



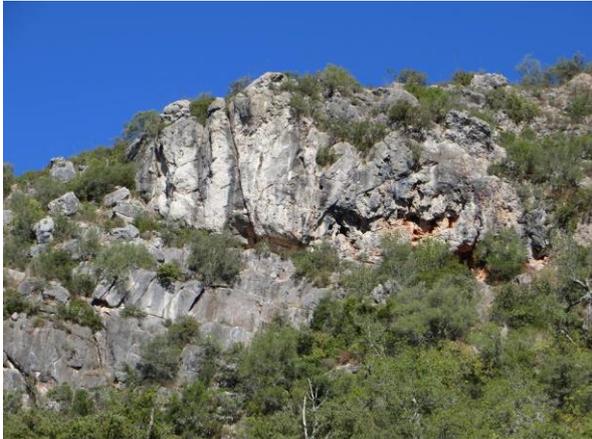
Honeyguide

WILDLIFE HOLIDAYS

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**Algarve and Alentejo
4 – 11 November 2017**

Holiday participants

Howard and Sue Bayliss
Margaret Dixey
George Kalli
David and Lesley Lord

Karen Klempka and
Michael McCue
Brennan and Karin Auger
Will Warham

Leaders

Rob Macklin (centre)
and from SPEA, Hugo Sampaio (left) with, on the Sunday only, Domingos Leitão (right).



Report and lists by Rob Macklin.

We stayed in the Alte Hotel for 4 nights – www.altehotel.com
and the Hotel Mira Sagres for 3 nights – www.hotelmirasagres.com

The pelagic trip was with www.marilimitado.com

Photos by Brennan Auger, Karin Auger and Domingos Leitão.

Cover: top: Rocha da Pena (KA), stonechat (BA).

Middle: purple swamphen (KA), view near Castro Verde (KA).

Bottom: Cape St Vincent, common dolphins (BA).

Below – the group on dry land (DL) and at sea on the pelagic trip.



As with all Honeyguide holidays, part of the price of the holiday was put towards a conservation project, in this case SPEA's campaign against oil drilling off-shore by the Algarve coast. Hugo Sampaio, both Honeyguide leader and SPEA officer, explained how this contributes to a current court case (see p.9). The bank transfer to SPEA from the Honeyguide Wildlife Charitable Trust was £500, made up of each group member's conservation contribution supplemented by Gift Aid.

This year's donation brings the total given to SPEA since the first Honeyguide holiday in mainland Portugal in 2005 to £6282. The total for conservation contributions from all Honeyguide holidays to the end of 2017 is £119,322.

INTRODUCTION

This was Honeyguide's third autumn visit to the Algarve and Alentejo and was blessed with cloudless skies and temperatures in the low twenties throughout. The first half of the trip was based at Alte and included visits to Castro Marim, Rocha de Pena and Castro Verde. The reserve at Castro Marim on the Guadiana Estuary again came up trumps with 20+ species of wading birds, excellent views of spoonbills and greater flamingos, two scarce Audouin's gulls, excellent views of an osprey and booted eagle plus an amazing 160 white storks on migration. The imposing cliffs at Rocha de Pena allowed us to get great views of several blue rock thrushes and we were fortunate to find two ring ouzels here. The highlight of the day had to be 100+ griffon vultures drifting along the ridge, a magnificent sight! The Castro Verde grasslands were full of birds and we found two immature golden eagles, two Bonelli's eagles and a black vulture here. In superb evening light we located 26 great bustards on a hillside with hoopoes and little owls in the foreground.

The second part of the week was based at Vila do Bispo and included trips to Monchique, Salgados Lagoons and Sagres. The Algarve had suffered from very little rain and high summer temperatures so most of the vegetation was burnt off. However the birds were brilliant including Spanish imperial eagle at Sagres, 160 glossy ibises at Salgados, at least seven bluethroats at the Alvor Estuary and alpine accentors at the Cabo de São Vicente. A fantastic week on the Algarve and Alentejo in good company with sun-filled days and warm nights!

DAILY DIARY

Saturday 4 November – to Portugal

A roundabout full of flowering Californian poppies at Luton Airport brightened a dull day before those of the group travelling from Luton boarded their Airbus flight to Faro flying at the dizzying height of 37,000 feet. We arrived twenty minutes early at 17:40, meeting up with the rest of the group plus Domingos and Hugo. After sorting out the paperwork with Europcar we were soon on our way to Alte, arriving after dark. On the way a dead genet was spotted on the road but had gone by the following morning. Over dinner Domingos introduced the group to the plan for the week ahead and we all retired looking forward to the explorations of the coming days.

Sunday 5 November – Castro Marim and Rio Formosa Natural Park at Tavira

A chilly start with a cloudless sky and temperatures climbing to 22°C. Before we left the hotel several species were noted including 13 azure-winged magpies, a black redstart on the roof, a mistle thrush flying over and both robin and blue tit in the hotel gardens. Today's destination was the 2000 hectare Castro Marim wetland reserve on the Guadiana Estuary and the border with Spain, about an hour's drive along the motorway. We made our first stop overlooking open water and saltpan lagoons on one side with scrubby grassland and a carob plantation on the other. As we pulled off the highway we were delighted to see a hoopoe feeding unconcernedly among the saltmarsh right in front of the buses – a great start to the day. As we walked along the track the birds came thick and fast with eight great crested and five little grebes on the open water, a large Caspian tern on the lookout for a meal, a fishing Sandwich tern and the first of many Mediterranean gulls. The carob plantation was playing host to a very large flock of spotless and common starlings which soon attracted the attention of a passing pale-phase booted eagle, causing panic among the flock.



An eagle flies over Castro Marim (DL).

Several crested larks were very showy on the grassland and track, we had very good views of a male Sardinian warbler and a fan-tailed warbler (*Zitting cisticola*) before spotting an Iberian grey shrike searching avidly for insects. Two crag martins were over the open water before a cry went up, "Osprey over the saltmarsh" and this superb raptor gave us all great views. More raptors appeared in the shape of two hunting female marsh harriers and three buzzards over the saltmarsh before one of the highlights of the week: 160 white storks soaring overhead trying to gain height on the thermals – a magnificent site and a classic case of visible migration (aka *vis mig*).

In a very open olive grove two cattle egrets were feeding, not surprisingly, among cattle, two late swallows flew overhead and a loafing group of 50+ cormorants were on one of the lagoon banks. Invertebrates were thin on the ground but we saw several clouded yellows and a large white butterfly before Brennan came up with the only red-veined darter dragonfly of the morning. Time to head into the nearby town for a well-earned coffee but not before we found a very obliging southern hawk dragonfly and six juvenile greater flamingos in one of the lagoons. At the bar several of the group had cappuccino 'Portuguese style' topped with a huge blob of whipped cream!

Time for lunch at the nearby reserve centre (closed at weekends!) and on the way in we spotted ringed plover, green sandpiper and four black-winged stilts. After lunch we turned our attention to the numerous salt pans and grassland. There was less water than usual after such a hot summer but even so the lagoons were full of waders and after George had spotted two sanderlings we soon racked up a whole host of birds including up to 20 curlew sandpipers, 50 black-winged stilts, 20+ avocets and small numbers of Kentish and ringed plovers, little stints and ruff, among others. Looking further out across the lagoons we found at least 60 greater flamingos, a mixture of adults and juveniles, plus a superb group of 40 spoonbills with many feeding in the lagoons giving us great views. More waders were soon located, a spotted redshank and greenshank, two more Kentish plovers then ten shelducks feeding in the shallows. The highlight was a Caspian tern flying lazily over the area showing off its huge red bill!

The hillside up from the centre was tinder dry after a very hot summer (temperatures up to 44°C) and very little rain so we were both surprised and delighted to find an area of the delicate white flowers of autumn narcissus *Narcissus serotinus*, blue autumn squill and the impressive merendera. Domingos then pulled off his usual trick of finding a Moorish gecko on the side of an abandoned well. With the afternoon moving on we headed off to our last stop at Tavira and on the way out of Castro Marim turned up two Iberian hares and two red-legged partridges.

The Tavira salt pans were also a little low on water but the first two lagoons held 15 sanderlings, 100+ dunlins, single avocet and black-tailed godwit, a ruff and two kingfishers which flashed back and forth. As we walked along the track to the sea we encountered four yellow-legged gulls doggedly chasing an Audouin's gull, presumably to make it drop its catch. Luckily for us another adult Audouin's gull sat out in full view on the lagoon track giving us all excellent views. A male Sardinian warbler sat out in full view, a common bird in the Algarve but usually hard to pin down, two gannets drifted along the shoreline while careful inspection of another lagoon turned up four grey plovers and two turnstones.



Watching an Audouin's gull (DL).

As we headed back to the buses a flock of 15 shovelers flew over, George found four teals skulking in the corner of one of the lagoons and our final sighting was nine immature greater flamingos feeding in a sunset-drenched lagoon. On the way back to Alte we dropped Domingos off at the train station at Loule to catch the last train to Lisbon, leaving me and Hugo to take the team home!

Monday 6 November – Rocha da Pena and Barranco do Velho

Another cloudless day with temperatures again hitting 22°C with very little wind. Before we left the hotel Karin had a distinctly chilly swim in the outdoor pool, Brennan turned up a great tit and four linnets while David spotted two stock doves overhead. Our first destination was the imposing and classified site of Rocha da Pena, a limestone mountain reaching 500 metres (1640 feet). After driving through some very narrow roads we parked up the buses and began to explore the rough trail. A mistle thrush flew over and we could hear but not see a short-toed treecreeper before spotting a female great spotted woodpecker on the flowering stem of an *Agave americana*. A pair of kestrels were very active along the ridge with 20 or so crag martins and the falcons soon saw off a passing common buzzard. We could hear blue rock thrushes singing and it wasn't long before we tracked down two bright males and a more dowdy female.

There was a continuous stream of chaffinches moving through the area but one of the highlights of the morning came when George spotted two ring ouzels high up in the rocks, with both birds having an altercation with a resident blue rock thrush. Another migrant then appeared in the shape of a common redstart, a curlew bunting flew over and a woodlark in typical song flight came right over our heads. The vegetation here was very dry with few flowering plants but we still managed to find a clouded yellow and Will spotted a small copper. Time for coffee in the local bar which proved to be an inspired choice as Rob hung around outside and picked up 100+ griffon vultures drifting along the ridge, presumably heading for Sagres – what an amazing sight.



Small copper (BA), praying mantis (KA), red-veined darter (BA).

After this excitement we moved on to a cork oak forest at Barranco Do Velho where we had our picnics. Woodland birding is always challenging but we did quite well getting very good views of firecrest, several blackcaps were flitting through the trees, a jay flew off at speed while five siskins and several goldfinches were found in the canopy. Within the shelter of the forest we found more butterflies particularly the bright yellow and orange Cleopatra, a comma plus both long-tailed blue and Lang's short-tailed blue. We also found a 'helice' clouded yellow, a white version of the species. The undoubted invertebrate highlight of the day was a praying mantis found by Brennan on the edge of the track eliciting a posse of eager photographers! We then headed back to the buses but not before Hugo spotted a high flying group of 17 migrating white storks.

Our last stop of the day was a short drive to the very top of the forest in an open area of grassland. We hoped to see more raptors but had to be content with just three buzzards and six grey herons. A huge flock of birds in the distance turned out to be yellow-legged gulls over a probable landfill site. We just had time to take a walk around the local church where a wall brown butterfly was sunning itself on the boundary wall bringing to an end our second full day in the Algarve. Back at the hotel we enjoyed drinks on the terrace as we watched the sun go down.

Tuesday 7 November – Castro Verde

Yet another glorious day as we drove north along the motorway to the open grasslands of the Castro Verde SPA (Special Protection Area for birds). As we pulled off the motorway we saw two red kites, a forerunner of the amazing 42 noted during the day! Passing through the town of Castro Verde we encountered the open vistas immediately recording two little owls and 30 azure-winged magpies. Our first stop of many, overlooking areas of open grassland, was very productive as a flock of eight cranes flew straight towards us – totally unexpected. Two Iberian grey shrikes showed really well on phone wires and a fence post respectively, 17 cormorants flew overhead and a flock of 150 lapwings was being continually spooked by one of the many red kites. A little owl was perched up on a pile of rocks as they usually are here, giving us all good views, and the fields were full of wintering skylarks and resident Thekla larks.

We drove on deeper into the farmed countryside and our next stop turned out to be equally profitable. Hugo spotted a large raptor in the distance and we could see it was a black vulture but despite our best efforts we were unable to get any closer to it. Compensation was at hand as three great bustards were feeding unconcernedly on the nearby grassland before another large raptor hove into view, an immature golden eagle. We were not finished yet! Rob spotted a soaring group of 13 griffon vultures soaring higher and higher into the thermals and a migrating flock of 50 wood pigeons flew fast and straight, probably intent on avoiding any potential predators. While all this was going on Karen found our only brown argus butterfly of the week on the roadside. Time for coffee and a rest break in the nearby village of Penilhos. After coffee we had to quickly move the vans as a huge lorry rumbled through the very narrow streets!

We decided to have lunch at the imposing church at Senhora de Araceli, all of 276 metres above sea level and giving us fabulous views across the area. On the short drive from Penilhos we logged another seven hoopoes, a green sandpiper, an extremely well camouflaged little owl which Sue did brilliantly to spot and a single male Dartford warbler. Our lunch spot was fairly quiet but we did find six siskins in a grove of holm oaks, at least five more red kites, several red-veined darters and a single painted lady. After lunch we made our way towards San Marcos but soon brought the buses to a shuddering halt as we spotted another immature golden eagle over an olive grove; unbelievably it was immediately mobbed by a resident pair of Bonelli's eagles and quickly moved off.



Outdoor picnic (KA)

Our next stop was a small wetland on the outskirts of Castro Verde town which was full of birds including 31 little grebes, 3 cattle egrets, both green and common sandpipers and three black-winged stilts. New species for the trip were moorhen and common snipe plus two common waxbills hopping through the lakeside vegetation.

The afternoon was quickly moving on but we still had hopes of more birds. We drove down a dusty farm track and almost immediately found 26 great bustards on a hillside, a mixture of males and females, and we had brilliant views through the telescopes in superb evening light! As we were watching the bustards a hoopoe flew by right in front of us then two more perched up in full view on phone wires, making 12 for the day. Our attention then turned to three rabbits running around a pile of stones with two bemused little owls on the top in full view.



Hoopoe (BA), distant great bustards (KA).

With the evening drawing in we had time for one more stop just outside Castro Verde and as we pulled up we saw a black-shouldered kite hunting over the grassland, sometimes hovering like a kestrel, before gently flying on and catching prey to eat on a telegraph pole – superb.

To round off a fantastic day at Castro Verde, a ringtail hen harrier quartered the grassland – what a day!

Wednesday 8 November – Salgados Lagoons and Monchique

Another sunny yet somewhat breezy day and time to change hotels and move west. Before we left the Alte Hotel two black redstarts were chasing each other around the car park and a hummingbird hawk-moth was nectaring on the garden flowers. Our first port of call was the Salgados Lagoons at Pera which was absolutely alive with birds. As we drove on to site we encountered 50+ cattle egrets on a ploughed field with more heron species on the lagoons in the shape of two grey herons, three little egrets and 17 spoonbills. These were joined by 12 greater flamingos and an amazing flock of 160 glossy ibises feeding in the shallows. Overhead another 70 white storks were migrating over the area.



Flamingos, glossy ibis (KA).

A large array of wildfowl was out on the lagoons including ten shovelers and gadwall, several pochards, two pintails and two wigeons plus a much scarcer pair of red-crested pochards and ferruginous ducks. The shallow edges of the lagoons had attracted several wader species, among them ten black-winged stilts, ten black-tailed godwits, five snipe and two green sandpipers. All of these birds were on edge as two booted eagles, two marsh harriers and a peregrine patrolled the skies looking for an easy meal.

The lagoons are surrounded by extensive scrubby areas which were full of wintering chiffchaffs and we also spotted a wheatear, greenfinch, crested larks and a very skulking bluethroat which only showed very briefly. Not so a lone hoopoe which fed unconcernedly right out in the open – a great end to a spectacular morning.



Lago dos Salgados at Pêra (BA).

After coffee at a bar overlooking the lagoons we moved on to Monchique, the highest point in the Algarve at 902 metres (2959 feet) above sea level. The temperature dropped by eight degrees as we moved towards the summit and the wind whipped across the area. We had our picnic lunches in a sheltered spot accompanied by two black redstarts hopping around on the rocks. A flurry of excitement occurred as a small flock of 12 hawfinches came flying up the valley but disappeared from view in double quick time. Two painted ladies were sunning themselves in the sheltered sunny spots.

At the summit we all donned our coats to keep out the wind and proceeded to explore the area. Seven common buzzards, probably migrants, were hanging in the air along with two kestrels while a male blue rock thrush perched up on a huge rock giving us all good views. A wren called from the gorse scrub and our patience was finally rewarded as we were able to get reasonably good views of at least four Dartford warblers. The vegetation at this height was much greener than down below with most of the dwarf gorse in flower as well as one mullein *Verbascum creticum*. Hugo pointed out the introduced false acacia, self-seeded trees that are threatening to take over the entire area and should be removed! Just time for another coffee (or double scotch for some) before we headed off to the Hotel Mira Sagres in Vila do Bispo. After an excellent evening meal we looked forward to exploring the protected Sagres area over the next two days.

Thursday 9 November – Cabo de São Vicente and Sagres

A cool northerly breeze was blowing beneath a cloudless sky as we boarded the buses for Cabo de São Vicente, an early start to beat the crowds at this popular spot. We had indeed arrived before the tourist coaches and set about exploring the cape free of the crowds. A ringtail hen harrier was quartering the heath while offshore were 20+ gannets, two shags and our only two Cory's shearwaters of the trip. Hugo then found three wintering alpine accentors on the cliffs, a new species for most of the group and the new arrivals allowed us to get really close. At least four black redstarts were spotted around the lighthouse and a male blue rock thrush put in an appearance on the rocky cliffs. Three yellow-legged gulls were attempting to feed on something on the sea which on closer inspection turned out to be a small, dead sunfish.

We moved on to the migration watchpoint at Monte de Cabranesa and we had only driven a short distance along the dirt track when we spotted two Richard's pipits on the sandy track – a rare find! Three mistle thrushes and two woodlarks were among the host of Thekla larks and meadow pipits on the heath. We were also delighted to find many flowering autumn crocuses *Crocus serotinus* poking through the sand.

Migration began slowly as 11 ravens flew overhead before the first of 100+ common buzzards appeared over the woods in a constant stream over the next couple of hours. More raptors appeared as if by magic and we managed to identify two short-toed eagles, two Bonelli's eagles, a ringtail hen harrier and seven griffon vultures. The undoubted highlight here was an immature Spanish imperial eagle directly overhead before David and Lesley spotted it perched up in one of the pine trees, allowing us great views through the scopes.



Autumn crocus, red-billed choughs (KA).

Two flocks of 30 stock doves also passed over while the local woodland turned up a flock of 20 serins, ring ouzel, redwing and five fieldfares. As we were about to board the buses a flock of 40 azure-winged magpies flew out of the trees calling harshly and scattering a pair of black redstarts! Time for a coffee in a local bar and while we were there two choughs flew over calling and another 20 griffon vultures flew over continuing their migration.

As the afternoon wore on we explored the open heath and grassland from the dirt roads back to Vila do Bispo. A flock of 13 choughs were feeding out in the open with hordes of skylarks and just four golden plovers and we were fortunate enough to see both ringtail and male hen harriers hunting over the area. We stopped off to get some much-needed diesel for Rob's bus and just had time to spot approximately 150 golden plovers over the local farmland looking for a safe roost for the night – a great end to an exhilarating day.

Friday 10 November – Sagres, Martinhal and Alvor Estuary

A stunning male black redstart in the town square started yet another cloudless and glorious day in the Algarve with temperatures again rising to 22°C. We decided to drive on mainly dirt roads across the heath to Sagres and we soon pulled up at a high spot as 20 griffon vultures were attempting to gain height. While we were watching these, more birds appeared in the shape of five fieldfares flying past then two soaring immature Egyptian vultures accompanied by an adult Bonelli's eagle and five common buzzards – what a start to the day. We moved on to the farm as a male hen harrier drifted over the hillside and we then encountered an amazing flock of 130 red-billed choughs giving us all great views. This amazing start to the day's explorations was brought to a close by 160 golden plovers wheeling through the sky plus 20 lapwings and nine cattle egrets among the cattle.

Our next stop was right on the coast where we found 11 shags perched up on a large outcrop with 20 gannets flying past out to sea. Another male blue rock thrush put in an appearance and 12 ravens were flying lazily over the heath. With the morning warming up it was time to head back to the 'raptor viewpoint' at Monte de Cabranesa where the monitors were already in place. Five siskins flew over as we arrived and we had our first, albeit brief, sighting of a violet carpenter bee. A dung beetle caught everyone's attention and thousands of red-veined darters were moving through the area to who knows where! Overhead 100+ crag martins were joined by 11 common buzzards but with migration slow we decided to go off for a coffee. Just as we were leaving the site we spotted a huge flock of birds in the sky which turned out to be 77 griffon vultures with three more Egyptian vultures and two adult Bonelli's eagles – an amazing stroke of luck!

We decided to have lunch on the beach at Martinhal, a small wetland by Sagres Harbour. Seven Kentish plovers were feeding along the shoreline with a Mediterranean gull, a kestrel was hunting over the saltmarsh and 20 crag martins flew overhead. Our final destination was an hour's drive passing through the town of Lagos to the Alvor Estuary. This proved to be an inspired choice as this wetland area was chock full of birds. Out on the lagoons we logged 15 greater flamingos, 10 little egrets plus the much rarer great white egret – our first of the trip. On the saltmarsh at least eight grey herons were resting, all in a line, and four spoonbills were also taking it easy. Waders were very much in evidence including three black-winged stilts, six grey plovers, a whimbrel and four black-tailed godwits, while a Caspian tern flew overhead.

Perhaps the stars of the show here were at least seven bluethroats which were feeding on the mud along the edge of the lagoons and, unusually for this generally skulking species, giving us all good views. They were accompanied by yet another secretive species in the shape of two water rails which came right out in the open. The only great black-backed gull of the trip was tackling a fish right out on the sandbank, and as we were leaving we managed to see two hoopoes, a kingfisher and a Portugal rarity, a common pheasant.

After another splendid meal at the hotel Hugo explained what the Honeyguide donation of 546 euros would be used for. SPEA is currently involved in a legal battle trying to stop oil exploration off the coast of the Algarve and the donation would go towards funding this. Honeyguide has now donated the equivalent of 7000 euros to SPEA, and the conservation contribution total to all the organisations that Honeyguide supports is an amazing £119,322.

Saturday 11 November – Pelagic off Sagres and Quinto do Lago

The hottest day of the week with temperatures climbing to the dizzy heights of 24°C in another cloudless sky. Before we left Brennan had the great fortune to see a monarch butterfly fly past his hotel window! With the winds easing we were able to take our pelagic trip off Sagres out to the edge of the continental shelf, approximately 10 miles offshore. We met up with Sophie, our guide for the morning, and after a safety briefing boarded the RIB (Rigid Inflatable Boat) and headed out to sea.

This late in the year there is a heavy swell offshore and the boat at speed tended to hit the downside of the swell hard – worse in the front but better in the back of the RIB. We soon encountered our first pod of common dolphins which came right up to the boat dashing through the waves – a brilliant experience. The first of several great skuas were beginning to appear as we spotted a large gathering of birds on the horizon. Making for these we came upon a huge flock of gannets and yellow-legged gulls feeding on what we thought was an anchovy shoal.



Gulls at sea, on the pelagic trip (KA).

Mixed in with these birds were many great shearwaters which literally flew over the RIB, and the odd kittiwake. We then found another pod of common dolphins, both pods totalling 100+ in all, before spotting a trawler which again attracted many birds including several more great skuas and many more great shearwaters. Moving away we began to chuck the chum overboard and were soon rewarded with several storm petrels and, as in 2015, another Wilson's petrel, a lifer for most on the pelagic. All agreed it was an amazing experience not to be missed!

Back to the hotel for lunch then swiftly on our way towards Faro, stopping off at Quinto do Lago, a wetland lagoon on the coast with scrub and the sea on one side and an immaculate green golf course on the other. It's not hard to see who takes all the water in the Algarve! The seaward side of the wetland hosted many waders including new species in the shape of curlew and two bar-tailed godwits plus six black-tailed godwits, nine grey plovers and three turnstones. The wetland itself was awash with wildfowl and other species and we had superb close-up views of nine gaudy purple swampheens and three spoonbills. Two hoopoes were feeding on the golf course, Sue spotted a kingfisher flashing by and we finally identified at least six black-headed weavers flitting through the scrub.

We then moved on to the Tower Hide which gave us great views over the area with wildfowl aplenty including lots of gadwalls, shovelers and pochards but also a few wigeons, four pintails, four red-crested pochards and a new species in two female tufted ducks. At least two little bitterns were known to be there but on this occasion they eluded us, but we were fascinated to see both Spanish and red-eared terrapins on the lake. A fantastic spot for birds but with time running out we had to head for the airport for some of us and downtown Faro for the others but a great way to end our explorations of the Algarve and Alentejo!



Honeyguiders birdwatching and botanising (DL).

HOLIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

| | |
|----------|---|
| David | Spanish imperial eagle. |
| Lesley | Alpine accentors. |
| Howard | Visible migration of white storks and griffon vultures. |
| Sue | Visible migration of white storks and griffon vultures. |
| Margaret | Great bustards in the evening light. |
| Brennan | Bluethroats. |
| Karin | Egyptian and griffon vultures plus white storks. |
| Will | Black-winged stilts. |
| Karen | Wild pear. |
| Michael | White stork migration. |
| George | Bluethroats. |
| Hugo | Arrival of many wintering species. |
| Rob | Huge flock of choughs. |

WILDLIFE LISTS

BIRDS – 149 species

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Little grebe | Noted at three sites, max.31 at Castro Verde & 12 at Salgados Lagoons. |
| Great crested grebe | Eight at Castro Marim & one at Salgados Lagoons. |
| Cory's shearwater | Just two off Cabo de São Vicente. |
| Great shearwater | 100+ on pelagic off Sagres. |
| Wilson's storm petrel | One on pelagic off Sagres. |
| Storm petrel | Seven on pelagic off Sagres. |
| Gannet | Peak of 300+ on pelagic off Sagres. |
| Cormorant | Peak of 100+ at Castro Marim. |
| Shag | Peak of 11 on rocks off Monte de Cabranesa. |
| Cattle egret | Widespread and common. |
| Little egret | Peak of 10 at Alvor Estuary. |
| Great white egret | One at Alvor Estuary. |
| Grey heron | Peaks of six at Barranco de Velha & eight at Alvor Estuary. |
| White stork | Peaks of 160 at Castro Marim & 70 at Salgados Lagoons. |
| Spoonbill | 60 at Castro Marim, 17 at Salgados Lagoons & four at Alvor Estuary. |
| Greater flamingo | Peak of 80 at Castro Marim. |
| Shelduck | Ten at Castro Marim. |
| Wigeon | Two at Salgados Lagoons & 20+ at Quinta do Lago. |
| Gadwall | Ten at Salgados Lagoons & 100+ at Quinta do Lago. |
| Teal | Four at Tavira, four at Salgados Lagoons & two at Quinto do Lago. |
| Mallard | Widespread & common. |
| Pintail | Two at Salgados Lagoons & four at Quinta do Lago. |
| Shoveler | Peak of 100+ at Quinta do Lago. |
| Red-crested pochard | Two at Salgados Lagoons & four at Quinta do Lago. |
| Pochard | Ten at Salgados Lagoons & 50+ at Quinta do Lago. |
| Tufted duck | Two females at Quinta do Lago. |
| Ferruginous duck | Pair at Salgados Lagoons. |
| Black-shouldered kite | Three at Castro Verde. |
| Red kite | A high count of 42 at Castro Verde. |
| Egyptian vulture | Five at Sagres. |
| Griffon vulture | Peaks of 100 at Rocha da Pena & 100 at Sagres. |
| Black vulture | One at Sagres. |
| Short-toed eagle | Two at Sagres. |
| Marsh harrier | Two at Castro Marim & two at Salgados Lagoons. |
| Hen harrier | Peak of four at Sagres. |
| Buzzard | Peak of 100+ at Sagres. |
| Golden eagle | Two at Castro Verde. |
| Spanish imperial eagle | Immature bird at Sagres. |
| Bonelli's eagle | Two at Castro Verde, two at four at Sagres. |
| Booted eagle | Two at Castro Marim, two at Salgados Lagoons & one at Sagres. |
| Osprey | One at Castro Marim. |
| Kestrel | Widespread & relatively common. |
| Peregrine | One over Salgados Lagoons. |
| Red-legged partridge | Recorded at Castro Marim, Castro Verde & Sagres. |
| Common pheasant | One at Alvor Estuary. |
| Water rail | Two at Alvor Estuary. |
| Moorhen | Peak of four at Castro Verde. |
| Purple swamphen | Nine at Quinta do Lago. |
| Coot | Widespread & common especially at Castro Marim. |
| Crane | Eight at Castro Verde. |
| Great bustard | 29 at Castro Verde. |
| Oystercatcher | Two at Castro Marim. |
| Black-winged stilt | Peak of 30 at Castro Marim & 12 at Salgados Lagoons. |
| Avocet | 20 at Castro Marim. |
| Ringed plover | Peak of 15 at Castro Marim. |
| Kentish plover | Three at Castro Marim, seven at Martinhal & one at Alvor Estuary. |
| Golden plover | Peak of 160 at Sagres. |
| Grey plover | Five at Castro Marim, seven at Martinhal & nine at Quinta do Lago. |
| Lapwing | Peak of 300 at Castro Verde. |
| Turnstone | Two at Tavira, one at Alvor Estuary & three at Quinta do Lago. |
| Sanderling | Peak of 17 at Castro Marim. |
| Little stint | Two at Castro Marim. |
| Curlew sandpiper | 20 at Castro Marim. |
| Dunlin | 120 at Castro Marim. |
| Ruff | Two at Castro Marim. |
| Snipe | Peak of five at Salgados Lagoons & Alvor Estuary. |
| Black-tailed godwit | Peak of 10 at Salgados Lagoons. |
| Bar-tailed godwit | One at Quinta do Lago. |
| Whimbrel | One at Alvor Estuary. |
| Curlew | One at Quinta do Lago. |
| Redshank | Peak of 100 at Castro Marim. |
| Spotted redshank | One at Castro Marim. |
| Greenshank | Two at Castro Marim & one at Alvor Estuary. |
| Green sandpiper | Peak of three at Castro Verde. |

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|--------------------------|---|
| Common sandpiper | Peak of four at Castro Marim. |
| Great skua | 15 on pelagic off Sagres. |
| Mediterranean gull | Peak of 50 at Castro Marim. |
| Black-headed gull | Widespread & common. |
| Audouin's gull | One at Castro Marim & one at Salgados Lagoons. |
| Yellow-legged gull | Widespread & common. |
| Great black-backed gull | Adult at Alvor Estuary. |
| Lesser black-backed gull | Widespread & common. |
| Kittiwake | One on pelagic off Sagres. |
| Sandwich tern | One at Castro Marim and one at Alvor Estuary. |
| Caspian tern | Two at Castro Marim & one at Alvor Estuary. |
| Feral pigeon | Widespread & common. |
| Stock dove | 30 on migration at Sagres. |
| Woodpigeon | Peak of 50 in one flock at Castro Verde. |
| Collared dove | Common in towns & villages. |
| Little owl | Six at Castro Verde. |
| Kingfisher | Two at Castro Marim, one at Castro Verde, Alvor Estuary & Quinta do Lago. |
| Hoopoe | Peak of 12 at Castro Verde. |
| Great spotted woodpecker | One at Rocha de Pena. |
| Crested lark | Widespread & common. |
| Thekla lark | Common at Castro Verde & Sagres. |
| Woodlark | One at Rocha de Pena & two at Sagres. |
| Skylark | Widespread & common. |
| Crag martin | Widespread & common with peak of 100+ at Sagres. |
| Barn swallow | Two at Castro Marim & two at Sagres Harbour. |
| Richard's pipit | Two at Sagres. |
| Meadow pipit | Widespread & common. |
| White wagtail | Widespread & common. |
| Wren | Only at Monchique. |
| Alpine accentor | Three at Cabo de São Vicente. |
| Robin | Small wintering numbers. |
| Bluethroat | At least seven at Alvor Estuary & one at Salgados Lagoons. |
| Redstart | One at Rocha de Pena. |
| Black redstart | Peak of seven in Sagres area. |
| Stonechat | Widespread & common. |
| Wheatear | One at Salgados Lagoons. |
| Blue rock thrush | Peak of four at Rocha de Pena. |
| Ring ouzel | Two at Rocha de Pena & one at Sagres. |
| Blackbird | Widespread & uncommon. |
| Song thrush | Singles at Alte, Castro Marim & Sagres. |
| Redwing | One at Sagres. |
| Fieldfare | Five at Sagres on two dates. |
| Mistle thrush | Peak of three at Sagres. |
| Fan-tailed warbler | Peak of four at Salgados Lagoons. |
| Dartford warbler | One at Castro Verde & minimum of four at Monchique. |
| Sardinian warbler | Widespread & common. |
| Blackcap | Six at Barranco do Velho. |
| Chiffchaff | Widespread & common. |
| Firecrest | One at Barranco do Velho. |
| Blue tit | Noted at Alte and Rocha de Pena. |
| Great tit | Recorded in small numbers. |
| Nuthatch | One heard at Barranco do Velho. |
| Short-toed treecreeper | Two at Barranco do Velho. |
| Iberian grey shrike | Peak of six at Castro Verde. |
| Jay | Single birds at Barranco do Velho & Castro Verde. |
| Azure-winged magpie | Widespread & common. |
| Magpie | Widespread & common. |
| Red-billed chough | 130 at Sagres. |
| Jackdaw | Peak of just five at Alvor Estuary. |
| Carrion crow | 10 at Castro Verde. |
| Raven | 17 at Castro Verde & 12 at Sagres. |
| Spotless starling | Widespread & common. |
| Common starling | Common at Castro Marim. |
| House sparrow | Widespread & common. |
| Black-headed weaver | Minimum of six at Quinto do Lago. |
| Common waxbill | Two at Castro Verde. |
| Chaffinch | Peak of 100+ at Rocha de Pena. |
| Serin | 20 at Sagres. |
| Goldfinch | Widespread & common. |
| Greenfinch | Two at Salgados Lagoons. |
| Siskin | Peak of six at Castro Verde. |
| Bullfinch | One at Rocha de Pena. |
| Hawfinch | Two at Monchique. |
| Linnet | Widespread & common. |
| Corn bunting | Noted at Castro Verde & Sagres. |

| Mammals – 7 species | | | |
|--|------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Common dolphin | Rabbit | Genet – dead on road | Mole – hills only |
| Iberian hare | Wild boar – signs only | Badger – dead on road | |
| Reptiles & amphibians – 3 species | | | |
| Spanish terrapin | Red-eared terrapin | Moorish gecko | |
| Butterflies – 13 species | | | |
| Large white | Small white | Clouded yellow inc. 'helice' form | Cleopatra |
| Small copper | Brown argus | Long-tailed blue | Lang's short-tailed blue |
| Red admiral | Painted lady | Comma | Wall brown |
| Monarch | | | |
| Odonata – 3 species | | | |
| Red-veined darter | Southern hawkler | Migrant hawkler | |
| Notable invertebrates | | | |
| Hummingbird hawk-moth | Dung beetle | Violet carpenter bee | Praying mantis |

PLANTS

Numbers on the right refer to Blamey & Grey-Wilson, *Mediterranean Wild Flowers*.

Where there is no number, usually these are plants in floras from northern Europe

e.g. *Wild Flowers of Britain & Europe* by Fitter, Fitter & Blamey

Wild Flowers of the Algarve by Thorogood & Hiscock.

Planted trees are noted when of special interest.

| SPERMATOPHYTA Conifers | | |
|---|------------------------------|-----|
| Araucariaceae | | |
| <i>Araucaria heterophylla</i> P | Norfolk island pine | |
| Pinaceae – Pine family | | |
| <i>Pinus pinea</i> | stone / umbrella pine | 3 |
| <i>Pinus pinaster</i> | maritime pine | 5 |
| Cupressaceae – Cypress family | | |
| <i>Juniperus phoenicea</i> | Phoenician juniper | 17 |
| ANGIOSPERMS | | |
| Moraceae – Mulberry family | | |
| <i>Ficus carica</i> | fig | 42 |
| Aizoaceae – Aizoon family | | |
| <i>Carpobrotus edulis</i> | Hottentot fig | 115 |
| Fagaceae – Oaks | | |
| <i>Castanea sativa</i> | sweet chestnut | 23 |
| <i>Quercus coccifera</i> | holly / prickly / kermes oak | 24 |
| <i>Quercus rotundifolia</i> | holm oak | 26 |
| <i>Quercus suber</i> | cork oak | 27 |
| <i>Quercus faginea</i> | Portuguese oak | 30 |
| Chenopodiaceae – Goosefoot family | | |
| <i>Beta vulgaris</i> ssp. <i>maritima</i> | sea beet | 80 |
| <i>Arthrocnemum macrostachya</i> | a perennial glasswort | 84 |
| <i>Suaeda vera</i> | shrubby seablite | 94 |
| <i>Halimione vulgaris</i> | sea purslane | 100 |
| Caryophyllaceae – Pink family | | |
| <i>Paronychia capita</i> | paronychia | 134 |
| Fabiaceae was Leguminosae – Pea family | | |
| <i>Ceratonia siliqua</i> | carob | 431 |
| <i>Genista hirsuta</i> ssp. <i>algarbrensis</i> | | 466 |
| <i>Ulex parviflorus</i> | small-flowered gorse | 473 |
| <i>Ulex minor</i> | dwarf gorse | |
| <i>Spartium junceum</i> | Spanish broom | 481 |
| <i>Hippocrepis glauca</i> | horseshoe vetch | 704 |
| Oxalidaceae | | |
| <i>Oxalis pes-caprae</i> | Bermuda buttercup | 735 |
| Anacardiaceae – Pistacio family | | |
| <i>Pistacia lentiscus</i> | mastic tree or lentisc | 865 |
| Malvaceae – Mallow family | | |
| <i>Malva sylvestris</i> | common mallow | 898 |
| Thymelaeaceae – Daphne family | | |
| <i>Daphne gnidium</i> | daphne | 936 |

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|--|-----------------------------|-------|
| Cistaceae – Rockrose family | | |
| <i>Cistus albidus</i> | grey-leaved cistus | 961 |
| <i>Cistus ladanifer</i> | gum cistus | 971 |
| <i>Cistus palhinhae</i> | | 972 |
| Tamaricaceae – Tamarix | | |
| <i>Tamarix africana</i> | tamarix | 1016 |
| Cactaceae – Cactus family | | |
| <i>Opuntia maxima (ficus-indica)</i> | prickly pear | 1040 |
| Myrtaceae – Myrtle family | | |
| <i>Myrtus communis</i> | common myrtle | 1052 |
| Punicaceae – Pomegranate family | | |
| <i>Punica granatum</i> | pomegranate | 1064 |
| Umbelliferae / Apiaceae – Carrot family | | |
| <i>Eryngium maritimum</i> | sea holly | 1073 |
| <i>Ferula communis</i> | giant fennel | 1141 |
| Ericaceae – Heath family | | |
| <i>Arbutus unedo</i> | strawberry tree | 1176 |
| <i>Erica arborea</i> | tree heather | 1178 |
| <i>Erica australis</i> | Spanish heath | 1181 |
| Araliaceae – Ivy family | | |
| <i>Hedera helix</i> | ivy | |
| Oleaceae – Olive family | | |
| <i>Olea europaea</i> | olive | 1248 |
| <i>Olea europaea</i> spp <i>oleaster</i> | wild olive | 1248a |
| Apocynaceae – Oleander family | | |
| <i>Nerium oleander</i> | oleander | 1256 |
| Convolvulaceae – Bindweed family | | |
| <i>Ipomoea purpurea</i> | common morning glory | 1319 |
| Boraginaceae – Borage family | | |
| <i>Lithodora diffusa</i> | scrambling gromwell | 1351 |
| Lamiaceae (Labiatae) – Mint family | | |
| <i>Teucrium scorodonia</i> | wood sage | 1433 |
| <i>Rosmarinus officinalis</i> | rosemary | 1526 |
| <i>Lavandula stoechas</i> | French lavender | 1528 |
| Asteraceae – Daisy family | | |
| <i>Dittrichia viscosa</i> | stink aster | 1842 |
| <i>Carlina corymbosa</i> | flat-topped carline thistle | 1920 |
| MONOCOTYLEDONS | | |
| Liliaceae | | |
| <i>Asphodelus aestivus</i> | common asphodel | 2089 |
| <i>Merendera filifolia</i> | merendera | 2132 |
| <i>Scilla autumnalis</i> | autumn squill | 2189 |
| <i>Asparagus albus</i> | white asparagus | 2214 |
| <i>Ruscus aculeatus</i> | butcher's broom | 2219 |
| <i>Smilax aspera</i> | common smilax, sarsaparilla | 2222 |
| <i>Crocus serotinus</i> | autumn crocus | 2325 |
| Agavaceae | | |
| <i>Agave americana</i> P | agave, century plant | 2253 |
| Amaryllidaceae | | |
| <i>Pancratium maritimum</i> | sea daffodil | 2270 |
| <i>Narcissus serotinus</i> | | 2272 |
| Palmae – Palm family | | |
| <i>Chamaerops humilis</i> | dwarf fan palm | 2357 |
| Gramineae | | |
| <i>Arundo donax</i> | giant reed | 2494 |
| <i>Phragmites australis</i> | common reed | |
| FERNS (PTERIDOPHYTA) | | |
| <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> | bracken | |