

Romania's Danube Delta & Carpathian Mountains

Naturetrek Tour Report

11 - 20 May 2019



Pallas's Gull



European Brown Bear



Large Copper



European Honey Buzzard

Report compiled by Tom Cadwellender



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With 12 Naturetrek clients

Day 1

Saturday 11th May

Bucharest – Vulcan, Transylvania

The group arrived into Bucharest airport via various routes, meeting two who had made the journey the day before early in the afternoon. The assembled group were soon on their way north to the Carpathian Mountains. As the city architecture changed to more rural buildings the landscape also changed from the flat agricultural plains to the first glimpses of snow-covered mountains and forested hillsides. Birds along the roadside were few, although hirundines, mainly Barn Swallows, were hawking insects and may have still been on migration. Hooded Crows flew over the road and several Common Buzzards either perched on power poles or drifted overhead. A Dipper was seen on a rock in the river as we snaked our way through increasingly 'Alpine' villages perched upon steep, well-wooded slopes. The landscape was quite something with the dark green of the Norway Spruce contrasted markedly with the lush green of the deciduous trees on the mountain slopes.

After a comfort stop, at a filling station, which included excellent coffee and astounding Apple Strudel, we eventually arrived at our hotel in Vulcan near the Piatra Cralului National Park. The light was amazing as was our very 'new hotel'; seemingly it had only opened 10 days earlier. The views from our balconies were stunning as was the hospitality for our first night in Romania. .

Day 2

Sunday 12th May

Piatra Cralului National Park – Zernesti Gorges – Bear Reserve in Apple Clearing

Early morning mist hung around the nearby fields, although this soon lifted and gave way to a very bright start to the day. Several people wandered into the Hotel garden, which had at one time been an orchard complete with gnarled old Apple Trees and a great Walnut tree, replete with holes, which were being used as nest sites by Tree Sparrows and Starlings.

After traveling a short way we soon reached our first destination - the Zernesti Gorges. The approach to the gorges was through well-wooded slopes and we could hear a number of Wood Warblers 'trilling' but they remained elusive, as did small parties of Common Crossbill as they 'chirped' from Norway Spruce just up the hillside. However we did get fabulous views of a small party of Willow Tits just over the path and Grey Wagtails followed the small stream nearby. Butterflies, especially Speckled Wood and Orange Tip, were much in evidence in the area. Despite plenty of human activity in the gorge, with many walkers, cyclists and rock climbers, a pair of Kestrels appeared to be setting up home and were displaying above our heads. Then a Raven came over, but soon a much bigger bird came into view, although at a distance. This was our first sighting of a 'much sought after' species – the Lesser Spotted eagle. Whilst scanning the sky we could see many 'hirundines' mainly House Martins, making their way north. This was a timely reminder that, even though many birds were singing locally, bird migration was still very much in action.

Back to the hotel for lunch we made preparations for our 'evening out'. On our way to the Bear Reserve we stopped off at one or two places and walked, looking for farmland birds, here we saw Common Swifts moving

through and soon we were to hear the familiar sound of the Yellowhammer. A Golden Oriole sang its 'fluting' song nearby but it didn't show. We picked up a distant Red-backed Shrike and then another, this time a male, much closer as it sat perfectly still for a short while giving superb views.

Then on to the main event – The Bear Hide. We picked up the Forest Ranger and travelled by mini bus to around 500m from the hide area and walked the rest of the distance to the hide. Once settled in we could see a clearing within the forest, which the ranger had been baiting with corn-on-the-cob and cinnamon rolls to attract the bears. We didn't have to wait for long as a mother and two cubs came in, then a couple of adolescents came sauntering by only to run off when a huge adult male appeared. There was a very distinct pecking order here! All in all someone counted up to 13 individual bears that had come through the clearing in the hour we had sat there. Then they were gone. We hung around for a little longer, just in case and we were treated to close up views of Raven and Common Buzzard. On the slow drive out of the area a Roe Deer was, unusually, feeding at the edge of a field; we were very lucky as these animals are very shy here. Nearby another Lesser Spotted Eagle sat in a field, it eventually flew but not before most of the group got very good views.

Day 3

Monday 13th May

Piatra Cralului National Park – Hermit Monastery – Coltui Chiliilor – Bran Castle

The hotel garden was, again, a perfect place for pre-breakfast birding. In the sunshine a small flock of Serin flitted around the tops of trees and Tree Sparrows were going about their communal nesting business. All the while a Common Redstart sang from trees in a neighbouring garden.

Again it was a short drive for the morning's birding in Piatra Cralului National Park, with sunshine greeting us as we got ourselves organised for our walk to the Hermit Monastery. As we started to climb, a Garden Warbler sang from a close-by copse. We spent a little time trying to see this bird but it was playing 'hard to get', eventually showing only briefly. Nearby, a Fieldfare was carrying food into a nest in an orchard but not before it sat very obligingly on top of a Norway Spruce enabling us to have good views. As we continued to climb up the hillside, Lesser Whitethroats were singing all around and gave nice but fleeting views. Meanwhile a Cuckoo's call echoed across the valley invoking smiles and 'that's the first of the year' type comments.

As butterflies, mainly Comma, captured some attention, Ravens and Common Buzzard flew over and a Yellow-bellied Toad frolicked in a flood pool on the track. We were amazed and captivated by a floristically rich meadow, which nestled in the forested hillside. The many interesting plants included Bugle and Yellow Orchid, and several Tree Pipits sang from sentinel Spruce trees. Again, the contrast between the pale-leaved Beech and Birch and the dark needled Norway Spruce was very evident here. We continued on our climb accompanied by Coal Tits, Chiffchaffs and Wrens and just before the monastery a Honey Buzzard, with central tail feathers missing, sailed overhead. The missing feathers gave the effect of an indented tail and several of us initially thought Black Kite. At the Monastery a Black Redstart sang from the rooftop and a Camberwell Beauty flew through whilst we had our picnic lunch. After visiting the chapel, chatting to a Monk and filling our water bottles from the special spring we began our slow decent, on the way we heard a Firecrest which then showed ever so briefly to a few before flitting off.

The afternoon excursion was a cultural delight, after stopping on a hillside to view the 'Alpine' landscape with upland grazing meadows, snowy mountains and summer chalets we headed for the town of Bran and its Castle.

An added cultural experience was walking through the kiosks selling all kinds of Dracula and Bran memorabilia, of varying degrees of quality, around the entrance to the Castle. However once inside the fabric of the building a great tale unfolded and everyone agreed the Castle had a fantastic history and it was a truly worthwhile experience.

Day 4

Tuesday 14th May

Vulcan, Transylvania – Lake Hasariac - Tulcea, Danube Delta

The morning dawned grey and threatening, which we didn't mind too much as we had a travel day with a long drive to Tulcea and the Danube Delta ahead of us. Before we were too far into the journey the rain started and it rained most of the rest of the day, the only variation was how heavy it came down. However, it was interesting to see how the architecture of the towns changed from Transylvanian to Germanic then to more Black Sea influences and how industry changed too. Roadside kiosks become more evident selling a range of garden sculpture ranging from Storks to Gnomes, in various forms. We were told selling and collecting this sort of stuff is incredibly popular here. So 'kitsch' is alive and well in Romania. Eventually we noticed the landscape had changed also from the mountains to hills then flat agricultural land the closer we got to the Delta. We made several stops at filling stations 'en route', which provided us with brief birding opportunities. One such stop resulted in a Crested Lark on the forecourt and a small group of Bee-eaters were found at another filling station.

A late lunch stop was made at Lake Hasariac, it was still raining quite heavily but it gave us a small taste of what the Danube Delta had to offer. We quickly got to grips with Black-necked Grebes, Spoonbills and Whiskered Terns, whilst a very obliging Great Reed Warbler sang nearby and even sat at the top of reeds giving everyone the chance to get their eye in.

As we approached Tulcea the rain stopped and the weather brightened, if just slightly. Upon arrival at the Floating Hotel we were greeted with a very welcome Cherry Brandy sort of drink and the sweetest of little sweet biscuits. Whilst we were chatting and enjoying our welcome aperitif a Mediterranean Gull drifted by, in company with the Black-headed Gulls, towards the sewage outfall. So, with all of the rainwater the hoped-for Blue Danube was just a little brown.

Day 5

Wednesday 15th May

Danube Delta – Mile 36 – Sulina Branch – Furtuna (Storm) Lake area.

As we gathered pre-breakfast on the aft deck some of us were greeted by a singing Golden Oriole which then flew over the river and out of sight. This was a grey, cool start to the day, which turned to heavy rain showers later in the morning; however, it turned into a 'great' Cuckoo day. After breakfast we boarded the barge to cruise the mighty River Danube and the canals and lakes of the delta, as the Floating Hotel was towed out to meet us. We followed various waterways hearing Cuckoos and Great Reed Warblers everywhere. We then made an appropriate entrance into Lake Furtuna (which translates as Storm Lake), and right on cue, a storm broke, although fortunately it was brief. We had close views of a White-tailed Eagle being chased by a Hooded Crow, and Whiskered Terns were here in their thousands. Great White Pelicans, accompanied by Great Cormorants gathered in large fishing parties whilst Pygmy Cormorants appeared to have a very different strategy by feeding

around the edges of the water. Squacco Herons and Great White Egrets, supplemented by the occasional Purple Heron, stood guard.

Late morning a murmuring of 'oh, I quite fancy a cup of coffee' had just crossed the lips when the barge took a quick turn to the right and we came to an abrupt halt in the reeds and the coffee flasks came out. Just then we could hear the kee-kee-kee call of a bird of prey! Looking up into a nearby tree a female Red-footed Falcon was sitting right above us and as we looked closely there was a superb male sitting on another branch. Wow, that's all! All this fantastic bird life against a colourful back drop of Yellow Flag Iris and soundscape of 'gargling' Marsh Frogs. What a first morning on the Delta?

We met up with the Floating Hotel for lunch and a chance to catch our breath. In the afternoon we then set out, again to explore the Delta. Before too long we came upon two White-tailed Eagles sitting together in a tree, and nearby Pygmy Cormorants loafed in treetops. A cry came 'Roller' and we were soon having close up views of one of the most colourful European birds, having recently arrived in the Delta from its African winter quarters. We returned to the Floating Hotel, which by this time had been towed to our overnight location just off Lake Jacob. As we chatted over dinner we were entertained by a most splendid adult Pallas's Gull aka Great Black-headed Gull, which did several circuits alongside us and gave superb views.

Day 6

Thursday 16th May

Danube Delta – Caraoman Bird Sanctuary – north of Old Danube

Waking in what appeared to be the middle of nowhere the sun peeked through, but didn't last and a grey morning followed, but thankfully it did feel a little warmer. We had quickly fallen into the pattern of out-on-the-barge to explore the canals straight after breakfast and as we waited to board, a Pallas's Gull flew around the boat first thing.

First visit of the day was to Caraoman Bird Sanctuary where we got onto dry land and we walked, which was most welcome after sitting for most of the last few days. Cuckoos called overheard, White Pelicans made a crossing, a Hoopoe perched in a tree and there had been a significant arrival of Painted Lady butterflies. After a little while ashore we resumed our cruising towards the derelict glass works but not before we'd heard Penduline Tits as they were constructing their penduline nest. We stopped and waited but they didn't appear. We continued to the disused glass works where a Caspian Tern greeted us as it flew over the canal.

Once ashore we discovered several Marsh Frogs, of various colours, sunning themselves on the rocky shore, while Swallows and House Martins collected mud from muddy pools. As we stood watching the Martins we heard the distinctive call of Bee-eaters. We tracked them down to a small mound, which had been partially excavated for sand, revealing a flat surface suitable as a nest site. It appeared that several pairs were making nest holes alongside a small colony of Sand Martins. We walked around the village looking for migrant birds; the only ones we found were Northern Wheatears. Even in a small village, White Storks have built their huge nests and here was a pair with a large chick. Continuing our walk-about to the wader scrapes we could hear Avocets calling. The wader pools had mainly dried out which meant that there were very few birds save for a few, very vocal Avocets, and several Wood Sandpipers.

Now it was time to head back to the 'Mother Ship' but not before calling in on the Penduline Tit nest-building site. The birds were still calling so we kept back a safe distance and we were rewarded with both birds back on site weaving blades of grass and *Juncus* into the dangling structure. Taking photographs was quite tricky as the nest swayed back and forth in the breeze. The reedbeds were alive with bird song particularly from Great Reed Warbler but just occasionally we heard the 'rattle' of Savi's Warbler in the distance, unfortunately they never really show very well.

After lunch the Floating Hotel was towed to north of Sulina Branch, and we, in the barge, peeled off again to explore further into the Delta. To our great delight a Hobby decided to follow us for a while or at least it appeared that way. As was the case throughout our travels in the Delta we were accompanied by Great Reed Warblers, as they appeared to be everywhere, Kingfishers darted across the waterway and Squacco Herons stood by as we sailed close. We moved into larger areas of water where we began to see many more Great Crested Grebes, with a few pairs of Red-necked Grebes and the occasional pair of Black-necked Grebes. Into Dunarea Veche and we got into the marsh terns! Oh boy, what a spectacle! At first a few Black Terns were with the more numerous Whiskered then several White-winged Terns joined in but this was just a flavour of the main event. Further into the bigger lake the number of terns increased dramatically to tens of thousands of birds, these joined by a few Pallas's Gulls with a supporting cast of Ferruginous Ducks.

Later in the afternoon there must have been a gigantic hatching of insects, possibly triggered by the increasing temperatures, and again the sky was filled with terns, even Starlings were filling their boots on the flying food. What could follow that? Well, we followed a White-tailed Eagle which gave fantastically close views back to the Floating Hotel and it landed in a nearby tree. Just as we arrived back to the Floating Hotel a metre long Dice or Water Snake came swimming in front of us. What a superb day, and to round it off we had our dinner in beautiful evening light with a magnificent sunset.

Day 7

Friday 17th May

Danube Delta – Eracle – Stipoc Razabainita – Mile 23 – Sulina Canal – Tulcea

This was a misty, or it could have even been described as a foggy, early morning but the indications were there that it would be a 'good weather' day. The signs were quite correct and the weather turned out to be quite fabulous and most welcome, after some of the cold and wet days we'd recently experienced.

After breakfast we boarded the barge and travelled out into some of the smaller reaches of the Delta. Our first major encounter of the morning was with a great 'herd' of mostly Great White, but with a few Dalmatian, Pelicans communally fishing along a canal. They were gathering a shoal of fish into a smaller and smaller area then diving in and filled those great big pouches. Helping out were both species of Cormorants, Great and Pygmy. All the while we were accompanied by Cuckoos, Great Reed Warblers and a few Nightingales singing their 'raucous' songs from deep cover. Rollers and Kingfishers were colourful beauties as they either sat out on branches or snags or shot in front of the barge. During our coffee break we watched as 'waves' of European Honey Buzzards continued their migration northward, and an inflated Giant Leech raised gasps from the group.

We cruised on and as we rounded a corner we picked up a slight movement in a Hooded Crow nest in a small tree, on closer inspection, and expecting to see chicks we couldn't believe our luck when we noticed two sets of small, furry, ears sticking up above the nest rim and realised they were Wildcat kittens. As the barge moved

position slightly and little heads with 'large eyes peaked out there was a chorus of 'ah' as we got better views. The mother Wildcat came into view and appeared to the escort the kittens down the tree into a small hollow at the base. What a find? We recognised how lucky we were to have witnessed a family of Wildcats, a really difficult animal to see. After such a brilliant experience we headed back to the 'Mother Ship' for lunch and that was to be our last trip out into the Delta on the barge.

After lunch we stayed aboard the 'Mother Ship' (aka the Floating Hotel) as we set off on our slow journey back to Tulcea and, yes, this was our last afternoon sailing the Danube Delta. Gathering in the sunshine at various points around the Floating Hotel we all found places to watch the Delta and its wildlife go by. On the top deck we were rewarded with a superb vantage point to view over the *Phragmites Reed* into the wet areas beyond. We scored with a flyby Little Bittern and we could see many other heron and egret species going about their business. Birds of Prey were again in evidence with Hobby and Red-footed Falcon coming very close as we cruised up the Danube.

When we got back to the jetty in Tulcea we could hear what appeared to be a festival along at the other end of the Harbour. Music, lights and fireworks all gave a great display and several of the group walked out after dinner to investigate what was happening and they reported back it was some kind of celebration and that a great time was had.

Day 8

Saturday 18th May

'Mainland' – Area above Somora – Celic Deru – Mancin Mountains

After leaving the Floating Hotel at around 8.30am, we drove a little way north to visit an exceptional vantage point near to Salceni. This location gave us a chance to overlook some of the agricultural processes of the people working alongside the Delta floodplain and the fascinating Delta landscape, all this with a super backdrop of Bee-eaters and Corn Bunting.

Retracing our route south we continued to an area of open hillside with Oak, Pear, and Hawthorn scrub woodland. It was a relatively steep walk as we gradually climbed to the ridge but not before a Levant Sparrowhawk, with its black wing tips, came soaring through quickly followed by a Eurasian Sparrowhawk which gave us a super opportunity to compare these two very similar species. The walk was welcomed by most after our recent walking had been limited by the virtue of being on the Floating Hotel for four days. Onto the ridge we could hear the plaintive song of an Ortolan Bunting, which we eventually located on the left side of a bush then we realised that a Tawny Pipit was sitting on the other side. More birds of prey were picked up when a 'dark phase' Booted Eagle flew over and a 'light phase' one started hunting over our heads and even began stooping on prey, unfortunately we lost it behind trees so we couldn't see the result. Meanwhile several groups of Honey Buzzards were making their way north.

We weren't always looking up because the butterflies were very much in evidence with Blues and Commas but the flowers also caught our eye and none more than the endemic Wild Peony, which was filled with insects. On our descent through the grassy slopes we could see movement around some holes in the ground. Pausing to investigate we got our first views of the small Sousliks running around the holes which were their nesting burrows. The grass on this slope was short, as it had been heavily grazed by rangy sheep, which were wandering

widely. However, the shepherds weren't using familiar Border Collies to herd them, they were using really, really big dogs to guard them, so we needed to be on our guard as we walked through.

Our lunch stop was in a mature woodland picnic area, popular with Romanians and as it was a Saturday several families were enjoying the sunny weekend by having BBQs here too. As we gathered around the picnic table a small bird, partially obscured, sat out on a little broken branch and it turned out to be Spotted Flycatcher. Then we heard the distinctive song of an Icterine Warbler, but we couldn't quite locate it at first. 'There it is, in the tree!' After a bit of guiding through various branches and 'windows' in the leaves we eventually got to the right place in the tree and there it was all along!

First stop in the afternoon was in the Machin Mountains National Park, which contains the oldest mountains in Romania. We wanted to go into a gorge and the trail was steep but as we walked slowly we were accompanied by the 'jangle' of the Corn Buntings singing and several Long-legged Buzzards broke over the ridge; some were paler than others but all had the distinctive unmarked pale tails. We were scanning all the while whilst we climbed looking for Pied Wheatear but it was not to be. However, we did see a Northern Wheatear. Short-toed Eagle soared overhead and we had super views of two different Red-Backed Shrikes. Whilst we were standing looking and listening, a single Woodlark called and hopped between rocks. On our way back down we noticed a number of butterflies including Large Copper.

Next it was on to the last stop of the day in the amazing landscape of the 'Steppe', a vista of flat grassland running into the distance with a backstop of the Dobryja Hills complete with redundant vine growing terraces. Gazing out onto this 'Steppe' area there appeared to be an abundance of Isabelline Wheatears, which were sharing their dry grassland habitat with Souseliks. We heard Turtle Dove 'purring' then two came flying through and we eventually found them feeding in a nearby animal compound.

We had our long drive back to Pension Ibis in Tulcea where we stayed overnight.

Day 9

Sunday 19th May

'Mainland' Badadag - Black Sea Coast – Sinoe – Vadu (Disused Chemical Factory)

Our last full day in Romania dawned sunny and warm and we travelled towards the Steppe grassland of South west Badadag Lake and forest. Badadag was the capital of the Turkish Empire.

Our first stop was a short walk in a lofty ancient forest of Hornbeam and Oak. As soon as we stepped into the wood we knew this was a special place as the air appeared to be filled with birdsong. We first got our ears onto Sombre Tits as they flitted just above our heads. We could hear more songs and calls so we then settled to wait for birds to appear. Firstly Wood Warbler song-flighted from a branch next to a clearing and then we picked out Icterine Warbler, a song we'd learned the day before. Soon the distinctive notes of Red-breasted Flycatcher were identified and a fine male gave some of us some good views.

We travelled further into the 'Steppe'. These 'great plains' were so reminiscent of other lands in the Balkans such as Georgia and Bulgaria. As we drove we were instructed to pay close attention to the roadside wires, fences and trees because this was Roller, Hoopoe and Black-headed Bunting habitat and we were not disappointed as we picked up all three species along the way.

Next we stopped at a layby for a short walk onto the Limestone Plateau. The area was dry and hot but we were rewarded with the wild flowers, which were exquisite. They included the fabulous Purple Orchid, and many other Limestone specialists. Of course with the abundance of wild flowers came specialist butterflies such as Glanville Fritillary and Queen of Spain Fritillary.

It was getting hotter, so our picnic lunch was in a shady little spot, which had the fringe benefit of a thriving colony of Spanish Sparrows, with a few House Sparrows for company, nesting in the roof spaces of a small building.

Suitably refreshed we headed for some coastal lagoons just inland from the Black Sea near Vadu. As we approached, a male Golden Oriole flew alongside the bus. On the scrapes we saw several interesting migrant wader species, particularly 'flashy' was the brick red of the summer plumaged Curlew Sandpipers with several Little Stints accompanying them. We heard the call of Collared Pratincole and looked up to see several flying over and dropping onto a nearby field where about a dozen were already sitting. A Northern Wheatear hopped amongst the industrial debris and a splendid male Black-headed Wagtail sat out on *Juncus sp.*

Out in the lagoon we could see a feeding flock of Spoonbills, and Marsh Harriers caused havoc when they quartered the reeds. Great Reed and Savi's Warblers sang from deep in the reedbeds but we were after another warbler here – Paddyfield! We heard one or two sing briefly but only glimpsed it as it flew between patches of reeds. The wind was a little too strong for them to perch out in the open for prolonged periods. In the background we could hear the low booming of a Bittern and then it flew over and gave fantastic views. We scoured the flock of Terns and Gulls on the edge of the lagoon and found an immature Little Gull and as we stood there a Crested Lark decided to give a show and wandered within a few feet of the group. As we made our way out of the area we got our eye on to not one but two Lesser Grey Shrikes sitting out on the reedbed. They were very obliging and many photographs were taken.

This area had given us some fantastic birding experiences but the landscape was quite surreal with the backdrop of the disused and derelict chemical works looming large and the relics of pipeline supports marching off into the distance. However we all agreed this was birding at its best. But before we could leave we had to 'dip our hooves' (as they say in this part of the world) in the Black Sea and that is what a number of us did!

We had our last overnight in Pension Ibis in Tulcea. The staff, who had been so helpful and friendly, presented us with a special 'goodbye cake' and glasses of Prosecco.

Day 10

Monday 20th May

Tulcea – Bucharest Airport

This was our final morning in Romania and we knew the road we needed to travel. However, before setting out onto the motorway we made a brief stop at Lake Hasariac to look for Ruddy Shelduck, this time on the opposite side, and although the weather was kinder, there were many fewer birds. The Ruddy Shelduck proved elusive, but the brief stop did give us another chance to brush up our recently learned ID skills of European Honey Buzzard as one flew low over us as we stood by the roadside. Also Eurasian Sparrowhawk and Kestrel made appearances whilst we were there. We couldn't linger as we had flights to catch.

Travelling the small roads there were a number of people selling fish by the roadside and we were told an interesting tale that some of these fish sellers would add stones to the fish to make them heavier thereby increase the value. A bit of roadside fraud!

After our informal picnic lunch stop at a service station we had an uneventful, but long, drive back to Bucharest airport. Once inside the cool airport we made our separate ways for various different 'check ins' but not before saying our 'fond farewells' and agreeing it had been a fantastic trip, only made possible by a good mix of friendly people, super wildlife experiences and magnificent landscape.

Thank you all for your superb company. Until the next time – Noroc!

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The 'Flotel'

Species Lists

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

	Common name	Scientific name	May									
			11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
1	Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
2	Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
3	Common Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>				✓					✓	
4	Garganey	<i>Anas querquedula</i>					✓		✓			
5	Gadwall	<i>Mareca strepera</i>					✓	✓	✓			
6	Wigeon	<i>Mareca penelope</i>					✓					
7	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
8	Common Pochard	<i>Aythya ferina</i>				✓	✓	✓	✓			
9	Ferruginous Duck	<i>Aythya nyroca</i>				✓	✓	✓	✓			
10	Goldeneye	<i>Bucephala clangula</i>					✓					
11	Common Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>				✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
12	Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>				✓						
13	Red-necked Grebe	<i>Podiceps grisegena</i>					✓	✓	✓			
14	Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
15	Black-necked Grebe	<i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>				✓		✓				
16	Black Stork	<i>Ciconia nigra</i>			✓							
17	White Stork	<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
18	Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>				✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
19	Eurasian Spoonbill	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>				✓	✓	✓			✓	
20	Eurasian Bittern	<i>Botaurus stellaris</i>									✓	
21	Little Bittern	<i>Ixobrychus minutus</i>							✓			
22	Black-crowned Night Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>					✓	✓	✓			
23	Squacco Heron	<i>Ardeola ralloides</i>	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
24	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
25	Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>					✓	✓	✓			
26	Great White Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
27	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
28	Great White Pelican	<i>Pelecanus onocrotalus</i>					✓	✓	✓		✓	
29	Dalmatian Pelican	<i>Pelecanus crispus</i>					✓	✓	✓		✓	

	Common name	Scientific name	May									
			11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
30	Pygmy Cormorant	<i>Microcarbo pygmeus</i>				✓	✓	✓	✓			
31	Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
32	European Honey Buzzard	<i>Pernis apivorus</i>		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		
33	Short-toed Snake Eagle	<i>Circaetus gallicus</i>								✓	✓	
34	Lesser Spotted Eagle	<i>Clanga pomarina</i>		✓						✓	✓	
35	Booted Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus pennatus</i>								✓	✓	
36	Levant Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter brevipes</i>								✓		
37	Eurasian Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>		✓						✓	✓	
38	Northern Goshawk	<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>			✓							
39	Western Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>				✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
40	White-tailed Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i>					✓	✓	✓			
41	Long-legged Buzzard	<i>Buteo rufinus</i>								✓		
42	Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		
43	Water Rail	<i>Rallus aquaticus</i>							H			
44	Little Crake	<i>Porzana parva</i>					H					
45	Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>				✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
46	Eurasian Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
47	Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>										
48	Pied Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>						✓				✓
49	Northern Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>						✓				✓
50	Common Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>										✓
51	Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>						✓				✓
52	Little Stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>										✓
53	Curlew Sandpiper	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>										✓
54	Ruff	<i>Calidris pugnax</i>										✓
55	Collared Pratincole	<i>Glareola pratincola</i>										✓
56	Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
57	Little Gull	<i>Hydrocoloeus minutus</i>										✓
58	Mediterranean Gull	<i>Ichthyaetus melanocephalus</i>				✓						
59	Pallas's Gull	<i>Ichthyaetus ichthyaetus</i>					✓	✓	✓			
60	Caspian Gull	<i>Larus cachinnans</i>					✓		✓	✓	✓	
61	Yellow-legged Gull	<i>Larus michahellis</i>				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		

	Common name	Scientific name	May										
			11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
62	Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>										✓	
63	Caspian Tern	<i>Hydroprogne caspia</i>							✓				
64	Sandwich Tern	<i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>										✓	
65	Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>						✓	✓	✓		✓	
66	Whiskered Tern	<i>Chlidonias hybrida</i>				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
67	White-winged Tern	<i>Chlidonias leucopterus</i>							✓				
68	Black Tern	<i>Chlidonias niger</i>						✓	✓	✓			
69	Stock Dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>							✓		✓		
70	Common Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
71	European Turtle Dove	<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>									✓		
72	Eurasian Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
73	Common Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>			H			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
74	Little Owl	<i>Athene noctua</i>	✓										
75	Common Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>		✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	
76	European Roller	<i>Coracias garrulus</i>						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
77	Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>						✓	✓	✓			
78	European Bee-eater	<i>Merops apiaster</i>				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
79	Eurasian Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>						✓	✓		✓	✓	
80	Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>				✓						✓	
81	Black Woodpecker	<i>Dryocopus martius</i>		H				✓					
82	Grey-headed Woodpecker	<i>Picus canus</i>						✓	✓	✓		✓	
83	Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
84	Red-footed Falcon	<i>Falco vespertinus</i>						✓		✓	✓	✓	
85	Eurasian Hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>						✓	✓	✓			
86	Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>		✓									
87	Red-backed Shrike	<i>Lanius collurio</i>		✓	✓						✓	✓	
88	Lesser Grey Shrike	<i>Lanius minor</i>										✓	
89	Eurasian Golden Oriole	<i>Oriolus oriolus</i>		H				✓	✓			✓	
90	Eurasian Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>		✓	✓								
91	Eurasian Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	
92	Spotted Nutcracker	<i>Nucifraga caryocatactes</i>			✓								
93	Western Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>				✓	✓				✓	✓	

	Common name	Scientific name	May									
			11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
94	Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>		✓	✓	✓						✓
95	Hooded Crow	<i>Corvus cornix</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
96	Northern Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>		✓	✓							
97	Coal Tit	<i>Pariparus ater</i>		✓	✓	✓						
98	Sombre Tit	<i>Poecile lugubris</i>										✓
99	Willow Tit	<i>Poecile montanus</i>		✓								
100	Eurasian Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>						✓	✓	✓	✓	
101	Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
102	Eurasian Penduline Tit	<i>Remiz pendulinus</i>					H	✓				✓
103	Bearded Reedling	<i>Panurus biarmicus</i>					✓	✓	✓			
104	Woodlark	<i>Lullula arborea</i>								H		
105	Eurasian Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>								✓		
106	Crested Lark	<i>Galerida cristata</i>		✓								✓
107	Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>				✓	✓	✓	✓			
108	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
109	Common House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	
110	Cetti's Warbler	<i>Cettia cetti</i>							H			
111	Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>					✓		✓			
112	Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>					✓					
113	Common Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
114	Wood Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus sibilatrix</i>		H	H					H	✓	
115	Great Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus arundinaceus</i>				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
116	Sedge Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>					✓					
117	Paddyfield Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus agricola</i>										✓
118	Icterine Warbler	<i>Hippolais icterina</i>								✓	✓	
119	Savi's Warbler	<i>Locustella luscinioides</i>					H	H	✓		✓	
120	Eurasian Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	
121	Garden Warbler	<i>Sylvia borin</i>		✓			✓	✓	✓			
122	Lesser Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia curruca</i>			✓			✓	✓		✓	
123	Common Firecrest	<i>Regulus ignicapilla</i>			✓							
124	Eurasian Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>		✓	✓						✓	
125	Common Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

	Common name	Scientific name	May									
			11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
126	Common Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
127	Fieldfare	<i>Turdus pilaris</i>			✓							
128	Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>		H	H		H	✓				
129	Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>					✓	✓		✓	✓	
130	European Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>		✓	✓							✓
131	Common Nightingale	<i>Luscinia megarhynchos</i>					H		H	H	✓	
132	Collared Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula albicollis</i>					✓					
133	Red-breasted Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula parva</i>										✓
134	Black Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>			✓							
135	Common Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>			✓		✓	✓	✓			
136	Northern Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>						✓		✓	✓	
137	Isabelline Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe isabellina</i>								✓		
138	White-throated Dipper	<i>Cinclus cinclus</i>	✓									
139	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
140	Spanish Sparrow	<i>Passer hispaniolensis</i>				✓						✓
141	Eurasian Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>		✓	✓	✓		✓				
142	Western Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>					✓					
143	Black-headed Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava feldegg</i>										✓
144	Grey-headed Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava thunbergi</i>						✓				
145	Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>		✓		✓						
146	White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
147	Tawny Pipit	<i>Anthus campestris</i>									✓	
148	Tree Pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>			✓							
149	Common Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
150	Hawfinch	<i>Coccothraustes coccothraustes</i>									✓	
151	European Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>				✓						✓
152	Red Crossbill	<i>Loxia curvirostra</i>			H							
153	European Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>			✓			✓				
154	European Serin	<i>Serinus serinus</i>		✓	✓	✓						
155	Corn Bunting	<i>Emberiza calandra</i>								✓	✓	
156	Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>			✓	✓						
157	Ortolan Bunting	<i>Emberiza hortulana</i>								✓	✓	

	Common name	Scientific name	May										
			11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
158	Black-headed Bunting	<i>Emberiza melanocephala</i>										✓	
159	Common Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>						✓	✓	✓			

Mammals

1	European Brown Bear	<i>Ursus arctos arctos</i>		✓									
2	European Roe Deer	<i>Capreolus capreolus</i>		✓		✓							
3	Red Squirrel	<i>Sciurus vulgaris</i>		✓									
4	European Souselik	<i>Spermophilus citellus</i>									✓	✓	
5	Golden Jackel	<i>Canis aureus</i>							✓				
6	European Wildcat	<i>Felis silvestris</i>								✓			

Amphibians & Reptiles

1	Yellow-bellied Toad	<i>Bombina variegata</i>			✓								
2	Edible Frog	<i>Rana kl. esculenta</i>							✓				
3	Marsh Frog	<i>Rana ridibundus</i>							✓	✓			
4	Spur-thighed Tortoise	<i>Testudo graeca</i>									✓	✓	
5	Sand Lizard	<i>Lacerta agilis</i>									✓	✓	
6	Balkan Wall Lizard	<i>Podachis tauricus</i>									✓		
7	Eastern Green Lizard	<i>Lacerta virdis</i>								✓			
8	Meadow Lizard	<i>Darevskia praticola</i>			✓								
9	Grass Snake	<i>Natrix natrix persa</i>							✓				
10	Dice Snake	<i>Natrix tessilata</i>							✓				

Butterflies

1	European Swallowtail	<i>Papilio machaon</i>		✓	✓								
2	Scarce Swallowtail	<i>Iphiclides podalirius</i>									✓	✓	
3	Green-veined White	<i>Pieris napi</i>		✓								✓	
4	Orange Tip	<i>Anthocharis cardamines</i>		✓	✓						✓		
5	Brimstone	<i>Gonepteryx rhamni</i>		✓	✓								
6	Small Copper	<i>Lycaena phlaeas</i>									✓		
7	Large Copper	<i>Lycaena dispar</i>										✓	

	Common name	Scientific name	May										
			11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
8	Lesser Fiery Copper	<i>Lycaena thersamon</i>									✓		
9	Eastern Baton Blue	<i>Pseudophilotes vicrama</i>										✓	
10	Silver-studded Blue	<i>Plebejus argus</i>										✓	
11	Camberwell Beauty	<i>Nymphalis antiopa</i>			✓								
12	Painted Lady	<i>Vanessa cardui</i>						✓	✓	✓			
13	Small Tortoiseshell	<i>Aglais urticae</i>								✓			
14	Comma Butterfly	<i>Polygonum c-album</i>			✓								
15	False Comma	<i>Nymphalis vaualbum</i>								✓			
16	Queen of Spain Fritillary	<i>Issoria lathonia</i>										✓	
17	Eastern Knapweed Fritillary	<i>Melitaea ornata</i>										✓	
18	Glanville Fritillary	<i>Melitaea cinxia</i>										✓	
19	Speckled Wood	<i>Pararge aegeria tircis</i>		✓	✓								
20	Dingy Skipper	<i>Erynnis tages</i>										✓	

Moths: (Macros)

European Geometrid, *Lythria purpuraria*Latticed Heath, *Chiasmia clathrata*Nutmeg, *Discestra trifolii*

Other Invertebrates

Fire Bug, *Pyrrhocoris apterus*Ant Lion, *Nemoptera sinuata*Scorpion Fly, *Panorpa meridionalis*Crab Spider, *Misumena vatia*Roman Snail, *Helix pomatia*European Medicinal Leech, *Hirudo medicinalis*

Plants (with thanks to Judith Chapman, Jools Ready and Wendy Dickson for helping to producing this plant list)

Please Note: Nomenclature contained within this list follows the taxonomic amendments, based on DNA analysis, made by the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew and the Missouri Botanic Garden, and following The Plant List, an internationally accepted list of vascular plant families, published and maintained by these two Institutions.

Scientific name**Common name****Pre-Dicots****Primitive Angiosperms****Nymphaeaceae***Nuphar lutea**Nymphaea alba***Water-lily Family**

Yellow Water-lily

White Water-lily

Eu-Dicots**True Dicotyledons****Anacardiaceae***Cotinus coggygria***Sumach Family**

Smoke Bush

Apiaceae*Eryngium maritimum***Carrot Family**

Sea Holly

Araliaceae*Hedera helix***Ivy Family**

Common Ivy

Betulaceae*Carpinus orientalis***Birch Family**

Oriental Hornbeam

Boraginaceae*Echium vulgare***Borage Family**

Viper's-bugloss

Brassicaceae*Lunaria rediviva***Cabbage Family**

Perennial Honesty

Cannabaceae*Cannabis sativa***Cannabis Family**

Cannabis or Hemp

Caprifoliaceae*Dipsacus pilosus***Honeysuckle Family**

Small Teasel

Caryophyllaceae*Dianthus carthusianorum***Pink Family**

Carthusian Pink

Compositae (Asteraceae)*Achillea millefolium***Daisy Family**

Yarrow

Cirsium vulgare

Spear Thistle

Leucanthemum vulgare

Ox-eye Daisy

Convolvulaceae*Convolvulus arvensis***Bindweed Family**

Field Bindweed

Geraniaceae*Geranium pratense***Geranium Family**

Meadow Crane's-bill

Lamiaceae*Mentha aquatica***Mint family**

Water Mint

Salvia nemorosa subsp. *babadagensis*

Babadag Sage

Linaceae*Linum austriacum***Flax Family**

a Perennial Flax

Menyanthaceae*Nymphoides peltata***Bogbean Family**

Fringed Water-lily

Resedaceae*Reseda lutea***Mignonette Family**

Mignonette

Salicaceae*Populus alba***Willow Family**

White Poplar

Populus x canadensis

Hybrid Black Poplar

Salix alba

White Willow

Salix cinerea

Grey Willow

Sapindaceae*Acer campestre***Maple Family**

Field Maple

Vitaceae*Vitis sylvestris***Grape-vine Family**

Eurasian Wild Grape

Scientific name

Common name

Monocots

Monocotyledons

Amaryllidaceae

Daffodil Family

- Allium oleraceum*
- Leymus racemosus*
- Phragmites australis*

- Field Garlic
- a Lyme Grass
- Common Reed

The following is a list of flowers recorded on the tour, and compiled by Judith Chapman, Jools Ready and Wendy Dickson as 'write ins'.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <i>Dactylorhiza sambucina</i> | Elderflower Orchid |
| <i>Cruciata laevipes</i> | Crosswort |
| <i>Primula veris</i> | Cowslip |
| <i>Gentiana clusii</i> | Trumpet Gentian |
| <i>Caltha palustris</i> | Marsh Marigold |
| <i>Iris pseudacoris</i> | Yellow flag Iris |
| <i>Iris sintensii</i> | (a blue iris) |
| <i>Plantago major</i> | Greater Plantain |
| <i>Plantago lanceolata</i> | Ribwort Plantain |
| <i>Cynoglossum officinale</i> | Houndstongue |
| <i>Erodium cicutarium</i> | Storksbill |
| <i>Paeonia peregrina</i> | Romanian Paeony |
| <i>Polygonatum multiflorum</i> | Solomon's Seal |
| <i>Mandragora officinale</i> | Mandrake |
| <i>Elaeagnus rhamnoides</i> | Sea Buckthorn |
| <i>Leymus arenarius</i> | Sea Lyme Grass |
| <i>Matteuccia struthiapteris</i> | Shuttlecock Fern |
| <i>Ajuga reptans</i> | Bugle |
| <i>Cymbalaria muralis</i> | Ivy-leaved Toadflax |
| <i>Soldanella alpina</i> | Alpine Snowbell |
| <i>Acinos arvensis</i> | Basil Thyme |
| <i>Adonis aestivalis</i> | Summer Pheasants Eye |
| <i>Achillea clypeolata</i> | a yarrow |
| <i>Bupleurum falcatum</i> | Sickleleaved Hares' Ear |
| <i>Lithospermum purpureocaeruleum</i> | Purple Gromwell |
| <i>Euphorbia amygdaloides</i> | Wood Spurge |
| <i>Jasione montana</i> | Sheepsbit Scabious |
| <i>Salvia verberica</i> | Wild Clary |
| <i>Salvia nutans</i> | Nodding Sage |
| <i>Neottia ovata</i> | Common Twayblade |
| <i>Linum bienne</i> | Pale Flax |



Spanish Sparrow



Group on a boat trip