the Netherlands.

Back to Hotel Kopala for the final night.

Day 9

Saturday 29th April

Tbilisi to London

Our journey home today. We were up promptly, packed and boarding the bus by 7:15. A flyover Cattle Egret and a Laughing Dove by the hotel meant we did not have a completely birdless day! We returned to the same restaurant as the middle Tbilisi day – this time for breakfast en route to the airport. Well, it was quite an experience! It is hard to appreciate different cultural norms. We knew Georgian meals are substantial. Up until now, our breakfasts had been light buffet type affairs with a few vegetables, bread, cheese etc. Nothing could have prepared us for this. Salads, rice, sausages – fine with that. Then came a chicken dish, then nine massive pizzas of three different types, baked potatoes and more salads. We had no chance. After getting our hot drinks, and essentially picking at the feast, fit for around 30 people, we left to drive the final 20 minutes to the airport. Nika had joined us this morning to see us off. He left with a large bag of pizzas! Our queue was long and slow-moving for a period, then moved and cleared in about five minutes. A few more purchases of Georgian wine and honey in departures, and we were boarding our flight to Istanbul.

After a short stopover, we boarded our flight to London, landing on time at 16:30 where we said our goodbyes after a fantastic trip.

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Species lists

Birds (H = Heard only)

		April 2023							
Common name	Scientific name	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
Ruddy Shelduck	<i>Tadorna ferruginea</i>							20	
Garganey	<i>Spatula querquedula</i>							7	
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>							2	
Eurasian Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>							8	
Caucasian Grouse	<i>Lyrurus mlokosiewiczi</i>	3	8	3	4				
Caucasian Snowcock	<i>Tetraogallus caucasicus</i>		6	1	3				
Chukar Partridge	<i>Alectoris chukar</i>		2		H		4		
European Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>						1		
Alpine Swift	<i>Tachymarptis melba</i>				2	4	4	✓	
Common Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>	✓	2		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Common Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>					H	H	H	
Rock Dove	<i>Columba livia</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Stock Dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>						2		
Common Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>					✓	2	2	
European Turtle Dove	<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>						2		
Eurasian Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>		2		✓	✓		✓	✓
Laughing Dove	<i>Spilopelia senegalensis</i>	2			✓				1
Demoiselle Crane	<i>Grus virgo</i>							3	
Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>							2	
Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>							20	
Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>							1	
Red-necked Phalarope	<i>Phalaropus lobatus</i>							18	
Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>		✓	✓				3	
Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>							1	
Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>						1		
Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>							10	
Armenian Gull	<i>Larus armenicus</i>							✓	
Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>							1	

		April 2023							
Common name	Scientific name	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
Whiskered Tern	<i>Chlidonias hybrida</i>							✓	
Black Stork	<i>Ciconia nigra</i>					1			
White Stork	<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>							10	
Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>							1	
Grey-headed Swampphen	<i>Porphyrio poliocephalus</i>							1	
Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>					1		1	
Black-crowned Night Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>	2						1	
Squacco Heron	<i>Ardeola ralloides</i>							4	
Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>			2				5	
Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>		LO					2	
Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	1						✓	
Western Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>	1							1
Bearded Vulture	<i>Gypaetus barbatus</i>		1	6					
Egyptian Vulture	<i>Neophron percnopterus</i>					2		2	
European Honey Buzzard	<i>Pernis apivorus</i>							3	
Griffon Vulture	<i>Gyps fulvus</i>	2	10	10	2	3	✓	65	
Cinereous Vulture	<i>Aegypius monachus</i>						2	3	
Short-toed Snake Eagle	<i>Circaetus gallicus</i>	2				3	1		
Lesser Spotted Eagle	<i>Clanga pomarina</i>							2	
Booted Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus pennatus</i>					2			
Steppe Eagle	<i>Aquila nipalensis</i>					2		2	
Eastern Imperial Eagle	<i>Aquila heliaca</i>					2	1		
Golden Eagle	<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>	1	4	4	1				
Eurasian Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	2	1	1	1		1	2	
Northern Goshawk	<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>			1					
Western Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>							1	
Pallid Harrier	<i>Circus macrourus</i>							?	
Montagu's Harrier	<i>Circus pygargus</i>	3	1		?			2	
Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>	✓	✓		1			1	
Long-legged Buzzard	<i>Buteo rufinus</i>				1			1	
Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	6	3	3	10	2	✓		
Eurasian Scops Owl	<i>Otus scops</i>					H	H	H	
Short-eared Owl	<i>Asio flammeus</i>						1		
Eurasian Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>			1		1	✓	2	
European Roller	<i>Coracias garrulus</i>						10	✓	
Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>							1	
European Bee-eater	<i>Merops apiaster</i>					3	✓	✓	
Wryneck	<i>Jynx torquilla</i>			1					
Syrian Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos syriacus</i>						3	1	
European Green Woodpecker	<i>Picus viridis</i>							H	
Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	3	2	2	✓	2	✓	✓	
Merlin	<i>Falco columbarius</i>				1				
Eurasian Hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>							1	
Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	2	1	1		2			
Red-backed Shrike	<i>Lanius collurio</i>						2	2	
Lesser Grey Shrike	<i>Lanius minor</i>						1		
Woodchat Shrike	<i>Lanius senator</i>							4	
Eurasian Golden Oriole	<i>Oriolus oriolus</i>						H		
Eurasian Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	1	2	2		3	✓	2	
Eurasian Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	1			2	19	✓	✓	
Red-billed Chough	<i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i>	20	✓	H	2				

		April 2023							
Common name	Scientific name	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
Alpine Chough	<i>Pyrrhocorax graculus</i>	2	1	500	✓				
Western Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>							✓	
Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>							✓	
Hooded Crow	<i>Corvus cornix</i>	5	✓	1	1	✓	✓	✓	
Northern Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>	10	✓	✓	✓	1	✓	✓	
Coal Tit	<i>Parus ater</i>	1	2			5			
Eurasian Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	5	5			1			
Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	5	5	2	2	✓	✓	✓	
Eurasian Penduline Tit	<i>Remiz pendulinus</i>							3	
Woodlark	<i>Lullula arborea</i>						1		
Eurasian Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>						✓	✓	
Crested Lark	<i>Galerida cristata</i>					1	✓	✓	
Horned Lark	<i>Eremophila alpestris</i>	4			1				
Greater Short-toed Lark	<i>Calandrella brachydactyla</i>							2	
Calandra Lark	<i>Melanocorypha calandra</i>							✓	
Turkestan Short-toed Lark	<i>Alaudala heinei</i>						4		
Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>					✓			
Eurasian Crag Martin	<i>Ptyonoprogne rupestris</i>						✓		
Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	✓	✓	3	1	✓	2	✓	
Common House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>	✓			1	✓	✓	✓	
Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>	4		2	H				
Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>	2	1	2					
Mountain Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus sindianus</i>			2	2	2	1	H	
Common Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	2		✓	✓	2			
Green Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus nitidus</i>							4	
Eurasian Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	5		1	H	H	H		
Garden Warbler	<i>Sylvia borin</i>							1	
Lesser Whitethroat	<i>Curruca curruca</i>		H	3				h	
Eastern Orphean Warbler	<i>Curruca crassirostris</i>						H		
Common Whitethroat	<i>Curruca communis</i>							2	
Eurasian Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	1	2	1		H			
Krüper's Nuthatch	<i>Sitta krueperi</i>					3			
Western Rock Nuthatch	<i>Sitta neumayer</i>						1		
Eurasian Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>	1							
Wallcreeper	<i>Tichodroma muraria</i>		1	2					
Common Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>					✓		✓	
Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	1	H	1	H	H		H	
Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>					2			
Common Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Ring Ouzel	<i>Turdus torquatus</i>	10	2	4	5				
Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>							1	
European Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>			H		1			
Common Nightingale	<i>Luscinia megarhynchos</i>				H	H		2	
Red-breasted Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula parva</i>	1		5				2	
Semicollared Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula semitorquata</i>		1						
Black Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>	1	✓	✓	✓			✓	
Common Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>	1	2	4	1	✓	✓	✓	
Güldenstädt's Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus erythrogastus</i>	11	1	1	1				
Blue Rock Thrush	<i>Monticola solitarius</i>					2			
Whinchat	<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>		1						
European Stonechat	<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>					1			

		April 2023							
Common name	Scientific name	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
Northern Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	2	✓	2	2				
Isabelline Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe isabellina</i>						✓	✓	
Eastern Black-eared Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe melanoleuca</i>							2	
Pied Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe pleschanka</i>						2	1	
Finsch's Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe finschii</i>						2		
White-throated Dipper	<i>Cinclus cinclus</i>	1	1	2					
Rock Sparrow	<i>Petronia petronia</i>						✓		
Eurasian Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>							5	
Spanish Sparrow	<i>Passer hispaniolensis</i>						✓	✓	
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
Alpine Accentor	<i>Prunella collaris</i>	1H							
Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	2H	✓	✓	✓	1		H	
Western Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>	6		20	H		✓	✓	
Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	1	3	2	1			1	
White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Tree Pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>					2			
Water Pipit	<i>Anthus spinoletta</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓				
Common Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	4	✓	1		✓	✓	H	
Eurasian Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	1	1	4	H				
Great Rosefinch	<i>Carpodacus rubicilla</i>			25					
European Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>	1	1		1	✓	✓	✓	
Twite	<i>Linaria flavirostris</i>		25	10					
Common Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>					✓		1	
European Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Red-fronted Serin	<i>Serinus pusillus</i>		10	10	3	H		✓	
Eurasian Siskin	<i>Spinus spinus</i>	1		2					
Corn Bunting	<i>Emberiza calandra</i>					5	✓	✓	
Rock Bunting	<i>Emberiza cia</i>		H	2					
Grey-necked Bunting	<i>Emberiza buchanani</i>							1	
Ortolan Bunting	<i>Emberiza hortulana</i>						1		
Black-headed Bunting	<i>Emberiza melanocephala</i>						1		

Mammals

Common name	Scientific name
East Caucasian Tur	<i>Capra cylindricornis</i>
Eurasian Red Squirrel	<i>Sciurus vulgaris</i>
Red Fox	<i>Vulpes vulpes</i>
Wolf (scat only)	<i>Canis lupus</i>
Goitered Gazelle	<i>Gazella subgutturosa</i>
European Hedgehog	<i>Erinaceus europaeus</i>

Reptiles & Amphibians

Common name	Scientific name
Long-legged Wood Frog or Eastern Spadefoot	<i>Rana macrocnemis</i>
Spur-thighed Tortoise	<i>Testudo graeca</i>
European Glass Lizard	<i>Pseudopus apodus</i>

Common name	Scientific name
Urtartian Rat Snake	<i>Elaphe urartica</i>

Invertebrates

Common name	Scientific name
Butterflies	
Common Swallowtail	<i>Papilio machaon</i>
Scarce Swallowtail	<i>Iphiclidides podalirius</i>
Large White	<i>Pieris brassicae</i>
Small White	<i>Artogeia rapae</i>
Common Orange-tip	<i>Anthocharis cardamines</i>
Clouded Yellow	<i>Colias crocea</i>
Pale Clouded Yellow	<i>Colias hyale</i>
Common Brimstone	<i>Gonepteryx rhamni</i>
Common Wood White	<i>Leptidea sinapis</i>
Green Hairstreak	<i>Callophrys rubi</i>
Green-underside Blue	<i>Glaucopsyche alexis</i>
Common Brown Argus	<i>Aricia agestis</i>
Adonis Blue	<i>Lysandra bellargus</i>
Common Blue	<i>Polyommatus icarus</i>
Painted Lady	<i>Vanessa cardui</i>
Small Tortoiseshell	<i>Aglaia urticae</i>
Queen of Spain Fritillary	<i>Issoria lathonia</i>
Caucasian Spotted Fritillary	<i>Melitaea interrupta</i>
Common Wall Brown	<i>Lasiommata megera</i>
Dingy Skipper	<i>Erynnis tages</i>
Small Copper	<i>Lycaena phlaeas</i>
Nine-spotted Moth	<i>Amata phegea</i>
Praying mantis	<i>Empusa pennata</i>
Locust	

Flora

Plants	
Solomon's Seal	<i>Polygonatum multiflorum</i>
Cyclamen sp	<i>Cyclamen</i>
Bird's Eye Primrose	<i>Primula farinosa</i>
Oxlip	<i>Primula elatior</i>
Gentian sp	<i>Gentiana</i>
Green-winged Orchid	<i>Anacamptis morio</i>
Hen Bane	<i>Hyoscyamus niger</i>
Spring Meadow Saffron	<i>Colchicum bulbicodium</i>