Go Slow...in Istria in Autumn

Naturetrek Tour Report

28th Sept – 5th October 2021

Report by Luca Boscain



Tour participants: Luca Boscain (leader) with eight Naturetrek clients.

Summary

We enjoyed a wonderful week (despite Covid paperwork), with a great group, excellent Mediterranean weather of warm sunny days and a rich flora and fauna.

Birding was particularly rewarding, with sightings of most of the target species, including six species of woodpecker, Griffon Vulture, Goshawk, Eagle Owl and Great Grey Shrike, and an astonishing last day at Isola della Cona with amazing flocks of hundreds of geese, ducks and waders, resting and flying together in a renewed wetland.

The butterfly sightings were also excellent with a remarkable list of 28 species, helped by the presence of a rich variety of late blooms, including hundreds of Lady's-tresses Orchids.

Day 1

Tuesday 28th September

Trieste Airport (IT); Trieste (IT); Istarske Toplice in Sv. Stjepan/Santo Stefano (our hotel accommodation) - Weather details: sunny; 14°C - 27°C

After a good flight from Stansted, we landed at the Trieste-Ronchi dei Legionari airport at 4.15 p.m. Here it took a little while to check the documents required to enter in the European Community.

The airport was very small, so it was no problem to find Luca, our local tour leader, at the Arrivals Hall. We walked out into warm temperature of 27.5°C, and took the minibus to the Istrian peninsula.

Soon Luca pointed out some Mediterranean Gulls among the flocks of numerous Black-headed Gulls fluttering over the fields.

We drove for about 45 minutes, first along a comfortable motorway and then following the attractive Costiera road to Trieste, coloured by the warm light of the afternoon, noticing the tall flowering spikes of the Chimney Bellflower (*Campanula pyramidalis*) and pretty saplings of the invasive Tree of Heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*).

Luca stopped for five minutes, giving us a quick photo opportunity, in front of the Trieste main square, "Piazza Unità d'Italia", where we could admire the beauty of the Habsburg palaces in the clear orange light of the sunset.

This was an opportunity to learn about the history of the city that used to be called the "Port of Wien" until the end of the First World War. It was one of the most important harbours in the Mediterranean, with an interesting mixed population of Italians and Slovenians. Luca explained the complicated history of Istria, with a mix of populations (Italians, Slovenians, Croatians and Romanians), often causing conflict and migrations of people since the Medieval age, when Slavs populations established inland, and Hungary and Austria reached the Adriatic, and the Republic of Venice included the coastal towns within its maritime empire.

This complicated history meant that there was no issue crossing through Slovenia, but tighter controls at the Croatian border – but we did get a feast of lovely new stamps! After about 15 minutes, we continued on our way. As dusk was falling as we travelled along the rather remote and deserted roads we saw first a Great Egret in a stream and then a Brown Hare.

We arrived at the Istarske Toplice hotel, which is based in an ancient thermal spot surrounded by dramatic vertical rocks and wide forests (rich in truffles), and checked in to our rooms. We met again for dinner shortly afterwards, at the Konoba Oprtalj restaurant.

The narrow road appeared more bendy in the darkness, but when we reached Oprtalj/Portole (the majority of the Istrian places names are provided bilingually, with a Slav and an Italian name), we were able to see its scenic Venetian Loggia (a space surrounded by columns and covered by a roof where the important personalities of the village used to meet to discuss important matters), and a number of winged Saint Mark's lions (the symbol of the Republic of Venice that used to rule in most of Istria until 1797).

We had a bean soup followed by lovely tagliatelle pasta with local ham, drinking the Croatian beer Osijek or the local wines Terrano and Malvazija. For the liquor lovers, the restaurant offered also a selection of shots with cherry, mistletoe and pure grappa.

Getting out after dinner, we explored a bit the village, being delighted by the clear view of the Milky Way and noticing the loud chirps of crickets and the flight of the European Free-tailed Bats (*Tadarida teniotis*), seen in the town wall's lights. Everything in an absolute quiet, with no artificial noises of cars or even dogs barking in the air. What a lovely first evening!

Day 2

Wednesday 29th September

Around the hotel in Sv. Stjepan/Santo Stefano; Mirna-Quieto valley; Motovun/Montona - Weather details: sunny and hot; $16^{\circ} - 26^{\circ}C$

We enjoyed breakfast at 8am: a buffet rich of interesting balcanic savory dishes - sausages, hot vegetables and cheese lasagne, but also more international options like tasty scrambled eggs.

Walking a short distance, we could hear the first calls of the sough-after Grey-headed and Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers.

We met at 9am to have a walk around Sv. Stjepan/Santo Stefano: we first saw two Marsh Tits on the cedar in front of the gate. The Green Woodpeckers were very active, calling from every corner, with one climbing a trunk right in front of us. Despite many birds here, it wasn't easy at all to getting views in amongst the foliage but we recorded Nuthatches, Firecrests, Long-tailed Tits, Short-toed Treecreepers, Song Thrushs and Siskins.

There were still a lot of blooming plants around, even this late in the season and some past their best: Branched St. Bernard's Lilies (*Anthericum ramosum*), Keeled Garlics (*Allium carinatum*), *Allium ericetorum*, Rock-roses (*Helianthemum nummularium*), Moth Mulleins (*Verbascum blattaria*), Oreganos (*Origanum vulgare*), Winter Savories (*Satureja montana*), Pink Bindweeds (*Convolvulus cantabrica*) and the attractive Blue speedwell (*Veronica barrelieri*).

With the sunshine heating the meadows, butterflies started to climb the stems, often posing on the top of the flowers: it was particularly impressive, with every new specimen spotted belonging to a different species! The series of the "blues" (Lang's Short-tailed, Adonis, Common Blue, Brown Argus), the "whites" (Small, Wood, Southern Small, Large), the "clouded yellows" (Common and Berger's or Pale), the "browns" (Meadow and Wall), the "graylings" (Woodland and Common) and a couple of Small Coppers and worn Silver-washed Fritillaries: Luca helped us to work through the identification features of each species.

We scanned the clear sky seeing a Peregrine Falcon, a Raven and a pair of Common Buzzards, while a bit of climb along a track led us to a nice panorama of the valley, with the thermal site Istarske Toplice dominated by a huge rock with the ruins of the Saint Stephen church on the top. After a brief comfort stop, we followed another footpath to the cliff edge: here we noticed some European Cyclamens (*Cyclamen purpurascens*) in the shady corners and the endemic sandwort (*Moehringia tommasinii*) in the crevices of the rock, unfortunately with only few withered flowers left.

Later on, Luca went shopping to Buzet/Pinguente, followed by a look around the local shops or to have a coffee. The picnic lunch was set out by Luca on the ping-pong tables outside our block, in the shade of oak and maple trees, and included a variety of local cheese and ham, vegetables, green olives and chocolate biscuits.

For the afternoon excursion, we met at 2.30pm and we drove along the Mirna/Quieto river valley, but since it was a little quite with just a few Goldfinches, we decided to drive directly to the mouth of the river, passing through the town of Novigrad. The first stop was on a dyke between brackish water lakes and a sea bay: though the telescopes, we found a flock of Wigeons, together with three Pochards, plus a number of Mute Swans, Great Crested Grebes, Great Cormorants, Common Sandpipers and Little Egrets. A loud Oystercatcher crossed in flight, followed by a dozen migrating Yellow Wagtails, while male and female Marsh Harrier patrolled a salty prairie covered in purple flowers of Sea Lavender (*Limonium cfr. narbonense*) and Sea Aster (*Tripolium pannonicum*). We then walked to the opposite corner of the lagoon and found a stunning Great Grey Shrike, allowing Tony to get some photos.

The banks were covered in colourful flowers, including Spiny Restharrow (*Ononis spinosa*), Common Toadflax (*Linaria vulgaris*), Brown Knapweed (*Centaurea jacea*), Fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*), Cocklebur (*Xanthium orientale*) and Lucerne (*Medicago sativa*).

We then returned inland and Luca took the group close to the gate of the ancient hilltop town of Motovun/Montona. The steep cobbled road led us to see first the Venetian Loggia, with its wonderful panorama to the Mirna/Quieto valley, and then to the attractive Duomo square, dominated by the 700 years old Romanesque bell-tower. Some of us also managed to find also delicious ice-creams, while Luca appeared a few minutes later, coming from a much lower car park, to show us the interesting moths resting under the town gate: Bedrule Brocade (*Mniotype solieri*), Brick (*Agrochola circellaris*) and the commoner Willow Beauty (*Peribatodes rhomboidaria*).

We got back to the hotel at 5.30pm, with some spare time to relax before meeting for the check-list at 7pm followed by the short drive to dinner. After the checklist, we walked outside and spotting a flock of Alpine Swifts flying very high in the sky and we heard first the Eagle Owl calling from the cliffs, and then the odd autumn calls of a young Tawny Owl.

The short drive to Konoba Dolina gave the unexpected crossing of five Wild Boars followed by two Roe Deer. A delightful dinner with omelette and delicate local truffles, pork and chocolate cake was accompanied by carafes of Cabernet Sauvignon and Chardonnay.

Back to Istarske Toplice, Mary spotted the startling (but not aggressive), Radiated Wolf Spider (*Hogna radiata*), while Luca settled the moth trap outside.

Day 3

Thursday 30th September

Rt Kamenjak/Capo Promontore; Pula/Pola; Monkodonia/Moncodogno - Weather details: thunderstorm at night, then sunny but windy; 14° - 22°C

At about midnight a violent thunderstorm forced Luca to switch off the moth-trap, so in the morning just a Willow Beauty (*Peribatodes rhomboidaria*), was in the net. Having a wander around the block with the early risers, we spotted a Praying Mantis (*Mantis religiosa*), an Orange Swift (*Triodia sylvina*), a worn Blair's Mocha (*Cyclophora puppillaria*) and the green bush-crickets (*Phaneroptera nana*) and (*Tylopsis lilifolia*), all attracted at night by the artificial lights of the hotel.

We left at 9am and, after about one hour of driving, we arrived at the village of Premantura/Promontore, where we had to search around for a while before discovering that the ticket office of the Rt Kamenjak/Capo Promontore peninsula had been moved in a new place further on: we took the opportunity to have a nice coffee in a bar.

Driving through some bumpy and dusty tracks, we journeyed south across the peninsula until we reached a large Austro-Hungarian bunker situated almost to the southernmost point. We left the minibus under the shade of some odd Aleppo Pines, bent by the strong Bura winds, and climbed the hill of the bunker, going through a Mediterranean maquis of Myrtles (*Myrtus communis*), Prickly Junipers (*Juniperus oxycedrus*) and Mastics (*Pistacia lentiscus*), with rich clusters of red berries, and having brief views of Sardinian Warblers, Blackcaps and Firecrests. However, finding small passerines in the strong wind was challenging.

From the terrace above the bunker roof, we had a 360° view, going from the far peak of Ucka/Monte Maggiore, the tallest mountain in Istria (1,396 m), behind the village of Medulin/Medolino, to the elongated islands of Cres/Cherso and Lošinj/Lussino, to the deep blue Adriatic sea and to the skyscrapers of Pula/Pola, emerging behind some short hills. Here we saw a Sparrowhawk and a couple of Barn Swallows on migration, while few Pallid Swifts battled against the breeze overhead. In the scattered patches of dry grass, we noticed tens of pretty flowers of Lady's-tresses Orchids and Autumn Squill (*Prospero autumnale*), but also the sea-lavender (*Limonium cancellatum*) and the pink (*Dianthus ciliates*), both endemic of the Adriatic basin. Nearby in the "Safari bar", very popular among tourists in summertime, we saw a poor Common Redstart that had found a sheltered place away from the wind among the two hulls of a beached catamaran where it fed before continuing its journey to Africa.

We descended almost to the rocky shore, among Tree Heaths (*Erica arborea*) and Rock Samphires (*Crithmum maritimum*), noticing a number of grasshoppers and Common Graylings (*Hipparchia semele*), when Luca left us some spare time to wander while he rushed back to the minibus to prepare the picnic. It took some time and discussion to decide that the black bird swimming in front of us was a Mediterranean Shag (*Phalacrocorax aristotelis desmarestii*) and not the commoner Great Cormorant, before we walked back to the shade of the pines for lunch. Later we drove for about half an hour to the city of Pula/Pola where we parked right in front of the Roman amphitheatre. Luca told us about the general differences about the function and the shows between Greek theatres and Roman amphitheatres, then we had a loop around the cavea, noticing here and there Common Wall Lizards (*Podarcis muralis*) with its distinctive green back, some Jackdaws flying around a distant bell-tower and a number of short rock plants including Common Purslane (*Portulaca oleracea*), Prostrate Sandmat (*Euphorbia*)

prostrata), Cantabrican Morning Glory (Convolvulus cantabrica) and the invasive Tropical Horseweed (Erigeron sumatrensis) from America.

Then we drove north, following the western coast of Istria to Rovinj/Rovigno, and turned into a countryside track to reach the castelliere of Monkodonia/Moncodogno, a Bronze Age Celtic village surrounded by walls almost like a primitive castle. We walked few hundred metres in the maquis of Downy (*Quercus pubescens*) and Holm Oaks (*Q. ilex*) to a hill top with a magnificent view to the coast till the Brijuni/Brioni islands and a series of derelict ruins and walls. The peace of the place was total in the warm colours of the afternoon, so we enjoyed exploring the archaeological site where quite a few plants were still in bloom, including Yellow Bartsia (*Odontites luteus*) and Lady's-tresses Orchids, attracting many insects like Eastern Bath White (*Pontia edusa*), Eastern Baton Blue (*Pseudophilotes vicrama*), Northern Wall Brown (*Lasiommata maera*), Cone-headed Grasshopper (*Acrida ungarica*) and Hornet Robber Fly (*Asilus crabroniformis*). The birding was pretty slow, possibly because of the heat, and we only flushed a possible Cirl Bunting while a Yellow Wagtail on migration flew over the bush of Christ's-thorns (*Paliurus spina-christi*), nicknamed "tortellini bush" by Luca.

Then it was time to drive home, arriving around 6 pm. At the check-list time, we heard Eagle Owl once again, and Alpine Swifts. For dinner we had an appetizer with Istrian ham, cheese and warm bread, followed by ravioli with wild asparagus and fusi (a local homemade pasta) with truffles, ending with a fruit of the forest cake and honey and herb liquors.

Day 4

Friday 1st October

Učka/Monte Maggiore; Hum/Colmo - Weather details: sunny; 7° - 20°C

Today we started a bit later than usual, at 9.30am so Luca could go shopping for the next two days. Luca heard a Black Woodpecker early morning and later, when we were all loading the minibus, a Middle-spotted Woodpecker came to perch on a dead tree nearby, showing perfectly for everybody, while a Nuthatch was pecking on the ground: what a great start!

After about 45 minutes of driving, climbing through beautiful forests of Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), Italian Maple (*Acer opalus*) and Hop-Hornbeam (*Ostrya carpinifolia*), we arrived at a stunning view point in the northern edge of mount Učka, from which we could admire the Kvarner Gulf from Rijeka/Fiume to Mount Velebit, to the islands of Cres/Cherso and Krk/Veglia, the only Croatian island to occasionally host some Brown Bears.

After a comfort stop at the Visitor Centre of Vela Učka, we drove few more minutes along a narrow road among the Black (*Pinus nigra*) and Scots Pines (*Pinus sylvestris*) that led us to the southern foothill of the mount Učka: here were a series of nice clearings and scattered settlements called Mala Učka. We started to walk spotting Coal Tit, Chiffchaff, Firecrest, Greenfinch, Chaffinch and Goldfinch, while were only heard Hawfinches and Crossbills. In the thermophile pastures there were still a lot of flowers, including the last blue stems of Italian Eringo (*Eryngium amethystinum*), two species of savory, (*Satureja montana*) and (*Satureja subspicata*) (the second sub-endemic of ex-Yugoslavia), Autumn Crocus (*Colchicum autumnale*), Silver Horehound (*Marrubium incanum*) and the endemic wallflower (*Erysimum carniolicum*). We also found the shrubs with fruits like Burnet Rose (*Rosa spinosissima*), Whitebeam (*Sorbus aria*), Dwarf Elder (*Sambucus ebulus*), Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) and a number of brambles (*Rubus spp.*). Walking along a peaceful road among buildings that were possibly mainly summer or even abandoned houses, we kept finding new species of flowers, from Wood Pink (*Dianthus sylvestris*), to Stemless Carline Thistle (*Carlina acaulis*), Hairy Hemp-nettle (*Galeopsis pubescens*), Wall Germander (*Teucrium chamaedrys*) and

Dwarf Mallow (*Malva neglecta*) and the leaves most likely of the endemic hellebore (*Helleborus multifidus istriacus.*) In the sky we noticed Sparrowhawk, Common Buzzard and two Ravens then Mary spotted a rare Griffon Vulture gliding from the Učka straight to the nesting colonies on the island of Cres/Cherso.

For lunch we settled in the sunshine among some derelict houses, with a wide panorama to the whole Istria that was lying below us and saw a nice Rock Bunting that perched on the top of a bush. The grass was filled in grasshoppers, including Blue-winged (*Oedipoda caerulea*) and Red-winged (*Oedipoda germanica*), Italian Locust (*Calliptamus italicus*) and Meadow Grasshopper (*Pseudochorthippus parallelus*). Descending along the same road, we spotted a black morph Red Squirrel (*Sciurus vulgaris*) from the minibus. Clearly the group of Brits that stopped and came back a hundred metres to see the rodent, offered the most exciting event of the day for the family of loud dogs of the nearby isolated farm!

We arrived at Hum/Colmo, the "smallest walled town in the World". We decided the best idea would be to relax a bit and drink a coffee in the lovely veranda of a bar, enjoying the mild sunshine and the pleasure of chats for a while. We then explored the town now only inhabited by just a couple of dozens of people mainly involved in tourism, with several souvenir stores and drinking spots: we saw the tombstones with the mysterious Glagolitic alphabet, the tiny Venetian Loggia, the local liquor biska flavoured with mistletoe and the façade of the parish church, unfortunately closed, as usual. Local wildlife included House Sparrows, Common Wall Lizard, Geranium Bronze (*Cacyreus marshalli*) and Hornet Mimic Hoverfly (*Volucella zonaria*).

We came back to the hotel at 4.30pm, having plenty of time for a long check-list that this evening included also the plants particularly for Ann.

The supper at the Konoba Dolina offered beef soup with spaghetti, ćevapčići (the typical balcanic sausages) with ajvar sauce (made mainly with red peppers) and, for pudding, apple strudel.

When we got outside the restaurant, we spent some time admiring the gorgeous Milky Way and the thousands of stars in such a clear sky, far from any pollution and civilization, listening the song of a Tawny Owl.

Day 5

Saturday 2nd October

Zrenj/Stridone; Cepic/Ceppich; Oprtalj/Portole; "Mlaka"nearby Sv. Stjepan/Santo Stefano - Weather details: sunny; 14° - 22°C

Once again, going to the main block for breakfast, where heard Middle-spotted, Grey-headed and Black Woodpecker, while a Song Thrush was hopping in the grass.

We left at 9 o'clock and drove for about half an hour to the village of Zrenj/Stridone. Our timing was perfect as we got out of the minibus as the cypresses and hedges near the cemetery were filled in birds: Hawfinches, Starlings, Chaffinches, Jays, Blue Tits, Lesser Whitethroat... and, later on, a singing Cirl Bunting, Siskins and Tree Pipits on migration etc; Luca, even picked out the distinctive calls of a Red-throated Pipit and of some Crossbills!

In the meadows there were many pretty spikes of Lady's-tresses Orchids and a number of butterflies heating up in the sunshine: Clouded Yellow, Small Copper, Red Admiral, Common Grayling, Meadow Brown and Ann managed to photograph the only Queen of Spain Fritillary (*Issoria lathonia*) of the trip. Back on the minibus, we

continued seeing a second dark Red Squirrel crossing the road near Sveta Lucija/Santa Lucia, then we reached another rural village, Cepic/Ceppich, where we descended by foot along track in the woodland to a rather popular climbing wall.

There were finches and pipits on passage, clear sign of the migration in action, while the dry meadows showed some more Italian Eryngos, Branched St. Bernard's Lilies, European Cyclamens and the pink *Dianthus ciliatus*. We also added few more butterflies, including a gorgeous Southern White Admiral (*Limenitis reducta*) and Speckled Wood (*Pararge aegeria*), both posing on a leaf, and some more interesting insects like Common Darter (*Sympetrum striolatum*), Italian Striped Bug (*Graphosoma italicum*) and Rufous Grasshopper (*Gomphocerippus rufus*).

We arrived at the beautiful view point from where we could scan a peaceful clearing edged by White Willows (*Salix alba*): we heard the distinctive call of a Black Woodpecker and we spotted a Red Fox that was hunting in the grass, totally oblivious he was being watched, then a juvenile of Northern Goshawk flew right above it, showing its large size in comparison with the carnivore and the boldly striped buffish chest, and continued flying over the woodland.

We kept descending for few hundred metres when a male Lesser-spotted Woodpecker came to perch on a dead tree, showing its red crown.

The lunch spot was near the Saint Mary of the Snows church of Cepic/Ceppich, where we enjoyed a slice of tasty melon or a sandwich but had to pay some attention when walking in the short grass, so we did not trample on the ubiquitous Lady's-tresses Orchids and Veronica barrelieri speedwells. Ann spotted a cute Parasol Mushroom (*Macrolepiota procera*) in a bush, while Luca showed to the members of the group a large Eastern Green Lizard (*Lacerta viridis*), hiding in the weeds.

Driving back to the Mirna valley, we stopped for a quarter of an hour at Oprtalj/Portole, to take some photos in daylight of the scenic village. In the picturesque Venetian Loggia, we found a French Red Underwing (*Catocala elocata*) resting on a wall, unfortunately not showing the attractive hindwings.

We spent the afternoon in the plain woodlands on the other side of river Mirna/Quieto then Sveti Stjepan/Santo Stefano, in a locality possibly called "Mlaka". With the heat, the birdwatching was hard work but we still enjoyed some wildlife including Eastern Green, Common Wall and Dalmatian Wall Lizard (*Podarcis melisellensis*) and insects like Southern Hawker (*Aeshna cyanea*), Praying Mantis, Southern White Admiral, Silver-washed Fritillary, Oberthur's Grizzled Skipper (*Pyrgus armoricanus*) and a wonderful caterpillar of Common Swallowtail (*Papilio machaon*).

After some spare time, we met at 6.30pm with the intention of trying to see the Eagle Owl we kept hearing: we first detected a male singing from a southern cliff, then a second one even further and once again the loud Alpine Swifts having their evening chatterings high above our heads. We decided to try to go closer in the minibus when the deep booming calls started to come from the much closer northern cliff, just above our block. Luca quickly spotted the Eagle Owl on a prominent rock, so everybody could see clearly, through the telescope, the bird inflating its white throat: what a view!

We celebrated another great day enjoying a dinner of omelette with fresh golden chanterelles, gnocchi with beef and boar stew, a lemon cheesecake and a sage grappa.

Day 6

Sunday 3rd October

Pre-breakfast walk around the hotel in Sv. Stjepan/Santo Stefano; take off "Zavoj"; Buzet/Pinguente; Srbanj/Serbani; Savudrija/Salvore - Weather details: cloudy in the morning, then sunny and breezy; 17° - 24°C

Considering that there were six species of woodpeckers around the hotel, it was worth spending some time to try and get a better view, so Luca met with two of the group at 7am for a pre-breakfast walk. The sky was cloudy and the morning rather dark, not the best weather conditions for the observations, but we went anyway to walk along the stream alongside the Mirna/Quieto valley forest. We first noticed a Grey Wagtail, a Kingfisher in flight and again the Alpine Swifts in the sky, then we stopped near some promising large Pedunculate Oaks (*Querus robur*). At the beginning, we could see only tits feeding in the foliage, then a Grey-headed Woodpecker appeared, staying for a while calling on a dead trunk, so we could get a good view through the telescope. On the way back, we spotted Middle and Lesser Spotted Woodpecker on the same tree, followed by a pair of Short-toed Treecreepers: really a successful hour!

After breakfast, we drove east, passing Buzet/Pinguente and then along a deserted road almost to the border with Slovenia. We stopped for a walk here, where the paragliders take off, called "Zavoj": it was almost like a natural terrace, with a wide view to the valley on one side and a rather flat prairie area on the northern side, where we could see the fence with barbed wire marking the border of the European Community. We noticed an unusual buff coloured lark together with the Woodlarks that were feeding on the gravel of the track: checking carefully, Luca identified it as another Woodlark, but with a very unusual isabelline plumage! However with a rather chilly climate and grey skies, birding was particularly slow, with only two Skylarks, some Chaffinches and two Crossbills on migration. More interesting was the flora, with the flowers of Hyssop (*Hyssopus officinalis*), Mountain Onion (*Allium senescens*), *Allium ericetorum* and Giant Scabious (*Cephalaria leucantha*), all emerging obviously from the yellow dry grass, and the green leaves of the endemic subspecies of Sweet Iris (*Iris pallida illyrica*).

Back at the minibus, we descended to have a look in a scattered grove of Black Pines: mission accomplished because we managed to see two very obliging Crested Tits, plus Coal Tit and Firecrest.

Then the group had some free time to explore the old Venetian centre of Buzet/Pinguente, on the top of a hill, and accompanying Ann to buy some local cheese.

Considering rain was forecast, we had our picnic under a nice shelter nearby the graveyard of Srbanj/Serbani. After few raindrops, the weather improved and while we were enjoying some good Italian gorgonzola cheese and Croatian peppers filled with hummus sauce, wide glimpses of blue appeared in the sky.

The birdwatching from a wonderful view point overlooking the Mirna/Quieto valley produced six Ravens, two Common Buzzards, Red Kite, Sparrowhawk and Kestrel, while through the telescope we could see some Coypus grazing peacefully on the sides of ponds and canals, including an albino individual. The dry meadows hosted also some more Lady's-tresses Orchids, Autumns Squills, *Dianthus ciliatus*, Graylings and a Praying Mantis, despite the great grazing job of sheep and goats. In the cemetery Luca pointed us the quantity of Italian surnames on the tombstones: Italians used to account for about half of the Istrian population before the end of the Second World War, when more than 300.000 people were forced to leave their houses to emigrate to Italy.

After half an hour of driving along a motorway, we arrived to Savudrija/Salvore, by the shore of the Adriatic sea. We stopped at a nice little bay where, with the low tide, there were plenty of Yellow-legged Gulls in the mud flats. Scanning carefully, we also noticed a Little Stint, Dunlin and a juvenile Mediterranean Gull.

The we drove a kilometre more and then went hiking, in a yellow sea of Sticky Fleabanes (*Dittrichia viscosa*), until we reached a pristine coastline with white rocks and crystalline turquoise waters. Looking across the panorama to the far town of Piran/Pirano in Slovenia, we spotted three distant Shags and three late Barn Swallows, but what we enjoyed more was the lack of people and the general peace, even if things might change in the future with the huge new hotel being built: it was a paradise, but possibly not for a longer time. Here we saw Italian Wall Lizard (*Podarcis siculus*), Southern Darters (*Sympetrum meridionale*), Honey Bees and Common Blue (*Polyommatus icarus*).

Supper this evening included a spicy beef paté, chicken and sausages and, for pudding, frittelle and crostoli, two pastries that in Venice were served during the Carnival.

On the way back to the hotel, we spotted the silhouettes, illuminated from behind, of a large Wild Boar sow with at least three piglets, grazing peacefully on a meadow.

Day 7

Monday 4th October

Hrastovlje/Cristoglie (SLO); Skocjanski Zatok/Val Stagnon (SLO); Koper/Capodistria (SLO); Secovlje/Sicciole (SLO) - Weather details: cloudy in the morning, then sunny; 17° - 26°C

The plan for the day was to go to Slovenia for the day and then come back to Croatia for the last night at Istarske Toplice. In so doing we would be entering in the Schengen area. Now the UK is not part of the EU and with additional Covid-19 rules in each country, we hoped for a smooth crossing. We had already filled the Croatian form before our arrival and each member of the group had brought a lateral Covid-test just in case they were needed. We had spent some time the night before preparing the necessary forms for each country.

Driving to the border, nearby Buzet/Pinguente, we noticed a road-killed Badger, then arrived the time of the truth. We caused quite a queue behind our minibus, because the guards of the two nationalities checked each passport twice, then at the Slovenian side they checked also the vaccination certificates. Despite the odd bit of confusion, we were allowed into Slovenia... quite stressful, but at least we did it! From there, we drove once again along the very quiet Slovenian roads until the village of Hrastovlje/Cristoglie, where we went to see the ancient Romanesque church of the Holy Trinity, surrounded by a tall wall to protect it from the raids of the Turks. This type of walled church is called Tabor in Slovene. We had to wait our turn for the visit, so we enjoyed some Serins, the Chimney Bellflower, growing in the wall, and Blackbirds and Starlings feasting on a fig.

Inside the church, we could admire the frescos dating back to 1490 and a guide switched on a tape with an interesting explanation in English about each painting, showing the scenes it was telling about through a bamboo cane. Luca pointed out the painting of a bird with a curved bill that was possibly identified as a Bald Ibis, a species that became extinct in Europe by the end of XVII century.

We then had a coffee break in a bar, hearing the distant song of a Woodlark, before driving for 15 minutes to the Adriatic coast, where we went to the beautiful reserve of Skocjanski Zatok/Val Stagnon. Here we were welcomed by Domen, a friend of Luca, who allowed us to visit the largest tower, now officially closed for decorating, and told us something about the history of the wetland. There used to be a large tidal lagoon

surrounding the ancient city of Koper/Capodistria, but it had been progressively drained and substituted by the container modern port until a group of children, particularly interested in nature, managed to stop the expansion of cement and to preserve the surviving part of marsh. This area was therefore protected and renewed in order to recreate a suitable habitat for the wildlife and make it usable by citizens, creating footpaths, blinds and hides. From the huge and attractive tower, we could admire a 360° view to the marsh and to the tidal bay: the introduced Camargue white horses, used to control the growth of the vegetation, were followed by Cattle and Little Egrets, and a Hobby flew above. The lowest level of the tower, almost underground, offered an unexpected perspective, because it had windows showing the underwater world, with tens of tiny Mosquito Fishes (*Gambusia bolbrooki*). From another hide, we scanned the lagoon where there were hundreds of Mallards, Wigeons and Teals, plus Mute Swans, Great Crested Grebes and Great Cormorants. In the glasswort prairies, we spotted some Greenshanks and a Curlew. There were hundreds of mating dragonflies, including Southern Darters (*Sympetrum meridionale*) and Migrant Hawkers (*Aeshna mixta*) as we walked along the reedbed trails. We had our last picnic in the shade of the visitor centre, eating another mix of cheese, including the famous Pag

After lunch, we went to have a short wander in the Koper/Capodistria city centre: Luca pointed out the common features of each town inside the maritime empire of the Republic of Venice, going from the cisterns under each square, to the winged lions, to the Islamic-like decorations of the windows. Then we arrived at Tito's square, with its City Hall with Ghibelline battlements, the large Loggia and the Duomo, and continued until a view point to the commercial port, the most important in Slovenia, with tens of cranes and thousands of containers.

Coming back, we stopped for a wonderful Italian gelato, particularly welcome for all the group.

cheese, a delicious melon and a variety of dark chocolate biscuits.

Just before the border with Croatia, we turned into a track that led us to the edge of the Secovlje/Sicciole saltpans. The stream on the side of the road was populated by Moorhens, Coypu and tens of mullets and Sea Basses (*Dicentrarchus labrax*). The light of the afternoon cast the area with wonderful warm colours, but there weren't many birds around: scanning by telescope Luca only spotted a distant Great Grey Shrike and the second Hobby of the day. Surprisingly the border passage didn't give us any problems, so we drove back to Croatia smoothly.

Konoba Dolina prepared fish for our last evening, starting with tasty baccalà mantecatto (a typical Venetian cod sauce) and bread, then a Sea Bass or Sea Bream and finishing with a superb tiramisù. We couldn't miss, the selection of four different liquors and grappas for our last supper.

Back to the hotel, the Eagle Owl was in song and we noticed a variety of interesting moths trapped in the corridors of our block, including Yellow Shell (*Camptogramma bilineata*), Scalloped Oak (*Crocallis elinguaria*), Scarce Blackneck (*Lygephila craccae*), Square-spot Rustic (*Xestia xanthographa*), Beautiful Arches (*Mniotype satura*) and Flame Brocade (*Trigonophora flammea*).

Day 8

Tuesday 5th October

Marina Nova (IT); Isola della Cona (IT); Valle Cavanata (IT); Trieste Airport (IT) - Weather details: Mainly sunny, but very humid and windy; 17°-24°C

Just after breakfast, perfectly on time at 8.45am, we were ready to load our suitcases, while the dark clouds soon turned into heavy rain. At the border once again, the guards only needed to see passports, so it didn't take too long and, from there, we had about one hour of driving, first along the bendy roads of Slovenia and then in the much more comfortable Italian motorway, while the weather improved. Our first stop was nearby the harbour of Monfalcone, at Marina Nova, where you can sometimes find rarer grebes and divers, but possibly because of the high tide and of the warm and humid Sirocco wind, there were almost no birds at all.

We then travelled to the Isola della Cona, possibly the most important birding reserve in Italy, with an astonishing checklist of about 330 species of bird. We set down at the bar "Al pettirosso" (= of the robin) where we could drink a coffee enjoying a wonderful view through the huge window: hundreds of geese, ducks, waders and gulls feeding and resting in a restored wetland.

We also met Paul Tout who usually leads the Istria tour who rescued a large Edible Frog (*Pelophylax kl. esculentus*) that had entered in the bar.

We went up to the upper floor of the same building where we could got even better views, overlooking most of the marsh. Greylag Geese, Teals, Wigeons, Shovelers, Lapwings, Snipes, Black-headed and Mediterranean Gulls in their hundreds, some Pintails and Gadwalls, but also one Ruddy Duck, two Bar-headed Geese and two Canada Geese, all probably escapes In the distance, in a group of Ruffs, Luca spotted a Wood Sandpiper, while a Marsh Harrier passed in flight.

Then we went through the footpath that leads to the "Marinetta" hide: along the trail, we saw a delicate Eastern Willow Spreadwing (*Chakolestes panvidens*), many Migrant Hawkers and darters and a couple of Lang's Short-tailed Blues. At the "Cavaliere" hide, we found a dozen of Pied Avocets but also we met one of the most famous Italian ornithologists, Pierandrea Brichetti, the author of "Ornitologia Italiana", the encyclopaedia about Italian birds. At the "Marinetta" hide, with nobody else around, we opened the large windows to overlook a memorable spectacle: another mix of waterfowl, but first of all, hundreds of Dunlins with a number of Ringed Plovers, Greenshanks, Curlews, Little Stints and at least one Curlew Sandpiper, mottled because it was moulting its summer plumage from brick red to white. We could have spent all day there, scanning and looking for more species, but the day was short, so we had to come back to the bar "Al pettirosso" for lunch, enticed by good lasagne with Bolognese sauce or mushrooms. In the pond in front of the window, covered by floating Fringed Water-lilies (*Nymphoides peltata*), we noticed a Little Grebe, a Great Egret, a Grey Heron, a pair of Gadwalls, a dozen Red-eared Sliders (*Trachemys scripta elegans*) and some more frogs.

There was still some more time left for a last bit of birding, so we transferred to another reserve, Valle Cavanata. After a short walk in the shrubs, we reached a hide, but with the wind, most of the birds had moved far away to shelters near the opposite bank, including 15 Greater Flamingos, mainly youngsters but also two pink adults. We were at the north-eastern limit of their distribution in Italy, they never appear in thousands like in other Italian wetlands. Then Sue achieved her desire, because Luca found four Pygmy Cormorants perched together on some stakes and got the telescope on them. It was the last sighting of a wonderful last day: we were at the Trieste

airport just before 3pm with plenty of time to explore each corner of such a small building and to go through the last border controls before the journey to Stansted.

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Checklist

Birds

	Common name	Scientific name	28	29	30	1	2	3	4	5
		ne names and Taxonomy (inclu of the World (version 9.2), whic future	ch seems d							
	N.B.									
	H = Heard									
	LO = Leader only									
	x = units									
	xx = tens									
	xxx = hundreds									
1	Common Pheasant	Phasianus colchicus					1			
2	hybrid with Canada Goose [feral]	x Branta canadensis								2
3	Bar-headed Goose [feral]	Anser indicus								2
4	Greylag Goose	Anser anser								xx
5	Mute Swan	Cygnus olor		10					20	XX
6	Ruddy Shelduck [feral]	Tadorna ferruginea								1
7	Northern Shoveler	Spatula clypeata								XX
8	Gadwall	Mareca strepera								XX
9	Eurasian Wigeon	Mareca penelope		100					3	xx
10	Northern Pintail	Anas acuta								5

							•			
	Common name	Scientific name	28	29	30	1	2	3	4	5
11	Mallard	Anas platyrhynchos	_	2				X	XX	XX
12	Eurasian Teal	Anas crecca	_	3					20	XXX
13	Common Pochard	Aythya ferina		3			25	10		
14	Alpine Swift Pallid Swift	Tachymarptis melba		25	Н		25	10		
15		Apus pallidus	_		3					
16	Rock Dove [feral]	Columba livia var. domestica	_	10	10	1	2	10	XX	XXX
17	Common Wood Pigeon	Columba palumbus	_	1	1			50	XX	1
18	Eurasian Collared Dove	Streptopelia decaocto	_							15
19	Water Rail	Rallus aquaticus	_							3H
20	Common Moorhen	Gallinula chloropus	_				1		5	5
21	Eurasian Coot	Fulica atra	_						100	XX
22	Little Grebe	Tachybaptus ruficollis	_	1					5	1
23	Great Crested Grebe	Podiceps cristatus	_	2					6	
24	Greater Flamingo	Phoenicopterus roseus								15
25	Pied Avocet	Recurvirostra avosetta	_							10
26	Eurasian Oystercatcher	Haematopus ostralegus	_	1						
27	Northern Lapwing	Vanellus vanellus								100
28	Ringed Plover	Charadrius hiaticula								4
29	Eurasian Curlew	Numenius arquata							1	2
30	Ruff	Calidris pugnax								10
31	Dunlin	Calidris alpina						1		ххх
32	Curlew Sandpiper	Calidris ferruginea								1
33	Little Stint	Calidris minuta						1		5
34	Common Sandpiper	Actitis hypoleucos		2						
35	Wood Sandpiper	Tringa glareola								1
36	Common Greenshank	Tringa nebularia								3
37	Black-headed Gull	Chroicocephalus ridibundus	xxx	xx				1	5	ххх
38	Mediterranean Gull	Ichthyaetus melanocephalus	x					1		50
39	Yellow-legged Gull	Larus michahellis	x	x	x			50	xx	xx
40	Pygmy Cormorant	Microcarbo pygmaeus								10
41	European (Mediterranean) Shag	Phalacrocorax aristotelis desmarestii			1			3		
42	Great Cormorant	Phalacrocorax carbo		10					10	15
43	Western Cattle Egret	Bubulcus ibis							2	50
44	Grey Heron	Ardea cinerea		2		1			10	10
45	Great Egret	Ardea alba	1	5					2	5
46	Little Egret	Egretta garzetta		2				2	20	xx
47	Griffon Vulture	Gyps fulvus				1				
48	Eurasian Sparrowhawk	Accipiter nisus		2	1	1		1	1	
49	Northern Goshawk	Accipiter gentilis	-				1			
50	Western Marsh Harrier	Circus aeruginosus		2			_			1
51	Red Kite	Milvus milvus		_				1		-
52	Common Buzzard	Buteo buteo		5	2	4	5	5	1	2
53	Eurasian Eagle-Owl	Bubo bubo		н	H	, ·	2	2H	H	<u> </u>
54	Tawny Owl	Strix aluco		н	н	н	H	211	н	
55	Common Kingfisher	Alcedo atthis		н		···		1	н	н
	Middle Spotted			···				-		
56	Woodpecker	Dendrocarpos medius				1	н	1	н	
57	Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	Dryobates minor		н			1	2		
58	Great Spotted Woodpecker	Dendrocopos major				2	2	ЗН	2	н
59	Black Woodpecker	Dryocopus martius				н	2H			

	Common name	Scientific name	28	29	30	1	2	3	4	5
0	European Green	Diaua vizidia		3			3	-	211	
60	Woodpecker	Picus viridis		-		н	-	5	2H	H
61	Grey-headed Woodpecker	Picus canus		H			H	2	H	1
62	Common Kestrel	Falco tinnunculus			1			1	2	2
63	Eurasian Hobby	Falco subbuteo							2	
64	Peregrine Falcon	Falco peregrinus		1						
65	Great Grey Shrike	Lanius excubitor		1				1	1	
66	Eurasian Jay	Garrulus glandarius	X	X	X	x	XX	X	XX	X
67	Eurasian Magpie	Pica pica	X	1	X			2	X	X
68	Western Jackdaw	Coloeus monedula	15		10			2		5
69	Hooded Crow	Corvus cornix	1	1	10			50	x	x
70	Northern Raven	Corvus corax		1		2	7	7	2	
71	Marsh Tit	Poecile palustris		3		Н	5	2H	н	
72	Coal Tit	Periparus ater				2	5	2		
73	Crested Tit	Lophophanes cristatus						2		
74	Eurasian Blue Tit	Cyanistes caeruleus		н	н	6	3	2	н	
75	Great Tit	Parus major		5	н	3H	5	5	3H	н
76	Woodlark	Lullula arborea					2	4	н	
77	Eurasian Skylark	Alauda arvensis						2		
78	Barn Swallow	Hirundo rustica			3			3		1
79	Cetti's Warbler	Cettia cetti		н					н	3H
80	Long-tailed Tit	Aegithalos caudatus		2H			5		н	5
81	Common Chiffchaff	Phylloscopus collybita		2H		5	3H	3H		н
82	Eurasian Blackcap	Sylvia atricapilla			3		н		5	
83	Lesser Whitethroat	Curruca curruca					1			
84	Sardinian Warbler	Curruca melanocephala		2H	5H					
85	Common Firecrest	Regulus ignicapillus		н	1	3	н	н		н
86	Eurasian Wren	Troglodytes troglodytes				2H		н		
87	Dunnock	Prunella modularis					2H			
88	Short-toed Treecreeper	Certhia brachydactyla		н	н	н	2H	3	н	
89	Eurasian Nuthatch	Sitta europaea		н	1	2	5	3		
90	Common Starling	Sturnus vulgaris		10			100	10	50	хх
91	Common Blackbird	Turdus merula	3	5	2	5	5	5	2	3
92	Song Thrush	Turdus philomelos		3H	_	1	2	3	_	1
93	Mistle Thrush	Turdus viscivorus				_	4	-	1	
94	European Robin	Erithacus rubecula		5	н	5	5	5	2	x
95	Common Redstart	Phoenicurus phoenicurus			2	-				1
96	House Sparrow	Passer domesticus		1	3	5	н		20	
97	Eurasian Tree Sparrow	Passer montanus			-	-				1
98	Yellow Wagtail	Motacilla flava		10	1					
99	Grey Wagtail	Motacilla cinerea		2	-	1		2	1	
100	White Wagtail	Motacilla alba alba		5	20	10	10	20	10	5
100	Red-throated Pipit	Anthus cervinus			20	10	Н	20	10	
101	Meadow Pipit	Anthus pratensis		5	20	10	10	20	10	5
102	Tree Pipit	Anthus trivialis			20	10	2	_ 20	10	
103	Common Chaffinch	Fringilla coelebs				10	20	10		
104	Common Crossbill	Loxia curvirostra				9	20 H	2		
		İ				9 H	5		8	
106	Hawfinch	Coccothraustes coccothraustes						2H	ō	
107	European Greenfinch	Chloris chloris		4 5		5	3		-	
108	European Goldfinch	Carduelis carduelis		15		1	5	H	5	
109	European Serin	Serinus serinus							5	

	Common name	Scientific name	28	29	30	1	2	3	4	5
110	Eurasian Siskin	Spinus spinus		н			3H	2H		
111	Cirl Bunting	Emberiza cirlus			?		5			
112	Rock Bunting	Emberiza cia				6				

				1			1		1	
	Common name	Scientific name	28	29	30	1	2	3	4	5
	N.B.									
	C = Caterpillar									
	S = signs									
	LO = Leader only									
	x = units									
	xx = tens									
	xxx = hundreds									
	BUTTERFLIES:									
		Papilionidae								
1	Common Swallowtail	Papilio machaon					1C			
		Pieridae								
2	Large White	Pieris brassicae		1				1		
3	Small White	Pieris rapae		1	1		1	2		
4	Southern Small White	, Pieris mannii		1						
5	Wood White	Leptidea cfr. sinapis		2						
6	Eastern Bath White	Pontia edusa			2					
7	Clouded Yellow	Colias crocea		5	10		10	3		1
	Berger's/Pale Clouded									
8	Yellow	Colias alfacariensis/hyale		2		1				
	0	Lycaenidae								
9	Small Copper	Lycaena phlaeas		1		1	1			<u> </u>
10	Geranium Bronze	Cacyreus marshalli				1				<u> </u>
11	Lang's Short-tailed Blue	Leptotes pirithous		1						2
12	Brown Argus	Aricia agestis		1						<u> </u>
13	Eastern Baton Blue	Pseudophilotes vicrama			1					<u> </u>
14	Adonis Blue	Polyommatus bellargus		2		1	3			<u> </u>
15	Common Blue	Polyommatus icarus		5	1	1		5		<u> </u>
		Nymphalidae								ļ
16	Red Admiral	Vanessa atalanta		1	3	5	5		1	1
17	Painted Lady	Vanessa cardui			1					ļ
18	Southern White Admiral	Limenitis reducta					2			<u> </u>
19	Silver-washed Fritillary	Argynnis paphia		3			1			
20	Queen of Spain Fritillary	Issoria lathonia					1			
21	Woodland Grayling	Hipparchia fagi		5			1			
22	Grayling	Hipparchia semele		1	3	5	10	5	2	
23	Speckled Wood	Pararge aegeria aegeria					3			2
24	Small Heath	Coenonympha pamphilus		2	1	1	5	2	1	1
25	Meadow Brown	Maniola jurtina		2	3	1	5			<u> </u>
26	Wall Brown	Lasiommata megera		5		2	10	1		
27	Large Wall Brown	Lasiommata maera			3					
		Hesperiidae								

	Common name	Scientific name	28	29	30	1	2	3	4	5
28	Oberthur's Grizzled Skipper	Pyrgus armoricanus					1			
	MOTHS:									
1	Orange Swift	Triodia sylvina			1					
2	Blair's Mocha a Wave	Cyclophora puppillaria			1					
3		Idaea camparia							1	
4	Single-dotted Wave	Idaea dimidiata			1					
5	Yellow Shell	Camptogramma bilineata							1	
6	Scalloped Oak	Crocallis elinguaria							1	
7	Willow Beauty	Peribatodes rhomboidaria		3	1		2		5	
8	a Footman	Eilema sp.			2				1	
9	a Yellow Underwing	complex Noctua janthina							1	
10	Large Yellow Underwing	Noctua pronuba							1	
11	Square-spot Rustic	Xestia xanthographa							1	<u> </u>
12	White Point	Mythimna albipuncta							2	<u> </u>
13	a Noctuid	Mythimna congrua							1	<u> </u>
14	Straw Underwing	Thalpophila matura					1			<u> </u>
15	Beautiful Arches	Mniotype satura							1	
16	European Noctuid	Mniotype solieri		1						ļ
17	Flame Brocade	Trigonophora flammea							3	
18	Brick	Agrochola circellaris		1						
19	Vine's Rustic	Hoplodrina ambigua							1	
20	Dark Spectacle	Abrostola triplasia							1	
21	French Red Underwing	Catocala elocata					1			
22	Passenger	Dysgonia algira					1D			
23	Mother Shipton	Callistege mi						1C		
24	Scarce Blackneck	Lygephila craccae							2	
25	Buttoned Snout	Hypena rostralis				1			5	
26	a Crambid	Crambidae sp.					1			<u> </u>
	OTHER									
	INVERTEBRATES:									
1	Eastern Willow Spreadwing	Chalcolestes parvidens								3
2	Southern (Blue) Hawker	Aeshna cyanea					1			
3	Migrant Hawker	Aeshna mixta							XX	XX
4	Southern Darter	Sympetrum meridionale						2	XXX	
5	Common Darter	Sympetrum striolatium					2			
6	a Darter Southern Sickle Bush-	Sympetrum sp.			1					XX
7	cricket	Phaneroptera nana		1	1			1	3	
8	Lily Bush-Cricket	Tylopsis lilifolia			1					ļ
9	Common Maquis Grasshopper	Pezotettix giornae				1	1			
10	Italian Locust	Calliptamus italicus				1	1			
	Cone-headed (Nosed)							_		
11	Grasshopper	Acrida ungarica			10			2		
12	Red-winged Grasshopper	Oedipoda germanica				1	1			
13	Blue-winged Grasshopper	Oedipoda caerulea		x	2	2	3	2		

	Common name	Scientific name	28	29	30	1	2	3	4	5
	Grasshopper									
	Slender Digging									
15	Grasshopper	Acrotylus patruelis			1					
16	Woodland Grasshopper	Omocestus rufipes		1			1		1	
17	Rufous Grasshopper	Gomphocerippus rufus					1			
18	Bornhalm's Grasshopper	Chorthippus cfr. bornhalmi			1					
19	Meadow Grasshopper	Pseudochorthippus parallelus				1				
20	Praying Mantis	Mantis religiosa		1	2		1	1		
21	Italian Striped Bug	Graphosoma italicum					2			
22	Southern Green Stink Bug	Nezara viridula							1	
	Brown Marmorated Stink									
23	Bug	Haylomorpha halys					1			
24	Western Conifer Seed Bug	Leptoglossus occidentalis							1	
25	Gendarme Bug	Lygaeus equestris				1				
26	Fire Bug	Pyrrhicoris apterus		1		1	1			
27	a Scorpion-fly	Panorpa sp.		1			<u> </u>			
28	a Crane-fly	<i>Tipula</i> sp.	-		10	1	1		2	
29	Stripe-eyed Lagoon Fly	Eristalinus taeniops						1		
30	Drone-fly	Eristalis tenax				1				
31	Hornet Mimic Hover Fly	Volucella zonaria				2			1	
32	Hornet Robber Fly	Asilus crabroniformis			1					
33	a Green lacewing	Pseudomallada sp.							1	
34	a Caddis-fly	Hydropsyche sp.			1					
35	a Paper wasp	Polistes associus			хх					
36	Hornet	Vespa crabro		1			1		3	1
37	a Wasp	Scolia hirta		1						
38	a Sweet bee	Lasioglossum sp.		1						
39	Mossy Rose Gall Wasp	Diplolepis rosae					S			
40	Carpenter Bee	Xylocopa violacea		1						
41	Common Carder Bee	Bombus pascuorum				1				
42	a Bee	Megachile sp.		1						
43	Honey Bee	Apis mellifera	1					x	x	1
44	a Smooth harvester ant	Messor sp.	1		xx			xx		
45	7-Spot Ladybird	Coccinella septempunctata	1		701		1			
46	Springtime Dung Beetle	Trypocopris vernalis	1		1D		_			
47	a Broad-nosed weevil	Otiorhynchus sp.			10				1	
1										
48	a Jumping spider	Heliophanus melinus						1		
40	Diadem Spider	Araneus diadematus		1			1	1		
49 50	Radiated Wolf Spider	Hogna radiata	1	2	1					
	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·		1		1		1			
51	Marbled Cellar Spider	Holocnemus pluchei		1			1			
52	Long-bodied Cellar Spider	Pholcus phalangioides		1	2				1	
53	a Scorpion	Euscorpius sp.			2				1	<u> </u>
	Operators Operation	0								<u> </u>
54	Garden Snail	Cornu aspersum			X					
55	a Snail	Cernuella cfr. neglecta							x	
56	a Snail	Campylaea cfr. illyrica		1						
57	Turbinate Monodont	Phorcus turbinatus						X		
58	a Limpet	Patella sp.						x		<u> </u>
	Deedlet Are area a									
59	Beadlet Anemone	Actinia mediterranea	1					1		

	Common name	Scientific name	28	29	30	1	2	3	4	5
	N.B.									<u> </u>
	S = Signs									ļ
	D = Dead									ļ
	H = Heard									
	LO = Leader only									<u> </u>
	x = units									
	xx = tens									
	xxx = hundreds		ļ							
	MAMMALS:									<u> </u>
1	European Mole	Talpa europaea								S
2	European Free-tailed Bat	Tadarida teniotis	2					н		<u> </u>
3	Kuhl's Pipistrelle	Pipistrellus cfr. kulhii			н	н			н	
4	Red Fox	Vulpes vulpes					1			
5	European Badger	Meles meles							1D	
6	Wild Boar	Sus scrofa		5			1	4		
7	European Roe Deer	Capreolus capreolus		3				1		
8	European Hare	Lepus europaeus	1						1D	
9	Eurasian Red Squirrel	Sciurus vulgaris				1	1			
10	Соури	Myocastor coypus						19	1	5
	AMPHIBIANS:									<u> </u>
1	European Tree Frog	Hyla arborea		н			н			
2	Perrin's Tree Frog	Hyla cfr. perrini								н
3	Edible Frog	Pelophylax kl. esculentus								10
4	Common Toad	Bufo bufo		2				1		
	REPTILES:									
1	Red-eared Slider	Trachemys scripta								10
2	Eastern Green Lizard	elegans Lacerta viridis					2			10
2 3	Common Wall Lizard	Podarcis muralis			5	1	3			
	Dalmatian Wall Lizard	Podarcis melisellensis			5		1			
4 5	Italian Wall Lizard	Podarcis siculus			2		1	1	5	
5					~					
	FISHES:									
1	European Seabass	Dicentrarchus labrax							x	
2	A mullet	Mugilidae sp.							xx	
3	Eastern Mosquitofish	Gambusia cfr. holbrooki	1	İ				1	xx	

Plants

Scientific name

Common name

Location

N.B.

* = Endemic or limited distribution [] = Introduced or escape

PTERIDOPHYTES

FERNS & ALLIES

Scientific name Calamophytes Horsetails Equisetaceae Horsetail Family Equisetum telmateia Great Horsetail Leptosporangiate Ferns **True Ferns** Spleenwort family Aspleniaceae Asplenium ceterach Rustyback Fern Asplenium ruta-muraria Wall-rue Asplenium scolopendrium Hart's-tongue Asplenium trichomanes Maidenhair Spleenwort **Bracken Family** Dennstaedtiaceae Pteridium aquilinum Bracken

Polypodiaceae Polypodium vulgare

GYMNOSPERMS

Cupressaceae Juniperus communis Juniperus oxycedrus

Pinaceae Pinus halepensis Pinus nigra Pinus sylvestris

ANGIOSPERMS **Pre-Dicots**

Aristolochiaceae Aristolochia clematitis

Eu-dicots

Adoxaceae Sambucus ebulus Sambucus nigra Viburnum lantana

Amaranthaceae

Amaranthus retroflexus Atriplex prostrata Chenopodium album Salicornia europea Salsola soda Suaeda maritima

Anacardiaceae Cotinus coggygria Pistacia lentiscus Pistacia terebinthus

Apiaceae Crithmum maritimum Daucus carota

Common name

Polypody Family Common Polypody

CONIFERS **Juniper Family** Juniper **Prickly Juniper**

Pine Family Aleppo Pine Black Pine Scots Pine

FLOWERING PLANTS **Primitive Angiosperms Birthwort Family** Yellow Birthwort

True Dicotyledons Moschatel Family Danewort or Dwarf Elder Elder Wayfaring Tree

Goosefoot Family Redroot Amaranth Creeping Saltbush Fat Hen Common Glasswort Fleshy Russian Thistle Annual Sea-Blite

Sumach Family Smoke Bush Mastic Tree **Turpentine Tree**

Carrot Family Rock Samphire Wild Carrot

Location

Istarske Toplice

Istarske Toplice Mala Ucka Cepic Istarske Toplice

Mlaka

Cepic

Mala Ucka Kamenjak

Kamenjak **Istarske Toplice** Mala Ucka

Savudrija

Mala Ucka Mala Ucka Mala Ucka

Zrenj Savudrija Hrastovlje Skocjanski Zatok Savudrija Skocjanski Zatok

Istarske Toplice Kamenjak Srbani

Kamenjak Istarske Toplice Scientific name Eryngium amethystinum* Eryngium campestre Foeniculum vulgare Pastinaca sativa Seseli tortuosum Trinia glauca

Apocynaceae [Vinca major]

Araliaceae Hedera helix

Betulaceae

Alnus glutinosa Carpinus orientalis Corylus avellana Ostrya carpinifolia

Boraginaceae Echium vulgare Heliotropus officinalis

Brassicaceae Capsella bursa-pastoris Diplotaxis sp. Erysimum cfr. carniolicum* [Lobularia maritima] Sisymbrium officinale

Campanulaceae Campanula pyramidalis Campanula sp. Campanula trachelium

Caprifoliaceae Cephalaria leucantha Dipsacus fullonum Scabiosa sp.

Caryophyllaceae

Cerastium sp. Dianthus ciliatus* Dianthus sylvestris Moehringia tommasinii* Petrorhagia saxifraga Saponaria officinalis Silene latifolia Silene vulgaris

Celastraceae Euonymus europaeus

Cistaceae

Common name Italian Eryngo Field Eryngo (dead stems) Fennel Wild Parsnip -Honewort

Periwinkle Family Greater Periwinkle

Ivy Family Ivy

Birch Family Black Alder Oriental Hornbeam Hazel Hop-hornbeam

Forget-me-not Family Viper's-bugloss Heliotrope

Cabbage Family Shepherd's Purse a Rocket a Wallflower Sweet Alyssum (planted) Hedge Mustard

Bellflower Family Chimney Bellflower a Bellflower Nettle-leaved Bellflower

Honeysuckle Family Giant Scabious Teasel (dead stems) A scabious

Pink Family a Mouse-ear Chickweed a Pink Wood Pink a Sandwort (leaves) Tunic Flower Common Soapwort White Campion Bladder Campion

Spindle Family Spindle

Rock-rose Family

Location

Kamenjak Kamenjak Mirna mouth Hum Kamenjak Mala Ucka

Savudrija

Istarske Toplice

Isola della Cona Istarske Toplice Cepic Mala Ucka

Istarske Toplice Monkodonja

Mala Ucka Istarske Toplice Mala Ucka Hum Mala Ucka

Hrastovlje Mala Ucka Istarske Toplice

Take off "Zavoj" Mirna valley Istarske Toplice

Mala Ucka Kamenjak Mala Ucka Istarske Toplice Istarske Toplice Istarske Toplice Istarske Toplice

Istarske Toplice

Scientific name

Cistus creticus (incanus) Cistus monspeliensis Helianthemum nummularium

Compositae (Asteraceae)

Achillea millefolium Artemisia sp. Bellis cfr. perennis Bellis sylvestris Bidens frondosa Buphthalmum salicifolium Carduus nutans Carlina acaulis Carlina corymbosa Centaurea jacea Cichorium intybus Cirsium eriophorum Cirsium vulgare Dittrichia viscosa Erigeron annuus Erigeron canadensis Erigeron sumatrensis Eupatorium cannabinum Galinsoga quadriradiata [Helianthus tuberosus] Helichrysum italicum Helminthotheca echioides Jacobaea sp. Leucanthemum vulgare Limbarda crithmoides Pentanema sp. Picris hieracioides Pilosella officinarum Pulicaria dysenterica Senecio vulgaris Scolymus hispanicus Solidago canadensis Sonchus cfr. asper [Symphyotrichum sp.] Symphyotrichum squamatum Taraxacum cfr. officinale Tripolium pannonicum Xanthium orientale italicum

Convolvulaceae

Calystegia sepium Convolvulus arvensis Convolvulus cantabrica [Ipomoea cfr. purpurea]

Cornaceae Cornus sanguinea

Crassulaceae

Common name

Pink Cistus (leaves) Narrow-leaved Cistus (leaves) Rock-rose

Daisy Family

Yarrow a Wormwood Daisy Southern Daisy **Beggar-ticks** Ox-eye Nodding Thistle Stemless Carline Thistle **Clustered Carline-Thistle** Brown Knapweed Chicory Woolly Thistle (dead stems) Spear Thistle Woody Fleabane Annual Fleabane **Canadian Horseweed Tropical Horseweed** Hemp-agrimony Gallant Soldier Jeruselem Artichoke Curry Plant Bristly Ox-tongue a Ragwort Ox-eye daisy **Golden Samphire** a Fleabane Hawkweed Ox-tongue Mouse-ear Hawkweed **Common Fleabane** Common Groundsel Common Golden Thistle Canada Goldenrod **Prickly Sowthistle** a Blue Aster Saltmarsh Aster **Common Dandelion** Sea Aster a Cocklebur

Bindweed Family

Hedge Bindweed Field Bindweed Pink Bindweed Common Morning-Glory (planted)

Dogwood Family Dogwood

Stonecrop Family

Location Kamenjak Kamenjak Istarske Toplice

Mala Ucka Take off "Zavoj" Savudrija Monkodonja Mlaka Hum Mala Ucka Mala Ucka Kamenjak **Istarske Toplice** Istarske Toplice Mala Ucka Mlaka Kamenjak Istarske Toplice Mlaka Pula Mlaka Mala Ucka Mirna valley Kamenjak Savudrija Istarske Toplice Zrenj Savudrija Zrenj **Istarske Toplice** Zrenj Mlaka Hum Savudrija Mlaka Mala Ucka Isola della Cona Skocjanski Zatok Hum Mirna mouth Mirna mouth

Istarske Toplice Savudrija Istarske Toplice Istarske Toplice

Mirna mouth

Scientific name Sedum album Sedum dasyphyllum Sedum hispanicum Sedum sexangulare

Ericaceae Erica arborea

Euphorbiaceae Euphorbia cyparissias Euphorbia maculata Euphorbia cfr. nicaeensis Euphorbia prostrata

Fagaceae

Castanea sativa Fagus sylvatica Quercus ilex Quercus pubescens Quercus robur

Geraniaceae Erodium cicutarium Geranium robertianum Geranium rotundifolium

Hypericaceae Hypericum cfr. perforatum

Juglandaceae [Juglans regia]

Lamiaceae Betonica officinalis Clinopodium sp. Galeopsis cfr. pubescens Hyssopus officinalis Lamium maculatum Lycopus europaeus Marrubium incanum* Mentha aquatica Mentha cfr. longifolia Mentha sp. Origanum vulgare Prunella vulgare Salvia glutinosa Salvia officinalis Salvia cfr. pratensis Salvia verticillata Satureja montana Satureja subspicata* Stachys annua Stachys recta Teucrium chamaedrys

Common name White Stonecrop

Thick-leaved Stonecrop Spanish Stonecrop Tasteless Stonecrop

Heather Family Tree heath

Spurge Family

Cypress Spurge Spotted Spurge Nice Spurge Prostrate Spurge

Beech Family

Sweet Chestnut European Beech Holm Oak Downy Oak Pendunculate Oak

Crane's-bill Family Common Stork's-bill Herb-Robert Round-leaved Crane's-bill

St. John's wort Family Perforate St John's-wort

Walnut Family Walnut

Deadnettle Family Common Hedge-Nettle A calamint Hairy Hemp-nettle Hyssop Spotted Deadnettle European Water-Horehound Silver Horehound Watermint Horse Mint a Mint Oregano Selfheal Sticky Sage Garden Sage Meadow Clary (leaves) Whorled Clary Winter Savory Lilac-flowered Savory Annual Yellow-Woundwort Yellow Woundwort Wall Germander

- Location
- Hum Oprtalj Mala Ucka Istarske Toplice

Kamenjak

Istarske Toplice Pula Kamenjak Pula

Zrenj Vela Ucka Istarske Toplice Monkodonja Istarske Toplice

Mala Ucka Mala Ucka Mala Ucka

Istarske Toplice

Mala Ucka

Mlaka Istarske Toplice Vela Ucka Take off "Zavoj" Mala Ucka Mlaka Mala Ucka Mlaka Zrenj Mala Ucka **Istarske Toplice Istarske Toplice** Mlaka Kamenjak Zrenj Vela Ucka **Istarske Toplice** Mala Ucka Zrenj Monkodonja Mala Ucka

Scientific name

Teucrium polium capitatum Thymus sp.

Leguminosae (Fabaceae) Amorpha fruticosa [Gleditsia triacanthos] Lathyrus latifolius Medicago lupulina Medicago sativa Melilotus albus Melilotus albus Melilotus sp. Ononis spinosa [Robinia pseudoacacia] Spartium junceum Trifolium pratense Trifolium repens

Loranthaceae Viscum album

Malvaceae Althaea cannabina Malva neglecta Malva sylvestris [Tilia sp.]

Menyanthaceae Nymphoides peltata

Moraceae [Broussonetia papyrifera] [Ficus carica]

Myrtaceae Myrtus communis

Oleaceae Fraxinus ctr. angustifolia Fraxinus ornus Ligustrum vulgare

Onagraceae Epilobium cfr. hirsutum

Orobanchaceae Melampyrum sp. Odontites luteus Odontites vulgaris Orobanche hederae

Oxalidaceae Oxalis acetosella Oxalis corniculata Common name

Felty Germander a Thyme

Pea Family Desert False Indigo Honey Locust Broad-leaved Sweet Pea Black Medick Lucerne White Melilot a Yellow melilot Spiny Restharrow False Acacia Spanish Broom Red Clover White Clover

Mistletoe Family Mistletoe

Mallow Family Hemp-leaved Mallow Dwarf Mallow Common Mallow a Lime tree

Bogbean Family Fringed Water-lily

Mulberry Family Paper Mulberry Fig

Myrtle Family Common Myrtle

Olive Family Narrow-leaved Ash Flowering Ash Wild Privet

Hairy Willowherb

Broomrape Family a Cow-wheat (dead stems) Yellow Odontites Red Bartsia Ivy Broomrape (dead stems)

Woodsorrel Family Wood-Sorrel Creeping Woodsorrel **Location** Monkodonja Mala Ucka

Isola della Cona Savudrija Istarske Toplice Istarske Toplice Mirna mouth Istarske Toplice Zrenj Mirna mouth Istarske Toplice Kamenjak Mala Ucka Mlaka

Mirna valley

Mlaka Mala Ucka Istarske Toplice Cepic

Isola della Cona

Istarske Toplice Istarske Toplice

Kamenjak

Istarske Toplice Take off "Zavoj" Cepic

Isola della Cona

Take off "Zavoj" Monkodonja Savudrija Istarske Toplice

Cepic Pula Scientific name Papaveraceae Chelidonium majus

Plantaginaceae Cymbalaria muralis Globularia cordifolia Linaria vulgaris Plantago lanceolata Plantago major Veronica barrelieri

Plumbaginaceae Limonium cancellatum* Limonium cfr. narbonense

Polygonaceae Polygonum aviculare

Portulacaceae Portulaca oleracea

Primulaceae Cyclamen purpurascens Lysimachia arvensis

Ranunculaceae Clematis vitalba Consolida regalis Helleborus cfr. multifidus istriacus* Helleborus cfr. niger Ranunculus sp.

Resedaceae Reseda lutea

Rhamnaceae Frangula alnus Paliurus spina-christi

Rosaceae Agrimonia eupatoria Crataegus monogyna Fragaria cfr. vesca Geum urbanum Potentilla cinerea Potentilla reptans Prunus avium Prunus spinosa Rosa cfr. canina Rosa spinosissima Rubus cfr. caesius Rubus cfr. ulmifolius Sanguisorba minor Common name Poppy Family Greater Celandine

Plantain Family Ivy-leaved Toadflax

Matted Globularia (leaves) Common Toadflax

Ribwort Plantain Greater Plantain A speedwell

Plumbago Family a Sea Lavender a Sea Lavender (leaves)

Knotweed Family Prostrate Knotweed

Purslane Family Purslane

Primrose Family European Cyclamen Scarlet Pimpernel

Buttercup Family Old Man's Beard Forking Larkspur an Hellebore (leaves) Christmas Rose (leaves) a Buttercup

Mignonette Family Mignonette

Buckthorn Family Alder Buckthorn Christ's-thorn

Rose Family Common Agrimony Hawthorn Wild Strawberry (leaves) Wood Avens (leaves) Abbotswood Potentilla (leaves) Creeping Cinquefoil Wild Cherry Blackthorn Dog Rose Burnet Rose European Dewberry a Bramble Elmleaf Blackberry Salad Burnet

Location

Mala Ucka

Mala Ucka Mala Ucka Mirna mouth Zrenj Mala Ucka Istarske Toplice

Kamenjak Mirna mouth

Istarske Toplice

Pula

Istarske Toplice Zrenj

Istarske Toplice Zrenj Mala Ucka Mala Ucka Cepic

Istarske Toplice

Mlaka Monkodonja

Savudrija Mala Ucka Mala Ucka Cepic Mala Ucka Mala Ucka Skocjanski Zatok Mirna valley Mala Ucka Mala Ucka Mala Ucka Istarske Toplice Istarske Toplice Scientific name Sorbus aria

Rubiaceae Galium sp. Galium verum

Rutaceae Ruta officinalis

Salicaceae Populus alba Populus nigra Salix alba Salix purpurea

Santalaceae Osyris alba Thesium divaricatum

Sapindaceae Acer campestre Acer monspessulanum Acer opalus

Scrophulariaceae Verbascum blattaria Verbascum cfr. thapsus

Simaroubaceae Ailanthus altissima

Solanaceae Datura stramonium Solanum dulcamara Solanum nigrum

Tamaricaceae Tamarix sp.

Urticaceae Parietaria judaica Urtica dioica

Verbanaceae Verbena officinale

Vitaceae Parthenocissus quinquefolia Vitis sylvestris

Monocots

Alismataceae Alisma plantago-aquatica Common name Whitebeam

Bedstraw Family a Bedstraw Lady's Bedstraw

Rue Family Rue

Willow Family White Poplar Black Poplar White Willow Purple Willow

Sandalwood Family Poet's Cassia A Bastard toadflax

Maple Family Field Maple Montpelier Maple Italian Maple

Figwort Family Moth Mullein Great Mullein

Tree of Heaven family Tree of Heaven

Nightshade Family Jimsonweed Bittersweet Nightshade Black Nightshade

Tamarisk Family Tamarisk

Nettle Family Pelitory-of-the-Wall Common Nettle

Vervain Family Vervain

Vine Family Virginia Creeper Wild Vine

Monocotyledons Water-plantain Family European Water-plantain Location Mala Ucka

Mala Ucka Mala Ucka

Take off "Zavoj"

Mlaka Istarske Toplice Istarske Toplice Mlaka

Istarske Toplice Cepic

Istarske Toplice Istarske Toplice Vela Ucka

Istarske Toplice Savudrija

Trieste

Isola della Cona Savudrija Istarske Toplice

Mirna mouth

Istarske Toplice Mala Ucka

Istarske Toplice

Savudrija Zrenj

Isola della Cona

Scientific name

Amaryllidaceae Allium carinatum pulchellum* Allium ericetorum Allium senescens [Sternbergia lutea]

Asparagaceae Anthericum ramosum Asparagus acutifolius Asparagus officinale Prospero autumnale Ruscus aculeatus

Colchicaceae Colchicum autumnale

Iridaceae Iris pallida illyrica*

Orchidaceae Spiranthes spiralis

Poaceae Arundo donax Hordeum murinum Lagurus ovatus Phragmites australis Setaria pumila

Smilacaceae Smilax aspera

FUNGI Macrolepiota procera Lycoperdon sp.

Common name

Daffodil Family Keeled Garlic a Garlic Mountain Onion Winter Daffodil

Asparagus Family Branched St. Bernard's Lily Spiny Asparagus Asparagus Autumn Squill Butcher's-Broom

Meadow Saffron Family Autumn Crocus

Iris Family Sweet Iris (leaves)

Orchid Family Autumn Lady's-tresses Orchid

Grass Family Giant Reed Wall Barley Hare's Tail Grass Common Reed Yellow Bristle-grass

Smilax Family Smilax

Parasol Mushroom a Puffball

Location

Istarske Toplice Istarske Toplice Take off "Zavoj" Buzet

Istarske Toplice Cepic Secovlje Kamenjak Monkodonja

Mala Ucka

Take off "Zavoj"

Kamenjak

Mirna mouth Mala Ucka Kamenjak Istarske Toplice Istarske Toplice

Kamenjak

Cepic Kamenjak