

## **Birding Extremadura and Casa Rural El Recuerdo**

**WINTER TOUR 25<sup>th</sup> January – 1<sup>st</sup> February 2011**

**Guests: David and Kath Beekens and Liz and Brian Snell**

**Guide: Martin Kelsey**

### **Itinerary**

25<sup>th</sup> January 2011: Collection from Madrid Airport and transfer to Casa Rural El Recuerdo

26<sup>th</sup> January 2011: Plains near Santa Marta de Magasca

27<sup>th</sup> January 2011: Sierra Brava Reservoir (south of Zorita) and the rice-growing area near Madrigalejo (Casas del Hito and Moheda Alta).

28<sup>th</sup> January 2011: Campo Lugar steppes and Palazuelo rice fields

29<sup>th</sup> January 2011: Monfragüe National Park.

30<sup>th</sup> January 2011: Arrocampo reservoir and Cabañas del Castillo in Villuercas mountains

1<sup>st</sup> February 2011: Morning on Belén Plains and afternoon transfer to Madrid

### **TRIP REPORT**

#### **25<sup>th</sup> January 2011**

David, Kath, Brian and Liz arrived on the easyJet flight from Liverpool, getting in well ahead of schedule. We left Madrid late afternoon, heading in the direction of the setting sun. Before it got dark, we had seen several **White Stork**, **Common Kestrels** and **Buzzards**, as we crossed the plains of Castille La Mancha before entering Extremadura. We arrived at Casa Rural El Recuerdo mid-evening, to a welcome log fire and dinner.

## 26<sup>th</sup> January 2011

We enjoyed superb weather today, a light south-easterly wind, generally clear skies and sunshine. It was chilly first thing but the gentle warmth of the sun came through during the day. We explored the plains to the east and north of the village of Santa Marta de Magasca. In the morning we did a seven kilometre walk along tracks on the plains, making the most of the fine weather and panoramic views north to the snow-capped Gredos mountains and east to Trujillo and the Villuercas mountains. The walk gave us the chance to study some **Thekla** and **Crested Larks**, as well as listening to the almost constant accompaniment of **Calandra Larks**. Early on we found a large party of at least 40 **Pin-tailed Sandgrouse** on the ground. Despite their distance the good light conditions enabled us to note their gorgeously-patterned plumage. Large numbers of **Lapwing** and **Golden Plover** were also present. We found a flock of nearly 40 **Great Bustard**, including some fine males. More distant flight views were also obtained of **Little Bustard** and **Black-bellied Sandgrouse**. Our return route was impeded somewhat by a large herd of loose cattle, including a bull which appeared more interested in his rival in a neighbouring field. The quick-thinking of Brian led us to leave the path and take a wide margin across a field, to enable the cattle to retreat safely. Back on route, we returned to the vehicle and headed for the village of Santa Marta de Magasca for coffee. We had lunch beside the Rio Magasca, north of the village, watching **Kingfisher**, **Black** and **Grieffon Vulture** as well as **Hawfinch**. We then returned to an area of plains to the north of the village, stopping to watch a **Little Owl** and just minutes later a large group of **Pin-tailed Sandgrouse**, in excellent late afternoon light. The day concluded with a memorable and wonderful watch from a track. We stood in one place and seemingly the birds came to us. Large numbers of **Corn Bunting** and **Calandra Lark**, a **Merlin** dashing through, with another sighting of a bird hunting in the vicinity of a male **Hen Harrier**, a fine male **Marsh Harrier**, six **Great Bustards** and the magnificent spectacle of a flock of over 50 **Little Bustard** flying over head, their white plumage shining brightly against the pure blue sky, with the sound of their whistling wings filling the heavens.

## 27<sup>th</sup> January 2011

Despite the forecast of rain it was clear and calm all day, with just some rain at dusk. Indeed the weather conditions were excellent for our first stop: the reservoir of Sierra Brava which lies south of the town of Zorita. The surface of the reservoir was like a mill-pond. Although distant, vast rafts of dabbling duck were visible, with **Shoveler** appearing particularly numerous. There must be few places in Europe where such a large number of this species can be seen.



Our first **Common Cranes** for the day were feeding on the hillside below the reservoir. We descended to an area of rice fields where family parties of **Common Crane** and flocks of **Grey Lag Geese** fed. Parking beside an embankment, we walked along the bank. As well as the cranes and geese, there were several **Great White Egret**, three or four **Bluethroat** (usually offering just brief flight views, but sometimes perching out in the open) and a fine **Water Pipit**. **Marsh Harriers** quartered the stubble fields and a superb male **Hen Harrier** was also seen as we retraced our steps on the drive back to the reservoir.

We then drove to the crane centre of Moheda Alta where we enjoyed a picnic lunch in the *dehesa*. Beyond the woodland was one of the main feeding areas for cranes and from a tower hide we were able to watch between eight and ten thousand cranes, as well as parties of **Grey Lag Geese** and **Lapwings**. Liz found a **Black Stork** feeding close to a **White Stork** and there were no fewer than 27 **Common Shelduck** also present: a very large total for Extremadura. Liz also caught a glimpse of a **Peregrine** and later whilst walking beside the stubble fields, we found a very recently-used plucking post, with the remains of a **Corn Bunting**. Parties of **Red Avadavats** entertained us and checking a nearby pool we found amongst other duck a superb drake **Pintail** and six **Tufted Duck**.



On our return we paused near the old Railway station of Madrigalejo and found several **Stone Curlew**. We had excellent views as they stood, preened and walked in an area of tree-planting. As light fell we headed back, a lone **Great Bustard** flying across the road and the first drops of rain for the day on the windscreens.

### 28<sup>th</sup> January 2011

Notwithstanding the threatening shower clouds and strong, fresh winds, it was a day with some memorable sightings. We started on the plains east of Campo Lugar where a flock of 11 **Great Bustards** were found on our very first stop. They were watched in excellent light, preening and feeding, seemingly largely made up of males, some of which were already sporting their spring "moustaches". Not much further on we had superbly close views of two **Little Bustards**, standing in a stubble field, with a **Common Starling** feeding close by. It was wonderful to have such prolong views of these normally quite shy birds. Larks abounded on the plains, as did **Golden Plover** and **Lapwing**. We had a thrilling view of a female **Merlin** dashing close by and disturbing a **Little Owl** from its perch. Breathtaking as well was the huge "kettle" of perhaps 300 **White Stork**, rising and circling against a stormy sky, clearly heading northwards.

From the plains we descended to the rice growing area near Palazuelo, where fields are mainly ploughed after harvest, meaning that most are wet and muddy. Struggling against a strengthening wind, we searched a ditch for **Bluethroat**,

but managed only brief flight views. However we did see about a dozen **Kentish Plovers** and several hundred **Dunlin**. Liz also saw two **Barn Swallows**, perhaps wondering why on earth they had reached an area with such bitterly cold winds! We had lunch close to the village of Palazuelo where fleeting views of a female **Little Bittern** were obtained by some and a **Southern Grey Shrike's** larder with half a rodent was found, with the shrike still in attendance!

After lunch we stopped to walk a track to search for more waders, but were delightfully distracted by a real star of a bird: a **Bluethroat** which obligingly perched in a nearby orchard, in the open, at close range for wonderfully prolonged views...the best that most of us could remember ever having of this species. The fields had a medley of waders: **Kentish Plover**, **Ringed Plover**, **Dunlin**, **Spotted Redshank** and **Greenshank**. Constantly **Common Cranes** were calling and everywhere birds were present. We completed the afternoon with a very pleasant walk beside some riverine woodland, listening to **Cetti's Warblers** and watching a finch flock coming to feed in maize stubble. The sky was turning dark grey, with beams of sunlight from broken clouds illuminating spectacularly pockets of the landscape. With a rumble of thunder and the first drops of rain, we decided that it was time to retreat to the minibus and return home.

### **29<sup>th</sup> January 2011**

Although the misty weather did not look particularly inviting first thing, we saw glimmers of light blue above suggesting that indeed the mist would clear during the morning. This would auger well for Monfragüe National Park, as it would prove. We arrived at the first viewpoint of Peña Falcon as mist still hung over the top half of the massive rock face in front of us. Scores of **Griiffon Vultures** soared in and out of the mist, whilst closer at hand an exquisite **Firecrest** fed at the top of a holm oak tree beside us. A **Great White Egret** flew through the gorge.

As the mist slowly rose, so we could see perhaps 120 **Griiffon Vultures** congregating on the grassy slope to the right of the cliff. On closer inspection they were seen to be pulling at shrubs to gather nest material. As we watched several **Black Vultures** flew in to join them, providing an excellent comparison.

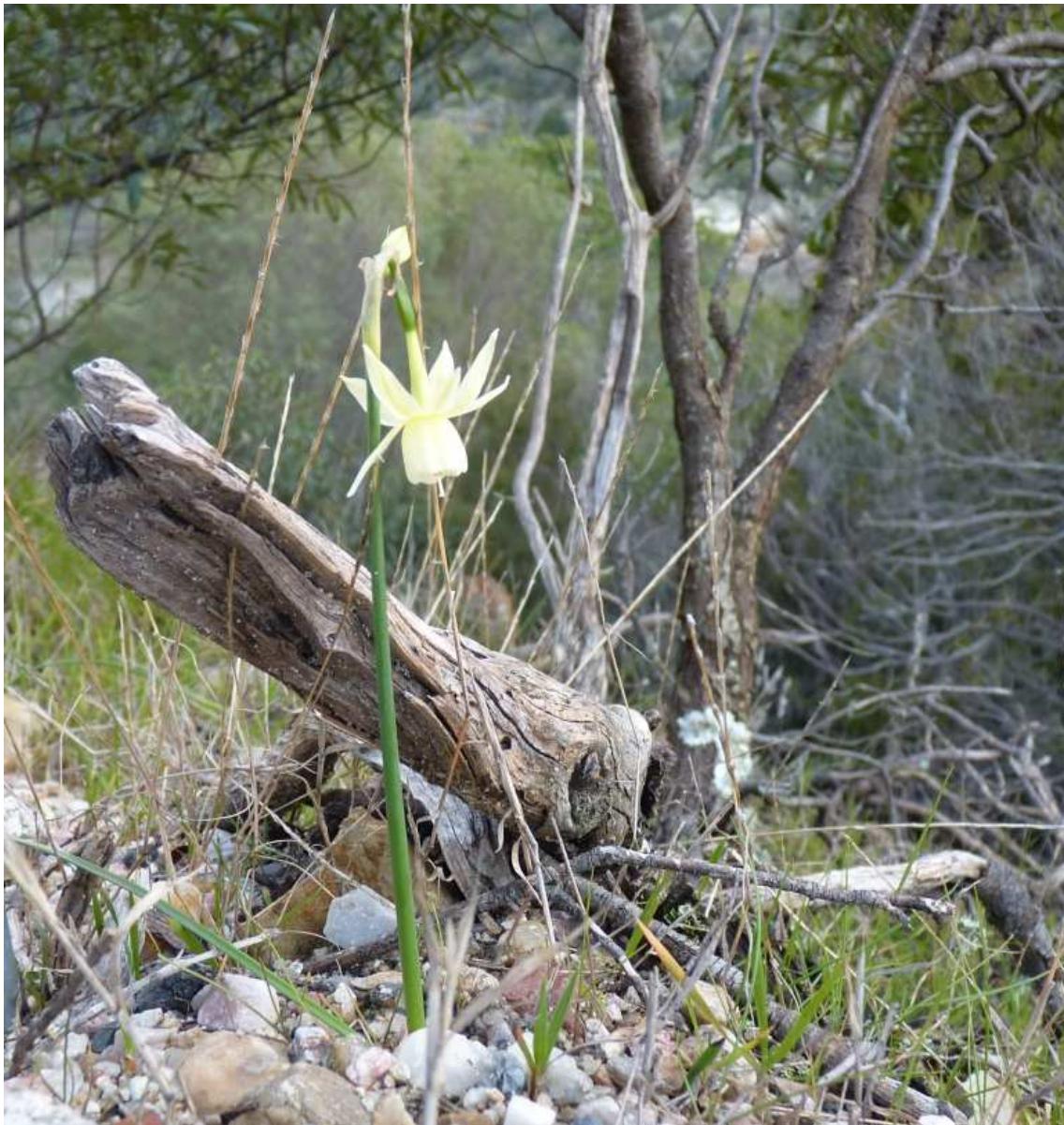


In the distance other vultures were in a kettle and we found an adult **Spanish Imperial Eagle** with them. It drifted off and disappeared, but fortunately reappeared soon after to fly along the hillside in front of us and perch on a rock. This was just the start of a wonderful medley of observations, including an adult carrying nest material, being mobbed by a **Peregrine** and flying directly overhead. What was equally exciting was the arrival of a juvenile **Spanish Imperial Eagle** which flew in to settle on the hillside and we were able to watch it hop on the ground and tug at branches, just as an adult might collect nest material.

We had spent a highly productive morning almost glued to the spot, but eventually we felt it time to move on and we stopped for a picnic lunch at the Tajadilla viewpoint, close to the dam. Thicker and more threatening clouds were gathering in the west. Vultures drifted overhead and as we finished our meal, so a throng of **Azure-winged Magpies** came down to pick-clean the table and ground.



We spent most of the afternoon at another spectacular viewpoint: the Portilla del Tiétar. Vultures again provided excellent viewing, but pride of place was an extraordinary threesome: a dog **Otter**, a **Grey Heron** and a **Kingfisher**. The **Otter** was successfully catching catfish and taking them to a rocky bay to eat. There was waiting the **Grey Heron** which would lunge at the **Otter**, crested raised, presumably in order to steal the fish. The **Otter** looked at the Heron and turned away, to eat the fish with its back to the **Grey Heron**. In came a **Kingfisher** who perched on a branch above the two of them, watching with interest. It was a delightful scene...as was indeed the arrival of a **Raven** (with attitude!), which noisily flew in to settle at the top of the cliff beside a **Grieffon Vulture**. The **Raven** looked up at the **Grieffon** and the **Grieffon** returned its stare. As the **Raven** hopped from one leg to the other, keeping eye-contact with the vulture it made for a perfect “What’s the caption” competition – indeed Brian chose it as one of his magical moments of the week! We must also mention the incubating **Eagle Owl**. Initially only one ear tuft was visible, but as we patiently watched, so more of its head appeared until most of its face was visible. We found **Angel Tears Narcissus** in flower and as we returned through the park we saw **Red Deer** and a tame and well-fed **Fox**. We concluded our visit watching tight flocks of **Rock Sparrow** coming into roost, along with throngs of **House Martin**, as a stormy evening sky was filled with spiralling vultures.



**30<sup>th</sup> January 2011**

A cool and misty morning, it was initially calm but later came a freshening wind. The mist rose but the sky remained stormy all day. We headed first to the reservoir of Arrocampo, about forty minutes away, which provides the cooling water for the power station of Almaraz. The constant water level and slightly warmer than average water temperature creates the conditions for a good fringing bank of vegetation, largely Great Reed Mace, which is a feature not seen in most other reservoirs in Extremadura. Our visit coincided with that of a major fishing contest and we were well outnumbered by anglers wading through the reeds or standing chest-deep in the water. Birding was therefore harder than usual and it took us sometime to get even a glimpse of the local speciality, the **Purple Swamphen**. However, we enjoyed looking for **Barn Swallow** amongst the throngs of **Crag Martins** and **House Martins** flying low over the water. A rather distant **Black-winged Kite** nevertheless gave us prolonged views of its hovering. We had coffee beside a small pool, where three drake

**Teal** competed for the attention of two females, Their courtship display was a delight to watch. The surrounding wooded pasture was full of small birds: **Crested Larks**, **Spanish Sparrow**, **Chiffchaffs** and **Chaffinches**. We then headed for the Villuercas mountains and had lunch beside the River Almonte south of Retamosa. **GriFFon Vultures** soared overhead and we found a pair of **Black Wheatear** haunting the rocky valley. Whilst watching these a flock of perhaps fifty **Siskin** landed on the riverine Alders and provided enchanting views as they foraged, the males in particular looking very striking in their contrasting yellow, black and green plumage.

From there we arrived at the village of Cabañas del Castillo, tucked below impressive crags. The view from behind the village across the Villuercas range was breathtaking and although the peak of Pico de Villuercas was hidden by cloud, fresh snow could be seen on its slopes. The olive groves around the village were full of **Blackcaps** and we also found a fine male **Cirl Bunting**. On the crags we had a superb view of a **Peregrine**: its underparts rather rufous tinged, showing it to be of the Mediterranean race *brookei*. We ended the day walking through cork oak woodland nearby, seeing or hearing **Short-toed Treecreeper**, **Nuthatch**, **Firecrest** and **Great Spotted Woodpecker**. In the crags above a pair of **Red-billed Chough** were particularly vocal, whilst another **Peregrine** set out to hunt.



**31<sup>st</sup> January 2011**

It was clear and frosty as we set off from Casa Rural El Recuerdo, following a sighting of a **Hawfinch** helping itself to almond buds. As we approached Monfragüe National Park we saw the extraordinary phenomenon of a massive

tongue of fog extruding from the gorge of Peña Falcon. The roads through the park itself were fogbound, so it was with very little visibility that we carefully approached the Tajadilla picnic area. The plan here was to wait for raptors, in particular Bonelli's Eagle. The mist was so thick however that we couldn't see across the river at first. Our attention was drawn to small, nearby birds, especially a gorgeous **Firecrest** foraging in a small oak tree. Parties of **Hawfinches** were also present. Gradually the sun strengthened and the mist broke, although for a very long time it hung around in the wings, waiting for a return.



**Griffon** and **Black Vultures** were taking to wing, whilst masses of **Song Thrushes** flew from one side of the valley to the next. We had planned to spend the afternoon at another location, but as our departure time approached, so the weather improved, so we decided to stay on in the park. We had lunch at the Tajadilla site, and saw a **Black Stork** circling overhead...a spring arrival? After lunch and an abortive wait for **Azure-winged Magpies** to repeat their performance of arriving at the picnic table to take crumbs, we headed for a belt of nearby pines. **Hawfinches** abounded here as well, and three **Great Spotted Woodpeckers** were also seen. The best however was the **Bonelli's Eagle**, at last! Liz spotted the pair at a distance, and whilst one flew off to the south, the other approached quite closely. It was later to reappear for a second performance. We then went to the Higuerilla view point overlooking the Tietár river.



The Gredos mountains to the north were covered in south, whilst closer at hand vultures spiralled over the Portilla del Tietár cliffs, and we found a pair of **Spanish Imperial Eagles** in the air too. They were far off, but the sun caught their white forewing remarkably. A female **Goosander** was also present: a common bird for David, Kath, Liz and Brian, but a mega rarity here. We then headed back with a spot to admire the view at the Rio Almonte river before spending a few minutes in the main square of Trujillo.

### 1<sup>st</sup> February 2011

There had been a sharp frost overnight and the day dawned clear, with a fine of crescent moon to the east. We spent a couple of hours on the Belén Plains to the north-east of Trujillo. From a vantage point just outside the village, the expanse of open plains had a frosty tone and through a slight haze one could make out the form of the massive Gredos mountains to the north. The light across the plains was excellent and despite some distance we would find a small group of about ten **Great Bustard**. Closer at hand was a **Dartford Warbler**, foraging in the frost-free sunny roadside verge at the base of stone wall, on which it sometimes perched right out in the open, almost as if it was willing the sun to warm the air. The occasional **Red Kite** flapped languidly across the landscape. As we started to cross the plains, we stopped whenever we could: a **Little Owl** peering out at us from a pile of rocks, a group of five male **Great Bustard**, much closer than the others and in superb light, distant **Little Bustards** and **Thekla Lark**, preening nearby in the sunshine, its diagnostic cinnamon-rusty band across the rump superbly on show. The constant presence of small birds: finches, pipits, larks and **Corn Buntings** no

doubt attracted a male **Merlin** which dashed low over the ground, backwards and forwards before settling on a rocky outcrop. Everywhere one looked there were **Lapwing** and **Golden Plover**. The area deserved much more time, but we needed to be back at Casa Rural El Recuerdo late morning to complete packing in time for our departure. As we arrived a **Cetti's Warbler** sang from bushes near the drive. Luggage aboard, we bade farewell to our base and drove out of the village, just before 12.30. **Barn Swallows** and **House Martins** hawked insects over a wet meadow close to the village, as the sun was thawing the frost. The run to Madrid was smooth, the views of the mountains excellent and good numbers of **White Stork**, a few **Common Crane** and a **Sparrowhawk** seen en route. After a stop to fill up the tank as we entered Madrid, we reached the airport as planned.

### List of species seen

Good weather generally throughout the holiday helped to bring a very good total of **126 species** of bird seen. These are listed below.

1. **Little Grebe:** One seen on a pool in the rice fields on 27<sup>th</sup> January.
2. **Great Crested Grebe:** Seen at Sierra Brava reservoir on 27th January and in Monfragüe on 29<sup>th</sup> January.
3. **Great Cormorant:** Seen most days, with largest number seen in Monfragüe National Park.
4. **Little Bittern:** One female briefly seen at Palazuelo on 28<sup>th</sup> January.
5. **Cattle Egret:** Seen most days.
6. **Little Egret:** Seen most days with over a hundred seen near Palazuelo on 28<sup>th</sup> January.
7. **Great White Egret:** 6-8 seen on rice fields on 27<sup>th</sup> January and three near Palazuelo on 28<sup>th</sup> January (including a bird with an orange darvic ring on the right leg), one flying over Monfragüe on 29<sup>th</sup> January and one at Arrocampo on 30<sup>th</sup> January.
8. **Grey Heron:** Seen everyday.
9. **Black Stork:** One at Moheda Alta on 27<sup>th</sup> January and at least one in Monfragüe on 31<sup>st</sup> January.
10. **White Stork:** Seen everyday. Over 300 in a spiralling flock over the plains on 28<sup>th</sup> January.

11. **Grey Lag Goose**: Several hundred on the rice fields on 27<sup>th</sup> January and one at Arrocampo on 30<sup>th</sup> January.
12. **Egyptian Goose**: Five at Casas del Hito on 27<sup>th</sup> January.
13. **Common Shelduck**: 27 at Moheda Alta on 27<sup>th</sup> January.
14. **Wigeon**: Seen amongst rafts of duck on Sierra Brava reservoir on 27<sup>th</sup> January.
15. **Gadwall**: Seen on Sierra Brava reservoir, Moheda Alta and at Casas del Hito on 27<sup>th</sup> January.
16. **Teal**: Seen at Sierra Brava reservoir, Arrocampo and on Belén Plains.
17. **Pintail**: Seen on Sierra Brava reservoir, Moheda Alta and at Casas del Hito on 27<sup>th</sup> January.
18. **Mallard**: Seen everyday.
19. **Shoveler**: Thousands present at Sierra Brava on 27<sup>th</sup> January.
20. **Tufted Duck**: Six at Moheda Alta on 27<sup>th</sup> January.
21. **Goosander**: Female at Monfragüe on 31<sup>st</sup> January.
22. **Black-winged Kite**: One at Arrocampo on 30<sup>th</sup> January.
23. **Red Kite**: Seen almost everyday, usually singly, but more sightings on plains on Belén, Campo Lugar and Arrocampo.
24. **Griffon Vulture**: Seen everyday. Hundreds seen in Monfragüe National Park.
25. **Black Vulture**: Seen almost everyday, especially in Monfragüe National Park and on the plains.
26. **Marsh Harrier**: Seen almost every day, with about ten seen on the rice fields on 27<sup>th</sup> January.
27. **Hen Harrier**: Males seen on plains near Santa Marta de Magasca, and on the rice fields.
28. **Sparrowhawk**: One in the Villuercas mountains.
29. **Common Buzzard**: Seen every day.
30. **Spanish Imperial Eagle**: A pair seen on each visit to Monfragüe National Park and a juvenile on 29<sup>th</sup> January.

31. **Golden Eagle:** One seen distantly in Monfragüe on 29<sup>th</sup> January.
32. **Bonelli's Eagle:** A pair seen in Monfragüe on 31<sup>st</sup> January.
33. **Common Kestrel:** Seen almost every day.
34. **Merlin:** At total of seven sightings, generally on the plains.
35. **Peregrine:** One seen at Moheda Alta on 27<sup>th</sup> January, one in Monfragüe on 29<sup>th</sup> January and two in Villuercas mountains on 30<sup>th</sup> January
36. **Red-legged Partridge:** Seen or heard on three days
37. **Water Rail:** Seen or heard on both visits to the rice fields
38. **Moorhen:** Seen on several days.
39. **Purple Swamphen:** Seen and heard at Arrocampo on 30<sup>th</sup> January.
40. **Common Coot:** Seen at Arrocampo on 30<sup>th</sup> January.
41. **Common Crane:** Seen almost every day. About eight thousand feeding at Moheda Alta on 27<sup>th</sup> January.
42. **Little Bustard:** Five seen distantly and later a flock of about 50 near Santa Marta de Magasca on 26<sup>th</sup> January and two on Campo Lugar plains on 28<sup>th</sup> January and about six on Belén Plains on 1<sup>st</sup> February.
43. **Great Bustard:** Flocks of 36 and six seen near Santa Marta de Magasca on 26<sup>th</sup> January, one near Zorita on 27<sup>th</sup> January, flocks of 11 and 13 on Campo Lugar plains on 28<sup>th</sup> January and a total of about 15 on Belén Plains on 1<sup>st</sup> February.
44. **Stone Curlew:** About 15 at Madrigalejo on 27<sup>th</sup> January.
45. **Ringed Plover:** Three near Palazuelo on 28<sup>th</sup> January.
46. **Kentish Plover:** A total of about 25 in two flocks near Palazuelo on 28<sup>th</sup> January.
47. **Golden Plover:** Present in large numbers (several hundreds) on plains and rice fields.
48. **Lapwing:** Seen almost everyday in large numbers.
49. **Dunlin:** About 400 near Palazuelo on 28<sup>th</sup> January.
50. **Common Snipe:** Apart from one bird near a pool on plains near Santa Marta de Magasca on 26<sup>th</sup> January, all sightings were from rice fields.

51. **Common Curlew**: Two near Palazuelo on 28<sup>th</sup> January.
52. **Spotted Redshank**: One near Palazuelo on 28<sup>th</sup> January.
53. **Greenshank**: Two on plains near Santa Marta de Magasca on 26<sup>th</sup> January and about ten near Palazuelo on 28<sup>th</sup> January.
54. **Green Sandpiper**: Seen almost every day.
55. **Common Sandpiper**: A total of three seen on pools in rice fields on 27<sup>th</sup> January.
56. **Lesser Black-backed Gull**: Seen almost daily.
57. **Black-headed Gull**: Seen almost daily.
58. **Black-bellied Sandgrouse**: About six seen near Santa Marta de Magasca on 26<sup>th</sup> January.
59. **Pin-tailed Sandgrouse**: Two flocks totalling over 110 birds seen near Santa Marta de Magasca on 26<sup>th</sup> January.
60. **Feral Pigeon**: Seen daily.
61. **Wood Pigeon**: Seen almost daily.
62. **Collared Dove**: Seen daily.
63. **Eagle Owl**: Seen at Monfragüe on 29<sup>th</sup> January.
64. **Little Owl**: Seen almost daily on plains near Santa Marta de Magasca (three sightings), near Sierra Brava reservoir (three), Campo Lugar Plains (two) and Belén Plains (three).
65. **Kingfisher**: Seen almost daily.
66. **Hoopoe**: Seen daily, with double figures seen some days.
67. **Great Spotted Woodpecker**: Three seen in woodland in Villuercas mountains and three seen in Monfragüe.
68. **Calandra Lark**: Seen almost daily.
69. **Crested Lark**: Seen almost daily.
70. **Thekla Lark**: Seen in Monfragüe, near Santa Marta de Magasca and on Belén Plains.
71. **Woodlark**: Heard near Santa Marta de Magasca and seen briefly in Villuercas mountains.

72. **Skylark**: Large wintering flocks on plains and rice fields.
73. **Crag Martin**: Seen almost daily in suitable habitat.
74. **Barn Swallow**: First seen near Palazuelo on 28<sup>th</sup> January, also at Arrocampo and near Casa Rural El Recuerdo.
75. **House Martin**: Seen every day.
76. **Meadow Pipit**: Seen almost daily.
77. **Water Pipit**: One seen on rice fields at Casas del Hito on 27<sup>th</sup> January.
78. **Grey Wagtail**: Seen almost daily.
79. **White Wagtail**: Seen daily.
80. **Wren**: Singles seen or heard almost daily.
81. **Robin**: Seen daily.
82. **Bluethroat**: Three or four seen at Casas del Hito on 27<sup>th</sup> January, two seen near Palazuelo on 28<sup>th</sup> January.
83. **Black Redstart**: Seen daily.
84. **Stonechat**: Seen daily.
85. **Black Wheatear**: Pair at Rio Almonte near Retamosa on 30<sup>th</sup> January.
86. **Blue Rock Thrush**: Seen in Monfragüe and in the Villuercas mountains.
87. **Blackbird**: Seen daily.
88. **Song Thrush**: Seen daily.
89. **Mistle Thrush**: Seen in the Villuercas mountains and Monfragüe.
90. **Cetti's Warbler**: Heard and seen at Arrocampo, on the rice fields and at Casa Rural El Recuerdo.
91. **Zitting Cisticola**: Seen on the rice fields.
92. **Dartford Warbler**: One heard at Monfragüe on 31<sup>st</sup> January and one seen on Belén Plains on 1<sup>st</sup> February .
93. **Sardinian Warbler**: Seen almost daily.
94. **Blackcap**: Seen almost daily.

95. **Common Chiffchaff**: Seen daily.
96. **Firecrest**: Seen in Monfragüe and the Villuercas mountains.
97. **Long-tailed Tit**: Seen almost daily.
98. **Blue Tit**: Seen almost daily.
99. **Great Tit**: Seen almost daily.
100. **Nuthatch**: Heard in Villuercas mountains and near Monfragüe.
101. **Short-toed Treecreeper**: Seen in Villuercas mountains and Monfragüe.
102. **Penduline Tit**: Heard but not seen in Arrocampo on 30<sup>th</sup> January.
103. **Southern Grey Shrike**: Seen every day.
104. **Jay**: Individuals seen in Monfragüe and the Villuercas mountains.
105. **Azure-winged Magpie**: Parties seen every day.
106. **Magpie**: Seen every day.
107. **Red-billed Chough**: Pair in Villuercas mountains on 30<sup>th</sup> January.
108. **Jackdaw**: Seen daily.
109. **Raven**: Seen almost daily.
110. **Common Starling**: One seen on Campo Lugar plains.
111. **Spotless Starling**: Seen daily.
112. **House Sparrow**: Seen daily.
113. **Spanish Sparrow**: Seen almost everyday.
114. **Tree Sparrow**: Two seen on rice fields on 27<sup>th</sup> January.
115. **Rock Sparrow**: Over 100 seen at roost in Monfragüe on 29<sup>th</sup> January and one seen on Campo Lugar plains.
116. **Red Avadavat**: Large numbers on rice fields.
117. **Chaffinch**: Seen daily.
118. **Serin**: Seen almost daily in small numbers.

119. **Greenfinch:** Seen almost daily.
120. **Goldfinch:** Seen almost day and large flocks on plains.
121. **Siskin:** About 50 at Rio Almonte near Retamosa on 30<sup>th</sup> January.
122. **Linnet:** Seen almost daily.
123. **Hawfinch:** Seen almost everyday, with over 30 seen in Monfragüe on 31<sup>st</sup> January.
124. **Cirl Bunting:** Seen in Monfragüe and Villuercas mountains.
125. **Reed Bunting:** Seen on rice fields and at Arrocampo.
126. **Corn Bunting:** Seen every day and in large numbers.

**Mammals seen include:**

**Otter:** Monfragüe 29<sup>th</sup> January and prints at Casas del Hito on 27<sup>th</sup> January

**Red Deer:** Monfragüe 29<sup>th</sup> January

**Fox:** Monfragüe 29<sup>th</sup> January

**Rabbit:** Santa Marta de Magasca 26<sup>th</sup> January

**Butterflies identified:**

**Large Tortoiseshell:** Santa Marta de Magasca 26<sup>th</sup> January

**Portuguese Dappled White:** Monfragüe 29<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> January