

Bird – Watching Tour

with

WINGSPAN BIRD TOURS

To

MOROCCO

MARCH 20TH - 30TH 2018



TRIP REPORT

PLACES VISITED

DAY 1 – TUES 20TH

ARRIVAL AT MARRAKECH – TRANSFER TO THE OURIKA VALLEY WITH BIRDING AT THE HIGH ATLAS RESORT OF OUKAIMEDAN

DAY 2 – WEDS 21ST

TRANSFER FROM OURIKA VALLEY TO BOUMALNE DADES VIA AIT OURIR, TIZI-N-TICHKA PASS AND QUARZAZATE

DAY 3 – THURS 22ND

BOUMALNE DADES - TAGDILT TRACK – DADES GORGE

DAY 4 – FRI 23RD

TRANSFER FROM BOUMALNE DADES TO MERZOUGA'S ERG CHEBBI DUNE SYSTEM, WITH SEVERAL BIRDING STOPS ALONG THE WAY

DAY 5 – SAT 24TH

AUBERGE DERKAOUA GROUNDS, RISSANI AREA AND TRANSFER TO CAFÉ YASMINA

DAY 6 – SUN 25TH

ERG CHEBBI SAND DUNES AND A WADI NEAR MERZOUGA

DAY 7 – MON 26TH

TRANSFER FROM ERG CHEBBI DUNES AT MERZOUGA, TO TALIOUINE

DAY 8 – TUES 27TH

TRANSFER FROM TALIOUINE TO AGADIR WITH STOPS AT AOULOZ GORGE – SOUS VALLEY – OUED SOUS

DAY 9 – WEDS 28TH

SOUSS MASSA NATIONAL PARK – OUED SOUS

DAY 10 – THURS 29TH

TRANSFER FROM AGADIR TO ESSAOUIRA WITH STOPS AT – CAPE RHIR – TAMRI – TAMANDAR – OUED KSOB

DAY 11 – FRI 30TH

TRANSFER FROM ESSAOUIRA TO MARRAKECH AIRPORT A FEW STOPS TO LOOK FOR LARKS AND A VISIT TO MARRAKECH RESERVOIR

TOUR LEADER: BOB BUCKLER

PARTICIPANTS:

CRAIG LEWIS, COLIN HUNT, WILL SMITH, STEVE ZARATE, ROBIN ELLIOTT, CINDY & JOE HARRIS, RICHARD SMITH, STUART McQUEEN, THEO CAMPBELL, GUY CAMPBELL.

SUMMARY:

A cold start to this tour saw the group wrapped up warm for the first few days. The cold weather system for this year had delayed spring migration and consequently we saw very few migrant species and no visible raptor migration. However, Morocco is a special place and holds many gems and delights for visiting birders and the beautiful landscapes are arguably more beautiful than many places in Europe.

The group were delighted to see the likes of Moussier's Redstart, Leviallant's Woodpecker, Crimson-winged Finch, Tristram's Warbler, Hoopoe Lark, Thick-billed Lark, Desert Sparrow, Desert Warbler, Pharaoh Eagle Owl, Fulvous Babbler, Black-crowned Tchagra, Bald Ibis, Little Swift and a whole host of other larks, wheatears, warblers and finches.

DAY 1 – TUESDAY MARCH 20TH, 2018

ARRIVAL AT MARRAKECH – TRANSFER TO THE OURIKA VALLEY WITH BIRDING AT THE HIGH ATLAS RESORT OF OUKAIMEDAN

WEATHER: clear blue sky in Marrakech, broken sunshine later in the Atlas Mountains with some cloud cover. temp in Morocco ranged from 20C down to 1C at sunset.

It was a cracking start to this superb tour of Morocco, 8 of us arrived at Menara Airport on time at 11:25am. In the meantime, Ahmed our driver had collected the other four participants from their hotels in Marrakech. We began birding almost straight away with a pair of House Buntings in the Terminal building. A very slow and complicated security process and baggage collection saw all of us through the airport in just over an hour. Our driver Ahmed was outside waiting for us with our 14-seater bus and the four other participants, all Americans.



We were on our way in no time heading for the Atlas Mountains and our hotel in the Ourika Valley. We notched up the usual suspects on the way, such as White Stork, Spotless Starling, Collared Dove, House Martin and Barn Swallow. One or two goodies were also seen by some of the group, these included Common Cuckoo, Woodchat Shrike and Alpine Swift.

Once at our hotel in the Ourika Valley we quickly checked-in, got ourselves into warm birding gear and birding mode before setting off to the high Atlas at Oukaïmeden. We made several stops as we climbed up the winding road to the Oukaïmeden Ski Resort, the scenery was terrific with snow covered peaks towering above us.



Our first couple of stops produced Red-billed Chough, Blue Rock Thrush and Black Wheatear. Next, we found a couple of Moussier's Redstart, also Black Redstart, another Blue Rock Thrush and more Black Wheatears. A small pine copse provided sightings of several Hawfinches, also a single Common Crossbill, a Brambling, a pair of Common Firecrests, Coal Tit and both Common and African Chaffinches.



A babbling brook was our next venue where a very obliging White-throated Dipper searched for food and half a dozen Black Wheatears flitted about. A swirling mass of 'choughs' held both Red-billed and Alpine species.

At Oukaïmeden, it was very cold, we spent a little time searching for Alpine Accentor with not much joy, but we did find half a dozen Atlas Horned Larks, small flocks of Rock Sparrows, Linnets, lots of Black Redstarts, Common Chaffinches and a couple of Mistle Thrushes. A Yellow Wagtail was a nice find and several African Crimson-winged Finches delighted the group with their presence.

We saved the best until last as we drove to the top car park near the ski-lift, a flock of about 50 African Crimson-winged Finches were flitting about in the car park. They were amazing and very obliging too, most of the group got great pictures of the birds. We searched for A Little Owl without success before the cold finally drove us away. The temperature had dropped to near freezing as the sun dropped behind the mountains.



Crimson-winged Finches

We were back at the hotel at 6:30pm with plenty of time to get ready for our 7:30pm dinner which was, of course, a delicious Chicken Tajine.

DAY 2 – WEDNESDAY 21ST MARCH 2018

TRANSFER FROM OURIKA VALLEY TO BOUMALNE DADES VIA AIT OURIR, TIZI-N-TICHKA PASS AND QUARZAZATE

WEATHER: Beautiful clear sky to start, then fantastic sunshine all day spoilt only by a strong, cold wind which increased throughout the day. Top temp 20C but felt like 10C.

We had a great day today with some exciting sightings as we travelled through some of the most scenic landscapes that Morocco has to offer.

We ate breakfast at 6:30am and we had the bus loaded up before 7:30am and we were on our way under a clear blue sky. Our first stop was only 15 minutes along the Ourika Valley. A regular stop of mine and my favourite place to look for Levaillant's Woodpecker. We noted Cattle Egret, Grey Wagtail, Red-rumped Swallow and Common Bulbul as we travelled.

As soon as we got off the bus we were greeted by a chorus of bird song and within minutes a female Levaillant's Woodpecker flew into view. It showed briefly before flying off into the valley, but what a great start. We quickly listed a lot of common birds, such as Serin, Greenfinch, African Blue Tit, African Chaffinch and Wren.

A flock of six or so Little Swifts swarmed above sharing their air-space with Red-rumped & Barn Swallows, House Martins and a couple of distant Crag Martins.

Next, we took a path down to the Ourika river, along the way we could hear Blackcap, Greenfinch, Serin, Cetti's Warbler and the noisy Common Bulbul but there was no sign of the woodpecker even though it called a few times.

At the river we found several Tree Pipits, Little Ringed Plover and a Moroccan Wagtail. Then the Levillant's Woodpecker reappeared, this time it was a male and it sat in view for about 10 minutes.



Little Ringed Plover

On the way back, we had good views of Cetti's Warbler and some of the group saw Willow Warbler and then a Bonelli's Warbler was sighted by two of us.

Passing further down the valley we turned off for Ait Ourir and after 30 minutes we stopped at the roadside for another birding spell. From where we stood we had a terrific panoramic view across scrub land, pastures, olive groves, woodland, hedges and ditches.

As we emerged from the bus a Great-spotted Cuckoo flew into a bush not far away but before any of the group saw it they were distracted by the appearance of at least 3 Common Cuckoos. Further distraction occurred in the form of Barbary Partridges, they flew in but were hard to see in the scrub. Magreb Magpies were chasing the cuckoos around and eventually they flushed out two Great-spotted Cuckoos, so all the group got to see them at last. Before we left the area, we had good close views of Thekla Lark, as well as distant sightings of a Sardinian Warbler.

We then put in some miles as we entered the Tizi-n-Tichka Pass, the gateway through the Atlas Mountains, the scenery was just stunning, it was drier than usual, so the colourful spring flowers were not on show. We made a quick stop to watch a Booted Eagle but generally the number of raptors was disappointing today.

Once through the pass we dropped down into warmer climes, a lunch stop produced very little, Black Wheatear, Thekla Lark and our usual walk through a pine plantation was abandoned because the wind was blowing like a gale.

As the landscape changed so did the vegetation and the temperature. It was 21C as we made our way across the flat plains towards Quarzazate. We were faced by an arid, flat, landscape with

poor vegetation, the only greenery was seen along the occasional rivers and streams. We never made another stop because of the windy conditions until we reached the huge Reservoir at Quarzazate.

We drove along a dirt track to get to the reservoir, but we were very disappointed to find that the water level was extremely low, in fact the water itself was about a mile away from us. The windy conditions didn't help, all we saw was a couple of Common Shelduck, White Wagtails and a few genuine looking Rock Doves. On the scree slopes we found our first Desert Wheatear and a male Northern Wheatear.

A further 90km was covered before we arrived at our hotel on the outskirts of Boumalne Dades, we sat to eat at 7:30pm it was another delicious tajine. Our bird log was short but full of quality sightings, despite the windy conditions we managed to see some nice species today.

DAY 3 – THURSDAY 22ND MARCH 2018

BOUMALNE DADES - TAGDILT TRACK – DADES GORGE

WEATHER: wall to wall sunshine all day, a light but cold breeze, top temp 20C

We had a smashing day, the weather was almost perfect, bright sunshine, but with a chilling breeze which made it feel cold for most of the day.

An early breakfast of crêpes, eggs, bread, cheese, jam, olives, cake and lovely coffee saw us out of the hotel before 7:30am, there was quite a chill in the air to start with. Around the hotel we saw House Bunting, Blue Rock Thrush and a pair of Black Wheatears.

We then set out on foot and walked across the 'Regs' (stony plains) just outside the hotel, soon we were watching wheatears; both Northern and the Black-eared varieties to start with then we added Thekla Lark, White-crowned Wheatear and Desert Wheatear.



Our hotel at Boumalne Dades

We made our way to a small area that is obviously used as a 'rubble-tipping' site, the mounds of rubbish attracted a few birds. We found a single Greater Short-toed Lark and a few more Thekla Larks but not much else, it was disappointing compared to previous years.

We then jumped onto the bus and travelled the short distance to the Tagdilt track where we spent the next 2-3 hours visiting another rubbish tip, how nice. We found lots more birds there including Red-rumped Wheatears, White Wagtail, Crested Lark, Trumpeter Finch, Temminck's Horned Lark, a Great Grey Shrike and the star bird, the Thick-billed Lark. We had great views of all the above.

A few raptors appeared, first we found a Long-legged Buzzard perched on a mound of rubble then several Black Kites took to the air. After an hour or so we climbed back onto the bus and headed further along the Tagdilt Track away from the rubbish tip.

Birds were few and far between it always amazes me that more species can be seen near human rubbish dumps than out in the field. We then found a few goodies starting with a pair of Desert Larks that showed well. Then a couple of Cream-coloured Coursers were seen in flight and not long afterwards we saw several on the ground having great scope views of them.



The barren landscape of the Tagdilt Track

A pair of Hoopoe Larks delighted the group a 'most wanted' species now in the bag. We continued for several kilometres stopping occasionally to watch species already listed, a flock of some 20+ Greater Short-toed Larks were nice to see, and a displaying Hoopoe Lark thrilled the group.

Eventually we turned off the track and back onto a metalled road, driving another 5km to a small farm holding where a kind of mini-oasis occurs. A small area of cultivated land is surrounded by bushes and trees and usually holds a few migrants. Today it was a little quiet with fewer warblers about, but we listed some nice migrant species.

Turtle Dove was an early find followed by Willow Warbler, Bonelli's Warbler and Common Redstart. We went on to find Little Ringed Plover, Tree Pipit, Meadow Pipit, Eurasian Hoopoe, Woodchat Shrike and both Common Swift and House Martin.

Other birds of note included; Moussier's Redstart, Trumpeter Finch, Thekla and Crested Larks and our first Laughing Dove.

From the 'oasis' we drove back into Boumalne Dades to buy our picnic supplies and then we drove into the Dades Gorge. We hadn't travelled far when a large raptor appeared low over the road, we pulled over quickly and jumped out. The bird was an adult Bonelli's Eagle, a superb bird, two Common Kestrels were mobbing it, we had great views of it. At the same time, we noted 3 species of swift, Alpine, Common and Pallid, they were all moving northward up the valley.

At the head of the valley we had great views of the spectacular gorge, but we were there for birding not sight-seeing! A long walk in very blustery conditions eventually produced our target species. We found a sheltered spot and searched the scrub for the Tristram's Warbler which finally showed extremely well, great result. Other species noted during the walk included: Black Wheatear, Barbary Partridge, Crag Martin and Blue Rock Thrush.

After a quick cuppa sitting on the terrace of a restaurant in the sunshine we drove back to the Tagdilt Track to look for more species. Unfortunately, it was blowing a gale and we had to abandon our quest. An early finish found us back at the hotel at 5pm in good time for our 7pm dinner which was a Berber style omelette, delicious.



Tristram's Warbler – taken by Stuart McQueen

DAY 4 – FRIDAY 23RD MARCH 2018

TRANSFER FROM BOUMALNE DADES TO MERZOUGA'S ERG CHEBBI DUNE SYSTEM, WITH SEVERAL BIRDING STOPS ALONG THE WAY

WEATHER: clear sky and sunshine all, a cold breeze kept the temperature down, top temp. 22C

We had a long day on the road ahead of us but even before breakfast we were out birding. We set off at 6am heading back to the stony plains, our first stop was 10 minutes away as we made a second attempt at seeing sandgrouse near the Tagdilt Track.

We dipped again on the sandgrouse, in fact not many species were seen at all, Desert and Red-rumped Wheatears and not much else. We continued along the road back to the 'oasis' where we had quite a few birds yesterday. Today was just as good with plenty of sightings, we added Common Whitethroat to the trip list but watched many other species that were recorded yesterday.

After breakfast we began our journey in a south-easterly direction toward Erfoud via Goulmima, we planned a few stops along the way, in fact only 20 minutes into the journey we stopped at a rock quarry, our first birding destination.

The quarry is a regular site for Pharaoh Eagle Owl and last year we also found Maghreb Wheatear there. We spent a short time searching a rock face, but the owl was not in its usual place, so we widened our search and found an adult Pharaoh Eagle Owl sitting next to a small cave.

We also found Desert Lark, Tawny Pipit, Desert Wheatear, Common Kestrel and a 'Greenland' race of Northern Wheatear, what a colourful bird!

Back in the bus we tried to put some miles behind us, but we stopped three times for birds of prey sightings, we logged Long-legged Buzzard, Marsh Harrier and what was most definitely a male Lesser Kestrel.



Even though we have bright sunshine everyone is wearing several layers of clothing

Eventually we arrived at our second scheduled birding walk, it was a wadi just east of Goulmima where we hoped to see several species. The wadi spread out in front of us, it stretched for many kilometers, consisting of a mosaic of a million clumps of grass, the flat landscape was broken only by dense leafless, thorny bushes dotted here and there, a hot, hostile environment that looked lifeless.

But it wasn't without life we saw plenty, a dozen or so species of birds, a Cape Hare, 3 different butterflies, lizards and lots of small wasps and bees were visiting patches of brightly coloured flowers. Our main target bird was the Streaked Scrub Warbler, a wren-like species with a very long tail that often hopped along the sand visiting the grass clumps looking for insects. We found Grey Shrike, (*Lanius elegans*), also Desert Wheatear, Bar-tailed Lark (our first of the trip), several Spectacled Warblers, Subalpine Warbler but unfortunately, we dipped on the Scrub Warbler. A bonus sighting was that of three Thick-billed Larks, they allowed close approach and gave stunning views.

We had walked about two kilometers before we turned back, it was very hot by now and the cool breeze had dropped so most of us were flagging. Back at the bus we made a short attempt to see

the Scrub Warbler on the other side of the road but failed again, we did find Common Whitethroat, Common Redstart and another Spectacled Warbler.

Next, we drove back into Goulmima we then turned south and headed out of town towards Erfoud. Our next stop was at a small river where for the last four years the construction of new bridge has greatly disturbed the environment, the bridge is now finished! Nevertheless, it is my favourite place where you can find Blue-cheeked Bee-eaters. The river was still in flow, more of a trickle really but several pools were visible from the bridge.

We immediately found a single Black-crowned Night-Heron sitting out on a rock near one of the larger pools. Then a Moroccan Wagtail appeared but not much else was seen until we set off walking along the river bank.



White-crowned Wheatear

A couple of Bonelli's Warblers were feeding in some 'elephant' grass and just after we turned a bend in the river we had views over a large shallow pool. The pool held Little Egret, Purple Heron, several Grey Herons and a couple of Little-ringed Plovers. A Sedge Warbler was found close by and another Bonelli's Warblers gave superb close views as did a pair of White-crowned Wheatears, they appeared as we all stood perfectly still looking over the pools.

Further exploration produced little more, we never got to see the Bee-eaters, this was my first dip of this species at this site! Perhaps we shall see it later in the trip!

We hit the road in earnest now, making our way down through Erfoud and onto the 'new' desert road that is now completely tarmac all the way down to Merzouga. The huge Erg Chebbi sand dunes sat on the horizon ahead of us like a creased, golden blanket, the dunes became more imposing as we drew near, stretching for many kilometers and rising many meters above us. Our Auberge Hotel for the first night is about 15km away from the dunes, it has extensive gardens with plenty of scrub, trees and hedges.

After quickly checking-in there was a little time to go birding so some of the group went for a short walk. Many birds were flitting about in the scrub, we found: Eurasian Hoopoe, Woodchat Shrike, Bar-tailed Lark, Desert Wheatear, White-crowned Wheatear and Subalpine Warbler.

A flock of some 40+ European Bee-eaters dropped into the trees, obviously looking for a roost for the night and one of the last birds seen was a Western Olivaceous Warbler.

Dinner was taken out in the courtyard, it was delicious, everyone was in a good mood, perfect ambiance, it was great to sit outside in a nice warm temperature for dinner.

DAY 5 – SATURDAY 24TH MARCH 2018

AUBERGE DERKAOUA GROUNDS, RISSANI AREA AND TRANSFER TO CAFÉ YASMINA

WEATHER: another glorious day with unbroken sunshine, 27C, light easterly cool wind.

It was chilly at first light when we emerged from our rooms, the morning sunrise was spectacular, vibrant reds and orange it was worth getting up just to see that. We trolled the grounds of the Auberge and soon it was light enough to pick out a few species. The flock of European Bee-eaters was still there making a lot of noise as they contemplated their day ahead, I'm pretty sure that they would leave shortly to continue their northerly migration to Western Europe.



The sunrise this morning

We found the usual Eurasian Hoopoe, Woodchat Shrike, Northern & White-crowned Wheatears, Subalpine and Bonelli's Warbler and luckily for most of the group the Western Olivaceous Warbler was still feeding in the tamarisk trees.

Further exploration produced at least three Common Nightingales, a couple of Common Redstarts and many more Subalpine Warblers.

After a delicious breakfast taken outside in the courtyard we set off for Rissani which entailed a drive across the desert of some 5km before reaching the metalled road. We hadn't gone far when we bumped into a good number of birds; first a group of Cream-coloured Coursers appeared then we found Hoopoe Lark and a small flock of Greater Short-toed Larks. It was around 9am when we arrived at Rissani, a tourist route circumnavigates the town passing through some tiny villages and picturesque countryside, we took that route.

During a series of walks and short hops on the bus we covered about 15km, it was hard going as the sun was hot and the breeze had disappeared. We found lots of Great Grey and Woodchat

Shrikes, House Buntings, Laughing Doves, Wheatears but not many migrant warblers and no Blue-cheeked Bee-eaters (normally this area is alive with them).

The Magreb Lark (formerly Long-billed Crested Lark) was very common and we did see lots of Barn Swallows, House Martins and Common Swifts, at one point a single Long-legged Buzzard circled ahead of us.



Fulvous Babbler – by Stuart McQueen

After a couple of hours of walking we finally bumped into one of our target birds, the Fulvous Babbler, we found a flock or family party of about eight birds, they were extremely obliging and came very close to us, fantastic, a little pressure was off!

Next, we drove into Rissani to pick up lunch before driving just a couple of kilometres out of town to search for Saharan Olivaceous Warbler. A dry river bed (wadi) was our venue with an avenue of mature tamarisk tree on raised banks either side of us. The trees held many warblers, mostly Western Bonelli's and Subalpine Warblers but also Serins.

Again, it took a while, but we found our target bird the Saharan Olivaceous Warbler, nice one. A large group of hirundines held Barn Swallows, Sand Martin, Crag Martin and House Martins and whilst we were watching those we heard the distinctive call of the Blue-cheeked Bee-eater. Before long a single bird flew over us, we saw it for about 20 seconds but we all had good binocular views and one or two of the group got good pictures of it. At last, Blue-cheeked Bee-eater on the list.

Another wadi was our next venue but this one, found just out of town, still had several pools of water sitting there. We were hoping for a few waders, herons and egrets but all we saw was a pair of Ruddy Shelduck and a distant Brown-necked Raven!

Moving on, our next venue was a huge flat plain covered in scattered scrub, it is a place where I have seen sandgrouse during previous visits. Most of the group were up for a long walk in the heat of the afternoon, a nice breeze encouraged us.

About half-an-hour into the walk a group of 9 sandgrouse took to the air, luckily for us they landed about 200 meters away, so we approached carefully and got good scope views of 9 Spotted Sandgrouse, smashing! We also found a pair of Hoopoe Larks, the male was singing and

occasionally performing his flight display. During the walk we also noted Trumpeter Finch, Bar-tailed Desert Lark and many Desert Wheatears.

Before heading to our next hotel, we stopped at the Rissani Rubbish Dump, how nice. Brown-necked Ravens and Black Kites were observed as well as several White Wagtails and with them were a few Yellow Wagtails. We noted *Iberiae* and *flavissimo* races of Yellow Wagtail with one extremely bright male *flavissimo* getting us excited thinking we may have found a Citrine Wagtail! But it wasn't.

We drove to the Erg Chebbi Sand Dunes found at Merzouga and where our next hotel is situated. It was around 5:30pm when we checked-in, most of the group relaxed in their rooms before dinner at 7pm. One or two ventured onto the main terrace where a ringing group were at work, they were wrapping up for the day but showed us a 'Greenland Race' (*leucorhoa*) Northern Wheatear in the hand, that was nice to see. A passing Booted Eagle drifted by over the dunes and a group of 5 Ruddy Shelduck flew past.

DAY 6 – SUNDAY 25TH MARCH 2018

ERG CHEBBI SAND DUNES AND A WADI NEAR MERZOUGA

WEATHER: heavy sand-filled air formed a thick mist all day, giving very poor visibility, some sunshine mid-afternoon. Top temp 30C



The clocks went forward last night so it wasn't light here until 7am, that is when we met on the terrace. The ringing group were just getting started but it was windy, very misty and not much hope of catching too many birds in the nets.

A few species were caught, we watched the group process: Woodchat Shrike, Subalpine Warbler, Common Nightingale, Bonelli's Warbler and a House Sparrow.

A singing Hoopoe Lark – by Stuart McQueen

Breakfast was taken at 8am and at 9am we set off for a 4x4 ride across the dunes to a Berber village where we hoped to see Desert Sparrow. We stopped to watch several species along the way, such as; Bar-tailed Lark, Hoopoe Lark, Brown-necked Raven and Trumpeter Finch.

We also stopped to walk in wadi looking for Desert Warbler, after about 1km we found one, the bird showed extremely well but very briefly. Most of the group saw it but some did not, and some had only very poor views of it. After some walking we could not find another one in that particular wadi.

Carrying on with our quest for sparrows we drove further into the dunes. It took a while with at least two stops at Berber dwellings before we found, first, a female Desert Sparrow and then a beautiful male. A great result, job done we set off back to the hotel.

It was still windy when we got back and the 'ringers' were not catching anything, so we set off on foot to explore the tamarisk scrub. In an hour we found many birds but only a Common Chiffchaff and a very bright Yellow Wagtail (*Iberiae*) were new for the day list.

We had lunch in the restaurant before we set off for another soiree into the desert. Only half the group had seen the Desert Warbler this morning, so we set off to find another one. I knew of a good place to find them, so we headed there.

After 30 minutes driving on un-made tracks a large wadi spread out in front of us with an expanse of scrub growing in it, this is where we got off the bus and set out on foot. We were soon watching several species, Bar-tailed Larks, Desert Wheatear, Woodchat Shrike and we inadvertently put up a Hoopoe Lark that was sitting on a nest of eggs, in fact I nearly trod on the bird! We quickly vacated the area.

After about 15 minutes a beautiful male Desert Warbler came into view, it was singing on the top of a bush, smashing, everyone got to see it. We then jumped back onto the bus and returned to the hotel.



The Desert Warbler showed extremely well

Another walk around the grounds around 4pm produced a fly-over Barbary Falcon, (this bird had been seen on 3 occasions during the day by other birders) Eurasian Hoopoe, Common Nightingale and the usual flurry of Subalpine and Western Bonelli's Warblers. We called it a day at 5pm and got ready for dinner. Tomorrow we leave the desert area and head for the coast and the Sous Valley.

DAY 7 – MONDAY 26TH MARCH 2018

TRANSFER FROM ERG CHEBBI DUNES AT MERZOUGA, TO TALIOUINE

WEATHER: All day sunshine, top temp 29C.

It was still dark at 7am this morning so we went straight into breakfast. We had the luggage loaded up and were all on board the bus by 8am. We had to travel some 500km today, so we hadn't planned any scheduled birding stops this morning.

We saw many species from the bus as we crossed the desert and up through Rissani. We saw mainly White-crowned Wheatears and Woodchat Shrikes but also Bar-tailed and Desert Larks, Laughing Dove, Long-legged Buzzard, Common Kestrel and various hirundines. Our first toilet stops produced Subalpine Warbler and Crested Lark. A perched Booted Eagle was nice to see and close to the road too, but raptor sightings were very few and far between.



Subsequent, short birding episodes, produced more Woodchat Shrikes, Common Cuckoo, Eurasian Hoopoe but generally birds were keeping their heads down in very dry conditions. In the Draa Valley we stopped to scan the river Draa and noted Pied Avocet, Green Sandpiper, Grey Heron and group of European Bee-eaters.

We stopped in Agnz to pick up picnic supplies and 10 minutes later we pulled over to eat it. Lunch-break birds included a Laughing Dove, several Bonelli's Warblers, Common Redstart, Pallid Swift, more White-crowned Wheatears and not much else.

It was 29C at 2pm when we finished our lunch break but with a cooling breeze. We travelled for three more hours and arrived at our hotel in Taliouine at 5pm.



We had covered 500km passing through some stunning landscapes and some lifeless moonscapes, generally the countryside and surroundings were very beautiful but very dry this year.

Most of us went for a walk at 5:30pm into some almond orchards and small cultivated areas found behind the hotel. Many birds were singing in the late afternoon sunshine, we heard Common Nightingale, Greenfinch, Blackbird, African Chaffinch and Laughing Dove, in addition we sighted Sardinian Warbler, Eurasian Hoopoe, Woodchat Shrike, Thekla Lark, Blackcap, Bonelli's Warbler, Moussier's Redstart, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Red-rumped Swallow and Common Kestrel.

Dinner was a lovely tajine, my favourite, lamb with prunes, veg and onions, we were all tired and in bed by 9pm.

DAY 8 – TUESDAY 27TH MARCH 2018

TRANSFER FROM TALIOUINE TO AGADIR WITH STOPS AT AOULOZ GORGE – SOUS VALLEY – OUED SOUS

WEATHER: Hazy sunshine early morning, clear sky from 10am top temp 28C

We had a great day today, it was our best day as far as bird numbers are concerned, we saw over 90 species and took our trip total to 162. At 7:00am we met for breakfast and before 8am we loaded onto the bus and set off on the road. Species seen around the hotel included; Thekla Lark, Blue Rock Thrush, African Chaffinch, Serin, many Common Bulbuls and lots of common species. Generally migrant species we again low in numbers and a bit disappointing.



Thekla Lark

The last leg of our journey to the coast was ahead of us, we still had 200km to go with a couple of scheduled birding stops along the way. Our first stop was in the scenic gorge just passed Aoulouz, the river Sous flows through the gorge and usually holds a good number of species.

From the road bridge we soon found Glossy Ibis (3), Grey Heron, Little Egret, Common Moorhen, Little Grebe, Ruddy Shelduck and lots of Common Bulbuls. A star find was that of Little Bittern, a male dashed about from reed-bed to reed-bed and was often heard calling (barking).

Our walk into the gorge was very pleasant, beautiful sunshine, a cool breeze with a temperature around 23C, just smashing! A pair of Common Kestrels entertained us with their impressive

courtship display, we noted Green and Common Sandpiper, Sedge Warbler, Grey Wagtails and plenty of warblers were flitting about in the scrub.

Further into the walk we failed to find the usual Peregrine Falcon, but we did see a White Stork and a flyover Booted Eagle. We heard and found Common Nightingale, but we failed to find the usual Night Heron roost. But a nice surprise was the finding of a Black-crowned Tchagra, this bird showed well for a short while before flying up high into a bush on the top of the cliff face, we all had good views but many of the group would have liked more!

Finally, as we came back to the road bridge we spent more time looking for 'crakes' by scanning the reed-beds and water margins. Eventually we found two Little Crakes, one of each sex. Everyone was happy with their views of this species.



Little Crake

After that excitement we continued our journey, the landscape changed as we moved into the Sous Valley, rolling hills were covered by a 'forest' of Argan Trees, all in fruit. But after a while we passed into flat scrubland again and this is where we took our second walk.

Once we got out of the bus we searched for our target bird, the Black-winged Kite, but we couldn't find one. Other species seen during our walk were Eurasian Hoopoe, Greenfinch, Woodchat and Great Grey Shrikes, Black-eared Wheatear and a flock of some 30+ Short-toed Larks.

Moving on we made good progress, we made one quick impromptu stop to look at a pair of Black-winged Kites that circled over a roadside field, they soon rose to a great height before drifting off, a great sighting and we were pleased to have that one in the bag. We reached Agadir by 3:30pm, we logged Pallid Swifts and a couple of Common Kestrels over Touradant and lots of Maghreb Magpies near Agadir.

After checking into our hotel, unpacking and a quick change we were ready for a good walk, the estuary of Oued Sous was the venue this time. We were dropped off about 2km from the river-mouth, we intended to walk the 2km and back in the 2 ½ hours we had at our disposal.



Slender-billed Gull

We made slow progress because there were so many species to see! We searched some scrubland for Stone Curlew without success, but we did find Great-spotted Cuckoo, lots of Magreb Magpies and a few Sardinian Warblers. Later we did see a fly-over Stone Curlew, but we couldn't relocate it on the ground.

As we made our way down river we saw Greater Flamingo, Eurasian Spoonbill, Grey Heron, Little Egret, a flock of White Storks, Common Redshank, Common Greenshank, Black-headed, Mediterranean and Yellow-legged Gulls, they were loafing on a sand-bar with groups of Gull-billed and Sandwich Terns. A few meters further on we had good close views of Mediterranean Gulls near a sewage outflow. Then we found a Little Gull on the opposite bank, a smashing find and to top that a Slender-billed Gull sat in the same area.

Further along on the opposite river bank we watched a host of waders of all shapes and sizes feeding on the muddy shore, from the biggest, Eurasian Curlew, to the smallest, Little Stint, most families were represented. *Limosa*, *Pluvialis*, *Charadrius*, *Calidris* & *Tringa*. Also Pied Avocet, Black-winged Stilt, Oystercatcher and both Black & Bar-tailed Godwits.



Osprey

Nearer to the shoreline the river spread over a large area of sand, fewer birds were feeding there but we had great views of Sanderling, Curlew Sandpiper, Dunlin, Kentish & Grey Plovers and we found a Little Gull and a single Red Knot.

We never had time to walk the entire length of the estuary, so we turned back about half-way along, in the heathland on the northern bank we found Zitting Cisticola, Sardinian Warbler, Magreb Magpie, a fly-over Marsh Harrier and some Linnets.

A tired group arrived back at the hotel, dinner was taken at 8pm we all retired to bed at 9. Tomorrow will be an early start as we are visiting Sous Massa National Park.

DAY 9 – WEDNESDAY 28TH MARCH 2018

SOUSS MASSA NATIONAL PARK – OUED SOUS

WEATHER: Sunshine all day, nice cooling breeze, top temp. 26C.

We ate our continental breakfast at 7am and it was just getting light as we left the hotel at 7:45 am. We drove south from Agadir for an hour before arriving at Souss Massa. One stop was made to look for a colony of Little Swifts, however the disused garage that the birds nest in had been demolished! So, there were no swifts to be seen.

Souss Massa national park surrounds the river Massa and the main track through the park lies on the north bank and runs all the way down to the beach. It is one of my favourite walks, the weather is always glorious, today was no exception, a shroud of very high cloud weakened the sunlight and made perfect birding conditions!



view of the River Massa at the beach

The approach track to the park is also good for birding, we got off the bus and walked about 1km through small farmland plots it was like walking alongside large allotments, the track undulates and on the peaks we had splendid views of the river, the wide flat-bottomed valley and the distant hills about 5km away.

We listed a good number of species but generally the migrant numbers were down, a few Chiffchaffs, Subalpine and Bonelli's Warblers were seen along with Common Redstart and our only Garden Warbler of the trip. It was the resident species that stole the show, with House

Bunting, Moussier's Redstart, Zitting Cisticola, Laughing Dove, Sardinian Warbler, Serin, Common Bulbul and a Cetti's Warbler.

We also had some good sightings on and near the river, with a group of Night Herons, several Purple Herons, Little Grebes, Grey Heron, Little Egret. Also, Greenshank, Common Sandpiper and Redshank.



Once we arrived at the reserve entrance the track is much higher giving great views over the river, we walked due west with the sun behind us, the light was great. We added Turtle Dove, Eurasian Linnet, Black-eared Wheatear and our main target bird, the Black-crowned Tchagra, this bird did not show for long but we all saw it.

Not too many birds were on the river, but we enjoyed Eurasian Spoonbill, Great & White-breasted Cormorant, Osprey, a fly over flock of Glossy Ibis and both Caspian and Gull-billed Terns quartered the river. We walked most of the track and stopped at a viewing area where we could scope open muddy areas that were exposed during this low-tide period. A number of wader species were counted there: Ringed Plover, Grey Plover, Greenshank and Redshank. Another great find was that of a Water Rail on the opposite bank on the edge of a reed-bed.

We saw a few more species on the river and shoreline but the main sighting was of another Black-crowned Tchagra, this one showed much better.

Moving on we scoped the beach area where a gull roost held many birds. We picked out some Sanderling, a Grey Plover and a host of gulls and terns were loafing on a sand-bar in the roost. We looked for our first Audouin's Gull without success, but we did see both Caspian and Sandwich Terns standing near the gulls.

A few butterflies were on the wing, we listed: Painted Lady, Greenish Black-Tip, Lang's Short-tailed Blue and both Large and Small Whites.



Moroccan Rock Lizard

We then walked up to a village and into a hotel restaurant where we had lunch out on the terrace watching Spotless Starlings and Common Kestrels, we also listed Stone Curlew on the way up.

From there we drove back into the village and down to the river, parking the bus by a bridge we got out for a walk. From the bridge we saw; Grey Heron, Night Heron, Common Moorhen, Reed Warbler, Yellow Wagtail, Common Sandpiper and White Wagtail.

We also saw a Laughing Dove perched in a nearby tree and whilst watching the dove one of the group picked out a Wryneck. Further scrutiny of the same tree produced a few more brief sightings of the Wryneck so that all group got to see it. We also found a singing Olivaceous Warbler, lots of Serins, Linnets, House Sparrows, Crested Larks and a few Cattle Egrets. Another group of 9 Glossy Ibis flew over and we located two Turtle Doves before we left the area. On the way out of the village of Massa we found a Little Owl on a dry-stone wall, the bird showed really well and posed for our cameras.



Turtle Dove

Driving back to Agadir we arrived around 3:30pm and after a short break at the hotel we left to visit Oued Sous for a second visit. This time we walked down river to the sea and to a fresh water pool hidden in the heathland. The pool held lots of birds with dozens of Pied Avocets, Greater Flamingos, Eurasian Spoonbills, both Ruddy and Common Shelduck, Northern Shoveler, Eurasian Teal and a great find was of five Marbled Ducks.

Waders present included, Redshank, Ruff, Greenshank, Black-winged Stilts, Common and Green Sandpipers and a Whimbrel.

The estuary itself held all the same birds as yesterday except that today we had much better views of Slender-billed Gulls, Little Gull, Osprey, Marsh Harrier and dozens of other wader species. It really is a wonderful place to visit, if you like wader watching this is the place for you.



Maghreb Magpie - now given species status - *Pica mauritanica*

At 7pm we left and returned to the hotel, dinner was at 8pm, a delicious fish dish. During the courses we went through the bird log, we had added 8 new species to our list today, which now stands at, 181.

Tomorrow we travel north along the coast to Essaouira for our last night!

DAY 10 – THURSDAY 29TH MARCH 2018

TRANSFER FROM AGADIR TO ESSAOUIRA WITH STOPS AT – CAPE RHIR – TAMRI – TAMANDAR – OUED KSOB

WEATHER: All day sunshine, very little cooling breeze, top temp 31C.

Another day of glorious weather, but without the cooling breeze it got much warmer and a little humid. We left the hotel before 8am and over the next hour we drove north from Agadir along the coast road making one stop at a sandy bay to look at a large flock of roosting gulls, we saw our first Audouin's Gull with the common gull species and a dozen Sandwich Terns.

At Cape Rhir we looked out over a calm blue sea, with quite high surfing waves, during the walk down we had excellent views of a Stone Curlew, the cameras worked in over-drive for a while.

Just off-shore dozens of Northern Gannets were passing, heading northward, we also had two or three sightings of Common Scoter. A nice flock of Pied Avocets also went north as did Grey

Hérons, Little Egrets and small numbers of both Gull-billed and Sandwich Terns. We found two Whimbrels on the rocks with Little Egret, Sanderling and a couple of Redshanks.

From the Cape we drove a little further north to Tamri, we parked in the bay where a large lagoon lies adjacent to a massive reed-bed. We had high expectations of seeing several new species, but, it was somewhat disappointing. We did find a flock of Spanish Sparrows, a couple of Eurasian Coots (both new for the list), also Marsh Harriers, Grey Heron and a flock of some 14 Purple Herons sat in the reeds.



Plain Martin – taken by Stuart McQueen

Loafing on the far shore of the lagoon were dozens of gulls including a good number of Audouin's Gulls, a few waders fed on the shoreline these included: Kentish, Little Ringed and Greater Ringed Plovers, Common Sandpiper and Redshank.

Within minutes of arriving our main target bird appeared; the Bald Ibis, this critically endangered species is now doing well in Morocco and in reintroduced colonies throughout Europe. We saw two birds at first, they drifted across the distant hills and landed on a wall, then 26 other birds circled around and joined them.

Before long the Ibis flew up and circled on the thermals and they were joined by the 14 Purple Herons, it was quite a sight, they circled right above us.

Other species seen in the bay were Moroccan Wagtail, Zitting Cisticola, Sedge Warbler, Sardinian Warbler Ruddy Shelduck, Little Grebe and not much else. We searched the bushes and scrub area, but they were devoid of any migrant species.

Back on the bus we drove into the town of Tamri to buy lunch and then we continued up to the hillside where the Ibis favoured. A single bird remained and even that one soon flew off. We could scope back down into the bay from where we parked, another 9 Bald Ibis were loafing on the beach area near the gulls. An Osprey kept flying around putting up all the gulls and generally causing panic and chaos.

Our next stop was in the Argan Forest just north of Tamandar, this area seemed to be much greener than anywhere else we had visited, more rain had obviously fallen there than further south. This was confirmed when we stopped because large pools of water were still present in the low-lying fields.

We scoped a few species around the water, Grey Heron, Redshank, Little Ringed Plovers but not much else. Our first Corn Buntings were found too, how nice!

A subsequent search of the Argan trees produced very little, what a difference from last year when these trees held many migrant species. We found a few Woodchat Shrikes, lots of Crested and Thekla Larks, more Corn Buntings but not much more.

Across the main road the vegetation was a little thicker, with wild barely growing below the Argan trees, we never fared much better there, even more Corn Buntings and a brief glimpse of a Common Nightingale was all we got.

From the Argan forest we completed the last leg of the journey to Essaouira where we made our final birding stop of the day. Ahmed dropped us off by the side of a bridge below which the Oued Ksob flows out to the bay, the current water level was low creating a series of pools. Our intention was to walk a couple of kilometers downstream towards the beach along the stony riverbed.

We spent nearly two, most enjoyable hours, watching many species feeding in the pools or coming down to drink, it was amazing to think that such a wildlife paradise existed just a few hundred meters from the busy town centre of Essaouira.



Dunlin on the river Ksob – taken by Stuart McQueen

Our main target species was the Brown-throated Martin (aka Plain Martin) which we found almost immediately, in fact there were dozens of them! We also searched for warblers in the scrub finding very few, Chiffchaff, Willow and Sardinian Warblers.

Brightly coloured Greenfinches, Goldfinches, Serins and African Chaffinches came down to drink from the pools, where Common and Green Sandpipers were abundant. Common Greenshanks, Redshanks, Little-ringed and Greater Ringed Plovers and Dunlin made up the other waders seen, whilst Little & Cattle Egrets fed in or near the water, Moroccan & White Wagtails flitted about around the pools. On the boulders and in the scrub, we listed Black-eared Wheatear, Woodchat Shrike and Common Bulbuls. A single Song Thrush was the first for our list and a huge flock of Yellow-legged Gulls was quite spectacular to see as they bathed in the river.

A small number of Eurasian Spoonbills fed in the river further down and we saw a single Pied Avocet and a few Black-winged Stilts.

We finally arrived at a second bridge where our bus was waiting for us. We used the bridge as a viewing platform to scan the river as it flowed into the sea, a huge gull roost could be seen on the beach. But only Yellow-legged and Lesser Black-backed Gulls could be seen.

It was now 6pm we jumped on board the bus and we drove into town. We parked just outside the walled enclosure of the old town and walked to our hotel. The old town consisted of tightly packed buildings, narrow streets full of venders and a hoard of people. The sights, sounds, smells and the general hustle & bustle of the streets exuded a vibrant, thriving atmosphere - such a contrast to our stroll along the river.

Our hotel was the best yet, a superb traditional Moroccan building full of atmosphere and a lovely ambiance. Dinner was taken at 7pm, our last dinner, it was lovely. Everyone was in a jovial mood and the group made a presentation to Ahmed and Driss our drivers.

Tomorrow we have most of the day to travel to Marrakech so there will be birding opportunities along the way. Our total now stands at

DAY 11 – FRIDAY 30TH MARCH 2018

TRANSFER FROM ESSAOUIRA TO MARRAKECH AIRPORT A FEW STOPS TO LOOK FOR LARKS

WEATHER: Hazy sunshine to start, then cloudless sun all day, no breeze. Temp 28C

This was our bonus birding day because there are now also evening flights from Marrakech to London, so we had this whole extra day to make our way back to the airport.

We arranged to meet for breakfast at 7am and at 8am our official walk started, we set off to the fishing port area, we worked our way through the narrow streets and alley-ways of Essaouira passing the empty, silent Souk a stark contrast to the vibrant, noisy chaos of last night.



We noted many House Buntings feeding in the streets and lots of Common and Pallid Swifts dashed between the buildings. At the docks it looked like the full fishing fleet was in port, it was an amazing sight to so many empty boats together, with bright blue livery they looked somehow, sinister, even ghostly in the morning mist. As usual the port area was crowded with Gulls, hundreds of them, both Yellow-legged and Lesser Black-backed. On the rocky shoreline we found Grey Plover and our first Ruddy Turnstones.

After packing our suitcases onto the bus, we set off for the journey to Marrakech. We were about an hour along the road when we stopped for our first walk, Calandra, Sky and Lesser Short-toed Larks were targets as well as Spanish Sparrow.

After a short walk we logged Great Grey Shrike (*algeriensis*), Black-eared Wheatear, Crested Lark, Spectacled Warbler and a very distant Cream Coloured Courser, we walked further and searched for the Courser but found Stone Curlew, several Calandra Larks, Skylarks and a small flock of Greater Short-toed Larks.

We picked up lunch supplies in one of the towns that we passed through and ate whilst we travelled. It was around 3pm when we reached the airport. But we were only dropping off Cindy and Joe who were taking an earlier flight than the rest of the group. We still had 4 hours to kill so we decided to visit the large man-made reservoir just south west of Marrakech near a town called Lalla Takerkoust some 40 minutes from the airport.



The water level of the reservoir was extremely low and as a result no birds were seen on the water at all! However, a walk in the surrounding cultivated areas produced some very nice sightings. Craig found his and the groups second Wryneck of the trip and soon afterwards we were watching Hawfinch, Common Nightingale, Eurasian Hoopoe, European Bee-eater, Night Heron, Serins, Red-rumped Swallows, Common Redstart, several Common Cuckoos (all calling) it was like a May spring morning in the UK with all the bird song.

Soon it was time to go, Ahmed and Driss got us back to the airport at 5:45 in good time for our 21:15 flight. They had both done an incredible job driving us all over Central Morocco, we said our goodbye and went to check-in.

Our trip total finished on 186, not including birds only heard or the subspecies; Moroccan Wagtail & African Chaffinch. We missed a few species during this wonderful trip, but it wouldn't be fun if everything turned up on cue.

If you like the sound of this tour, then contact me and book your place for the next one

SPECIES SEEN BETWEEN 20TH – 30TH MARCH 2017/18

ANSERIFORMES: Anatidae		2017	2018
Ruddy Shelduck	<i>Tadorna ferruginea</i>	√	√
Common Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>		√
Gadwall	<i>Anas strepera</i>	√	√
Eurasian Wigeon	<i>Anas penelope</i>	√	√
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	√	√
Northern Shoveler	<i>Anas clypeata</i>	√	√
Eurasian Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>	√	√
Marbled Teal	<i>Marmaronetta angustirostris</i>	√	√
Common Scoter	<i>Melanitta nigra</i>	√	√
GALLIFORMES: Phasianidae			
Barbary Partridge	<i>Alectoris barbara</i>	√	√
PODICIPEDIFORMES: Podicipedidae			
Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	√	√
PHOENICOPTERIFORMES: Phoenicopteridae			
Greater Flamingo	<i>Phoenicopterus roseus</i>	√	√
PROCELLARIIFORMES: Procellariidae			
Manx Shearwater	<i>Puffinus puffinus</i>	√	
CICONIIFORMES: Ciconiidae			
White Stork	<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>	√	√
PELECANIFORMES: Threskiornithidae			
Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>	√	√
Northern Bald Ibis	<i>Geronticus eremita</i>	√	√
Eurasian Spoonbill	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>	√	√
PELECANIFORMES: Ardeidae			
Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	√	√
Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>	√	√
Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	√	√
Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>	√	√
Squacco Heron	<i>Ardeola ralloides</i>	√	√
Black-crowned Night Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>		√
SULIFORMES: Sulidae			
Northern Gannet	<i>Morus bassanus</i>	√	√
SULIFORMES: Phalacrocoracidae			
Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	√	√
White-Breasted Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax maroccanus</i>	√	√
ACCIPITRIFORMES: Pandionidae			
Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	√	√
ACCIPITRIFORMES: Accipitridae			
Black-winged Kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>	√	√
Short-toed Snake Eagle	<i>Circaetus gallicus</i>	√	
Booted Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus pennatus</i>	√	√
Bonelli's Eagle	<i>Aquila fasciata</i>		√
Eurasian Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipitor nisus</i>	√	√
Western Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	√	√
Montagu's Harrier	<i>Circus pygargus</i>	√	√
Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>	√	√
Long-legged Buzzard	<i>Buteo rufinus</i>	√	√
GRUIFORMES: Rallidae			
Little Crane	<i>Porzana parva</i>	√	√
Spotted Crane	<i>Porzana porzana</i>	√	

	Water Rail	<i>Rallus aquaticus</i>		√
	Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	√	√
	Eurasian Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>	√	√
	CHARADRIIFORMES: Burhinidae			
	Eurasian Stone-curlew	<i>Burhinus oedinemus</i>	√	√
	CHARADRIIFORMES: Haematopodidae			
	Eurasian Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	√	√
	CHARADRIIFORMES: Recurvirostridae			
	Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>	√	√
	Pied Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>	√	√
	CHARADRIIFORMES: Charadriidae			
	Grey Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>	√	√
	Common Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	√	√
	Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>	√	√
	Kentish Plover	<i>Charadrius alexandrinus</i>	√	√
	CHARADRIIFORMES: Scolopacidae			
	Common Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	√	
	Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa</i>	√	√
	Bar-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>	√	√
	Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>	√	√
	Eurasian Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>	√	√
	Spotted Redshank	<i>Tringa erythropus</i>	√	
	Common Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>	√	√
	Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>	√	√
	Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>	√	√
	Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	√	√
	Ruddy Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>	√	√
	Red Knot	<i>Calidris canutus</i>	√	√
	Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>	√	√
	Little Stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>	√	√
	Curlew Sandpiper	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>	√	√
	Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>	√	√
	Ruff	<i>Philomachus pugnax</i>	√	√
	CHARADRIIFORMES: Glareolidae			
	Cream-coloured Courser	<i>Cursorius cursor</i>	√	√
	Collared Pratincole	<i>Glareola pratincola</i>	√	
	CHARADRIIFORMES: Laridae			
	Slender-billed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus genei</i>	√	√
	Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	√	√
	Little Gull	<i>Hydrocoloeus minutus</i>	√	√
	Audouin's Gull	<i>Ichthyaetus audouinii</i>	√	√
	Mediterranean Gull	<i>Ichthyaetus melanocephalus</i>	√	√
	Yellow-legged Gull	<i>Larus cachinnans</i>	√	√
	Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>	√	√
	Gull-billed Tern	<i>Gelochelidon nilotica</i>	√	√
	Caspian Tern	<i>Hydroprogne caspia</i>	√	√
	Sandwich Tern	<i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>	√	√
	CHARADRIIFORMES: Stercorariidae			
	Great Skua	<i>Stercorarius skua</i>	√	
	PTEROCLIFORMES: Pteroclididae			
	Spotted Sandgrouse	<i>Pterocles senegallus</i>	√	√
	Crowned Sandgrouse	<i>Pterocles coronatus</i>	√	
	COLUMBIFORMES: Columbidae			
	Rock Dove	<i>Columba livia</i>	√	√

	Common Woodpigeon	<i>Columba palumbus excelsa</i>	√	√
	Turtle Dove	<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>	√	√
	Eurasian Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	√	√
	Laughing Dove	<i>S. senegalensis phoenicophila</i>	√	√
	CUCULIFORMES: Cuculidae			
	Great Spotted Cuckoo	<i>Clamator glandarius</i>	√	√
	Common Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>	√	√
	STRIGIFORMES: Strigidae			
	Pharaoh Eagle-owl	<i>Bubo ascalaphus</i>	√	√
	Tawny (Maghreb) Owl	<i>Strix aluco mauritanica</i>	H	
	Little Owl	<i>Athene noctua saharae</i>	√	√
	CAPRIMULGIFORMES: Apodidae			
	Alpine Swift	<i>Apus melba</i>		√
	Common Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>	√	√
	Pallid Swift	<i>Apus pallidus</i>	√	√
	Little Swift	<i>Apus affinus galilejensis</i>	√	√
	CORACIIFORMES: Meropidae			
	Blue-cheeked Bee-eater	<i>Merops persicus</i>	√	√
	European Bee-eater	<i>Merops apiaster</i>	√	√
	BUCEROTIFORMES: Upupidae			
	Eurasian Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>	√	√
	PICIFORMES: Picidae			
	Levaillant's Woodpecker	<i>Picus vaillantii</i>	√	√
	Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>		√
	Wryneck	<i>Jynx torquilla</i>		√
	FALCONIFORMES: Falconidae			
	Lesser Kestrel	<i>Falco naumanni</i>	√	√
	Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	√	√
	Lanner Falcon	<i>Falco biarmicus erlangeri</i>	√	
	Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus minor</i>	√	
	Barbary Falcon	<i>Falco pelegrinoides</i>	√	√
	PASSERIFORMES: Malaconotidae			
	Black-crowned Tchagra	<i>Tchagra senegalus cucullatus</i>	√	√
	PASSERIFORMES: Laniidae			
	Great Grey Shrike	<i>Lanius elegans</i>	√	√
	Great Grey Shrike	<i>Lanius algeriensis</i>	ssp	ssp
	Woodchat Shrike	<i>Senator rutilans</i>	√	√
	PASSERIFORMES: Corvidae			
	Maghreb Magpie	<i>Pica mauritanica</i>	√	√
	Red-billed Chough	<i>Pyrrhocorax p. barbarus</i>	√	√
	Alpine Chough	<i>Pyrrhocorax graculus</i>	√	√
	Brown-necked Raven	<i>Corvus ruficollis</i>	√	√
	Northern Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>	√	√
	PASSERIFORMES: Paridae			
	Coal Tit	<i>Parus ater atlas</i>	√	√
	(Ultramarinus) Af. Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes teneriffae ultramarinus</i>	√	√
	Great Tit	<i>Parus major excelsus</i>	√	√
	PASSERIFORMES: Alaudidae			
	Greater Hoopoe Lark	<i>Alaemon alaudipes</i>	√	√
	Thick-billed Lark	<i>Rhamphocoris clotbey</i>	√	√
	Desert Lark	<i>Ammonanes deserti payni</i>	√	√
	Bar-tailed Lark	<i>Ammomanes cincturus arenicolor</i>	√	√
	Calandra Lark	<i>Melanocorypha calandra</i>		√
	Eurasian Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	√	√

	Thekla Lark	<i>Galerida theklae ruficolor</i>	√	√
	Crested Lark	<i>Galerida cristata riggenbachi</i>	√	√
	Maghreb Lark	<i>Galerida macrorhyncha randonii</i>	√	
	Horned Lark	<i>Eremophila alpestris atlas</i>	√	√
	Temminck's Lark	<i>Eremophila bilopha</i>	√	√
	Greater Short-toed Lark	<i>Calandrella b. brachydactyla</i>	√	√
PASSERIFORMES: Pycnonotidae				
	Common Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus barbatus</i>	√	√
PASSERIFORMES: Hirundinidae				
	Brown-throated Martin	<i>Riparia paludicola mauritanica</i>	√	√
	Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>	√	√
	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	√	√
	Eurasian Crag Martin	<i>Pryonoprogne rupestris</i>	√	√
	Common House Martin	<i>Delichon urbica</i>	√	√
	Red-rumped Swallow	<i>Hirundo daurica rufola</i>	√	√
PASSERIFORMES: Cettiidae				
	Cetti's Warbler	<i>Cettia cetti</i>	√	√
PASSERIFORMES: Scotocercidae				
	Streaked Scrub Warbler	<i>Scotocerca inquieta saharae</i>	√	
PASSERIFORMES: Phylloscopidae				
	Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilis</i>	√	√
	Eurasian Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	√	√
	Iberian Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus ibericus</i>	√	√
	Western Bonelli's Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus bonelli</i>	√	√
PASSERIFORMES: Acrocephalidae				
	Sedge Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>	√	√
	Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>	√	√
	Saharan Olivaceous Warbler	<i>Iduna pallida reiseri</i>	√	√
	Western Olivaceous Warbler	<i>Iduna opaca</i>	√	√
PASSERIFORMES: Cisticolidae				
	Zitting Cisticola	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>	√	√
PASSERIFORMES: Leiothrichidae				
	Fulvous Babbler	<i>Turdoides fulvus</i>	√	√
PASSERIFORMES: Sylviidae				
	Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla mauritanicus</i>	√	√
	African Desert Warbler	<i>Sylvia deserti</i>	√	√
	Common Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>	√	√
	Tristram's Warbler	<i>Sylvia deserticola</i>	√	√
	Spectacled Warbler	<i>Sylvia conspicillata</i>	√	√
	Subalpine Warbler	<i>Sylvia cantillans</i>	√	√
	Sardinian Warbler	<i>Sylvia melanocephala</i>	√	√
PASSERIFORMES: Regulidae				
	Common Firecrest	<i>Regulus ignicapilla balearicus</i>	√	√
PASSERIFORMES: Troglodytidae				
	Eurasian Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	√	√
PASSERIFORMES: Certhiidae				
	Short-toed Treecreeper	<i>Certhia brachydactyla mauritanica</i>	√	
PASSERIFORMES: Sturnidae				
	Spotless Starling	<i>Sturnus unicolor</i>	√	√
PASSERIFORMES: Turdidae				
	Ring Ouzel	<i>Turdus torquatus</i>	H	
	Common Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	√	√
	Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus deichleri</i>	√	√

	Song Thrush	<i>Turdus</i>	√	√
	PASSERIFORMES: Muscicapidae			
	European Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	√	√
	Common Nightingale	<i>Megarhynchos megarhynchos</i>	√	√
	Black Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>	√	√
	Common Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>	√	√
	Moussier's Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus moussieri</i>	√	√
	Blue Rock Thrush	<i>Monticola solitarius</i>	√	√
	Whinchat	<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>	√	
	European Stonechat	<i>Saxicola torquata</i>	√	√
	Northern Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	√	√
	Seeböhm Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe seebohmi</i>	ssp	ssp
	Desert Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe deserti</i>	√	√
	Black-eared Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe hispanica</i>	√	√
	Red-rumped Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oesta</i>	√	√
	Black Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe leucura riggenbachi</i>	√	√
	White-crowned Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe leucopyga</i>	√	√
	PASSERIFORMES: Cinclidae			
	White-throated Dipper	<i>Cinclus cinclus minor</i>	√	√
	PASSERIFORMES: Passeridae			
	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	√	√
	Spanish Sparrow	<i>Passer hispaniolensis</i>	√	√
	Desert Sparrow	<i>Passer simplex</i>	√	√
	Rock Sparrow	<i>Petronia petronia</i>	√	√
	PASSERIFORMES: Motacillidae			
	Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	√	√
	White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	√	√
	Moroccan Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba subpersonata</i>	ssp	ssp
	Western Yellow Wagtail	<i>Flavissima flava iberiae</i>	√	√
	Western Yellow Wagtail	<i>Flavissima flava flava</i>	ssp	ssp
	Tawny Pipit	<i>Anthus campestris</i>	√	√
	Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	√	√
	Tree Pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>	√	√
	PASSERIFORMES: Fringillidae			
	Common Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	√	√
	African Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs africana</i>	ssp	ssp
	Hawfinch	<i>Coccothraustes coccothraustes</i>	√	√
	Af. Crimson-winged Finch	<i>Rhodopechys alienus</i>	√	√
	Trumpeter Finch	<i>Bucanetes githagineus</i>	√	√
	European Greenfinch	<i>Carduelis chloris virens</i>	√	√
	Eurasian Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>	√	√
	European Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis parva</i>	√	√
	European Serin	<i>Serinus serinus</i>	√	√
	PASSERIFORMES: Emberizidae			
	Corn Bunting	<i>Miliaria calandra</i>	√	√
	Rock Bunting	<i>Emberiza cia</i>	√	
	Cirl Bunting	<i>Emberiza cirlus</i>	√	√
	House Bunting	<i>Emberiza striolata</i>	√	√
	Common Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>	√	
	TOTALS		190	183