

Romania's Danube Delta and Carpathian Mountains

Naturetrek Tour Report

11th – 20th September 2023



Great White Pelicans



Lesser Fiery Copper



Eurasian Brown Bears



Osprey

Tour report and photos by Jessica Turner



Naturetrek

Mingledown Barn

Wolf's Lane

Chawton

Alton

Hampshire

GU34 3HJ

UK

T: +44 (0)1962 733051

E: info@naturetrek.co.uk

W: www.naturetrek.co.uk

Tour participants: Jessica Turner & Laurentiu Petrencu (leaders) & Dan (driver) with 14 Naturetrek clients.

Summary

The Carpathian Mountains and the Danube Delta and surrounding area provide a range of habitats with a wealth of wildlife. In the mountains, we enjoyed the sight of ten Eurasian Brown Bears, including a couple of cubs, feeding in front of the hide in the Stramba Valley, a couple of Carpathian Chamois, some great views of Lesser Spotted Eagles, Red Squirrels and meadows starred with Byzantine Crocuses and Common Autumn-crocuses. Across in the Danube Delta, the sheer abundance of birds was memorable: the large flocks of Great White Pelicans, along with great views of European Rollers, an astonishing array of woodpeckers, European Bee-eaters, Common Kingfishers, White-tailed Eagles, Hobbies and Red-footed Falcons, not to mention Squacco Herons – we almost ran out of superlatives! My thanks to all the group for your enthusiasm, spotting skills and expertise and especially to Laurentiu – a great trip!

Day 1

Monday 11th September

Fly Bucharest; transfer Vulcan

The 14 group members met Jessica at Heathrow Terminal 3 for our 8.55am BA flight to Bucharest. We landed at 2.40pm and soon collected our bags and met with Laurentiu, our local guide. We made our way out, to be collected by Dan, our driver, in the red bus. With luggage stowed, we drove north in the afternoon traffic, across the flat plains, noting three Western Marsh Harriers, a Eurasian Sparrowhawk and a couple of Common Buzzards among other species.

We reached the Sub-Carpathian hills, and the landscape became more wooded, with a trio of Northern Ravens being seen. The road took us along the Prahova valley and gave lovely views of the Bucegi mountains. After a refreshment break, we left the E60, turning north-west towards Râșnov and on to the village of Vulcan, seeing large numbers of Common Buzzards in the fields and on posts and pylons. We reached the Șura Sașilor, our base for the first three nights, where we received a warm welcome. We left our bags and went straight to enjoy a delicious dinner, after which Laurentiu outlined plans for the following day. With a long day of travel, we were very ready for our beds.

Day 2

Tuesday 12th September

Piatra Craiului; Stramba Valley

This morning we met for breakfast at 7.30am, leaving the guest house at 8.30. As we were gathering, three Jays and a Fieldfare flew overhead, House Martins were in the sky and a Common Redstart was on a village roof. The fields again held plenty of Common Buzzards, along with Ravens, Hooded Crows and Kestrel, and we were delighted to see a Lesser Spotted Eagle take off from the ground and land on a pole. After a brief stop in Zărnești,

where we noticed the now-empty large White Stork's nest on the Town Hall, we drove on to a path towards the Coltul Chiliinor Monastery, in the Piatra Craiului National Park.

The stony track wound up through meadows and open woodland. A Black Redstart and White Wagtail were on a roof, while a female Red-backed Shrike posed nicely on a bush, along with three Marsh Tits. Spotted Nutcracker was heard, and in the course of the morning many were seen, the white-edged tail and distinctive flight showing clearly, although the birds usually quickly disappeared as they landed. A family of Whinchats were more obliging. Plants included Chicory (*Cichorium intybus*), a bright blue Flax *Linum catharticum*, only found in eastern Europe, yellow Sickle Medick (*Medicago sativa* subsp. *falcata*), Heartsease Pansy (*Viola tricolor*) and Balkan Toadflax (*Linaria genistifolia*). A Clouded Yellow was seen at rest. As we continued, a flock of Linnets flew over, Crested Tit showed well, a Red Squirrel showed off its dark-brown colouring, a young Grass Snake slithered up the bank, and we found some beautiful Byzantine Crocuses (*Crocus banaticus*), with their distinctive three mauve tepals forming a cup surrounding three smaller, paler ones. A few Sand Lizards were noted and, as we started back, Lautentiu found a Yellow-bellied Toad in a puddle, showing us the reason for its name. A few more butterflies were seen: Common Blue, a very battered Cardinal Fritillary, Comma and a few Peacocks and Red Admirals, but generally few insects were on the wing. There was flurry of bird activity near the bottom, with another Lesser Spotted Eagle, Peregrine Falcon and Sparrowhawk showing in quick succession, while others watched a Blue (Southern) Hawker dragonfly and a Large Cone-head cricket. We returned to the guesthouse for a tasty lunch and some R&R time.

At 4pm, we left to drive to the Stramba Valley, enjoying the sight of horses and carts and traditionally made hayricks. We had a sudden stop when a Lesser Spotted Eagle was seen on a fencepost and another in a tree, both giving some good views and again, as we started up the stony track in the valley, when another was perched in the top of a tree right by the road. A five-Eagle day – not bad! As we set off for a short walk past meadows, a Middle Spotted Woodpecker was seen well in a tree. Other birds included Yellowhammers and Marsh Tit. Butterflies included Brimstone, most likely Berger's Clouded Yellow (there are several pale Clouded Yellow species, but Berger's is most likely in this habitat), Common Clouded Yellow, Small Heath and an Oberthur's Grizzled Skipper. We were collected by Dan and driven further up the road, where we met with the local rangers, before driving further into the forest.

We parked up and took the short walk to the bear hides, passing a couple of Bear droppings en route. We could see Bears were already present, feeding on the maize and biscuit put out for them each evening. As soon as we entered the hide, we could count 10 Brown Bears, including two eight-month cubs. As we settled down to watch them, we could start to identify that the mother was quite thin, and protective of her youngsters if another bear came too close, although the little ones were quite confident and keen to explore and find food in some of the smaller nooks and crannies in the tree trunks where it had been put. There were another six female bears and a darker, large male, all feeding together. Three Foxes joined the feast, along with a Raven, Nuthatch and Jay. We watched them for an hour as they climbed over the large tree trunks, sometimes wandering off and then returning for another go, before disappearing again into the trees. There were still a few looking for the last remnants as we

left in the fading light. What a great evening! We returned to the guesthouse at 9pm with Dan having negotiated cows, horses and horse-and-carts on unlit roads and enjoyed a celebratory beer on the balcony after an excellent day.

Day 3

Wednesday 13th September

Zărnești Gorge; Măgura; Bran

Some of the group were out in the hotel garden at 7am, seeing a male Syrian Woodpecker, a couple of the very similar-looking Great Spotted Woodpeckers and a couple which could not be identified reliably. A Tree Sparrow and a good number of Fieldfares, especially flying over, were also seen.

After breakfast, and with sandwiches made, we left at 8.30am, again seeing good numbers of Ravens, Buzzards and Kestrels on the road to Zărnești. We drove on to the approach to the Zărnești Gorge, where a Dipper was glimpsed in the river, and several Grey Wagtails seen after we parked. We slowly walked along the track through forest that was mainly Beech (*Fagus sylvaticus*), Manna Ash (*Fraxinus ornus*), Eastern Hornbeam (*Carpinus orientalis*) and Spruce (*Picea abies*), with Willow Tit as well as plenty of Marsh Tits giving good views. Crested Tit and a Eurasian Treecreeper showed well too. Plants included the Elecampane-like *Telekia speciosa* and a Balkan form of Spreading Bellflower (*Campanula patula* subsp. *abietina*). As we entered the gorge proper, with its high, limestone walls, we started to see a lot of the pretty, large-flowered Carpathian Bellflower (*Campanula carpatica*), as well as Annual Honesty (*Lunaria annua*) and a single Fringed Gentian (*Gentianopsis ciliata*). A few insects were around, with Migrant Hawker dragonfly, Comma, Wall Brown, Red Admiral, and Green-veined White butterflies, Hummingbird Hawk-moth and a dead Convolvulus Hawk-moth recorded. The stand-out butterfly, however, was a Hungarian Glider, which has a very restricted distribution. Sadly, no Wallcreeper could be located, this time.

Dan then drove us up to the little village of Măgura, with a pastoral landscape with extensive views to the Bucegi Mountains and the cliffs of the Pietra Craiului closer across the valley. Black and Common Redstarts and a showy Bullfinch were among the birds round the traditional, as well as more modern, mountain houses and barns, and some of the meadows were starred with Common Autumn-crocus (*Colchicum autumnale*). There was a large movement of hirundines, mainly House Martins but also a few Sand Martins, which hawked through the valley. A Black Woodpecker was seen briefly before disappearing far away. Careful scanning of the cliffs at first seemed fruitless, but then two fine Alpine Chamois, of the slightly larger and darker Carpathian subspecies, strolled across a large grassy patch, grazing sporadically, and disappeared behind a rocky outcrop, giving everyone beautiful, scoped views.

Our next stop was in Bran, with its fortified castle associated with Vlad the Impaler and Count Dracula. Most of the group took the opportunity for a peaceful coffee or drink, away from the bust tourist areas. On our way home, as well as the usual Common Buzzards, we saw another Lesser Spotted Eagle and also four separate White Storks standing in the fields. After a break, we met on the balcony to update the checklists before another excellent dinner.

Day 4

Thursday 14th September

Transfer to Tulcea

This morning we left the Carpathian Mountains to drive across the country to the Danube Delta. Having said goodbye and thank-you to our lovely hosts at the guesthouse, we drove south towards Ploiești, seeing a couple of Lesser Spotted Eagles and a Grey Heron soon after we left the village. Our first stop was near Sinaia at Castelul Peleş, a fairytale castle built in the late C19 as a summer residence for King Carol I of Romania and his three successors from 1866 until 1947, and Laurentiu explained some of the history of the country. Chaffinch, Robin, Marsh Tit and Great Tit were early sightings. There was also a large dropping of Brown Bear, right in the middle of the approach road, full of maize and fruit and deposited probably during the previous night. More Byzantine Crocuses and Common Autumn-crocuses starred the park meadows, so we could compare the two flowers, and tall spikes of Cabbage Thistles (*Cirsium oleraceum*) still had their pale yellow flowers. We also noted Silver Limes (*Tilia tomentosa*), an Eastern European species with their grey-white undersides to leaves giving the whole tree a pale appearance. The star bird of this visit was a singing Red-breasted Flycatcher which was initially heard and seen briefly as it flicked from branch to branch. On the way back to the bus Dipper, Grey Wagtail and another Red Squirrel were seen. Moving on, we had a couple of comfort stops at Service Stations on the long journey, as we headed eastwards, noting the many little roadside stalls selling produce, with tomatoes and watermelons giving way to grapes.

We crossed the Danube on the Giurgeni Bridge, and soon after took another break at Lacul Hazarlâc. Immediately, our attention was drawn to a flotilla of maybe 100+ Ruddy Shelducks near the lake edge, with Mallard behind them. In front, Common Snipe, Little Ringed Plovers and Spotted Redshank were on the shore, partly displaced by a massive flock of Rooks. Common Pochard, Eurasian Teal, Great Crested Grebe, Little Egret and a very distant Grey Heron, Black-headed and Caspian Gulls were added, and four Whiskered Terns did not stay long. A Crested Lark sang nearby while overhead, above the Swallows and Sand Martins, a dark morph Booted Eagle flew through the swirling flocks of Starlings and Rooks. A Marsh Harrier hunted low. A great half-hour!

On the final leg of the journey, a couple more Marsh Harriers were seen, along with a flying Roller. We reached the city and Dan dropped us at the quay, where we boarded the floating hotel. After a welcome drink and a briefing, we settled in to our rooms, before regathering for a delicious dinner with views of the river. Afterwards, those on the upper deck saw a Night Heron which perched on one of the mooring ropes. We settled to sleep with the gentle sound of lapping water.

Day 5

Friday 15th September

Danube Delta

This morning, those out before breakfast reported a Hobby and a Kingfisher from the boat in Tulcea. The day was mild and generally cloudy with hazy sunshine and some light rain later. After a sumptuous 7.30am feast, at 8.30am we boarded the smaller vessel that would take us down the narrower channels of the delta. We set off along the Tulcea branch of the river, turning in to the Sulina Branch and then into the Mila 36 channel, noting

extensive White Willow (*Salix alba*) and the planted Hybrid Black Poplars (*Populus x canadensis*) along the banks and contrasting them with the native White Poplars (*Populus alba*) further on. There was also extensive False-indigo Bush (*Amorpha fruticosa*), Wild Vine (*Vitis vinifera*) and White Bryony (*Bryonia dioica*) and clumps of Purple Loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*). Large numbers of Swallows, Whiskered Tern and a lovely flock of European Bee-eaters were early sightings, along with our first Marsh Harrier of the day. Common Kingfishers, 'blue bullets', darted along the channels and were occasionally seen perched. When we cut the engine, we heard the call of Thrush Nightingale, Chiffchaffs, the Bee-eaters and a chorus of Eastern Tree-frogs. Hobbies became plentiful and a male Red-footed Falcon flew high. A couple of Black Woodpeckers were seen in flight and perched briefly, and we added Lesser Whitethroat and a female Blackcap to our list.

We turned into a smaller channel with a couple of juvenile Night Herons on tree roots, yet more Kingfishers, Pygmy and Great Cormorants, ubiquitous Grey Herons, Little and Great Egrets and our first sighting of a White-tailed Eagle, perched in a dead Poplar, showing its white tail as it flew. In the course of the day, we saw about a dozen birds. A couple of Common Greenshank flew downstream, a Sparrowhawk flew through, and a Black Stork soared overhead. Another couple of Black Woodpeckers gave better views, but Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers, although heard regularly were frustratingly elusive, offering the briefest of glimpses. Orange-coloured butterflies may have been a Copper species but didn't stop to be identified (a later sighting of Large Copper indicated that these may have been the same), while a Camberwell Beauty was more certain. Odonata included Migrant Hawker, Common Bluetail and probable Eastern Willow Spreadwings (they can only reliably be distinguished from Western Willow Spreadwings in the hand). Water plants included mats of Floating Fern (*Salvinia natans*), Fringed Water-lily (*Nymphoides peltata*), Yellow Water-lily (*Nuphar lutea*) and Arrowhead (*Sagittaria sagittifolia*).

Lacul cu Cutete, translated as 'the lake of the henhouse', held a Great White Pelican among Mute Swans and other species, and extensive flocks of Great White Pelicans were seen in stately flight formation, probably well over 150 birds showing their black wing tips and margins, contrasting with the white. Small flocks of Tree Sparrows flew up into the reeds. More birds were appearing in every direction, and we were ready for coffee and tea by the time we reached the entrance of the closed Lacul Nebunu. Refreshed, we continued back into Mila 36 and other channels, adding Squacco Herons, a juvenile Red-backed Shrike, a young Honey Buzzard on a dead tree and several Spotted Flycatchers, more good views of Whiskered Terns, Kingfishers and more White-tailed Eagles all being particularly enjoyed. Great and Little Egrets together allowed helpful comparison. We completed the roughly semicircular loop, meeting up with the floating hotel, which had continued along the Sulina Branch, at the village of Gorgova.

We continued cruising while we enjoyed a delicious, though rather late lunch, with more eagles, pelicans and a wonderful Golden Jackal calmly trotting along the bank next to us. On the other side, there was a movement of Terns, with lots of Whiskered and some very smart White-winged Terns still in their summer plumage of black bodies and (not surprisingly) white wings. The hotel moored up on a stretch of the Old Danube, a channel

predating the dredged Sulina Branch. After a short break, during which Little Gull was added to the list, we met again at 4.30pm for a later afternoon excursion on the smaller boat.

This time we headed south, exploring the Crişan to Caraorman and Ciamurlia channels and visiting Lacul Iacob. We passed through a mass of Whiskered Terns on the main channel, which gather there because of the fast boats stirring the water. At first, all seemed relatively quiet, but we heard and again glimpsed Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, and heard but could not see, Bearded Reedling (Tit). Green Sandpiper and Little Grebe were also new. Much of the surface of the very shallow Lake Iacob was covered in Water-chestnut (*Trapa natans*), on which good numbers of Squacco Herons could be seen, along with Mallard, Teal and the usual heron and cormorant species. In the Narrow-leaved Bulrushes (*Typha angustifolia*) where we had stopped, we had nice views of both Common Reed and Sedge Warblers, neither species so easy to see at this time of year. As we returned, we saw more Green Sandpipers, Wood Sandpiper and Lapwing on the shore and had good views of another Grey-headed Woodpecker, this time able to see its markings. A flock of Caspian and Black-headed Gulls on the bank also held a couple of Caspian Terns, an adult and youngster, both showing their large red bills. The sky was pink in the west and the light was fading as we got back to the flotel at about 7pm, with time for a break before dinner and checklist. We all agreed it had been an incredible day in the delta.

Day 6

Saturday 16th September

Danube Delta

An Osprey was perched on a dead branch near the boat this morning, seen by the first out at dawn and the calls of Bee-eaters overhead could be heard from bed. After another excellent 7.30am breakfast, we were ready to leave at 8.30 in the small boat, retracing our route along the Crişan – Caraorman channel, our destination being the village of Caraorman at the end of it. Again, there were many Whiskered Terns all around as we traversed the short section of the Sulina branch, before turning into the quieter side channel. Many Swallows were feeding low over the water and high above them, a group of nine distant raptors were migrating Honey Buzzards. Flowering-rush (*Butomus umbellatus*) still bore its pink flowers, and a young, sentinel White-tailed Eagle in the same tree as the previous evening had probably roosted there. The two Caspian Terns on a sandy bank had been joined by others, and at least 11 were with the gulls this morning. Some of the Squacco Herons were very close, and a juvenile Ferruginous Duck was with some Mallard. Another male Red-footed Falcon flew through, and a pause to look at a Red-backed Shrike also gave a smart Marsh Frog on a rock. A Dice Snake was seen swimming near the shore.

When we landed, at an area of waste ground and the remains of a deserted factory, three different Rollers were seen on wires and a highlight for some was a beautiful one in flight. Some old ponds still held a little water which provided food for bust Black-winged Stilts and large numbers of Spotted Redshank. Good numbers of Caspian Terns were with Caspian Gulls and Black-headed, and Laurentiu also picked out a larger, longer-billed, first-winter Pallas's Gull (also known as Greater Black-headed Gull). Four Black Storks were at the back of a field with various herons and three Glossy Ibis were closer. Singles of Eurasian Curlew, Ruff, Curlew Sandpiper and Common Redshank were added to the wader list. A mammal glimpsed running was probably a Golden Jackal, while the local

donkeys gave and received more attention. The ground was sandy, and plants included a lot of the toxic Thorn-apple, Small Caltrops (*Tribulus terrestris*), with yellow flowers and spiky fruit, white-flowered European Heliotrope (*Heliotropium europaeum*) and bushes of Narrow-leaved Oleaster (*Eleagnus angustifolia*, also called Russian Olive) and Tamarisk (*Tamarix sp.*). Many Darter dragonflies were around, and those examined closely were Moustached Darters, while a handful of butterflies were Small White, and singles of Little and Common Blue and Brown Argus. Walking back, Hoopoe, Northern Wheatear and Black Redstart were around the buildings and Tree Pipits flew overhead.

After coffee onboard, we returned along the canal, with a couple of Gadwall, one showing its wing markings well, another Wheatear, a fine Common Redstart, perched near a Spotted Flycatcher, a Yellow Wagtail and a swimming Grass Snake being most notable. Lunch was on the flotel at its mooring, after which we moved further along the Old Danube and to a new site on the Eracle canal in the Lopatna region of the delta. The morning cloud and wind had given way to warm sun, making a very pleasant journey, with the added bonus for some of a Great White Pelican which took off from the river just by the boat. Plants where we moored included Lesser Water-Parsnip (*Berula erecta*) and Marsh Woundwort (*Stachys palustris*), while a female Large Copper butterfly was photographed.

We set off on our late-afternoon excursion at 5pm, along the Eracle to visit firstly Lake Trei Iezere. The narrow approach had lots of Kingfishers and a stop for Lesser Spotted Woodpecker also gave Common Bluetail damselflies. The water was starred with flowers of Frog-bit. Much of the surface of Trei Iezere was covered with a mat of vegetation (Water Chestnut, Water Soldier and Yellow and White Waterlilies) on which the birds could walk and even nest. There were good numbers of Whiskered and Caspian Terns and we added Common Terns too. Squacco Herons were abundant, and we watched one catch and then struggle to eat a frog. A Dalmatian Pelican gave good views here. The next lake was Lacul cu Ciulini. A flock of 17 Purple Herons were on migration, and the lake held both Great White and lots of Dalmatian Pelicans, so we could see the similarities and differences, and the colours on the head and beak of Great White. A Marsh Harrier took a Squacco Heron, while a Purple Heron landed and could be seen in more detail. White-tailed Eagle was heard and two perched in the same tree. As we drove back into the sunset, a flock of 13 Squacco Herons were seen migrating.

Day 7

Sunday 17th September

Danube Delta

Waking to such a beautiful and peaceful location was a joy, and several of the group watched the sun rise over the misty marsh and the day brighten. Pre-breakfast bird sightings included a flight of Great White Pelicans, a line of nine migrating Spoonbills, a Bee-eater swooping to drink in the river and hundreds of Swallows resting in the reeds and feeling low over the water. After another excellent breakfast, we were ready to leave on the small boat at 9am, exploring the narrower channels and lakes to the west of where we were moored, as we slowly made our way back towards Tulcea. Bearded Reedlings (Tits) were heard and seen, occasionally well, as they flicked through the reeds, while an Osprey was new for most of the group. A Savi's Warbler was heard and possibly glimpsed. We entered a lake, where six Great White Pelicans were circle-feeding and a Purple Heron landed. A Grey-headed Woodpecker

flew past, calling loudly. Turning into a wider channel, we had great views of a party of Bearded Reedlings, and as the channel widened to a small lake, the Osprey was seen again, hunting almost over the boat and giving the most wonderful views. A pair of Great White Pelicans were in perfect light, while three Ferruginous Ducks soon hid in the reeds. As we negotiated a narrow channel, an adult Night Heron flew into a White Willow, Water Rail squealed, and a Sparrowhawk flew overhead. Penduline Tit called and we saw a young bird with a very short tail and unmarked face. Emerging into the Vişina Channel, we at last had excellent views of a Lesser Spotted Woodpecker on a dead tree.

We had coffee in Lake Ligeanca, where there were a large number of Coots (200+) and a White-tailed Eagle was mobbed by a Marsh Harrier. Meanwhile three young eagles were playing in the sky. We emerged into the Old Danube at Mila 23 village. Next, we made our way to Lacul Furtuna, where there were enormous numbers of Great White Pelicans on the far side, on the water and in flight. Closer to hand, Black-necked Grebe was in with Little and Great Crested, and Garganey in flight were our first for the trip. With almost a surfeit of Kingfishers, we left along another channel, making our way to the Şontea channel, where we found our floating hotel. As we approached, the Osprey reappeared, this time with a large fish in its talons. The Flotel set off at 2pm, following the route towards Tulcea in the hot sun. There was plenty of time for reading and dozing, while birds seen included yet more White-tailed Eagles, Marsh Harriers, Purple Herons and a fly-over Black Woodpecker. We docked at Tulcea at about 6pm and dined with the backdrop of a lovely sunset, ending our time in the Danube Delta. A Little Owl was heard calling in the night.

Day 8

Monday 18th September

Deniz Tepe (steppe) & Vadu (Black Sea coast)

This morning we had to say farewell and thanks to the lovely floating hotel staff who had looked after us so well. After a 7.30am breakfast and leaving luggage to be taken to the Ibis Tours guesthouse, we were collected again by Dan to explore the southern part of the Biosphere Reserve. Although the weather was warm and sunny, it was also quite windy. A 30-minute drive took us to Deniz Tepe ('Hill of the Sea') which stands isolated in the surrounding plains. We walked along the stony track approaching the hill, being picked up later. As we set off, a Red-throated Pipit was glimpsed by some, and two Linnets were on a wire, with Common Kestrel, Yellow and White Wagtails. Many Eastern Bath Whites were flying, and a couple of Cardinal Fritillaries were impressive. Other insects included a Devil's Coach-horse Beetle and a Rattle Grasshopper which showed red wings as it jumped. Plants in flower included Forking Larkspur (*Delphinium consolida*) and Small Caltrops.

A large raptor perched was shown to be a Short-toed Snake Eagle when it took off and circled round the hill, giving us superb views, and other raptors included a second Short-toed, Hobby, Red-footed Falcons, Common Buzzard and an overhead Long-legged Buzzard, showing its rufous underparts. There was also a good movement of Marsh Harriers, with several males being noted, after we had commented on the apparent absence of male birds in the delta. Several Northern Wheatears were seen as well as a young Isabelline Wheatear perched up, and a Tawny Pipit was on a rock. We saw the nests of a colony of Spanish Sparrows, but the birds had moved on. As we were

leaving, we had good views of a flock of Yellow Wagtails by a field of Lucerne, which was covered in butterflies, including both Clouded Yellow and Pale Clouded Yellow. We had a tasty picnic provided by the guesthouse near Sinoe, where Southern Darter dragonflies were perched on metal railings, and many red-and-black Firebugs were around, as well as a Dock Shield Bug. Butterflies here included Red Admiral, Common Blue and Brown Argus, as well as a Four-spotted moth. We also saw a Balkan Wall Lizard.

Refreshed, we continued on towards the coast, seeing more Marsh Harriers, and commenting on tremendous erosion of the fine soil from the vast fields with the dust clouds stirred up by the ploughs; a couple of dust-devils (mini tornadoes) were seen over the prairies. We stopped at Vadu to walk a stony track to some ponds formerly used for sand and mineral extraction. Bee-eaters were overhead as we left the bus, as well as a Kestrel and two Red-footed Falcons. Marsh Harriers were over the reeds and ponds, sometimes close, while duck included Ferruginous Ducks, Shoveler, Gadwall and Mallard. Little Egrets and Grey Herons stood sentinel, a Purple Heron took off in front, while waders included Wood Sandpiper, lots of Snipe, Curlew, and both Common and Spotted Redshanks, Ruff and Dunlin. A Water Rail was heard, and Little Gulls flew over and were seen very well at rest. Reed Buntings flitted, Ruddy Darter and Migrant Hawker dragonflies, Small Heath, Small White and Common Blue butterflies were noted, as well as two dead Grass Snakes, and plants included Marsh Mallow (*Althaea officinalis*) and Fleabane (*Pulicaria dysenterica*). The next pond held Pied Avocets, Greenshank, more Ruff, Dunlin in both winter and summer plumage, smaller Little Stints and a Little Ringed Plover, while a Dalmatian Pelican flew off.

Our final stop was at the beach, with plenty of Common Terns and Great Cormorants perched on fishing nets, and Mediterranean Gulls in flight and at rest among the majority Black-headed and Caspian Gulls. A group of Sanderlings ran along the shoreline, and plants here included Sea Cabbage (*Crambe maritima*), Sea-holly (*Eryngium maritimum*), while Little Grebes and Mute Swans were in a pond behind. Some of the group chose to paddle in the surprisingly warm water as waves crashed onto the sandy beach which held plenty of shells. As we drove slowly back, a Hoopoe and several Red-backed Shrikes were seen, and the Purple Heron took off again from its earlier spot. After a stop at a little shop in the village for refreshments, we headed back north, reaching Tulcea at 7pm.

We received a warm welcome as we checked in to the Ibis Tours guesthouse, where our bags were waiting, and were soon sitting down to another good dinner. A quick recap and list update was followed by a relatively early night for most of the group.

Day 9

Tuesday 19th September

Celic Dere Monastery; Maçin Mountains

For our last day exploring the wildlife of Romania we headed further west, away from the Biosphere Reserve. Our first stop of the day was at the Monastery of Celic Dere, on the edge of extensive woodland with open pastures. Immediately, a Red-throated Pipit was glimpsed, and Tree Pipits flew overhead. Next to the parking area was an old windmill, and two Syrian Woodpeckers plus a Great Spotted all landed on a vertical blade, giving excellent views and the opportunity to compare these similar species. A short time later, Middle Spotted Woodpecker was

heard and again, two birds perched on the blade, giving great views. The Great Spotted also returned to what was obviously a favourite woodpecker post. Grey-headed Woodpecker was heard and seen in flight. A Lesser Spotted Eagle drifted over and then a Little Owl called, immediately responded to by three others around, one being seen briefly on the windmill. A Cardinal Fritillary was sunning itself and Hawfinches flew over – not bad for a couple of metres from the vehicle!

We set off walking, with more Hawfinches flying between the trees. Two Levant Sparrowhawks and a Common Buzzard circled above the hillside, and Goldfinches, Greenfinches, Chaffinches, House Sparrows and a Willow Warbler flicked about. Butterflies included Clouded Yellow, Small White and lots of Cardinal Fritillaries, with large numbers of Migrant Hawkers darting overhead. Common Quince trees (*Cydonia oblonga*) were growing in the hedgerows, and we sampled some of the fresh Walnuts (*Juglans regia*). Green Woodpecker was heard and seen by some, and a small stream held Marsh Frogs and attracted Grey Wagtails. Red Admiral, Common Blue, a Grizzled Skipper and Meadow Brown were noted, along with Common Cone-headed Grasshoppers and Blue-winged Grasshoppers. We walked back through the forest of Eastern Hornbeam (*Carpinus orientalis*), having some further lovely views of Hawfinches. Back in the car park a Hobby swooped very low over us. Our route west took us close to the Danube and so to the Ukraine border, before we turned south. We had our picnic on shady benches at another memorial shrine, where three tiny puppies wanted to come with us.

Our afternoon destination was in the Măcin Mountains, an area of granite hills. We took the access road to a large quarry, where lines of trucks were waiting to collect stone, but turned off across open steppe. We walked along a fairly level track to the edge of some low hills. A pair of Peregrine Falcons flew over the cliffs, and Hobbies flew low overhead. A very smart male Red-footed Falcon was hunting and had an encounter with a Hobby before going their separate ways, and a Eurasian Sparrowhawk was added to the tally. At ground level, our attention was drawn to a Praying Mantis and a good selection of butterflies, including Pale Clouded Yellows, Adonis Blues, Mallow Skipper and Eastern Bath Whites, while a Lesser Fiery Copper was nectaring on European Heliotrope (*Heliotropium europaeum*). Further up, in a damper area, we added Oberthur's Grizzled Skippers and a Large Copper. A real treat on the top of a prominent boulder was a very smart Eastern Black-eared Wheatear, which gave magnificent, scoped views as it kept returning to its look-out point. Plants included the endemics Dobrogea Pink (*Dianthus nardiformis*), Romanian Bellflower (*Campanula romanica*) and Balkan Clary (*Salvia nemorosa*), and as we walked back, we added Small Copper and Spotted Fritillary butterflies. We also encountered more Balkan Wall Lizards but, sadly, no tortoises today.

As we started to head for home, we stopped in the village of Greci for refreshments and the opportunity to buy gifts to take back to the UK. We were back at the guesthouse at 6pm, with our final dinner together at 7pm, during which we discussed some of the highlights of our time together.

Day 10

Wednesday 20th September

Transfer Bucharest; fly UK

Today we had to leave the fascinating country of Romania. After our 7.30am breakfast, we were ready to leave at 8.30am. While we were waiting, we noted that the Jackdaws were of the eastern subspecies *soemmeringii* with white collar markings on the neck. En route to the airport a Long-legged Buzzard and a flock of about 50 Black Storks were seen. We made one comfort stop at Slobozia, where we encountered our first rain of the trip, although it was only light. We made good time, arriving just after 1.30pm, and saying our thanks and goodbyes to Dan our diver, and especially to Laurentiu, who had guided us superbly throughout the trip. The group checked in and, after a slight delay, arrived back at Heathrow at 6pm local time.

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Byzantine Crocus



Squacco Heron – with lunch!

Species lists

Birds (H = Heard only, LO = Leader Only)

I=Introduced		September 2023									
Common name	Scientific name	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>					✓	✓	✓			
Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Ruddy Shelduck	<i>Tadorna ferruginea</i>				✓						
Garganey	<i>Spatula querquedula</i>							✓			
Northern Shoveler	<i>Spatula clypeata</i>				✓	✓			✓		
Gadwall	<i>Mareca strepera</i>						✓	✓	✓		
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Eurasian Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>				✓	✓	✓		✓		
Common Pochard	<i>Aythya ferina</i>				✓						
Ferruginous Duck	<i>Aythya nyroca</i>						✓	✓	✓		
Common Pheasant - I	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓		
Rock Dove	<i>Columba livia</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	
Common Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Eurasian Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Water Rail	<i>Rallus aquaticus</i>							H	H		
Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓		
Eurasian Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓		
Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓		
Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Black-necked Grebe	<i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>							✓			
Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>						✓				
Pied Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>								✓		
Northern Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>					✓	✓		✓		
Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>				✓				✓		
Eurasian Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>						✓		✓		
Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa</i>						✓		LO		
Ruff	<i>Calidris pugnax</i>						✓		✓		
Curlew Sandpiper	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>						✓				
Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>								✓		
Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>								✓		
Little Stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>								✓		
Common Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>				✓		✓		✓		
Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>				✓						
Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>					✓	✓				
Common Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>						✓		✓		
Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓		
Spotted Redshank	<i>Tringa erythropus</i>				✓		✓	✓	✓		
Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>					✓	✓		✓		
Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Little Gull	<i>Hydrocoloeus minutus</i>					✓			✓		

I=Introduced		September 2023									
Common name	Scientific name	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Mediterranean Gull	<i>Ichthyaetus melanocephalus</i>								✓		
Pallas's Gull	<i>Ichthyaetus ichthyaetus</i>						✓				
Caspian Gull	<i>Larus cachinnans</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓		
Yellow-legged Gull	<i>Larus michahellis</i>					✓					
Gull-billed Tern	<i>Gelochelidon nilotica</i>					✓	✓	✓			
Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>						✓		✓		
Whiskered Tern	<i>Chlidonias hybrida</i>				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
White-winged Tern	<i>Chlidonias leucopterus</i>					✓					
Black Stork	<i>Ciconia nigra</i>					✓	✓				✓
White Stork	<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>			✓							
Pygmy Cormorant	<i>Microcarbo pygmaeus</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓		
Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓		
Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>						✓				
Eurasian Spoonbill	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>							✓			
Black-crowned Night Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>				✓	✓	✓	✓			
Squacco Heron	<i>Ardeola ralloides</i>					✓	✓	✓			
Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>						✓	✓	✓		
Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>					✓	✓	✓			
Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Great White Pelican	<i>Pelecanus onocrotalus</i>					✓	✓	✓			
Dalmatian Pelican	<i>Pelecanus crispus</i>						✓	✓	✓		
Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>						✓	✓			
European Honey Buzzard	<i>Pernis apivorus</i>					✓	✓	✓			
Short-toed Snake Eagle	<i>Circaetus gallicus</i>								✓		
Lesser Spotted Eagle	<i>Clanga pomarina</i>		✓	✓	✓					✓	
Booted Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus pennatus</i>				✓						
Levant Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter brevipes</i>									✓	
Eurasian Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	
Western Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
White-tailed Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i>					✓	✓	✓			
Long-legged Buzzard	<i>Buteo rufinus</i>								✓		✓
Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓
Little Owl	<i>Athene noctua</i>								H	✓	
Eurasian Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>						✓		✓		
European Roller	<i>Coracias garrulus</i>				✓	?	✓				
Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>					✓	✓	✓			
European Bee-eater	<i>Merops apiaster</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓		
Middle Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocoptes medius</i>		✓							✓	
Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dryobates minor</i>					✓	H	✓			
Syrian Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos syriacus</i>			✓						✓	

I=Introduced		September 2023									
Common name	Scientific name	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>		✓	✓	H	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Black Woodpecker	<i>Dryocopus martius</i>			✓		✓		✓			
European Green Woodpecker	<i>Picus viridis</i>		H	H	H					✓	
Grey-headed Woodpecker	<i>Picus canus</i>		H			✓	✓	✓		H	
Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Red-footed Falcon	<i>Falco vespertinus</i>					✓	✓		✓	✓	
Eurasian Hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>		✓							✓	
Red-backed Shrike	<i>Lanius collurio</i>		✓			✓	✓		✓		
Eurasian Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>		✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	
Eurasian Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Spotted Nutcracker	<i>Nucifraga caryocatactes</i>		✓	✓							
Western Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓
Hooded Crow	<i>Corvus cornix</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Northern Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>	✓	✓	✓		✓					
Coal Tit	<i>Periparus ater</i>		✓	✓							
Crested Tit	<i>Lophophanes cristatus</i>		✓	✓							
Marsh Tit	<i>Poecile palustris</i>		✓	✓	✓					H	
Willow Tit	<i>Poecile montanus</i>			✓							
Eurasian Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Eurasian Penduline Tit	<i>Remiz pendulinus</i>						H	✓			
Bearded Reedling	<i>Panurus biarmicus</i>					H		✓	LO H		
Crested Lark	<i>Galerida cristata</i>				✓				✓		
Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>			✓	✓	✓			✓		
Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Common House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		
Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>		✓			✓	✓	✓			
Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>		✓							✓	
Common Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>		✓	✓		H	H	H	✓	H	
Sedge Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>					✓					
Common Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>					✓					
Savi's Warbler	<i>Locustella luscinioides</i>							H	H		
Eurasian Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>					✓					
Lesser Whitethroat	<i>Curruca curruca</i>					✓					
Common Firecrest	<i>Regulus ignicapilla</i>		✓								
Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>		H	✓	H						
Eurasian Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>		H	✓							
Eurasian Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>		✓	✓	✓					✓	
Eurasian Treecreeper	<i>Certhia familiaris</i>		H	✓		H					
Common Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

I=Introduced		September 2023									
Common name	Scientific name	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>			✓							
Common Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		H	
Fieldfare	<i>Turdus pilaris</i>		✓	✓							
Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
European Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓				H	
Thrush Nightingale	<i>Luscinia luscinia</i>					H					
Red-breasted Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula parva</i>				✓					✓	
Black Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>		✓	✓	✓		✓			✓	
Common Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>		✓	✓			✓				
Whinchat	<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>		✓						LO		
Northern Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>						✓		✓		
Isabelline Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe isabellina</i>								✓		
Eastern Black-eared Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe melanoleuca</i>									✓	
White-throated Dipper	<i>Cinclus cinclus</i>			✓	✓						
Eurasian Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>			✓		✓	✓	✓			
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	
Western Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>						✓		✓		
Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>			✓	✓					✓	
White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Tawny Pipit	<i>Anthus campestris</i>								✓		
Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>		✓								
Tree Pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>		H	✓			✓				
Red-throated Pipit	<i>Anthus cervinus</i>								✓	H	
Common Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	H		✓	
Hawfinch	<i>Coccothraustes coccothraustes</i>									✓	
Eurasian Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>		H	✓							
European Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>									✓	
Common Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>		✓	✓					✓		
Red Crossbill	<i>Loxia curvirostra</i>										
European Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>		✓	✓						✓	
Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>		✓	H							
Common Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>						✓	✓	✓		

Mammals (S = Signs, D = Dead)

		September 2023									
Common name	Scientific name	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Eurasian Red Squirrel	<i>Sciurus vulgaris</i>		✓	✓	✓						
Bank Vole	<i>Clethrionomys glareolus</i>		✓								
European Mole	<i>Talpa europaea</i>		S	S						S	
Noctule	<i>Nyctalus noctula</i>					✓	✓				
Noctule sp.										✓	

Common name	Scientific name	September 2023									
		11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Common Pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>					✓	✓				
Soprano Pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>					✓	✓				
Golden Jackal	<i>Canis aureus</i>					✓	✓				
Red Fox	<i>Vulpes vulpes</i>		✓		D						
Eurasian Brown Bear	<i>Ursus arctos arctos</i>		✓		S						
Alpine Chamois	<i>Rupicapra rupicapra carpatica</i>			✓							
European Badger	<i>Meles meles</i>				D						

Reptiles & Amphibians (H = Heard, D = Dead)

Common name	Scientific name	September 2023									
		11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Yellow-bellied Toad	<i>Bombina variegata</i>		✓								
Eastern Tree Frog	<i>Hyla orientalis</i>					H	H	H		H	
Edible Frog	<i>Pelophylax esculentus</i>							✓			
Marsh Frog	<i>Pelophylax ridibundus</i>						✓	✓			
Common Frog	<i>Rana temporaria</i>									✓	
Frog sp.										✓	
Sand Lizard	<i>Lacerta agilis</i>		✓								
Balkan Wall Lizard	<i>Podarcis tauricus</i>								✓	✓	
Grass Snake	<i>Natrix natrix</i>		✓				✓		D		
Dice Snake	<i>Natrix tessellata</i>						✓				

Butterflies & Moths (D = Dead)

Common name	Scientific name	September 2023									
		11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Large White	<i>Pieris brassicae</i>		✓	✓							
Small White	<i>Pieris rapae</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Green-veined White	<i>Pieris napi</i>			✓					✓	✓	
Pale Clouded Yellow	<i>Colias hyale</i>								✓	✓	
Clouded Yellow	<i>Colias crocea</i>		✓						✓	✓	
Berger's Clouded Yellow	<i>Colias alfacariensis</i>		✓	✓							
Brimstone	<i>Gonepteryx rhamni</i>		✓								
Small Copper	<i>Lycaena phlaeas</i>									✓	
Large Copper	<i>Lycaena dispar</i>					?	✓	?		✓	
Lesser Fiery Copper	<i>Lycaena thersamon</i>									✓	
Little Blue	<i>Cupido minimus</i>						✓		✓		
Brown Argus	<i>Aricia agestis</i>						✓			✓	
Adonis Blue	<i>Polyommatus bellargus</i>									✓	
Common Blue	<i>Polyommatus icarus</i>		✓				✓		✓	✓	

Common name	Scientific name	September 2023									
		11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Blue sp.			✓								
Hungarian Glider	<i>Neptis rivularis</i>			✓							
Camberwell Beauty	<i>Nymphalis antiopa</i>					✓					
Red Admiral	<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>		✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	
Peacock	<i>Aglais io</i>		✓								
Comma Butterfly	<i>Polygonum c-album</i>		✓	✓							
Cardinal Fritillary	<i>Argynnis pandora</i>		✓						✓	✓	
Spotted Fritillary	<i>Melitaea didyma</i>									✓	
Meadow Brown	<i>Maniola jurtina</i>		✓							✓	
Small Heath	<i>Coenonympha pamphilus</i>		✓						✓	✓	
Wall Brown	<i>Lasiommata megera</i>		✓								
Large Wall Brown	<i>Lasiommata maera</i>									✓	
Oberthur's Grizzled Skipper	<i>Pyrgus armoricanus</i>		✓							✓	
Mallow Skipper	<i>Carcharodus alceae</i>									✓	
Moths											
Rest Harrow	<i>Aplasta ononaria</i>		✓								
Convolvulus Hawk-Moth	<i>Agrius convolvuli</i>			D							
Hummingbird Hawk-Moth	<i>Macroglossum stellatarum</i>		✓	✓							
Silver Y	<i>Autographa gamma</i>		✓	✓							
The Geometrician	<i>Grammodes stolidus</i>									✓	
The Four-spotted	<i>Tyta luctuosa</i>								✓	✓	

Other Invertebrates

Common name	Scientific name	September 2023									
		11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Willow Spreadwing (Western/Eastern)	<i>Charcolestes viridis/parvidens</i>					✓					
Common Bluetail	<i>Ischnura elegans</i>					✓	✓				
Blue Hawker	<i>Aeshna cyanea</i>		✓								
Migrant Hawker	<i>Aeshna mixta</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Southern Darter	<i>Sympetrum meridionale</i>								✓		
Ruddy Darter	<i>Sympetrum sanguineum</i>								✓		
Moustached Darter	<i>Sympetrum vulgatum</i>						✓			✓	
Darter sp.						✓					
Cone-headed Grasshopper	<i>Acrida ungarica</i>								✓	✓	
Blue-winged Grasshopper	<i>Oedipoda caerulea</i>									✓	
Rattle Grasshopper	<i>Psophus stridulus</i>		✓							✓	
Large Conehead	<i>Ruspolia nitidula</i>		✓								
Great Green Bush-cricket	<i>Tettigonia viridissima</i>			✓							
Roesel's Bush-cricket	<i>Roeseliana roeselii</i>		✓								

		September 2023									
Common name	Scientific name	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Praying Mantis	<i>Mantis religiosa</i>									✓	
Green Shield Bog	<i>Palomena prasina</i>					✓		✓		✓	
Fire Bug	<i>Pyrrhocoris apterus</i>								✓	✓	
Common Pond Skater	<i>Gerris lacustris</i>							✓			
Mosquito sp.						✓	✓	✓			
Drone-fly	<i>Eristalis tenax</i>		✓								
Hornet	<i>Vespa crabro</i>		✓			✓				✓	
Wasp sp.	<i>Vespa sp.</i>									✓	
Honey Bee	<i>Apis mellifera</i>		✓	✓						✓	
Devil's Coach-horse Beetle	<i>Ocypus olens</i>								✓		
A Pollen Chafer	<i>Oxythyrea funesta</i>		✓								
Seven-spot Ladybird	<i>Coccinella 7-punctata</i>								✓	✓	
Two-spot Ladybird	<i>Adalia bipunctata</i>									✓	
Leaf Beetle sp.	<i>Chrysomelidae</i>			✓							
Wasp Spider	<i>Argiope bruennichi</i>		✓								

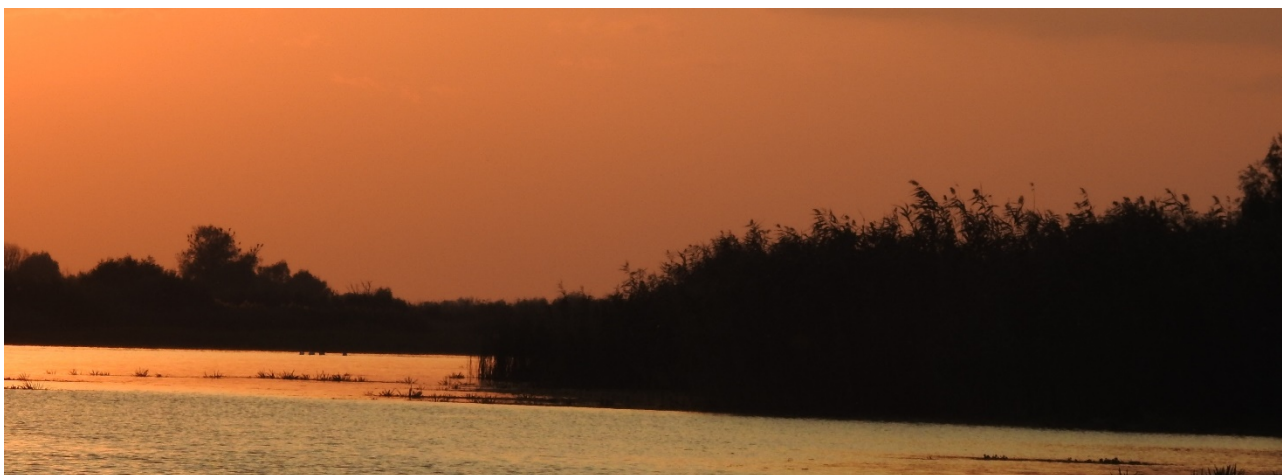
Plants (E = Endemic)

Common name	Scientific name	Day	Location
Water-ferns	Salviniaceae		
Floating Fern	<i>Salvinia natans</i>	5	Danube Delta
Spleenworts	Aspleniaceae		
Maidenhair Spleenwort	<i>Asplenium trichomanes</i>	3	Zarnești Gorge
Marsh Fern Family	Thelypteridaceae		
Marsh Fern	<i>Thelypteris palustris</i>	7	Danube Delta
Water-lilies	Nymphaeaceae		
European White Water-lily	<i>Nymphaea alba</i>	6	Danube Delta
European Yellow Water-lily	<i>Nuphar lutea</i>	5	Danube Delta
Water-plantain Family	Alismataceae		
Common Arrowhead	<i>Sagittaria sagittifolia</i>	5	Danube Delta
Flowering-rushes	Butomaceae		
Flowering-rush	<i>Butomus umbellatus</i>	6	Danube Delta
Frog-bit Family	Hydrocharitaceae		
Frog-bit	<i>Hydrocharis morsus-ranae</i>	7	Danube Delta
Water-soldier	<i>Stratiotes aloides</i>	7	Danube Delta
Meadow Saffron Family	Colchicaceae		
Common Autumn-crocus	<i>Cilchicum autumnale</i>	3	Măgura
Iris Family	Iridaceae		
Byzantine Crocus	<i>Crocus banaticus</i>	2	Coltul Chiliilor
Bulrush Family	Typhaceae		
Lesser Bulrush	<i>Typha angustifolia</i>	5	Danube Delta
Common Bulrush	<i>Typha latifolia</i>	7	Danube Delta
Grasses	Poaceae		
Common Reed	<i>Phragmites australis</i>	5	Danube Delta
Hornworts	Ceratophyllaceae		
Rigid Hornwort	<i>Ceratophyllum demersum</i>	7	Danube Delta
Buttercup Family	Ranunculaceae		
Yellow Monk's-hood	<i>Aconitum anthora</i>	3	Zarnești Gorge

Common name	Scientific name	Day	Location
Forking Larkspur	<i>Delphinium consolida</i>	8	Deniz Tepe
Poppy Family	Papaveraceae		
Common Poppy	<i>Papaver rhoeas</i>	2	Coltul Chiliilor
Stonecrop Family	Crassulaceae		
Orpine	<i>Hylotelephium telephium</i>	3	Zarnești Gorge
Great Stonecrop	<i>Hylotelephium maximum</i>	3	Zarnești Gorge
Vine Family	Vitaceae		
European Grape	<i>Vitis vinifera</i>	5	Danube Delta
Caltrops Family	Zygophyllaceae		
Small Caltrops	<i>Tribulus terrestris</i>	6	Caraorman
Pea Family	Fabaceae		
False-indigo Bush	<i>Amorpha fruticosa</i>		
Tuberous Pea	<i>Lathyrus tuberosus</i>	9	Măcin
Crown Vetch	<i>Coronilla varia</i>	2	Coltul Chiliilor
Field Restharrow	<i>Ononis arvensis</i>	2	Coltul Chiliilor
Sickle Medick	<i>Medicago sativa</i> subsp. <i>falcata</i>	2	Coltul Chiliilor
Rose Family	Rosaceae		
Common Quince	<i>Cydonia oblonga</i>	9	Celic Dere
Tormentil	<i>Potentilla erecta</i>	2	Coltul Chiliilor
Oleaster Family	Elaeagnaceae		
Narrow-leaved Oleaster	<i>Elaeagnus angustifolia</i>	6	Caraorman
Hemp Family	Cannabaceae		
Indian Hemp	<i>Cannabis sativa</i>	9	Celic Dere
Nettle Family	Urticaceae		
Common Nettle	<i>Urtica dioica</i>	3	Zarnești Gorge
Cucumber Family	Cucurbitaceae		
White Bryony	<i>Bryonia dioica</i>	5	Danube Delta
Beech Family	Fagaceae		
European Beech	<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>	3	Zarnești Gorge
Birch Family	Betulaceae		
Eastern Hornbeam	<i>Carpinus orientalis</i>	3	Zarnești Gorge
Violets	Violaceae		
Wild Pansy or Heartsease	<i>Viola tricolor</i>	2	Coltul Chiliilor
Willow Family	Salicaceae		
White Poplar	<i>Populus alba</i>	1	Roadsides
Hybrid Black Poplar	<i>Populus x canadensis</i>	5	Danube Delta
White Willow	<i>Salix alba</i>	5	Danube Delta
Spurge Family	Euphorbiaceae		
Sea Spurge	<i>Euphorbia paralias</i>	6	Caraorman
Flaxes	Linaceae		
Carpathian Flax	<i>Linum extraaxillare</i>	2	Coltul Chiliilor
Crane's-bills	Geraniaceae		
Dusky Crane's-bill	<i>Geranium phaeum</i>	3	Zarnești Gorge
Common Herb Robert	<i>Geranium robertianum</i>	3	Zarnești Gorge
Purple Loosestrife Family	Lythraceae		
Purple Loosestrife	<i>Lythrum salicaria</i>	5	Danube Delta
Water-chestnut	<i>Trapa natans</i>	5	Danube Delta
Soapberry Family	Sapindaceae		
Field Maple	<i>Acer campestre</i>	9	Celic Dere
Mallow Family	Malvaceae		
Silver Lime	<i>Tilia tomentosa</i>	4	Castelul Peleş
Marsh Mallow	<i>Althaea officinalis</i>	8	Vadu

Common name	Scientific name	Day	Location
Tree-of-Heaven Family	Simaroubaceae		
Tree-of-Heaven	<i>Ailanthus altissima</i>	9	Măcin
Cabbage Family	Brassicaceae		
Sea Cabbage	<i>Crambe maritima</i>	8	Vadu
Annual Honesty	<i>Lunaria annua</i>	3	Zarnești Gorge
Hoary Alison	<i>Berteroa incana</i>	2	Coltul Chiliilor
Rock-rose Family	Cistaceae		
Common Rock-rose	<i>Helianthemum nummularium</i>	2	Coltul Chiliilor
Campion Family	Caryophyllaceae		
Carthusian Pink	<i>Dianthus carthusianorum</i>	2	Stramba Valley
Dobrogea Pink -E	<i>Dianthus nardiformis</i>	9	Măcin
Rock Campion	<i>Atocion rupestre</i>	3	Zarnești Gorge
Amaranth Family	Amaranthaceae		
Prickly Saltwort	<i>Salsola kali</i>	6	Caraorman
Fat-hen	<i>Chenopodium album</i>	3	Zarnești Gorge
Balsam Family	Balsaminaceae		
Himalayan Balsam	<i>Impatiens glandulifera</i>	2	Stramba Valley
Bedstraw Family	Rubiaceae		
	<i>Galium rubioides</i>	3	Zarnești Gorge
a small white bedstraw	<i>Galium sp.</i>	2	Coltul Chiliilor
Gentian Family	Gentianaceae		
Willow Gentian	<i>Gentiana asclepiadea</i>	2	Coltul Chiliilor
Fringed Gentian	<i>Gentianopsis ciliata</i>	3	Zarnești Gorge
Borage Family	Boraginaceae		
Common Viper's-bugloss	<i>Echium vulgare</i>	2	Coltul Chiliilor
Large Blue Alkanet	<i>Anchusa azurea</i>	9	Măcin
European Heliotrope	<i>Heliotropium europaeum</i>	6	Caraorman
Bindweed Family	Convolvulaceae		
Field Bindweed	<i>Convolvulus arvensis</i>	9	Măcin
Hedge Bindweed	<i>Calystegia sepium</i>	6	Danube Delta
Yellow Dodder	<i>Cuscuta campestris</i>	9	Măcin
Nightshade Family	Solanaceae		
Bittersweet	<i>Solanum dulcamara</i>	6	Danube Delta
Common Thorn-apple	<i>Datura stramonium</i>	6	Caraorman
Olive Family	Oleaceae		
Manna Ash	<i>Fraxinus ornus</i>	3	Zarnești Gorge
Plantain Family	Plantaginaceae		
Balkan Toadflax	<i>Linaria genistifolia</i>	2	Coltul Chiliilor
Common Toadflax	<i>Linaria vulgaris</i>	5	Danube Delta
Vervain Family	Verbenaceae		
Common Vervain	<i>Verbena officinalis</i>	6	Caraorman
Dead-nettle Family	Lamiaceae		
Sticky Clary	<i>Salvia glutinosa</i>	3	Zarnești Gorge
Balkan Clary	<i>Salvia nemorosa</i>	9	Măcin
Whorled Clary	<i>Salvia verticillata</i>	2	Coltul Chiliilor
Pannonic Thyme	<i>Thymus pannonicus</i>	3	Zarnești Gorge
Water Mint	<i>Mentha aquatica</i>	5	Danube Delta
Horse Mint	<i>Mentha longifolia</i>	2	Coltul Chiliilor
Wild Basil	<i>Clinopodium vulgare</i>	3	Zarnești Gorge
Marsh Woundwort	<i>Stachys palustris</i>	6	Danube Delta
Spotted Dead-nettle	<i>Lamium maculatum</i>	3	Zarnești Gorge
Bellflower Family	Campanulaceae		

Common name	Scientific name	Day	Location
Carpathian Bellflower	<i>Campanula carpatica</i>	3	Zarnești Gorge
A Spreading Bellflower	<i>Campanula patula subsp. abietina</i>	3	Zarnești Gorge
Nettle-leaved Bellflower	<i>Campanula trachelium</i>	2	Coltul Chiliilor
Common Harebell	<i>Campanula rotundifolia</i>	2	Coltul Chiliilor
Romanian Bellflower -E	<i>Campanula romanica</i>	9	Măcin
Bogbean Family	Menyanthaceae		
Fringed Water-lily	<i>Nymphoides peltata</i>	5	Danube Delta
Daisy Family	Asteraceae		
Annual Immortelle	<i>Xeranthemum annuum</i>	9	Măcin
Cotton Thistle	<i>Onopordum acanthium</i>	8	Deniz Tepe
Sand Knapweed	<i>Centaurea arenaria</i>	6	Caraorman
Wig Knapweed	<i>Centaurea phrygia</i>	2	Coltul Chiliilor
Stemless Carline Thistle	<i>Carlina acaulis</i>	2	Coltul Chiliilor
Yellow Melancholy Thistle	<i>Cirsium erisithales</i>	3	Zarnești Gorge
Cabbage Thistle	<i>Cirsium oleraceum</i>	4	Castelul Peleş
Great Marsh Thistle	<i>Carduus personata</i>	3	Zarnești Gorge
Woolly Burdock	<i>Arctium tomentosum</i>	3	Zarnești Gorge
Marsh Sow-thistle	<i>Sonchus palustris</i>	5	Danube Delta
Common Chicory	<i>Cichorium intybus</i>	2	Coltul Chiliilor
Wood Ragwort	<i>Senecio ovatus</i>	3	Zarnești Gorge
Eastern Daisy Fleabane	<i>Erigeron annuus</i>	2	Coltul Chiliilor
European Yarrow	<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	2	Coltul Chiliilor
European Goldenrod	<i>Solidago virgaurea</i>	3	Zarnești Gorge
Canadian Goldenrod	<i>Solidago canadensis</i>	1	Roadsides
Oxeye Daisy	<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>	2	Coltul Chiliilor
Yellow Mayweed	<i>Cota tinctoria</i>	3	Măgura
Common Fleabane	<i>Pulicaria dysenterica</i>	2	Stramba Valley
Yellow Oxeye	<i>Telekia speciosa</i>	3	Zarnești Gorge
Rough Cocklebur	<i>Xanthium strumarium</i>	2	Eagle Stop
Spiny Cocklebur	<i>Xanthium spinosum</i>	6	Caraorman
Viburnum Family	Viburnaceae		
Dwarf Elder	<i>Sambucus ebulus</i>	3	Zarnești Gorge
European Elder	<i>Sambucus nigra</i>	3	Zarnești Gorge
Gelder-rose	<i>Viburnum opulus</i>	2	Coltul Chiliilor
Honeysuckle Family	Caprifoliaceae		
Small Scabious	<i>Scabiosa columbaria</i>	2	Coltul Chiliilor
Pale Yellow Scabious	<i>Scabiosa ochroleuca</i>	2	Coltul Chiliilor
Aralia Family	Araliaceae		
Common Ivy	<i>Hedera helix</i>	3	Zarnești Gorge
Umbellifers	Apiaceae		
Field Eryngo	<i>Eryngium campestre</i>	8	Deniz Tepe
Sea-holly	<i>Eryngium maritimum</i>	8	Vadu
Greater Masterwort	<i>Astrantia major</i>	2	Coltul Chiliilor
Lesser Water-parsnip	<i>Berula erecta</i>	6	Danube Delta
Wild Carrot	<i>Daucus carota</i>	2	Coltul Chiliilor
Common Burnet-saxifrage	<i>Pimpinella saxifraga</i>	2	Coltul Chiliilor



Sunset from the boat