

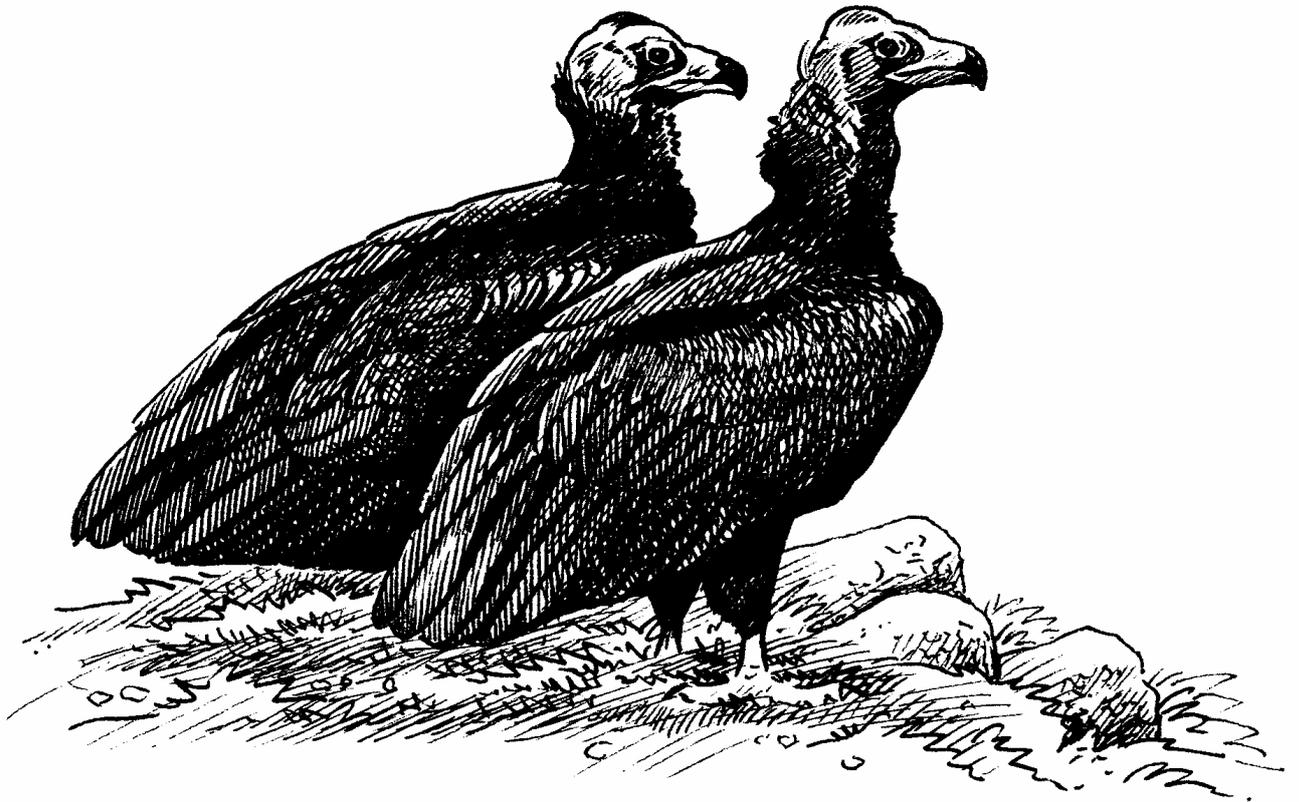
Honeyguide

WILDLIFE HOLIDAYS

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**Eastern Greece
1 – 8 May 1999**

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The group

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Leaders

Chris Durdin
Steve Henson

Report by Steve Henson, plus plants by Chris Durdin.
Illustrations by Rob Hume. Front cover: black vultures.

As with all Honeyguide holidays, £25 of the price of the holiday was put towards a conservation project. In this case £350 was given to WWF's Dadia Project, presented to Valya Stergioti when she gave a talk about the project's work. A thank-you letter from Valya appears at the end of this report.

This brings the total given to conservation projects in Europe since the first Honeyguide holiday in 1991 to £17,425 (at the end of the 1999 season).

Summary

Itinerary & daily highlights

Day 1 Saturday, 1/5/99

Afternoon: flew from London Heathrow on 12:30hrs Olympic Airways flight to Athens, arriving 18:40hrs. Onward flight to Alexandroupolis, arriving 20:15hrs. Picked up hire cars at the airport, stopping near Loutros for our evening meal, on route to Dadia Ecotourism Centre.

Day 2 Sunday, 2/5/99

Morning: circular walk through Dadia village, downhill through farmland into the Diavolorema River valley, northeast of the village.

Late afternoon: Dadia Forest Reserve – walked up by road to the observation hide overlooking the raptor 'feeding station', returning along the marked forest trail.

Bird highlights of the day were Egyptian vulture, flocks of migrating Levant sparrowhawks, bee-eater, red-rumped swallow, whinchat, red-backed shrike, hawfinch and black-headed bunting. Other highlights were spur-thighed tortoise and praying mantis. An amphibian highlight was the common tree frog after dark.

Day 3 Monday, 3/5/99

Morning: Evros Delta – open area north of the railway line and a part-circuit of Drana Lagoon.

Late afternoon: drove up the steep track onto the southernmost of the Loutros Hills, overlooking the Evros Delta.

Bird highlights of the day were little egret, white-tailed eagle, marsh harrier, long-legged buzzard, great reed warbler and singing ortolan buntings.

Day 4 Tuesday, 4/5/99

Morning: Evros Delta – visited the new Evros Delta Visitors' Centre, followed by Anthi lagoons, west of the Loutrou River.

Late afternoon: brief stop by the river in Loutros, then onto the hillslopes east of Loutros (tracks wind uphill from the village in an approximately east to northeasterly direction).

Bird highlights of the day were white pelican, squacco heron, glossy ibis, collared pratincole, gull-billed tern, whiskered tern and golden oriole. A botanical highlight was French figwort.

Day 5 Wednesday, 5/5/99

Morning: brief stops west of Lefkimi before continuing west to the high, craggy radio mast (Kerea) area in Dadia Forest Reserve.

Afternoon: lunch stop and leisurely afternoon, west of Lefkimi. Stream valley scrub, woodland and cultivation. Ice-cream and drinks stop in Provatonas before returning to Dadia village.

Bird highlights of the day were short-toed eagle, booted eagle and golden oriole. Non-bird highlights were predominant with green lizard, yellow-bellied toad, Glanville fritillary, peony, wild tulip and lady orchid.

Day 6 Thursday, 6/5/99

Morning: a walk through Dadia village, downhill through woodland, scrub and small fields into the Diavolorema River valley, north of Dadia village.

Afternoon: visit to the nearby town of Soufli.

Bird highlights of the day were a group of nine black vultures over the Ecotourism Centre, olivaceous warbler, golden oriole and masked shrike, with woodchat shrike and black-headed bunting in the same field of view. A red squirrel rounded off an exciting morning.

Day 7 Friday, 7/5/99

Morning: Dadia Forest Reserve – a return visit by minibus to the observation hide overlooking the raptor 'feeding station'.

Afternoon: Evros Delta – a brief look at the open area north of the railway line and a part circuit of Drana Lagoon as far as the pump houses.

Bird highlights of the day were Egyptian, griffon and black vultures perched in adjacent trees at the raptor 'feeding station', male red-footed falcon, stone-curlew, Isabelline wheatear and black-headed bunting. A European souslik was well seen by some as we circuited the delta.

Day 8 Saturday, 8/5/99

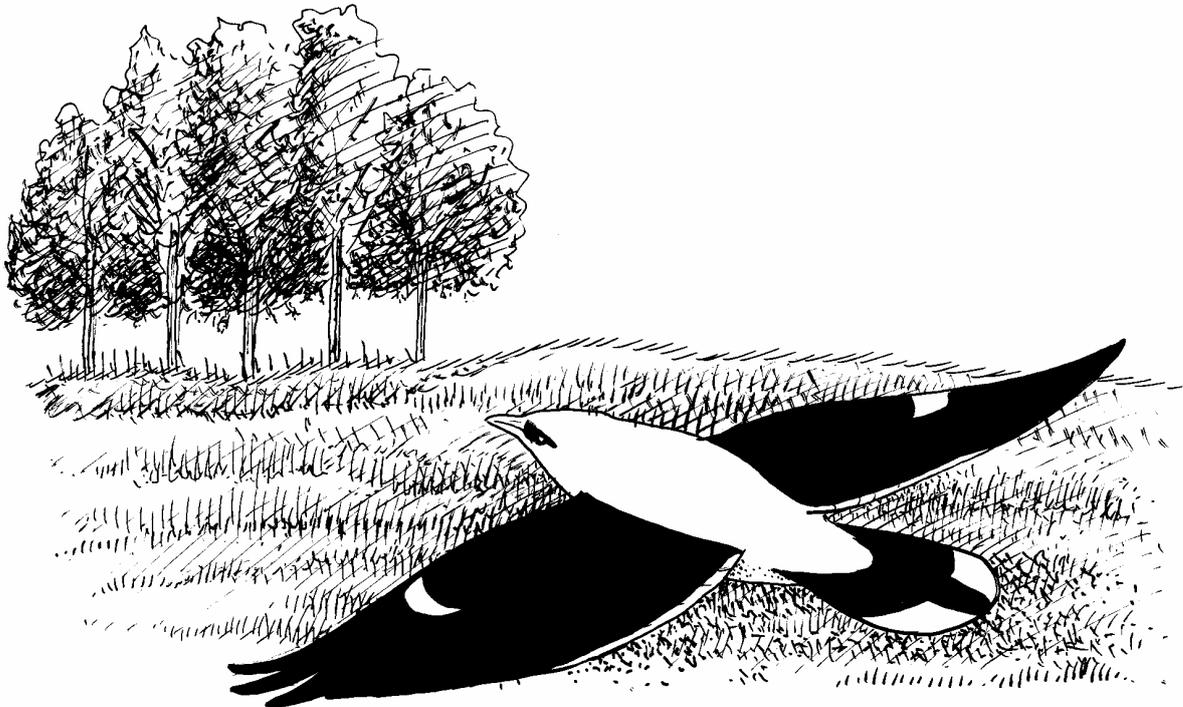
Departed Dadia Ecotourism Centre early morning for 07:35hrs Olympic Airways flight from Alexandroupolis to Athens.

Morning in Athens, visiting the old town and Acropolis. Casual birdwatching in the surrounding parkland.

Returned to Athens international airport for early afternoon onward flight to London Heathrow.

Bird highlights of the week were white pelican, white-tailed eagle, long-legged buzzard, whiskered tern, great reed warbler, olivaceous warbler, golden oriole, masked shrike and black-headed bunting (so beautiful & abundant!)

Memorable spectacles included the abundance of birds in the Evros Delta and seeing four shrike species in close proximity, in quick succession.



Daily diary

Saturday, 1/5/99 – in transit

We arrived at Athens airport, touching down with only 25 minutes to spare before our onward flight to Alexandroupolis. Transit through the airport went smoothly and we were soon bused out to the waiting plane. Skies were overcast and the air heavy, with a temperature of 26°C. Just time to glimpse yellow-legged gull, swift, crested lark and house sparrow before climbing aboard.

The flight over the Aegean Sea to 'Alex' took just an hour, providing wonderful views of some of the islands below for those with window seats. Dusk was falling as we walked across the tarmac, greeted by much fresher air and a pleasant 21°C.

We picked up our hire cars at the airport, stopping on route near Loutros for an evening meal. Getting to the taverna proved eventful. A bridge over the river had been washed away earlier in the year, thus necessitating a detour of several kilometres to reach the taverna only about 100 metres beyond the bridge! At the taverna, run as a women's cooperative, we met two Italian birders who enthusiastically named the birds they had recently seen on the Evros Delta, whetting our appetites for the week ahead.

Later, after a filling and enjoyable meal, we headed for the Dadia Ecotourism Centre about an hour and 59 km away to the north. The eventfulness of the journey continued as our 'convoy' of cars hit a pothole in the road approaching Dadia village, losing a wing mirror on one of them in the process!

Arriving at the Ecotourism Centre, we quickly settled in and retired for the night.

Sunday, 2/5/99 – Dadia village, the Diavolorema River valley and Dadia Forest Reserve

By 6am Jared was out on the first of his early morning sorties, getting to grips with some of the smaller birds around the centre, which include woodlark, black-eared wheatear, Sardinian warbler, serin and cirl bunting. By the time we took breakfast at the café, the morning was hot and sunny, ideal conditions for soaring raptors.

After breakfast we set out on the first of our local walks, through Dadia village and downhill into farmland and the Diavolorema River valley. Wheatear, black-eared wheatear and a flock of circling Levant sparrowhawks soon halted our progress. Eventually we stopped in the village square to admire the white stork sat on its huge platform nest. A colony of house and Spanish sparrows in the underside of the nest greatly added to the spectacle (male Spanish sparrows are such stunning birds!). Further on through the village, we stopped to admire a perched red-rumped swallow, low on a cable. Pale, whitish streaks on the mantle could be seen, a feature usually impossible to see.

To the northeast of the village we strolled down into farmland with its characteristic small fields, scrub, scattered trees and flower-fringed tracks. Soaring raptors were in evidence with honey buzzard, Egyptian vulture, lesser spotted eagle, booted eagle and another flock of Levant sparrowhawks moving quickly through. Nightingales sang continuously from the depths of the scrub whilst in contrast several red-backed and woodchat shrikes showed themselves well. Soon we encountered the first of many singing male black-headed buntings, one of the most abundant and striking birds of the trip, much-admired and so characteristic of the area. Three bee-eaters moved through the valley where a golden oriole sang from the riverside willows. Several black storks, little ringed plover, turtle dove and whinchat were seen well whilst a singing crested lark proved more difficult against the bright mid-day sky. Insects were abundant in the sunshine with several fast-flying Camberwell beauty, swallowtail and scarce swallowtail butterflies, an occasional Egyptian locust flushed from the vegetation, and huge carpenter bees visiting the flowers of bladder senna. A well-earned taverna lunch rounded off a superb walk.

During late afternoon we walked up by road to the observation hide overlooking the raptor 'feeding station' in Dadia Forest Reserve. There was a general lull in bird activity with most detection taking place by sound rather than sight. Cuckoo, Sardinian warbler, Eastern Bonelli's warbler and chiffchaff were heard singing, with long-tailed tits seen. A spur-thighed tortoise and praying mantis enlivened the uphill walk. Few birds were in evidence at the 'feeding station', which lacked a fresh supply of carcasses. Vultures were conspicuous by their absence although Egyptian vultures and short-toed eagles were soaring in the vicinity. The highlight came in smaller form with a pair of hawfinches in pines in front of the hide quickly spotted by Keith. Soon, early evening was upon us and we returned to the Centre along the marked forest trail.

The evening was spent in Dadia village for the first of many tasty and sociable evening meals. Later, outside the taverna, were calling scops owls, seen well with the aid of streetlamps and my torch.

Monday, 3/5/99 – Evros Delta and Loutros

A short journey on route 95 back towards Alex took us to the Evros Delta where we searched the open, scrubby area north of the railway line. Despite the heat, birds were much in evidence with marsh harrier, short-toed lark, whinchat, red-backed shrike, singing black-headed buntings and a magnificent long-legged buzzard overhead. An obliging calandra lark sang from the ground for several minutes, giving time for good telescope views.

We crossed the railway line and stopped near the bridge over the canal to look for great reed warblers in the tall reed. We waited only a matter of seconds before one came into view, climbing a reed stem and singing simultaneously. Soon another appeared at very close range, staying in view long enough for everyone to see it well through a telescope. By the side of the canal were several enormous marsh frogs basking in the strong sunshine.

After a quick break from birding for water and biscuits, we drove in convoy slowly along the floodbank fringing the huge Drana Lagoon, stopping en route in areas of interest. An Isabelline wheatear, glimpsed tantalizingly, quickly 'disappeared', several red-backed shrikes were present, Cetti's warbler sang loudly and we had to avoid the hazard of spur-thighed tortoises crossing the track in front of us! Eventually we reached a wet area with a flock of 81 feeding little egrets. There were distant rafts of large white birds out on the water – no, not pelicans but mute swans! In the distance we picked up two white-tailed eagles showing, even at long range, their characteristic huge bulk.

The weather was hot and sunny so our packed lunches were eaten in whatever shade could be gleaned from the cars. Birds were everywhere, particularly over Voulgarouda Lagoon on the seaward side of Drana Lagoon, with feeding collared pratincoles, Mediterranean gulls, little gulls, gull-billed terns and white-winged black terns, although they were often too distant for really good views. Nearer were several stunning black-headed wagtails and flocks of avocet, curlew sandpiper and spotted redshank.

As the air cooled during late afternoon we drove up onto the southernmost of the Loutros hills, overlooking the Evros Delta, to the tiny chapel at the top. We enjoyed panoramic views and were able to see far in the distance where we had been earlier that day. After a long hot day some of the group enjoyed a 'potter' in the flower-rich chalk grassland whilst others searched successfully for singing male ortolan buntings on the scrub covered slopes nearby. This is a good area for raptors – three buzzards, a long-legged buzzard and a kestrel were present.

Tuesday, 4/5/99 – Evros Delta and the hillslopes east of Loutros revisited

After breakfast we headed off along route 95 again, this time bound for a different part of the Evros Delta. Our first stop was the recently completed Evros Delta Visitor Centre, south of Loutros, where we were met by Eleni Makrigianni.

Eleni showed us around the centre and gave a splendid introductory talk on the wildlife and conservation of the delta. With our appetites whetted, we were whisked off by minibus (with Chris following behind in the car) to the Anthi lagoons, west of the Loutrou River. This area of shallow freshwater, fringed with reed, rushes and willows, is very different in character to Drana Lagoon, being smaller and more intimate, allowing closer views of the birds.

Heading out on foot towards the beach, birds were around us in abundance and at times it was difficult to decide what to look at next! An adult and two immature white pelicans drifted past at low level, giving good views. Collared pratincoles, whiskered terns and gull-billed terns fed over the lagoons and several squacco herons were foraging from the edges of the track or in the shallows. The drying western lagoon, coated in water-crowfoot, had feeding grey herons, little egrets and a flock of over 40 glossy ibis. Waders were also present with black-winged stilt, wood sandpiper and large flocks of ruff and spotted redshank, many of the latter in spangled summer plumage. Some of us spotted a swimming grass snake and along the track were clouds of blue damselflies (sorry, I didn't identify them – there were too many birds!).

It was hot and sunny again today (over 31°C) so we stopped on the beach for lunch. Kentish plover, sanderling and turnstone were feeding along the shoreline, with a few sandwich terns offshore. After lunch we walked west along the beach towards a large flock of loafing gulls. The group furthest in front enjoyed excellent views of resting Mediterranean gulls, more Kentish plovers and a hoopoe foraging on the beach, but unfortunately the gulls and hoopoe had flown by the time the others had caught up.

Later in the afternoon we gave our thanks to Eleni for spending the day with us and headed for the nearby village of Loutros where we stopped briefly at the river to look at the Judas trees. Several Spanish sparrows were collecting dried grass for nest material and a party of 19 bee-eaters flew overhead.

On a nearby track, most of the group walked steadily up onto the hillslopes east of Loutros, whilst others potted for plants and butterflies lower down. A layer of high cloud made walking easier, although by this time of the day, many birds had become inactive and difficult to see. Short-toed lark, woodlark and tree pipit were present in the mosaic of chalk grassland and scrub, with a Sardinian warbler giving reasonable if intermittent views down on the scrubby slope. Sitting for a while to admire the view, we could hear singing turtle dove, cuckoo, nightingale, whitethroat, golden oriole, chaffinch, ortolan bunting and corn bunting – marvellous sounds. Buzzard and long-legged buzzard were seen again today, as well as two Levant sparrowhawks.

Before returning downhill a large, basking European glass lizard surprised Jenny (and *vice versa!*) and we came across a Hermann's tortoise. Lower down the slope we recorded our second hoopoe of the day before driving back to Dadia after a terrific day.

Wednesday, 5/5/99 – Dadia Forest Reserve, west of Lefkimi

A cloudy, dull morning was not ideal for an outing up to the radio mast on one of the high, rocky outcrops in Dadia Forest Reserve, west of Lefkimi. We hoped the cloud would lift and after leaving route 95 at Provatonas, drove west around the edge of Lefkimi, stopping en route nearby to look for a colony of breeding red-rumped swallows. Curiously, the swallows were absent although the stop was worthwhile, as we met a local farmer and saw grey wagtail. Woodchat shrikes were scrutinized on the way before we eventually entered forest and began to climb steeply uphill, via the hairpin bends!

With low cloud and a cool breeze, jackets and fleeces were the order of the day once at the radio mast. We pottered along the road, admiring and identifying some of the many spectacular plants in flower including peony, wild tulip and lady orchid. In the cooler air many of the butterflies were torpid, allowing us time to confirm the identity of a Glanville fritillary. Chris and I scanned in vain the many cavities in the huge outcrops of rock for breeding eagle owl. Most of the group did, however, enjoy views of black-eared wheatear, blue rock thrush, crag martin, raven and ortolan bunting, and a fine male hawfinch perched briefly in the top of a pine close to Mike and me. Most raptors were keeping a low profile but we had good 'eye-level' views of displaying short-toed eagles.

For lunch we headed downhill, stopping on the way to photograph a stunning patch of crane's-bill in what by this time was bright sunshine. An ideal picnic spot was found at the edge of the forest, where it merged with scrub along a narrow stream valley, with singing Eastern Bonelli's warblers nearby. Unintentionally we ended up pottering here for the afternoon (it was such a pleasant, peaceful spot!), finding white helleborine in the process. Jared explored the stream, soon finding smooth newt and yellow-bellied toad, as well as both terrapin species. Subalpine and Sardinian warblers were present in the scrub, the former carrying food, and a female *Ficedula* flycatcher was glimpsed briefly – almost certainly a semi-collared flycatcher. As the afternoon wore on golden orioles were added and at last Keith, Joyce and I had good if brief views of Eastern Bonelli's warbler.

Satisfied after a very relaxing and enjoyable afternoon, we headed back to Dadia, stopping in Provatonas for ice cream and drinks on the way.

Thursday, 6/5/99 – Dadia Forest Reserve, the Diavolorema River valley and Soufli

A group of nine black vultures over the Ecotourism Centre got the morning off to a good start. After breakfast we set off on the second of our local walks through the village, downhill into the Diavolorema River valley, with its characteristic small fields and scrub.

Overnight the wind had veered to the north, bringing cooler, windier weather with a spot or two of rain. Initially, finding birds was hard work but once out into the farmland there were a number of birds to get our teeth into. An olivaceous warbler uncharacteristically sat in view for several minutes allowing everyone to see it through the 'scope. Shrikes were plentiful with a woodchat and singing black-headed bunting in the same field of view and five male red-backed shrikes together in a small field. We reached the road and immediately came across a pair of masked shrikes (the male in immaculate plumage). With three shrike species seen, we had continued only a little further before also finding a lesser grey shrike and a Syrian woodpecker, although several of the group had already gone ahead for a brisk walk to relieve the cold! There was nothing for it but to christen this part of the valley 'shrike corner'!

Despite the weather, raptors were also in evidence with two soaring lesser spotted eagles, the first views of the week for the whole group, plus a black kite and a female goshawk. On the way back to the village an Eastern Bonelli's warbler gave brief, frustrating views but we fared better with golden orioles and a red squirrel, rounding off an exciting morning.

After lunch at the café, some of the group drove into nearby Soufli. Unfortunately the silk museum and many of the shops were closed but it did provide an opportunity to see a border town of the region. Several silk purchases were made, including a tie for Chris, as well as stamps for postcards, and some enjoyed a reasonable cup of tea or coffee in one of the Kafeneia. Even here in the town we managed to find a few birds including a soaring booted eagle and a probable peregrine.

On the way back we stopped to watch, at very close quarters, a hunting pale-phase booted eagle which 'crashed' into the roadside vegetation before carrying off a large green lizard.

Friday, 7 /5/99 – Dadia Forest Reserve and a return to the Evros Delta

After breakfast we returned by minibus to the observation hide overlooking the raptor 'feeding station' in Dadia Forest Reserve. There were still no fresh carcasses at the site although this time vultures were present, with one each of Egyptian, griffon and black vultures perched in adjacent trees.

Friday was a free day with most opting for a return to Drana Lagoon on the delta. Conditions were cooler with an overcast sky and a strong northerly wind but, using the cars as 'hides' we worked our way around the raised bank in relative comfort, as far as the pump houses. Red-backed shrikes were more numerous along the bank to the north of the lagoon and may have included migrants held up in the strong wind. A pair of Isabelline wheatears were in the same location as the one glimpsed earlier in the week but this time we were able to see them well through the 'scope whilst being buffeted by the wind.

There was still a large flock of spotted redshank on the lagoon and we found a feeding group of about 15 little stints close to the bank. Two pairs of very obliging stone-curlews were found, beyond the area visited on Monday. One of the pairs fed along the edges of a stony track and nearby there was another Isabelline wheatear and a tawny pipit. A flighty hoopoe was flushed from the bank ahead of us and whilst searching for it the front group spotted a European souslik (a small, sandy-coloured rodent) on the bank ahead. To the amazement of Joyce and I, it seemed to vanish without a trace into the bank – an amazing optical illusion as it retreated into its burrow. Two distant red-footed falcons hunted over the rough grazing marshes whilst later, as we sheltered from the wind behind the pump houses, a fine male dashed past us at close range. As we looked towards Turkey and several distant mosques, four white storks and a black stork moved purposefully north along the Evros valley, high above the border.

Finally, on the way back towards route 95, we came across a female hen harrier to the north of the railway line, adding another raptor species to an already impressive list. Approaching Dadia village, another impromptu stop was made to watch a pair of lesser spotted eagles soaring over the road.

Saturday, 8/5/99 – homeward bound

We set off from the Ecotourism Centre bound for Alex airport in the coolness of first light, for an early morning flight to Athens. A hobby, the penultimate raptor of the trip, flew into view alongside route 95 near Feres, the main avian event on this leg of the journey.

After a delayed departure from Alex, we arrived at Athens airport only to find that our onward flight to Heathrow had also been put back, allowing ample time for a trip into Athens. We left our luggage and headed for the taxi rank, meeting up again 25 minutes later at the Acropolis, amid hordes of tourists.

Chris and I headed off towards the old town for shopping and a coffee, leaving the rest of the Honeyguiders to look around the Acropolis or do some casual birding in the surrounding parkland. A peregrine soared over the old town whilst a few alpine swifts mingled with swifts above the Acropolis. Despite the moderate heat of the morning and considerable numbers of tourists, those still birding managed to find Rüppell's warbler, firecrest and rock nuthatch before it was time to head back to the airport for an early afternoon flight to London Heathrow.

The week yielded many wildlife highlights and memories, and new friends were made. Many thanks to Angela and John for driving and for their tolerance of the occasional pothole. Many thanks to everyone from Chris and myself for being such good company.

Systematic lists

Birds

English & scientific names, and status are based on *The Birds of Greece* (Handrinos & Akriotis 1997) except for Bonelli's warbler which is now considered to be a distinct species, Eastern Bonelli's warbler *Phylloscopus orientalis* (see *Ibis* 139:197-201). Status is general and refers to Greece as a whole.

Great crested grebe

Fairly widespread and locally common resident, common and widespread winter visitor
Several, Drana Lagoon, Evros Delta, 3/5.

Cormorant

Fairly widespread and locally common resident, common and widespread winter visitor
Evros Delta, 3/5, 4/5 & 7/5. Seen most frequently along the coastal margins.

White pelican

Scarce and local summer visitor and passage migrant
An adult and 2 immatures over the Anthi lagoons, Evros Delta, 4/5.

Squacco heron

Common but local summer visitor, common and widespread passage migrant
Anthi lagoons, Evros Delta, 4/5.

Little egret

Fairly common and widespread resident, common and widespread passage migrant
A group of 81, Drana Lagoon, Evros Delta, 3/5; present in good numbers on the Anthi lagoons, Evros Delta, 4/5 and on Drana Lagoon, Evros Delta, 7/5.

Grey heron

Common and widespread resident
Several, Evros Delta, 3/5, 4/5 & 7/5.

Purple heron

Rare and local summer visitor, fairly common passage migrant
3+, Anthi lagoons, Evros Delta, 4/5; 7, Drana Lagoon, Evros Delta, 7/5.

Black stork

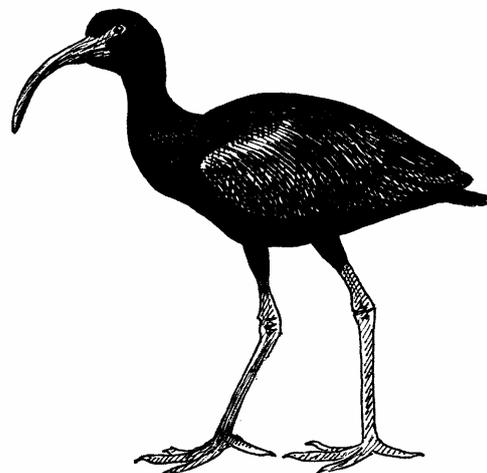
Rare and local summer visitor and passage migrant
9, over Dadia Forest Reserve, Diavolorema River valley, Dadia and the surrounding area, 2/5; singles, hillslopes east of Loutros, 3/5; west of Provatonas, 5/5, and over the Diavolorema River valley, Dadia, 6/5. 3+ over Dadia Forest Reserve (seen from the hide at the raptor 'feeding station,) and 1 moving north along the Evros valley with 4 white storks, Evros Delta, 7/5.

White stork

Widespread and locally common summer visitor and passage migrant
Several seen daily, 2/5-7/5. 4 moving north along the Evros valley with a single black stork, 7/5. Occupied nests in the village square, Dadia; in Loutros, Provatonas, Monastiraki and south of Soufli.

Glossy ibis

Rare and local summer visitor, fairly common and widespread passage migrant
A flock of 42 plus several smaller groups, Anthi lagoons, Evros Delta, 4/5; c.10, Drana Lagoon, Evros Delta, 7/5.



Spoonbill

Rare and local resident

2, Anthi lagoons, Evros Delta, 4/5.

Mute swan

Rare and local resident, locally common winter visitor

Very numerous, Drana Lagoon, Evros Delta, 3/5 & 7/5; several present on the Anthi lagoons, Evros Delta, 4/5.

Shelduck

Scarce and local resident, fairly widespread and locally common winter visitor

1, Drana Lagoon, Evros Delta, 3/5; c.8, Drana Lagoon, Evros Delta, 7/5.

Mallard

Fairly widespread but scarce resident, very common and widespread winter visitor

Singles, Drana Lagoon, Evros Delta, 3/5; Anthi lagoons, Evros Delta, 4/5 and 2+, Drana Lagoon, Evros Delta, 7/5.

Pintail

Common and widespread winter visitor and passage migrant

Several, Monolimni (Paloukia) Lagoon, Evros Delta, 7/5.

Garganey

Scarce and local summer visitor, common and widespread passage migrant

5, Anthi lagoons, Evros Delta, 4/5.

Shoveler

Fairly widespread and common winter visitor and passage migrant

Several, Drana Lagoon, Evros Delta, 3/5; c.5, Monolimni (Paloukia) Lagoon, Evros Delta, 7/5.

Honey buzzard

Widespread but scarce summer visitor and passage migrant

1 soaring with several other raptors over the edge of Dadia Forest Reserve, 2/5.

Black kite

Rare and local resident, scarce winter visitor and passage migrant

1, Diavolorema River valley, Dadia, 6/5.

White-tailed eagle

Rare and local resident

2 immatures, Drana Lagoon, Evros Delta, 3/5.

Egyptian vulture

Fairly widespread and locally fairly common summer visitor and passage migrant

7 in the Dadia area, 2/5; 1, Anthi lagoons, Evros Delta, 4/5; 2, radio mast (Kerea), Dadia Forest Reserve, west of Lefkimi, 5/5; 3 at the raptor 'feeding station', Dadia Forest Reserve, 7/5.

Griffon vulture

Fairly common but local resident

Several in the Dadia area, 2/5 and 1 at the raptor 'feeding station', Dadia Forest Reserve, 7/5.

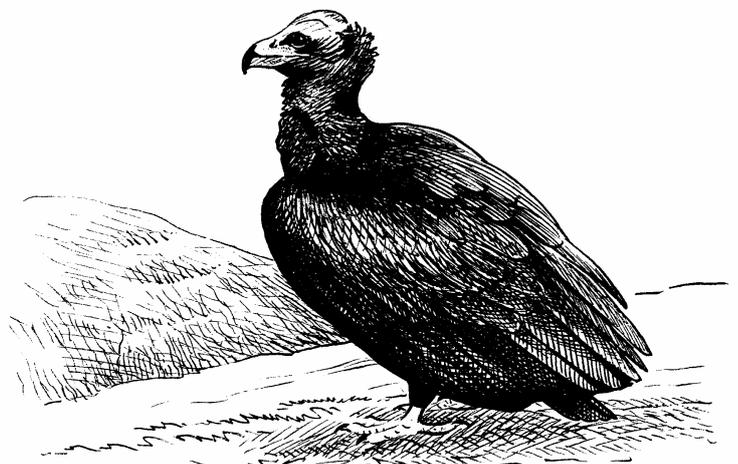
Individuals soaring over the forest seen daily from the Ecotourism centre.

Black vulture

Rare and local resident

Several in the Dadia area, 2/5

(outnumbering griffons) and 6/5; 3 at the raptor 'feeding station', Dadia Forest Reserve, 7/5. Individuals soaring over the forest seen daily from the Ecotourism Centre (also outnumbering griffons), with a group of 9 on 6/5.



Short-toed eagle

Fairly common and widespread summer visitor

5 in the Dadia area, 2/5; 1, Evros Delta, 3/5; 6, radio mast (Kerea) and surrounding area, Dadia Forest Reserve, west of Lefkimi, 5/5; several, Dadia Forest Reserve, 7/5.

Marsh harrier

Fairly widespread but scarce resident, common winter visitor and passage migrant

Several, Evros Delta, 3/5, 4/5 & 7/5. Frequently seen hunting over arable farmland and scrub, including an individual hunting over arable farmland adjacent to route 95, south of Monastiraki. 1 west of Provatonas, 5/5.

Hen harrier

Widespread and locally fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant

A female, north of the railway line, Evros Delta, 7/5.

Goshawk

Fairly common and widespread resident

Singles, Dadia, 3/5 & 5/5; a female, Diavolorema River valley, Dadia, 6/5.

Sparrowhawk

Fairly widespread and locally fairly common resident, common and widespread winter visitor

1, west of Lefkimi, 5/5. Probable sparrowhawks were seen on the hillslopes east of Loutros, 4/5 and in Soufli, 6/5.

Levant sparrowhawk

Fairly widespread and locally fairly common summer visitor and passage migrant

Flocks of 9 and 13, Dadia, 2/5; 2, hillslopes east of Loutros, 4/5; 1, Dadia, 7/5.

Buzzard

Common and widespread resident and winter visitor

2, Dadia, 2/5; 2, Evros Delta, 3/5; 3, hillslopes east of Loutros, 3/5; 1, hillslopes east of Loutros, 4/5; several, radio mast (Kerea) and surrounding area, Dadia Forest Reserve, west of Lefkimi, 5/5; 1, Diavolorema River valley, Dadia, 6/5; 1, Dadia Forest Reserve, 7/5; 1, seen from route 95, on route to Evros Delta, 7/5.

Long-legged buzzard

Fairly widespread and locally fairly common partial migrant

Singles, north of the railway line, Evros Delta, 3/5; hillslopes east of Loutros, 3/5; Loutros (near the Visitors' Centre), 4/5; hillslopes east of Loutros, 4/5.

Lesser spotted eagle

Fairly widespread and locally fairly common summer visitor and passage migrant

1 over farmland, Dadia, 2/5; 2, Diavolorema River valley, Dadia, 6/5; 2, Diavolorema River valley, Dadia, 7/5.

Booted eagle

Fairly widespread and locally fairly common summer visitor and passage migrant

3 (including 2 dark phase birds), Dadia, 2/5; singles, west of Provatonas, 5/5; Diavolorema River valley, Dadia, 6/5 (taking a large, green lizard); Soufli, 6/5; Dadia Forest Reserve, 7/5.

Kestrel

Common and widespread resident

Singles, 2/5, 3/5 & 7/5, with 2 along route 95, 7/5.

1-2 seen near the Acropolis in Athens on the return journey, 8/5.

Red-footed falcon

Common and widespread passage migrant

Perched individuals in arable farmland alongside route 95: a female near Monastiraki, 3/5 and a male near Feres, 4/5. 3, Drana Lagoon, Evros Delta, 7/5.

Hobby

Fairly common and widespread summer visitor and passage migrant

1, early morning, near Feres, 8/5.

Moorhen

Common and widespread resident

1, Loutrou River, Loutros, 4/5.

Coot

Common and widespread resident, very common winter visitor

Several, Evros Delta, 3/5 & 4/5.

Oystercatcher

Scarce and local resident, fairly common winter visitor
Small numbers, Evros Delta, 3/5, 4/5 & 7/5.

Black-winged stilt

Fairly widespread and locally common summer visitor, common and widespread passage migrant
Anthi lagoons, Evros Delta, 4/5.

Avocet

Fairly widespread and locally fairly common resident and winter visitor
Evros Delta, 3/5, 4/5 & 7/5.

Stone-curlew

Fairly widespread and locally fairly common summer visitor and passage migrant
2 pairs, Drana Lagoon, Evros Delta, 7/5.

Collared pratincole

Fairly common but local summer visitor, widespread passage migrant
Numerous, Evros Delta, 3/5; Anthi lagoons, Evros Delta, 4/5.

Little ringed plover

Fairly common and widespread summer visitor and passage migrant
2, Diavolorema River valley, Dadia, 2/5; 1, Diavolorema River valley, Dadia, 7/5.

Ringed plover

Fairly common and widespread passage migrant, rare winter visitor
Evros Delta, 3/5.

Kentish plover

Common and widespread resident
Several along the shoreline near Anthi lagoons, Evros Delta, 4/5; 1, Drana Lagoon, Evros Delta, 7/5.

Grey plover

Fairly widespread and locally common winter visitor and passage migrant
5, Evros Delta, 7/5.

Lapwing

Scarce and local resident, common and widespread winter visitor
3, Anthi lagoons, 4/5; 2, Drana Lagoon, Evros Delta, 7/5.

Sanderling

Fairly common and widespread passage migrant, scarce winter visitor
Several, feeding along the shoreline near Anthi lagoons, Evros Delta, 4/5.

Little stint

Very common and widespread passage migrant, locally common winter visitor
Several small flocks, including 15+ on 7/5, Drana Lagoon, Evros Delta, 3/5 & 7/5.

Curlew sandpiper

Widespread and locally common passage migrant
Several flocks, Drana Lagoon, Evros Delta, 3/5.

Dunlin

Common and widespread winter visitor and passage migrant
Drana Lagoon, Evros Delta, 3/5 & 7/5.

Ruff

Very common and widespread passage migrant, scarce winter visitor
Drana Lagoon, Evros Delta, 3/5; a large flock, Anthi lagoons, Evros Delta, 4/5.

Snipe

Common and widespread winter visitor and passage migrant
1, Anthi lagoons, Evros Delta, 4/5.

Whimbrel

Widespread but scarce passage migrant
A few along the coastal margins, Evros Delta, 3/5.

Curlew

Common and widespread winter visitor and passage migrant
Several along the coastal margins, Evros Delta, 4/5 & 7/5.

Spotted redshank

Fairly common and widespread passage migrant, scarce winter visitor

Several large flocks, Drana Lagoon, Evros Delta, 3/5 & 7/5; a large flock, Anthi lagoons, Evros Delta, 4/5.

Redshank

Widespread and locally common resident

Evros Delta, 3/5.

Greenshank

Fairly common and widespread passage migrant, scarce winter visitor

Singles, Drana Lagoon, Evros Delta, 3/5 and Anthi lagoons, Evros Delta, 4/5.

Green sandpiper

Fairly common and widespread winter visitor and passage migrant

2, Evros Delta, 7/5.

Wood sandpiper

Common and widespread passage migrant

9, plus two small flocks, Anthi lagoons, Evros Delta, 4/5; 1 moving over Dadia village after dark, 5/5; 1, Drana Lagoon, Evros Delta, 7/5.

Common sandpiper

Rare and local summer visitor, fairly common and widespread passage migrant

1, Evros Delta, 3/5; 1, Loutrou River, Loutros, 4/5; 2, Evros Delta, 7/5.

Turnstone

Fairly common and widespread passage migrant

1, along the shoreline near Anthi lagoons, Evros Delta, 4/5.

Mediterranean gull

Widespread and locally common resident

Very numerous along the coastal margins west of Drana Lagoon, Evros Delta, 3/5, 4/5 & 7/5.

Little gull

Widespread and locally common passage migrant, scarce winter visitor

4 feeding over Voulgarouda Lagoon, Evros Delta, 3/5; 1, Anthi lagoons, Evros Delta, 4/5.

Black-headed gull

Rare and local resident, very common and widespread winter visitor

2, Evros Delta, 3/5; small numbers, Evros Delta, 4/5 & 7/5. Seen most frequently along the coastal margins.

Yellow-legged gull

Very common and widespread resident

Evros Delta, 3/5, 4/5 & 7/5. Seen most frequently along the coastal margins.

Also seen in Athens, 1/5 & 8/5.

Gull-billed tern

Scarce and local summer visitor and passage migrant

Several, Evros Delta, 3/5 & 7/5; a flock of 14, plus several other individuals, Anthi lagoons, Evros Delta, 4/5.

Sandwich tern

Rare and local resident, common and widespread winter visitor and passage migrant

Several offshore, near the Anthi lagoons, Evros Delta, 4/5.

Common tern

Widespread and locally common summer visitor and passage migrant

Several, Evros Delta, 3/5, 4/5 & 7/5.

Little tern

Widespread and locally common summer visitor and passage migrant

Several, Evros Delta, 3/5, 4/5 & 7/5.

Whiskered tern

Rare and local summer visitor, common passage migrant

Good numbers feeding over the Anthi lagoons, Evros Delta, 4/5. Several were perched on telegraph wires.

Black tern

Rare and local summer visitor, common passage migrant

60+ feeding over Voulgarouda Lagoon, Evros Delta, 7/5.

White-winged black tern

Common and widespread passage migrant

Several birds feeding over Voulgarouda Lagoon and 2, Drana Lagoon, Evros Delta, 3/5, with a single over Voulgarouda Lagoon, 7/5.

Rock dove (Feral pigeon)

Status?

Seen 3/5 & 4/5.

Woodpigeon

Fairly common and widespread resident

Singles, Dadia Forest Reserve, 2/5 & 6/5.

Collared dove

Common and widespread resident

Seen daily, 2/5-7/5.

Also seen around the Acropolis in Athens on the return journey, 8/5.

Turtle dove

Common and widespread summer visitor and passage migrant

Small numbers seen daily, 2/5-7/5, with a flock of 30+ between Loutros and Monastiraki, 7/5.

Cuckoo

Fairly widespread but scarce summer visitor, widespread and fairly common passage migrant

Heard daily, 2/5-7/5, with a few individuals seen.

Scops owl

Common and widespread partial migrant

Up to 4 birds calling in and close to the village each evening after dark, 2/5-7/5. A pair in the vicinity of the school and church near the village square were seen on three evenings, with exceptionally good views on 2/5 & 7/5.

Tawny owl

Fairly common and widespread resident

1 heard, late evening, Dadia village, 5/5.

Swift

Very common summer visitor and passage migrant

Seen daily, 2/5-7/5. Also seen in Athens, 1/5 & 8/5.

Bee-eater

Widespread and locally common summer visitor and passage migrant

3, Diavolorema River valley, northeast of Dadia village, 2/5; 19 high over Loutros, 4/5; 4 perched on telegraph wires west of Provatonas, 5/5; 4, Diavolorema River valley, Dadia, 6/5.

Roller

Scarce and local summer visitor and passage migrant

Several, presumably migrants, perched on wires in arable farmland alongside route 95 in the Feres area, south to Monastiraki: 7, 3/5; 2, 4/5 & 1, 7/5. 1 perched on wires in arable farmland, west of Provatonas, 5/5.

Hoopoe

Fairly common and widespread summer visitor and passage migrant

1, Dadia Forest Reserve, 2/5; 1 heard, Evros Delta, 3/5; 1 foraging on the beach, Anthi lagoons, Evros Delta, 4/5; 7, hillslopes east of Loutros, 4/5; 3, Drana Lagoon, Evros Delta, 7/5. Despite its striking plumage this species can be elusive and difficult to see.

Green woodpecker

Widespread and locally fairly common resident

1 heard, 5/5.

Syrian woodpecker

Fairly common and widespread resident

1 in farmland northeast of Dadia village, 2/5; 1 heard, Dadia Forest Reserve, 6/5; 1, Diavolorema River valley, Dadia, 6/5.

Calandra lark

Widespread and locally common resident

Several, north of the railway line, Evros Delta, 3/5. Seen in arable farmland adjacent to route 95, 4/5 & 7/5.

Short-toed lark

Common and widespread summer visitor and passage migrant

Evros Delta, 3/5, 4/5 & 7/5; 1 in song, hillslopes east of Loutros, 4/5.

Crested lark

Common and widespread resident

Common in open areas, including roadsides and arable farmland. Seen daily, 2/5-7/5.

Also seen at Athens airport, 1/5.

Woodlark

Fairly common and widespread resident

2 near the Ecotourism Centre, Dadia, 2/5 & 6/5; 2, hillslopes east of Loutros, 3/5; 1, hillslopes east of Loutros, 4/5; 2, west of Lefkimi, 5/5; 1, Diavolorema River valley, Dadia, 6/5.

Skylark

Fairly common but local resident, very common and widespread winter visitor

Evros Delta, 3/5, 4/5 & 7/5. Occurs in open saltmarsh and brackish areas.

Sand martin

Widespread and locally common summer visitor, very common passage migrant

Drana Lagoon, Evros Delta, 3/5 & 7/5.

Crag martin

Fairly common and widespread partial migrant

Several, radio mast (Kerea), Dadia Forest Reserve, west of Lefkimi, 5/5.

Swallow

Very common and widespread summer visitor and passage migrant

Seen daily, 2/5-7/5.

Red-rumped swallow

Widespread and locally common summer visitor

Several seen daily, 2/5-7/5.

House martin

Common and widespread summer visitor

Seen daily, 2/5-7/5.

Tawny pipit

Widespread but scarce summer visitor

Several, Drana Lagoon, Evros Delta, 3/5 & 7/5 and on the beach, Anthi lagoons, Evros Delta, 4/5.

Tree pipit

Scarce and local summer visitor, common and widespread passage migrant

1, hillslopes east of Loutros, 4/5.

Yellow wagtail

Common and widespread summer visitor and passage migrant

All birds seen showed the characteristics of the black-headed race, *Motacilla flava feldegg*. Several, Diavolorema River valley northeast of Dadia village, 2/5; numerous in the Drana Lagoon area, particularly on the fringes of saltmarsh, Evros Delta, 3/5 & 7/5; Anthi lagoons, Evros Delta, 4/5.

Grey wagtail

Fairly common and widespread resident and winter visitor

A male, near the road bridge 2.2km west of Lefkimi, 5/5.

White wagtail

Fairly widespread but scarce resident, common and widespread winter visitor

1, Diavolorema River valley northeast of Dadia village, 2/5.

Robin

Fairly common and widespread resident, very common winter visitor.

2 heard in song, Dadia Forest Reserve, 2/5; heard in song, Dadia Forest Reserve, 5/5; 2 near the raptor 'feeding station', Dadia Forest Reserve, 7/5.

Nightingale

Common and widespread summer visitor

Heard daily, 2/5-7/5, with a few individuals seen.

Whinchat

Scarce and local summer visitor, common passage migrant

A pair (the male in fine spring plumage) in farmland northeast of Dadia village, 2/5; 3, north of the railway line, Evros Delta, 3/5.

Stonechat

Common and widespread resident

1, Dadia, 2/5; 2, lower hillslopes east of Loutros, 4/5.

Isabelline wheatear

Rare and local summer visitor

1 along the canal north of Drana Lagoon, Evros Delta 3/5 and a pair in the same place, 7/5; 1, on the southeastern side of Drana Lagoon, Evros Delta, 7/5.

Wheatear

Common and widespread summer visitor and passage migrant

1 on the rocky slopes near the Ecotourism Centre, Dadia, 2/5.

Black-eared wheatear

Common and widespread summer visitor

The eastern race, *Oenanthe hispanica melanoleuca*. 2, near the Ecotourism Centre, Dadia, 2/5; 2, hillslopes east of Loutros, 3/5; several, radio mast (Kerea), Dadia Forest Reserve, west of Lefkimi, 5/5. Males of the black-throated plumage-type are spectacular!

Blue rock thrush

Fairly common and widespread resident

3 males, radio mast (Kerea), Dadia Forest Reserve, west of Lefkimi, 5/5.

Blackbird

Common and widespread resident

Seen daily, 2/5-7/5. Also seen in Athens on the return journey, 8/5.

Song thrush

Scarce and local resident, very common and widespread winter visitor

1 heard singing, Dadia Forest Reserve, 2/5.

Mistle thrush

Fairly common and widespread resident

1, Dadia Forest Reserve, 2/5 and 1 heard, Dadia Forest Reserve, 3/5.

Cetti's warbler

Common and widespread resident

Several heard calling from the base of tamarisks and adjacent vegetation along the canal north of Drana Lagoon, Evros Delta, 3/5 & 7/5.

Sedge warbler

Scarce and local summer visitor. Common passage migrant

A few individuals heard singing along the canal north of Drana Lagoon, Evros Delta, 3/5 & 7/5.

Great reed warbler

Common and widespread summer visitor and passage migrant

2 seen well in tall reed (*Phragmites australis*) along the canal north of Drana Lagoon, Evros Delta, 3/5, with several others heard. Also heard in this area on 7/5. This species becomes very visible when singing, climbing up the reed stems.

Olivaceous warbler

Common and widespread summer visitor

1 heard singing near the road bridge 2.2km west of Lefkimi, 5/5; 1 seen well and several others heard calling, Diavolorema River valley, Dadia, 6/5; 1, Evros Delta, 7/5.

Several heard singing around the Acropolis area in Athens, on the return journey, 8/5. The song is similar to that of reed warbler but is faster and more 'liquid'.

Subalpine warbler

Common and widespread summer visitor

1, Dadia Forest Reserve, 2/5; a pair (food carrying) in scrub, Dadia Forest Reserve, west of Lefkimi, 5/5.

Sardinian warbler

Very common and widespread resident

2 seen and 2 heard singing, Dadia Forest Reserve, 2/5; 3 males and a female, hillslopes east of Loutros, 4/5; a pair in scrub, Dadia Forest Reserve, west of Lefkimi, 5/5. Several seen or heard singing in parkland around the Acropolis in Athens on the return journey, 8/5.

Whitethroat

Common and widespread summer visitor and passage migrant

Seen daily, 2/5-7/5.

Blackcap

Common and widespread resident

Heard singing, Dadia Forest Reserve, 2/5 and below the radio mast (Kerea), Dadia Forest Reserve, west of Lefkimi, 5/5. 1 and several others heard, just north of the village, Dadia Forest Reserve, 6/5.

Eastern Bonelli's warbler

Fairly widespread and locally fairly common summer visitor and passage migrant

1 heard singing, Dadia Forest Reserve, 2/5; 2 and several heard singing, Dadia Forest Reserve, west of Lefkimi, 5/5; 1, north of the village, Dadia Forest Reserve, 6/5; heard, singing, Dadia Forest Reserve, 7/5.

Chiffchaff

Fairly common but local summer visitor, common and widespread winter visitor

Several, including singing individuals, Dadia Forest Reserve, 2/5, 3/5, 5/5, 6/5 & 7/5.

Spotted flycatcher

Widespread and locally common summer visitor, very common passage migrant

2+ heard, Dadia Forest Reserve, 2/5.

1, in parkland adjacent to the Acropolis in Athens on the return journey, 2/5.

Long-tailed tit

Fairly common and widespread resident

2+, Dadia Forest Reserve, 2/5; heard, Dadia Forest Reserve, 3/5, 5/5 & 6/5.

Coal tit

Common and widespread resident

Heard, Dadia Forest Reserve, 2/5 & Dadia Forest Reserve, west of Lefkimi, 5/5.

Great tit

Common and widespread resident

Seen daily, 2/5-7/5. Also seen around the Acropolis area in Athens on the return journey, 8/5.

Golden oriole

Fairly common and widespread summer visitor and passage migrant

1 heard in the Diavolorema River valley northeast of Dadia village, 2/5; 1 seen and others heard, Dadia Forest Reserve, 2/5 & 7/5; heard, Dadia Forest Reserve 3/5; 1, Dadia Forest Reserve, 4/5; 1 and several heard, hillslopes east of Loutros, 4/5; 4+, Dadia Forest Reserve, west of Lefkimi, 5/5; several seen and heard, just north of the village, Dadia Forest Reserve, 6/5.

Red-backed shrike

Common and widespread summer visitor and passage migrant

Northeast of Dadia village, 2/5; north of the railway line, Evros Delta, 3/5; Drana Lagoon, Evros Delta, 3/5; in scrub and farmland and at the edge of Dadia Forest Reserve, west of Lefkimi, 5/5; several, including five males in one small field, Diavolorema River valley, Dadia, 6/5; edge of Dadia Forest Reserve, 6/5; Dadia, 7/5.

Lesser grey shrike

Fairly widespread but scarce summer visitor and passage migrant

1, Diavolorema River valley, north of Dadia village, 6/5.

Woodchat shrike

Common and widespread summer visitor

3, northeast of Dadia village, 2/5, in scrub and farmland and at the edge of Dadia Forest Reserve, west of Lefkimi, 5/5; Diavolorema River valley, north of Dadia village, 6/5; Evros Delta, 7/5.

Masked shrike

Scarce and local summer visitor

A male and female, Diavolorema River valley, north of Dadia village, 6/5.

Jay

Widespread and locally common resident

Dadia Forest Reserve, 2/5, 3/5, 5/5, 6/5 & 7/5.

Magpie

Common and widespread resident

Evros Delta, 3/5 & 7/5 and in farmland and scrub at various places along route 95, 3/5, 4/5 & 6/5.

Jackdaw

Common and widespread resident

Several in Provatonas and Soufli. Appears to be quite localised in this area and strongly associated with the built environment.

Hooded crow

Very common and widespread resident

Seen daily, 2/5-7/5.

Raven

Fairly common and widespread resident

Seen in farmland adjacent to Route 95, 3/5 & 7/5; 2, hillslopes east of Loutros, 4/5; 1, radio mast (Kerea), Dadia Forest Reserve, west of Lefkimi, 5/5; 2, Dadia, 6/5.

Starling

Fairly common but local resident, very common and widespread winter visitor

Seen daily, 2/5-7/5.

House sparrow

Very common and widespread resident

Seen daily, 2/5-7/5. Also seen in Athens, 1/5 & 8/5.

Spanish sparrow

Widespread and locally very common resident and summer visitor

Seen daily, 2/5-7/5. Small breeding colony in Dadia village, in the underside of the occupied stork's nest in the village square. A breeding colony in tall oriental planes, along the Loutrou River just south of Loutros. Several seen collecting nest material in Loutros, 4/5.

Tree sparrow

Widespread and locally common resident

1, Dadia village, 2/5; 1, Dadia, 3/5 & 7/5.

Chaffinch

Very common and widespread resident and winter visitor

Seen daily, 2/5-7/5.

Serín

Fairly common and widespread resident

Seen or heard daily, 2/5-7/5. Heard in the Acropolis area in Athens on the return journey, 8/5.

Greenfinch

Common and widespread resident

Dadia Forest Reserve, 2/5, 3/5, 4/5, 6/5 & 7/5.

Goldfinch

Common and widespread resident

Seen daily, 2/5-7/5.

Linnet

Common and widespread resident

1, hillslopes east of Loutros, 4/5.

Hawfinch

Fairly widespread but scarce resident, widespread and locally common winter visitor

A male and female in pines, adjacent to the raptor 'feeding station', Dadia Forest Reserve, 2/5; a male perched at the top of a pine, radio mast (Kerea), Dadia Forest Reserve, west of Lefkimi, 5/5.

Cirl bunting

Common and widespread resident

2, Dadia, 2/5; 1 heard singing, Dadia Forest Reserve, 2/5; heard, radio mast (Kerea), Dadia Forest Reserve, west of Lefkimi, 5/5 heard, in scrub habitat at the edge of Dadia Forest Reserve, west of Lefkimi, 5/5; north of the village, Dadia Forest Reserve, 6/5.

Ortolan bunting

Widespread and locally common summer visitor

1 heard singing, Dadia Forest Reserve, 2/5; 3+ seen and others heard, hillslopes east of Loutros, 3/5; heard, hillslopes east of Loutros, 4/5; several seen and heard, radio mast (Keiea), Dadia Forest Reserve, west of Lefkimi, 5/5.

Black-headed bunting

Widespread and locally very common summer visitor

Very common. Seen daily, 2/5-7/5.

Corn bunting

Very common and widespread resident

Common but outnumbered by black-headed bunting. Seen or heard daily, 2/5-7/5.

Additional bird species recorded in Athens on the return journey, 8.5.99:

Peregrine

Widespread but scarce resident and winter visitor

1 high above old Athens, to the north of the Acropolis.

Alpine swift

Common and widespread summer visitor and passage migrant

Several around the Acropolis with swifts.

Rüppell's warbler

Fairly widespread and locally common summer visitor

A male, in parkland adjacent to the Acropolis.

Lesser whitethroat

Fairly common but local summer visitor, locally common passage migrant

1, in parkland adjacent to the Acropolis.

Firecrest

Fairly common and widespread resident

2, in parkland adjacent to the Acropolis.

Rock nuthatch

Fairly widespread and locally common resident

1, in parkland adjacent to the Acropolis. It was Jared who saw this nuthatch; the Birds of Greece confirms that only rock nuthatch occurs here.

Mammals

English & scientific names follow *Mammals of Britain and Europe* (MacDonald & Barrett 1993). Eastern hedgehog is referred to as Eastern European hedgehog in *A world list of mammalian species* (Corbett & Hill 1991)

Eastern hedgehog (*Erinaceus concolor*)

Dead individuals seen alongside the main route 95 between Alexandroupolis airport and Soufli.

Red squirrel (*Sciurus vulgaris*)

1 near the Ecotourism Centre, Dadia Forest Reserve, 4/5; 1, just north of the village, Dadia Forest Reserve, 6/5.

European souslik (*Spermophilus (Citellus) citellus*)

1, at the entrance to its burrow on top of the main Drana Lagoon floodbank, Evros Delta, 7/5.

Reptiles

English & scientific names follow *A field guide to the reptiles and amphibians of Britain and Europe* (Arnold & Burton 1978)

Hermann's tortoise (*Testudo hermanni*)

1, hillslopes east of Loutros, 4/5.

Spur-thighed tortoise (*Testudo graeca*)

Dadia Forest Reserve, 2/5; 3+ on the track north of Drana Lagoon, Evros Delta, 3/5 and also seen there on 7/5.

European pond terrapin (*Emys orbicularis*)

Several in a small stream pool at the edge of Dadia Forest Reserve, west of Lefkimi, 5/5.

Stripe-necked terrapin (*Mauremys caspica*)

Present at the duck pond at the edge of Dadia village; many dead individuals, Anthi lagoons, Evros Delta, 4/5; several in a small stream pool at the edge of Dadia Forest Reserve, west of Lefkimi, 5/5. European pond terrapin present in the same pool, along with smooth newt, yellow-bellied toad and stream frog.

Balkan green lizard (*Lacerta trilineata*)

A juvenile, Dadia Forest Reserve, 3/5.

Green lizard (*Lacerta viridis*)

Adult males, Dadia Forest Reserve, 2/5; hillslopes east of Loutros, 4/5; Dadia Forest Reserve, 5/5.

Green lizard sp. (*Lacerta*) (either Balkan green *L. trilineata* or green *L. viridis*)

Indeterminate adults or juveniles were seen on several occasions.

European glass lizard (*Ophisaurus apodus*)

1 dead individual on the track, Dadia Forest Reserve, 2/5; 1 basking on the road (later found dead) near Loutros, 3/5; 1 dead on the track leading up to the hillslopes east of Loutros, 3/5; 1 possibly 2, hillslopes east of Loutros, 4/5.

Grass snake (*Natrix natrix*)

1 swimming, Anthi lagoons, Evros Delta, 4/5.

Amphibians

English & scientific names also follow *A field guide to the reptiles and amphibians of Britain and Europe* (Arnold & Burton 1978)

Smooth newt (*Triturus vulgaris*)

Present in a small stream pool at the edge of Dadia Forest Reserve, west of Lefkimi, 5/5.

Green toad (*Bufo viridis*)

Heard each evening and occasionally seen, between the village and the Ecotourism Centre, 2/5-7/5. The song is a high-pitched, "liquid" trill which is very cricket-like.

Yellow-bellied toad (*Bombina variegata*)

Present in a small stream pool at the edge of Dadia Forest Reserve, west of Lefkimi, 5/5.

Common tree frog (*Hyla arborea*)

Two individuals (identified by the variation in their flank stripe) in the stream between Dadia village and the Ecotourism Centre, 2/5 & 3/5.

Stream frog (*Rana graeca*)

Seen or heard daily in the stream between Dadia village and the Ecotourism Centre, 2/5-7/5; Dadia Forest Reserve, west of Lefkimi, 5/5.

Marsh frog (*Rana ridibunda*)

Seen and heard daily at several locations including the Dadia area and Evros Delta, 2/5-7/5. Several very large individuals were basking at the edge of the canal north of Drana Lagoon, Evros Delta, 3/5.

Butterflies

English & scientific names follow *The Mitchell Beazley pocket guide to Butterflies* (Whalley 1981)

Swallowtail (*Papilio machaon*)

Scarce swallowtail (*Iphiclides podalirius*)

Green-veined white (*Artogeia napi*)

Orange tip (*Anthocharis cardamines*)

Clouded yellow (*Colias crocea*)

Brimstone (*Gonepteryx rhamni*)

Camberwell beauty (*Nymphalis antiopa*)

Small tortoiseshell (*Aglais urticae*)

Painted lady (*Cynthia cardui*)

Peacock butterfly (*Inachis io*)

Queen of Spain fritillary (*Issoria lathonia*)

Glanville fritillary (*Melitaea cinxia*)

Meadow brown (*Maniola jurtina*)

Southern gatekeeper (*Pyronia cecilia*)

Wall brown (*Lasiommata megera*)

Green hairstreak (*Callophrys rubi*)

A moon moth was found roosting on tree heather in Dadia Forest Reserve, 2/5; also seen at street lights in Dadia village on some evenings.

PLANTS

This section, contributed by Chris Durdin, is arbitrarily divided between trees and the rest, rather than being in strict botanical order. The rest follows the family order in Blamey & Grey-Wilson's Mediterranean Wild Flowers. You don't have to be much of a botanist to realise that much of the list is incomplete, but it makes a start!

Trees

Pines are *Pinus brutia*, Turkish pine and *Pinus nigra*, black pine

Juniper

Oaks in the area are downy oak *Quercus pubescens*, bitter or Turkey oak *Q cerris*, *Q conferta* and *Q dalechampii*. The last is the usual oak around the Ecotourism centre. A very difficult genus: we were advised that the last was identified by a botany professor from Athens, who had to examine the rings in the wood to separate it from a similar species.

Eastern hornbeam

Manna (= flowering) ash

Christ's-thorn

Judas tree

False acacia

Eastern strawberry tree *Arbutus andrachne* with beautiful orange-red peeling bark and

untoothed leaves

Montpellier maple

Field maple

Dogwood

Cornelian cherry

Fig

Flowers and the rest

DICOTYLEDONS

Pinks

Sticky catchfly

White campion

Buttercups

Peacock anemone *Anemone pavonina*

Ranunculus velutinus

Celery-leaved crowfoot

Peony

We thought *Paeonia peregrina*, but the information centre has a photo labelled

Paeonia officinalis

Blue bugle *Ajuga genevensis*

Thymus capitus

Crucifers

Alyssum corymbosum

Hoary cress

Roses

Geum bulgaricum

Dog rose agg.

Peas

Yellow vetch *Vicia lutea*

Bladder senna

Lathyrus hirsutus?

Spanish broom

Hop trefoil

Large yellow restharrow

Geraniums

Cut-leaved cranesbill

Long-stalked cranesbill

Dovesfoot cranesbill

Little robin

St John's-worts

Hypericum cerastoides

Perfoliate St John's-wort

Rockrose family

Sage-leaved cistus

Cistus creticus

Fumana arabica

Umbellifers

Hemlock

Olive family
Wild jasmine

Primrose family
Purple loosestrife *Lysimachia atropurpurea*
not the British wetland plant - very different

Labiates
[Spotted deadnettle *Lamium maculatum*
Groundpine - these two seen on the 1998
recce and included for future reference]
Blue bugle *Ajuga genevensis*
Thymus capitatus

Figwort family
Verbascum sinuatum
French figwort *Scrophularia canina* subsp.
bicolor, an eastern subspecies

Bellflowers
Large Venus's looking glass

Composites
Centaurea triumfetti a perennial cornflower
Cornflower
Field eryngo

Bedstraws
Crosswort

Borage family
Blue (=purple) gromwell *Buglossoides*
purpurocaerula

Nonea Nonea pulla
A comfrey *Symphytum ottomanum*

MONOCOTYLEDONS

Yam family
Black bryony

Iris family
Iris attica

Lily family
Asphodel
Wild tulip *Tulipa sylvestris*
Fritillaria pontica
Star-of-Bethlehem
Grape hyacinth

Arums
Dragon arum

Orchids
Mammose ophrys
Narrow-leaved helleborine
White helleborine
Long-lipped tongue orchid
Lady orchid

Grasses
Reed
Giant reed
Large quaking grass



WWF World Wide Fund For Nature
Παγκόσμιο Ταμείο Για τη Φύση

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Dadia, 17 May 1999

Dear Mr. Durdin,

On behalf of the Project Manager and the rest of us working in WWF Greece – Dadia Project I would like to say how nice it was to meet some Honeyguiders. I hope that you all truly enjoyed your stay in the Ecotouristic Center of Dadia and that all the group has now a clear picture of Dadia Forest and its precious fauna and flora.

Once more we would like to thank the Honeyguide for its donation and we assure you we will try to make the best of it. As you very well know World Wide Fund for Nature is a non-profit NGO and its main funds are its members' subscriptions and donations from its friends. It is thanks to all of you that we can continue working for Dadia Forest and all other projects worldwide.

Hoping to see you soon,

Valya Stergioti

Project Manager Assistant