

Birding Extremadura and Casa Rural El Recuerdo
EARLY SPRING TOUR 21st February – 4th March 2011

Guests: Mervyn and Rose Needham

Guide: Martin Kelsey

Itinerary

21st February 2011: Collection from Madrid Airport and transfer to Casa Rural El Recuerdo

22nd February 2011: Sierra Brava Reservoir (south of Zorita) and the rice-growing area near Madrigalejo (Casas del Hito, Moheda Alta and Palazuelo).

23rd February 2011: Plains near Santa Marta de Magasca

24th – 27th February 2011: Free days spent visiting Trujillo, the Birdfair at Monfragüe National Park and local walks

28th February 2011: Villuercas mountains and Belén Plains

1st March 2011: Monfragüe National Park and plains near Santa Marta de Magasca.

2nd March 2011: Plains near Santa Marta de Magasca, Talaván reservoir and River Almonte

3rd March 2011: Sierra Brava reservoir, Casas del Hito and ricefields near Palazuelo

4th March 2011: Arrocampo, Valdecañas and transfer to Madrid airport.

TRIP REPORT

List of species seen

Good weather generally throughout the holiday helped to bring a very good total of **131 species** of bird seen. These are listed below.

1. **Little Grebe:** Seen on small pools on plains and at Arrocampo.
2. **Great Crested Grebe:** Seen at Sierra Brava reservoir, Talaván and Arrocampo.
3. **Great Cormorant:** Seen most days, with largest number seen in Monfragüe National Park.
4. **Squacco Heron:** 1 near Palazuelo on 22nd February and two three on 3rd March.
5. **Cattle Egret:** Seen most days.
6. **Little Egret:** Seen most days.
7. **Grey Heron:** Seen everyday.
8. **Black Stork:** One at Moheda Alta on 22nd February and also seen in Villuercas mountains and in Monfragüe.
9. **White Stork:** Seen everyday.
10. **Grey Lag Goose:** Skeins on migration near Santa Marta de Magasca on 23rd February and single figures also present on rice fields on 22nd February and 3rd March.
11. **Egyptian Goose:** One at Casas del Hito on 22nd February and two present there on 3rd March.
12. **Common Shelduck:** 2 at Moheda Alta on 22nd February and 12 at Sierra Brava on 3rd March.
13. **Gadwall:** Seen almost every day
14. **Teal:** Seen almost every day.
15. **Mallard:** Seen almost every day.
16. **Shoveler:** Thousands present at Sierra Brava and also seen at Arrocampo.

17. **Tufted Duck:** Six at Moheda Alta on 22nd February.
18. **Common Pochard:** Two on pool near Santa Marta de Magasca on 23rd February.
19. **Black Kite:** One near Santa Marta de Magasca on 23rd February and also seen at Monfragüe on 1st March.
20. **Red Kite:** Seen everyday.
21. **Egyptian Vulture:** Seen almost daily from 28th February, with three or four seen in the Villuercas and in Momfragüe.
22. **Griffon Vulture:** Seen almost everyday. Hundreds seen in Monfragüe National Park.
23. **Black Vulture:** Seen almost everyday, especially in Monfragüe National Park and on the plains.
24. **Short-toed Eagle:** Singles seen almost every day.
25. **Marsh Harrier:** Seen almost every day.
26. **Sparrowhawk:** One almost every day.
27. **Common Buzzard:** Seen every day.
28. **Spanish Imperial Eagle:** One bird seen near Santa Marta de Magasca on 23rd February, an adult and a juvenile in Monfragüe on 1st March and 1 adult at Valdecañas on 4th March.
29. **Bonelli's Eagle:** A pair and a juvenile seen in Monfragüe on 1st March.
30. **Lesser Kestrel:** Seen almost every day
31. **Common Kestrel:** Seen every day.
32. **Merlin:** At total of two brief sightings, on the plains and rice fields.
33. **Peregrine:** One in the Villuercas mountains on 28th February
34. **Red-legged Partridge:** Seen almost every day
35. **Quail:** Two birds seen at Moheda Alta on 22nd February
36. **Water Rail:** One heard at Talaván on 2nd March.
37. **Moorhen:** Seen on several days.
38. **Purple Swamphen:** Seen and heard at Arrocampo on 4th March

39. **Common Coot:** Seen at Talaván, Sierra Brava and Arrocampo.
40. **Common Crane:** Several thousand spread over areas like Moheda Alta and Palazuelo on 22nd February. Huge migration north on 23rd February with numerous skeins over Santa Marta de Magasca. Six birds present at Casas del Hito on 3rd March.
41. **Little Bustard:** Small party near Santa Marta de Magasca on 22nd February and a total of 60 seen in area on 2nd March.
42. **Great Bustard:** Seven seen at Casas del Hito on 22nd February, two on Belén Plains on 28th February, about 30 seen near Santa Marta de Mgasca on 1st March and on 2nd March and five near Sierra Brava on 3rd March.
43. **Avocet:** About 130 near Palazuelo on 22nd February and a smaller party at Casas del Hito on 3rd March.
44. **Stone Curlew:** About 15 at Madrigalejo on 22nd February and a pair near Sierra Brava on 3rd March.
45. **Ringed Plover:** Seen near Palazuelo on 22nd February.
46. **Kentish Plover:** A small party near Palazuelo on 22nd February and one present on 3rd March.
47. **Golden Plover:** Seen almost every day, with numbers diminishing during the stay.
48. **Lapwing:** Seen everyday.
49. **Dunlin:** About 10 at Casas del Hito on 3rd March.
50. **Little Stint:** About 20 near Palazuelo on 22nd February.
51. **Ruff:** two or three at Casas del Hito on 3rd March.
52. **Common Snipe:** Small numbers on rice fields on 3rd March.
53. **Common Curlew:** One near Palazuelo on 22nd February.
54. **Common Redshank:** About four at Casas del Hito on 3rd March.
55. **Greenshank:** Singles seen at Palazuelo on 22nd February, on the plains near Santa Marta de Magasca on 2nd March and at Casas del Hito on 3rd March.
56. **Green Sandpiper:** Seen on several days, especially along canal near Sierra Brava reservoir on 3rd March.

57. **Common Sandpiper:** Singles seen at Sierra Brava reservoir.
58. **Lesser Black-backed Gull:** Seen almost daily.
59. **Black-headed Gull:** Seen almost daily.
60. **Black-bellied Sandgrouse:** About six seen near Santa Marta de Magasca on 23rd February
61. **Pin-tailed Sandgrouse:** Large party of about 70 present near Santa Marta de Magasca on 23rd February.
62. **Feral Pigeon:** Seen daily.
63. **Wood Pigeon:** Seen almost daily.
64. **Collared Dove:** Seen daily.
65. **Eagle Owl:** Seen at Monfragüe on 1st March.
66. **Little Owl:** Two seen on Belén Plains on 28th February and also recorded near Santa Marta de Magasca.
67. **Kingfisher:** Seen almost daily.
68. **Hoopoe:** Seen daily, with double figures seen some days.
69. **Green Woodpecker:** Heard on several mornings at Casa Rural El Recuerdo
70. **Great Spotted Woodpecker:** Seen in woodland in Villuercas mountains and in Monfragüe.
71. **Lesser Spotted Woodpecker:** Seen in Villuercas mountains on 28th February, also during free days close to Casa Rural El Recuerdo.
72. **Calandra Lark:** Seen almost daily.
73. **Crested Lark:** Seen almost daily.
74. **Thekla Lark:** Seen in Monfragüe, near Santa Marta de Magasca and on Belén Plains.
75. **Woodlark:** Heard near Santa Marta de Magasca.
76. **Skylark:** Large wintering flocks on plains and rice fields.
77. **Sand Martin:** Several at Arrocampo on 4th March.

78. **Crag Martin**: Seen almost daily in suitable habitat.
79. **Barn Swallow**: Seen every day.
80. **Red-rumped Swallow**: Seen almost daily from 1st March.
81. **House Martin**: Seen every day.
82. **Meadow Pipit**: Seen daily.
83. **Water Pipit**: Singles seen on rice fields on 22nd February and 3rd March..
84. **Grey Wagtail**: Seen in the Villuercas mountains.
85. **White Wagtail**: Seen daily.
86. **Wren**: Singles seen or heard almost daily.
87. **Robin**: Seen daily.
88. **Bluethroat**: Brief glimpses at Casas del Hito on 3rd March.
89. **Black Redstart**: Seen daily.
90. **Stonechat**: Seen almost daily.
91. **Blue Rock Thrush**: Seen in Monfragüe, Villuercas mountains and along Rio Almonte.
92. **Blackbird**: Seen daily.
93. **Song Thrush**: Seen almost daily.
94. **Mistle Thrush**: Seen in the Villuercas mountains and Monfragüe.
95. **Cetti's Warbler**: Heard and seen at Arrocampo, on the rice fields and at Casa Rural El Recuerdo.
96. **Zitting Cisticola**: Seen almost daily.
97. **Dartford Warbler**: One heard at Monfragüe on 1st March .
98. **Sardinian Warbler**: Seen daily.
99. **Blackcap**: Seen daily.
100. **Common Chiffchaff**: Seen almost daily.
101. **Firecrest**: Seen in the Villuercas mountains.

102. **Long-tailed Tit:** Seen almost daily.
103. **Crested Tit:** Excellent views in Villuercas mountains on 28th February
104. **Blue Tit:** Seen daily.
105. **Great Tit:** Seen almost daily.
106. **Nuthatch:** Heard in Villuercas mountains.
107. **Short-toed Treecreeper:** Seen in Villuercas mountains and Monfragüe.
108. **Penduline Tit:** Excellent vies of one feeding along Rio Ruercas near Palazuelo on 3rd March.
109. **Iberian Grey Shrike:** Seen every day.
110. **Jay:** Individuals seen in Monfragüe and the Villuercas mountains.
111. **Azure-winged Magpie:** Parties seen every day.
112. **Magpie:** Seen every day.
113. **Jackdaw:** Seen almost daily.
114. **Raven:** Seen almost daily.
115. **Spotless Starling:** Seen daily.
116. **House Sparrow:** Seen daily.
117. **Spanish Sparrow:** Seen almost everyday.
118. **Tree Sparrow:** Seen on rice fields.
119. **Rock Sparrow:** One seen along Monroy road on 23rd February and 2nd March.
120. **Red Avadavat:** Large numbers on rice fields.
121. **Chaffinch:** Seen daily.
122. **Serin:** Seen daily in small numbers.
123. **Greenfinch:** Seen almost daily.
124. **Goldfinch:** Seen daily and large flocks on plains.

125. **Siskin:** Small party at Rio Almonte near Retamosa on 28th February.
126. **Linnet:** Seen almost daily.
127. **Hawfinch:** Seen almost everyday.
128. **Cirl Bunting:** Seen at Rio Almonte briefly on 2nd March.
129. **Rock Bunting:** Seen in Monfargüe, Villuercas mountains, Rio Almonte and Valdecañas
130. **Reed Bunting:** One seen on 28th February.
131. **Corn Bunting:** Seen every day and in large numbers.

Butterflies identified:

Cleopatra
Bath White
Green – striped White
Spanish Festoon
Large Wall
Holly Blue
Swallowtail
Small Copper
Clouded Yellow