

Honeyguide

WILDLIFE HOLIDAYS

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Extremadura

Salisbury & District Natural History Society

12 – 19 April 2003

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Holiday participants

Rosemary and Gerald Nicholls

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Elisabeth Richmond
Ailsa McKee

Margaret Pragnell
Jean Carroll

Pamela James
Grace Hickman

Joan Tripp
Marigold Woolley

Audrey Lovett
Brenda Davis

Stella Williams
Winifred Harvie

Christopher Reynolds
Martin Craig

Ted Sansby

John Pitman

Leaders/drivers

Rob Macklin
Russell Leavett
Dale Newton

Report by Rob Macklin

Illustrations by Rob Hume. Front cover: lesser kestrel

As with all Honeyguide holidays, £25 of the price of the holiday was put towards a conservation project, in this case for La Sociedad Española de Ornitología (SEO), the Spanish Ornithological Society, and its work in Extremadura. During the holiday, Carlota Viada Sauleda from SEO came to Finca Santa Marta to collect £500 from this group's holiday in Extremadura.

This year's donations, including from another Honeyguide group in Extremadura and a group in the Spanish Pyrenees, bring the total given to SEO since the first Honeyguide holiday in Spain in 1991 to £8,620 and the total conservation contributions from all Honeyguide holidays to £29,800. A thank-you letter from SEO appears at the end of this report.

Extremadura
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April 12th - Heathrow to Trujillo

We met up with the group at Heathrow and had to endure a rather lengthy check-in at the Iberia desk before winging our way to Madrid. We landed in mid-afternoon in cloudy and cool conditions with temperatures just touching 12 Celsius! Our first birds on touchdown were a flock of 150 Spotless Starlings on the airfield. We collected the three minibuses and were soon leaving the airport via the M40 around Madrid thanks to the navigating skills of Ted and Ailsa.

On the way south we stopped at the Hotel David just west of Talavera de la Reina for drinks where a Black Kite drifted across the highway, a Serin sang from the surrounding scrub and a White Stork's nest was occupied by one adult. Heaps of Magpies were seen from the buses on the way as well as various Kestrels, Swallows and Crested Larks. As we neared Trujillo we noticed a huge Cattle Egret breeding colony in the dehesas with approximately 200 birds in and around the site!

We finally arrived at our destination, the Finca Santa Marta, where Henri and his Ecuadorean staff showed us to our rooms. After this we were given an introductory talk to the Finca by our host over drinks and snacks before enjoying a super four-course meal. Lots of Swallows were flitting about the Finca, the occupied White Stork nest on the roof also had House Sparrows nesting in the base of it and a lucky few heard a Scops Owl calling as they retired to bed.

April 13th - The Belén Plain and Madronera

A sunny yet breezy start to the day with a few hardy folk venturing into the grounds of the Finca before breakfast. This proved to be an inspired start to the trip with good views of Hoopoe and Azure-Winged Magpies and both Crossbill and Cirl Bunting heard. All sorts of movements were going on with seven Griffon Vultures, a Booted Eagle, two Ravens and four Bee-eaters flying over. Soon after at least six Montagu's Harriers flew north-west, a Pallid Swift showed well over the gardens and two Gull-Billed Terns flew directly over the Finca. What a start to the day!!

A late breakfast meant that we left the Finca at 10.00 heading for the Belén Plain via Belén village. This proved highly amusing as we took a wrong turning in the village and ended up in the local square. Several local villagers came out, complete with olive branches on Palm Sunday, and proceeded to offer directions to Trujillo!! Not to worry we soon found the way out and made our way to our first stop overlooking a small farm. This area proved a little quiet although we had good views of our first Southern Grey Shrike and another Booted Eagle drifted over. Patches of black-centred flowers on the roadside turned out to be a delightful colony of Spotted Rockroses.

We then made our way across the open plain stopping at two locations before lunch and finding a splendid group of 18 Great Bustards including several which took flight. A solitary Little Bustard also flew in but soon disappeared in the long grass and a late-staying Golden Plover was a surprise. Raptors here included about 20 Griffon Vultures, a couple of Red Kites and several Lesser Kestrels while Calandra Larks were chasing each other seemingly oblivious to our presence.

Our lunch stop was overlooking a White Stork and Cattle Egret breeding colony by a small lake; Jackdaws were also breeding within the colony. Hardly had we started our lunch when a Woodchat Shrike and a Fan-tailed Warbler perched up on a nearby fence allowing us to get the telescopes on them. We then heard Bee-eaters calling and two of these also perched up on the fence giving us close views. A whole host of vultures then drifted over the group and many landed in a nearby field where there seemed to be a small carcass. As is the way out here the six Black Vultures took precedence over the Griffons at the carcass and an Egyptian Vulture also put in a brief appearance.

Our next stop was at a high point on the plain where we were really fortunate to find two male Great Bustards displaying to several females; they were like huge balls of white feathers and were visible for miles! We then moved on to a known Stone-curlew breeding site at the Finca Valcaliente and were not to be disappointed as we quickly picked up two adults with a chick very close to the road. Dale then flushed a Corn Bunting from the roadside and discovered a nest on the ground containing four eggs.

Feeling very satisfied with ourselves we decided to head back via Madronera; we stopped on the way to search an area of hillside for plants but were interrupted by driving rain although we still had time to find a Cuckoo and two Short-toed Treecreepers.

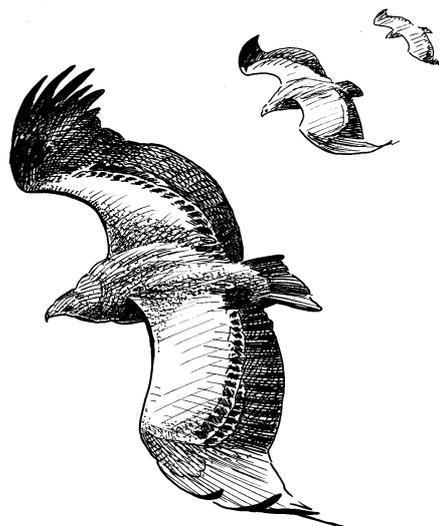
Sunday evening is a night off for the staff at Finca Santa Marta so Henri had booked us in at the La Troya restaurant in Trujillo, the only one that could take 23 people. We left in good time for our 8:45pm appointment but were somewhat delayed by the closure of the main square, or Plaza Mayor, to vehicles in the centre of town. This meant we had to divert ourselves towards the Municipal Cemetery and up past several churches along incredibly narrow roads. After a stress-fuelled few minutes we all finally managed to find our way round and park on the north side of the town! Russell's comment was "what a nightmare"! The meal was interesting featuring several local dishes including the famous "mijas" which is fatty meat and breadcrumbs fried in lard - needless to say much was left but at least the beans were good!!

April 14th - Rio Almonte at Jaraicejo and Monfragüe Natural Park

The pre-breakfast walk did not get far as we were presented with dense mist, low cloud and rain. An Azure-winged Magpie was watched down to three metres on the lawn and Gerald had a flock of 20 in the grounds.

After breakfast our first stop was at the bullring and fishponds in Trujillo; several Pallid Swifts were in the air and a number of Lesser Kestrels were seen well on the roof of the bullring. The weather was beginning to lift although it was still cold and the fishponds held two spectacular Black-winged Stilts and a Common Sandpiper plus numerous Little Grebes, Coots and Moorhens. Among the many House Sparrows, John managed to find our first heavily-marked Spanish Sparrow.

Henri had told us that the road to Monfragüe out of Trujillo was closed for repairs so we diverted up the motorway to a delightfully attractive spot by the Río Almonte at Jaraicejo. Four Red-Rumped Swallows were a real delight as they hunted for insects over the river and a Southern Grey Shrike gave us all good views as it perched on the top of a pylon. Crag Martins were hunting over the river where a White Wagtail was seen, a couple of Cetti's Warblers sang from dense scrub and a Mistle Thrush sang from surrounding woodland. It was still decidedly chilly so we stopped off in Torrejón el Rubio for coffee (the countryside here was dominated by the hundreds of thousands of flowering Gum Cistus); House Martins were breeding in the village and 13 Griffon Vultures (*pictured, right*) drifted over at low altitude.



It was now time to make our way to Monfragüe Natural Park and we stopped just below the castle for lunch where the sun finally came out and even butterflies such as Red Admiral, Painted Lady and Small White appeared. Griffon Vultures continued to make their presence felt overhead and they were intermittently joined by two Egyptian Vultures and a pale-phase Booted Eagle. We also saw our first Black Stork here with its legs dangling as it soared overhead with the Vultures. Several of the group then climbed the steep stairs to the top of *Castillo Monfragüe* where the view across the park was absolutely breathtaking. Two Peregrine Falcons joined in the aerial ballet with the vultures from here, a Green Woodpecker called from the woodland, two Serins gave us really close views as they were feeding on chickweed seeds and our first Swallowtail butterfly flashed by.

Our next stop was at the nearby Peña Falcon viewpoint where we located a Black Stork sitting on its nest in the base of the cliff. Views through the telescope showed the red bill and red eye extremely well!! At least three singing Blue-Rock Thrushes were found here including one that landed below us showing its fine blue plumage. A stunning male Black Redstart was also seen here. Another coffee stop at Villarreal de San Carlos was hugely appreciated and even here the raptors kept coming with two Egyptian Vultures, a Black Vulture, a Short-toed Eagle and yet another pale-phase Booted Eagle.

Our final stop of the day was at the renowned Tiétar Cliffs overlooking the Rio Tiétar; luckily for us a Spanish couple pointed out an Eagle Owl nest with two very large downy chicks. We were able to get the telescopes onto these and everyone managed to get good views. What a bonus!! Soon after this three Egyptian Vultures appeared with two of these fighting with each other and feathers flying. Incredibly these two birds then tumbled down the cliff displacing a full adult Eagle Owl from its roost site; we could hardly believe our eyes as the owl shook itself and stood out in full view! After all this excitement it was time to depart for the long drive back to Trujillo but we still had time to see a Bonelli's Eagle drift along the cliffs as we climbed into the buses. What an end to a great day!!

In the evening Carlota and her new Extremadura colleague came over to the Finca and gave us a presentation on the birds of the region. Nobody had a screen so we stripped down the tables, hoisted the tablecloths onto the wall and on with the slide show - a triumph of British ingenuity!! After the talk we were delighted to hand over a cheque for £500 from the group to help bird protection in the region.

April 15th - Zorita, Embalse de Sierra Brava, Madrigalejo, Vegas Altas, Río Gargaligas

Another grey, cool and breezy start and we decided to head south of the Finca towards Altas Vegas. We picked up more fuel at Zorita before making our first stop at a cold and windy Embalse de Sierra Brava. As we pulled into the reservoir the only three Pin-tailed Sandgrouse of the trip flew across the hillside and were missed by most of the group. However the reservoir produced a lot of interest including two Black-necked Grebes, several Common Sandpipers, four Great Crested Grebes, five Black-winged Stilts and several Black-headed Gulls. The surrounding slopes produced a hunting Montagu's Harrier while over the nearby fields were 10 hunting Gull-billed Terns and at least two Marsh Harriers. Several Fan-tailed Warblers (sometimes called Zitting Cisticolas) sang from the roadside but were quite difficult to see.

After coffee in Madrigalejo we headed off to our lunch stop at Vegas Altas, an area of rice fields and arable land. We were hoping to get good views of Black-shouldered Kites in this area but had to be content with distant views of one hovering over the dehesas. A Great Bustard landed in a nearby arable field, two Red-rumped Swallows (*right*) came very close to the group and at least 20 Gull-billed Terns were hawking for insects.



The weather began to improve in the afternoon as we headed south on the EX 355 and stopped on the old bridge over the Río Gargaligas. The thick reeds and sedge around the bridge was heaving with activity including singing Great Reed and Cetti's Warblers. The former sang from high up on the reeds giving us all excellent views and the singing birds were then joined by a couple of Nightingales. Bird activity continued with a Little Bittern breaking cover on the east side of the bridge, two Reed Warblers broke into song and three Penduline Tits showed briefly from the dense cover. We decided to take a walk along the river where we found two locals apparently fishing for crayfish. They had abandoned several of these on the path where they were rescued by the group and taken back to the river's edge. We surmised that they were being caught for local restaurants! The improving weather tempted out a couple of butterflies including a Green-underside Blue and we then noticed several Common Waxbills dashing up and down the river but it was hard to get really good views. The singing throng were then joined by a Blackcap and we estimated that six singing Great Reed Warblers were present on this stretch of river. As we walked back to the buses we spotted that hordes of the Barbary Nut Irises had opened giving everyone a chance to get the cameras out. The final activity at the bridge was provided by approximately 60 Collared Pratincoles hunting for insects over the fields before flying right over us showing their cream gorgets and red underwings to great effect.

We decided to go for one more stop before heading home and this was at the bridge over the same river by the village of Los Guadalperales. Our quarry bird was Roller but we were to be disappointed with this species. A Montagu's Harrier was hunting over the fields, at least two Kingfishers flashed along the river and a Quail uttered its characteristic "*wet-my-lips*" song from the arable fields. Movement in the

Eucalyptus trees by the river turned out to be a small colony of Spanish Sparrows and we were all able to see the breeding birds around their nests!

We returned to the finca in much better weather conditions and most of the group took the opportunity to have a look around the grounds. John discovered a singing Bonelli's Warbler from the pines at the very top of the property, two Red Kites gave chase to a Black Kite and a pale-phase Booted Eagle drifted into view over the trees. After dinner several folk heard at least three Scops Owls plus a Little Owl calling.

April 16th - Santa Marta de Magasca & Monroy

Still somewhat chilly in the morning and not helped by an apparent breakage in the heating system. A flock of 30 Bee-eaters was located around the Finca before breakfast and Chris found a small group of three Long-tailed Tits at the top of the olive groves. Two Pallid Swifts flying over completed the pre-breakfast entertainment.

Leaving the Finca at 09.30 we headed off in the direction of Trujillo and took the Cáceres road after ignoring an apparent diversion in the city. Our first stop was overlooking open steppe and immediately we picked up at least 10 Little Bustards on their breeding grounds in the long grass. We managed to scope a couple of males and were able to see them in full breeding plumage, a marvellous sight. Three Great Bustards then put in an appearance before a loud cackling announced the arrival of four Great Spotted Cuckoos. Two Southern Grey Shrikes were then found perched on the wires, a Quail called from the open fields and at least 20 Calandra Larks were chasing each other. An amazing start to the day!

The next stop was also overlooking open steppe as well as a large field of winter wheat. The latter was supporting a colony of breeding Montagu's Harriers and we watched enthralled as several birds sky-danced in the air above us. A huge Black Vulture then came into view and began soaring over the fields with five Montagu's Harriers. We were hoping to get good views of sandgrouse in this area and there were indeed a flock of 30 Black-bellied Sandgrouse on the far horizon. We used the telescopes to search the open steppes and managed to find two sandgrouse although the views were not brilliant. Another Great Spotted Cuckoo was located in the dehesa and five more Great Bustards flew across the open fields. Searching along the roadside we found one of the few orchids of the trip, a Bug Orchid. After all this excitement we were in need of morning coffee and we tracked down a good bar in Santa Marta de Magasca.

After coffee we made another unscheduled stop on our way to Monroy, was overlooking the Río Magasca. At least 20 Bee-eaters (*right*) were found here and gave many of the group good views. A Short-toed Eagle hovered characteristically over the surrounding hills, Crag Martins and Red-rumped Swallows appeared to be breeding under the bridge and a lucky few saw a Kingfisher fly down the river. Two Red-legged Partridges allowed us to approach extremely closely which was somewhat surprising considering how much this species is hunted in Spain. As we looked along the river we noticed several Stripe-necked Terrapins hauled out on the rocks.



Our lunch spot was overlooking the Río Almonte just south of Monroy although we had to share the site with several fishermen. Bird sightings continued to interrupt lunch with both Short-toed and Booted Eagles drifting by, four Bee-eaters hunting insects over the river and both Crag Martins and Red-rumped Swallows nesting under the bridge. Gerald found the first Spanish Festoon butterfly of the trip on the slopes down to the river.

The bulk of the afternoon was spent in an open area of olive groves, dehesa and grassland just north of Monroy. As we disembarked from the buses we admired the large White Stork colony on the roadside before walking on. A large number of Tongue Orchids were found here particularly in the wetter areas and there were lots of Crown Daisies and Field Marigolds. It wasn't long before we spotted our main quarry, a Black-shouldered Kite perched up on the electricity wires. He sat there for what seemed like an age before descending into nearby trees where he copulated with a female. The nearby pylon had a Raven's nest on the top with both birds in attendance and the soaring Griffon Vultures were joined by up to four Short-toed Eagles. John then picked up a singing lark and closer investigation revealed two Thekla Larks in a nearby olive grove. Two similar butterflies also prompted a closer look and we managed to confirm one as Small Copper and the other as the much rarer Provence Hairstreak.

April 17th - Trujillo, Embalse de Tozo and Belén Plain

Lo and behold a sunny morning as we decided to take a post-breakfast walk around the grounds of the Finca Santa Marta before venturing into Trujillo. A pale-phase Booted Eagle drifted over and at least 12 Bee-eaters flew through the almond grove. A Woodchat Shrike sat up briefly in the top of an olive tree and a Woodlark sang high in the air. Another new bird for the week was a singing Greenfinch in the Cork Oaks and a Short-toed Treecreeper was also found here. Earlier in the week some of the group had found a patch of Champagne Orchids and we duly came across them in another olive grove that was also full of Ribbed Melilot. Russell began overturning stones and discovered two Scorpions although you couldn't say he was very fond of them!

We finally left the Finca at about 11 o'clock and attempted to take the buses to a parking area just below the castle. Unfortunately all roads into Trujillo were closed due to Easter processions and market day so we parked on the outskirts and walked in. This still gave us almost two hours in the city to sample its medieval delights. Lesser Kestrels were in great abundance over the city as were Pallid Swifts while White Storks were nesting right in the city centre.



A short drive up the motorway to the turning to Torrecillas de la Tiesa and lunch was taken by the Río Tozo. The sound of the frogs here was almost overwhelming and Black Kites seemed to be everywhere over the dehesas. Russell was poking around in the river edge vegetation and came up with a Viperine Snake and another of these poisonous centipedes. We then walked along the river towards the Embalse de Tozo and another four Bee-eaters enlivened the scene. A newly-emerged dragonfly was seen at close quarters and its blue eyes really stood out – later identification confirmed it as a Western Club-tailed Dragonfly. We were rather surprised to find hundreds of Hoop Petticoat narcissus (*left*) in fine flower along the wetter areas of the river bank: we thought they would have been over several weeks ago! Perhaps it was a reflection of the recent cold and wet conditions.

The reservoir itself held good numbers of Great Crested Grebes, Gadwall and Mallards while approximately 20 Black-winged Stilts fed and preened in the shallows. A few of the group were fortunate enough to get a brief glimpse of very late Crane and a solitary Greenshank fed amongst the stilts. A singing Woodlark confused us for a moment but we were able to fantastic views of it in the telescope then we found the remains of a predated Azure-winged Magpie. Another splendid Spanish Festoon was seen flitting across the meadow and two more Bug Orchids were found in flower.

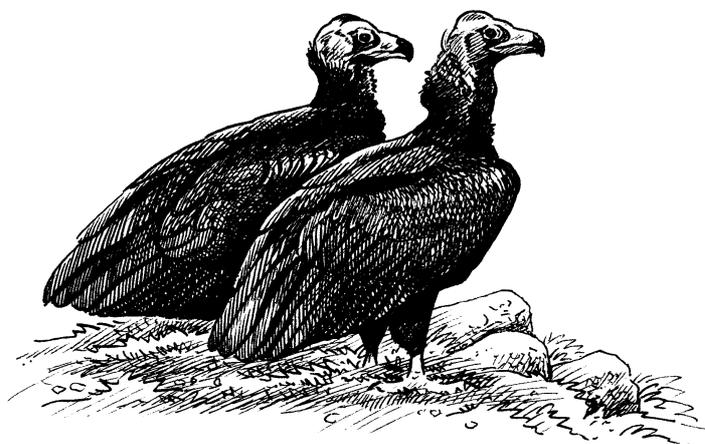
We decided to avoid the motorway and drive back across the Belén Plain; we made just one stop at one of the high vantage points and immediately got the scopes onto at least 20 Great Bustards. Another eight Bee-eaters flew past uttering their characteristic calls and a very dark Fox was seen lurking around nearby farm buildings.

April 18th - Embalse de Arrocampo, Almaraz & Monfragüe Natural Park

A relatively long drive up the motorway to one of the best and most productive wetlands in Extremadura. We came to the reservoir via a short detour where we were able to get good photographs of the Pink Cistus *Cistus albidus*. The reservoir did not fail to live up to expectations and as we arrived

we saw at least 20 Bee-eaters on nearby fences. The west side of the reservoir was fairly quiet although a male Marsh Harrier hunted in the distance and several Gull-billed Terns were fishing. The east side of the road was much more productive with at least three Little Bitterns seen in flight and several Purple Gallinules perched up on the top of sedge clumps. There appeared to be a Grey Heron colony at the far end of the reservoir in the reedbeds and keen eyes spotted a Black-crowned Night Heron on the bank. Two Purple Herons were much more obliging and flew low over our heads before dropping out of site. To cap all of this a Great White Egret flew along the edge of the west side of the reservoir but a long way off. Both Great Reed Warblers and Cetti's Warblers were in full song here and we were amazed when a singing Cetti's sat out in full view allowing us to get really good, close views. Our final birds here were a Ringed Plover flying over and a probable two Savi's Warblers singing from the depths of the reedbed.

Time was now pressing so we headed off to Monfragüe and lunch at Villareal de San Carlos. On the way we must have seen at least 100 more Bee-eaters over the dehesas! Villareal was absolutely packed with Easter visitors but we were able to get coffees, visit the park information centre and have lunch on the grass which was covered in Purple Viper's Bugloss. Hundreds of House Martins were in the air over the village and several Black Vultures also drifted over.



After lunch we retraced our steps and stopped at the Tagadilla Villareal where we were able to get excellent views of breeding Griffon Vultures. We also located an adult Egyptian Vulture on the nest then another bird came in and landed on the top of the crag. A little blob nearby turned out to be a far distant Rock Bunting when viewed through John's 60X lens! The next stop was at a small pine wood where we added three new species to the list, Robin, Goldcrest and Coal Tit. Near to this area was the Mirador La Bascula which has had views over an Imperial Eagle nest in recent years.

We certainly found a huge nest but the bird on it proved to be a Black Vulture (*above left*). Another four of these drifted over and two Montagu's Harriers came up over the ridge.

Our last stop of the day was at the Tiétar Cliffs in search of birds of prey; a Short-toed Eagle was hovering over the nearby cliffs and two Peregrines flew over the reservoir. We got the scopes out and were pleased to see that both Eagle Owl chicks were still in the nest although they were huddled down as a cold wind began to blow. It was time for us to take our leave of the park and the cold and cloudy conditions turned into a massive storm with torrential rain as we reached the motorway. We finally reached base to be greeted with hot tea and biscuits, which were very well received.

The evening roll call was enlivened by gifts for the leaders and Rosemary & Audrey before we headed over to the restaurant which had had a fire burning in there for some time making it feel warm and welcoming.

April 19th - Trujillo to Heathrow

More heavy rain in the morning involved loading the bags under umbrellas and we were finally away by just before 10 o'clock. Luckily the rain abated and Black Kites, Buzzards, Cattle Egrets and a solitary Little Egret enlivened the long drive back to Madrid.

Another trip with the Salisbury Natural History Group came to end, which everyone enjoyed although the weather could have been better especially as there was a heat wave in the UK. Rob and Kathy look forward to seeing the group at the reunion.

Rob Macklin, Russell Leavett & Dale Newton.

BIRD LIST

Species	Comments
Little Grebe	Recorded on several small ponds throughout the area and four at the fishponds in Trujillo on Apr.14 th .
Great Crested Grebe	Peak counts were four at the Sierra Brava reservoir on Apr.15 th & 20 at the Embalse de Tozo on 17 th .
Black-necked Grebe	Two at the Sierra Reservoir on Apr.15 th .
Cormorant	Single birds at Belén and Arrocampo.
Little Bittern	One at Rio Gargaligas on Apr.15 th and three at Arrocampo on Apr.18 th .
Night Heron	One at Arrocampo on Apr.18 th .
Cattle Egret	Widespread and common with 200 at the colony just north of Trujillo.
Little Egret	One on the way to Madrid on Apr.19 th .
Great White Egret	One at Arrocampo on Apr.18 th .
Grey Heron	Widespread and peak of 20+ at Arrocampo on Apr.18 th .
Purple Heron	Two at Arrocampo on Apr.18 th .
Black Stork	Reported from the breeding sites in Monfragüe.
White Stork	Widespread and common.
Gadwall	50 at Embalse de Tozo on Apr.17 th .
Mallard	Widespread and common.
Black-Shouldered Kite	One at Vegas Altas on Apr.15 th and two at Monroy on Apr.16 th .
Black Kite	Widespread and common.
Red Kite	Widespread and relatively common.
Egyptian Vulture	Eight at Monfragüe on Apr.14 th & six there on Apr.18 th .
Griffon Vulture	Peak of 100+ at Monfragüe on Apr.14 th .
Black Vulture	Peak of 10 at Monfragüe on Apr.18 th .
Short-toed Eagle	Peak of four at Monroy on Apr.16 th .
Marsh Harrier	Two at Sierra Brava on 15 th and male at Arrocampo on 18 th .
Montagu's Harrier	Peak of 25 on the road to Santa Marta de Magasca on Apr.16 th .
Common Buzzard	Recorded in small numbers across the dehesas.
Spanish Imperial Eagle	One at the Tiétar Cliffs on Apr.14 th .
Booted Eagle	Noted daily from all locations
Bonelli's Eagle	One at the Tiétar Cliffs on Apr.14 th .
Lesser Kestrel	Widespread and common particularly on Belén Plain and at Trujillo.
Common Kestrel	Relatively widespread and fairly common.
Peregrine Falcon	Two at Castillo Monfragüe on Apr.14 th & two at Tiétar Cliffs on Apr.18 th .
Red-legged Partridge	A peak of six on the road to Monroy on Apr.16 th .
Common Quail	Calling males heard at Rio Gargaligas on Apr.15 th & on road to Santa Marta de Magasca on Apr.16 th .
Moorhen	Widespread and common at wetland areas.
Purple Swamp-Hen	At least 10 at Arrocampo on Apr.18 th .
Common Coot	Small numbers seen at several locations.
Common Crane	One at Embalse de Tozo on Apr.17 th .
Little Bustard	One on the Belén Plain on Apr.13 th and at least 10 males at Santa Marta de Magasca on Apr.16 th .
Great Bustard	Peak counts were 30 on the Belén Plain on Apr.13 th & 20 on Apr.17 th .
Black-winged Stilt	Peak counts were 15 in the Zorita area on Apr.15 th and 20 at Embalse de Tozo on Apr.17 th .
Stone-curlew	A pair with young were on the Belén Plain on Apr.13 th .
Collared Pratincole	60+ were at Rio Gargaligas on Apr.15 th .
Great Ringed Plover	One at Arrocampo on Apr.18 th .
Golden Plover	One at the Belén Plain on Apr.13 th .
Greenshank	One at Embalse de Tozo on Apr.17 th .
Common Sandpiper	Peak of six at Sierra Brava reservoir on Apr.15 th .
Black-headed Gull	Party of 40+ on the road near Zorita on Apr.15 th .
Gull-billed Tern	Two at Finca Santa Marta on Apr.13 th ; 25 at Altas Vegas on Apr.15 th ; three at Arrocampo on Apr.18 th .

Black-bellied Sandgrouse	30+ on road to Santa Marta de Magasca on Apr.16 th .
Pin-tailed Sandgrouse	Three at Sierra Brava reservoir on Apr.15 th .
Wood-pigeon	Odd birds noted in woodland areas.
Collared Dove	Widespread and common.
Great Spotted Cuckoo	Six on the road to Santa Marta de Magasca on Apr.16 th .
Scops Owl	Up to three heard throughout the week at Finca Santa Marta.
Eagle Owl	Nest with two downy young found at the Tiétar Cliffs on Apr.13 th and also seen on Apr.18 th . Adult here on Apr.13 th .
Little Owl	Heard throughout week at Finca Santa Marta.
Common Swift	Widespread and common.
Pallid Swift	Highest numbers were from Trujillo with 20+ there on Apr.17 th .
Common Kingfisher	Two at Rio Gargaligas on Apr.15 th ; one at Rio Magasca on Apr.16 th .
European Bee-eater	Widespread and common with a peak of 100 on the road from Arrocampo to Monfragüe on Apr.18 th .
Hoopoe	Widespread and common; four at Finca Santa Marta throughout week.
Green Woodpecker	One heard calling at Peña Falcon on 14 th .
Great Spotted Woodpecker	One at Peña Falcon on 14 th ; One heard drumming at Finca Santa Marta on Apr.18 th .
Calandra Lark	Common on the steppes towards Santa Marta de Magasca and on the Belén Plain.
Crested Lark	Widespread and common.
Thekla Lark	Two at Monroy on Apr.16 th ; one singing at Monfragüe on Apr.18 th .
Woodlark	Recorded at several locations with 2+ at Finca Santa Marta.
Sand Martin	Two at Sierra Brava Reservoir on Apr.15 th .
Crag Martin	Widespread and common particularly in mountainous areas.
Barn Swallow	Widespread and common; breeding at Finca Santa Marta.
Red-rumped Swallow	Breeding at the majority of bridges over the various rivers.
House Martin	1000+ at Rio Gargaligas on Apr.15 th ; 500+ at Monfragüe on Apr.18 th .
White Wagtail	Recorded on all river systems.
Wren	Widespread but not particularly common.
Robin	One in pine woods at Monfragüe on Apr.18 th .
Rufous Nightingale	Heard on the north side of Monfragüe on Apr.14 th & 18 th ; four singing at Rio Gargaligas on Apr.15 th .
Black Redstart	Two at Monfragüe on Apr.14 th ; one at Finca Santa Marta on Apr.15 th .
Common Stonechat	Widespread and common.
Northern Wheatear	Peak of four on the Belén Plain on Apr.13 th .
Blue Rock Thrush	Peak of five at Monfragüe on Apr.14 th .
Blackbird	Widespread and common.
Mistle Thrush	Two at Jaraicejo; two at Finca Santa Marta on Apr.17 th .
Cetti's Warbler	Recorded from all wetland areas - one seen very close at Arrocampo on Apr.18 th .
Fan-tailed Warbler	Widespread and common in lowland areas.
Savi's Warbler	Two singing at Arrocampo on Apr.18 th .
Sedge Warbler	One seen briefly at Arrocampo on Apr.18 th .
Reed Warbler	Singing birds reported from Rio Gargaligas on Apr.15 th & Arrocampo on Apr.18 th .
Great Reed Warbler	8+ singing males at Rio Gargaligas on Apr.15 th ; heard at Arrocampo on Apr.18 th .
Sardinian Warbler	Recorded throughout the week at Finca Santa Marta.
Blackcap	Single birds at Finca Santa Marta on Apr.15 th ; one at Arrocampo on Apr.18 th .
Western Bonelli's Warbler	A singing male was at Finca Santa Marta on Apr.15 th .
Goldcrest	One in pine woods at Monfragüe on Apr.18 th .
Long-tailed Tit	Three at Finca Santa Marta & two at Rio Magasca on Apr.16 th .
Coal Tit	One in pine woods at Monfragüe on Apr.18 th .
Blue Tit	Widespread and common.
Great Tit	Widespread and common.

Short-toed Treecreeper	Seen at several locations including Finca Santa Marta.
Penduline Tit	Three seen briefly at Rio Gargaligas on Apr.15 th .
Southern Grey Shrike	Seen daily but only in ones & twos.
Woodchat Shrike	Increasing in numbers throughout the week with a peak of five on Apr.18 th .
Eurasian Jay	Single birds seen on three days in the dehesas.
Azure-winged Magpie	Widespread and common in the dehesas and around Finca Santa Marta.
Magpie	Widespread & common.
Eurasian Jackdaw	Widespread & common.
Carrion Crow	Peak of eight on the Belén Plain on Apr.13 th .
Common Raven	Recorded daily including nesting pair on pylon at Monroy on Apr.16 th .
Spotless Starling	Widespread & common.
House Sparrow	Widespread & common.
Spanish Sparrow	20 on the Belén Plain on Apr.13 th ; nesting colony at Rio Gargaligas on Apr.15 th .
Common Waxbill	10+ at Rio Gargaligas on Apr.15 th .
Common Chaffinch	Widespread & common.
European Serin	Widespread & common.
Greenfinch	Singing male at Finca Santa Marta on Apr.17 th .
Goldfinch	Widespread & common.
Linnet	Peaks of four at Vegas Altas on Apr.15 th & Finca Santa Marta on Apr.17 th .
Common Crossbill	Reported calling at Finca Santa Marta on Apr.13 th .
Cirl Bunting	Two at Finca Santa Marta on Apr.13 th .
Rock Bunting	One at Monfragüe on Apr.18 th .
Corn Bunting	Widespread and extremely common.

MAMMALS

Red Fox	<i>Vulpes vulpes</i>
Iberian Hare	<i>Lepus sp</i>
Rabbit	<i>Oryctolagus cuniculus</i>

REPTILES & AMPHIBIANS

Stripe-necked Terrapin	<i>Mauremys caspica</i>
Ladder Snake	<i>Elaphs scalaris</i>
Viperine Snake	<i>Natrix maura</i>
Iberian Wall Lizard	<i>Podarcis hispanica</i>
Moorish Gecko	<i>Tarentola mauretanic</i>
Iberian Pool Frog	<i>Rana perezi</i>
Crayfish	

BUTTERFLIES

Swallowtail	Southern Speckled Wood
Spanish Festoon	Provence Hairstreak
Small White	Green Hairstreak
Western Dappled White	Small Copper
Bath White	Common Blue
Orange Tip	Green Underside Blue
Red Admiral	Brown Argus
Painted Lady	Dingy Skipper
Small Heath	

OTHER INVERTEBRATES

Iberian Blue-tailed Damselfly	<i>Ischnura grealsii</i>
Western Club-tailed Dragonfly	<i>Gomphus pulchellus</i>
Mole Crickets	<i>Gryllotalpa gryllotalpa</i>
A centipede	<i>Scolopendra cingulatus</i>
Violet Carpenter Bee	<i>Xylocopa violacea</i>
Oil Beetle	
Scorpion	

Extremadura plant list – spring 2003

(numbers on the right refer to Blamey and Grey-Wilson's *Mediterranean Wild Flowers*)

Pinaceae	<i>Pinus pinea</i>	Stone/Umbrella Pine (3)
Cupressaceae	<i>Juniperus communis</i>	Common Juniper (13)
Fagaceae	<i>Quercus rotundifolia</i>	Evergreen Oak (26)
	<i>Quercus suber</i>	Cork Oak (27)
	<i>Quercus pubescens</i>	Downy Oak (31)
Ulmaceae	<i>Ulmus sp</i>	Elm
Urticaceae	<i>Urtica membranacea</i>	Membranous Nettle (49)
Caryophyllaceae	<i>Cerastium sp</i>	Mouse-ear
	<i>Paronychia argentea</i>	Paronychia (136)
	<i>Spergularia rubra</i>	Sand Spurrey (146)
	<i>Spergularia Purpurea</i>	Purple Sand Spurrey (148)
	<i>Silene tridentata</i>	Catchfly sp (178)
	<i>Silene colorata</i>	Catchfly sp (180)
	<i>Silene Linicola</i>	Flaxfield Catchfly
	<i>Moenchia erecta</i>	Upright Chickweed
Ranunculaceae	<i>Ranunculus sp</i>	Water Crowfoot sp
	<i>Ranunculus cornutus</i>	Buttercup sp (236)
	<i>Ranunculus muricatus</i>	Celery-leaved Buttercup (243)
	<i>Ranunculus arvensis</i>	Corn Crowfoot (244)
Papaveraceae	<i>Papaver rhoeas</i>	Common Poppy (283)
	<i>Papaver dubium</i>	Long-headed Poppy (284)
	<i>Papaver argemone</i>	Prickly Poppy (287)
Fumariaceae	<i>Fumaria capreolata</i>	Ramping Fumitory (303)
Cruciferae	<i>Eruca sativa</i>	Eruca (361)
Resedaceae	<i>Reseda alba</i>	White Mignonette (375)
Crassulaceae	<i>Sedum album</i>	White Stonecrop (386)
	<i>Crassula tillaea</i>	Mossy Stonecrop
	<i>Umbilicus rupestris</i>	Navelwort (396)
Rosaceae	<i>Rosa sp</i>	Dogrose
Leguminosae	<i>Cercis siliquastrum</i>	Judas Tree (430)
	<i>Acacia dealbata</i>	Silver Wattle (432)
	<i>Cytisus multiflorus</i>	White Broom
	<i>Cytisus scoparius</i>	Broom (456)
	<i>Ulex parviflorus</i>	Small-flowered Gorse (473)
	<i>Lupinus micranthus</i>	Hairy Lupin (484)
	<i>Astragalus lusitanicus</i>	Iberian Milk Vetch (504)
	<i>Vicia villosa subsp. varia</i>	Fodder Vetch (510a)
	<i>Vicia laxiflora</i>	Slender Tare (521)
	<i>Vicia tetrasperma</i>	Smooth Tare (523)
	<i>Vicia lutea</i>	Yellow Vetch (525)
	<i>Vicia peregrina</i>	Vetch sp (533)
	<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i>	Sweet Pea (539)
	<i>Lathyrus cicera</i>	Pea sp (545)
	<i>Lathyrus clymenum</i>	Vetchling sp (550)

	<i>Melilotus officinalis</i>	Ribbed Melilot	(571)
	<i>Medicago arabica</i>	Spotted Medick	(623)
	<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>	Bird's Foot Trefoil	(625)
	<i>Trifolium fragiferum</i>	Strawberry Clover	(652)
	<i>Trifolium stellatum</i>	Star Clover	(662)
	<i>Anthyllis vulneraria</i>	Med.Kidney Vetch	(690)
	<i>Hedysarum coronarium</i>	Italian Sainfoin	(710)
Oxalidaceae	<i>Oxalis pes-caprae</i>	Bermuda Buttercup	(735)
Geraniaceae	<i>Geranium molle</i>	Dove's-foot Cranesbill	(741)
	<i>Geranium lucidum</i>	Shining Cranesbill	(749)
	<i>Erodium chium subsp.littoreum</i>	Storksbill	(751a)
	<i>Erodium laciniatum</i>	Storksbill	(753)
	<i>Erodium botrys</i>	Storks-bill sp	(758)
Linaceae	<i>Linum bienne</i>	Pale Flax	(777)
	<i>Linum perenne</i>	Perennial Flax	(778)
Anacardiaceae	<i>Pistacia terebinthus</i>	Turpentine Tree	(861)
Malvaceae	<i>Malva sylvestris</i>	Common Mallow	(898)
Violaceae	<i>Viola kitabeliana</i>	Dwarf Pansy	(931)
Cistaceae	<i>Cistus albidus</i>	Grey-leaved Cistus	(961)
	<i>Cistus salvifolius</i>	Sage-leaved Cistus	(965)
	<i>Cistus ladanifer</i>	Gum Cistus	(971)
	<i>Tuberaria guttata</i>	Spotted Rockrose	(985)
	<i>Tuberaria echioides</i>	Rockrose sp	(988)
Tamaricaceae	<i>Tamarix sp</i>	Tamarisk	
Cucurbitaceae	<i>Bryonia cretica</i>	White Bryony	(1033)
Cactaceae	<i>Opuntia ficus-indica</i>	Prickly Pear Cactus	(1040)
Umbelliferae	<i>Smyrniium perfoliatum</i>	Perfoliate Alexanders	(1088)
	<i>Scandix pectin-veneris</i>	Shepherd's Needles	(1097)
	<i>Foeniculum vulgare</i>	Fennel	(1108)
	<i>Oenanthe sp</i>	Water Dropwort	
	<i>Ferula communis</i>	Giant Fennel	(1141)
Ericaceae	<i>Arbutus unedo</i>	Strawberry Tree	(1176)
	<i>Erica arborea</i>	Tree Heath	(1178)
	<i>Erica lusitanica</i>	Portuguese Heath	(1179)
Primulaceae	<i>Anagallis arvensis</i>	Scarlet Pimpernel	(1198)
Oleaceae	<i>Fraxinus ornus</i>	Flowering Ash	(1245)
	<i>Olea europaea</i>	Olive	(1248)
Rubiaceae	<i>Asperula arvensis</i>	Blue Woodruff	(1288)
Boraginaceae	<i>Echium plantagineum</i>	Purple Viper's Bugloss	(1383)
	<i>Borago officinalis</i>	Borage	(1395)
	<i>Cynoglossum creticum</i>	Blue Hound's Tongue	(1402)
	<i>Anchusa undulata</i>	Undulate Anchusa	(1406)
	<i>Anchusa azurea</i>	Large Blue Alkanet	(1409)
	<i>Myosotis ramossima</i>	Early Forget-me-not	

Labiatae	<i>Teucrium scorodonia</i>	Wood Sage	(1433)
	<i>Ballota acetabulosa</i>	Garden Horehound	(1469)
	<i>Thymus vulgaris</i>	Thyme	(1508)
	<i>Mentha suaveolens</i>	Apple Mint	(1523)
	<i>Rosmarinus officinalis</i>	Rosemary	(1526)
	<i>Lavandula stoechas</i>	French Lavender	(1528)
	<i>Lavandula multifida</i>	Cut-leaved Lavender	(1531)
	<i>Salvia verbenaca</i>	Wild Clary	(1545)
Scrophulariceae	<i>Verbascum sp</i>	Mullein	
	<i>Misopates orontium</i>	Weasel Snout	(1611)
	<i>Linaria amethystea/spartea</i>	Toadflax sp	
	<i>Antirrhinum sp</i>	Snapdragon	
	<i>Linaria chalepensis</i>	Toadflax sp	(1619)
Orobanchaceae	<i>Orobanche ramosa</i>	Branched Broomrape	(1655)
	<i>Orobanche minor</i>	Common Broomrape	(1664)
Campanulaceae	<i>Campanula sp</i>	Bellflower	
	<i>Campanula rapunculus</i>	Rampion Bellflower	(1759)
Compositae	<i>Bellis annua</i>	Annual Daisy	(1791)
	<i>Bellis sylvestris</i>	Southern Daisy	(1793)
	<i>Evax pygmaea</i>	Evax	(1805)
	<i>Phagnalon rupestre</i>	Phagnalon	(1831)
	<i>Chamaemelum nobile</i>	Chamomile	(1884)
	<i>Bidens sp.</i>	Bur-marigold	
	<i>Chrysanthemum coronarium</i>	Crown Daisy	(1895)
	<i>Calendula arvensis</i>	Field Marigold	(1908)
	<i>Atractylis humilis</i>	Atractylis	(1932)
	<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>	Spear Thistle	(1958)
	<i>Cirsium arvense</i>	Creeping Thistle	(1964)
	<i>Galactites tomentosa</i>	Galactites	(1971)
	<i>Onopordum illyricum</i>	Illyrian Scotch Thistle	(1973)
	<i>Silybum marianum</i>	Milk Thistle	(1982)
	<i>Cnicus benedictus</i>	Blessed Thistle	(2011)
	<i>Tolpis barbata</i>	Tolpis	(2030)
<i>Urospermum dalecampii</i>	Urospermum	(2039)	
Liliaceae	<i>Asphodelus aestivus</i>	Common Asphodel	(2089)
	<i>Ornithogalum umbellatum</i>	Star-of-Bethlehem	(2171)
	<i>Ornithogalum nutans</i>	Star-of-Bethlehem	(2173)
	<i>Scilla peruviana</i>	Squill	(2183)
	<i>Muscari comosum</i>	Tassel Hyacinth	(2201)
	<i>Asparagus acutiflorus</i>	Asparagus	(2212)
	<i>Allium roseum</i>	Rosy Garlic	(2224)
	<i>Narcissus bulbocodium</i>	Hoop-petticoat Narcissus	(2281)
Iridaceae	<i>Gynandriris sisyrinchium</i>	Barbary Nut	(2305)
	<i>Gladiolus illyricus?</i>	Gladiolus	(2308?)
	<i>Romelea ramiflora gaditana</i>	Sand Crocus	(2316a)
	<i>Romulea columnae</i>	Sand Crocus	(2320)
Orchidaceae	<i>Orchis morio subsp. champagneuxii</i>	Champagne Orchid	(2403b)
	<i>Orchis coriophora</i>	Bug Orchid	(2405)
	<i>Serapias vomeracea</i>	Long-lipped Serapias	(2450)
Gramineae	<i>Briza maxima</i>	Large Quaking Grass	(2460)

Ferns (Pteridophyta)	<i>Cheilanthes pteridioides</i>	Scented Cheilanthes	(2517)
	<i>Cheilanthes hispanica</i>	Cheilanthes	(2521)
	<i>Ceterach officinarum</i>	Rusty-back Fern	(2532)
	<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>	Bracken	

Cáceres, 21 april 2002

Dear Honeyguide groups:

It was a pleasure to meet you all at Finca Santa Marta in Trujillo to talk about the importance of Extremadura to protected birds.

Extremadura is a priority in terms of conservation of birds in Spain and in Europe. But, unfortunately for those we love nature, the progress is arriving at Extremadura in form of more new roads, highways, irrigation schemes and plans to build dams. We want to stress the need for making compatible the economic development with the adequate protection and management of such a diverse region. To achieve this aim, SEO/BirdLife has increased both monitoring and intervention activities in this region.

Your collaboration supports and encourages us to continue our actions in Extremadura, particularly to carry out our Conservation Programme.

On behalf of SEO/BirdLife, I want to acknowledge your collaboration and wish to meet you next year.

Marcelino Cardalliaguet
Extremadura Conservation Officer