

Romania's Danube Delta & Carpathian Mountains

Naturetrek Tour Report

12 – 21 May 2018



Steppe Polecat by Mike Catchpole



Red-breasted Flycatcher by Stephen Hardy



Paddyfield Warbler by Stephen Hardy



Glossy Ibis by Mike Catchpole

Report compiled by Andy Buntten
Images courtesy of Mike Catchpole & Stephen Hardy



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Day 2

Saturday 12th May

London Heathrow – Bucharest – Transylvania

We all arrived at Heathrow Airport to catch our British Airways flight to Bucharest, which was entirely smooth and uneventful. We landed on time at Bucharest and after collecting our luggage, met our local guide Alex who quickly took us down to our brand-new minibus and its driver George. As the flight landed at 6.30pm we weren't going to get to our guest house until late, so we stopped at a restaurant close to the airport where the presence of a wedding party meant that we were entertained as well as being very well fed on soup, chicken and delicious cherry-filled pancakes.

We arrived at our hotel a little after midnight and quickly retired to our rooms to dream of the splendours to come the following day in this magnificent area of beautiful mountain forests.

Day 2

Sunday 13th May

Piatra Craiului National Park (Coltul Chiliilor) – Bran

We had a delicious and filling breakfast, with fresh omelettes for those who wished, before creating our own sandwiches for lunch and then heading off with our new driver Julian a short distance to the Piatra Craiului National Park. It was a stunningly lovely day and the sun shining off the limestone cliffs of the ridge made a gorgeous picture.

Today we were walking up the track to the monastery of Coltul Chiliilor, a distance of around three kilometres, and it being a Sunday, we were already being joined by locals out for a weekend outing. At the base of our walk we were delighted to see so many Cockchafers (Maybugs) flying around. This gave an indication of the sheer amount of insect biomass available to birds like shrikes and raptors. Common Buzzards, a Northern Raven and a White Stork were overhead as we made our way up the track before sheltering from the sun to listen to nearby bird song. A Yellowhammer was singing from a conifer just uphill from us and giving wonderful rich yellow views, while a Tree Pipit obligingly perched on top of another conifer allowing us to see it well through the telescope. All the while a Lesser Whitethroat was singing heartily from a birch thicket – eventually giving brief but very satisfactory views.

Chiffchaffs, two splendid Goldcrests and increasing numbers of Common Chaffinches were interesting the birdwatchers, while some lovely gentians and milkworts, together with Woodland Ringlet, Orange Tip and Small Heath butterflies entertained us all. The sound of distinctive 'chup-chupping' drew our attention to the presence of a male Red Crossbill which landed on the top of a nearby Larch and gave us good, if slightly silhouetted, views. A virtually completely eviscerated tree indicated the presence of a Black Woodpecker in the vicinity and although we didn't find it, for a while we heard one and caught a glimpse of it in flight shortly after our lunch. It was a bit tantalising!

Our next treat was a fantastic view of a Red-backed Shrike which was singing from a low branch only some 40 yards away. With aid of the telescope we could see its throat extending as it performed its surprisingly sweet

warble intermixed with harsher charring notes. Wall and Brimstone butterflies danced in front of us and a fine Yellow-bellied Toad was found in its usual habitat of a rather ephemeral pond in the middle of the track.

We reached the monastery at lunch time, which we ate in glorious sunshine with Clouded Apollos dancing around us and Globe Flowers and Early Purple Orchids in abundance. Our descent brought us brief Black Woodpecker views, plus more satisfactory sights and sounds of Marsh Tits, more Tree Pipits, Yellowhammers and another White Stork fly past.

Back to our bus we drove to the impressive Moieciu De Jos Valley where the view was quite remarkable, before travelling to Bran Castle and having the equally remarkable experience of this famous 'Dracula' landmark. Almost as impressive to many of us were the excellent views of Fieldfares in fine breeding plumage – a rare sight for UK-based birders.

Our day ending, we came back to our hotel for a lovely meal, including a sort of rhubarb meringue pie, before doing our lists and retiring to bed.

Day 3

Monday 14th May

Piatra Craiului National Park (Zarnesti Gorge) – Bear Sanctuary

After another filling breakfast, including delicious omelettes, we were off again to the Piatra Craiului Park, though this time for a walk up the Zarnesti Gorge. The weather was cooler this morning with more cloud cover, but the perfect temperature for our gentle uphill walk along the broad gravel track.

Almost immediately we heard Red-breasted Flycatcher singing, with its staccato downward lilt, from the nearby woods. It was also great to hear Eurasian Wrens loudly singing away, with Song Thrushes in the background. Grey Wagtails seemed to be everywhere, bobbing and calling with their beaks full of insects, as we meandered upwards. The delightful trilling of a Wood Warbler held us for a while as we tried to find the bird which was well hidden away from us. Fortunately, we heard a number of these birds singing away and finally managed to track one down as it sang from the normal high branch, before dashing down to chase another bird away. Marsh Tits were in evidence as well and we had excellent views of a few of these smart little birds, some calling to put beyond doubt any identification confusions with Willow Tit.

We had been scanning the impressive limestone cliffs and high 'meadows' for some time in the hope of Chamois or possibly the specialist bird that we all hoped to see but hardly dare name, when we heard that characteristic glissando whistle – like a kettle coming to boil as Alex described it – and there on the cliff in front of us appeared a fantastic male Wallcreeper. It was only some 30-40 yards away and we watched it moving around the cliff face, one minute perfectly hidden in its grey and black plumage, the next a flash of crimson as it moved to another fissure in the limestone. A fantastic sight and a first for a number of the group! The promised rain appeared and though only a light shower, it signalled our time was up and we needed to head back to Hotel Elena to have our lunch.

After a delightful lunch of soup, schnitzel and wonderful chocolate cakes, we headed back out for our afternoon and evening adventures. We drove north out of Zarnetsi towards, and then through, Sinca Noua before turning off onto a westward heading track and leaving the bus to go on a gentle walk through the scrub-strewn

meadows, wonderfully rich in all sorts of biodiversity – flowers, insects and birds. We watched a Hoopoe for a good ten minutes as it flapped around, sometimes being chased by Fieldfares and sometimes chasing its own prey items. We were, in turn, watched by very alert sheepdogs carefully keeping guard over their sheep in a nearby field.

Yellowhammers were singing from various isolated bushes and we found a vole sticking his head out of his hole and seemingly unworried about the amount of photographic attention he was getting. We stopped to see a Spotted Flycatcher do its normal stuff from the top of a dead tree, and listened to a wonderfully flowing Garden Warbler somewhere deep in the streamside vegetation. Red-backed Shrikes were watchful from old brush piles and Golden Orioles serenaded us from the middle distance, sounding very exotic and, as usual, very elusive to see. A Common Cuckoo however was much more obliging and perched on top of a tree in the middle distance for long enough for us to get good views through the telescope. Common Swifts were overhead and a small group were fortunate to pick out three Alpine Swifts as well.

Then it was time to drive a little further down the track and get ourselves ready to see the evening's main event - Brown Bears. Before that though we had an excellent entrée as some of the group had gone for a comfort stop and in so doing one set of sharp eyes spotted a wonderful Salamander on an old tree stump. A slight delay ensued as we tumbled out of the coach again to take photographs before getting to the bear hide site and carefully and quietly walking the hundred yards or so to the hide itself. We arrived a little later than originally planned – amphibian photography to blame – and found a bear already at the site as we nestled into the hide.

For the next hour and three-quarters we were treated to a wonderful show as Brown Bears of different ages appeared, ate, chased each other and generally had a good time. There were four different individuals, all females, two five-year olds, one three-year old and a one-year old cub. The cub, not surprisingly, was the most alert, always ready to scamper away if she felt there was a potential threat, however managing to consume more than her fair share of the biscuits and other items put out by the rangers. It was an absolutely fantastic evening with bears in front of us virtually all of the time. The tiered seating allowed excellent views for all and the group was very thoughtful in changing places with each other to allow front seats to be shared around for the especially keen photographers. All too soon dusk was falling and we needed to make our way back over the low small bridge and to our hotel. It was difficult to drag ourselves away though, as there were three adult bears right in front of the hide as we crept silently out!

A fantastic day all round and one rightly celebrated with some Ursus beer when we arrived back at Hotel Elena.

Day 4

Tuesday 15th May

Transylvania to Tulcea (birding en route at Lake Hasarlac)

Sadly, it was now time for us to leave this marvellous area of mountains, woods, Wallcreepers and Bears, and so we consumed our last substantial breakfast with light fluffy omelettes, loaded our minibus with skill and precision, and headed off towards the Danube Delta. We headed south and east across the agricultural areas of Ploiesti and Slobovia, remorselessly towards the delta and fortified with Mintoes and Chocolate Limes. As we descended from the mountain areas to the flat plains so the birds changed too and we started to pick up small groups of Glossy Ibis, various egret species and the first of very many European Rollers perched up on the electricity and telephone wires.

We broke our journey a few times and most notably at the lake of Hasarlac, where got our first taste of water birds with Great Egret, Pygmy Cormorant, Common Pochard and Glossy Ibis. Bee-eaters called overhead, a Great Reed Warbler sang lustily from the reeds below us and we heard the thin call of a Penduline Tit.

We continued on our way and before too long we were at Tulcea and could board the floating hotel – our home for the next four nights. Before our meal we gazed across the broad expanse of the Danube with its numerous Common Terns, Black-headed Gulls and swooping Barn Swallows.

Day 5

Wednesday 16th May

Danube Delta (Mile 36) – Sulina Brach – Litcovr and Ceamurlia Canals

We woke to a beautiful sunny morning with the early sounds of the river, the city and the motorized boats at Tulcea's port. Early risers were treated to flight pasts of Whiskered and Common Terns, a Dalmatian Pelican and Black-headed and Caspian Gulls, as well as the usual Western Jackdaws, Hooded Crows and Collared Doves.

After a delicious breakfast on board, we left our floating hotel behind and started our first day on the Danube, exploring the river delta on our expedition boat.

We made our way along the Canal Mile 36 and very quickly started to see numbers of Common Kingfishers only dreamt of in the UK. We counted around ten before scarcely mentioning that another kingfisher had shot past. In the glorious sunshine we really didn't know where to look - there were Pygmy Cormorants flying over, Dalmatian Pelicans, Common Cuckoos galore and even a couple of elusive Golden Orioles whose songs we could hear from the trees lining the bank made a brief appearance. We turned a corner on the narrow waterway and from a channel to our right poured out over a hundred White Pelicans and Great Cormorants flying low over our heads and keeping our photographers extremely busy to get the ideal shot. Our trip became even more idyllic as we gently cruised along with European Rollers appearing in just about every other tree, Squacco Herons flapping along in front of us, Banded Demoiselles fluttering around the lily pads, and everywhere the harsh but beautiful song of Great Reed Warblers.

Approaching 'Crazy Lake' we had an amazing encounter with a White-tailed Eagle which was calmly perched on a tree next to the waterway and gazed at us superciliously as we drifted past; its equanimity only disturbed by a persistent Hooded Crow and thus giving excellent flight views of this adult individual. More wonderful birds were to follow: lovely Red-necked Grebe, Ferruginous Ducks, Marsh Harriers and Glossy Ibis. We were regularly seeing lots of pelicans now and so able to get to grips with the difference between Dalmatian and White Pelicans, both in flight and at a distance on the water. Wonderful Whiskered Terns were our almost constant companions, with Common Terns making their presence known with their harsher calls.

European Rollers seemed to becoming almost commonplace and the only issue now was getting a good photograph of one as we crossed Lake Furtuna and settled down in a flurry of Common and Whiskered Terns for a coffee and some delicious wafer biscuits. Grey-headed Woodpeckers made an appearance, as did a lovely group of bank-nesting Sand Martins as we approached our Mother Ship for lunch. Even then the Danube kept giving: more European Rollers, a beautiful Black-headed '*feldegg*' Yellow Wagtail and then a metre-long Dice Snake with a struggling beast -some said fish- in its grasp. Time for us to eat too!

The lunch, of course, was excellent and we then set off on our Flotel down the Sulina Branch of the Danube, reclining on the top deck and watching the world go by. Rollers were still omnipresent but a new bird was a smart Lesser Grey Shrike on a bankside bush. An area of shallow water produced a number of waders including Black-winged Stilt and Black-tailed Godwit. Eurasian Spoonbills flew overhead, half a dozen Black Terns provided a welcome comparison to our constant companions the Whiskered Terns, and there was a brief view of a dog-like animal trotting along the canal path before disappearing into the scrub. Golden Jackal? We couldn't be absolutely sure but it seemed the most likely option.

Around 4.45pm we got back onto the smaller ship to explore the Litcov and Ceamurlia Canals. This lovely little trip produced yet more European Rollers, lots of damselflies, Red-necked Grebes, yet more Common Cuckoos and excellent views of Great Reed Warblers boldly singing from the top of their swaying Phragmites stem.

Distant falcons were earnestly discussed until they revealed themselves as Hobbies, a group of waders were resolved into Wood Sandpipers and a Ruff, and an obliging Dalmatian Pelican enabled us to see its distinguishing characteristics on water before flying off and showing its paler underwing.

We arrived back on the boat and quickly got ready to do our 'list', but even then the day kept giving as a pair of Rose-coloured Starlings appeared and we all scampered onto the top deck to get really good views of this exotic starling before completing the tally of our truly magical day, opening some bottles of the excellent wine on board our Flotel, and settling down for our evening meal

Day 6

Thursday 17th May

Caraoman Bird Sanctuary and factory site – Old Danube- Channels north of Sulina Branch

Many of us woke early this morning, assisted by the violent thunderstorm which acted as a good wake up call, to see what may be around here in the heart of the Delta. A Eurasian Bittern which had been calling last night had continued with its booming through the night and into the early morning. The Great Reed Warblers were in good voice and were joined by songs of a Garden Warbler, which eventually showed itself, and Lesser Whitethroat, which remained hidden.

We breakfasted to the accompaniment of the rain and the persistent calling Common Cuckoos before getting on to our smaller vessel and heading off down the canal. We went through a flock of around 30 White Pelicans with numbers of Great Cormorant present too and around four Great Egrets. During our brief journey we saw a lot of, by now, familiar friends: Black-crowned Night Herons, Squacco Herons, Gadwall, Ferruginous Duck and a collection of around ten Great Egrets including a pink legged one from further east.

At 9.15am the light rain had cleared and we disembarked and had a walk around the old fish ponds area which now is the Caraoman Bird Sanctuary. Bitterns were calling regularly and the ubiquitous Common Cuckoos were flying to and fro, calling as they moved between bushes and trees. Thunder clouds were building and our walk was punctuated by dramatic flashes of lighting and distant rumbling. A Lesser Whitethroat was rattling away from nearby Sallow trees and beautiful damselflies (Scarce Blue-tailed) were fluttering weakly around on the low vegetation. A distant calling Common Pheasant was joined by nearer, and somewhat more exotic, singing Savi's Warbler, and Common Reed Buntings zipped among the reeds. A heron flew past us and we imagined it would be one of the usual that we'd been seeing so regularly, but looking again we saw it was a Eurasian Bittern. A wonderful sight! A little further on we were able to set ourselves up with the sun behind us and look across a

large expanse of water. Grebes galore! Lots of Great Crested Grebes, six Black-necked Grebes and six Red-necked Grebes, all set out in front of us. Whiskered Terns bounced around dipping down into the water with their cracking calls and all the while there was a constant chorus of Marsh Frogs. It was almost time for us to leave but just before we boarded our small boat a Penduline Tit, which had been calling away for a long time, appeared and flew down a line of Phragmites, perching from time to time to allow some brief but excellent views.

Back on the boat we hadn't gone very far before we found a wonderful Lesser Grey Shrike in a bush posing well and looking very smart indeed. A Reed Warbler was singing from the reedbeds and a couple of Whinchats suddenly appeared perched high in the canal side bushes. A minute or so later we had fantastic views of two European Bee-eaters perched close to the bank side and apparently investigating a few holes that were in a low sand bank. Golden Orioles, masses of White Pelicans and Pygmy Cormorants were being seen as we approached a muddy area with various ducks and hidden waders. There were Garganey, Black-winged Stilts, four Ferruginous Ducks and Northern Lapwings. We couldn't make out all the waders but they were probably a mix of Ruff and Wood Sandpipers.

Our final stop before lunch was the site of the old disused factory and accommodation buildings, where we were immediately greeted by over 30 European Bee-eaters calling and wheeling around in front of us. A fabulous sight! An area of wet grassland held Pied Avocet, White Stork, and Great and Little Egrets. We hunted around the derelict houses and found Common Kestrel, a wonderful Little Owl and a few chipping Tree Sparrows. Once back on the boat and heading back to our mother ship, we saw a large 'kettle' of swirling White Pelicans, a soaring White-tailed Eagle and a great view of a male Red-footed Falcon.

Lunch was, as usual, very tasty and filling and we had an hour's gentle cruising on the floating hotel before we left on our small boat around 4.30pm for another slow cruise around small canals and lakes in the old Danube area around canal Mile 23. Here we had luck with birds of prey, seeing magnificent White-tailed Eagles, excellent views of Hobbies and a reasonable view of a male Red-footed Falcon. Grey-headed Woodpeckers were calling and occasionally showing on old telegraph posts and we were fortunate to see both Great Crested and Red-necked Grebes on their nests; discretely slipping off as our boat moved carefully past them. Crossing a fairly large lake we had the extreme good fortune to see an Otter suddenly pop its head out of the water with a fish in its mouth. Seeing us it almost immediately disappeared again giving only a fleeting view of its back as it swam rapidly away.

Heading back we found another nice Hobby perched in a tree, excellent views of a White-tailed Eagle being pestered by four Hooded Crows and, at the other end of the size spectrum, a pair of beautiful Bearded Reedlings climbing up and down dead reed stems.

It had been yet another wonderful day and we clambered on boat our floating hotel for a quick wash, to do our rapidly expanding list and then tuck into an excellent meal, complete with birthday cake and a magnificent rendition of Happy Birthday on the trumpet by Alan for our birthday 'boy'!

Day 7

Friday 18th May

Eracle – Stipoc – Razaboinita – Sontea Canal (mile 36 to Tulcea)

Today was to be our last full one on the wonderful Danube Delta and it was glorious morning with the sun rising over the trees next to our floating hotel and shedding beautiful light on the marshes opposite. The early risers (and later ones too) were treated to an amazing, almost deafening, chorus from what sounded like two million frogs on the aquatic vegetation opposite. As always there were Whiskered Terns dipping and twisting along the river, a pair of Mute Swans shepherded three cygnets along, while Great Crested Grebes dived and Ferruginous Ducks and Gadwall appeared out of the reedy creeks. In the reedbeds we caught glimpses of Common Reed Bunting and managed to track down a persistently reeling Savi's Warbler.

Just as we were leaving on our smaller boat a Little Bittern flew low over the reeds before dropping into them – never to be seen again. Our gentle sail through the creeks and small canals was, as usual, an absolute delight. The weather was perfect and the multitudes of Great Reed Warblers were in perfect and energetic song, joined intermittently with Savi's Warblers, Penduline Tits, Garden Warblers, Common Redstarts and Common Reed Buntings. Cuckoos and Squacco Herons seemed particularly numerous this morning with numbers of Squacco Herons appearing at just about every bend in the canal. Cuckoos were being seen in their twos and threes and included a really attractive rufous female form, plus the bubbling call of another female. We began to wonder how any Reed Warblers ever raised any young at all.

In the water there were various forms of action too with hundreds of damselflies, mainly Red-eyed, a Grass Snake swam by with only its head showing, and yet another Otter was seen on our trip -this time swimming rapidly across the small canal. Rollers were making an appearance now with increasing numbers being seen, culminating in five birds displaying and calling as they flew around some telegraph wires just a matter of metres away; an amazing riot of blue and chestnut-brown.

An area of marshy grassland hove into view and with it a whole load of wading birds: fifteen or more Wood Sandpipers, around the same number of Ruff, one male in rather pleasing black-necked plumage, and numbers of Glossy Ibis and Northern Lapwings. A turtle slipped into the water just before we drove into the bankside and moored up for coffee. Almost immediately two lovely male Red-footed Falcons circled around our boat, calling and snatching insects out of the sky. As we made our way back to the flotel Hobbies whisked past us, a flock of around 50 Pygmy Cormorants appeared over distant trees, and at last one of the commonly heard Common Redstarts made an appearance and flew across the boat from one set of willows to another.

Back to our home, we sat on the observation deck for a while as another delicious meal was prepared, watching a Roller flying past, a Red-footed Falcon hovering at the back of the marsh and Bearded Reedlings flitting around in the Phragmites. A huge Hornet busily inspecting everyone was a signal for us to descend for our meal and for us to start our journey back towards Tulcea.

The afternoon was spent in glorious weather watching while the world moved past us. Common Nightingales sang, Red-necked Grebes swam by in numbers, and around the middle of the afternoon we had one of the best views of White-tailed Eagle anyone could possibly have - sitting at eye level only about ten yards away and brought to our attention by an almost speechless but dramatically gesticulating Angela.

Day 8

Saturday 19th May

Area above Somova – Sarica – Celic Dere – Muntii Mancinulu

With great reluctance we had to leave our wonderful floating hotel although we were looking forward to another exciting day and some new habitats and animals. We drove a short distance to an area near Somova, towards Parches, where we had a most magnificent view over the western end of the Danube. From our vantage point we could see broad expanses of Phragmites with numerous smaller lakes, inlets and channels with the wide main Danube flowing below. A tightly-gathered pack of White Pelicans were fishing in harmony and groups of Bee-eaters floated around us calling in their mellifluous way. Glossy Ibises were feeding below too, Great Egrets and Red-necked Grebes were in the smaller areas of open water, and the trill of a Savi's Warbler made its way up to us.

A by now very familiar European Roller flew past us as we climbed back onto our bus and drove a short distance along the road to our next stop. However even in that brief period we saw Long-legged and Honey Buzzards. We stopped and made our way through a gently rising hillside with scattered oak trees; a popular area for grazing cattle and sheep with their concomitant guard dogs which barked dutifully at us while wagging their tails at the same time. A Hobby dashed past us and an overhead Common Buzzard had a female Levant Sparrowhawk in close attendance. A Hoopoe put on a good show close in front of us, dextrously extracting a snail from its shell before flying off with its prize.

Over the more distant ridge to our south we could see a handful of birds of prey which, on being examined through the telescope, turned out to be Honey Buzzards. Fortunately, one person was checking to see if anything else was around and saw a Griffon Vulture pass over our heads: a very rare bird in these parts and an excellent bird to 'write in' later when we did our sightings list. Ortolan Buntings were calling as we reached our bus but although we couldn't pick one of these up, we did have our first good view of a very smart Spanish Sparrow calling from a mid-distance bush.

Our next stop was a short distance away at the woods around the monastery site of Celic Dere. A Lesser Spotted Eagle was soaring overhead as we entered the woodland path, a broad avenue lined with wonderful trees, principally Hornbeam. This was a lovely walk full of birdsong: squeaky Icterine Warblers, purring Turtle Doves and trilling Wood Warblers. We heard the distinctive descending scale of a Red-breasted Flycatcher and after a while had the most fantastic views as the bird circled around us, singing with great gusto.

Our lunch was taken in a large woodland glade in the company of a group of young Romanian keep fit enthusiasts who were enthusiastically keeping fit. We enjoyed a more restful time eating our delicious simple picnic and watching some spectacular longhorn beetles and jewel-like Rose Chafers on the elderflowers which lined the woodland edge. Finishing our picnic we then drove south, following the line of the Danube and passing through Macin. A few kilometres later we turned east to access the Muntii Macinulu National Park. Here we started a slow walk up a gorge. European Rollers were perched on the telegraph wires and various butterflies, included the very spectacular Cardinal, flitted ahead of us. A rock on the ridge to our left proved extremely fruitful as first a Northern Wheatear, then a Pied Wheatear and finally a Common Rock Thrush made an appearance. While we were watching those a Common Buzzard, a Long-legged Buzzard and a Honey Buzzard all flew by! We couldn't have staged it better.

We continued along the track a little way and found a number of the huge *Brachyporus* crickets climbing around in the grass. These were real monsters, a good three inches long and clad in very impressive iridescent armour-like chitin. As always bird song accompanied us and we heard Lesser Whitethroat, Common Nightingale and the surprisingly sweet song of a Red-backed Shrike. Thunder clouds were looking a little threatening so, after we'd feasted our eyes and cameras on a very fine blue headed Balkan Green Lizard, we turned back to our bus.

Driving along the track we were brought to a standstill by an extremely smart Black-headed Bunting perched next to the track side. A few yards further on we found another of these very neat birds on the left side of the coach, thus giving everyone very good views. We had one further stop in the National Park so we drove a little further south before once again turning east and driving along a rutted track alongside a very nice steppe area. As we bounced along looking for Souseliks we saw a mammal dart into a nearby bush causing two Isabelline Wheatears a great deal of distress. It wasn't a Souselik and we could hardly believe our eyes when a distinctive panda-like head peered out at us. Steppe Polecat! He or she was intent on finding something and we were treated to a good ten minutes viewing as it busied itself in the low vegetation and investigated various burrows. An amazing sight of a rare, and rarely seen, mammal!

We walked across the steppe still getting occasional views of our polecat in the middle distance and getting lots of good views of Isabelline Wheatears. By a low ridge of hills we found a perched Long-legged Buzzard and across the steppe a solitary Eurasian Stone-curlew – both were given good attention through the telescopes. It was only as we were making our way back to our bus that we finally had a few, rather fleeting, glimpses of our original quarry - the Souseliks.

Yet another amazing day!

Day 9

Sunday 20th May

Western Black Sea Coast – Sinoe - Vadu

We had had heavy rain overnight and when we set out it was still cloudy though warm and with skies lightening. Our trip today was down the west side of the Black Sea and after an hour or so of driving, we headed through the village of Sinoe and down a track with fields of various crops either side. European Bee-eaters seemed to be everywhere, as did Red-backed Shrikes with sometimes one every ten yards or so; an incredible density. A Calandra Lark appeared on the road ahead of us and as we watched that, we also noticed a very smart Lesser Grey Shrike perched on a low line of turned hay. Yellow Wagtails were everywhere and many different forms too, from the beautiful Black-headed *Feldlegg* race to the paler *Thunbergi* one. We stopped to examine a European Pond Turtle on the road, only to be driven back into our bus by a about million very hungry mosquitoes.

At the base of the track we left the bus for a walk and immediately found some Paddyfield Warblers. These singing birds seemed to be relatively common and were far from shy, landing on reeds right in front of us and giving even the less gifted of the photographers a sporting chance. A very imposing White-tailed Eagle beat past us with its normal retinue of Hooded Crows, while we settled down for a bit of very satisfying wader watching. There were very large numbers of Curlew Sandpipers, some resplendent in their deep red breeding colours. Dunlin too with their black bellies and a brace of Broad-billed Sandpipers moved around among the others. Common Ringed Plovers darted and stopped in their characteristic way and a lone pale sandpiper turned out to be a Marsh Sandpiper once we'd got our telescopes on it.

A little further on an area of open water produced two Red-crested Pochards and a beautiful White-winged Tern, which later settled so we could see its jet-black head and belly very well. Hundreds of White and an occasional Dalmatian Pelicans put in appearances, as did Purple and Grey Herons, a Spoonbill, an unexpected Little Tern, a Turtle Dove and a fly past of three Collared Pratincoles.

We had our picnic lunch by a small religious shrine in the shade of poplar trees, in which was a lively and noisy colony of Spanish Sparrows, before getting back on the bus and heading a little further south to the marshes and wetlands near a disused factory site near Vadu. There were European Bee-eaters galore here, perching up on various wires, and almost immediately we heard the distinctive deep booming of a Eurasian Bittern. A small muddy pool proved a rich hunting ground for waders: Wood Sandpiper, Little Stint, Pied Avocet, Curlew Sandpiper and a new one for us, Little Ringed Plover. Most exciting was a wonderful perched Collared Pratincole which gave excellent views as it sat and preened. A little further along and we found quite a number of Black-winged Stilts and among them, partially hidden by the vegetation, a number of very smart Garganey. An island in the middle of a small lake was alive with noisy Common Terns, and Red-crested Pochard, Pied Avocet, Common Redshank and Kentish Plover were also found in the area.

Then it was back onto the bus to drive a short distance towards the beach, where we were amazed to see so many Red-backed Shrikes – they really did seem to be in every bush! At the coast we enjoyed the Black Sea view and watched some White Pelicans, Great Cormorants and Common Terns lurking on an off-shore fish farm.

It was then time to head home, but a couple of treats were yet in store: Red-backed Shrikes galore in the bushes of course, but one bush next to the bus held a beautiful male Red-footed Falcon and on closer inspection we noticed a female bird just below it, sitting on a nest. We watched transfixed from our bus 'hide' only a matter of feet away as the birds swapped over the incubation duties. Absolutely amazing views of these incredibly attractive little falcons! We continued down our bumpy track before our driver's sharp eyes spotted a Souselik in the nearby vegetation. Another of these engaging mammals appeared on the other side of the bus too thus providing good views for all.

Another brilliant day was coming to an end and we headed back to our hotel for some delicious wine, lovely food and the delight of filling in our list of the day's great sightings.

Day 10

Monday 21st May

Tulcea – Bucharest airport

Time for us to go! After a relaxed start, another lovely breakfast, a sit in the flower-filled gardens of our very smart guest house and some unpressured packing, we boarded our bus for the journey from Tulcea to Bucharest. We passed through the rookery near a lake where a set of sharp back-seat eyes picked out another Souselik, and although we didn't see any of the Red-footed Falcons that are there, we did get a glimpse of a Golden Oriole.

A little further on we stopped for a break at a most fantastic Bee-eater colony. Birds were flashing around everywhere at the edge of the old Danube flood plain. There were Bee-eaters, European Rollers, hirundines and starlings, and a male Golden Oriole put in an appearance. Walking a little way through a butterfly and herb-rich grassland, we surveyed the broad former floodplain, now with a group of cattle being lead through by a blue-clad cowman. On the edge of a dyke there were two Ruddy Shelduck – a welcome addition to our list. We left this

site and on driving back to the main road saw a few more Ruddy Shelduck as well as a pale phase Booted Eagle which drifted regally past our bus.

The rest of our journey was uneventful with old favourites like Hoopoes, Red-backed Shrikes, Black-Crowned Night Herons and Great Egrets appearing as we passed suitable habitats. We arrived at the airport more or less on time and our check-in and other such matters went smoothly.

Warm thanks are due to our local guide Alex, whose laconic humour fitted the group like a glove; to all the staff at the hotel in Zarnesti, on the wonderful floating hotel and our final guest house in Tulcea. Everyone was helpfulness personified. And, of course, the group; you were a delight to be with and you gelled together from the first second – thanks are due to you for the excellent, friendly atmosphere that transforms a trip into a real holiday.

All that was left was our return flight back to the UK, where another Naturetrek adventure came to an end with a host of golden memories.

La revedere Rumania...Multumesc! (Goodbye Romania...Many thanks!)

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Steppe Polecat by Mike Catchpole

Species Lists:

Birds (✓ = recorded but not counted; H = heard; poss = possible sighting)

	Common name	Scientific name	May									
			12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
1	Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>				8	80	20	10	6	20	
2	Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>				15	150	30	150	10	60	
3	Common Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>					2	1			30	
4	Ruddy Shelduck	<i>Tadorna ferruginea</i>										8
5	Gadwall	<i>Mareca strepera</i>					5	6	4		4	
6	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>			1	2	12	10	12	✓	✓	✓
7	Garganey	<i>Spatula querquedula</i>						4			10	
8	Red-crested Pochard	<i>Netta rufina</i>									2	
9	Common Pochard	<i>Aythya ferina</i>				4	10	8	10	2	10	
10	Ferruginous Duck	<i>Aythya nyroca</i>					8	20	18	10	2	
11	Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>				2						
12	Grey Partridge	<i>Perdix perdix</i>										1
13	Common Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>				1	2	1			2	1
14	Red-necked Grebe	<i>Podiceps grisegena</i>					10	8	15	4		
15	Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>				2	5	25	12	4		
16	Black-necked Grebe	<i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>						6				
17	Black Stork	<i>Ciconia nigra</i>			1							
18	White Stork	<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>		5	1	10	6	8	6	6	6	20
19	Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>				14	35	30	30	40		10
20	Eurasian Spoonbill	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>					8				1	
21	Eurasian Bittern	<i>Botaurus stellaris</i>						1			H	
22	Little Bittern	<i>Ixobrychus minutus</i>							2			
23	Black-crowned Night Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>				1	12	20	20			4
24	Squacco Heron	<i>Ardeola ralloides</i>					40	12	40		1	
25	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>					20	20	10	1	2	
26	Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>				1	4	6	8		2	
27	Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>				1	2	15	6	5	3	6
28	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>				6	30	20	10	10	20	✓
29	Great White Pelican	<i>Pelecanus onocrotalus</i>					150	200	50	200	200	412

	Common name	Scientific name	May									
			12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
30	Dalmatian Pelican	<i>Pelecanus crispus</i>					12	1	1	1	1	
31	Pygmy Cormorant	<i>Microcarbo pygmeus</i>				2	40	✓	✓	10		1
32	Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>				4	100	✓	✓	10	6	4
33	European Honey Buzzard	<i>Pernis apivorus</i>		3						6		
34	Griffon Vulture	<i>Gyps fulvus</i>								1		
35	Lesser Spotted Eagle	<i>Clanga pomarina</i>								1		
36	Booted Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus pennatus</i>										1
37	Levant Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter brevipes</i>								1		
38	Western Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>					10	10	8	2	10	2
39	Hen Harrier	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>									1	
40	White-tailed Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i>					5	3	3		1	
41	Long-legged Buzzard	<i>Buteo rufinus</i>								4	3	
42	Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>		5	2	4			1	2		
43	Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>						2	3			
44	Eurasian Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>				6	6	8	12	12		
45	Eurasian Stone-curlew	<i>Burhinus oedicephalus</i>								1		
46	Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>					8	12			50	
47	Pied Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>						6			12	
48	Northern Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>				4	12	8	30		20	2
49	Common Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>									4	
50	Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>									2	
51	Kentish Plover	<i>Charadrius alexandrinus</i>									5	
52	Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa</i>					2	2			5	
53	Common Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>									6	
54	Marsh Sandpiper	<i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>									1	
55	Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>					27		15		15	
56	Little Stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>									10	
57	Broad-billed Sandpiper	<i>Limicola falcinellus</i>									2	
58	Curlew Sandpiper	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>									40	
59	Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>									6	
60	Ruff	<i>Philomachus pugnax</i>					20		15		12	
61	Collared Pratincole	<i>Glareola pratincola</i>									3	

	Common name	Scientific name	May									
			12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
62	Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>				✓	✓	✓	20	✓	✓	
63	Caspian Gull	<i>Larus cachinnans</i>				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
64	Yellow-legged Gull	<i>Larus michahellis</i>					✓	✓			✓	✓
65	Little Tern	<i>Sternula albifrons</i>									1	
66	Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>				2	40	30	20	15	200	✓
67	Whiskered Tern	<i>Chlidonias hybrida</i>					50	✓	✓	20	5	
68	White-winged Tern	<i>Chlidonias leucopterus</i>									1	
69	Black Tern	<i>Chlidonias niger</i>				2	6	3	1			
70	Rock Dove	<i>Columba livia</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	10		✓	✓	✓
71	Common Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>			2	1	2	6	10	4	2	
72	European Turtle Dove	<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>								H	1	
73	Eurasian Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	2	✓	✓	✓
74	Common Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>		H	1	1	20+	20+	20	2	1	
75	Little Owl	<i>Athene noctua</i>						1				
76	Alpine Swift	<i>Tachymarptis melba</i>			3							
77	Common Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>		12	10	✓		2				
78	European Roller	<i>Coracias garrulus</i>				8	20+	6	10	6	12	8
79	Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>					10+	3	3			
80	European Bee-eater	<i>Merops apiaster</i>				10	6	30	2	60	40	100
81	Eurasian Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>			3	1	1	2	1	3	12	8
82	Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>			1		H	H	1	1		
83	Black Woodpecker	<i>Dryocopus martius</i>		1	H							
84	Grey-headed Woodpecker	<i>Picus canus</i>					2	1		H		
85	Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>		1	1	2	1	8		2	4	2
86	Red-footed Falcon	<i>Falco vespertinus</i>				1		2	3		4	
87	Eurasian Hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>					6	6	4	4	2	1
88	Red-backed Shrike	<i>Lanius collurio</i>		1	4		1	3	2	6	30	6
89	Lesser Grey Shrike	<i>Lanius minor</i>					1	4			1	
90	Eurasian Golden Oriole	<i>Oriolus oriolus</i>			H		2	4	6	1	H	
91	Eurasian Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>		2	2							
92	Eurasian Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>		6	2	30	6	5	4	12	6	✓
93	Western Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>		4		✓	30		20	✓	✓	✓

	Common name	Scientific name	May										
			12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	
94	Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>		1		✓				1	2	✓	✓
95	Hooded Crow	<i>Corvus cornix</i>		4	2	10	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
96	Northern Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>		2	5	2	2				2		
97	Coal Tit	<i>Periparus ater</i>		H	3								
98	Marsh Tit	<i>Poecile palustris</i>		2	3								
99	Eurasian Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>			2		5	2	2	4			
100	Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>		3	1		2	2	2	3	2		
101	Eurasian Penduline Tit	<i>Remiz pendulinus</i>				H	H	1	H				
102	Bearded Reedling	<i>Panurus biarmicus</i>						2	4				
103	Eurasian Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>			H					H			
104	Crested Lark	<i>Galerida cristata</i>								8	2		
105	Calandra Lark	<i>Melanocorypha calandra</i>									3		
106	Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>					15	12		10	6	6	
107	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>		12	4	✓	30	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
108	Common House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>		1	10	✓	10			✓	✓	✓	✓
109	Red-rumped Swallow	<i>Cecropis daurica</i>								1			
110	Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>		2			4	2	2				
111	Common Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>		1	H		H	H	H	H			
112	Wood Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus sibilatrix</i>			2					1			
113	Great Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus arundinaceus</i>				H	4	2	4		6		
114	Sedge Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>						1	H				
115	Paddyfield Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus agricola</i>									12		
116	Eurasian Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>						H	H		1		
117	Icterine Warbler	<i>Hippolais icterina</i>								2			
118	Savi's Warbler	<i>Locustella luscinioides</i>					H	H	2		H		
119	Eurasian Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>		H	H		H	H		H			
120	Garden Warbler	<i>Sylvia borin</i>			H			1	H				
121	Lesser Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia curruca</i>		1		H		H	H	H			
122	Common Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>			H								
123	Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>		2	1								
124	Eurasian Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>			H								
125	Eurasian Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>		1									

	Common name	Scientific name	May									
			12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
126	Wallcreeper	<i>Tichodroma muraria</i>			1							
127	Eurasian Treecreeper	<i>Certhia familiaris</i>		H	H							
128	Rosy Starling	<i>Pastor roseus</i>					2			6		
129	Common Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>		4	30	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
130	Common Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>			3	1	2		2	1		
131	Fieldfare	<i>Turdus pilaris</i>		8	4	2						
132	Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>		1	3							
133	Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>			2							
134	Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>			1			2			1	
135	European Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>		H	1							
136	Common Nightingale	<i>Luscinia megarhynchos</i>				H	H		H	H		
137	Red-breasted Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula parva</i>			1					1		
138	Common Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>					H	H	3			
139	Common Rock Thrush	<i>Monticola saxatilis</i>								1		
140	Whinchat	<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>						2				
141	Northern Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>								1	4	
142	Isabelline Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe isabellina</i>								8		
143	Pied Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe pleschanka</i>								1		
144	White-throated Dipper	<i>Cinclus cinclus</i>			2							
145	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
146	Spanish Sparrow	<i>Passer hispaniolensis</i>								2	12	
147	Eurasian Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>					1	2	6	6		4
148a	Blue-headed Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava dombrowskii</i>									1	
148b	Black-headed Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava feldegg</i>					1				4	
148c	Grey-headed Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava thunbergi</i>									20	
149	Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>			10							
150	White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>		8	2		6	6	6	2		
151	Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>								2		
152	Tree Pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>		2								
153	Common Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>		10	4		2	H	1	2		
154	Red Crossbill	<i>Loxia curvirostra</i>		1								
155	European Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>			3					2		

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			12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
156	Corn Bunting	<i>Emberiza calandra</i>					2		2	6	4	2
157	Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>		2	4							
158	Ortolan Bunting	<i>Emberiza hortulana</i>								H		
159	Black-headed Bunting	<i>Emberiza melanocephala</i>								2		
160	Common Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>						3	6		5	

Mammals

1	Roe Deer	<i>Capreolus capreolus</i>			1	1						1
2	European Brown Bear	<i>Ursus arctos</i>			4							
3	Golden Jackal	<i>Canis aureus</i>					poss					
4	Vole sp.				1							
5	Red Fox	<i>Vulpes vulpes</i>				1						
6	Otter	<i>Lutra lutra</i>						1	1			
7	Steppe Polecat	<i>Mustela eversmanni</i>								1		
8	Souslik	<i>Spermophilus citellus</i>								1	3	1
9	Eastern Hedgehog	<i>Erinaceus concolor</i>									Dead	
10	Common Mole	<i>Talpa europaea</i>				Dead						

Amphibians

1	Yellow bellied Toad	<i>Bombina variegata</i>		2								
2	Marsh/Pond/Edible Frog	<i>Pelophylax sp</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓	H	
3	Fire Salamander	<i>Salamandra salamandra</i>			1							

Reptiles

1	Dice Snake	<i>Natrix tessellata</i>					1	Dead				
2	Grass Snake	<i>Natrix natrix persa</i>							1			
3	Eastern Green Lizard	<i>Lacerta viridis</i>								1		
4	Balkan Wall Lizard	<i>Podarcis tauricus</i>								1		
5	Spur-thighed Tortoise	<i>Testudo graeca</i>								Dead		
6	European Pond Turtle	<i>Emys orbicularis</i>								2		
7	Snake sp									2		

	Common name	Scientific name	May									
			12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21

Butterflies:

1	Small White	<i>Pieris rapae</i>		✓	✓								✓	
2	Large White	<i>Pieris brassicae</i>						✓						
3	Green-veined White	<i>Pieris napi</i>		✓								✓		
4	Clouded Apollo	<i>Parnassius mnemosyne</i>		✓										
5	Eastern Bath White	<i>Pontia edusa</i>											✓	
6	Pale Clouded Yellow	<i>Colias hyale</i>											✓	
7	Orange Tip	<i>Anthocharis cardamines</i>		✓	✓									
8	Small Heath	<i>Coenonympha pamphilus</i>		✓								✓		
9	European Swallowtail	<i>Papilio machaon</i>		✓										
10	Dingy Skipper	<i>Erynnis tages</i>		✓										
11	Glanville Fritillary	<i>Melitaea cinxia</i>										✓		
12	Red Admiral	<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>						✓	✓	✓				
13	Painted Lady	<i>Vanessa cardui</i>												✓
14	Cardinal	<i>Argynnis pandora</i>										✓		
15	Green-underside Blue	<i>Glaucopsyche alexis</i>										✓		
16	Common Blue	<i>Polyommatus icarus</i>										✓		
17	Woodland Ringlet	<i>Erebia medusa</i>		✓										
18	Large Copper	<i>Lycaena dispar</i>											✓	
19	Wall Brown	<i>Lasiommata magera</i>		✓								✓		
20	Speckled Wood	<i>Pararge aegeria</i>										✓		

Other sightings of note:

1	Cockchafer	<i>Melolontha melolontha</i>		✓										
2	Scorpion Fly sp			✓										
3	Bee Fly	<i>Bombylius major</i>		✓										
4	Hornet	<i>Vespa crabro</i>			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓				
5	Roman Snail	<i>Helix pomatia</i>			✓						✓			
6	Banded Demoiselle	<i>Calopteryx splendens</i>					✓							
7	Red-eyed Damselfly	<i>Erythromma najas</i>					✓		✓					
8	Scarce Blue-tailed Damselfly	<i>Ischnura pumilio</i>						✓	✓					

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			12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	
9	Blue-tailed Damselfly	<i>Ischnura elegans</i>								✓			
10	Emperor Dragonfly	<i>Anax imperator</i>								✓			
11	Ruddy Darter	<i>Sympetrum sanguineum</i>								✓			
12	Field Cricket	<i>Gryllus campestris</i>									✓		
13	Bronze Glandular Bush Cricket	<i>Bradyporus dasyopus</i>									✓		
14	Rose Chafer sp										✓		
15	Longhorn Beetle sp										✓		
16	a Chafer	<i>Oxythyrea funesta</i>									✓		
17	Fire Bug	<i>Pyrrhororis apterus</i>									✓		
18	Dytiscid larvae sp											✓	



Common Cuckoo by Stephen Hardy



Large Copper by Mike Catchpole



Red-footed Falcon by Stephen Hardy