

Sicily in Autumn

Naturetrek Tour Report

13th – 19th September 2022



Common Swallowtail



European Scops Owl



Sea Daffodil



European Dwarf Mantis

Tour report and images by Luca Boscain



Naturetrek

Mingledown Barn

Wolf's Lane

Chawton

Alton

Hampshire

GU34 3HJ

UK

T: +44 (0)1962 733051

E: info@naturetrek.co.uk

W: www.naturetrek.co.uk

Tour participants: Luca Boscain & Josip Lendinskap (leaders) with 13 Naturetrek clients.

Day 1

Tuesday 13th September

Fontanarossa airport, Foce del Simeto and Capo Murro di Porco

After a very early start, we landed at the Fontanarossa airport of Catania on time, at 10am.

During the flight, the lucky people who were by the windows could enjoy the view of the Aeolian archipelago, with the island of Stromboli characterized by the steaming top of the volcanic cone, followed by the massive dark shape of a much larger volcano, Etna, the highest in Europe, emerging from the clouds and the haze of the lowlands.

At the Arrivals gate, we were welcomed by Josip, our leader from Croatia, while Luca, the other leader who flew from Venice, arrived just a bit later when we were finishing our coffee.

The rental of the minivans was rather slow, as usual in Sicily where the Mediterranean character triumphs, but after a short drive of 20 minutes, we left the main road to penetrate into the countryside, following the northern bank of the Simeto river, the second longest in Sicily. Here we walked for few hundred metres to the estuary. On the beach, often disturbed by people having a walk, there were hundreds of Yellow-legged Gulls, among which, with the telescope, we could spot two Lesser Black-backed Gulls, two Sandwich Terns, a Wood Sandpiper, four Pied Avocets and two Oystercatchers. A flock of 50 Greater Flamingos flew over the deep blue sea in perfect light, showing the contrasting pink plumage perfectly.

The dragonflies that were patrolling the bank were very interesting, going from the well-known Blue Emperor, to much more localized Long Skimmers (*Orthetrum trinacria*) and Northern Banded Groundlings (*Brachythemis impartita*), with distinctive dark spots on the wings.

We stopped for lunch at a petrol station, not far from Lentini, where we could choose among a rich selection of sandwiches and drinks.

We arrived at our agriturismo, the “Pozzo di Mazza”, almost at 3p.m., where we were welcomed by Carmen, who led us to the rooms. The setting was extremely attractive, with a lovely settlement formed by ancient buildings all restored to accommodate visitors, a courtyard with tables and a surrounding garden with mixed Mediterranean and exotic plants.

In the afternoon, we went to the nearby Capo Murro di Porco, the most prominent peninsula of eastern Sicily, and we walked to a white lighthouse. On the limestone rocks, deeply eroded by the rain and the sea waves, we noticed two pretty males of Black-eared Wheatear, chasing flies with acrobatic flights.

The sea-watching offered only a distant Yelkouan Shearwater and a much closer Audouin's Gull, that passed in flight showing well the tricoloured bill and the silvery plumage.

In the patches of dry grass, together with Italian (*Podarcis siculus*) and Sicilian Wall Lizards (*Podarcis wagleriana*), we noticed some late flowers like Pine Thistle (*Carlina gummifera*), Sea Squill (*Drimys pancration*), Golden (*Limbarda*

crithmoides) and Rock Samphire (*Crithmum maritimum*) and the endemic *Limonium syracusanum*, with tiny pale purple flowers.

We followed a path among a maquis of Mediterranean Dwarf Palms (*Chamaerops humilis*), Mastics (*Pistacia lentiscus*), Thorny Brooms (*Calicotome infesta*) and Tree Spurges (*Euphorbia dendroides*) and we had brief views of Sardinian Warbler and Zitting Cisticola. A colourful male Red-veined Darter (*Sympetrum fonscolombii*) posed on twig, allowing nice photos.

After birding, we stopped in a minimarket to buy some ice-creams and drinks, then we met at 19.30 to share the check-list of the day, in the lovely courtyard of Pozzo di Mazza.

Our first supper was an amazing succession of local flavours, starting with *capponata* and vegetarian pancakes, continuing with *arancini* and filled sardines, and ending with a glorious pistachio flan and a *zibibbo* wine.

A Scops Owl called in the distance while Luca set up the moth-trap for the night.

Day 2

Wednesday 14th September

Vendicari and Syracuse archaeological park

We met at 7.15 by the moth-trap in the garden: unfortunately tens of wasps (*Vespula* cfr. *germanica*) had come into the trap to hunt the moths, so the bottom of the trap was quite a battlefield.

There weren't large moths, the largest being a Giant Looper (*Ascotis selenaria*), but despite this there were tens of small ones like Vestals (*Rhodometra sacraria*), Spotted Sulphurs (*Emmelia trabealis*), *Pseudozanza bipartita*, Dark Mottled Willow (*Spodoptera ciliata*) and Small Mottled Willow (*Spodoptera exigua*). Some people followed Josip in a birding walk that produced Whinchat, Sardinian and Subalpine Warbler.

For breakfast Carmen pampered us with homemade cakes, marmalades and yogurt, mainly made with their own lemons. Hoopoe, Kestrel and Barn Swallows passed in the sky while we were sitting in the courtyard.

After breakfast, we drove southwards stopping in Avola to shop for the picnics, then we continued to the reserve of Vendicari. On the way, from the Josip's minivan, were seen a Turtle Dove and a Swift, most likely a Pallid one.

In Vendicari we walked few hundred metres to the first pair of hides, in which we spread out and scanned hard the former salt pans. Tens and tens of Grey Herons and egrets were sitting on a derelict building, while the brackish waters of the lagoon were literally covered in Greater Flamingos and other waterbirds. In front of the hide were feeding in the mud Wood Sandpipers, a Spotted Redshank worthy of its name, Black-winged Stilts and some Little Ringed Plovers. Further, on the posts, we noticed several Slender-billed Gulls and a couple of Gull-billed Terns, one of which came to fish in front of the hides. We walked on a trail through what is usually a wet prairie, that now had plenty of Golden Samphires and Sea Lavenders (*Limonium* ssp.) in bloom, and we reached one of the most popular beaches of Sicily, all left natural with its dark masses of Neptune Grass (*Posidonia oceanica*) leaves.

We followed the coastline of sand dunes with Large-fruited Junipers (*Juniperus macrocarpa*), Mastics and Olives (*Olea europaea*), and plenty of grasshoppers (*Acrotylus* sp.) were seen on the path.

The next hide faced to the south, so the light wasn't perfect, together with the haze, but the lagoon was filled with hundreds of birds, going from gulls to waders to flamingos to ducks, unfortunately most of them pretty distant.

We had good views through the telescope of Curlew Sandpipers, Dunlins, Little Stints and Ringed Plovers that were feeding on the mud in front, while we struggled to distinguish a Bar-tailed Godwit and three Caspian Terns much further away, among the Black-headed Gulls.

At the last hide, not far from the ancient tuna factory that some of us visited (it felt like being in a roofless cathedral), there were not many birds, just a Little Stint in winter plumage and a Greenshank, so we started slowly to come back to the minivans.

There, at quarter to two, we found a picnic arranged smartly by our guides in the back of the two minivans, shaded from the bright sunshine, with a lovely selection of cheese and vegetables.

In the afternoon we drove to Syracuse, stopping to recover from the heat in the shade of a cafe and then starting to visit the archaeological site called Neapolis, the "new town".

Here we explored the shady gardens in the foothill of some cliffs, with Jackdaws, Feral Pigeons and a Kestrel, and the *Latomie*, artificial caves dug by the prisoners of the Greek tyrants of Syracuse. According to the interpretation of the famous painter Caravaggio, one of those caves, with a very odd sinuous shape, was the evil tool of the tyrant Dionisius to hear the lamentation of his prisoners.

Here and there we noticed a number of local and exotic plants introduced from all around the planet, going from Squirting Cucumber (*Echallium elaterium*), to Marvel of Peru (*Mirabilis jalapa*), Lantana (*Lantana camara*), American Pokeweed (*Phytolacca americana*) and Flax-leaved Horseweed (*Erigeron bonariensis*).

Then we climbed to the highest level of the Greek theatre, being enchanted by a great view into the bay. Most of the timber seats that are set up in summer to cover the ancient rocks were not dismantled yet, despite the end of the acting season.

Luca explained to us a lot about the history of the town and the differences among the Greek theatre and the Roman amphitheatre we visited later, while a Cattle Egret passed in flight.

We came back at about 6 o'clock, so we did the checklist after a supper that included *bruschetta*, *parmigiana*, pasta with *pesto trapanese*, chicken skewer with lemon and a wonderful *cassatella* with *ricotta* cheese.

In the night our dreams were enhanced by the duet of a couple of Scops Owls.

Day 3

Thursday 15th September

Penisola Magnisi and Saline di Priolo

This morning the moth-trap was set on a terrace on the first floor, with a lovely view into the Syracusan countryside with a *masseria* and olive trees.

There were quite a few species that had been seen the day before, but in different proportions, with a clear dominance of Mediterranean Brocade (*Spodoptera littoralis*). New ones were Large Yellow-underwing (*Noctua pronuba*), Sorcerer (*Aedia leucomelas*), Shuttle-shaped Dart (*Agrotis puta*), Flame (*Axylia putris*), Hoary Footman (*Eilema* cfr. *caniola*), Geometrician (*Grammodes stolidus*) and a number of *Palpita vitrealis*. People that joined Josip in a birding walk had a Turtle Dove in flight, Yellow Wagtail and Common Redstart.

After breakfast we drove northwards, passing Syracuse and descending to a horrible industrial area with refineries, chimneys and rusty pipes: the failed attempt of the Italian government to develop the local economy without caring at all about the landscape.

We reached an isthmus that connected the mainland with the Penisola Magnisi: the contrast between the background and the amazing peace and beauty of the vast prairies was strong. The extensive area of thistles and flat limestone was a perfect setting for the concert of Crested Larks, while Zitting Cisticola, Tawny Pipit and Northern Wheatear were definitely more discrete. In the sky flew some Pallid Swifts and Barn Swallows, among which Will spotted a Red-rumped one. From the northern edge of the peninsula, Luca spotted an Audouin's Gull sitting on a rock. There were very few flowers, and everything was yellow but there were a few Heliotropes (*Heliotropium europaeum*) and Leadworts (*Plumbago europaea*), where we found Southern Common Blue (*Polyommatus celina*) and Red-veined Darter. Among the dead stems we distinguished Field Eryngo (*Eryngium campestre*), Illyrian (*Onopordum Illyricum*) and Carline thistle (*Carlina* cfr. *hispanica*).

In the area of the WWII bunkers, near the short lighthouse and a herd of cows, we noticed some Stone Curlews running in the grass, getting them in the scopes.

Near a rectangular garden surrounded by Prickly Pears, Luca spotted an unexpected female Violet Dropwing (*Tritheimis annulata*) that posed for the photographers.

On the way back, we encountered the Aragonese tower and the ruins of the Neolithic settlement of Thapsos.

The heat was noticeable, having spent all the morning in the open under remorseless bright sunshine, so we went to recover in the village of Priolo Gargallo, where a very good Italian gelato was extremely welcome.

While Luca arranged the picnic in the shade on some tables, kindly offered by the LIPU workers of the Saline di Priolo, Josip led the group to the only surviving hide of the reserve, devastated by a fire in 2019. Inside was extremely hot and the windows were at very odd heights, but the view to the lagoon was spectacular: not only tens of Flamingos, but a large selection of gulls and waders was there. The Curlew Sandpipers and Little Stints were close, but we discussed a lot about the further shore birds among which we recognized Kentish, Ringed and Little Ringed Plovers, Sanderling, Dunlin, Common Sandpiper, Greenshank, Spotted Redshank and Wood Sandpiper.

Among the Black-backed Gulls, also some Slender-billed ones appeared, together with a couple of Sandwich Terns and loud Caspian Terns.

At about 2pm, we came back under the Carrob Trees (*Ceratonia siliqua*) and we had another glorious picnic with a very tasty yellow melon. After lunch, we walked along another path of the reserve, paying a lot of attention to the dragonflies: we found in fact Western Spreadwings (*Chalcolestes viridis*), Southern Darters (*Sympetrum meridionale*) and

Broad Scarlets (*Crocothemis erythraea*), plus the European subspecies of Speckled Wood (*Pararge aegeria aegeria*), much more orange than ours.

The beach in front the reserve, covered in Sea Daffodils (*Pancratium maritimum*) in bloom, hosted a nest of Loggerhead Turtle (*Caretta caretta*) almost ready for the eggs to hatch and some Mediterranean Gulls passed in flight.

Supper offered a vegetables mix, vegetarian *arancini*, *consious*, *ravioli capuliatu*, swordfish and a pistachio cake, everything delicious.

We were having the pudding when a Scops Owl came to sing very close to the table: Luca managed to find it and to show the bird with his powerful torch. The tame Owl stayed for minutes on a palm and later on an olive tree, allowing good pictures.

Day 4

Friday 16th September

Mount Etna

This morning we had a quick breakfast and departure because we needed to change Josip's minivan at Fontanarossa airport and we were conscious of how much slow and complicated this might be, especially in a very crowded airport like Catania.

It needed a lot of effort and patience but, with the very kind help of some members of the group, we managed to do it successfully.

Then we drove along some of the worst surfaced roads of eastern Sicily through the foothills of Mount Etna, our destination of the day. The fertile gentle slopes were populated with a succession of picturesque villages, but also with quarries of lava stones and, unfortunately, litter along the sides of the road.

We stopped not far from Nicolosi, where the maquis of Etna Brooms (*Genista aetnensis*), in the truth small trees more than bushes, opened with nice patches of Red Valerian (*Centranthus ruber*) in bloom, a very popular plants among the butterflies. A Southern White Admiral (*Limenitis reducta*) passed in flight without stopping, while we could easily compare Long-tailed (*Lampides boeticus*), Lang's Short-tailed (*Leptotes pirithous*) and Southern Blues, feasting on the red flowers. In the sky we saw two flocks of very high Bee-eaters on migration.

We continued through a series of lovely orchards and woodlands of Sweet Chestnuts (*Castanea sativa*) and Downy Oaks (*Quercus pubescens*), not far from Monte Concilio, and we had another short break. Birds were silent but for a Blue Tit, while a couple of Woodland Graylings (*Hipparchia fagi*) and Cardinal Fritillaries (*Argynnis pandora*) were noticed.

Later we drove among very dark recent lava fields, probably few tens of year old, and we finally reached the area of Rifugio Sapienza, a very touristic village with vast car parks, restaurants and souvenir stores.

We had lunch in a self-service restaurant where we could chose a "tris" among a good selection of *primi* and vegetable starters.

The group divided and six people joined Josip, deciding to go by cable car to the highest reachable point, not far from the summit of the volcano. They then caught a powerful 4x4 bus that led them through the ash fields up to an altitude of 2,700m, where a vulcanologist guide met them and, with him, they went along a short trail to a view point to the Valle del Bove, the valley where usually most of the lava flows.

Despite the sunshine, it was chilly with the wind there, and they could see clearly the sulphur and the steam coming out from the three main craters of the summit.

The other seven members of the group went with Luca to the very peaceful grassy clearing of Piano Vetore. Our guide first spotted a male Red Crossbill, then, by the Austrian Black Pines (*Pinus nigra*) a number of nice forest birds appeared: Firecrests, Short-toed Treecreepers, Coal Tits and Nuthatches.

The grass was mainly yellow and dry, but here and there there were still several flowers like Tunicflower (*Petrorhagia saxifraga*), the endemic knapweed *Centaurea jadiniae*, Sheep's-bit (*Jasione montana*), plus amazing trees of Etna Broom in full bloom, in one of which Alan noticed a juvenile Rock Bunting.

Other endemic plants were not in flower like Etna Milk-vetch (*Astragalus siculus*) and Etna Barberry (*Berberis aetnensis*), while we went through a maquis of Black Poplars (*Populus nigra*), already with some yellow leaves, a sign of the autumn at the door.

In the middle of the path were plenty of Graylings, impossible to assign to a precise species because both, Common (*Hipparchia semele*) and Sicilian (*Hipparchia blachieri*), occur at this altitude and they can only be distinguished by genitalia, while in the meadows they saw tens of lovely Queen of Spain Fritillaries (*Issoria lathonia*), Long-tailed, Lang's Short-tailed and Southern Blues, Clouded Yellows (*Colias croceus*), Woodland Graylings and Small Whites (*Pieris rapae*).

After an undergrowth of Brackens (*Pteridium aquilinum*), they came to a road that ran beside a couple of sites where they could notice the different texture of the lava crust, that solidified quickly, and the underground lava, with bubbles of gas, that probably took years and years to get colder. Here they noticed a female Crossbill on a tree, a couple of Wall (*Lasiommata megera*) and Large Wall Browns (*Lasiommata maera*) and they had a great view through the scope of an adult Rock Bunting, admiring the contrast between the grey striped head and the bright orange breast. Their last observation in Piano Vetore was a stunning Woodlark that showed on a stone maybe 15 metres from them, so they could distinguish clearly the two white brows joining in the nape.

At 5 p.m., with perfect timing, we all gathered together again in the car park of Rifugio Sapienza to start the descent. We stopped a last time to try with the playback to get an answer from the Rock Partridges, but we had no luck. Josip heard instead Sicilian Long-tailed Tits (*Aegithalos candatus siculus*) in the distance, so we all could see this endemic subspecies feeding for several minutes on a couple of Etna Brooms, noticing the characteristic brown head.

The return to the *agriturismo* took about an hour and half, so many of us could relax while the driving got smoother along the motorway.

The supper was once again beautiful, with pasta *alla norma*, tender pork and an ice-cream followed by a creamy homemade *limoncello*.

Day 5

Saturday 17th September

Southern *pantani* and Marzamemi

This morning we woke up to an unexpected wind that blew from inland extremely strongly, moving leaves and dust everywhere. Luckily Alan had come earlier to collect some moths in pots and he checked that the moth-trap as well wasn't blown away. New species included Scarce Bordered Straw (*Helicoverpa armigera*), Porter's Rustic (*Athetis hospes*), Cream Bordered Green Pea (*Earias* cfr. *clorana*) and two wonderful Mediterranean Mantises (*Iris oratoria*).

Josip led people less keen on moths for a walk in the garden and found a very good Swallowtail (*Papilio machaon*), Wall Brown, a *Gegenes* skipper and some Broad Scarlets.

Later, we drove southwards to the *pantani*, brackish water lakes, at the most southern Sicilian corner. After a junction in Pachino, we stopped because there were some stunning Bee-eaters perched on a wire.

At the Pantano Cuba, we were welcomed by Paolo who works here and who told us about the place where we were: it used to be, in fact, a place filled with poachers that used to shoot everything. A German foundation felt the importance of that area as a stopover for migrant birds on the way to Germany from Africa, so they decided to buy the land, step by step, to enclose it, to clean it from litter and greenhouses and to start an amazing project of increasing of the general wildlife, planting hundreds of native trees, building piles of stones or logs for reptiles, reusing old buildings as nest towers for birds, bees and bats, etc.

In front of Paolo's hut, there was a lovely garden with flowers and a small pool where different species of dragonflies and bees came. We found also a Dwarf Mantis (*Ameles spallanzania*), with its characteristic "mandolino butt".

Unfortunately, the combination of summer drought, strong hot wind and some smoke from a fire nearby was a combination to reduce any wildlife activity to the minimum. The lake was in fact completely dry, with only Little Ringed Plovers running on the dry mud surface, and a few birds were standing in the open like a couple of Whinchats. In the few patches of shade, there were tens of Southern Darters and a single Island Bluetail (*Ischnura genei*).

The foundation used three sweet donkeys to keep the grass of part of the meadows very low, while other areas were mowed in stripes to allow small fauna to find a place to hide.

Paolo was adding water almost every day to a little pond where we found a youngster of the endemic Sicilian Pond Turtle (*Emys trinacris*), eyeing us from some masses of algae, a Sicilian Grass Snake (*Natrix helvetica sicula*), many Broad Scarlets and a couple of delicate Migrant Spreadwings (*Lestes barbarus*), with their typical bicoloured pterostigma.

After a picnic lunch, we said goodbye to Paolo, and many of us left a donation to help their amazing project, really the most inspired we saw in a complicated land like Sicily, and we then drove by the Pantano Longarini.

In some straight canals there were Great Cormorants, Grey Herons, egrets, Common Sandpipers, Little Ringed Plovers, Little Grebes and, unexpectedly, a Bar-tailed Godwit and a Water Rail in the open. We visited also the Granelli beach, but the only two birds that were around the two canal mouths were a Grey Plover and a Kingfisher.

In the Pantano Bruno there was still some water and we saw by telescope Shelducks, a Teal, Shovelers, Greater Flamingos, Ruffs and Coots, but the heat haze was very noticeable by now. Driving back nearby Pantano Longarini, we had a great view of an Osprey hunting over the hidden ponds and canals. In the small Pantano Auruca there wasn't too much; a couple of Snipes and Common Sandpipers.

We ended our visit to the *pantani* with the richest place: we parked by a wonderful rough seaside and we walked a hundred metres to the spectacular Pantano Baronello. The lake was in fact literally covered in birds: as Peter said, "name a wader and you will find it".

In the nearest mud soon landed nine Glossy Ibises, while nearby were resting tens of Little Egrets, Slender-billed and Black-headed Gulls. We scanned carefully with the telescopes the shore birds bonanza and, among tens of Common Redshanks, Little Stints, Curlew Sandpipers and Dunlins, we noticed Common and Little Ringed Plovers, Temminck's Stints and Spotted Redshank.

Behind the Greater Flamingos, on the other side of the lake by the reeds, there were a Curlew, Bar-tailed Godwit and an unexpected Purple Swamphen. When three Marsh Harriers appeared, the smaller birds moved, and a pair of Marsh Sandpipers was distinguished by Luca in the distance.

We decided that it was time to get out of the hot Sicilian sun, cooked by the warm and humid western wind, so we had a break in Marzamemi: in this beautiful fishermen's village, now become rather touristic, we tried an award-winning *gelateria*, having excellent *granita* or *gelato* by the seaside.

To drive back to the *agriturismo* from there took about 45 minutes. Tonight, chef Pepe prepared for us a pasta with olives and capers, very tasty swordfish rolls with lemon and a lemon sorbet.

Day 6

Sunday 18th September

Cava Grande del Cassibile and Noto

The moth-trap, set up in the garden, did extremely well, with hundreds of moths, but without a huge variety of species and mainly small sized specimens. New ones, among tens and tens of Mediterranean Brocades and Small Mottled Willows were three Dark Sword Grass (*Agrotis ipsilon*), Bordered Straw (*Heliothis peltigera*), a *Cryphia* sp., plus a nice Geometrician - always beautiful.

As far as migration went, the only sign was the presence of a Chiffchaff in the garden: typically bad weather is needed to get grounded migrants.

After breakfast, we drove southwards to Avola and, from there, we climbed with the minivans a bendy road to a breath-taking view point from which we admired the Ionian sea, the former terraces along the hilly slopes and the extended town of Avola, home of the well-known local grape *Nero d'Avola*.

In the blue sky some Bee-eaters passed, while below us we noticed some Sardinian Warblers, a Stonechat and a nice Swallowtail. Josip spotted a female or young Blue Rock-thrush on a wire that we could observe properly through the scopes.

We continued ascending, seeing a colourful male Cleopatra (*Gonepteryx cleopatra*) by a wall covered in Ivy (*Hedera helix*) and we arrived on the top of the plateau, where there were a lot of summer houses and a convent.

We stopped in a valley where Luca had Sicilian Rock Partridge in spring, but once again we had no luck with that species. A Great Banded Grayling (*Brintesia circe*) was only seen in flight, while a Sicilian Grayling (*Hipparchia blachieri*), apparently the only sibling species of our Common Grayling reported in the area, landed on the gravel of the roadside.

We drove a bit further to the edge of the very deep gorge of Cava Grande del Cassibile: the river, with its popular green pools plenty of tourist, was flowing in almost 500 metres below.

After a comfort stop, we went by foot to explore the interesting Mediterranean maquis, dedicating attention to the interesting flora: many nice purple Pine Thistles, Flax-leaved Daphnes (*Daphne gnidium*) and Love-in-the-mists (*Nigella damascena*), but also the red berries of the Osyris (*Osyris alba*) and the tiny round fruits of the Almond-leaved Pear (*Pyrus spinosa*). Woodlark and Crested Lark were both singing, while on the top of the Hawthorns (*Crataegus monogyna*) we noticed Stonechats and pretty Cirl Buntings. Here and there there were a few Southern Darters and butterflies like Eastern Bath White (*Pontia edusa*), Meadow Brown (*Maniola jurtina*) and Small Copper (*Lycena phlaeas*).

We went up a barren hill with Thorny Burnets (*Sarcopoterium spinosum*) and then, from there, we descended among the stone walls to the edge of the gorge. The view was stunning, stretching to the distant city centre of Syracuse, and a dozen of Ravens passed in flight.

We found another viewpoint from a derelict terrace: on the Red Valerians in bloom there were a number of Meadow Browns, Common and Scarce Swallowtails (*Iphiclides podalirius*), Southern Blue and Hummingbird Hawkmoth (*Macroglossum stellatarum*).

We came back at about 1 p.m. for lunch, sitting at a table in the shade. The service, as usual in Sicily, was particularly slow, but it was worth waiting because a beautiful selection of Sicilian appetizers arrived, with pizza, bruschetta, olives, grilled courgettes, aubergines, peppers, cheese and salami, all extremely tasty.

From there, we drove half an hour to Noto, the capital of the Sicilian Baroque architecture. Luca led us through the monumental city gate into the centre, leaving us an hour and half to explore a number of beautiful churches, the theatre and an interesting exhibition with paintings and photos from Caravaggio to Yoko Ono.

Many of us got an umpteenth Italian *gelato*, enjoying the view to the cathedral while sitting on the stairs of the City Hall. A House Martin and some Pallid Swifts were still visiting their nests under eaves and roofs, while Luca pointed out to us a flowering Sicilian Snapdragon (*Antirrhinum siculum*), growing from the crevice of a house.

We came back to the *agriturismo* before 6 o'clock, in plenty of time to pack our stuff in the luggage.

Josip had a Barn Owl flying in the garden, then we met for the last check-list of the week and supper, that included pasta with a kind of *amatriciana* sauce, breaded veal with ham and cheese and a *ricotta* cake, followed by the last *zibibbo* liquored wine.

During the night some rain fell, decreasing the temperature at last.

Day 7

Monday 19th September

Fontanarossa airport

This morning we had an early breakfast at 7.30 and, while we were waiting, a lovely male Sardinian Warbler showed very well in the open on a Prickly Pear leaf.

We were ready to leave an hour later, and we drove for about an hour to the airport: there were quite a few birds around, including first of all a Hoopoe in flight and then a pale morph Booted Eagle, circling over the motorway.

We arrived smoothly at the Fontanarossa airport and said goodbye to our always smiling and helpful leaders and luckily the flight was on time.

Receive our e-newsletter

Join the Naturetrek e-mailing list and be the first to hear about new tours, additional departures and new dates, tour reports and special offers. Visit www.naturetrek.co.uk to sign up.

Social Media

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



www.facebook.com/naturetrekwildlifeholidays



www.twitter.com/naturetrektours



www.instagram.com/naturetrek_wildlife_holidays

Species lists

Birds (H = Heard only)

Common name	Scientific name	September 2022						
		13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Common Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>		10			2		
Northern Shoveler	<i>Spatula clypeata</i>		20	10		10		
Eurasian Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>			50		1		
Pallid Swift	<i>Apus pallidus</i>	2	2	10		10	10	1
Feral Rock Dove	<i>Columba livia</i>	20	50	50	15	5	5	
Common Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	20	20	10	3	10	5	5
European Turtle Dove	<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>		1	1				
Eurasian Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	5	10	5	5	10	5	
Water Rail	<i>Rallus aquaticus</i>					1		
Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>			3		4		
Eurasian Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>			2		10		
Western Swamphen	<i>Porphyrio porphyrio</i>					1		
Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>			15		10		
Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>		1					
Greater Flamingo	<i>Phoenicopterus roseus</i>	50	400	150		150		
Eurasian Stone-curlew	<i>Burhinus oedecnemus</i>		h	10	2h	h		
Eurasian Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	2		2				
Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>		5	10		1		
Pied Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>	4	10					
Grey Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>					1		
Common Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	1	5	5		5		
Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>		20	5		10		
Kentish Plover	<i>Charadrius alexandrinus</i>			5		3		
Eurasian Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>					1		
Bar-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>		1			3		
Ruff	<i>Calidris pugnax</i>		1			10		
Curlew Sandpiper	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>		10	4		20		
Temminck's Stint	<i>Calidris temminckii</i>					2		
Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>			4				
Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>		1	1		10		
Little Stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>		10	5		20		
Common Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>					2		
Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>			1		3		
Common Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>		2			10		
Marsh Sandpiper	<i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>					2		
Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>	1	10	1		2		
Spotted Redshank	<i>Tringa erythropus</i>		1	2		1		
Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>		10	1				
Slender-billed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus genei</i>		20	10		100		
Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>		100	20		50		
Audouin's Gull	<i>Ichthyaetus audouinii</i>	1		2		7		
Mediterranean Gull	<i>Ichthyaetus melanocephalus</i>			6				
Yellow-legged Gull	<i>Larus michahellis</i>	200	2	2		10		
Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>	2						
Gull-billed Tern	<i>Gelochelidon nilotica</i>		2					
Caspian Tern	<i>Hydroprogne caspia</i>		3	2				
Sandwich Tern	<i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>	2		5				

Common name	Scientific name	September 2022						
		13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Yelkouan Shearwater	<i>Puffinus yelkouan</i>	1						
White Stork	<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>	S			S			S
Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>		1			4		
Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>					9		
Eurasian Spoonbill	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>		35					
Squacco Heron	<i>Ardeola ralloides</i>		1					
Western Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>		1	5				
Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	1	60	1		10		
Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>		3	1		2		
Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	1	30	10	1	175		
Western Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>					1		
Booted Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus pennatus</i>							1
Western Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	1	1	1		6	1	
Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	1	1	3	3	3	1	2
Western Barn Owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>						1	
Eurasian Scops Owl	<i>Otus scops</i>	h	2h	1	h	h		
Eurasian Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>		1					1
Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>			1		2		
European Bee-eater	<i>Merops apiaster</i>				40	20	20	
Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	3	2	2	1	2	3	1
Woodchat Shrike	<i>Lanius senator</i>					1		
Eurasian Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	2	2		2		1	
Eurasian Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	5	5	5	3	5	10	10
Western Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>		6					
Hooded Crow	<i>Corvus cornix</i>	3	6	20	2	1	2	
Northern Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>				2		11	
Coal Tit	<i>Parus ater</i>				10			
Eurasian Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>		1	1	3	1	3	
Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	1	2	5	3		2h	2
Woodlark	<i>Lullula arborea</i>				4		h	
Crested Lark	<i>Galerida cristata</i>	2	h	10		2	h	1
Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>				1	?		
Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	10	3	20	30	30	10	10
Common House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>				1	50	50	
Red-rumped Swallow	<i>Cecropis daurica</i>			1				
Cetti's Warbler	<i>Cettia cetti</i>		3h	2h		h	h	
Sicilian Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus siculus</i>				6			
Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>	1						
Common Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>				2		2	
Zitting Cisticola	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>	2	2	3		2		
Sardinian Warbler	<i>Curruca melanocephala</i>	5	5	5	h	5	10	3
Eastern Subalpine Warbler	<i>Curruca cantillans</i>		1		1			
Common Firecrest	<i>Regulus ignicapilla</i>				2			
Eurasian Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>				2h		h	
Eurasian Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>				2			
Short-toed Treecreeper	<i>Certhia brachydactyla</i>				3			
Common Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>		1					
Spotless Starling	<i>Sturnus unicolor</i>	50	50	30	5	200	20	20
Common Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	1	2	1	3	2	5	
European Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>				h			
Common Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>			1				

Common name	Scientific name	September 2022						
		13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Blue Rock Thrush	<i>Monticola solitarius</i>						1	
Whinchat	<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>		1			2		
European Stonechat	<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>						4	
Northern Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	2	2	2				
Western Black-eared Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe hispanica</i>	3						
Eurasian Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>	1	2	1	h	3	1	
Italian Sparrow	<i>Passer italiae</i>	5	2	10	3	10	h	3
White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba alba</i>	2	10	4		1	h	
Western Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>		2h	2			1	
Tawny Pipit	<i>Anthus campestris</i>			2				
Common Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>						h	
European Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>		1					
Common Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>		10			4	5	
European Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>		3	10		2	2	1
Rock Bunting	<i>Emberiza cia</i>				3			
Cirl Bunting	<i>Emberiza cirius</i>						2	
Common Crossbill	<i>Loxia curvirostra</i>				2			

Other vertebrates

		September 2022						
Common name	Scientific name	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
MAMMALS:								
Kuhl's Pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus kuhlii</i>	h	h	1	3	h	1	
REPTILES								
Sicilian Pond Turtle	<i>Emys trinacris</i>					1		
Loggerhead Turtle	<i>Caretta caretta</i>			S				
Italian Wall Lizard	<i>Podarcis siculus</i>	2	10	5	2	1	10	
Sicilian Wall Lizard	<i>Podarcis wagleriana</i>	3		3				
Moorish Gecko	<i>Tarentola mauritanica</i>	3	2	1	2	3	2	
Barred Grass Snake	<i>Natrix helvetica sicula</i>					1		

Invertebrates

Common name	Scientific name	September 2022						
		13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Mallow Skipper	<i>Carcharodus alceae</i>				2			
Mediterranean/Pygmy Skipper	<i>Gegenes nostradamus/pumilio</i>		5			5		
Swallowtail	<i>Papilio machaon</i>					3	6	
Scarce Swallowtail	<i>Iphiclidides podalirius</i>						1	
Large White	<i>Pieris brassicae</i>				1			
Small White	<i>Pieris rapae</i>		2	2	5			
Eastern Bath White	<i>Pontia edusa</i>		2				2	
Clouded Yellow	<i>Colias crocea</i>		1	1	3			
Cleopatra	<i>Gonepteryx cleopatra</i>		2				1	
Small Copper	<i>Lycaena phlaeas</i>		2		3		1	
Long-tailed Blue	<i>Lampides boeticus</i>		1		10		1	
Lang's Short-tailed Blue	<i>Leptotes pirithous</i>		10	10	5	2	1	

Common name	Scientific name	September 2022						
		13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Holly Blue	<i>Celastrina argiolus</i>		2	2				
Southern Blue	<i>Polyommatus celina</i>			2	5		1	
Southern White Admiral	<i>Limenitis reducta</i>				1			
Painted Lady	<i>Vanessa cardui</i>	2				1		
Red Admiral	<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>					1	1	
Small Tortoiseshell	<i>Aglais urticae</i>				2			
Queen of Spain Fritillary	<i>Issoria lathonia</i>				20			
Speckled Wood	<i>Pararge aegeria aegeria</i>		1	1				
Large Wall Brown	<i>Lasiommata maera</i>				1			
Wall Brown	<i>Lasiommata megera</i>		1	3	2	1	4	
Small Heath	<i>Coenonympha pamphilus</i>				1			
Cardinal	<i>Argynnis</i> cfr. <i>pandora</i>				3			
Great Banded Grayling	<i>Brintesia circe</i>						2	
Sicilian Grayling	<i>Hipparchia</i> cfr. <i>blachieri</i>						5	
A grayling	<i>Hipparchia semele/blachieri</i>				20			
Woodland Grayling	<i>Hipparchia</i> cfr. <i>fagi</i>				5			
Meadow Brown	<i>Maniola jurtina</i>						10	
MOTHS:								
MACROS:								
Pale Shoulder	<i>Acontia lucida</i>		2	2			4	
Sorcerer	<i>Aedia leucomelas</i>			3		4	2	
Dark Sword Grass	<i>Agrotis ipsilon</i>						3	
Shuttle-shaped Dart	<i>Agrotis puta</i>			1			1	
Giant Looper	<i>Ascotis selenaria</i>		1					
Yellow Belle	<i>Aspitates ochrearia</i>						1	
Porter's Rustic	<i>Athetis hospes</i>					3		
Flame	<i>Axylia putris</i>			1		1		
Pale Mottled Willow	<i>Caradrina</i> cfr. <i>clavipalpis</i>						1	
A noctuid	<i>Cryphia</i> sp.						1	
Cream Bordered Green Pea	<i>Earias</i> cfr. <i>clorana</i>					1		
Hoary Footman	<i>Eilema</i> cfr. <i>caniola</i>			1				
Spotted Sulphur	<i>Emmelia trabealis</i>		2	3		2	5	
Pink-barred Eublemma	<i>Eublemma cochylioides</i>					1		
Purple Marbled	<i>Eublemma ostrina</i>						1	
Geometrician	<i>Grammodes stolidia</i>			1			1	
Scarce Bordered Straw	<i>Helicoverpa armigera</i>					4		
Bordered Straw	<i>Heliothis peltigera</i>						1	
Chevron Snout	<i>Hypena lividalis</i>						1	
Portland Ribbon Wave	<i>Idaea degeneraria</i>		1			1		
Cream-fringed Wave	<i>Idaea distinctaria</i>			1				
Lustrous Least Carpet	<i>Idaea filicata</i>					1	1	
Least Carpet	<i>Idaea rusticata</i>		1					
Small Dusty Wave	<i>Idaea seriata</i>			1				
Cosmopolitan	<i>Leucania loreyi</i>		1					
Hummingbird Hawk-moth	<i>Macroglossum stellatarum</i>						1	
A noctuid	<i>Mythimna languida</i>			1				
An erebid	<i>Nodaria nodosalis</i>					2		
Large Yellow-underwing	<i>Noctua pronuba</i>			2				
Robust Tabby	<i>Pandesma robusta</i>		1					
A geometrid	<i>Phaiogramma etruscaria</i>					1	1	

Common name	Scientific name	September 2022						
		13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Un-named Noctuid	<i>Pseudozarba bipartita</i>		10	5		10	20	
Vestal	<i>Rhodometra sacraria</i>	1	20	5		5	10	
Middle Lace Border	<i>Scopula decorata</i>						1	
A geometrid	<i>Scopula minorata</i>					1		
Lace Border	<i>Scopula ornata</i>						1	
Dark Mottled Willow	<i>Spodoptera cilium</i>		3	2			1	
Small Mottled Willow	<i>Spodoptera exigua</i>		2	5		5	30	
Mediterranean Brocade	<i>Spodoptera littoralis</i>		10	30	20	20	50	
Ni Moth	<i>Trichoplusia ni</i>			1		2	1	
Four-spotted	<i>Tyta luctuosa</i>		1	1		2	1	
Cream Drab	<i>Xanthodes albago</i>		1	1		1		
Burnet sp.	<i>Zygaena</i> sp.			1c				
MICROS :								
A crambid	<i>Achyra nudalis</i>			5		10	5	
Barred Grass-veneer	<i>Agriphila inquinatella</i>				1			
A crambid	<i>Ancylolomia inornata</i>		1					
A crambid	<i>Antigastra catalaunalis</i>		1	1		1		
A crambid	<i>Aporodes floralis</i>						1	
Carnation Tortrix	<i>Cacoecimorpha pronubana</i>					1		
Privet Tortrix	<i>Clepsis consimilana</i>		1				1	
A pyralid	<i>Denticera divisella</i>			1				
European Pepper Moth	<i>Duponchelia fovealis</i>					1		
An elachistid	<i>Ethmia bipunctella</i>			2			1	
Adulatrix	<i>Eutelia adulatrix</i>						1	
Spiderling Plume	<i>Megalorhipida leucodactylus</i>			1		1		
Rush Veneer	<i>Nomophila noctuella</i>		5	5		2	5	
A crambid	<i>Palpita vitrealis</i>			5		4	5	
Mother of Pearl	<i>Patania ruralis</i>					1		
Diamondback Moth	<i>Plutella xylostella</i>			1				
A pyralid	<i>Pterothrixidia rufella</i>						1	
A coleophorid	<i>Coleophora</i> sp.					2		
DRAGONFLIES & DAMSELFLIES								
Western Willow Spreadwing	<i>Chalcolestes viridis</i>			5				
Migrant Spreadwing	<i>Lestes barbarus</i>					3		
Island Bluetail	<i>Ischnura genei</i>		1	1		1		
Migrant Hawker	<i>Aeshna mixta</i>				2			
Blue Emperor	<i>Anax imperator</i>	1	6	1	1		1	
Lesser Emperor	<i>Anax parthenope</i>		1					
Long Skimmer	<i>Orthetrum trinacria</i>	2	1					
Broad Scarlet	<i>Crocothemis erythraea</i>			3		10	1	
Red-veined Darter	<i>Sympetrum fonscolombii</i>	1		2				
Southern Darter	<i>Sympetrum meridionale</i>			4		100	2	
Violet Dropwing	<i>Trithemis annulata</i>			1				
Northern Banded Groundling	<i>Brachythemis impartita</i>	4						
OTHER INVERTEBRATES:								
A bush cricket	<i>Rhacocleis annulata</i>					1		
Yellow-winged Grasshopper	<i>Oedipoda fuscocincta</i>						2	

Common name	Scientific name	September 2022						
		13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Blue-winged Grasshopper	<i>Oedipoda caerulescens</i>			5	10		5	
A grasshopper	<i>Acrotylus</i> sp.		10					
Lamenting Grasshopper	<i>Eyprepocnemis plorans</i>			1				
Cone-headed Grasshopper	<i>Acrida ungarica</i>		1	5		3		
A bug	<i>Remaudiereana annulipes</i>		1					
A firebug	<i>Spilostethus pandurus</i>					1		
Cretan Seed Bug	<i>Lygaeus creticus</i>					2		
Leafhopper Assassin Bug	<i>Zelus renardii</i>					1		
A bug	<i>Acrosternum millierei</i>		1					
Southern Green Stink Bug	<i>Nezara viridula</i>						1	
Cicada sp.	<i>Cicadoidea</i> sp.			h			h	
European Dwarf Mantis	<i>Ameles spallanzania</i>				1	1		
A mantis	<i>Geomantis larvoides</i>			1				
Mediterranean Mantis	<i>Iris oratoria</i>					2		
A robber fly	<i>Tolmerus</i> sp				3			
Honey Bee	<i>Apis mellifera</i>			5	2	10		
A bee	<i>Bembix olivacea</i>					10		
A bee	<i>Amegilla</i> sp.		5			5		
Tyde's Sand Wasp	<i>Podalonia tydei</i>			1				
European Beewolf	<i>Philanthus triangulum</i>		1					
A wasp	<i>Scolia hirta</i>		1					
Mediterranean Potter Wasp	<i>Eumenes mediterraneus</i>					1		
Mediterr. Snouted Potter Wasp	<i>Rhynchium oculatum</i>		1					
German Wasp	<i>Vespula</i> cfr. <i>germanica</i>		20	5		20	5	
Seven Spot Ladybird	<i>Coccinella septempunctata</i>				20	1		
A beetle	<i>Ophonus</i> sp.						1	
Yellow-legged Millipede	<i>Pachyiulus flavipes</i>		1			1		

Plants

* = the species is endemic		
Scientific name	Common name	Location
PTERIDOPHYTES	FERNS & ALLIES	
Dennstaedtiaceae	Bracken Family	
<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>	Bracken	Piano Vetore (Etna)
Pteridaceae	Brake Family	
<i>Adiantum capillus-veneris</i>	Maidenhair Fern	Syracuse archaeological park
GYMNOSPERMS	CONIFERS	
Cupressaceae	Juniper Family	
<i>Juniperus communis</i>	Common Juniper	Piano Vetore (Etna)
<i>Juniperus macrocarpa</i>	Large-fruited Juniper	Vendicari
Pinaceae	Pine Family	
<i>Pinus halepensis</i>	Aleppo Pine	Capo Murro di Porco
<i>Pinus nigra laricio</i>	Black Pine	Piano Vetore (Etna)
<i>Pinus pinea</i>	Umbrella Pine	Etna
ANGIOSPERMS	FLOWERING PLANTS	
Dicotyledons	Dicots	

* = the species is endemic		
Scientific name	Common name	Location
Acanthaceae	Bear's-breech Family	
<i>Acanthus mollis</i>	Bear's-breech	Vendicari (dead stems)
Amaranthaceae	Amaranth Family	
<i>Arthrocaulon macrostachyum</i>	Glaucous Glasswort	Vendicari
<i>Atriplex portulacoides</i>	Sea-purslane	Vendicari
<i>Dysphania botrys</i>	Jerusalem Oak	Piano Vetore (Etna)
<i>Salsola kali</i>	Saltwort	Penisola Magnisi
Anacardiaceae	Cashew Family	
<i>Pistacia lentiscus</i>	Mastic Tree	Pantano Cuba
Apiaceae	Carrot Family	
<i>Bupleurum fruticosum</i>	Shrubby Hare's-ear	Cava Grande del Cassibile
<i>Crithmum maritimum</i>	Rock Samphire	Capo Murro di Porco
<i>Daucus carota</i>	Wild Carrot	Syracuse archaeological park
<i>Eryngium campestre</i>	Field Eryngo	Penisola Magnisi
<i>Ferula communis</i>	Giant Fennel	Vendicari (dead stems)
<i>Foeniculum vulgare</i>	Common Fennel	Capo Murro di Porco
<i>Echinophora spinosa</i>	Prickly Parsnip	Vendicari
<i>Smyrniolum perfoliatum</i>	Perfoliate Alexanders	Cava Grande del Cassibile (dead stems)
Apocynaceae	Periwinkle Family	
<i>Nerium oleander</i>	Oleander	Pozzo di Mazza (planted)
Araliaceae	Ivy Family	
<i>Hedera helix</i>	Ivy	Cava Grande del Cassibile
Asphodelaceae	Asphodel Family	
<i>Asphodelus ramosus</i>	Branched Asphodel	Capo Murro di Porco (dead stems)
Asteraceae	Daisy Family	
<i>Bellis</i> cfr. <i>sylvestris</i>	Southern Daisy	Cava Grande del Cassibile
<i>Calendula</i> sp.	A marigold	Cava Grande del Cassibile
<i>Carlina gummifera</i>	Pine Thistle	Capo Murro di Porco
<i>Carlina</i> cfr. <i>hispanica</i>	A carline thistle	Penisola Magnisi (dead stems)
<i>Centaurea giardinae</i> *	A knapweed	Piano Vetore (Etna)
<i>Dittrichia viscosa</i>	Yellow Fleabane	Capo Murro di Porco (leaves)
<i>Erigeron bonariensis</i>	Flax-leaved Horseweed	Syracuse archaeological park
<i>Eupatorium cannabinum</i>	Hemp Agrimony	Syracuse archaeological park
<i>Helichrysum</i> sp.	A curry plant	Cava Grande del Cassibile
<i>Helminthotheca echioides</i>	Bristly Ox-tongue	Vendicari
<i>Limbarda crithmoides</i>	Golden Samphire	Capo Murro di Porco
<i>Onopordum illyricum</i>	Illyrian Thistle	Penisola Magnisi (dead stems)
<i>Pallenis spinosa</i>	Spiny Starwort	Capo Murro di Porco (dead stems)
<i>Reichardia picroides</i>	Brighteyes	Penisola Magnisi
<i>Scolymus hispanicus</i>	Common Golden Thistle	Penisola Magnisi
<i>Senecio aetnensis</i> *	A ragwort	Piano Vetore (Etna)
<i>Symphotrichum subulatum</i>	Annual Saltmarsh Aster	Vendicari
<i>Tanacetum siculum</i> *	A tansy	Rifugio Sapienza (Etna)

* = the species is endemic		
Scientific name	Common name	Location
Berberidaceae	Barberry Family	
<i>Berberis aetnensis</i> *	Etna Barberry	Piano Vetore (Etna)
Boraginaceae	Forget-me-not Family	
<i>Echium italicum</i>	Italian Viper's-bugloss	Capo Murro di Porco (dead stems)
<i>Echium</i> cfr. <i>vulgare</i>	Viper's-bugloss	Piazza delle Stelle (Etna)
<i>Heliotropium europaeum</i>	Heliotrope	Syracuse archaeological park
Brassicaceae	Cabbage Family	
<i>Cakile maritima</i>	Sea Rocket	Vendicari
<i>Lobularia maritima</i>	Sweet Alyssum	Cava Grande del Cassibile
Cactaceae	Cactus Family	
<i>Opuntia ficus-indica</i>	Prickly Pear	Vendicari (planted)
<i>Opuntia</i> cfr. <i>stricta</i>	Shell Mound Prickly Pear	Capo Murro di Porco
Campanulaceae	Bellflower Family	
<i>Jasione montana</i>	Sheep's-bit	Piano Vetore (Etna)
Cannabaceae	Hackberry Family	
<i>Celtis australis</i>	Nettle Tree	Cava Grande del Cassibile
Capparaceae	Caper Family	
<i>Capparis orientalis</i>	Rock Caper	Syracuse archaeological park
Caprifoliaceae	Honeysuckle Family	
<i>Centranthus ruber</i>	Red Valerian	Piazza delle Stelle (Etna)
<i>Scilla atropurpurea</i>	Sweet Scabious	Penisola Magnisi
Caryophyllaceae	Pink Family	
<i>Petrorhagia</i> cfr. <i>illyrica</i>	a Tunic Flower	Cava Grande del Cassibile
<i>Petrorhagia saxifraga</i>	a Tunic Flower	Piano Vetore (Etna)
<i>Silene vulgaris</i>	Bladder Campion	Piazza delle Stelle (Etna)
Cistaceae	Rock-rose Family	
<i>Cistus creticus</i>	Hoary Rock-rose	Cava Grande del Cassibile (leaves)
Convolvulaceae	Bindweed Family	
<i>Convolvulus</i> cfr. <i>tenuissimus</i>	Mallow-leaved Bindweed	Cava Grande del Cassibile
<i>Convolvulus arvensis</i>	Field Bindweed	Pantano Cuba
<i>Ipomoea indica</i>	Oceanblue Morning Glory	Noto (planted)
Crassulaceae	Stonecrop Family	
<i>Sedum caeruleum</i>	Sky Stonecrop	Vendicari
<i>Umbilicus</i> sp.	Wall Pennywort	Cava Grande del Cassibile (dead stems)
Cucurbitaceae	Gourd Family	
<i>Ecballium elaterium</i>	Squirting Cucumber	Syracuse archaeological park
Ericaceae	Heather Family	
<i>Erica multiflora</i>	Mediterranean Heath	Cava Grande del Cassibile
Euphorbiaceae	Spurge Family	

* = the species is endemic		
Scientific name	Common name	Location
<i>Euphorbia characias</i>	Large Mediterranean Spurge	Cava Grande del Cassibile
<i>Euphorbia dendroides</i>	Tree Spurge	Capo Murro di Porco
<i>Euphorbia</i> cfr. <i>segetalis</i>	Grainfield Spurge	Capo Murro di Porco
<i>Ricinus communis</i>	Castor Oil Plant	Siracusa
Fabaceae	Pea Family	
<i>Acacia saligna</i>	Golden-wreath Wattle or Coojong	Pantano Longarini
<i>Astragalus siculus</i> *	Etna Milk-vetch	Piano Vetore (Etna)
<i>Calicotome infesta</i>	Thorny Broom	Capo Murro di Porco
<i>Ceratonia siliqua</i>	Carob Tree	Vendicari
<i>Genista aetnensis</i> *	Etna Broom	Piano Vetore (Etna)
<i>Ononis ramosissima</i>	A restharrow	Vendicari
<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>	False Acacia	Piano Vetore (Etna)
<i>Spartium junceum</i>	Spanish Broom	Etna
Fagaceae	Beech Family	
<i>Castanea sativa</i>	Sweet Chestnut	Monte Concilio (Etna)
<i>Quercus ilex</i>	Holly Oak	Syracuse archaeological park
<i>Quercus pubescens</i>	Downy Oak	Monte Concilio (Etna)
Hypericaceae	St. John's-wort Family	
<i>Hypericum triquetrfolium</i>	Curled-leaved St. John's-wort	Capo Murro di Porco
Lamiaceae	Deadnettle Family	
<i>Ajuga iva</i>	Southern Bugle	Cava Grande del Cassibile
<i>Clinopodium</i> cfr. <i>nepeta</i>	Lesser Calamint	Syracuse archaeological park
<i>Phlomis fruticosa</i>	Jerusalem Sage	Cava Grande del Cassibile
<i>Salvia fruticosa</i>	Greek Sage	Cava Grande del Cassibile
<i>Thymbra capitata</i>	Spanish Oregano	Vendicari
<i>Vitex agnus-castus</i>	Lilac Chaste Tree	Vendicari
Moraceae	Mulberry Family	
<i>Ficus carica</i>	Fig	Penisola Magnisi
Myrtaceae	Myrtle Family	
<i>Eucalyptus camaldulensis</i>	River Redgum	Vendicari (planted)
<i>Myrtus communis</i>	Myrtle	Saline di Priolo
Nyctaginaceae	Bougainvillea Family	
<i>Boerhavia coccinea</i>	Scarlet Spiderling	Pozzo di Mazza
<i>Mirabilis jalapa</i>	Marvel of Peru	Syracuse archaeological park
Oleaceae	Olive Family	
<i>Olea europaea</i>	Olive	Vendicari
Onagraceae	Willowherb Family	
<i>Chamaenerion dodonaei</i>	Rosemary-leaved Willowherb	Piano Vetore (Etna)
Phytolaccaceae	Pokeweed Family	
<i>Phytolacca americana</i>	American Pokeweed	Syracuse archaeological park
Plantaginaceae	Plantain Family	

* = the species is endemic		
Scientific name	Common name	Location
<i>Anthirrhinum siculum</i>	Sicilian Snapdragon	Noto
<i>Linaria purpurea</i>	Purple Toadflax	Piano Vetore (Etna)
<i>Plantago crassifolia</i>	A plantain	Vendicari
Plumbaginaceae	Thrift Family	
<i>Limonium narbonense</i>	A Sea-lavender	Vendicari
<i>Limonium</i> cfr. <i>virgatum</i>	A Sea-lavender	Vendicari
<i>Limonium syracusanum</i> *	A Sea-lavender	Capo Murro di Porco
<i>Plumbago europaea</i>	Common Leadwort	Penisola Magnisi
Polygonaceae	Knotweed Family	
<i>Polygonum</i> sp.	Knotweed sp.	Saline di Priolo
Portulacaceae	Purslane Family	
<i>Portulaca oleracea</i>	Common Purslane	Pozzo di Mazza
Ranunculaceae	Buttercup Family	
<i>Clematis vitalba</i>	Old Man's Beard	Syracuse archaeological park
<i>Delphinium halteratum</i>	Winged Larkspur	Cava Grande del Cassibile
<i>Nigella damascena</i>	Love-in-a-mist	Cava Grande del Cassibile
Rosaceae	Rose Family	
<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	Hawthorn	Cava Grande del Cassibile
<i>Potentilla</i> sp.	Cinquefoil sp.	Piano Vetore (leaves)
<i>Pyrus spinosa</i>	Almond-leaved Pear	Cava Grande del Cassibile
<i>Rosa</i> cfr. <i>canina</i>	Dog Rose	Piano Vetore (Etna)
<i>Rubus</i> cfr. <i>ulmifolius</i>	Elm-leaved Blackberry	Vendicari
<i>Sarcopoterium spinosum</i>	Thorny Burnet	Cava Grande del Cassibile
Salicaceae	Willow Family	
<i>Populus nigra</i>	Black Poplar	Piano Vetore (Etna)
<i>Populus tremula</i>	Aspen	Piano Vetore (Etna)
Santalaceae	Sandalwood Family	
<i>Osyris alba</i>	Osyris	Cava Grande del Cassibile
Sapindaceae	Maple Family	
<i>Acer</i> cfr. <i>pseudoplatanus</i>	Sycamore	Piano Vetore (Etna)
Scrophulariaceae	Figwort Family	
<i>Myoporum</i> sp.	Ngaio sp.	Pantano Cuba
<i>Verbascum</i> cfr. <i>sinuatum</i>	Wavy-leaved Mullein	Capo Murro di Porco
Simaroubaceae	Tree of Heaven Family	
<i>Ailanthus altissima</i>	Tree of Heaven	Syracuse archaeological park
Solanaceae	Nightshade Family	
<i>Nicotiana glauca</i>	Tree Tobacco	Penisola Magnisi
Tamaricaceae	Tamarisk Family	
<i>Tamarix</i> cfr. <i>gallica</i>	French Tamarisk	Saline di Priolo
Thymelaeaceae	Daphne Family	

* = the species is endemic		
Scientific name	Common name	Location
<i>Daphne gnidium</i>	Flax-leaved Daphne	Cava Grande del Cassibile
Verbenaceae	Verbena Family	
<i>Lantana camara</i>	Lantana	Syracuse archaeological park
<i>Phyla nodiflora</i>	Turkey Tangle Frogfruit	Pozzo di Mazza
<i>Verbena officinalis</i>	Common Vervain	Syracuse archaeological park
Vitaceae	Grape Family	
<i>Parthenocissus quinquefolia</i>	Virginia Creeper	Cava Grande del Cassibile
Zygophyllaceae	Caltrop Family	
<i>Tribulus terrestris</i>	Puncture Vine	Penisola Magnisi
Monocotyledons	<u>Monocots</u>	
Amaryllidaceae	Daffodil Family	
<i>Pancratium maritimum</i>	Sea Daffodil	Penisola Magnisi
Arecaceae	Palm Family	
<i>Chamaerops humilis</i>	Mediterranean Dwarf Palm	Capo Murro di Porco
Asparagaceae	Asparagus Family	
<i>Asparagus acutifolius</i>	Wild Asparagus	Capo Murro di Porco
<i>Drimys panchratium</i>	Sea Squill	Capo Murro di Porco
<i>Yucca</i> cfr. <i>gloriosa</i>	Moundlily Yucca	Capo Murro di Porco
Juncaceae	Rush Family	
<i>Juncus</i> sp.	Rush sp.	Penisola Magnisi
Poaceae	Grass Family	
<i>Ampelodesmos mauritanicus</i>	Mauritanian Grass	Cava Grande del Cassibile
<i>Arundo donax</i>	Giant Reed	Capo Murro di Porco
<i>Cynodon dactylon</i>	Bermuda Grass	Saline di Priolo
<i>Lagurus ovatus</i>	Hare's Tail	Penisola Magnisi
<i>Phragmites australis</i>	Common Reed	Vendicari
Posidoniaceae	Sea-grass Family	
<i>Posidonia oceanica</i>	Neptune Grass	Vendicari