

Go Slow in Portugal

Naturetrek Tour Report

16th – 23rd May 2025



Armeria berlangensis



Berlangas Island



Epaulet Skimmer



Iberis procumbens

Tour report by Fernando Romão



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Day 1

Friday 16th May

Sunny, warm, some wind, 25°C

On this occasion, the Go Slow in Portugal tour featured two guides, Fernando and Lara. They met the three guests who were already in Lisbon, and the flight with the main group did not arrive very late, only about fifteen minutes behind schedule. Faced with busy Lisbon traffic on a Friday afternoon, it took some time to leave the Portuguese capital. However, we managed to push on and headed north to Peniche, a coastal town about an hour away.

As we travelled along the motorway, the landscape unfolded along gentle hills with some agricultural fields in the valleys. Eucalyptus forests predominated, with some scattered Stone Pines. We did not see many birds during the drive but, as we got closer to Peniche, the flat, agricultural landscape with orchards allowed us to detect a few, like Common Swifts and Spotless Starlings. Yellow-legged Gulls started to become more common, and the usual White Stork was there, nesting on a pole by the side of the road, taking care of its young.

After we arrived at the hotel, on the beach, we had some time left before dinner. After the rooms had been allocated, the guides decided to take a trip to the supermarket to do the necessary shopping for the next day's picnic. A bit before dinner, the group met again to discuss the programme for the week ahead. After dinner, it was time to go to bed and restore our energy for the next day.

Day 2

Saturday 17th May

Practically cloudless, no wind, 24°C

The day started early with a pre-breakfast walk in the surroundings of the hotel. A small group joined the two guides and went to the beach in front of the hotel, crossing the dunes via the boardwalk. We were mainly looking for birds, but the sand dunes held a great diversity of specialized plants: Phoenician Juniper, Pale Stonecrop, Cretan Bird's-foot Trefoil, Sea Spurge, Sand Stock, Sweet Alyssum, the Portuguese endemic Thrift *Armeria welwitschii*, Sea-holly, Rock Samphire, Sea Daffodil and Scentless Curry Plant (not blooming).

Besides the Yellow-legged Gulls and Shags, we did not see much from the beach. However, on the dunes, we could see Blackbird, Greenfinch, Goldfinch and Linnet. On the return leg, a Hoopoe briefly flew over the road and went to the pinewood area.

After breakfast, the plan for the morning was to go along the north coast of the Peniche peninsula. So, it was a short drive until we stopped at the first spot, Papôa, a long rocky spur extending north-westwards. This site is part of the UNESCO Geopark Oeste, as traces of a seventy-million-year-old volcano can be found here. Shags were the first birds to be seen, resting on a sea stack nearby. We even managed to find a nest with a young Shag resting in it. In several places, we heard a Black Redstart calling, usually from the top of a rock. A Crested Lark was also observed, moving along the path, certainly looking for food. Occasionally, some passing Common Swifts were seen, followed by one or two Pallid Swifts.

A few plants also caught our attention in this place. These plants were characteristic of coastal cliffs, particularly Sea-lavender (*Limonium auriculifolium*), Rock Samphire (*Crithmum maritimum*), Golden Samphire (*Limbardia crithmoides*), Rough Cocksfoot (*Dactylis glomerata*), Cornish Mallow (*Malva multiflora*), Maritime Crosswort (*Crucianella maritima*) and Common Sea-heath (*Frankenia laevis*). In a sheltered depression, we also found several broomrapes, *Orobanche calendulae*, a marigold parasite. Next to this place, there was an area with African Tamarisk and a few Tree Mallows. We were also able to find Painted Lady and Red Admiral butterflies.

Driving a bit further, we went to a place called Ponta do Trovão. We crossed the road to walk a few metres and reached another geological point of interest: a GSSP (Global Boundary Stratotype Section and Points), a place where the transition between the Toarcian and Pliensbachian geological periods (approximately 183 million years ago) was well defined, and it was specified here with a so-called 'Golden Spike'. This meant it was the best place in the world where one could clearly see that transition, and defined the date for geologists worldwide. The soil here was full of marine fossils from that period: belemnites, which were like cuttlefish, and ammonites, a coil-shelled cephalopod. While returning to the van, we saw a fast-flying Clouded Yellow.

Back in the vans, we continued a bit further, to the westernmost point of mainland Portugal, Cape Carvoeiro, next to its lighthouse. Here, we explored the strange rocky landscape: it was a big limestone pavement, a natural karst formation. However, our eyes were on the huge sea stack in front of us, where some Shags rested, and where it is usually possible to see Peregrine Falcon (but not today). Suddenly, Lara shouted "Audouin's Gull!", and we could see a juvenile bird flying east, along the cliffs. A pair of Pallid Swifts also went by. Out at sea, we could also spot some more Shags, a few Cory's Shearwaters, and Gannets.

This was a great viewpoint to the southern coast and to Berlengas Island to the west, our destination on one of the next few days.

The picnic area was a bit urban, but it offered a view to the ocean and we were visited by Yellow-legged Gulls and a fearless Black Redstart, clearly interested in possible crumbs from the picnic. Afterwards, we drove about twenty minutes south, to the next town, Lourinhã. We parked the vans in the central area, in front of the courthouse. The edge of the roof held a reasonable colony of House Martins. We went straight to the local café, to drink coffees, eat ice creams and cakes, and use the toilet, also killing some time as we waited for the museum to open. Lourinhã Museum is a small private museum, where the main highlights are several dinosaur findings in the region, some of which are unique. In addition, the exhibition was pretty comprehensive, covering other more recent archaeological finds, as well as having an ethnographic section, and taking visitors from the formation of the Earth to the present day.

After this visit, we returned north, but made a small detour to the beach area of Paimogo, where a seventeenth-century fort still surveys this stretch of coast. The cliffs that sheltered the beach dated back to the Superior Jurassic (152M), and is best known for the discovery of a fossilised nest of about 100 dinosaur eggs and embryos, a very rare discovery indeed. We were looking mostly at plants, and we added several new ones: Wild Thistle (*Cynara humilis*), Iberian Milkvetch (*Erophaca baetica*) and Spiny Starwort (*Pallenis spinosa*). Despite the sunny weather and the shelter, we did not find any lizards, and only saw one elusive butterfly.

We then returned to the hotel, with time to relax, get ready for dinner, and complete the day's checklist. After dinner, Fernando decided to go out, walking a bit further along the avenue, to the dunes, to look for the European

Nightjar. The last light of dusk allowed us to see two birds flying, and eventually perched on the trees or fence poles, and singing from there.

Day 3

Sunday 18th May

Mostly cloudy morning, some clear spells, some showers. Afternoon sunny, 19°C

We set off again, early, for a walk before breakfast. The highlight was spotting a Red-legged Partridge in the hotel car park. Also, in the pine forest area next to the hotel, we saw three Iberian Grey Shrikes and some Rabbits.

After breakfast, we set off towards the Óbidos Lagoon, a little to the north, about thirty minutes away. We stopped on the shore of the lagoon, next to the mouth of a small watercourse. This lagoon had a small connection to the sea, so it was influenced by the tides. The tide was in a middling state, with a small margin of mud exposed. After time observing the shores of the lagoon with the telescopes, where we got some good sightings of Purple Heron, we decided to start the walking route along the shore, heading west and towards the observation tower further on. Several Grey Herons were also spotted, along with one Little Egret. After some persistence, we managed to make some good observations of Yellow Wagtails perched in the short vegetation. We also spotted some waders: Whimbrel, Redshank, Greenshank and Ringed Plover. Two Shelducks were feeding together in the low waters, as was a Black-winged Stilt. In the distance, we also spotted a female Marsh Harrier. Meanwhile, a Sardinian Warbler could be heard in the bushes flanking the track, but we could hardly see it. Easier to spot were the various Zitting Cisticolas, which floated across the landscape, giving their repeated “dzip-dzip-dzip” song. In addition to the birds, we found several new plant species, such as Bee Orchid, Broadleaf Wild Leek, Narrow-leaved Mock Privet, Woody Fleabane, and Mediterranean Marigold, among others. The lower temperature and overcast skies meant that no butterflies or dragonflies were seen.

We returned to the vans and headed for a second stop before lunch. Halfway there, we stopped for a moment in a new facility next to the lagoon. Back on the road, soon afterwards, we made a sudden stop at the side of the road to look at two Turtle Doves perched and singing, one of them on a telephone cable above the road. In the same place, a Song Thrush was singing from the top of a pine tree.

At the second point, also near the shore of the lagoon, we took a short section of the trail, now to the south-west. Another great variety of plants and some birds were seen there; Great Spotted Woodpecker stood out. The most obvious and interesting plants we saw here were Portuguese Crowberry (*Corema album*), *Halimium calycinum*, *Cistus crispus*, *Cistus inflatus*, Lavender (*Lavandula stoechas*), *Linaria spartea*, Common Centaury, Sheep's-bit, *Anchusa calcarea* and *Scrophularia frutescens*. The ground was covered with patches of the small Spotted Rock-rose and Black Eyes (*Tolpis barbata*), both yellow flowers.

We then moved on to a picnic site, different from previous years, as the usual one was full and also less sheltered from the rain. Our second choice was a nearby picnic site, also a park, but shaded by large trees that protected us from the rain.

In the afternoon, we headed north to the small town of Salir do Porto, on the southern shore of the bay of São Martinho do Porto. We went first to the local café, where we enjoyed our coffees on the terrace. Suddenly, it started to rain heavily for a few minutes. Fortunately, we had the protection of the large parasols on the terrace.

As soon as it stopped raining, the clouds began to move away, and the sun appeared, bright and warm. We took the opportunity to walk the short trail across the Tornada River, the dune area and continued along the shore of the bay. We did not see many birds, but we did see some interesting plants, especially the mullein *Verbascum litigiosum*, an endemic of the Portuguese coast. Nearby, was also blooming the Iberian endemic snapdragon, *Antirrhinum cirrhigerum*.

And finally! With the bright sun, a Swallowtail flew along the dunes, back and forth, allowing many of us to see it. At the point where we turned back, a Carbonell's Wall Lizard (*Podarcis carbonelli*) was basking along the wooden walkway. Slowly, we returned to the vans and drove for about forty-five minutes back to the hotel.

After filling the checklist of the day and a fine dinner, the guides managed to convince a few guests to go out and look for the Nightjar. When we were walking along the avenue, heading for the pine area, we saw the Nightjar coming from the dunes and crossing over the road, heading for the wooded area. We went there and stayed for a while, enjoying listening to the Nightjar and seeing it flying. When we started returning to the hotel, suddenly, Lara saw a bird flying to the top of a streetlamp. With binoculars and scope on it, we were astonished to see it was a Little Owl! For a while we tried to move in closer, but the small owl started to "jump" from lamp to lamp, until it finally disappeared. We were thrilled!

Day 4

Monday 19th May

Cloudy morning, clearer later. Light winds, 19°C

We went for a short walk again before breakfast. We returned to the spot behind the line of pine trees, where we again spotted the Iberian Grey Shrikes and some Rabbits. We also discovered some interesting plants, two of which we had seen the day before, the Iberian endemic *Antirrhinum cirrhigerum*, a snapdragon, as well as the Portuguese endemic *Verbascum litigiosum*, a mullein. But we also identified two new plants: the Iberian endemic *Iberis procumbens* ssp. *procumbens*, a candytuft, and Balm-leaved Figwort (*Scrophularia scorodonia*). The alkanet *Anchusa calcarea* was present, and Hare's-foot Plantain (*Plantago lagopus*) was blooming and everywhere.

After a filling breakfast, we left the hotel at 9.00am and drove north to visit the historic town of Óbidos. When we were almost there, we had a brief rain shower, which stopped when we arrived at the car park. While we were getting out of the vans and preparing ourselves to go, a Little Owl just flew over the car park and went past some trees. In town, we spent the morning on a free visit, mixing culture, history and a bit of nature: its main church (converted into a library), multiple shops and bars, its medieval castle, its aqueduct, and loads of tourists. Besides the ancient origin of the place, Óbidos was designated by UNESCO, in 2015, as a City of Literature. The town was setting up structures for the medieval market that was happening soon.

Walking along the old streets, we could see groups of *Antirrhinum majus* ssp. *linkianum*, an Iberian endemic snapdragon, hanging off the old medieval walls and growing on the roof tiles. We went from the southern gate to the northern one, exploring alongside the road. Black Redstarts were common on the roofs. We had nice views of Serin, singing from the canopy of trees. Robin and Speckled Wood could be seen outside the walls, using mostly the shady areas. Many Common Swifts flew over town, sometimes very low, and were clearly nesting in the old roofs. At one point, a Common Kestrel flew over town and moved to the west. Later, a Raven did more or less

the same. On a wall we saw a large cover of Ivy and, on the ground at its base, great numbers of *Orobancha hederae*, Ivy Broomrape. On the limestone natural walls, we also discovered Olive Buckthorn (*Rhamnus oleoides*).

We then spent some time doing different things: looking at books, exploring the streets, and enjoying the terraces with some coffees. At 11.30am, we departed, and stopped by a local supermarket to buy some bread and use the local loos. We then travelled a little further north, about ten minutes, until we reached Paul da Tornada wetland. As we parked the vans, a Purple Heron circled near us for a moment and left. By the car park there was a large group of Great Horsetail and an isolated Wand Mullein (*Verbascum virgatum*).

We settled at the picnic area to start preparing our lunch. While doing so and during the meal, we could hear and see several bird species: White Stork, Booted Eagle, Zitting Cisticola (perched nearby), Serin, and, in the distance, Savi's Warbler song. In the surroundings there were also new plants, namely, Royal Mallow, Downy Woundwort (*Stachys germanica*) and Stinking Broomrape (*Orobancha foetida*). A few butterflies were also detected here, like Clouded Yellow, Small White and a Painted Lady.

After lunch, we packed everything into the vans and went down to the wetland. Paul da Tornada Nature Reserve is a small wetland area fed by the Tornada River, which here forms a small, elongated and narrow lagoon, protected by reeds and willows. A path went all the way around it, but due to its length, we only explored the east side. It was on this side that we found two hides.

As the route began roughly halfway through the wetland, we started heading south, making a first stop at one of the hides, where we stayed for a few minutes. There was not much activity on the water: a few Mallards and a Coot. At the southern end, on a dead tree, we saw a couple of Great Cormorants resting. Another Purple Heron passed by. We continued to hear, regularly, the song of both Savi's and Cetti's Warblers. However, they hid deep in the vegetation and never offered any chance of seeing them. Over the water, a group of four Sand Martins were flying back and forth, sometimes picking insects from the surface.

After a while, we opted to go back to the trail and explore the northern part. We reached the second observatory and entered to scout this water section. We saw a fast-moving Kingfisher. And, on the opposite side of the lake, on the reeds, there was a bright yellow Black-headed Weaver, an African bird which has recently established a breeding population in Iberia, deriving from escaped cagebirds.

We returned to the path and continued northwards, occasionally making several interesting observations. At various points along the route, we could also hear Reed Warblers and some Common Waxbills (another cagebird now living wild) passing by. Sometimes, through the vegetation and trees, we could glimpse sections of water in the marsh. In one of them, we spotted a Little Grebe feeding. And on the opposite bank, we found a Spanish Terrapin resting in a sunny spot. There were also Iberian Water frogs around; we could hear them calling.

Along the way, we saw several Speckled Wood butterflies taking advantage of the shady areas, but landing on the small spots of light that came through the canopy. We also managed to see a couple of dragonflies, such as Common Bluetail and Broad Scarlet. A few plants caught our attention: a different rose, Evergreen Rose (*Rosa sempervirens*), plenty of Hemlock Water-dropwort (*Oenanthe crocata*) and False Grass-poly (*Lythrum junceum*). The tall reeds did not allow us to see through to the water and along the trail there was nothing much showing, so we decided to go back.

We arrived back at the hotel early enough to still have time for grocery shopping, to do the checklist and to dine earlier, which allowed us to go out still with some light, to look again for the Nightjar. Despite stronger winds, the Nightjar gave us very good observation opportunities, flying low and close, and perching nearby on the fence, allowing good views with the scope. We returned to the hotel tired, but satisfied with the experience.

Day 5

Tuesday 20th May

Clear, light winds, 20°C

As usual, some of us gathered at 7.30am for a walk before breakfast. This time, we prolonged the pre-breakfast walk for an hour. Our boat was not due to leave until 11.00am, so we had enough time. In fact, we took the van to drive a bit up the avenue, which would give us more time to explore a different area. This was an interesting spot, because we had sand dunes on our left and an agricultural field on our right.

We saw plenty of Rabbits, mostly around the cultivated land. On the same side, we followed a female Marsh Harrier until she dropped to the ground and out of sight. A Red-legged Partridge was also present in the crops. In the dunes, we detected Corn Bunting and Stonechat. With the scope, we scanned the sandy ground on the right side of the road, to confirm the presence of a special plant, the Iberian endemic toadflax *Linaria polygalifolia*. We easily managed to find a few specimens displaying their yellow flowers.

We turned back and used the access to reach the beach, along the boardwalk; we heard a Sardinian Warbler singing from the top of a juniper. At the beach, with a view over the sea, we could see some Cory's Shearwaters flying rather close to the shore. Several Yellow-legged Gulls and a few Shags were also seen flying in the bay.

Back at the hotel, after breakfast, the tour leaders, Lara and Fernando, prepared the individual picnics to take to the island. We arrived at the harbour about forty-five minutes before the boat's departure, giving us time to deliver the picnic bags, get the boat tickets and wander about for a while to look at birds.

The journey to the island was calm, with no special observations, apart from a Gannet or a Shag. On the island, perhaps due to the cool and rainy weather that had characterised this spring, there was an abundance of blooming flowers, especially the endemics *Armeria berlangensis*, *Echium rosulatum* ssp. *davaei*, *Scrophularia sublyrata*, but also *Spergularia rupicola* and *Linaria spartea*. However, we did not see any *Pulicaria microcephala*, one of the island's endemics; this species was clearly flowering late this year.

The walk went smoothly and we had plenty of time. We climbed up to the lighthouse and reached the island's plateau, then continued to its western end, a kind of viewpoint of the Atlantic and the island's steep slopes. Here we saw two Peregrine Falcons; one was resting on the cliff, standing on a small ledge, in the shade. A second bird briefly appeared over the hill and then dropped again, out of sight. After a time looking at the first bird, we decided to go back and stop by the old cistern, to sit down and to have our picnic, with a view to the west. In the meantime, Carbonell's Wall Lizards were active, moving around us, and so were Yellow-legged Gulls.

After our picnic, we slowly went back down, stopped at the local bar/restaurant, had something to drink, talked, and rested for a while. Half an hour before departure, we went down to the harbour and took the path that led to the narrow beach. From here we found another special plant of the island, *Angelica pachycarpa*. It is an Iberian

endemic, but in Portugal it can only be found here. At this site, an adult male Black Redstart was trying to satisfy the hunger of his anxious offspring, who were chasing him with insistent requests.

At 5.00pm, we got back on the boat, to return to the mainland. The journey was quieter, with calm waters, which made it easier for us to spot seabirds, and this time we had much more interesting sightings, of Cory's Shearwater, Balearic Shearwater, Shag and Yellow-legged Gull. Near the coast of Peniche, we spotted a group of five Whimbrels flying south across the sea.

Day 6

Wednesday 21st May

Cloudy with clear spells. Winds light to moderate, 19°C

The pre-breakfast session added nothing different from previous days: Crested Larks, Greenfinches, Linnets, Goldfinches, Iberian Grey Shrike and a Kestrel hunting over the dunes.

Today, we were visiting an area further inland, the Serras de Aire e Candeeiros Natural Park, a small mountain landscape formed from limestone. Soon after breakfast, we set off north for a journey of around an hour, initially on the motorway and then on national roads. Our first stop was at a local bar in Arrimal village, so we could use the toilets and have a coffee. After returning from the bar, a light-morph Booted Eagle was seen, flying over the slope on the west side.

After that, we visited the local lake, of which we made a circuit. Patrolling the still waters there was a Blue Emperor dragonfly, and a red darter which we could not see well enough for a conclusive identification. On the edge of the lake a few butterflies were flying, but not many, since the day was still cloudy and fresh: Clouded Yellow, Meadow Brown and Small White.

We got back into the van and, after a five-minute journey, arrived at our next stop, a larger lake. Here we found some Mallards and several Barn Swallows. Common Swifts were coming to the water surface, and a Melodious Warbler was singing from a small tree nearby, but would not allow us to see it. But we got a second one, perched on a different tree, on the fields. In the olive groves, we could hear the characteristic song of the Corn Bunting. At this lake, we managed to see several damselflies and dragonflies: Common Bluetail, Common Bluet, Blue-eye, Blue Emperor, Red-veined Darter and Broad Scarlet.

A longer drive took us to the lunch stop. The picnic area, a spot under the shade of trees, with picnic tables and seats, was located next to a waterhole, where we could see several bird species coming for water: Linnets, Goldfinches and Greenfinches. A pair of Red-rumped Swallows was also circling over the water. And a Cirl Bunting was singing, perched on a cable. Among the few dragonflies around, the special one was Epaulet Skimmer. The greener patch on the side of the waterhole hid a couple of interesting plants, like Bee Orchid and Common Selfheal. In the nearby olive groves, we dedicated some time to look for butterflies, and managed to find Iberian Marbled White and Spanish Gatekeeper.

After lunch, we drove just for a couple of minutes, to explore a section of a rural road on foot, in a mixed landscape of olive trees, grassland and scrub. At this point, next to the car park, an Ocellated Lizard was seen by a few. Several flowers and butterflies were also seen along the path: an already dry Giant Orchid, but plenty of Pyramidal

Orchids, and some Small-flowered Tongue Orchids. The butterflies we had here were mostly Meadow Browns, Spanish Gatekeepers and Iberian Scarce Swallowtails.

We decided it was time to start heading back, but not without stopping en route in the town of Porto de Mós for toilets and coffee.

Day 7

Thursday 22nd May

Some cloud, moderate winds, 19°C

Today we again planned to explore a mountain region. This time we were going to visit the Serra de Montejunto Landscape Protected Area. Straight after breakfast, we set off south-eastwards. The journey took around forty-five minutes, initially on the motorway and then on secondary roads, through villages and rural landscapes, climbing to the top of the mountain. The first stop was next to a natural waterhole, a doline (karst depression). It was a good place to watch passerines approaching the water to drink or bathe. We saw Greenfinch, Goldfinch, Serin and Linnets. Meanwhile, in the nearby trees, we heard a Cirl Bunting singing. We also explored the shore of the small lagoon for dragonflies, but there were none to be seen. However, we did see several Iberian Water Frogs.

Driving just a bit further, we parked the vans close to the interpretation centre (which was closed for maintenance). But we asked a nice lady to open the toilet facilities just for us, and she did; it was useful to have this opportunity before beginning the walk!

We began our three-kilometre circular walk through a mixed forest area with Sweet Chestnut, Italian Cypress, Stone Pine and Iberian Oak, interspersed with some clearings. Sadly, at the beginning of the path, we found a dead juvenile Horseshoe Whip Snake. Our expectations for the place were mainly on the flowers, butterflies and birds. Nevertheless, we had several sightings of Red Squirrel, both at the beginning of the path and during lunchtime. Again, the weather did not allow for many insect and bird sightings. The most interesting butterflies seen were Spanish Gatekeeper and Spanish Festoon. Difficult to observe but easy to hear was Firecrest, whose calls echoed through the forest. It was more interesting for plant: the highlights were several Iberian endemics, which included the daisy *Leucanthemum sylvaticum*, Giant Fennel, and the broom *Genista tournefortii*. We also managed to see a few more special ones, endemic plants from the Centre-West of Portugal: Small-flowered Gorse (*Ulex parviflorus* ssp. *airensis*), the cress *Coincya cintrana*, the campion/catchfly *Silene longicilia*, and the thistle *Carduus broteri* (*Carduus lusitanicus* ssp. *broteroi*). We were lucky enough to see a few wild peonies and Peticoat Daffodil blooming, along with several species of spurge, Etruscan Honeysuckle, Stinking Hellebore and Ivy Broomrape.

Around lunchtime, we finished the trail, and headed to the local picnic area, which was very well equipped with tables, tap water, toilets and a bar. After another nice lunch, we left the area to drive up to the top of the mountain; we saw an Ocellated Lizard crossing the road. We parked the vans by the old Dominican chapel and convent, dating from the thirteenth century, at an altitude of around 660m. The view from here was fabulous, especially to the north-west, where one could see the Peniche peninsula and Berlengas Island.

We only made a quick visit here, because it was windy, but the flowers were spectacular. Sheltered by the Kermes Oaks, there were much Angular Solomon's-seal, plus Mediterranean Small Restharrow (*Ononis reclinata*) and White

Rock-rose (*Helianthemum apenninum*). But the special plant was the saxifrage *Saxifraga cintrana*, endemic to the Centre-West of Portugal. It blooms only in April/May, and we saw just a couple of them.

And then we returned to our hotel, to have time to rest, run through the checklist and dine.

Day 8

Friday 23rd May

Clear, light winds, 19°C

Today we had no walk before breakfast, in order to have time to finish packing for departure. We left the hotel after breakfast, but we did not go directly to the airport, because we had enough time to explore the town of Peniche. We parked near the old coastal fortress and walked along a boardwalk to reach a viewpoint over the cliffs and the ocean. From here, we could see the typical fishermen's neighbourhood. We spotted some birds along our walk, like a Kestrel flying over the old walls of the military building. On the same walls we could see juvenile Yellow-legged Gulls, begging for food. Common Swifts were flying repeatedly over the town's roofs, while White Wagtails walked around in search of insects. At the same time, a Greenfinch was singing from a nearby tree.

We killed a little time until the Bobbin Lace Museum opened, and we had the opportunity to visit. Reflecting an important traditional activity in Peniche, we started by watching a short introductory video and then visited the room with the main exhibition. After passing by the local Mother Church or Saint Peter's Church, we headed to a traditional pastry shop, to try the local cakes and drink a coffee.

Shortly before noon, we were already on our way to Lisbon airport to get our flights back home, after a lovely Go Slow week in Portugal.

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Species lists

Birds (H = Heard only)

I=Introduced		May 2025							
Common name	Scientific name	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Common Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>			✓					
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>			✓	✓		✓		
Red-legged Partridge	<i>Alectoris rufa</i>	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		
European Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓			
Common Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Pallid Swift	<i>Apus pallidus</i>		✓						
Rock Dove	<i>Columba livia</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Common Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
European Turtle Dove	<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>			✓					
Eurasian Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>				✓				
Eurasian Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>				✓				
Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>			✓					
Common Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>			✓					
Eurasian Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>			✓		✓			
Common Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>			✓					
Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>			✓					
Audouin's Gull	<i>Ichthyaeetus audouinii</i>		✓						
Yellow-legged Gull	<i>Larus michahellis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>			✓					
Cory's Shearwater	<i>Calonectris borealis</i>		✓			✓			
Balearic Shearwater	<i>Puffinus mauretanicus</i>					✓			
White Stork	<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Northern Gannet	<i>Morus bassanus</i>		✓			✓		✓	
Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>			✓	✓				
European Shag	<i>Gulosus aristotelis</i>		✓			✓			✓
Eurasian Spoonbill	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>			✓					
Little Bittern	<i>Botaurus minutus</i>				✓				
Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>			✓					
Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>								
Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>			✓					
Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>			✓	✓				
Booted Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus pennatus</i>				✓		✓		
Western Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>			✓		✓			
Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>				✓				
Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>			✓			✓	✓	
Little Owl	<i>Athene noctua</i>			✓	✓				
Eurasian Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>		✓						
Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>			✓	✓				
Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>			✓	✓			✓	
Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓
Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>					✓			
Iberian Grey Shrike	<i>Lanius meridionalis</i>			✓	✓		✓		✓
Eurasian Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>			✓					
Eurasian Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>						✓		
Carrion Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>						✓		
Northern Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>				✓				
Eurasian Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>				✓				
Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>						✓	✓	
Crested Lark	<i>Galerida cristata</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

I=Introduced		May 2025							
Common name	Scientific name	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>				✓				
Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Western House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓			
European Red-rumped Swallow	<i>Cecropis rufula</i>			✓			✓		
Cetti's Warbler	<i>Cettia cetti</i>			✓	✓				
Common Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>				✓				
Melodious Warbler	<i>Hippolais polyglotta</i>						✓		
Savi's Warbler	<i>Locustella luscinioides</i>				✓				
Zitting Cisticola	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
Eurasian Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
Sardinian Warbler	<i>Curruca melanocephala</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Common Firecrest	<i>Regulus ignicapilla</i>							✓	
Eurasian Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>			✓	✓		✓	✓	
Short-toed Treecreeper	<i>Certhia brachydactyla</i>						✓	✓	
Spotless Starling	<i>Sturnus unicolor</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>			✓					
Common Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
European Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>			✓	✓			✓	
Black Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
European Stonechat	<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Black-headed Weaver - I	<i>Ploceus melanocephalus</i>				✓				
Common Waxbill - I	<i>Estrilda astrild</i>				✓				
Western Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacila flava iberiae</i>			✓					
White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Common Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>							✓	
European Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Common Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
European Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
European Serin	<i>Serinus serinus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Corn Bunting	<i>Emberiza calandra</i>		✓	✓		✓	✓		
Cirl Bunting	<i>Emberiza cirlus</i>			✓			✓	✓	

Mammals

		May 2025							
Common name	Scientific name	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Rabbit	<i>Oryctolagus cuniculus</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓		
Red Squirrel	<i>Sciurus vulgaris</i>							✓	

Reptiles and amphibians

D=dead		May 2025							
Common name	Scientific name	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Spanish Terrapin	<i>Mauremys leprosa</i>				✓				
Large Psammadromus	<i>Psammadromus algirus</i>				✓				
Ocellated Lizard	<i>Timon lepidus</i>						✓	✓	
Carbonell's Wall Lizard - E	<i>Podarcis carbonelli</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓			
Horseshoe Whip Snake	<i>Hemorrhois hippocrepis</i>							D	
Iberian Water Frog	<i>Pelophylax perezi</i>			✓	✓			✓	

Butterflies

Common name	Scientific name	May 2025							
		16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Swallowtail	<i>Papilio machaon</i>			✓					
Spanish Swallowtail	<i>Iphiclides feisthamelii</i>						✓		
Spanish Festoon	<i>Zerynthia rumina</i>							✓	
Large White	<i>Pieris brassicae</i>		✓						
Small White	<i>Pieris rapae</i>		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
Clouded Yellow	<i>Colias croceus</i>		✓		✓		✓	✓	
Holly Blue	<i>Celastrina argiolus</i>						✓		
Common Blue	<i>Polyommatus icarus</i>							✓	
Red Admiral	<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>		✓			✓		✓	
Painted Lady	<i>Vanessa cardui</i>		✓		✓	✓		✓	
Iberian Marbled White	<i>Melanargia lachesis</i>						✓		
Meadow Brown	<i>Maniola jurtina</i>						✓		
Spanish Gatekeeper	<i>Pyronia bathseba</i>						✓	✓	
Speckled Wood	<i>Pararge aegeria</i>		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
Lulworth Skipper	<i>Thymelicus acteon</i>						✓		
Small Skipper	<i>Thymelicus sylvestris</i>						✓		

Damselflies and dragonflies

Common name	Scientific name	May 2025							
		16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Southern Damsel	<i>Coenagrion mercuriale</i>						✓		
Common Bluetail	<i>Ischnura graellsii</i>				✓		✓		
Common Bluet	<i>Enallagma cyathigerum</i>						✓		
Blue-eye	<i>Erythromma lindenii</i>						✓		
Blue Emperor	<i>Anax imperator</i>						✓		
Epaulet Skimmer	<i>Orthetrum chrysostigma</i>						✓		
Red-veined Darter	<i>Sympetrum fonscolombii</i>		✓	✓		✓	✓		
Broad Scarlet	<i>Crocothemis erythraea</i>				✓		✓		

Plants

*=Iberian Endemic, **=Portuguese endemic, I=Introduced

Scientific name	Common name
<i>Acanthus mollis</i>	Bear's Breeches
<i>Agrimonia eupatoria</i>	Common Agrimony
<i>Allium ampeloprasum</i>	Wild Leek
<i>Allium roseum</i>	Rosy Garlic
<i>Anacamptis pyramidalis</i>	Pyramidal Orchid
<i>Anchusa calcarea</i> *	
<i>Anchusa undulata</i>	Undulate Alkanet
<i>Andryala arenaria</i>	
<i>Angelica pachycarpa</i> *	Portuguese Angelica
<i>Anthyllis vulneraria</i>	
<i>Antirrhinum cirrhigerum</i> *	
<i>Antirrhinum majus</i> subsp. <i>linkianum</i> *	Common Snapdragon
<i>Aristolochia paucinerervis</i>	
<i>Armeria berlengensis</i> **	
<i>Armeria welwitschii</i> **	
<i>Arundo donax</i>	Giant Reed
<i>Bellardia trixago</i>	Trixago Bartsia
<i>Bellis perennis</i>	Common Daisy

*=Iberian Endemic, **=Portuguese endemic, I=Introduced	
Scientific name	Common name
<i>Biscutella valentina</i>	
<i>Blackstonia perfoliata</i>	Common Yellow-wort
<i>Briza maxima</i>	
<i>Calendula suffruticosa</i>	
<i>Calluna vulgaris</i>	Common Heather
<i>Campanula rapunculus</i>	Rampion Bellflower
<i>Carduus lusitanicus</i>	
<i>Castanea sativa</i>	Sweet Chestnut
<i>Centaurea lusitanica</i> **	
<i>Centaurea pullata</i>	
<i>Centaurium erythraea</i>	Common Centaury
<i>Centranthus calcitrapae</i>	Annual Valerian
<i>Chaenorhinum organifolium</i>	Oregano-leaved Toadflax
<i>Cichorium intybus</i>	Common Chicory
<i>Cistus albidus</i>	Grey-leaved Rock-rose
<i>Cistus calycinus</i>	
<i>Cistus crispus</i>	Curled-leaved Rock-rose
<i>Cistus ladanifer</i>	
<i>Cistus psilosepalus</i>	
<i>Cistus salviifolius</i>	Sage-leaved Rock-rose
<i>Clinopodium vulgare</i>	Wild Basil
<i>Coincya cintrana</i> **	
<i>Coleostephus myconis</i>	Corn Marigold
<i>Convolvulus arvensis</i>	Field Bindweed
<i>Corema album</i>	
<i>Crambe hispanica</i>	Abyssinian mustard
<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	Common Hawthorn
<i>Crithmum maritimum</i>	Rock Samphire
<i>Crucianella maritima</i>	Maritime Crosswort
<i>Cupressus sempervirens</i>	Italian Cypress
<i>Cymbalaria muralis</i>	Common Ivy-leaved Toadflax
<i>Cynara humilis</i>	
<i>Cyperus eragrostis</i>	Tall Flatsedge
<i>Dactylis glomerata</i> subsp. <i>hackelii</i>	
<i>Daphne gnidium</i>	Narrow-leaved Mezereon
<i>Daucus carota</i>	Common Carrot
<i>Daucus muricatus</i>	
<i>Digitalis purpurea</i>	Common Foxglove
<i>Dipsacus comosus</i>	
<i>Dittrichia viscosa</i>	Woody Fleabane
<i>Echium plantagineum</i>	Purple Viper's-bugloss
<i>Echium rosulatum</i> subsp. <i>davaei</i> **	
<i>Equisetum telmateia</i>	Great Horsetail
<i>Erica arborea</i>	Tree Heath
<i>Erodium botrys</i>	Mediterranean Stork's-bill
<i>Erophaca baetica</i>	Iberian Milkvetch
<i>Eryngium campestre</i>	Field Eryngo
<i>Eryngium maritimum</i>	Sea-holly
<i>Euphorbia characias</i>	Mediterranean Spurge
<i>Euphorbia paralias</i>	Sea Spurge
<i>Euphorbia portlandica</i>	Portland Spurge
<i>Euphorbia terracina</i>	False Caper
<i>Ferula communis</i> subsp. <i>catalaunica</i> *	Giant Fennel
<i>Ficus carica</i>	Common Fig

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Scientific name	Common name
<i>Foeniculum vulgare</i>	Common Fennel
<i>Frankenia laevis</i>	Common Sea-heath
<i>Fraxinus angustifolia</i>	Narrow-leaved Ash
<i>Galactites tomentosus</i>	Purple Milk-thistle
<i>Gallium mollugo</i>	
<i>Genista grandiflora</i>	
<i>Genista tournefortii</i> *	
<i>Geranium purpureum</i>	
<i>Geranium robertianum</i>	Common Herb Robert
<i>Gladiolus illyricus</i>	Wild Gladiolus
<i>Helianthemum apenninum</i>	White Rock-rose
<i>Helichrysum stoechas</i>	Scentless Curry-plant
<i>Helleborus foetidus</i>	Stinking Hellebore
<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>	Common Hogweed
<i>Himantoglossum robertianum</i>	Giant Orchid
<i>Hypericum perforatum</i>	Perforate St John's-wort
<i>Iberis procumbens</i> subsp. <i>procumbens</i> *	Candytuft
<i>Iris foetidissima</i>	Stinking Iris
<i>Jasione montana</i>	Common Sheep's-bit
<i>Juniperus turbinata</i>	a juniper
<i>Lagurus ovatus</i>	Harestail Grass
<i>Laurus nobilis</i>	Bay Laurel
<i>Lavandula pedunculata</i>	
<i>Lavandula stoechas</i>	French Lavender
<i>Leucanthemum sylvaticum</i>	
<i>Limbaria crithmoides</i>	Golden-samphire
<i>Limonium auriculifolium</i> **	
<i>Linaria polygalifolia</i> *	Milkwort-leaved Toadflax
<i>Linaria sparteia</i>	
<i>Linum bienne</i>	Pale Flax
<i>Lobularia maritima</i>	Sweet Alison
<i>Lonicera etrusca</i>	Etruscan Honeysuckle
<i>Lonicera periclymenum</i>	Common Honeysuckle
<i>Lotus creticus</i>	Cretan Bird's-foot Trefoil
<i>Lotus hispidus</i>	Hairy Bird's-foot Trefoil
<i>Lupinus luteus</i>	Yellow Lupin
<i>Lysimachia arvensis</i>	Scarlet Pimpernel
<i>Lysimachia monelli</i>	Shrubby Pimpernel
<i>Lythrum junceum</i>	False Grass-poly
<i>Malva arborea</i>	Tree Mallow
<i>Malva multiflora</i>	Smaller Tree Mallow
<i>Malva trimestris</i>	Royal Mallow
<i>Marcus-kochia littorea</i>	Sand Stock
<i>Misopates calycinum</i>	
<i>Muscari comosum</i>	Great Hyacinth
<i>Narcissus bulbocodium</i>	Petticoat Daffodil
<i>Oenanthe crocata</i>	Hemlock Water-dropwort
<i>Olea europaea</i>	Common Olive
<i>Ononis ramosissima</i>	
<i>Ononis reclinata</i>	
<i>Ophrys apifera</i>	Common Bee Orchid
<i>Orlaya daucooides</i>	
<i>Ornithogalum narbonne</i>	Narbonne Star-of-Bethlehem
<i>Orobancha calandulae</i>	

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Scientific name	Common name
<i>Orobanche foetida</i>	
<i>Orobanche hederace</i>	Ivy Broomrape
<i>Orobanche minor</i>	Common Broomrape
<i>Paeonia broteroi</i> *	
<i>Pallenis spinosa</i>	Spiny Starwort
<i>Pancratium maritimum</i>	Sea Daffodil
<i>Papaver rhoeas</i>	Common Poppy
<i>Papaver somniferum</i>	Opium Poppy
<i>Paronychia argentea</i>	Algerian Tea
<i>Petrorhagia nanteuillii</i>	Childing Pink
<i>Petrosedum forsterianum</i>	Rock Stonecrop
<i>Petrosedum sediforme</i>	Pale Stonecrop
<i>Phillyrea angustifolia</i>	Narrow-leaved Mock Privet
<i>Phragmites australis</i>	Common Reed
<i>Pinus pinaster</i>	Maritime Pine
<i>Pinus pinea</i>	Stone Pine
<i>Pistacia lentiscus</i>	Mastic
<i>Plantago lagopus</i>	
<i>Polygonatum odoratum</i>	Angular Solomon's-seal
<i>Prunella vulgaris</i>	Common Selfheal
<i>Prunus spinosa</i>	Blackthorn
<i>Quercus coccifera</i>	Kermes Oak
<i>Quercus faginea</i>	Iberian Oak
<i>Quercus suber</i>	Cork Oak
<i>Ranunculus muricatus</i>	Rough-fruited Buttercup
<i>Reichardia gaditana</i>	
<i>Reseda luteola</i>	Weld
<i>Rhamnus alaternus</i>	Mediterranean Buckthorn
<i>Rhamnus oleoides</i>	
<i>Rosa canina</i>	Common Dog Rose
<i>Rosa sempervirens</i>	Evergreen Rose
<i>Rubia peregrina</i>	Common Madder
<i>Rubus ulmifolius</i>	
<i>Ruscus aculeatus</i>	Butcher's Broom
<i>Ruta montana</i>	Mountain Rue
<i>Salvia rosmarinus</i>	Common Rosemary
<i>Salvia sclareoides</i>	
<i>Sanguisorba verrucosa</i>	
<i>Saxifraga cintrana</i> **	
<i>Scabiosa atropurpurea</i>	Sweet Scabious
<i>Scrophularia canina</i>	French Figwort
<i>Scrophularia scorodonia</i>	
<i>Scrophularia sublyrata</i> **	
<i>Sedum album</i>	White Stonecrop
<i>Senecio gallicus</i>	French Groundsel
<i>Serapias parviflora</i>	Small-flowered Tongue Orchid
<i>Seseli tortuosum</i>	
<i>Silene latifolia</i>	White Campion
<i>Silene longicilia</i> **	
<i>Silene scabriflora</i>	
<i>Silene vulgaris</i>	Bladder Campion
<i>Spergularia rupicola</i>	Rock Sea-spurrey
<i>Stachys germanica</i>	Downy Woundwort
<i>Thalictrum speciosissimum</i>	Glaucous Meadow-rue

*=Iberian Endemic, **=Portuguese endemic, I=Introduced	
Scientific name	Common name
<i>Thapsia villosa</i>	Villose Poison-carrot
<i>Thymus zygis</i> subsp. <i>sylvestris</i> *	White Thyme
<i>Tolpis barbata</i>	Bearded Tolpis
<i>Trifolium incarnatum</i>	Crimson Clover
<i>Trifolium resupinatum</i>	Reversed Clover
<i>Trifolium stellatum</i>	
<i>Tuberaria guttata</i>	Spotted Rock-rose
<i>Typha latifolia</i>	Common Bulrush
<i>Ulex parviflorus</i> subsp. <i>airensis</i> **	Small-flowered Gorse
<i>Umbilicus rupestris</i>	Pennywort
<i>Verbascum litigiosum</i> **	
<i>Verbascum virgatum</i>	Twiggy Mullein