

Whales & Dolphins of the Azores

Naturetrek Tour Report

11 – 16 August 2015



Northern Bottlenose Whales surfacing



Fin Whale



Cory's Shearwater



Loggerhead Turtle

Report & images compiled by Ed Drewitt



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Summary

This six-day tour, in the deep waters of the Azores off the volcanic island of Pico, revealed a remarkable range of whales and dolphins. We were treated to over a dozen Sperm Whales, two Fin Whales, seven Northern Bottlenose Whales and four Sowerby's Beaked Whales. The supporting cast included four species of dolphin swimming alongside the boat: Bottlenose, Common, Atlantic Spotted and Risso's. We also enjoyed close views of Loggerhead Turtle, Cory's Shearwater, Great Shearwater and Common Tern. Meanwhile, a land trip provided the chance to see a shearwater chick in the hand, the unique World Heritage Site volcanic vineyards, a collapsed lava tube, Portugal's highest mountain peak, and the relic laurel and juniper trees on the higher ground. We visited some pools and marshy habitat where we found endemic Azores Grayling butterflies, and Citrine Forktail damselflies (from the U.S.). During the tour we also saw the Azorean subspecies of Blackbird, Woodpigeon, Goldcrest and Chaffinch.

Day 1

Tuesday 11th August

London to Pico Island

Leaving behind a cloudy, cool day in London, our flight headed west across southern England, over north-west France, across the Bay of Biscay, and over sunny mountains of northern Spain and Portugal. In glorious sunshine we waited for our connection to Horta. We then had a further two and a half hour flight west to the island of Faial where we transferred by taxi to the town of Horta. At the port we checked in our luggage and boarded the 5.15pm ferry to Pico Island. It was a windy day and the 20-minute sea crossing was a little up and down, but the sun shone and Cory's Shearwaters made the most of the wind to glide effortlessly over the waves. We checked in to our hotel just along the road from the ferry port in the town of Madalena. Most of us then met for dinner at 7.15pm at the Calheta Harbour, a restaurant next to the hotel, to relax and enjoy some local recipes before heading for bed.

Day 2

Wednesday 12th August

Pico

After breakfast we headed to CW Azores, our host for the week providing the boats and further local knowledge and expertise in finding whales and dolphins. Justin spent the first half an hour briefing us on the Azores and what we would expect to see, as well as the biology of some of the whales.

The weather forecast showed stronger winds today compared to the remaining three days, so we opted to explore Pico Island on land and save the sea for the rest of the holiday.

It was a little overcast to begin with but the sun soon broke through and we had hot weather for most of the day (apart from in the mountains). We set off at 9.45am with Justin, our guide, and first visited the vineyards of Pico, a World Heritage Site. Their unusual design and current use makes them unique and very special. Volcanic rocks have been built up to make small partitioned walls, and in these the seeds of the vines are planted. The terrain provides lots of nutrients despite the lack of soil, and with the hot sunshine and rain, plenty of grapes are

produced. The air was filled with the song of Blackcaps, despite it being August when most birds back in the UK go quiet. A few Blackbirds were also singing.

We then headed just beyond the suburbs where basalt boulders line the shore. In gaps under many of the rocks the fluffy chicks of Cory's Shearwaters were sheltering; visited by their parents (mainly fathers) only under the cover of darkness. Justin briefly took a large chick out from its nest for a quick view and explanation about their survival. This particular chick was around two weeks old and a small ball of fluff. Justin is monitoring many of the nests, including this one, to check on the chicks' survival rates as feral cats pose a real threat to this species. Most of the world's Cory's Shearwaters are only found in the Azores so their success is crucial for the security of the population. Up close we could see the special 'tubes' on the bill that help the bird detect smells over the sea such as shoals of fishes. In a few weeks time Justin will ring up to 20 young shearwaters, placing a metal identification ring on one leg. Recent GPS tracking has revealed that during the winter these birds winter in a variety of places over the Atlantic off the coasts of Africa, North America and Europe, switching between sites between years.

With the chick returned, we looked out for other birds spotting adult Cory's Shearwaters flying mid-channel between Pico and Faial. Carol spotted a young gull-like bird which was in fact a passage Whimbrel - a good spot.

We continued on past small fields of maize and more vineyards. A small covert of Red-legged Partridges flew up and across the road. Azorean subspecies of Chaffinch and Blackbird occasionally flew up from the road or passed across the fields along with House Sparrow and Atlantic Canary. A mile or so down the road we stopped to visit an old settlement. By the side of the road the boulders, walls and a fig tree were teeming with lizards: the Madeiran Wall Lizard. We carefully walked down a narrow path with crunchy, coarse volcanic stones beneath our feet. We then stopped to view the ruined walls of 15th Century Pico. Here lay the remains of buildings which date back to some of the first settlers to arrive on the island. In amongst the rocks, bright orange lichens, green ferns and other pioneer species were growing and contrasting with the dark black volcanic scree. On the rocks we spotted the odd Red Rock Crab, though they looked like they had been predated, and a pair of Ruddy Turnstones flew over the sea. The bushes were busy with singing Blackcaps, the odd Blackbird and a calling Goldcrest.

Further down the road we stopped on the edge of a village to taste some fresh mineral water from a well. The water was fresh and refreshing and we could taste the salt-like minerals.

Next we visited Antero Soares who was looking out for whales and dolphins for the various whale and dolphin watching companies. We would hear Antero's distinctive voice on the boat radio over the coming days. He was using big binoculars to look for whales and had helped the boats find Sperm and Pilot Whales that morning. His 'office' is a small, basic hide covered in cetacean posters, and Antero was sitting with his large binoculars fixed to a wooden platform from his chair. Outside the trees were busy with singing Blackcaps and a foraging Goldcrest.

We moved along the coast to Lajes harbour for lunch. We stopped along the way and enjoyed watching at least eight, and probably a dozen, day-flying Azorean Noctule Bats, an endemic species here. They hunt by day and night in the absence of any predators that might otherwise eat them. Some flew very close giving excellent views, hunting over some bushy fields and trees.

After a packed lunch and super views of the peak of Mount Pico, the highest peak in Portugal at 2,351 metres, we headed up into the hills, passing bright yellow flowers of the Ginger Lilies, Hydrangeas, and cows, a few of which we had seen on the lower ground. The Hydrangeas were in full blue bloom, forming informal hedgerows and field boundaries in the higher land. The air became cooler, overcast and windy, and the countryside was full of ancient juniper and laurel trees left over from the last ice age. Although severely fragmented by farming and forestry, the remaining stands are protected and give some insight into how the island would have looked thousands of years ago.

We stopped at a weedy lake surrounded by cooler air and mist. A small herd of cows were watching from afar as we headed out to look for more wildlife. Up to three Perez's Frogs were in a little ditch, their dark bodies and green lines running down their spines forming the perfect camouflage against the mud and moss. Across the rutted ground a few Citrine Forktails were found; a very special damselfly. Only females are found on the island and originate from North America. They reproduce by parthenogenesis whereby the eggs of the damselfly are still able to develop without the need for fertilisation by a male. Frogs could be heard in the background along with Chaffinch and Goldcrest. Occasionally the sun broke through - and suddenly there would be a flurry of activity as Azores Grayling butterflies took to the wing. At least half a dozen were seen. We drove down the road to another lake where the grassland was even busier with this endemic species of butterfly. Nearby a Grey Wagtail fed on the dam wall and a pair of Chaffinch gave fine views - the male blue and grey compared to the subspecies found in the UK.

We headed back across the island surrounded by parasitic cones that form a line east of Mount Pico. To our north we could see the neighbouring island of Sao Jorge, while ahead was Madalena and the island of Faial.

Travelling back along a straight road we stopped at a lava tube where the ceilings had collapsed a very long time ago. It was amazing being inside something which would have once been so hot and dynamic. As the lava had cooled, a hard rocky ceiling was formed, similar to opening the oven on a cake too early. The remaining lava shrank and collapsed as it cooled further, leaving a large gap or cave. At the entrance the greenest of green ferns, bryophytes (liverworts) and lycophytes (club mosses) were carpeting the rough volcanic walls. Under our feet you could make out the lava flows and see where, after settling, the flows had dropped further to form an irregular, pleated surface. The volcanic rock beneath our feet was in fact red as a result of the iron oxides present. Sheila, who specialises in moths, found a White-speck moth just outside the cave – one she and the rest of the group hadn't seen before. She says "It is a south coast immigrant to the UK, and an occasional transitory resident in Scilly and the extreme south-west of mainland England. Like most wainscots, it feeds as a larva upon various grasses, including members of the Gramineae. In the Azores, it is apparently a resident pest of pastureland, accounting for around 8% of the annual yield each summer! An interesting species – as it has colonised the Western Palearctic from America – where it is known as the Common Armyworm, and is a serious pest of cereals."

After enjoying beautiful views and roadside flowers, we travelled back down hill towards Madalena, arriving back in the sunshine at 4pm in good time to have a rest before dinner at the Calheta Harbour at 7pm.

Day 3

Thursday 13th August

With almost no wind and lots of sunshine we headed out at 9am on our first big sea trip. Whales had been spotted so we sailed out to the west coast with Petra as our skipper and Arne as our guide. On the way we stopped briefly to see a small school of Common Dolphins, and another group which were beginning to swim with them. We couldn't stop long and continued on. Under the direction of Antero from land we were in the zone - the area where some Sperm Whales had been spotted. We didn't have to wait long before the head of a whale appeared to our left. We suddenly had two male Sperm Whales surfacing from a shallow dive. We watched them for five to 10 minutes logging and blowing. Compared to females they had much larger, bulging heads (and spermaceti organs used in finding prey). Suddenly it was time for them to go, and the males, one at time, dived under the water, revealing their distinctive tail flukes above the sea's surface as they deep dived. They had gone foraging for at least 40 minutes down to the deep underwater canyons looking for squid and bottom-dwelling sharks. We waited on the sea for almost three-quarters of an hour, and on cue, one male appeared at the surface a mile or so ahead, at around 41 minutes after diving. We watched him blowing and replenishing his oxygen supplies before deep diving again, travelling up to three kilometres down to hunt. By this point the other male surfaced after 55 minutes. He didn't stay up too long and also dived, showing off his fluke right in front of us.

No other whales had been spotted that morning so we hugged the rugged, volcanic coastline and headed back towards Madalena. We stopped to see a small group of Bottlenose Dolphins and followed two for a short while, their dorsal fins much taller than that of the Common Dolphin. Further on we took a detour towards Faial where a school of Atlantic Spotted Dolphins with babies were surfacing. These were females with very small, young calfs. Some of the mothers were very spotted while their young were uniform grey.

During the trip we also saw many loafing flocks of Cory's Shearwaters, Common Terns and a flock of Yellow-legged Gulls; the Azorean subspecies with darker heads and wings compared to that on the mainland. Some of the shearwaters glided right towards and over our boat.

Time was getting on so we moved on and made it back to town for 12.30pm.

We stopped for lunch in nearby cafes before meeting again for our afternoon trip at 2pm.

The only known whales around were the two males we had seen in the morning. They were heading southwest so we quickly sailed down to Lajes against the waves and caught up with one of them just before he deep dived and showed off his fluke.

Prior to meeting up with him we encountered a group of Risso's Dolphins and Short-finned Pilot Whales. The first Risso's Dolphins we spotted were very elusive though one jumped out of the water - their quiet behaviour at first made us think they may have been Beaked Whales. Both species appeared to be feeding together which is common, and the Pilot Whales, even bigger than the Risso's Dolphins, came very close, showing off their curved, falcate dorsal fins.

Despite our fast and bumpy ride there, it was a much smoother journey back passing Cory's Shearwaters, Common Terns occasionally resting on the sea to perhaps peck at some flotsam, Yellow-legged Gulls, and very small butterfly-size flying fishes 'flying' across the water. Carol and Laura also spotted a Loggerhead Turtle each as we sped past.

We arrived back towards 5.30pm and had some time to rest and shower before dinner at Calheta Harbour restaurant at 7pm.

Day 4

Friday 14th August

With the weather looking fine and hardly any wind we set off at 9am, heading north of Pico, just off the east coast of Faial. The sea was very calm and it wasn't long before we were in the zone where Sperm Whales had been spotted. We suddenly had two female whales in front of us blowing and dipping under the water. Another two were blowing 100 metres away by another boat, and a single animal was swimming behind us. When Sperm Whales get out into the wider, open water after passing between Pico and Sao Gorge, they tend to surface lots and shallow dive as they try and relocate each after becoming dispersed. These two soon deep dived showing off their fluke as they went under. We headed towards Faial to watch another whale deep dive before waiting a little time for all the whales in the area to resurface. Half an hour later a mother Sperm Whale surfaced with a calf that was dipping under the water to peduncle feed - the young animal turns itself upside down and fixes its mouth into the mammary slits where its mother squirts milk out for the calf to drink. She also decided to deep dive (no doubt leaving the young animal to surface dive). Nearby a research boat from the university on Faial was tracking the whale using a telemetry aerial. The female had a red scientific device tagged onto her body to identify her and collect important data of her movements. After some great whale sightings we headed on to find dolphins.

We didn't have to wait long - in front of us a school of Bottlenose Dolphins were surfacing. There were 30 in total, probably closer to 50. There are always more under the water than you realize, perhaps three to four times as many as are surfacing. They would disappear for several minutes, probably to feed, before reappearing in small groups; their distinctive blows made a lovely splashing sound against the quietness of the ocean. The dolphins came closer to the boat, swimming within metres. The sea was so clear we watched the dolphins many metres below as they headed towards the bow or under our boat. On closer inspection, some had teeth lines along their bodies and dorsal fins where they have been fighting and interacting. Others had tiny nicks taken out of their dorsal fin too.

We left them to their feeding antics as a few other boats had also arrived, and headed south, stopping to see a large loafing flock of a few hundred Cory's Shearwaters. Earlier we also spotted a few Great Shearwaters. They are much whiter than the Cory's with a dark cap, white nape, and pied underwings. They breed mainly in the Tristan da Cunha group of islands in the South Atlantic (west to south-west of South Africa) where over million pairs nest. Up to three million pairs also nest on Gough Island and smaller numbers on the Falkland Islands. The birds we saw were on their way to their breeding which starts in September and continues through to May. They undertake long trans-equatorial migrations, congregating to feed on rich feeding grounds off the coasts of New England and southeast Canada between June-August before heading south. Recent satellite tracking research shows that most birds then return south via waters around the Azores and down the west side of the southern Atlantic. This time of the year is therefore a good period to see them passing off the coastlines of Pico and Faial.

Further south we encountered tens of Common Dolphins in a beautiful blue sea. There were tiny babies no more than a metre long too. We watched the dolphins chasing each other through the water; younger males often chase females in small groups to single one out. The females respond by swimming away with the males in tow. There was a lot of chasing behaviour happening. The yellow and pale grey flank patterns of the adults were very easy to see in the sunshine, and again the water was so clear we could see the dolphins swimming deep

below the boat. More Common Dolphins were ahead - there must have been a few hundred in total spread across this section of the sea.

We headed back towards Madalena, passing more flocks of shearwaters and small groups of Common Dolphins. Just before heading into the port we stopped by a very old underwater caldera (volcano crater) now fully exposed and forming seabird cliffs. Although post-breeding, there were still a few terns, gulls and pigeons around. We stopped for lunch after arriving back at 12.45pm and got ready to meet again at 2pm.

It was a hot, bright and sunny afternoon and the sea was even calmer than in the morning. We headed out south with Justin as our guide and 45 minutes later we encountered our first two whales. It wasn't clear at first what they were but a few surfaces later we could see they were Fin Whales; unusual here in August. They were hugging the coastline, dipping under water for a few minutes before coming up for breath with a tall, columnar spray and long, curved bodies with a small, slightly hooked dorsal fin. We were watching them from their right side and for those looking closely the very white jaw and throat on this side were visible just under the surface of the water. On the left side the jaw is the same colour as the rest of the body: ashy grey. They deep dived, arching their bodies like a rainbow. We continued slowly in the same direction and they resurfaced eight minutes later. This was repeated a few more times in between several surfaces to breathe. Further behind the whales a small group of Risso's Dolphins were also surfacing.

We left the Fin Whales and headed on to look for Sperm Whales. It wasn't long before we were watching one, although she didn't stay up long and soon revealed her fluke as she deep dived. As we continued on, a lone, youngish Bottlenose Dolphin was surfacing near the boat, and like many of its species it had a distinctive white tip to its beaked mouth.

We encountered two more Sperm Whales in separate places - both remained on the surface for five to 10 minutes, spurting water and replenishing their oxygen before also deep diving. One had a distinctive white patch of skin on its right side - many Sperm Whales have similar colourations, and some may even be almost white all over. Often they have pale skin just in front of their dorsal fin. Many of the whales seen today had white or pale patches here and across their flanks.

We stopped by a school of Risso's Dolphins, perhaps 20 - 30 individuals. The more mature adult males had very white heads where they have been interacting and fighting over many years. We could make out the knife-like slashes on their bodies (and especially their heads) and fins made by the teeth of other fellow dolphins. The younger animals and many females meanwhile are grey without the scars. A Great Shearwater landed nearby in the hope of some free food but Risso's Dolphins feed on squid and not the small fishes that other dolphins feed on so there was nothing going. The Cory's Shearwaters already know this and were nowhere to be seen, floating in rafts along other parts of the coastline where we were sailing.

While we waited for more whales the sea was a deep blue and almost flat. Two turtles were spotted ahead so we crept slowly closer to observe two Loggerhead Turtles basking in the sunshine. They were over half a metre long with golden brown carapaces - the central scutes running along the spine were spiny. Their flippers and head were spread out just under the water. Occasionally they raised their heads revealing their large eyes, big nostrils and beaked mouth. One was shy and swam into the depths but the other allowed us to approach within a few metres before we drifted away and it finally submerged.

At this point it was time to refocus on the Sperm Whales and we headed to an area where one had just gone down. We waited for only a short while and suddenly three rose out of the water together in unison and rested on the surfacing for ten minutes or so, blowing and sticking next to each other. Finally two arched their back and, after their next surface, deep dived, revealing their flukes on their way down. The third whale stayed up for a few more minutes before changing direction and finally deep diving too. All the Sperm Whales have a unique tail pattern. Instead of being smoothly shaped, the tail or fluke have various indentations caused by interactions with predators such as Orcas.

With just a little time to spare we headed off to find some more dolphins and came across a school of Atlantic Spotted Dolphins, perhaps 30 or more. They are 'dinkier' than the Common Dolphins we saw in the morning. If you don't notice their spots they look very black and grey, but small.

Finally our time was up and after having seen so much this afternoon, we headed back to Madalena in beautiful afternoon sunshine enjoying the gorgeous coastal landscape, vineyards and villages. We arrived back around 5.45pm and had a rest before meeting for dinner at 7.30pm.

After dinner, at 9.45pm we went out again with Justin, back to the coast near the vineyards. We watched and heard the Cory's Shearwaters come to visit their nests amongst the volcanic boulders. The strange, eerie calls were mesmerising and a sound you wouldn't expect to hear coming from these birds as they are usually silent when sat on the sea. We stood in the darkness for half an hour hearing the weird and unexpected calls of the males as they flew low over our heads and the breeding colony, while females 'growled' from the vegetation. Above our heads was a lovely starlit sky with the odd shooting star! By 10.30pm the sounds were fading away so we drove back to the hotel; ready for some sleep.

Day 5

Saturday 15th August

It was another bright day and we met at 9am and headed out to the south with our skipper Tiago and guide Arne. We headed up to 10 miles from the coast waiting for a Sperm Whale to surface - it didn't. So we continued southwest towards Lajes looking for a special, rare whale. We spent the first few hours searching and despite the gorgeous weather and calm seas there was little else around apart from shearwaters, the odd flying fish, and a few flying squid (which are always exciting to see, if momentarily). However, we did encounter two separate Loggerhead Turtles in the almost still, glassy water. And then suddenly, around 11am, the fun began as a group of at least seven Northern Bottlenose Whales surfaced in a big flurry of blows. These animals are up to nine metres long, putty coloured and look like submarines surfacing. They came up with big, steam engine-like blows, squirting slightly off to the left. Over the course of the hour we had super views of these fast moving animals. They would surface several times, moving all together before disappearing, often in a different direction for five to 10 minutes. When they surfaced they were so obvious with domed heads and contrasting colour to the bright blue sea. We managed to find them four or five times before they went under again and we left them to their diving antics. They are one of the largest beaked whales in the world, travelling deep under water to suck up squids with their toothless mouths. Only the mouths of the males have teeth: a pair just at the tip of their lower jaws.

As we headed back to Madalena we encountered a calm school of Risso's Dolphins and spent a little time watching them surface all around the boat before heading back in and arriving for lunch at 1pm.

An hour later after lunch near the waterside we headed back to sea, joined by Enrico and Dania who run CW Azores, as well as Louisa and Tiago. Like the morning, despite perfect conditions, the sea was very quiet. But we headed back out 10 miles and found the Bottlenose Whales again, watching them surface a few times before there was a pause and another fluffy of activity. They then appeared to deep dive and stayed under longer than ten minutes so we headed on to look for more wildlife. Just prior to seeing the whales we admired a Loggerhead Turtle that was basking in the sunshine at the water's surface. As we headed back towards the coastline we spotted three juvenile Common Terns. Two were actually sat on the water but the third appeared to be perched on something. It was stood on a turtle! The terns flew off and we got very close to the turtle before it swam away just a metre or two below the sea's surface. A floating yellow helmet was retrieved from the sea, covered in goose barnacles. Nearby, stripy Pilot Fish were swimming and looking for something to eat – they feed on ectoparasites, small creatures attached to the skin of sharks, rays and turtles.

We continued to scan the sea and Louisa spotted something surfacing. Four whales were coming up to breathe - these dark-skinned cetaceans were Sowerby's beaked Whales. They showed for just a few moments before deep diving and disappearing - typical behaviour of this species that feeds on squids very deep under the sea. Nearby, in the clear flat water, the tall, thin dorsal fin of a White Marlin was twisting and zigzagging, cutting through the surface tension of the sea before slipping away.

As we headed back along the coastline Enrico caught sight of something at the surface. We turned around and waited, seeing some more water movement - finally a dolphin appeared. In the end half a dozen immature Common Dolphins came swimming close to the boat. At the water's surface Ed spotted another turtle which came close to the boat before drifting away and swimming just under the water's surface.

In lovely sunshine and the peak of Pico clear of cloud, we had beautiful views of the island and its countryside all the way back to Madalena. The sea had been smooth for most of the journey but was a little choppier in the channel which made for an exhilarating final boat ride of the holiday. We arrived back at just after 6pm and met for our final dinner together at 7.15pm with views across Pico and Faial from the restaurant.

Day 6

Sunday 16th August

Overnight rain and low cloud had left Pico and Faial shrouded! We said goodbye to Magda and David who were heading to other islands in the Azores. We left Madalena on the 8.15am ferry, leaving behind Pico and watching a few Cory's Shearwaters gliding over the sea. The cloud was lifting and by the time we flew it was very sunny again. Just after takeoff the captain slowed the plane down and took us right past and level with the peak of Pico - even those on the right hand side of the plane could see it. We had a quick transfer to the airport but the London-bound flight was a little delayed giving us enough time to get some lunch and relax. We arrived in London just after 6pm, coming in over the Isle of Wight before passing through lots of cloud and flying over Berkshire down into Heathrow.

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Species Lists

Mammals (* indicates a species is endemic; ✓ = recorded but not counted; H = heard only)

	Common name	Scientific name	August					
			11	12	13	14	15	16
1	Azores Noctule Bat*	<i>Nyctalus azoreum</i>		12				
2	Greater Mouse-eared Bat	<i>Myotis myotis</i>				h (prob.)		
3	Risso's Dolphin	<i>Grampus griseus</i>			12+	30+	30+	
4	Bottle-nosed Dolphin	<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>			6	30+		
5	Short-beaked Common Dolphin	<i>Delphinus delphis</i>			20	100+	6+	
6	Atlantic Spotted Dolphin	<i>Stenella frontalis</i>			20	30+		
8	Sperm Whale	<i>Physeter macrocephalus</i>			2	12	1	
9	Short-finned Pilot Whale	<i>Globicephala macrorhynchus</i>			8+			
10	Fin Whale	<i>Balaenoptera physalus</i>				2		
11	Northern Bottlenose Whale	<i>Hyperoodon ampullatus</i>					7	
12	Sowerby's Beaked Whale	<i>Mesoplodon bidens</i>					4	

Birds

1	Cory's Shearwater	<i>Calonectris borealis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2	Great Shearwater	<i>Puffinus gravis</i>				3	1	
3	Ruddy Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>		2				
4	Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus phaeopus</i>		1				
5	Western Yellow-legged Gull	<i>Larus michahellis atlantis</i>	6	6	100+	100+	20+	✓
6	Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>	4	50	6	6	10+	
7	Feral Pigeon / Rock Dove	<i>Columba livia</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
8	Common Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus azorica</i>	1			4		
9	Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea patriciae</i>		2+	1	2	2	
10	Common Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula azorensis</i>		✓		6	✓	✓
11	Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla gularis</i>		h		6+	1	
12	Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus inermis</i>		h				
13	Common Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris granti</i>	2+			✓	✓	✓
14	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
15	Common Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs moreletti</i>		✓				
16	Atlantic Canary	<i>Serinus canaria</i>		✓		✓		

Butterflies & Moths

1	Clouded Yellow	<i>Colias crocea failiae</i>		2				
2	Azores Grayling*	<i>Hipparchia azorina</i>		12+				
3	White-speck Moth	<i>Mythimna unipuncta</i>		1				

Other Invertebrates

1	Emperor Dragonfly	<i>Anax imperator</i>						
2	Citrine Forktail	<i>Ishnura hastata</i>		2				
3	Red-veined Darter	<i>Sympetrum fonscolumbii</i>		3				
4	Miner bee sp.						1	

Amphibians & Reptiles

1	Madeiran Wall Lizard	<i>Lacerta (Teira) dugesii</i>		6				
2	Perez's Frog	<i>Rana perezi</i>		3				
3	Loggerhead Turtle	<i>Caretta caretta</i>			2	2	5	

	Common name	Scientific name	August					
			11	12	13	14	15	16

Marine

1	Red Rock Crab	<i>Cancer bellianus</i>		2				
2	Goose Barnacles	<i>Lepas anatifera</i>					✓	
3	Flying Squid sp						2	
4	Atlantic Flying Fish	<i>Cypselurus heterurus</i>			2+		✓	
5	Pilot Fish	<i>Naucrates ductor</i>					6	
6	Thick-lipped Mullet	<i>Chelon labrosus</i>					✓	
7	White Marlin	<i>Tetrapturus albidus</i>					✓	

Plants

Bracken, *Pteridium auilinum*

Soft Shield Fern, *Polystichum setiferum*

Elaphoglossum semicylindricum

Common Fig, *Ficus cerica*

Garden Nasturtium, *Tropaeolum major*

Hypericum, *Hypericum foliosum*

Spurge-laurel, *Daphne laureola*

Blue Morning Glory, *Ipomea indica*

Giant Cane, *Arundo donax*

Juniper, *Juniperus brevifolia*

Persea indica

Norfolk Pine tree, *Araucaria heterophylla*

Japanese Holly Fern, *Cyrtomium falcatum*

Fishbone Fern, *Nephrolepis cordifolia*

Japanese Cedar, *Cryptomeria japonica*

American Pokeweed, *Phytolacca americana*

Hydrangea, *Hydrangea macrophylla*

Sweet Pittosporum, *Pittosporium undulatum*

Wild Carrot, *Daucus carota*

Oxeye Daisy, *Leucanthemum vulgare*

Kahili Ginger/Ginger Lily, *Hedychium gardneranum*

Laurel, *Laurus azorica*

Lichen, *Parmotrema* sp.

Naturetrek Facebook

We are delighted to launch the Naturetrek Facebook page so that participants of Naturetrek tours can remain in touch after the holiday and share photos, comments and future travel plans.

Setting up a personal profile at www.facebook.com is quick, free and easy. The [Naturetrek Facebook page](#) is now live; do please pay us a visit!



The 2015 Group