

Autumn Birding in Southern Portugal

Naturetrek Tour Report

1 - 7 October 2013



Zodiac adventure by John Van de Graaff



Moorish Gecko by Val Taylor



Great Shearwater by John Van de Graaff



Short-toed Eagle by John Van de Graaff

Report compiled by Philip Thompson
Images courtesy of Val Taylor & John Van de Graaff



Naturetrek Cheriton Mill Cheriton Alresford Hampshire SO24 0NG England

T: +44 (0)1962 733051

F: +44 (0)1962 736426

E: info@naturetrek.co.uk

W: www.naturetrek.co.uk

Tour Leader: Philip Thompson
Dave Nevitt

Participants :- Caroline Gordon
Marylee Bomboy
John Van de Graaff
Stephanie Greenwood
Val Taylor
Anne Nuttall
John Ingram
Estelle Ingram
Chrissie Haunch
Richard Haunch
Tim Moore

Day 1

Tuesday 1st October

Once the group had been assembled we drove the short distance into the Rio Formosa National Park at the far end of the airport runway for a much needed picnic lunch with a little light birding while it was prepared. With appetites sated we then took a walk along the raised embankment separating the tidal estuary from the old salt pans. Scolding Sardinian Warblers were particularly obliging along this route allowing excellent views for everyone. Waders were the main focus of our attentions with a splendid variety and number of birds roosting in the salt marsh above the high tide and feeding on the pans. Numerous Grey Plovers, some still showing elements of summer plumage, almost concealed among the vegetation were abundant joined by smaller numbers of both Black-tailed and Bar-tailed Godwits, Curlew and Whimbrel. Within the pans smaller waders were joined in the distance by good numbers of Greater Flamingos, White Storks and Spoonbills. Among the wildfowl a vagrant Pale-bellied Brent Goose was the highlight for the area, a species not generally shown to occur any further south than northern Spain!

With a good afternoons birding completed we returned to the buses and drove to our hotel in Tavira where we would be based for the first few days of the trip.

Day 2

Wednesday 2nd October

Our day was spent exploring the coastal National Parks of Castro Marim and Rio Formosa and continuing to improve our wader identification skills with the broad selection of species encountered. We began the morning with the short drive eastwards to visit Castro Marim. On arrival at the reserve we left the tarmac and took a dirt road towards the saltpan workings that make up the heart of the reserve. The first pan we stopped at held an excellent range of wading birds that we spent some time looking through. Species not seen previously included Curlew Sandpiper, Little Stint, Red Knot and both Little Ringed and Kentish Plovers. Flamingos, Spoonbills, White Storks and herons were all present in good numbers.

We took a slow walk around the embankment surrounding the pans to head into the centre of the reserve. It is here that a large roosting flock of rare Audouin's Gulls was seen providing the highlight of the morning. We drove on to the north-eastern corner of the park to the visitor centre and picnic site for lunch. A short walk was then taken to scan the nearby pans and estuary. Large numbers of Black-tailed Godwits made up the main birds present with a selection of previously seen waders among them. On the distant embankments a small group of Caspian Terns were roosting alongside their smaller relatives Common Terns showing the huge size difference. Excitement was created by a hunting Peregrine shooting over fast and low and causing mass panic among the birds present as they erupted into the air.

A move to the west was then taken to revisit the Rio Formosa NP and an exploration of the freshwater lagoon within the Quinto do Lago golf course positioned alongside the salt marsh coastal strip. Our walk first took us through the sandy scrub bordering the golf course, estuary and salt pans. Very common in this area were the Iberian Magpies, which were everywhere, but a highlight was a Hoopoe on the track close in front of the group that flew up and was then seen on a couple more occasions. Hawking for insects from the trees were both Spotted and Pied Flycatchers and Willow Warblers and Chiffchaffs. The track led on to the hide overlooking the lake from which various group members spent some time observing the birds present. As expected, a completely different assortment of birds was seen on the lake. An unexpected sighting of an Arctic Skua chasing and harrying a tern was seen by some and unluckily missed by those in the hide at the time. A Black Tern was spotted delicately catching insects from the waters surface, in contrast to the small flock of Little Terns plunge diving for fish in the lake. In the reed beds several good views of the resident Purple Swamphens were obtained, whilst the 2 Little Bitterns were only seen by some of the group. A highlight for some was an obliging Water Rail that flew into a clump of reed and fed in the open for some time allowing excellent close scope views for those present. A couple of handsome male Black-headed Weavers were also seen as they moved among the reeds.

With time running out we began to make our way back to the vehicles but were fortunate in spotting a couple of Common Waxbills ahead of us as they appeared to be collecting nest material and commuting back and forth from an area of grass from where they plucked stems to the disappear into an area of scrub to then shortly reappear.

Day 3

Thursday 3rd October

In contrast to the previous days spent on the coast, today we travelled inland to visit the rolling grassland and semi-steppe areas of the Alentejo. Having made good time on the clear open roads throughout the journey we made our first stop near the village of Penilhos. After a little careful scanning we picked up a couple of very distant raptors, which were a pair of Spanish Imperial Eagles sparring with a Black Vulture. They remained very distant and as such did not get the pulses racing. We continued travelling slowly along the minor roads with several stops along the way to scan. Unfortunately luck had deserted us and birds proved incredibly difficult to find. Our only major success was with spotting a small number of Black-bellied Sandgrouse in flight, again rather distantly.

After our continued efforts we made our way to the LPN Visitor Centre north of Castro Verde where we had lunch provided by the local ladies. Whilst waiting for lunch to be laid out some of the group sighted a Golden Eagle pass by. Having enjoyed a splendid meal and having quizzed the centre staff on areas to try for birds we set off towards a few previously unvisited locations.

Whilst this took us into some eminently suitable habitat the bustards remained elusive. The remainder of the afternoon was fruitlessly spent searching this large area covering much ground over uneven dirt roads. Tired from peering into birdless country we made our way back to the coast and a beer to drown our sorrows...

Day 4

Friday 4th October

We were due to transfer hotels today but firstly spent the morning birding around the hotel overlooking various pans and the nearby estuary. On a positive note the weather had now lifted to become clear and sunny and it would soon become apparent that passage birds that had been stalled in their migration as a result of the last week's depression had resumed their movement and we began to pick up numbers of smaller warblers and raptors. This resulted in a couple of Spotted and Pied Flycatchers and Common Whitethroat being seen in the tamarisk alongside the resident Sardinian Warblers. We managed to pick up a couple of Stone Curlews as they flew from the salt marsh. Our first mammal of the trip was an unaware Iberian Hare sitting in the shade in the middle of a pan-side track. A pair of Hoopoes was viewed perched in nearby trees and our first Subalpine Warbler was found in bushes in the grounds of the hotel. The estuary was fairly quiet as we completed our circuit.

We then boarded the vehicles to undertake the first half of our journey towards Sagres, with a visit en route to Salgados Marsh near Pera. We stopped first nearby to have lunch overlooking a small marsh. The area of woodland and scrub here held more flycatchers and numerous small warblers. Next it was on to the main marsh, which is another freshwater lagoon that is currently threatened with development and 'restoration'. The jury is still out as to whether this will improve or destroy this site, but at the time of our visit diggers were in action and a large part of the lagoon is now drained. What remained of the open water held an abundance of birds of which the highlight was the large flock of 160+ Glossy Ibis. Also present was a large flock of over 100 resting White Storks joined by smaller numbers of Greater Flamingos and a few Spoonbills. A good selection of waders was present which included Avocet, Black-winged Stilt and both species of Godwits. A walk along the boardwalk over the dunes resulted in finding a Common Redstart being found sheltering in a large tamarisk and some much-improved views of the birds seen earlier. At one point the flock of Ibis took off to continue their movement to destination unknown affording fantastic views as they passed overhead fighting into the stiff wind. We then completed the journey to our very comfortable hotel in Sagres and a fine dinner.

Day 5

Saturday 5th October

We began our day with a pre-breakfast walk over the headland overlooking Sagres harbour. The morning began fairly cool with few birds about but the highlight for some was the fine colony of pretty white nodding bell-shaped flowers of *Leucojum autumnale*.

After breakfast the whole group set out to the grassy heathlands of the Sagres peninsular. An early stop produced numerous Willow/Chiffs flitting among the low tussocky shrubs, amongst which a Common Redstart and Melodious Warbler were also found. A Montagu's Harrier quartering the ground drifted out of sight having been seen by only a few of the group. A few distant raptors were seen of which much better views were obtained later in the afternoon.

We firstly had our picnic in the shelter of the pines near the viewpoint. In the pines a couple of elusive Crested Tits were glimpsed by most and a Nightjar was inadvertently flushed from underfoot. Some time was spent at the small mound that serves as the main raptor viewpoint with its 360-degree view. From here we were able to obtain excellent views of the many passing birds most of which were Booted and Short-toed Eagles and Sparrowhawks but also several Black Kites, Peregrines and a single Egyptian Vulture. Returning to the vehicles through the woods and heath we were fortunate to spot a Black Stork among a small group of Booted Eagles and discovered a rather intriguing large caterpillar feeding on the poisonous Apple of Sodom, which was later identified as being a Death's-head Hawkmoth!

Our final stop of the day was a visit to Cape St. Vincent. On the homeward drive we then spotted 3 Black Storks circling over the Cape, trying to re-orientate themselves for their eventual crossing into Africa.

Day 6

Sunday 6th October

The weather had remained fine with the result that this morning we were able to head out to sea for our pelagic trip in search of seabirds. As we set out and moved away from land we soon began to pick up our first Cory's Shearwaters as they cruised effortlessly by among the numerous Northern Gannets. It was these gannets that alerted the boat pilots to the presence of fish and the likelihood of a pod of Common Dolphins. Sure enough on approaching the plunge-diving feeding frenzy of Gannets we soon spotted the fast moving forms of several Common Dolphins. We spent some time travelling alongside the Dolphins as they swam and leapt right alongside and beneath the boats among which were several youngsters with their mothers.

The boat crew then continued onward towards the fast-moving trawler on the skyline. This trawler was actively fishing and moving at a considerable speed. Fortunately we were to come upon the gathered selection of seabirds from where the trawler had previously raised its nets. After a little further distribution of 'chum' over the side we were able to get fantastic close views of Cory's, Great, Sooty and Balearic Shearwaters and excellent numbers of the dainty European Storm Petrels among which a few Wilson's Storm Petrels were seen. As we were by now some distance from shore we had to return to make it back in time. During the return journey the incongruous sight of 3 Sand Martins were seen on their way to Africa followed, close to shore, with an Egyptian Vulture flying up from the sea cliffs!

After a little rest and change of clothes back at the hotel we set out once more to picnic among the pines alongside the Raptor Viewpoint. As before good numbers of raptors were passing this time with the addition of a small number of Honey Buzzards and a rare juvenile Bonelli's Eagle. We moved on making a few other stops. The most productive was a drive through a semi-derelict unfinished housing development in order to find the Blue Rock Thrushes that breed among the windowless houses. With success here we moved on to our final stop for an ice-cream at a nearby café above a popular surfing beach. Crag Martins, presumably breeding among the sea cliffs alongside the Red-billed Choughs, were also seen here.

Day 7

Monday 7th October

A very early start for the airport prevented any further activity in the field. We safely made it in good time to catch our various return flights home.

Species List

Birds (✓ = recorded but not counted; H = heard only)

	Common name	Scientific name	October						
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	Red-legged Partridge	<i>Alectoris rufa</i>		25	✓	H	8		
2	Brent Goose	<i>Branta benicula ssp. hrota</i>	1						
3	Common Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	24						
4	Gadwall	<i>Anas strepera</i>	10	✓		6			
5	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	6	✓		✓			
6	Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>	1						
7	Northern Shoveler	<i>Anas clypeata</i>	8	6		1			
8	Wigeon	<i>Anas penelope</i>		1					
9	Eurasian Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>		1					
10	Red-crested Pochard	<i>Netta rufina</i>		2					
11	Common Pochard	<i>Aythya ferina</i>		10					
12	Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>		2					
13	Cory's Shearwater	<i>Calonectris diomedea</i>					6	30	
14	Great Shearwater	<i>Puffinus gravis</i>						40	
15	Balearic Shearwater	<i>Puffinus mauretanicus</i>						6	
16	Sooty Shearwater	<i>Puffinus griseus</i>						4	
17	European Storm Petrel	<i>Hydrobates pelagicus</i>						15	
18	Wilson's Storm Petrel	<i>Oceanites oceanicus</i>						4	
19	Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>		15		8			
20	Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>	2	6					
21	Greater Flamingo	<i>Phoenicopterus roseus</i>	100	250		20			
22	Black Stork	<i>Ciconia nigra</i>					4		
23	White Stork	<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>	12	30		100			
24	Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>				163			
25	Eurasian Spoonbill	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>	20	30	6	3			
26	Little Bittern	<i>Ixobrychus minutus</i>		2					
27	Western Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>		✓	✓	✓			
28	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	6	✓		✓			
29	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	20	✓		✓			
30	Northern Gannet	<i>Morus bassanus</i>				3	40	✓	
31	European Shag	<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>						1	
32	Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	5	8	8	✓		2	
33	European Honey Buzzard	<i>Pernis apivorus</i>						4	
34	Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>					3	2	
35	Egyptian Vulture	<i>Neophron percnopterus</i>					1	3	
36	Griffon Vulture	<i>Gyps fulvus</i>			3				
37	Cinereous Vulture	<i>Aegypius monachus</i>			1				
38	Short-toed Snake Eagle	<i>Circaetus gallicus</i>					40	30	
39	Western Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>		2		2			
40	Montagu's Harrier	<i>Circus pygargus</i>					1		
41	Eurasian Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>					25	40	
42	Spanish Imperial Eagle	<i>Aquila adalberti</i>			2				
43	Golden Eagle	<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>			1				
44	Bonelli's Eagle	<i>Aquila fasciata</i>						1	
45	Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>			4	1	1	1	
46	Booted Eagle	<i>Hieraetus pennatus</i>		8	1		50	25	
47	Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	1		6	4	✓	✓	

	Common name	Scientific name	October						
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7
48	Eurasian Hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>						1	
49	Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>		1			6	3	
50	Water Rail	<i>Rallus aquaticus</i>		1					
51	Purple Swamphen	<i>Porphyrio porphyrio</i>		12		2			
52	Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>		6		12			
53	Eurasian Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>	✓	✓		✓			
54	Eurasian Stone-Curlew	<i>Burhinus oediconemus</i>				2			
55	Eurasian Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>				1			
56	Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>	2	35		30			
57	Pied Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>	4	25		10			
58	Northern Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>		6	1	1	1	30	
59	Grey Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>	✓	2		5			
60	Common Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	✓	✓	1	✓			
61	Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>		5					
62	Kentish Plover	<i>Charadrius alexandrinus</i>		1		1			
63	Common Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>		3					
64	Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa</i>	40	✓		20			
65	Bar-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>	1	3		2			
66	Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>	2			1			
67	Eurasian Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>	6			1			
68	Common Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>	✓	✓		✓			
69	Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>		6					
70	Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>		8	1	1			
71	Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	1	4		1			
72	Ruddy Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>	20	2		2			
73	Red Knot	<i>Calidris canutus</i>		4		2			
74	Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>		3		1			
75	Little Stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>		15					
76	Curlew Sandpiper	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>		20					
77	Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>	✓	✓		✓			
78	Ruff	<i>Philomachus pugnax</i>		1					
79	Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	✓	✓		✓		✓	
80	Mediterranean Gull	<i>Ichthyaeus melanocephalus</i>				2		1	
81	Slender-billed Gull	<i>Larus genei</i>				1			
82	Audouin's Gull	<i>Larus audouinii</i>		800+					
83	Great Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus marinus</i>		6					
84	Yellow-legged Gull	<i>Larus michahellis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
85	Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
86	Caspian Tern	<i>Hydroprogne caspia</i>	1	12		1			
87	Sandwich Tern	<i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>	4	8		12		1	
88	Little Tern	<i>Sternula albifrons</i>		8					
89	Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>		10					
90	Black Tern	<i>Chlidonias niger</i>	2	1					
91	Great Skua	<i>Stercorarius skua</i>						1	
92	Parasitic Jaeger	<i>Stercorarius parasiticus</i>		1					
93	Black-bellied Sandgrouse	<i>Pterocles orientalis</i>			11				
94	Rock Dove / Feral Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
95	European Turtle Dove	<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>					2	2	
96	Eurasian Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
97	Little Owl	<i>Athene noctua</i>			H	H			
98	Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>					1		

	Common name	Scientific name	October						
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7
99	Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	1	3					
100	Eurasian Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>		1	5	6			
101	Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>		1	1		1		
102	Southern Grey Shrike	<i>Lanius meridionalis</i>		1	✓	1			
103	Eurasian Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>		2		1			
104	Iberian Magpie	<i>Cyanopica cooki</i>	2	25	15	40		H	
105	Eurasian Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	2	4	8	5	2		
106	Red-billed Chough	<i>Pyrhacorax pyrrhacorax</i>					10	1	
107	Western Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>			4		4	6	
108	Carrion Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>			8		2		
109	Northern Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>			3				
110	European Crested Tit	<i>Lophophanes cristatus</i>					2		
111	Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>		1			2		
112	Calandra Lark	<i>Melanocorypha calandra</i>			25				
113	Crested Lark	<i>Galerida cristata</i>	20	10	✓	✓			
114	Thekla Lark	<i>Galerida theklae</i>					✓	✓	
115	Woodlark	<i>Lullula arborea</i>						H	
116	Eurasian Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>					H		
117	Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>		H			1	3	
118	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	6	12	6			2	
119	Eurasian Crag Martin	<i>Ptyonoprogne rupestris</i>						6	
120	Common House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>		✓					
121	Red-rumped Swallow	<i>Cecropis daurica</i>		4	15	2			
122	Cetti's Warbler	<i>Cettia cetti</i>		4		H			
123	Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>		3	1	8	✓	4	
124	Common Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>		2		1	✓		
125	Eurasian Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>		2					
126	Melodious Warbler	<i>Hippolais polyglotta</i>					1		
127	Zitting Cisticola	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>	6	✓	2	✓		2	
128	Common Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>	1	1		1	1		
129	Subalpine Warbler	<i>Sylvia cantillans</i>				1	1		
130	Sardinian Warbler	<i>Sylvia melanocephala</i>	✓	4	✓	✓	✓	✓	
131	Spotless Starling	<i>Sturnus unicolor</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
132	Common Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
133	Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>						1	
134	Black Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>					1	2	
135	Common Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>				1	1		
136	Whinchat	<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>			2	3			
137	European Stonechat	<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>	1	4	20	✓	✓	✓	
138	Northern Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	5	2	✓	15	10	3	
139	Blue Rock Thrush	<i>Monticola solitarius</i>					1	2	
140	Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>		2		6	3	1	
141	European Pied Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula hypoleuca</i>		1	1	12	50	6	
142	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
143	Black-headed Weaver	<i>Ploceus melanocephalus</i>		3					
144	Common Waxbill	<i>Estrilda astrild</i>		5					
145	Western Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava iberiae</i>				6	H	1	
146	White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>		2	3		3	1	
147	Water Pipit	<i>Anthus spinoletta</i>						H	
148	Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>				6			
149	European Greenfinch	<i>Carduelis chloris</i>		2		2			

	Common name	Scientific name	October						
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7
150	European Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
151	Common Linnet	<i>Carduelis cannabina</i>	1		20				
152	Corn Bunting	<i>Emberiza calandra</i>			30		6		

Mammals

Iberian Hare, *Lepus granatensis*

Common Dolphin, *Delphinus delphis*

Butterflies

Swallowtail, *Papilion machaon*

Large White, *Pieris brassicae*

Small White, *Pieris rapae*

Clouded Yellow, *Colias crocea*

Small Copper, *Lycaena phlaeas*

Geranium Bronze, *Cacyreus marshalli*

Lang's Short-tailed Blue, *Leptotes pirithous*

Long-tailed Blue, *Lampides boeticus*

Common Blue, *Polyommatus icarus*

Red Admiral, *Vanessa atalanta*

Painted Lady, *Vanessa cardui*

Cardinal, *Argynnis pandora*

Speckled Wood, *Pararge aegeria*

Meadow Brown, *Maniola jurtina*

Reptiles & Amphibians

European Pond Terrapin, *Emys orbicularis*

Red-eared Terrapin, *Trachemys scripta*

Moorish Gecko, *Tarentola mauritanica*

Plants

Iberian Endemic = *

Portuguese Endemic = **

Pinaceae

Pinus halepensis

This was the common species on the Sagres heathlands

Pinus pinea

Stone Pine

This is a native species occurring generally on the coast, but made up the recent pine-nut plantations covering large areas in the Alentejo.

Aizoaceae

Carpobrotus edulis

Dewplant Family

Hottentot Fig

Anacardiaceae

Pistacia lentiscus

Sumach Family

Mastic Tree

Apocynaceae

Nerium oleander

Periwinkle Family

Oleander

Widely planted but genuine flowering examples seen in the dried watercourses and gulleys in the Alentejo

Asteraceae**Daisy Family***Carlina hispanica*

This was the dried carline thistle seen near the raptor watchpoint, which I ID'd at the time as *C. corymbosa*.

Carlina racemosa

This was the widespread yellow papery flowered member of the Asteraceae that was almost completely dried out and browned at the time of flowering.

**Cynara algarbiensis*

A large purple flowered thistle with very short stem and large divided spiny leaves. Seen in flower on the Sagres heaths.

Cynara cardunculus

Seen widely, with large cardoon heads still present after flowering.

***Dittrichia maritima*

This species is a recent split from *Dittrichia viscosa*. Found on the Sagres heathlands with narrow lanceolate leaves and a more prostrate growth habit.

**Dittrichia revoluta*

Another recent split from *Dittrichia viscosa* having previously been a sub-taxa. This is widespread throughout the area.

*Helichrysum italicum**Inula crithmoides**Scolymus hispanicus*

Spanish Oyster Plant

Boraginaceae**Borage family***Echium gaditanum***Brassicaceae****Cabbage Family***Lobularia maritima*

Sweet Alison

*Malcolmia littorea***Carophyllaceae****Pink Family***Spergularia media*

Greater Sea Spurrey

Chenopodiaceae**Goosefoot Family***Arthrocnemum macrostachyum**Atriplex halimus**Halimione portulacoides*

Sea Purslane

*Salsola vermiculata**Sarcocornia fruticosa*

Sueda vera Shrubby Seablite

The above listed members of the Chenopodiaceae were the main constituent plants of the salt marshes visited on the trip.

Ericaceae

Calluna vulgaris

Corema album

Heather Family

Ling

Fabaceae

Lotus creticus

Ononis natrix

Retama monosperma

Pea Family

Southern Bird's-foot Trefoil

Large Yellow Restharrow

This was the large switch-like shrub growing around the hotel in Tavira

Fagaceae

Quercus coccifera

Quercus rotundifolia

Quercus suber

Beech Family

Kermes Oak

Cork Oak

Lamiaceae

Lavandula stoechas

Thymbra capitata

***Thymus camphoratus*

Dead-nettle Family

French Lavender

Plumbaginaceae

Limoniastrum monopetalum

Limonium sp.

Thrift Family

One of a couple of species, in a difficult group, seen in flower on the Sagres headland. Insufficient time available to figure out the species!

Limonium sp.

Another unidentified Sea Lavender, growing on the Sagres cliffs and headlands.

Plumbago europaea

This was growing among the rocks at the picnic site near Salgados Marsh

Ranunculaceae

Consolida ajacis

Buttercup Family

A few very late examples of this were found in flower with dried withered stems on the Sagres heath roadside

Scrophulariaceae*Verbascum sinuatum***Figwort Family****Solanaceae***Lycium intricatum***Nightshade Family**

A rare spiny shrub with narrow tubular purple flowers, growing on the headland at Sagres

Solanum linnaeanum (sodomaceum)

Apple of Sodom

This was the alien plant seen in the Sagres pinewoods, on which the caterpillar of the Death's-head Hawkmoth was feeding.

Tamaricaceae*Tamarix africana***Tamarisk Family****Thymelaceae***Daphne gnidium***Daphne Family****Verbenaceae***Verbena officinalis***Verbena Family**

Vervain

Verbena supina

A much rarer relative of Vervain, found in flower in a dried out puddle at the start of the sand track to the Salgados picnic spot

Zygophyllaceae*Tribulus terrestris***Caltrop Family**

Maltese Cross

Numerous flowering plants were at the entrance to the Tavira hotel

Arecaceae*Chaeromops humilis***Palm Family**

Dwarf Fan Palm

Liliaceae*Leucojum autumnale***Lily Family**

Several large colonies of these very attractive nodding white bell-shaped flowers were present on the rocky headland at Sagres.

Pancreatium maritimum

Sea Daffodil

A single remaining flower was found among a large population by the boardwalk at Salgados.

Scilla autumnale

Autumn Squill

Large numbers of this pretty lilac Squill were widespread on Sagres.

Urginia maritima

Sea Squill

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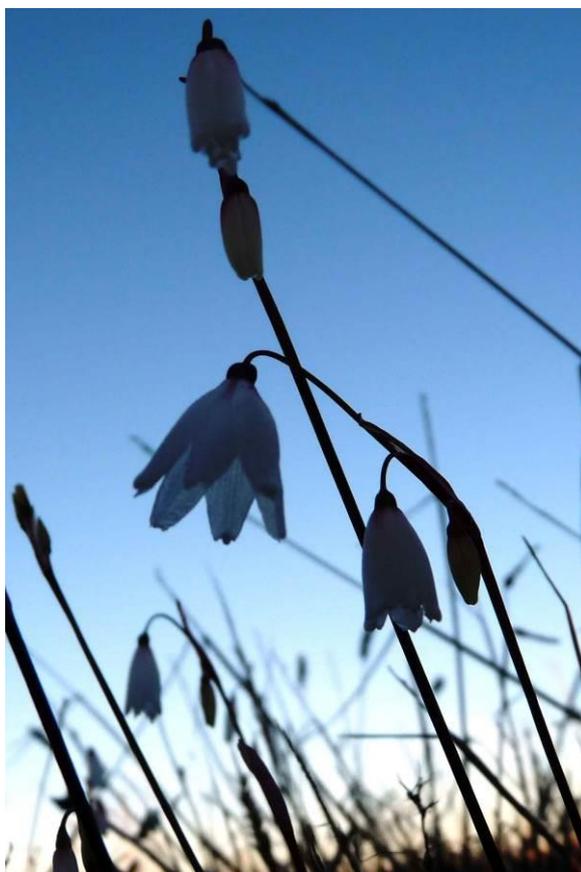
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Red-rumped Swallow by John Van de Graaff



Acis (Leucojum) autumnalis by Val Taylor