

# Honeyguide

**WILDLIFE HOLIDAYS**

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**Discovering Menorca  
20 – 27 April 2007  
U3A Cambridge Bird Club**

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**Participants**

Graham and Jill Garrett  
Andrew and Gill Goodhart  
Thea Cockcroft  
Jane Bett  
Wendy ap Rees  
Ann Knight  
Meg Vale  
Holly Anderson  
Annette Walker  
Richard Howlett Jones  
Clare and David Blatherwick  
Malcolm and Ann Ruel  
Peter and Caroline Chamberlain  
Sir Desmond and Lady Deborah Cassidi

**Leaders**

Robin and Rachel Hamilton

Our hosts at Matchani Gran

Shaun and Jenny Murphy

John Seymour, historian and Menorcan resident and Santi Cachot from GOB (*Grup Balear d'Ornitologia i Defensa de la Naturalesa*) joined the group during the week.

Conservation contribution

As with all Honeyguide holidays, £25 of the price of the holiday was put towards a conservation project, in this case for GOB's work in Menorca. The conservation contribution this year of £25 per person was supplemented in two ways. Firstly, by gift aid through the Honeyguide Wildlife Charitable Trust. Secondly, by a donation of £300 from Roger Jordan and friends in the Wildlife Outreach Network based in Essex, leading to a total of €1390 (£958). This donation brings the total to £7,165 contributed to GOB by Honeyguide holidays in the Balearics.

The total conservation contributions from all Honeyguide holidays since 1991 was at £48,013 (€69,619) at the end of September 2007.

This report was written by Robin and Rachel Hamilton.

*Front cover: hoopoe and Monte Toro by Will Woodrow.*

*Black-winged stilts by Gary Wright. Other illustrations by Rob Hume.*

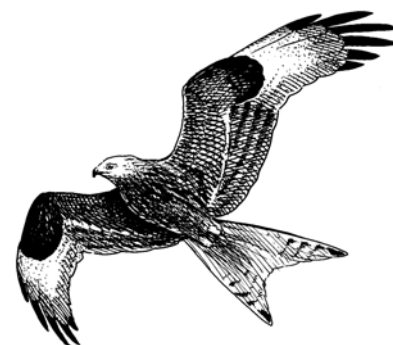
## Discovering Menorca 20 – 27 April, 2007

### U3A Cambridge Bird Club

#### Friday 20 April: Arrival and the surroundings of Matchani Gran

Reports of weeks of awful weather in the western Mediterranean made us look wistfully at the beautiful, cloudless sunrise as we left Luton Airport, but there were clear views over France and as we came in over Menorca, the island stood out sharply against a sparkling sea. The wild flowers in the airport grassland contrasted sharply with those we had left behind in England but the weather was as perfect as we could have hoped.

Shaun Murphy, our host, was waiting to greet us with our three minibuses (Andrew had nobly agreed to be the third driver) and we were soon on our way to Matchani Gran. Swallows, yellow-legged gulls and a red kite marked our arrival in the Mediterranean and, turning into the drive, we could hear the nightingale in full song and saw a smart male pied flycatcher.



Shaun introduced us to his wife, Jenny and their assistant, Helen, and we relaxed with complimentary drinks on the terrace by the pool while we took in our surroundings. Already the local birds were in evidence: Sardinian and Cetti's warblers, house sparrows, greenfinches and goldfinches were all singing, and a kestrel and a violet carpenter bee both flew past. Shaun talked us through the routines of Matchani Gran and entertained us with tales of the two previous weeks' groups cowering in minibuses to keep out of the torrential rain. He then took us off to show us to our rooms. Lunch in the long, cool, converted barn, overlooking the pool and gardens, gave us our first example of Jenny's excellent cooking. A briefing by Rachel, outlining the programme for the week, was dramatically interrupted as a large Hermann's tortoise trundled across the terrace.

After lunch, still in lovely sunshine, but with a light breeze, we set off on foot to explore the surroundings of Matchani Gran. Weeks of rain had resulted in a late spring and a landscape of uncharacteristically lush green. We went through the gateway into the field beside the car park where the stony pasture was only lightly grazed and there were flowers in profusion. Shoulder-high spikes of asphodel stood out, the mauve flowers and silver-marked foliage of *Galactites*, a sort of milk thistle, were strikingly beautiful and the paths were dotted with annual daisy – like ours, only very pale pink. We poked about where tiny flowers grew in the protection of rocks, juniper and mastic bushes and found the curious little friar's cowl and a few lingering flowers of tassel hyacinths and of sawfly and tongue orchids.

A hoopoe was calling in the distance and we watched a Sardinian warbler on a fig tree singing his characteristic scratchy song – too distant this time to see his smart plumage clearly. We caught a brief view of a hoopoe flying across the skyline and – a brief reminder of home – a blackbird gave us a quick burst of song. The clear air and light cloud were ideal for raptors and we had good views of several booted eagles as they soared overhead; they were mostly pale-phase birds but a dark-phase individual enabled us to get to grips with the range of plumage. Yellow-legged gulls were much in evidence, especially as we walked round to the eastern fields, and two ravens, surprisingly the only representatives of the crow family found in Menorca, made an appearance. At last, we all had a good view of a hoopoe, calling from the top of a fig tree. Scanning the magnificent dry stone walls, a legacy of centuries of agriculture, we found two redstarts, a whinchat and another male pied flycatcher, evidence perhaps of a fall of migrants. We had the opportunity to get to know the squeaky jingling song of a corn bunting, the first of many. A Thekla lark perched for a while on a dry stone wall while we got the binoculars trained on it, and a flock of linnets was feeding around the stone winnowing platform in the donkeys' field.

We strolled back to the house in time for a cup of tea on the terrace. Relaxing by the pool in the late afternoon, we were visited by yet another male pied flycatcher, another hoopoe and another booted eagle. It was a warm, balmy evening and we sat outside, drink in hand and well supplied with *tapas* by Shaun and Jenny, to discuss the day and record our sightings. Dinner, selected from the excellent and varied menu, was served in the barn.

It was still warm after dinner and Jill reported hearing a scops owl, so some of us went out onto the balcony to listen. The scops owl had gone but we turned our telescopes towards the moon and Venus, and listened instead to the local stone-curlews flying around, calling eerily in the darkness.

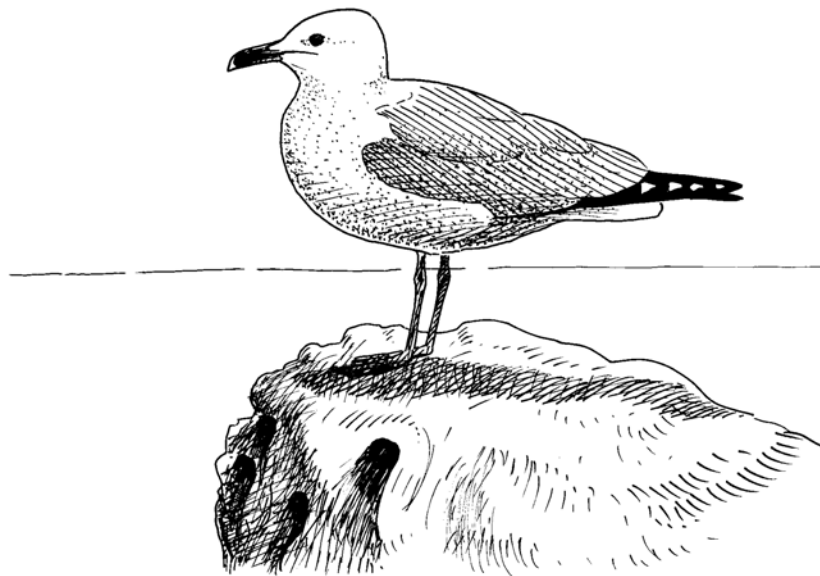
## Saturday 21 April: Son Bou and Torre d'en Gaumes

We woke to clear skies but a distant haze; it was hard to predict how the day would turn out. Almost everyone was up for the early walk. We set off down the pine-flanked drive just as the sun began to break through, to the accompaniment of the song of several nightingales. We were rewarded with good views of two hoopoes and a brief glimpse of a wheatear and, on the way back, Holly's sharp eyes found us a Thekla lark singing from a wire.

During the week we aimed to visit most parts of the island and we began by heading westwards, to Son Bou, on the south coast. We took the charming lane that connects the village of San Climent, close to Matchani Gran, with the main road that runs down the centre of the island from Mahón to Ciutadella. It winds between high stone walls across the limestone plateau that forms the southern part of the island. Wild olive trees and small fields framed by fine dry stone walls flanked our route and after a couple of miles we joined the main road. Even en route, there were more signs of migration in the shape of several woodchat shrikes and three turtle doves and while we had stopped for these, on three occasions, we heard a quail calling.

Son Bou is an important nature reserve consisting of a complex of sand dunes, reed beds and brackish lagoons lying between the sea and a holiday development rising up the limestone hillside behind. In spite of its position, the scale and the diversity of wildlife in the reserve are immense, and its geography enables the area to be explored freely without causing disturbance. It was wonderfully relaxing: the sunshine, the shelter of the warm sand dunes and the heady scent of the plants were a constant reminder that we were in the Mediterranean.

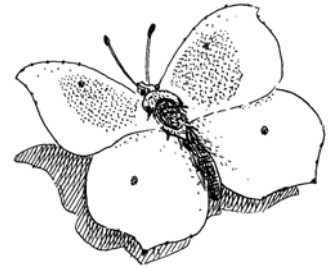
We walked along a boardwalk, flanked by Aleppo pines and tamarisk bushes, and quickly came upon a small pool with three black-winged stilts, a ruff and several coots and moorhens: just a foretaste. We followed the stream to where it was shallow enough to paddle across and, down on the beach, encountered a group of Audouin's gulls (*below*), their fine red bills easy to pick out in the sunshine. They are a Menorcan speciality and yet one of the rarest of the European gulls. Out on some rocks there were a few shags (of the Mediterranean race) and over the sea beyond the rocks we could see a little flock of Balearic shearwaters casting to and fro low over the waves.



Turning towards the land, we climbed to a viewpoint among the dunes. Familiar plants, marram grass, sea holly and sea spurge on the seaward edge, with scattered clumps of autumn flowering sand daffodil, soon gave way to a golden spectacle of southern bird's-foot trefoil and then wild rosemary, mastic bushes and Phoenician juniper. We surveyed the superb wetland, replenished by the rain of recent weeks. The sun was shining strongly as we watched little egrets and a purple heron flying gracefully over the reeds. Cetti's warblers shouted at us from nearby tamarisk bushes and we had some excellent views of stonechats perched on the juniper and mastic. Telescopes and binoculars were trained on the edges of the pools and then, there it was, the bird that we had been hoping for: first a glimpse, and finally an excellent view of two purple gallinules walking by the water's edge, feeding and dipping in and out of the reeds. It was very special, and inspired Richard to poetry (see below)! The activity of a small raptor behind us caught Claude's attention and there was a fine female kestrel perched in perfect position for us on a bush not far away. Then there was a shout, and amazingly, two more purple gallinules came into view, albeit briefly, in a pool on our left. As we watched, we had another fly-past of a purple heron and then three stilts flew by as we walked back for a welcome picnic lunch in the shade of pine trees

Torre d'en Gaumes is one of the most extensive and well studied of Menorca's Bronze Age monuments. It is a huge complex of dwellings and ceremonial structures perched in a commanding position high on a limestone hill looking south over the sea. There are well-made tracks which enable it to be easily explored but it is also an excellent viewpoint for birds, especially on migration and a good site for flowers and butterflies.

Small groups of swallows and swifts greeted our arrival and we had an excellent view of a fine red kite banking around so that the sunlight lit its beautifully patterned upper side. There were wheatears flitting about among the rocks, spoilt for choice of suitable nest sites. Thekla larks and tawny pipits, too, posed for us on the stones and walls; Graham found a particularly tantalising one hiding among brambles, but it eventually showed itself well for us. Claude found a blackcap skulking among some bushes and we had a perplexing time with some blue butterflies, evading us in the gusty breeze; a swallowtail and a Cleopatra (*right*) were much more obliging. The flowers in the stony grassland and among the ruins were fine and extremely colourful: poppies, dog daisies, vetches and fumitory. Scrambling among the rocks and in shady corners under the olive scrub we found wild madder and pale periwinkle, the exotic looking *Prasium majus* – related to the deadnettles and *Bellardia trixago* – related to foxglove, enormous juicy spears of wild asparagus. Annette and Richard had found a patch of sulphur yellow *Lathyrus ochrus* and Ann and Malcolm, the rich pink *Lathyrus clymenum*: both worthy of any garden.



We gathered at the minibuses and had a final scan of the sun-drenched landscape; across the island, the only significant hill at 358m high, Monte Toro, or more correctly *El Toro* (the hill, in Menorquin) stood out invitingly in the bright light. We headed for home, and heard yet another quail on the return journey, as well as enormous numbers of corn buntings on the roadside telegraph wires.

We had a reviving cup of tea by the pool and several people decided on a swim, overlooked by two booted eagles, one dark and one pale, and a fine male hen harrier. Then it was time for the daily 'log', with drinks and *tapas* on the terrace, before another of Jenny's excellent dinners.

### **Sunday 22 April: El Toro, Tirant and Cap Cavallería**

We decided on a left turn off the drive before breakfast and set off anticlockwise around the farmstead. Several of us had heard stone-curlews calling wildly before sunrise but now there was just a nightingale to reward the early risers.

After breakfast, we assembled in the car park and reviewed the weather. A trip to the top of El Toro was a possibility, but good weather and high visibility were critical. Shaun's reports of the weather for the next few days were not very encouraging so, as it was fine and warm, we decided to risk it even though the sun was covered in haze.

We followed the hairpin route to the top and looked down on the circling flocks of swallows, house martins and swifts. They were mostly common swifts but we picked out a few alpine and pallid swifts as well, streaking past and around the rocks below – quite a challenge for everyone to get a good view. There was a distant Egyptian vulture briefly in sight and we enjoyed watching the antics of a pair of stonechats. The view over the island was swathed in a light mist but it was possible to pick out most of our destinations and the geography of the north coast below us. The extensive blanket of woodland covering the northern part of the island was impressive to see – our destination for Tuesday – and it was possible to see the change in geology from the predominantly limestone south and the more complex geology of the north.

The summit of El Toro is also something of a tourist venue, so the party dispersed for a while to visit the beautiful Monastery Chapel, the gift shop and the terrace café – with beautiful views southwards over the island.

We wound our way down the hill and into the little town of Es Mercadal at its foot. Our next destination was the *Depuradora* or water purification plant on the edge of the town. We piled out of the minibuses and began a systematic scan of the lagoon banks and walkways. Several white wagtails bobbed on the rocks, common sandpipers fed at the water's edge and a pair of little ringed plovers showed signs that they were nesting on the near bank

A few miles to the north of Es Mercadal lies the extensive wetland reserve of Tirant. We looked out across a vast sweep of rushes interrupted with seablite and tamarisk bushes and little areas of water covered in water crowfoot. Several purple and grey herons were standing about, intent on their fishing prospects and small groups of little egrets were working the shallows; mallard and coot swam about under the shadow of tamarisk and willow bushes. Flocks of hirundines: swallows, sand martins and house martins, swirled in the air above us feeding on the plentiful supply of insects generated by the wetland. A collection of waders in some shallow water on our right aroused some interest and a few minutes watching them revealed redshank, dunlin, ruff, greenshank and wood sandpiper, all in ones and twos, feeding in the shallows and skulking among the low branches. This diversion set back our timing and we decided to reschedule our lunch stop so that we could picnic overlooking Tirant, as there was so much to see. We soon found a comfortable picnic place and, to our surprise, we were entertained by a party of black-winged stilts, elegantly feeding in a pool close to the road. More purple herons, raven, marsh harrier and a common buzzard (not very common here) were seldom out of sight and, on a smaller scale, several yellow wagtails and a fan-tailed warbler entertained us from time to time.

This year's Menorca holiday was a week or two later than usual and there was a possibility that the bee-eater colonies might be already occupied. After lunch, we continued along the unmade road through the wetlands towards the settlement of Tirant in search of one of the classic bee-eater sites. The sand hills were much in evidence, but there was no sign of bee-eaters, so we turned round and made our way towards Cap Cavallería, our destination on the north coast.

The road winds through rich agricultural land, quite different from the area around Matchani Gran. The road verges were bright with the lush growth of the crimson Italian sainfoin, yellow bird's-foot trefoil and golden Spanish broom, and we heard the characteristic tzip.... tzip.... tzip of fan-tailed warblers flying over the tall stands of Arundo and willow as we passed.

As we approached the headland of Cap Cavallería, the landscape gradually changed. More and more of the enormous tussock grass *Ampelodesmos mauritanicus* made its appearance; the pine and evergreen oak trees were stunted and the bushes sculpted into bizarre, windswept shapes. We stopped briefly for 'essentials' at the Ecocentre at the entrance to the protected area and then pressed on, across the progressively more desolate and exposed landscape. At last we reached the lighthouse and parked in a little quarry below the lighthouse wall. Almost immediately we heard the charming fluty song of a blue rock thrush, and found him perched conspicuously on a rocky pinnacle. He kept us company throughout our exploration of the headland. A wheatear and several tawny pipits were much in evidence too, searching for food among the dry stones. We followed a track out to the point where we could look down on the sea and overlook the offshore islands. There were shags swimming offshore and we had some excellent views of Balearic shearwaters both on the water and flying over the waves.

In these exposed conditions, a very special flora develops, with the local name *socarrell*. Only a limited number of species can survive and they are heavily adapted to avoid water loss, salt and wind damage and also to ward off herbivores. The effect is spectacular as many of these plants form dense prickly cushions with very pretty flowers: the little pink daisy, *Senecio rodriguezii*, tiny sea lavenders, cushions of a white-flowered *Dorycnium*, dwarf rosemary and many others.

Back at Matchani Gran, the pool was inviting for some but time was short so we decided to postpone our review of the day and do it over dinner. Shaun and Jenny were having the evening off so we set off for the Bar España in Es Castell, a little town down on Mahón Harbour where we had a table booked. Some of the group took a little stroll down to a viewpoint above the harbour and explored the old town. The town square was full of circling swifts swooping up to their nest sites under the eaves of the houses and the town barracks. We got a very warm welcome at Bar España and after our orders had been processed, (and the wine delivered to the table) we began the day's log, just managing to complete it as the first of the excellent dishes of local fare arrived at the table.

### **Monday 23 April: Mahón Harbour and s'Albufera**

There was a fine mist shrouding the early sun and we turned right to circumnavigate the farm buildings. This time, the early risers were well rewarded. Wendy had been up even earlier and had been watching two hoopoes by the pool. They had stayed for us all to enjoy them, and there was a good selection of migrants: several whinchats, a female blackcap, two turtle doves and a female hen harrier. The donkeys were enjoying their

new-born foal and after we had admired it too, we peered through the gap in the wall into the lower field and were delighted to see a pair of stone-curlews rising and flying low away over the walls and out of sight.

The warm sun soon dispersed the mist. We took a circuitous route through the narrow lanes down to the harbour in Mahón so that we could see at close quarters the historical Georgian heart of the town. We had booked a guided trip around the harbour in a glass-bottomed boat. While we waited for the boat, we took advantage of some rather surprising bird behaviour. We had brought with us a bag of stale bread from Matchani Gran and began tossing it into the water. The yellow-legged gulls, which were much in evidence on rooftops, boats and telegraph poles, took very little notice but the internationally rare Audouin's gulls appeared from nowhere and enthusiastically and confidently devoured our offerings. They performed elegant aerial manoeuvres and showed an extraordinary willingness to approach us both in the air and on land, a wonderful opportunity for rare photography.

We set off in blazing sunshine to explore the historical harbour. A multilingual commentary informed us about the historical and contemporary architectural, naval and cultural significance of what we were seeing. We had other interests too: a grey heron and a little egret perched hopefully on some mussel-growing pontoons. We came close to a group of six little egrets and an Audouin's gull on the island which had, until recently, been used to house a quarantine hospital. Outside the harbour mouth, we went below and looked through the glass bottom of the boat as we cruised among the fish and across the seagrass beds. Inside the harbour again, we returned close to the southern shore and explored some of the picturesque fishing settlements built on the steep banks. A blue rock thrush perched heraldically on top of the royal coat of arms above the gate to the naval garrison.

We arrived back at Matchani Gran to find Shaun ready to offer us drinks from the bar and the lunch tables spread for us under the shade of the vines on the terrace. As ever, Jenny's excellent cooking - a light meal of cold meats, pâtés and Mediterranean salads - was perfect for the occasion.

After lunch, we headed northeast to another reserve, saved from advancing tourist developments. Here, at S'Albufera Es Grau, the reserve was created after some of the infrastructure of the development was laid out, and ghost roads and an unfinished golf course are gradually being absorbed back into the countryside. Our first, brief stop was at a tiny cove where a few holidaymakers were enjoying the secluded beach and safe bathing. Our interest was focussed on a particular Mediterranean phenomenon: the drift line piled high with the remains of the seagrass, *Posidonia oceanica* whose elegantly waving fronds we had admired from the glass-bottomed boat.

We parked a little way back along the road and set off across a solid boardwalk carrying us safely over a magnificent saltmarsh (safely from the point of view of damage to the marsh, that is). There was some familiarity about the saltmarsh plants but they were bigger and more luxuriant than those at home. Much of this is due to the fact that they are related but different species but some of the vigour can be attributed to the climate. The salinity is low too, enabling a large number of less salt-tolerant species to thrive: lovely splashes of rose garlic and three-cornered leek, drifts of grey-leaved sea wormwood, clumps of golden samphire beginning to come out; even the dramatic yellow of Bermuda buttercup (an invader from southern Africa) added to the palette of colour and seemed to blend.



The boardwalk took us right across the saltmarsh and into the fragrant shade of an Aleppo pine wood. There were a few chaffinches about and we heard tits calling but the other birds were quiet. Out into the sun again we found ourselves on a sandy hillside buzzing with bees on the bird's-foot trefoil flowers. There were three species of cistus - pink and white - banks of wild rosemary and clumps of the tar-smelling pitch trefoil. A little way up the hill we found a charming colony of bumblebee orchids, still in good flower, the remnants of a few mirror (*left*) and sawfly orchids and a very smart white pyramidal orchid.

Those with the most energy strode on up the hill to the viewpoint at the top. Here, there are fine plants of tree spurge and tree heath and a meadow which, a week or two earlier, would have been blue with tassel hyacinth. A buzzard soared over the hillside and, looking out across the lake, we could see little groups of coots swimming in the shallows and feeding. Three common sandpipers searched for food along the shore and the water's edge was dotted with the brilliant white of little egrets.

We managed to arrive back at Matchani Gran in good time: tea, a swim, a drink on the terrace and time to do the log and still the weather was warm and settled. Shaun had booked us a table

at the local restaurant in St Climent for our evening meal, about five minutes' drive away. We had a fine selection of local dishes and some good local wine to choose from and were welcomed home by the stone-curlews again.

## **Tuesday 24 April: Fornells Saltpans, Fornells Point and Sa Roca**

Early on Tuesday it was fine with hazy sunshine again and, as usual, there were nightingales singing from several points in the bushes around the farmstead. After a brief glimpse of a hoopoe we decided to follow the same route as yesterday in the hope of showing the stone-curlews to those who had not been on yesterday's walk; sure enough, they were in the same field, no doubt holding territory, and flew up and away in the same direction.

It was time for another visit to the north of the island and to investigate further the habitats that have developed on the predominantly acid sandstones and shales. We took the little road north from St Climent again but this time went straight across the main road to join the original east-west highway, the *Cami d'en Kane* or Kane Road, named in honour of its builder, the highly respected former British Governor of the island. The road is much improved recently but it is still relatively traffic-free and allows a more leisurely appreciation of the surrounding landscape than does the main road. We quickly recognised a change, leaving behind the dry stony fields and wild olives for holm oak, cistuses and fertile agricultural land.

Our first stop was a fairly unpromising one. We just managed to squeeze the minibuses into a gateway safely off the road and, scrambling up onto the walls and gateposts, we scanned a group of abandoned saltpans. We could pick out Kentish plovers and a redshank in the water and a tawny pipit perched on one of the cross walls, giving a good telescope view. There was a shout and we all turned round in time to see a black kite flying low overhead. Then, just as we were about to leave, two ospreys flew by and Peter noticed that one was trailing the antenna of a transmitter. As we watched, the other one swooped down into the bay and caught a fish. It was altogether well worth the stop!

Fornells is an attractive little settlement in a very sought-after position on the shore of a secluded bay, but it had not fully woken up to the tourist season and there were few people about. We did, however, manage to find a café that could supply our party with coffee, beer and fruit juice, before we pressed on to the limestone outcrop of Fornells point.

We walked up the track towards the Moorish tower which commands a marvellous view along the coast and out to sea. We had a beautiful view of a blue rock thrush, its head matching the colour of the sky. Out on the sea we watched an Audouin's gull and several rafts of Balearic shearwaters, over 200 in all, accompanied by a few of the noticeably larger Cory's shearwaters. Some of the group climbed up to the Moorish tower and had a nice view of a tawny pipit calling from a rock. Others found the plants more compelling. Fornells Point was less rugged than the Cap de Cavallería, but still extremely exposed, the rock very porous and soil very thin. The plants were tiny and sparse, nestling among the scree, and characterised by their adaptation to these extreme conditions. We found little cushions of the sea lavender *Limonium minutum*, the fragrant silver-leaved sea wormwood, and very fleshy chickweeds and chamomiles. Tiny medicks and bright pink sea heath crept close to the ground and we were surprised by old friends such as rock samphire, bladder campion and wild carrot.

The afternoon stop was in Sa Roca, the large area of woodland that we had looked at from the top of El Toro. It was warm and sunny and we were glad of the shade so we picnicked under the trees, listening to the now familiar nightingale and the first nuthatch of the week. After lunch, we walked up the track, among the pines and holm oaks, disappointed to find that it had recently had most of the understorey cut as part of the routine cycle of fire prevention. We sadly missed the cistuses (known at Sa Roca for their strange but beautiful flowering parasite, *Cytinus ruber*), strawberry trees and tree heaths and most of the orchids but we were compensated by a wonderful display of wild gladioli, breathtakingly beautiful and delicate among the rocks. Caroline found a quiet spot to enjoy them to the accompaniment of yet another nightingale. Then Andrew had the week's only actual sighting of one. Jill's sharp ears picked up the shrill song of a firecrest, which obligingly sang and then showed itself to us, but the only migrant here was a male pied flycatcher. As the party assembled at the minibuses, Ann R and Rachel explored a little way below the road to see if there was any sign of the rare *Cytinus*, but they were disappointed.

We rejoined the Kane Road for our journey home, and found the trees beside the drive to Matchani Gran alive with both pied and spotted flycatchers. After a chance to relax, we were joined on the terrace by John Seymour, a local historian and cricketer, and friend of Shaun and Jenny. John's knowledge of the prehistory



and history of the island is immense and he was able to give us valuable background to the places we were visiting, from the ancient stone monuments to the fine Georgian buildings. He had also been researching the part the island had played in the Spanish Civil War and threw some very interesting light on those events, as did Desmond, to John's surprise, from personal experience! John stayed with us for dinner at Matchani Gran and we all enjoyed Shaun's bravura performance at the barbecue and Jenny's excellent cooking once more.

### **Wednesday 25 April: Ciutadella, Naveta d'es Tudons and Algendar Gorge**

The thin, high haze that we had been getting used to was there again and soon dispersed in the warm sun as we strolled up the drive before breakfast in the hope of newly arrived migrants; we were not disappointed. There were several willow warblers, a turtle dove, a male pied flycatcher and a snatch of song from a blackcap.

After breakfast, we assembled to board the minibuses and Robin noticed a flash of red in the pine tree above us; a goldfinch was sitting on a tiny, intricately woven nest close to the end of a branch just above our heads. We headed off down the main road to the former capital of the island, Ciutadella. There were several willow warblers and a spotted flycatcher in the square where we parked, with swifts constantly circling and feeding overhead. The group dispersed to explore the ancient city and find refreshments and souvenirs and then we turned east again to stop at the Naveta d'es Tudons, another fine and sophisticatedly constructed prehistoric monument. We kept our eyes out for birds as we walked briskly across the fields to the Naveta and were rewarded with a pair of ravens, good views of both a red-backed shrike and a woodchat shrike perched for the 'scopes and taking short flights after food. There were a couple of the now familiar booted eagles and we heard a quail though, as usual, prolonged searching with binoculars failed to find it. The return to the minibuses was slower, with eyes trained on the ground for the enormous range of flowers in the arable fields and among the bushes in the rocky, uncultivated patches. The cistus, wild rosemary and rockroses were all in flower; we were particularly charmed by the spotted rockrose, its delicate yellow petals decorated with a striking maroon splotch. We found a few remaining mirror and bumblebee orchids among the long grass and a single plant of the very fragrant subspecies of bug orchid, charming the Anns as they cupped their hands round it to catch the scent. Mixed in with the poor crops there were corn marigolds and poppies, clovers and vetches, catchflies and chamomile, and so much more; the botanists could have been happy there for hours.

It was lunchtime, so we drove on and turned south to Cala Galdana, a small resort on an extremely picturesque cove at the bottom of the Algendar Gorge. We made our way through an estate of expensive villas up to a viewpoint overlooking the bay and had our lunch. As well as the view, we were able to watch both common and alpine swifts and both yellow-legged and Audouin's gulls; there were also a few Mediterranean shags beneath us on the sea.

We drove down through the village and parked at the foot of the cliff at the entrance to the Algendar Gorge. The pool beneath the cliff at the mouth of the gorge had a grey heron and a little egret feeding among the rushes with a hoopoe perched and calling on the cliff above. A kestrel flew out above us and we had a nice view of a male wheatear as we set off.

The Algendar Gorge is one of the finest of the several gorges or *barrancas* which cut down through the limestone plateau that forms the southern half of Menorca. The shade and shelter give rise to a microclimate characterised by its humidity and lack of extremes of temperature and wind, and the response of the vegetation was immediately obvious. The slopes are dense with holm oaks and pines with a luxuriant ground flora, and the fertility of the narrow flood-plain beside the little stream is exploited for agriculture; 'escaped' rape, wheat and barley all grow well along the path side.

The fertile soil in the bottom of the gorge also gave rise to a profusion of bramble and nettle (*Urtica membranacea*, not our *U. dioica*), and many other flowers. As a result, butterflies and other insects were much in evidence: speckled wood (southern race), a Cleopatra and several whites, and an obliging Egyptian locust which gave us the opportunity to gaze into its stripy eyes. As we walked up the gorge, we had another lovely view of a woodchat shrike. Above us, the first Egyptian vulture flew over the valley and while we watched it, we heard the call of a wryneck from across the stream. Firecrests and tits were calling from the oaks above and, to our surprise, we heard a scops owl calling from the cliff opposite. Cetti's warblers were singing from deep in the willows behind the magnificent stands of giant reed *Arundo donax*. The Egyptian vultures (pictured right with a male hooded eagle)



were becoming more frequent, flying about and perching on the cliffs, and we watched as one regurgitated food for its young – fully grown but still dependent. Some of us went on up the gorge, towards the Egyptian vulture nesting cliffs, with increasing numbers of birds rising on thermals and coming in to land on the rocks around. Others stopped to wait beneath a sheer cliff, and were rewarded by a good view of a peregrine falcon.

On the walk back we paused to enjoy and photograph some of the flowers. A beautiful stand of hoary stock stood out, spectacularly purple, from a cliff ledge; damp rock crevices were thick with maidenhair fern; rock samphire, smelling disagreeably of shoe polish, grew high on the cliff face beside the track. Further back, a lovely group of Cretan mullein was in full flower and we admired a large clump of (naturalised) arum lilies. There was wild arum too – just the enormous leaves of Italian arum *Arum italicum* – and we found a few wild gladiolus spikes scattered along the trackside.

There was time for a quick swim for the enthusiasts when we got back to Matchani Gran and then we set off for Mahón for the last restaurant meal of the week. Shaun had booked a table at the Pizzeria Roma, down on the quayside. Again, we had a range of excellent local dishes to choose from and while we waited for our meal to arrive, we quickly logged the day's sightings and discussed the highlights. The weather still seemed to be holding as we drove back to Matchani Gran under a starlit sky.

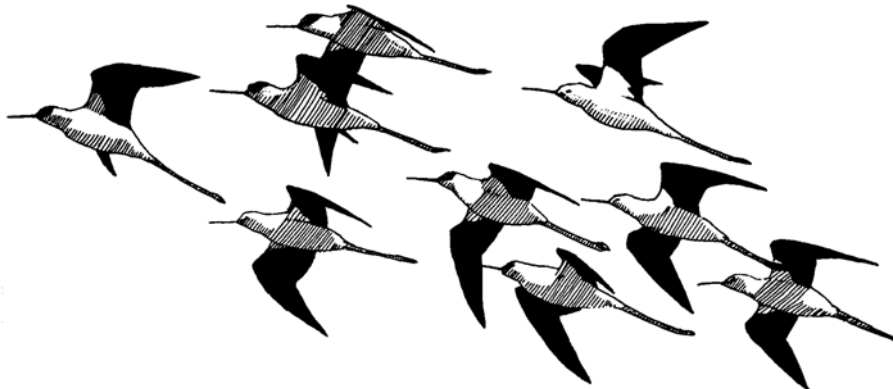
### **Thursday 26 April: Montgofre Nou and Cap de Favàritx**

Early on Thursday it was again fine with thin, high cloud; we could hardly believe our luck with the weather. There did not seem to be any migrants but we had nice views of a few Thekla larks before returning for a welcome breakfast.

Our last day took us to the northeast of the island, to Montgofre Nou, a private nature reserve based on an extensive area of lagoons and disused saltpans and set on an inlet of the sea carved through the sandstone hills. We stopped on the way, where the road crosses a plain of fertile fields divided by low hedges and overgrown walls. We stood beside the minibuses listening to a quail calling from the long grass and a fan-tailed warbler 'tzit tzitting' overhead. Most of us were looking at a smart male stonechat when David and Clare drew our attention to an animal on the far side of the field. It was a large pine marten, and we watched it excitedly for some time as it lolloped through the grass and hunted along a wall.

Santi Cachot, our friend from GOB, (*Grup Balear d'Ornitologia i Defensa de la Naturalesa*) had arranged for us to visit the reserve at Montgofre Nou and he was there to greet us as we turned off the road. The rough track took us for about a mile through an increasingly dramatic landscape of windswept trees and wind-eroded, weirdly honeycombed sandstone rocks. We could hear the occasional blue rock thrush singing as we drove along.

We parked at the entrance and as we walked into the reserve, Jane and Meg noticed a tiny tortoise; we watched it make its way along the track and then encouraged it into some cover and out of danger from the road. We walked on, with a buzzard and a booted eagle overhead, to the first of the salt-pans. At once we began to appreciate the diversity of waders and wildfowl for which Montgofre is famous: three green sandpipers, a greenshank, a pair of gadwall and a feral Bahama pintail that we first saw there two years ago. There were also dozens of black-winged stilts, flying around, calling and feeding in the shallow water; it was altogether a very elegant spectacle. Thea noticed a little ringed plover, and as we watched it, seven curlew sandpipers (some in breeding plumage), a dunlin and a little stint appeared from behind the bank. What a feast!



We turned our attention to the plants beside the track: tamarisk, pink and white cistuses, strawberry trees and prickly mounds of *Dorycnium*. Clumps of shrubby glasswort were scattered on the muddy edges where the waders skulked. Rocky banks were dotted with asphodel, poppies, Spanish broom and bushes of the fragrant spiny broom *Calicotome spinosa*. The best of the orchids were over but some sawfly orchids were still looking smart in the shelter of cistus bushes and there were a few lovely spikes of wild gladiolus.

Some kind volunteers returned to the minibuses to collect our lunch and we found a comfortable, sheltered bank to sit and look around us. Gill spotted a woodchat shrike and Annette found a fine drake garganey across the lagoon. While we were watching that, a pair of shelducks appeared nearby and an Egyptian vulture soared overhead. Then Holly, who had potted off, came back and gave a perfect description of a large, pale raptor that she had watched hovering with its legs dangling: a short-toed eagle without doubt.

After lunch, we bumped our way back to the road and then turned left, towards the east-pointing headland of Cap Favàritx, our final destination of the week. Bushes became more dwarfed and wind-clipped, more and more *Ampelodesmos* appeared and finally the plant cover almost disappeared altogether. As we approached the tip of the point, the rock became a bare, grey slate with scree slopes of broken slates and shales; almost the only vegetation in evidence was the carpets of the South African species, Hottentot Fig *Carpobrotus edulis*, with thick, fleshy leaves and bright pink or cream daisy-like flowers - not to everybody's taste, but spectacular in this bleak environment. We parked by a small lagoon, fed by spray from the frequent storms. Beside it, a pair of Kentish plovers were nesting; one of the pair sitting while the other fed at the water's edge. We scrambled round the slate shore where ancient worm-tracks were fossilised between the plates of slate. Tiny plants of sea heath grew in pink mats over the slate flags and dwarf sea lavender formed purple cushions in the crevices. In the cracks and in the shelter of rocks, the dwarf, fleshy-leaved Balearic endemic *Senecio rodriguezii* was in full flower. This striking pink daisy has no English name but the Menorquin name graphically translates as 'sea chamomile'. The sun was bright and warm but the wind was coming strongly off the sea and Deborah and Desmond struggled to juggle telescopes and sunshades. From the exposed cliff top, below the lighthouse, we had magnificent views of both Balearic and Cory's shearwaters. There were hundreds of the smaller Balearics and a good number of Cory's and we enjoyed watching the two species displaying their different flying techniques: frantic and determined versus languid and confident. With encouragement from Claude, the Balearics won!

Santi Cachot had agreed to come and talk to us about the work of GOB, so we returned to Matchani Gran, driving slowly down the magical, pine-flanked drive for the last time. We admired the giant fennel, the crown daisies and the enormous Arabian star-of-Bethlehem *Ornithogalum arabicum*, just opening in the field by the gate.

Santi gave us an interesting and moving account of the work of GOB: the battles they were fighting on behalf of the wildlife that we had so enjoyed and the techniques that they were using to introduce the island's young people to their heritage. GOB is the wildlife charity supported by Honeyguide donations so we were able to present him with a substantial cheque to contribute to their work.

It was our last evening and, as ever, Shaun and Jenny made a very memorable and hospitable occasion for us. We rounded it off with reminiscences and recollections of the highlights of everyone's week.

### **Friday 27 April: Home**

The last early morning walk was popular but we were surprised to discover Deborah up even earlier and already at work on a lovely watercolour of the gateway with its overhanging pine. We left her with her painting, entertained by the nightingale's singing, and walked up the drive. As we strolled along there were more nightingales in full song and we searched the bushes in vain for a glimpse of one. The only sign of migration was a single willow warbler.

Breakfast called – a final feast of fresh yoghurt, eggs and delicious local breads (including *ensaimada*, the wonderful Balearic speciality containing pumpkin jam)! Shaun was ready to help with our luggage, we said our 'goodbyes' and 'thank yous' to Shaun, Jenny and Helen, and headed for the airport on yet another exquisitely beautiful day.

## Highlights nominated by the group

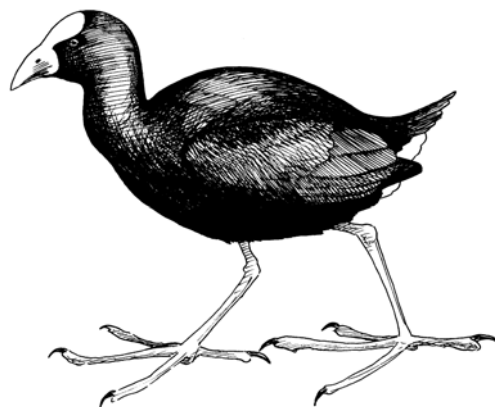
- Andrew:** Learning more about Menorca (which he had visited years ago); walking up the Algendar Gorge to see the vultures.
- Annette:** The whole aspect of the landscape with its beautiful plants; the corn buntings.
- Ann K:** The island altogether, with its birds and flowers; the good company; the nightingales.
- Ann R:** To see so much of the hoopoe – a bird of fantasy; the orchids; help with identifying some of the plants.
- Caroline:** The osprey; the great variety of birds on such a small island.
- Clare:** The dunlin, curlew sandpiper and little stint all together, thanks to Thea's sharp eyes.
- Claude:** The Cory's shearwaters being overtaken in flight by the much smaller Balearic shearwaters.
- David:** Listing one b\*\*\*\*\* weed after another! the Menorcan scenery.
- Deborah:** The osprey catching a fish.
- Desmond:** The goldfinches' nest over the car park; the pine marten; the osprey.
- Gill:** Lunch on the road at Tirant, watching purple herons.
- Graham:** Montgofre Nou: the curlew sandpipers, black-winged stilts etc, all at leisure, with no hides and nobody else around.
- Holly:** The osprey catching a fish; the pine marten on the last day; the whole aspect and landscape of the island with its beautiful flowers; the corn buntings and especially the little stint.
- Jane:** The Egyptian vultures; finding the tortoise at Montgofre Nou; the flowers everywhere: the pine marten; the wind-eroded rocks at Montgofre Nou.
- Jill:** Standing on the balcony in her nightdress with Holly, listening to stone-curlews in the dark and then seeing them next morning.
- Malcolm:** Seeing and hearing the blue rock thrush; the shearwaters, seen through a telescope; picking out the alpine swifts from the others from the top of El Toro.
- Meg:** Cap Favàritx; a whole week of flowers and birds; seeing the osprey fishing; hearing the firecrest.
- Peter:** The pine marten; the osprey carrying a transmitter.
- Richard:** Kentish plovers at Cap Favàritx.
- Thea:** Finding the Audouin's gulls at Son Bou; the wild flowers all over the island.
- Wendy:** Montgofre Nou; finding the little cluster of so many species of waders.
- Rachel:** The cistus in full flower everywhere; the display of wild gladiolus among the rocks at Sa Roca; nightingales in full song almost where ever we went.
- Robin:** The pine marten; the curlew sandpipers in summer plumage.



## SWAMP-HEN

Son Bou, April 2007

High sand dunes are a dress circle,  
a jostling ground for the watchers;  
lagoon the stage, and reeds the curtain.  
First on the cast list is 'Swamp-hen'-  
with such a name, a bit part, surely?  
But when he enters, he wins a laugh,  
wins hearts: purple suited,  
page boy's red hat, red beak a  
Bardolph's nose, he wades with care.  
'I am a purple gallinule, give me respect!'  
He stops, hitches up one orange leg,  
examines his huge toes. 'What catch is here?  
I must announce my news.' He exits Left.  
Farewell, Porphyrio Porphyrio!



by Richard Howlett Jones

<b>Birds</b>	<b>Latin Name</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	A pair at Son Bou
Cory's Shearwater	<i>Calonectris diomedea</i>	Several close inshore at Fornells and Cap Favàritx
Balearic Shearwater	<i>Puffinus mauretanicus</i>	Several at Son Bou. Large numbers close inshore at Cap de Cavallería, Fornells and Cap Favàritx
Shag	<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis desmarestii</i>	Small numbers at all coastal sites
Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>	Several small groups, usually with cattle, in the northern part of the island
Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	Small numbers at most wetland sites
Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	Individual birds at most wetland sites
Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>	Excellent views at Son Bou, Tirant and Montgofre Nou
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	Wherever fresh water was present
Gadwall	<i>Anas strepera</i>	A pair at Montgofre Nou
Bahama Pintail	<i>Anas bahamensis</i>	One feral bird at Montgofre Nou
Garganey	<i>Anas querquedula</i>	A drake at Montgofre Nou
Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>	Individuals at Matchani Gran and Fornells
Red Kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>	Individuals seen almost every day
Egyptian Vulture	<i>Neophron percnopterus</i>	Individuals at Cap de Cavallería and Monte Toro. Several birds in Algendar Gorge, seen well at nest sites
Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	One at Tirant
Hen Harrier	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>	One or two seen every day, mostly over Matchani Gran
Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	One or two at Tirant, Es Grau and Montgofre Nou
Short-toed Eagle	<i>Circaetus gallicus</i>	One at Montgofre Nou
Booted Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus pennatus</i>	Numerous sightings every day
Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	Three seen well near Fornells, one watched catching a fish
Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	Seen every day
Hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>	One at Tirant
Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	One in Algendar Gorge
Red-legged Partridge	<i>Alectoris rufa</i>	Two at Montgofre Nou
Quail	<i>Coturnix coturnix</i>	Heard calling from hayfields on many occasions
Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	At fresh water; Son Bou, Algendar Gorge and Montgofre Nou
Purple Gallinule	<i>Porphyrio porphyrio</i>	One glimpsed, then two more seen well at Son Bou
Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>	One or two at Son Bou and Tirant. Several at Es Grau and Montgofre Nou
Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>	Two at Son Bou, several at Tirant and many at Montgofre Nou
Stone-curlew	<i>Burhinus oedicnemus</i>	Heard around Matchani Gran on most nights and seen on three mornings
Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>	Small numbers at Es Mercadal, Montgofre Nou and Cap Favàritx
Kentish Plover	<i>Charadrius alexandrinus</i>	One near Fornells and two at Cap Favàritx
Little Stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>	One at Montgofre Nou
Curlew Sandpiper	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>	Seven seen well at Montgofre Nou, some in breeding plumage
Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>	Single birds at Tirant and Montgofre Nou
Ruff	<i>Philomachus pugnax</i>	One at Son Bou and several at Tirant
Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>	Single birds near Fornells and at Tirant
Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>	Single birds at Tirant and Montgofre Nou
Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>	A few at Tirant and several at Montgofre Nou
Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	One or two at Son Bou, Es Mercadal, Es Grau, Fornells and Montgofre Nou
Audouin's Gull	<i>Larus audouinii</i>	A few at Son Bou and Fornells, and several at Mahón Harbour
Yellow-legged Gull	<i>Larus cachinnans</i>	Seen at all coastal sites and frequently inland
Rock Dove	<i>Columba livia</i>	Apparently wild birds in Algendar Gorge, Fornells and Montgofre Nou. Numerous feral birds near buildings throughout the island
Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	Single birds at Matchani Gran and elsewhere inland on most days
Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	Widespread and plentiful near villages
Turtle Dove	<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>	Small numbers seen on most days, all over the island
Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>	Seen and heard at Matchani Gran
Scops Owl	<i>Otus scops</i>	Heard in Algendar Gorge
Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>	Seen frequently throughout the island
Pallid Swift	<i>Apus pallidus</i>	A few with common pallidus at Monte Toro
Alpine Swift	<i>Apus melba</i>	Several at Cala Galdana and Monte Toro
Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>	Individuals seen nearly every day, mostly at Matchani Gran
Bee-eater	<i>Merops apiaster</i>	A distant migrating flock at Cap de Cavallería
Wryneck	<i>Jynx torquilla</i>	One heard in Algendar Gorge
Short-toed Lark	<i>Calandrella brachydactyla</i>	Two at Matchani Gran
Thekla Lark	<i>Callierida theklae</i>	Individuals seen most days, often at Matchani Gran

Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>	A few at Monte Toro, Tirant and Es Grau
Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	Migrating flocks seen every day
House Martin	<i>Delichon urbica</i>	A few at Torre d'en Gaumes and Monte Toro
Tawny Pipit	<i>Anthus campestris</i>	Ones and twos seen nearly every day
Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>	Single birds at Tirant and Montgofre Nou
Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	One in Algendar Gorge
Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	One in Algendar Gorge
Nightingale	<i>Luscinia megarhynchos</i>	Heard frequently at all inland sites throughout the week
Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>	Three single migrating birds near Matchani Gran
Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	A few migrating individuals at Torre d'en Gaumes and Cap de Cavallería
Whinchat	<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>	Several migrating birds seen nearly every day
Stonechat	<i>Saxicola torquata</i>	Pairs or individuals seen on most days
Blue Rock Thrush	<i>Monticola solitarius</i>	Frequently seen in rocky places
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	Seen frequently at Matchani Gran occasionally elsewhere inland
Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	Individuals at Matchani Gran, Torre d'en Gaumes and Algendar Gorge
Garden Warbler	<i>Sylvia borin</i>	One at Matchani Gran
Sardinian Warbler	<i>Sylvia melanocephala</i>	Widespread and plentiful
Fan-tailed Warbler	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>	Seen and heard in many places, mostly near damp grassland
Cetti's Warbler	<i>Cettia cetti</i>	Frequently heard in wet and scrubby places
Sedge Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>	Heard at Son Bou
Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>	Heard at Son Bou
Wood Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus sibilatrix</i>	A few migrating birds at Matchani Gran, Sa Roca and Cap de Cavallería
Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>	Small numbers on several days, mostly at Matchani Gran
Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	A few single birds at Matchani Gran
Firecrest	<i>Regulus ignicapillus</i>	Heard and seen in Algendar Gorge and Sa Roca
Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>	Ones and twos on two days at Matchani Gran and in Algendar Gorge
Pied Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa hypoleuca</i>	A few seen nearly every day at Matchani Gran
Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	Seen at Matchani Gran, Es Grau and Sa Roca
Blue Tit	<i>Parus caeruleus</i>	One in Algendar Gorge
Red-backed Shrike	<i>Lanius collurio</i>	One in Algendar Gorge
Woodchat Shrike	<i>Lanius senator</i>	Seen all over the island throughout the week.
Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>	Small numbers seen all over the island
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	Near houses all over the island
Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	Singing birds at Matchani Gran and Sa Roca
Greenfinch	<i>Carduelis chloris</i>	Widespread and abundant
Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	Widespread and abundant
Linnet	<i>Carduelis cannabina</i>	Widespread and abundant
Corn Bunting	<i>Miliaria calandra</i>	Seen and heard all over the island

#### Butterflies and other insects

Large White	<i>Pieris brassicae</i>
Orange Tip	<i>Anthocharis cardamines</i>
Clouded Yellow	<i>Colias crocea</i>
Brimstone	<i>Gonepteryx rhamni</i>
Cleopatra	<i>Gonepteryx cleopatra</i>
Swallowtail	<i>Papilio machaon</i>
Red Admiral	<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>
Painted Lady	<i>Cynthia cardui</i>
Speckled Wood	<i>Pararge aegeria</i>
Wall Brown	<i>Lasiommata megera</i>
Common Blue	<i>Polyommatus icarus</i>
Pine Processionary Moth (tents)	<i>Thaumetopoea pityocampa</i>
Fire Bug	<i>Pyrrhocoris apterus</i>
Violet Carpenter Bee	<i>Xylocopa violacea</i>
a Buprestid beetle	<i>Chalcophora mariana</i>
Dung Beetle	<i>Scarabaeus sp</i>
Egyptian Locust	<i>Anacridium aegyptium</i>
Violet ground Beetle	<i>Carabus violaceus</i>

#### Fish

Mediterranean Pipefish	<i>Syngnathus acus</i>
Banded Bream	<i>Diplodus vulgaris</i>

**Amphibians**

Marsh Frog (heard)

*Rana ridibunda***Reptiles**

Italian Wall Lizard

*Podarcis sicula*

Hermann's Tortoise

*Testudo hermanni*

European Pond Terrapin

*Emys orbicularis***Mammals**

Algerian Hedgehog (dead on road)

*Erinaceus algirus*

Rabbit

*Oryctolagus cuniculus*

Pine Marten

*Martes martes*

## Discovering Menorca Plant List 2007

In the lists that follow, the distribution and / or localities are identified by the following codes:

- P – Planted; found in gardens or as a garden escape
- AG – Algendar Gorge
- CC – Cap de Cavallería
- CF – Cap de Favàritx
- EC – Es Castell
- EG – S'Albufera Es Grau
- EM – Es Mercadal *Depuradora*
- F – Fornells
- M – Mahón
- MG – Matchani Gran
- MN – Montgofre Nou
- MT – El Toro
- NT – Naveta d'es Tudons
- SB – Son Bou
- SR – Sa Roca
- T – Tirant
- TG – Torre d'en Gaumes
- W – Waysides, road verges, waste ground etc
- WS – Widespread throughout the island in suitable habitat

For some of the more widespread species, no attempt has been made to list all the localities and the code WS, widespread, indicates that a given species was more or less ubiquitous in the right habitats. We have tried to be as comprehensive as possible in the species listings, although some are more complete than others. For example, the plant list has ignored many species not in flower, and covered only the most obvious of difficult groups such as grasses, sedges and rushes. English names are given where there is one used in the books, or where one can justifiably be coined, but not otherwise.

**NON-FLOWERING PLANTS**

<b>Ferns &amp; Allies</b>	<i>Adiantum capillus-veneris</i>	maidenhair fern	AG C
	<i>Equisetum ramosissimum</i>		SB
	<i>E. telmateia</i>	great horsetail	AG
	<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>	bracken	SB
<b>Conifers &amp; Allies</b>	<i>Ephedra fragilis</i>	joint-pine	CC CF EG MN
	<i>Juniperus phoenicea</i>	Phoenician juniper	WS
	<i>Pinus halepensis</i>	Aleppo pine	WS

## FLOWERING PLANTS

Apocynaceae	<i>Vinca difformis</i>	pale periwinkle	TG W	
Araceae	<i>Arisarum vulgare</i>	friar's-cowl	AG MG SB SR TG	
	<i>Arum italicum</i>	Italian lords-and-ladies	CC AG SB MN	
	<i>Arum pictum</i>	autumn arum	AG CC MG W	
	<i>Dracunculus muscivorus</i>	dragon arum	CC	
	<i>Zantedeschia aethiopica</i>	arum lily	AG	
Araliaceae	<i>Hedera helix</i>	ivy	AG W	
Asteraceae	<i>Artemisia gallica</i>		EG	
	<i>Bellis annua</i>	annual daisy	AG EG MG NT TG	
	<i>Calendula arvensis</i>	field marigold	MG NT TG	
	<i>Carlina corymbosa</i>		CF	
	<i>Chrysanthemum coronarium</i>	crown daisy	WS	
	<i>Cichorium intybus</i>	chicory	T	
	<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>	spear thistle	MG NT SR W	
	<i>Evax pygmaea</i>		CC CF MG NT	
	<i>Filago pyramidata</i>	broad-leaved cudweed	NT	
	<i>Galactites tomentosa</i>		WS	
	<i>Helichrysum stoechas</i>		CC CF F	
	<i>Hyoseris radiata</i>		CC NT TG	
	<i>H. scabra</i>		F MG SR	
	<i>Hypochaeris achyrophorus</i>	golden-samphire	EG	
	<i>Inula viscosa</i>	stink aster	CF SR T	
	<i>Launaea cervicornis</i>		CC CF	
	<i>Pallenis spinosa</i>		MG	
	<i>Phagnalon saxatile</i>		EG	
	<i>Santolina chamaecyparissus</i>	lavender-cotton	CC CF F	
	<i>Senecio rodriguezii</i>		CC CF	
	<i>Silybum marianum</i>	milk-thistle	MG	
	<i>Sonchus asper</i>	prickly sow-thistle	SB	
	<i>S. oleraceus</i>	smooth sow-thistle	T	
	<i>S. tenerrimus</i>		SB	
	<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>	dandelion	W	
	<i>Urospermum dalechampii</i>		MG MN SB W	
	Boraginaceae	<i>Borago officinalis</i>	borage	AG TG W
<i>Cynoglossum creticum</i>		blue hound's-tongue	AG SB	
<i>Echium parviflorum</i>		small-flowered bugloss	MG TG	
<i>E. plantagineum</i>		purple viper's bugloss	CC MG SB	
<i>Lithospermum arvense</i>		corn gromwell	NT TG	
<i>Symphytum tuberosum</i>		tuberous comfrey	AG	
Brassicaceae	<i>Brassica napus</i>	rape	AG	
	<i>Cakile maritima</i>	sea-rocket	EG SB	
	<i>Capsella bursa-pastoris</i>	shepherd's-purse	TG W	
	<i>Cardaria draba</i>	hoary cress	AG	
	<i>Lobularia maritima</i>	sweet alison	CC EG SB	
	<i>Matthiola incana</i>	hoary stock	AG EC SB	
	<i>Raphanus raphanistrum</i>	radish	MG NT	
	<i>Rorippa nasturtium-aquaticum</i>	watercress	SB	
	<i>Sinapis arvensis</i>	charlock	W	
	<i>Sisymbrium officinale</i>	hedge mustard	W	
	Cactaceae	<i>Opuntia ficus-indica</i>	prickly-pear	WS
	Campanulaceae	<i>Campanula erinus</i>		NT
Capparaceae	<i>Capparis spinosa</i>	spiny caper	MT	
Caprifoliaceae	<i>Lonicera implexa</i>		AG EG SR	
	<i>L. periclymenum</i>	Honeysuckle	CC EG SR	
Caryophyllaceae	<i>Polycarpon alsinifolium</i>		AG MG	
	<i>Silene gallica</i>	small-flowered catchfly	AG CC EG MG NT	
	<i>S. secundiflora</i>		NT	
	<i>S. vulgaris</i>	bladder campion	EG MG MN NT T TG	
Chenopodiaceae	<i>Arthrocnemum macrostachyum</i>		EG	
	<i>Atriplex halimus</i>	shrubby orache	EG SB	
	<i>A. portulacoides</i>	sea-purslane	EG MN	
	<i>Beta vulgaris ssp. maritima</i>	sea beet	EG F SB	
	<i>Salicornia europea</i>	annual glasswort	EG	
	<i>S. ramosissima</i>	glasswort	EG MN	
	<i>Sarcocornia fruticosa</i>	shrubby glasswort	EG MN	
Cistaceae	<i>Helianthemum salicifolium</i>	willow-leaved rockrose	NT	
	<i>Cistus albidus</i>	grey-leaved cistus	AG EG MN SR	
	<i>C. monspeliensis</i>	narrow-leaved cistus	AG EG MN SR	
	<i>C. salvifolius</i>	sage-leaved cistus	EG MN NT SR	



	<i>Fumana thymifolia</i>	thyme-leaved fumana	NT
	<i>Tuberaria guttata</i>	spotted rockrose	NT
<b>Convolvulaceae</b>	<i>Calystegia sepium</i>	hedge bindweed	SB
	<i>C. soldanella</i>	sea bindweed	SB
	<i>Convolvulus althaeoides</i>	mallow-leaved bindweed	CC EG MG SB W
<b>Crassulaceae</b>	<i>Sedum acre</i>	biting stonecrop	CC
	<i>Umbilicus rupestris</i>	navelwort	AG F MG NT TG
<b>Cyperaceae</b>	<i>Carex extensa</i>	long-bracted sedge	AG
	<i>C. flacca</i>	glaucous sedge	SR
	<i>Eleocharis palustris</i>	common spike-rush	T
	<i>Schoenus nigricans</i>	black bog-rush	CC EG
	<i>Scirpus maritimus</i>	sea club-rush	F MN T
<b>Dioscoreaceae</b>	<i>Tamus communis</i>	black bryony	AG MN TG
<b>Dipsacaceae</b>	<i>Scabiosa atropurpurea</i>		AG
<b>Ericaceae</b>	<i>Arbutus unedo</i>	strawberry-tree	MN SR
	<i>Erica arborea</i>	tree-heath	EG MN SR
<b>Euphorbiaceae</b>	<i>Euphorbia characias</i>	large Mediterranean spurge	EG
	<i>E. dendroides</i>	tree spurge	AG CF EG MN
	<i>E. helioscopia</i>	sun spurge	WS
	<i>E. maresii</i>		CF F
	<i>E. paralias</i>	sea spurge	EG SB
	<i>E. pithyusa</i>		CC
	<i>Ricinus communis</i>	castor-oil plant	P
<b>Fagaceae</b>	<i>Quercus ilex</i>	holm oak	WS
<b>Frankeniaceae</b>	<i>Frankenia laevis</i>	sea-heath	CC CF F
<b>Gentianaceae</b>	<i>C. pulchellum</i>	lesser centaury	SB
<b>Geraniaceae</b>	<i>Erodium cicutarium</i>	Common stalk's-bill	MG W
	<i>E. malacoides</i>	mallow-leaved stork's-bill	MG SB W
	<i>E. moschatum</i>	musk stork's-bill	SB
	<i>Geranium columbinum</i>	long-stalked crane's-bill	W
	<i>G. dissectum</i>	cut-leaved crane's-bill	MN
	<i>G. molle</i>	dove's-foot crane's-bill	CC EG MG NT
	<i>G. purpureum</i>	little-robin	AG EG MG NT TG
	<i>G. rotundifolium</i>	round-leaved crane's-bill	W
<b>Iridaceae</b>	<i>Gladiolus illyricus</i>	wild gladiolus	AG EG MN SR T
	<i>G. italicus</i>		MG SB TG
	<i>Iris pseudacorus</i>	yellow flag	WS
	<i>Romulea assumptionis</i>		CC CF SB
<b>Juncaceae</b>	<i>Juncus acutus</i>	sharp rush	EG MN T
	<i>J. maritimus</i>	sea rush	CF EG MN SB
<b>Lamiaceae</b>	<i>Mentha aquatica</i>	water mint	AG
	<i>M. suaveolens</i>	apple-scented mint	AG SB
	<i>Prasium majus</i>		EG MG NT TG
	<i>Rosmarinus officinalis</i>	rosemary	AG CC EG MN NT SB SR
	<i>Salvia verbenaca</i>	meadow clary	WS
	<i>Teucrium subspinosum</i>		CC
<b>Liliaceae</b>	<i>Allium ampeloprasum</i>	wild leek	F SB
	<i>A. roseum</i>	rose garlic	AG EG F MG NT SB SR W
	<i>A. triquetrum</i>	three-cornered leek	AG EG SB TG W
	<i>Asparagus acutifolius</i>		MG TG
	<i>A. albus</i>		MG
	<i>A. horridus</i>		MG SB
	<i>Asphodelus aestivus</i>	common asphodel	WS
	<i>A. fistulosus</i>	hollow-leaved asphodel	WS
	<i>Muscari comosum</i>	tassel hyacinth	EG MG NT SB SR TG
	<i>Ornithogalum arabicum</i>	Arabian star-of-Bethlehem	MG
	<i>Ruscus aculeatus</i>	butcher's-broom	EG MN SB
	<i>Urginea maritima</i>	sea squill	CC CF EG MG MN SR TG
Linaceae	<i>Linum usitatissimum</i>	common flax	MN
Malvaceae	<i>Althaea hirsuta</i>	hairy mallow	SR
	<i>Lavatera arborea</i>	tree mallow	SB
	<i>Malva neglecta</i>	dwarf mallow	W
	<i>M. sylvestris</i>	common mallow	W
Moraceae	<i>Ficus carica</i>	fig	P MG
Oleaceae	<i>Phillyrea angustifolia</i>		AG EG MN SR
	<i>P. latifolia</i>		MG EG MN
	<i>P. latifolia</i> var. <i>rodriguezii</i>		CF EG
	<i>Olea europaea</i>	wild olive	MG WS
Orobanchaceae	<i>O. ramosa</i>	branched broomrape	MG
Orchidaceae	<i>Anacamptis pyramidalis</i>	pyramidal orchid	EG SB

	<i>Limodorum abortivum</i>	violet bird's-nest orchid	SR
	<i>Ophrys bombyliflora</i>	bumblebee orchid	EG NT T
	<i>O. lutea</i>	yellow bee-orchid	MG NT SR
	<i>O. speculum</i>	mirror orchid	AG EG MG NT SR
	<i>O. tenthredinifera</i>	sawfly orchid	AG EG MG MN NT SR
	<i>Orchis coriophora</i> ssp <i>fragrans</i>	bug orchid	NT
Oxalidaceae	<i>Serapias parviflora</i>	small-flowered tongue-orchid	EG MG MN SR
	<i>Oxalis corniculata</i>	yellow sorrel	MG
Papaveraceae	<i>O. pes-caprae</i>	Bermuda buttercup	EG MG NT SB TG
	<i>Chelidonium majus</i>	greater celandine	AG
	<i>Fumaria capreolata</i>	white ramping-fumitory	AG MG TG
	<i>F. officinalis</i>	common fumitory	NT SR TG
	<i>Papaver hybridum</i>	rough poppy	NT SB SR TG
	<i>P. rhoeas</i>	common poppy	NT TG W
	<i>P. somniferum</i>	opium poppy	NT TG
Papilionaceae	<i>Anthyllis hystrix</i>		CC CF
	<i>Astragalus balearicus</i>		CF MN
	<i>Calicotome spinosa</i>	spiny broom	EG MN WS
	<i>Coronilla juncea</i>	rush-like scorpion vetch	AG SR
	<i>Dorycnium fulgurans</i>		CC CF
	<i>D. hirsutum</i>		MN SR
	<i>D. pentaphyllum</i>		MN SR
	<i>Hedysarum coronarium</i>	Italian sainfoin	W WS
	<i>Lathyrus annuus</i>		EG
	<i>L. clymenum</i>		TG EG
	<i>L. ochrus</i>		TG
	<i>L. odoratus</i>	sweet pea	P W
	<i>L. sphaericus</i>	brown vetch	EG NT
	<i>Lotus creticus</i>	southern bird's-foot trefoil	EG F SB SR W
	<i>L. cytisoides</i>		EG SB
	<i>L. subbiflorus</i>	hairy bird's-foot-trefoil	EG
	<i>L. tetraphyllum</i>		CC SR
	<i>Medicago littoralis</i>		SB
	<i>M. marina</i>	sea medick	EG MG SB
	<i>Melilotus sulcata</i>		AG EM T
	<i>Psoralea bituminosa</i>	pitch trefoil	AG EG NT
	<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>	false acacia	P
	<i>Spartium junceum</i>	Spanish broom	MN
	<i>Trifolium campestre</i>	hop trefoil	EG
	<i>T. nigrescens</i>		MG NT
	<i>T. scabrum</i>	rough clover	TG
	<i>T. stellatum</i>	starry clover	MG NT
	<i>Vicia benghalensis</i>		AG NT
	<i>V. sativa</i>	common vetch	NT TG
	<i>V. tetrasperma</i>	smooth tare	SB
	<i>V. villosa</i>	fodder vetch	EG
Phytolaccaceae	<i>Phytolacca arborea</i>	ombu	P MG
Plantaginaceae	<i>Plantago afra</i>	branched plantain	NT
	<i>P. bellardii</i>		MG
	<i>P. coronopus</i>	buck's-horn plantain	AG
	<i>P. lanceolata</i>	ribwort plantain	AG W
	<i>P. major</i>	great plantain	SB
Plumbaginaceae	<i>Limonium echioides</i>		CC CF F
	<i>L. minutum</i>	dwarf sea lavender	CC CF F
Poaceae	<i>Ammophila arenaria</i>	marram grass	EG SB
	<i>Ampelodesmos mauritanicus</i>		CC CF SR W
	<i>Arundo donax</i>	giant reed	AG EG SB
	<i>Briza maxima</i>	large quaking-grass	EG NT SR
	<i>Desmazeria marina</i>	sea fern-grass	F
	<i>Elymus farctus</i>	sea couch-grass	EG SB
	<i>Lagurus ovatus</i>	hare's-foot grass	CC EG MG SR
	<i>Melica ciliata</i>		EG
	<i>Phragmites australis</i>	common reed	AC EG SB T
	<i>Poa annua</i>	annual meadow-grass	MG
	<i>Sporobolus pungens</i>		SB
Polygonaceae	<i>Emex spinosa</i>		SB
	<i>Rumex bucephalophorus</i>		CC EG NT
	<i>R. conglomeratus</i>	clustered dock	W
	<i>R. crispus</i>	curled dock	W
Posidoniaceae	<i>Posidonia oceanica</i>		EG M SB

Primulaceae	<i>Anagallis arvensis</i>	scarlet pimpernel (red and blue varieties)	EG MG NT SB SR TG
Ranunculaceae	<i>Adonis annua</i>	pheasant's eye	NT
	<i>Clematis cirrhosa</i>	maiden's-bower	AG EG MG SB TG
	<i>C. flammula</i>		EG MG SB TG
	<i>Ranunculus aquatilis</i>	common water-crowfoot	SB T
	<i>R. macrophyllus</i>		MN
	<i>R. muricatus</i>		SB
	<i>R. sceleratus</i>	celery-leaved buttercup	AG
Resedaceae	<i>Reseda alba</i>	white mignonette	MG F NT TG W
	<i>R. luteola</i>	weld	EG
Rhamnaceae	<i>Rhamnus alaternus</i>	Mediterranean buckthorn	AG EG MN
Rosaceae	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	hawthorn	AG SB WS
	<i>Malus (sylvestris?)</i>	crab apple	AG EG SR
	<i>Potentilla reptans</i>	creeping cinquefoil	AG
	<i>Prunus spinosa</i>	blackthorn	WS
	<i>Rosa sempervirens</i>		EM
	<i>Rubus ulmifolius</i>	bramble	WS
	<i>Sanguisorba minor</i>	salad burnet	AG SR T
Rubiaceae	<i>Crucianella maritima</i>		SB
	<i>Galium aparine</i>	cleavers	W
	<i>Rubia peregrina</i>	wild madder	AG EG NT SB SR TG
	<i>Sherardia arvensis</i>	field madder	MG NT
	<i>Valantia muralis</i>		CC NT SR
Rutaceae	<i>Ruta chalepensis</i>	fringed rue	MG NT
Salicaceae	<i>Populus alba</i>	white poplar	AG
Scrophulariaceae	<i>Bellardia trixago</i>		MG NT TG
	<i>Cymbalaria muralis</i>	ivy-leaved toadflax	C
	<i>Linaria triphylla</i>	three-leaved toadflax	NT TG
	<i>Parentucellia latifolia</i>		NT
	<i>P. viscosa</i>	yellow bartsia	MG NT
	<i>Scrophularia auriculata</i>	water figwort	AG
	<i>S. peregrina</i>		AG TG
	<i>Verbascum creticum</i>		AG MG NT
	<i>V. sinuatum</i>		AG
	<i>Veronica cymbalaria</i>		W
Smilacaceae	<i>Smilax aspera</i>	common smilax	AG EG MG SR TG
	<i>S. aspera</i> var. <i>balearica</i>		CC
Solanaceae	<i>Solanum nigrum</i>	black nightshade	SR
	<i>S. sodomium</i>	sodom apple	CC
Tamaricaceae	<i>Tamarix africana</i>		AG EG F SB
	<i>T. boveana</i>		AG SB
	<i>T. gallica</i>	tamarisk	EG SB
Typhaceae	<i>Typha angustifolia</i>	lesser reedmace	EM SB
	<i>T. latifolia</i>	greater reedmace	SB
Ulmaceae	<i>Ulmus minor</i>	small-leaved elm	AG
Urticaceae	<i>Parietaria judaica</i>	pellitory-of-the-wall	AG NT
	<i>Urtica membranacea</i>		WS
	<i>U. urens</i>	annual nettle	MG
Valerianaceae	<i>Centranthus calcitrapae</i>	Spanish valerian	EG NT SB SR
	<i>Valerianella discoidea</i>		MG AG SB