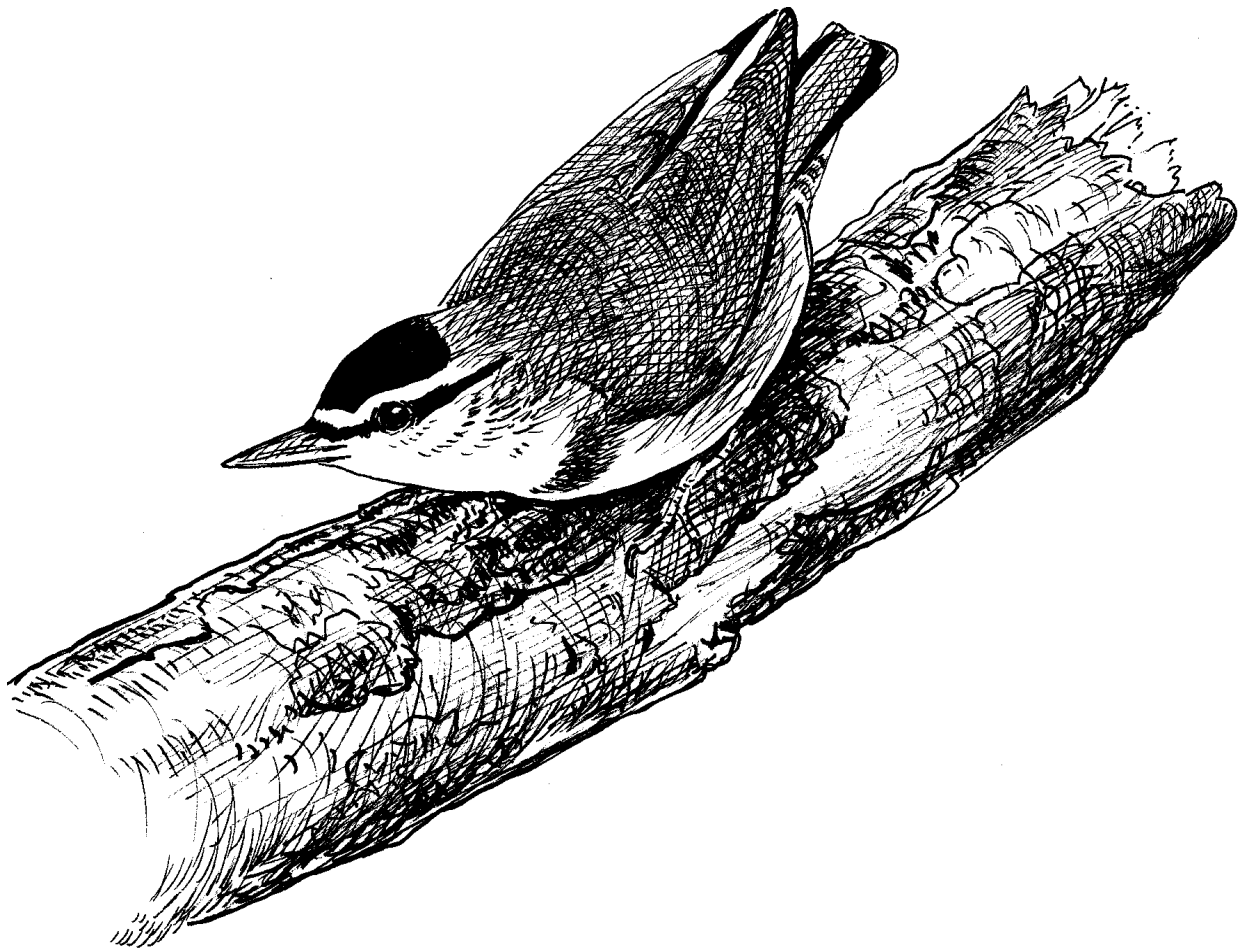


# *Honeyguide*

**WILDLIFE HOLIDAYS**

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**Lesvos**

**Salisbury & District Natural History Society**

**14 – 21 April 2004**

**Lesvos**  
**Salisbury & District Natural History Society**  
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**Holiday participants**

Rosemary and Gerald Nicholls

Jim and Brenda Wade

Donald and Rita Scarfe

Stella Williams

Bertha Staines

Ann Sanders

Ted Sansby

John Pitman

Ailsa McKee  
Patricia Dashwood

Pamela James  
Grace Hickman

Joan Tripp  
Marigold Woolley

Audrey Lovett  
Brenda Davis

Christopher Reynolds  
Michael Milward

*Leaders/drivers*

Rob Lucking  
Rob Macklin  
Kathy Macklin

Report by Rob Macklin, with minor additions by Rob Lucking. Plant list compiled by Kathy Macklin.  
*Illustrations by Rob Hume, except black-winged stilt flock by Gary Wright.*  
*Front cover: Krüper's nuthatch*

As with all Honeyguide holidays, £25 of the price of the holiday was put towards a conservation project, in this case for surveys in the Kalloni Bay Important Bird Area by the Hellenic Ornithological Society (HOS), which is based in Athens but whose work covers the whole of Greece and its islands. £1200 was given to HOS this year - £25 per person from the holidays in Crete and two in Lesvos. This brings Honeyguide's total contributions to HOS since the first Honeyguide holiday in Crete in 1995 to £4,945, and to conservation projects in Europe from all Honeyguide holidays to £33,330. We usually include a thank-you letter from HOS, but this hadn't been received when the report went to print.

**Lesvos**  
**Salisbury & District Natural History Society**  
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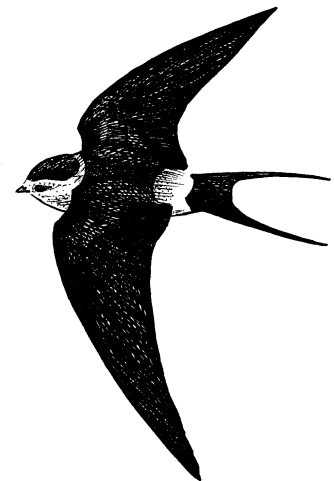
**Wednesday April 14<sup>th</sup> – Getting There**

An early start to travel to Heathrow and meet up with our old friends of the Salisbury Natural History Society. After an amazingly efficient and quick check-in we boarded our plane to Athens and, after a bite to eat and drink, connected with our local flight to Mytilini. We met Rob Lucking at the airport, loaded the luggage into a rather beaten-up old truck, before embarking on the hour-long journey to our base at Vatera. After our late arrival some of the group went straight to bed while the rest of us had a quick meal at the local taverna.

**Thursday April 15<sup>th</sup> – Around Vatera**

Overnight wind and rain had cleared by the morning although there was a distinct chill in the air with a fresh northerly wind. Gerald found the most spectacular, huge peacock moth (the largest moth in Europe) outside the apartments, which posed very obligingly for the cameras. Breakfast was taken at the only taverna open in Vatera (our base for the week) with our usual fare of toast, jam, yoghurt, cheese and occasional eggs. Large numbers of hirundines were moving through over breakfast including at least 100 red-rumped swallows. A long-legged buzzard was soaring over the backdrop of hills at Vatera, a common sandpiper was on the beach and both Cory's and Yelkouan shearwaters were seen offshore. The only woodpigeon of the week was also seen in the village. An initial examination of the beach flowers produced heaps of three-horned stock, woolly chamomile, yellow-horned poppy and Mediterranean catchfly.

After breakfast we decided to explore the beach scrub and the olive groves at the eastern end of Vatera. We had hardly disembarked from the buses when we spotted a black stork drifting off to the north, three shags on the sea, more red-rumped swallows overhead (*right*) and heard a loud Cetti's warbler in the scrub. Our first butterfly turned out to be a painted lady on the beach and then Rita found a tiny paper-wasp nest in the low vegetation. Birds were now turning up thick and fast and it was a job to know where to look. A pair of littleringed plovers gave us all excellent views and these were soon joined by four more birds. At least three black-eared wheatears and a northern wheatear were seen well on the beach, several common buzzards soared over the neighbouring hills, nightingales, reed warblers and subalpine warblers were all in full song and a superb woodchat shrike stayed in view long enough for us to get the telescopes on it. Some of the group were lucky enough to get a sighting of a little bittern, two stunning male ortolan buntings flitted in and out of view and several black and blue-headed wagtails were located among a small flock of grazing sheep – what a start to the day!



We then took the track that leads through the olive groves towards the village of Stavros. A short-toed eagle soared overhead, two linnets were spotted in the scrub and we had our first view of the local jay, this one of the race *atricapillus*, which has a black crown. In the shelter of the olive groves butterflies began to appear and we soon identified the local specialities scarce swallowtail and many Eastern festoons. Lunch was taken in a shady olive grove and further exploration of the hillside turned up several butterflies, including green-underside blue, spotted fritillary and clouded yellow. A buzzard overhead was carrying nesting material and was aptly christened by Chris as a *stick buzzard*! As we were about to retrace our steps we investigated a singing warbler on the slopes that turned out to be an orphean warbler, although very difficult to see. Compensation was provided by a hobby overhead and a turtle dove flying through.

We then decided to head to the western end of Vatera, to the mouth of the River Almiropotamos - after dropping off some of the group for a well-earned cup of tea. This area proved very productive with our first sighting of a female citrine wagtail on the mud at the edge of the river. This stunner was then joined by a spotted crake that gave us all good views – then a wood sandpiper and a little stint. Overhead were two short-toed eagles and a couple of common buzzards; both blue-headed and black-headed wagtails were around the river joining hundreds of hirundines, particularly swallows that had

been held up by the poor weather. To complete a super day a flock of 60 stunning Spanish sparrows flashed by and three turtle doves concentrated on moving through as fast as possible.

#### **Friday April 16<sup>th</sup> – Achladeri & Agiassos**

The day dawned sunny and bright with very little wind and Chris soon had two hoopoes (*right*) on the wires outside his room. Little ringed plover and white wagtail were on the beach and a hobby moved quickly through. After another substantial breakfast we decided to head off to Achladeri and an appointment with Kruper's nuthatch. On the way we picked up sightings of kestrel and woodchat shrike before arriving at the well-known nuthatch nest site. We weren't to be disappointed as we soon saw the bird (a Lesvos speciality) perched up on the nest tree in the middle of the conifer wood. He was very obliging giving us all excellent views through the telescopes and even bringing food into the nest and serenading us into the bargain! A couple of buzzards circled overhead, a mistle thrush called and two more local jays were seen well. More butterflies were noted here including wood white and small copper. A natterjack toad was found in the nearby stream and Patricia got herself nipped by a freshwater crab.



We then moved on a little way to a site where Provence orchids had been found the previous week. We soon found several patches of these lovely orchids, as well as many green-winged orchids. Gerald continued searching the woods and came up with a patch of 150+ purple limodors (violet bird's nest orchids), just emerging. We also found pink hawkbeard in full flower plus lots of the yellow *Anthemis rigida* (rayless chamomile). As time was moving on we headed off for our taverna lunch at Agiassos although on the way we spotted a black stork in a flooded field where, on inspection, we also picked up another calling Krüper's nuthatch and holly blue butterfly.

We arrived at our taverna in Agiassos to find building work in full swing and trenches all over the place. Work came to an abrupt halt and the loo was put back together which was a relief to many of us! Dimitra appeared as if by magic, to help us with our order and to see old friends in her home town. After a splendid meze lunch, some of the group climbed the steep track to explore the sweet chestnut wood above the village while some had a look around the fascinating church and town. The wood is celebrated for its wild flowers and it was soon easy to see why. Both peacock and crown anemones carpeted the ground, lots of barbary nut was in flower and a drooping star-of-Bethlehem was identified as *Ornithogalum nutans*. Perhaps the most impressive flowers here were the magnificent peonies, which provoked much clicking of cameras; not far behind were the super, green *Fritillaria pontica* in flower on the banks of the path. Some of the group saw a single false apollo butterfly sunning itself on the path. While we were relaxing and enjoying the flowers, some rare sunshine, the peace and the general ambience of the lovely wood, a short-toed eagle soared overhead, then a stunning male collared flycatcher roused us from our reverie. While straining for good views of him, we were also treated to a lucky glimpse of a beautiful Persian squirrel. An eastern Bonelli's warbler was trilling nearby and everyone managed to get a good view of it in full song.

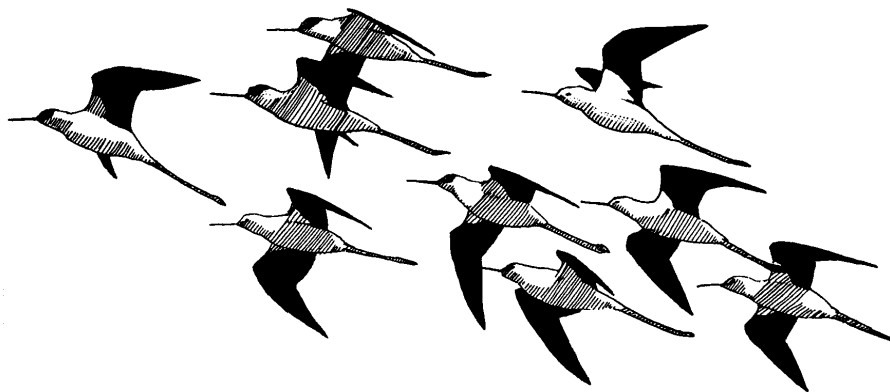
On the way back we stopped off briefly at another orchid site and quickly found lesser yellow bee-orchid, four-spotted orchid and several sombre bee-orchids. Other plants in flower included a pink valerian, oregano, shepherd's needle, blue hounds-tongue and beautiful drifts of *Anthemis chia*.

#### **Saturday April 17<sup>th</sup> – Kalloni Salt Pans & Pools**

Before breakfast a hoopoe was spotted at the back of the apartments then nine purple herons flew in off the sea allowing everyone to get good views. Bird movements offshore involved five shags, 10 Cory's shearwaters and approx. 26 Yelkouan shearwaters; but the real highlight was the appearance of four common dolphins!

On the way to Kalloni, we passed through Achladeri where we located two great white egrets, a ruddy shelduck, two common terns and two woodchat shrikes. We arrived at the salt pans in mid-morning

and were greeted by the sight of hundreds of birds feeding in the shallows. Perhaps the most impressive of these were the greater flamingos that numbered some 550 individuals; in flight the red wing coverts and black flight feathers were spectacularly eye-catching. There were also over a hundred avocets and 30 black-winged stilts (*below*) on the pans with other smaller waders including marsh & wood sandpipers, five spotted redshanks, four greenshanks and six curlew sandpipers. Careful scrutiny of the banks revealed two skulking stone-curlews, which disappeared into the grass at will. Herons here included five great white egrets, 17 grey and 15 purple herons, while a flock of 12 pintails fed in the shallows. A little tern then flew past and a slender-billed gull scoured the area for food - what a place for birds!



We then decided to find a place for our picnic lunch and finally settled on the shore of Kalloni Bay. A short-toed lark and two linnets were on the path as we parked our buses and a Spanish sparrow gave us all great views as it perched on the fence. It was fairly chilly as we unpacked the lunch on our smart paper tablecloths provided by Paniotis. A flock of brown wildfowl in the bay turned out to be 25 garganeys, while two great crested grebes were on the sea. A couple of curlews flew by and six common terns were briefly joined by a whiskered tern, which flew off towards the salt pans. After lunch we walked out across the plain at the back of the pans, through an amazing display of white asphodel, picking up at least 10 ruddy shelducks, 13 little terns, 10 alpine swifts overhead and three more black-headed wagtails. We had already seen a few short-toed larks and these were joined by an amazing flock of 55, which flew in and landed quite close to us. By this time the rain had arrived, so we headed back to the buses, where Gerald found a stunning striped-hawk-moth. A somewhat bedraggled male red-footed falcon was perched up on the telephone wires!

It was pretty cold by the time we reached Skala Kalloni but a welcoming taverna provided hot chocolate, coffee and some impressive-looking cakes! Swallows were nesting in the roof of the taverna but the highlight here was the huge white pelican standing stock still on the beach; apparently the pelican has made this village its home!

Suitably refreshed we sallied forth as the rain had eased and headed for Kalloni Pools. At least 10 black-winged stilts were nesting on the pools, a male garganey showed well in the shallows but the highlight was excellent views of nine glossy ibises (*right*). A white stork was also feeding on the edge of the pools, 15 wood sandpipers were counted, little grebes and water rails were heard while Cetti's and sedge warblers were in full song. A stunning black-headed wagtail flew in and three shiny green tree frogs posed well for the cameras on the reed stems!

On the way back we spotted three superb whiskered terns feeding on the edge of the salt pans; further inspection revealed at least 20 gull-billed terns, 50 common terns, five little egrets and a black stork. What an amazing day for birds!

When we got back to Vatera a quick change was the order of the day as we were all invited to attend the blessing of Dimitra's new holiday venture, Hibiscus Travel.

### **Sunday April 18<sup>th</sup> – Sigri and The Petrified Forest**

The day dawned cloudy with a strong westerly wind whipping in off the sea. Several members of the group took a pre-breakfast walk towards the river and picked up the two resident short-toed eagles, a peregrine, whitethroat and up to 10 black-headed wagtails.

It was a long drive to Sigri in the west of the island and unfortunately heavy rain dogged us most of the way. Our first stop was near Kalloni to see a roosting scops owl in a glade of eucalyptus trees. The owl gave us all fantastic views through binoculars and telescopes! We then moved on and drove across the mountains through torrential rain; it was not totally birdless however, as two masked shrikes were seen from the buses, one at least in fine view. As we drove into Sigri, the rain was still falling and a rather bedraggled lesser kestrel presented a sorry sight perched up on a rock. We decided to explore the museum of the Petrified Forest which turned out to be an inspired choice; a really interesting and well laid out set of exhibits were on show. The staff were also very helpful and allowed us to eat lunch in their restaurant. The rain finally abated after lunch and while we were waiting to board the buses several Yelkouan shearwaters were seen in the bay; passing raptors included up to six Montagu's harriers, female marsh harrier, hobby, peregrine and male lesser kestrel – not bad for a car park! A large flock of 70 jackdaws was also wheeling around the town.

On the way to the Petrified Forest we counted at least 16 lesser kestrels hunting over the hillsides. Annoyingly, the forest itself was closed, so we set about exploring the adjacent area. Several little owls were perched up around the nearby farm buildings, another male Montagu's harrier went over and up to four chukar partridges were also seen. A hungry tethered donkey really appreciated our bread and tomatoes left over from lunch.

We walked along the edge of the fence and quickly located a singing tawny pipit, at least seven black-eared wheatears and a couple of ordinary wheatears, a whinchat, meadow pipit and a migrant wood warbler in the only cover available. The difference between this barren, overgrazed area and the much lush vegetation inside the fence was remarkable. More migrants were also passing overhead including five alpine swifts and 10+ red-throated pipits, identified by their continuous flight calls. As we retraced our steps our first pair of Cretzschmar's buntings was spotted on the fence and was soon joined by another male. We continued walking along the road with a peregrine flashing over and soon found our quarry, a stunning cinereous bunting, which is largely confined to this area of the island. Several more Cretzschmar's buntings were seen in the scrub here, a super male whinchat perched up on the fence and a little brown job turned out to be our first tree pipit.

Time seemed to be slipping away so we only paid a very brief visit to the Ipsilou monastery, which was wreathed in cloud; a highlight here was a breeding pair of blue rock thrushes. After this, two buses headed back to Vatera while the other popped into the Isabelline wheatear site; just one of these wheatears was seen and the group also found a fan-lipped orchid. We all arrived back at base feeling weather-beaten and weary but pleased that the rain did not ruin the day.

### **Monday April 19<sup>th</sup> – Melinda & Polinichtos Pools**

The day dawned sunny and warm with no wind – a great relief to everyone. The pre-breakfast birding at the river picked up a squacco heron, a water rail and a reed warbler while a hoopoe was heard calling from the scrub. Offshore at least 30 Yelkouan shearwaters passed by and at least 50 alpine swifts moved through overhead.

After breakfast we took the buses up picturesque rough tracks to the small town of Melinda. Passing through olive groves on the way we heard nightingales singing and had good views of both circl and Cretzschmar's buntings. This morning's quarry were flowers in the olive groves and, to the background of nightingale song and gentle purring of turtle doves, we commenced our search for orchids. We soon located two excellent toothed orchids, dozens of long-lipped tongue orchids and what was probably a late-spider orchid. Some excellent specimens of naked man orchid were worth a scramble up the bank, and a fantastic, three-foot tall blue flower was identified as *Scilla hyacinthoides*. A lovely campanula was probably *C. sporadum*, I am reliably informed by Gerald and Rosemary after consultation with their campanula book. Sadly, quite a few flowers on the trip were not in any of the books we had with us and so have escaped identification, by us at least. Dragonflies were buzzing along the river and these were soon identified as lesser emperors. New butterflies here included the eastern race of baton blue, southern swallowtail and the more familiar small white; eastern festoons seemed to be buzzing around everywhere. Both peacock and crown anemones were in flower here, rusty-back fern was found on the stone walls and just two lesser yellow bee-orchids were discovered. Mike and Chris were also lucky enough to find the only sombre tit of the week.

After lunch we meandered back towards base pausing to stop at a charcoal burning station on the roadside that elicited much snapping of cameras. A red-throated pipit made its characteristic call as it went over and a singing black-eared wheatear was then joined by a female and yet another male. A collared flycatcher was then seen here and the sun finally decided to shine through the leaden skies!

We headed back to Vatera for a comfort stop and then off again to see the fascinating hot springs and then on to Skala Polichnitos. This area can be quite productive and we soon encountered circling buntings, stonechats and crested larks; overhead at least 30 alpine swifts were in flight and a short-toed eagle drifted over. The pools were disappointing; hosting just three greater flamingos, a wood sandpiper and a male blue-headed wagtail. Six stunning whinchats perched on the fence, giving us all good views. One bus decided to go on while the other two made their way home; as we were leaving the pools Brenda spotted an orange-looking bird perched low on a rock in the fields. Closer inspection revealed a superb adult female red-footed falcon and she was soon joined by a stunning slate-grey male – what a find! The late returning bus enjoyed watching a mixed flock of yellow wagtails feeding in the river bed and around a small flock of sheep grazing the fields alongside the salt pans and also found six red-footed falcons in the same area – four males and two females.

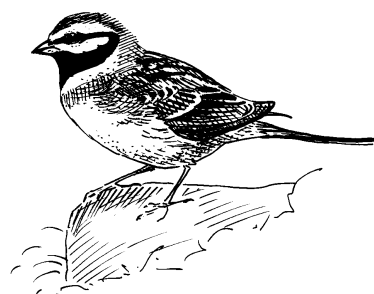
In the evening we again made our way to the local taverna for yet another super meal. On the way we noticed at least 45 Yelkouan shearwaters offshore and keen eyes picked out four dolphins moving through the surf. What a way to end the day!

### **Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> April – Petra, Molivos and the North Coast**

Another cloudy and cool start to the day although this did not stop a small group heading up to the point before breakfast. 60 Yelkouan shearwaters were offshore and a squacco heron was along the river. Rob spotted a large raptor coming in off the sea that gained height over the island and headed north – probably a lesser-spotted eagle but unfortunately not confirmed.

After breakfast we set off for the north side of Lesbos; the drive was relatively uneventful but we did pick up a white stork feeding in a meadow just outside Vatera.

Our first stop was at the "bandstand" on the road from Kalloni to Petra. A black stork was our first sighting as it drifted north and was swiftly followed by a long-legged buzzard in full display flight! A short-toed eagle was also in the air, a cuckoo flew quickly through and both circling (*right*) and Cretzschmar's buntings were on the bushes. Shining figwort and pink hawksbeard were in flower and the hillside was covered in oleander bushes.



Our next stop was in a large lay-by between Petra and Molivos, which is a well-known site for Rüppell's warbler; we didn't have long to wait as a male soon appeared in full song and was quickly joined by a female. Further searching of the area soon produced at least another two birds! An elusive Orphean warbler was seen by a lucky few. The bird life in this area was amazing with a peregrine and sparrowhawk soaring over the nearby hills, a male pallid harrier coming in off the sea, four ravens flying low over the sea and yet another long-legged buzzard. Small flocks of passerines were constantly moving through and we estimated there were about 500 Spanish sparrows and at least 30 tree pipits, the latter calling as they flew overhead. We then spotted a male blue rock thrush on the cliffs, at least three Cretzschmar's buntings put in an appearance and three crag martins buzzed along the cliffs! We also bumped into a group from Naturetrek co-led by Dave Suddaby, a former RSPB warden from the Ouse Washes.

After all this activity it was time for lunch and Dimitra had booked us in at a smart new taverna at Vafios. She arrived spot on time to ensure everything went smoothly and lunch was indeed excellent. The taverna afforded good views across the surrounding countryside and in the air was yet another short-toed eagle, a peregrine, two kestrels and two buzzards. Just before lunch we heard several bee-eaters calling but they proved hard to pin down! After lunch most of the group set off to explore Molivos with its imposing castle, while one bus decided to have a look at the reservoir. The latter site proved a little disappointing with just four wood sandpipers and a common sandpiper on the reservoir

edge. After this Rob joined up with us in his bus and we headed along a coastal track towards Eftalou; rumour had it that this was a good site for migrating raptors. Unfortunately it was late in the afternoon and no raptors were to be found but the shoreline did boast two common sandpipers and 20 more Yelkouan shearwaters were seen offshore. As time was getting on we headed back to Molivos to pick up the rest of the group, who had been frustrated to find the castle and the town all closed up for the afternoon siesta. There was an impressive white henbane growing by the castle, where the highlight of Kathy's week was a kiss from a handsome young (!) Greek man who we were asking for directions.

### **Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> April – A roundabout way home**

Alas, heavy rain throughout the night continued into mid-morning so we bade our farewells to Vatera in rather damp spirits. As we were packing up the buses 14 night herons came in off the sea, pied and spotted flycatchers were in the trees along the beach road and a little egret and oystercatcher were on the beach. There was also a continuous stream of alpine and common swifts moving through overhead.

At Vrissa we had a fine old time trying to park the buses but with this accomplished most of the group disappeared into the natural history museum, where we were treated to an evolutionary history of the island by the proprietor. Several of us walked back down the hill to where we had heard a warbler singing; after much searching we were delighted to identify the bird as an olivaceous warbler. We then went back to the museum to join the rest of the group and extricate the buses from the tiny village. We stopped for coffee at Polinichtos and noticed that the white stork's nest was occupied by the two adults and was also home to breeding house and Spanish sparrows.

Our last port of call before departure was the Roman aqueduct at Moria, which we managed to find after much backtracking and negotiating narrow winding roads! A very impressive construction, it was home to a large number of house sparrows and a good place to have lunch. A sparrowhawk drifted over, yet another woodchat shrike was located and the final bird of the trip was a smart male collared flycatcher in the adjacent olive grove. Time to head for Mytilini and a chance to have a quick look around the harbour, including a visit to the local co-operative produce shop before driving the short distance to the airport and home. Once again, our thanks to Rob Lucking and to the Salisbury Natural History Society for your delightful company and good humour, making for a most enjoyable week.

\* \* \* \* \*

## **Systematic Species Lists – Birds**

### **Little Grebe** *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

One on Kalloni Pool 17 April

### **Great-crested Grebe** *Podiceps cristatus*

Two offshore at Kalloni on 17 April.

### **Cory's Shearwater** *Calonectris diomedea*

Occasionally seen offshore at Vatera peaking at 10 on 17 April.

### **Yelkouan shearwater** *Puffinus yelkouan*

25 off Vatera Beach 15 April, 6 in Sigri Harbour on 18 April, 25 off Agia Fokas 19 April with over 100 there on 21 April.

### **Shag** *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

At least two seen daily from Vatera Beach. Two offshore between Petra and Molivos on 20 April.

### **White Pelican** *Pelecanus onocrotalus*

One at Kalloni on 17 April.

### **Little Bittern** *Ixobrychus minutus*

Single bird seen at mouth of Voukaris River, Vatera on 15 April.

### **Night Heron** *Nycticorax nycticorax*

Fourteen over Vatera on 21 April.



**Squacco Heron** *Ardeola ralloides*

One at Agia Fokas on 19 April and seen on Vatera Beach the next day.

**Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta*

Common at Kalloni Salt Pans on 17 April and seen from minibuses around Kalloni Bay on 18 and 20 April. One on Vatera beach on 21 April.

**Great White Egret** *Egretta alba*

Small numbers seen at Kalloni Salt Pans on 17 April and seen from minibuses around Kalloni Bay on 18 and 20 April.

**Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea*

Occasional individuals seen across the island but 17 at Kalloni Salt Pans on 17 April.

**Purple Heron** *Ardea purpurea*

Nine over Vatera on 17 April with another 15 at Kalloni Salt Pans the same day.

**White Stork** *Ciconia ciconia*

Pair nesting on old chimney in Polichnitos throughout; one on Kalloni Pool on 17 April and one near Vrisa on 21 April.

**Black Stork** *Ciconia nigra*

Singles seen at Vatera on 15 April, Megali Limni on 16 April, 'Derbyshire' on 18 April and from the Kalloni to Sigri Road on 20 April.

**Glossy Ibis** *Plegadis falcinellus*

Eleven on Kalloni Pool on 17 April.

**Greater Flamingo** *Phoenicopterus ruber*

Around 500 on Kalloni Salt Pans on 17 April then three on Polichnitos Salt pans on 19 April.

**Ruddy Shelduck** *Tadorna ferruginea*

10 at Kalloni Salt Pans on 17 April, one seen from minibus at 'Derbyshire' on 20 April.

**Shelduck** *Tadorna tadorna*

One at Kalloni Salt Pans on 17 April.

**Pintail** *Anas acuta*

Twelve on Kalloni Salt Pans on 17 April.

**Garganey** *Anas quercedula*

Eighteen over Kalloni Bay on 17 April with two drakes on Kalloni Pool the same day.

**Short-toed Eagle** *Circaetus gallicus*

Seen in small numbers almost daily.

**Marsh Harrier** *Circus aeruginosus*

A male at Kalloni Salt Pans on 17 April, a female at Sigri on 18 April and another between Petra and Molivos on 20 April.

**Montagu's Harrier** *Circus pygargus*

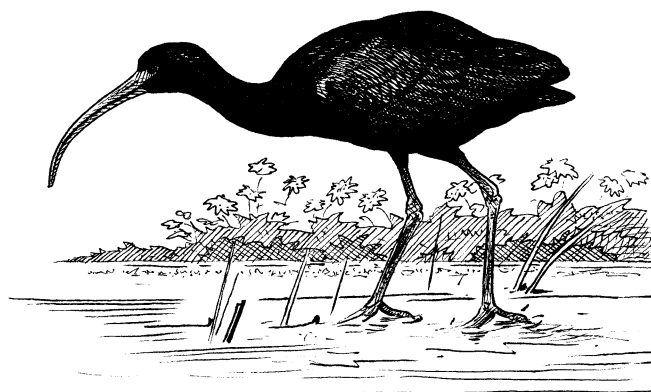
Six came in off the sea at Sigri on 18 April, then one sub-adult male at the Petrified Forest on 18 April with three females at Polichnitos Salt Pans on 19 April

**Pallid Harrier**

Adult male in off the sea between Petra and Molivos on 20 April

**Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter nisus*

Single birds seen near Petra on 20 April and Moria on 21 April.



**Common Buzzard** *Buteo buteo*

Small numbers seen at several location across the island.

**Long-legged Buzzard** *Buteo rufinus*

Single at Vatera on 15 April, one bird seen very well between Kalloni and Petra on 20 April with another at Petra on the same day.

**Kestrel** *Falco tinnunculus*

Singles at Vatera on 15 and 21 April with two at Vafios on 20 April.

**Lesser Kestrel** *Falco naumanni*

One by the side of the road at Sigri on 18 April with a further 18 at the Petrified Forest.

**Red-footed Falcon** *Falco vespertinus*

Single male at Kalloni Salt Pans on 17 April; four males and two females at Polichnitos Salt Pans on 19 April.

**Hobby** *Falco subbuteo*

Single at Vatera on 15 and 16 April then one at Sigri on 18 April and one at Vatera on 19 April.

**Peregrine** *Falco peregrinus*

Singles at Vatera and Sigri on 18 April and between Petra and Molivos on 20 April.

**Chukar** *Alectoris chukar*

At least five seen at the Petrified Forest on 18 April.

**Water Rail** *Rallus aquaticus*

One on the Almiropotamus River, Vatera on 19 April.

**Spotted Crake** *Porzana porzana*

One on the Almiropotamus River, Vatera on 15 April.

**Little Crake** *Porzana parva*

A male on the Almiropotamus River, Vatera on 20 April.

**Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus*

Up to six on the Almiropotamus River, Vatera throughout and six at Kalloni pools on 17 April.

**Coot** *Fulica atra*

Two at Kalloni pools on 17 April.

**Oystercatcher**

One on Vatera Beach on 21 April.

**Avocet** *Recurvirostra avosetta*

Around 100 at Kalloni Salt Pans on 17 April.

**Black-winged Stilt** *Himantopus himantopus*

Common on Kalloni Pool and Kalloni Salt Pans on 17 April.

**Stone-curlew** *Burhinus oedicnemus*

Two at Kalloni Salt Pans on 17 April.

**Little Ringed Plover** *Charadrius dubius*

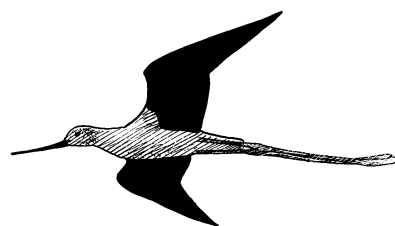
Small numbers seen daily on Vatera Beach although eight in the area on 15 April.

**Little Stint** *Calidris minuta*

One on the Almiropotamus River, Vatera on 15 April.

**Curlew Sandpiper** *Calidris ferruginea*

Six at Kalloni Salt Pans on 17 April.



**Snipe** *Gallinago gallinago*

One on the Almiropotamus River, Vatera on 20 April.

**Black-tailed godwit** *Limosa limosa*

One at Kalloni Salt Pans on 17 April.

**Curlew** *Numerius arquata*

Three at Kalloni Salt Pans on 17 April.

**Spotted Redshank** *Tringa erythropus*

Five at Kalloni Salt Pans on 17 April.

**Marsh Sandpiper** *Tringa stagnatilis*

Six at Kalloni Salt Pans on 17 April.

**Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia*

Eight at Kalloni Salt Pans on 17 April.

**Wood Sandpiper** *Tringa glareola*

Small numbers at all wetland sites visited.

**Common Sandpiper** *Actitis hypoleucos*

Up to four around Vatera throughout, also at Kalloni Salt Pans on 17 April and Efthalou on 20 April.

**Black-headed Gull** *Larus ridibundus*

One at Kalloni Salt Pans on 17 April.

**Slender-billed Gull** *Larus genei*

One at Kalloni Salt Pans on 17 April.

**Yellow-legged Gull** *Larus cachinnans michahellis*

Common throughout the island, often seen circling on thermals.

**Gull-billed Tern** *Gelochelidon nilotica*

Around 20 at Kalloni Salt Pans on 17 April.

**Common Tern** *Sterna hirundo*

Around 30 at Kalloni Salt Pans on 17 April. Also seen from minibus on 18 and 19 April.

**Little Tern** *Sterna albifrons*

Four at Kalloni Salt Pans on 17 April.

**Whiskered Tern** *Chlidonias hybridus*

Three at Kalloni Salt Pans on 17 April.

**Woodpigeon** *Columba palumbus*

One at Vatera on 15 April.

**Collared Dove** *Streptopelia decaocto*

Seen daily throughout the island.

**Turtle Dove** *Streptopelia turtur*

At least four at Vatera on 15 April, heard at Malinda on 19 April and near Petra on 20 April.

**Cuckoo** *Cuculus canorus*

Heard at Vatera on 15 April and one near Petra on 20 April.

**Scops Owl** *Otus scops*

One roosting in a Eucalyptus tree near Kalloni town on 18 April.

**Little Owl** *Athene noctua*

One seen every night at Vatera with at least three at the Petrified Forest on 18 April.

**Common Swift** *Apus apus*

Small numbers seen most days but a huge passage through Vatera on 21 April.

**Alpine Swift** *Apus melba*

Passages of around 10 at Kalloni Salt Pans on 17 April, 10+ at the Petrified Forest on 18 April, 40 at Polichnitos Salt Pans on 19 April, 30 at Vatera on 20 April and hundreds moving through Vatera on 21 April.

**Bee-eater** *Merops apiaster*

Up to six around Vafios on 20 April.

**Hoopoe** *Upupa epops*

Around Vatera on 16 and 19 April.

**Middle Spotted Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos medius*

Heard in olive groves near Vatera on 15 April, at Agiassos on 16 April and at Melinda on 19 April.

**Short-toed Lark** *Calandrella brachydactyla*

At least 70 at Kalloni Salt Pans on 17 April.

**Crested Lark** *Galerida cristata*

Abundant throughout the island.

**Sand Martin** *Riparia riparia*

Small numbers throughout.

**Crag Martin** *Ptyonoprogne rupestris*

Three between Petra and Molivos on 20 April.

**Swallow** *Hirundo rustica*

Common throughout.

**Red-rumped Swallow** *Hirundo daurica*

Seen daily. Passage of at least 400 through Vatera on 15 April.

**House Martin** *Delichon urbica*

Seen daily.

**Tawny Pipit** *Anthus campestris*

Two at the Petrified Forest on 18 April.

**Meadow Pipit** *Anthus pratensis*

One at the Petrified Forest on 18 April.

**Tree Pipit** *Anthus trivialis*

Single at the Petrified Forest on 18 April, one from minibus between Melinda and Vatera on 19 April and one between Petra and Molivos on 20 April.

**Red-throated Pipit** *Anthus cervinus*

Twenty-two over the Petrified Forest on 18 April and heard calling at Melinda on 19 April.

**Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla flava flava* (Blue-headed Wagtail)

Five at Vatera on 15 April with at least 40 at Polichnitos Salt Pans on 19 April.

**Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla flava feldegg* (Black-headed Wagtail)

The commonest 'yellow' wagtail we saw on the island. Seen in small numbers in all wetland habitats. Large mixed flock in the sheep fields behind Polichnitos Salt Pans on 19 April.

**Citrine Wagtail** *Motacilla citreola*

A female on the Almiropotamus River, Vatera on 15 April.

**White Wagtail** *Motacilla alba*

Two at Vatera on 15 April & 16 April then two at Polichnitos Salt Pans on 19 April.

**Wren** *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Several singing in the sweet chestnut woodland above Agiassos on 16 April and at Melinda on 19 April.

**Robin** *Erithacus rubecula*

Several singing in the sweet chestnut woodland above Agiassos on 16 April.

**Nightingale** *Luscinia megarhynchos*

Heard singing at most sites. Particularly numerous in the olive groves at Melinda on 19 April.

**Redstart** *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

One from the minibus between Melinda and Vatera on 19 April.

**Whinchat** *Saxicola rubetra*

One at Vatera on 15 April, one at the Petrified Forest on 18 April, at least six by the Polichnitos Salt Pans on 19 April and three between Petra and Molivos on 20 April.

**Stonechat** *Saxicola torquata*

One at Polichnitos Thermal Springs on 19 April and a male near Kalloni on 20 April.

**Isabelline Wheatear** *Oenanthe isabellina*

One at the Sigri-Eressos road junction on 18 April.

**Northern Wheatear** *Oenanthe oenanthe*

One or two individuals seen daily at several sites on the island.

**Black-eared Wheatear** *Oenanthe hispanicus melanoleuca*

Widespread throughout the island, particularly in the uplands.

One male of the pale-throated form seen at the Petrified Forest on 18 April.

**Blue Rock Thrush** *Monticola solitarius*

A pair at Ipsilou Monastery on 18 April with another pair between Petra and Molivos on 20 April.

**Blackbird** *Turdus merula*

Seen in small numbers throughout.

**Song Thrush** *Turdus philomelos*

One singing at Agiassos on 16 April.

**Mistle Thrush** *Turdus viscivorus*

One at Achladeri on 16 April.

**Cetti's Warbler** *Cettia cettia*

Heard and seen at Vatera throughout.

**Sedge Warbler** *Acrocephalus schoenobaemus*

Small numbers at Vatera throughout.

**Olivaceous Warbler** *Hippolais pallida elaeica*

Single male singing at Vrisa on 21 April.

**Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

Small numbers at Vatera throughout.

**Subalpine Warbler** *Sylvia cantillans*

Small numbers in olive groves and scrubby habitats throughout.

**Rüppell's Warbler** *Sylvia ruepelli*

One at Vatera on 15 April then at least four between Petra and Molivos on 20 April.

**Orphean Warbler** *Sylvia hortensis crassirostris*

Heard in olive groves at Vatera on 15 April, one seen briefly at the Petrified Forest on 18 April, heard at Melinda on 19 April and again seen briefly between Petra and Molivos in 20 April.

**Whitethroat** *Sylvia communis*

One at Vatera on 18 April with another between Kalloni and Petra on 20 April.

**Blackcap** *Sylvia atricapilla*

One at Agiassos on 16 April and one at Melinda on 19 April.

**Eastern Bonelli's Warbler** *Phylloscopus bonelli orientalis*

A singing male was located in the woods above Agiassos on 16 April.

**Wood Warbler** *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

Two at the Petrified Forest on 18 April.

**Spotted Flycatcher** *Muscicapa striata*

Single at Vatera on 15 & 21 April.

**Collared Flycatcher** *Ficedula albicollis*

One male above Agiassos on 16 April, a male between Melinda and Vatera on 19 April and another male at the Roman aquaduct at Moria on 21 April.

**Pied Flycatcher** *Ficedula hypoleuca*

A male at Vatera on 21 April.

**Sombre Tit** *Parus lugubris*

One seen by Chris and Mike at Melinda on 19 April.

**Blue Tit** *Parus caeruleus*

Common in woodland habitats

**Great Tit** *Parus major*

Common in woodland habitats

**Krüper's Nuthatch** *Sitta krueperi*

One at the pine woodlands at Achladeri on 16 April with another heard calling at the Megali Limni the same day.

**Short-toed Treecreeper** *Certhia brachydactyla*

Heard in the pine woodlands at Achladeri on 16 April.

**Woodchat Shrike** *Lanius senator*

Seen almost daily in small numbers throughout

**Masked Shrike** *Lanius nubicus* (right)

Two birds on the road to Sigri on 18 April.

**Jay** *Garrulus glandarius atricapillus*

Seen regularly in wooded habitats

**Jackdaw** *Corvus monedula*

Between 60 and 70 at Sigri on 18 April.

**Hooded Crow** *Corvus corone*

Common throughout the island

**Raven** *Corvus corax*

Four at Molivos on 20 April.

**House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus*

Common and widespread throughout.

**Spanish Sparrow** *Passer hispaniolensis*

Widespread throughout the island but less common than house sparrow.



**Chaffinch** *Fringilla coelebs*  
Common and widespread, especially in woodland.

**Serín** *Serinus serinus*  
Singing in the pine woods at Achladeri on 16 April.

**Greenfinch** *Carduelis chloris*  
Seen and heard in small numbers around the hotel and in wooded habitats.

**Goldfinch** *Carduelis carduelis*  
Seen in small numbers throughout.

**Linnet** *Carduelis cannabina*  
Seen in small numbers throughout.

**Cirl Bunting** *Emberiza cirlo*  
Occasional single birds seen at various location across the island on four dates.

**Cinereous Bunting** *Emberiza cineracea*  
A pair at the Petrified Forest on 18 April.

**Ortolan Bunting** *Emberiza hortulana*  
Two at Vatera on 15 April and one near Polichnitos Salt Pans on 19 April.

**Cretzschmar's Bunting** *Emberiza caesia*  
Seen in small numbers at the Petrified Forest on 18 April, Polichnitos Thermal Springs on 19 April and between Kalloni and Molivos on 20 April.

**Corn Bunting** *Miliaria calandra*  
Common and widespread throughout.

**Total – 137 species**

### Butterfly species list

Swallowtail	<i>Papilio machaon</i>
Scarce Swallowtail	<i>Iphiclides podalirus</i>
Eastern Festoon	<i>Zerynthia cerisyi</i>
False Apollo	<i>Archon apollinus</i>
Large White	<i>Pieris brassicae</i>
Small White	<i>Artogeia rapae</i>
Eastern Dappled White	<i>Euchloe ausonia</i>
Orange Tip	<i>Anthocharis cardamines</i>
Clouded Yellow	<i>Colias crocea</i>
Wood White	<i>Leptidea sinapis</i>
Green Hairstreak	<i>Callophrys rubi</i>
Small Copper	<i>Lycaena phlaeas</i>
Green-underside Blue	<i>Glaucopsyche alexis</i>
Baton Blue	<i>Pseudophilotes baton</i>
Brown Argus	<i>Aricia agestis</i>
Common Blue	<i>Polyommatus icarus</i>
Painted Lady	<i>Vanessa cardui</i>
Spotted Fritillary	<i>Melitaea didyma</i>
Small Heath	<i>Coenonympha pamphilus</i>

**total – 19**

## Plant List

**Italian Cypress** *Cupressus sempervirens*  
**Sweet Chestnut** *Castanea sativa*  
**Holly (Kermes) Oak** *Quercus coccifera*  
**Valonia oak** *Quercus aegilops*  
**Hornbeam** *Carpinus orientalis*  
**Fig** *Ficus carica*

**Roman Nettle** *Urtica pilulifera*  
**Hairy Birthwort** *Aristolochia hirta*  
**Sea Beet** *Beta vulgaris* ssp. *maritima*  
**Glasswort** sp. *Salicornia* sp.  
**Sea Purslane** *Halimione portulacoides*  
**Hottentot fig** *Carpobrotus acinaciformis*

**Italian catchfly** *Silene italica*  
**Hairless Catchfly** *Silene behen*  
**Mediterranean Catchfly** *Silene colorata*  
subsp. *colorata*

**Crown Anemone** *Anemone coronaria*  
**Peacock Anemone** *Anemone pavonina*  
**Water-crowfoot** sp. *Ranunculus* sp.  
**Peony** *Paeonia mascula* subsp. *arietina*

**Papaver rhoeas** *common poppy*  
**Prickly Poppy** *Papaver argemone*  
*Papaver nigrotinctum* (at Kalloni salt-pans)  
**Yellow-horned Poppy** *Glaucium flavum*  
*Hypocoum imberbe* (strange yellow flower on plain behind salt-pans)

**Common fumitory** *Fumaria officinalis*

**Spring Rock-cress** *Arabis verna*  
**Three-horned Stock** *Matthiola tricuspidata*  
**Golden alyssum** *Alyssum saxatile*  
**Dittander** *Lepidium latifolium*  
**Sea rocket** *Cakile maritima*

**White Mignonette** *Reseda alba*

**Reddish Stoncrop** *Sedum rubens*  
**Navelwort** sp. *Umbilicus* sp.

**Oriental Plane** *Platanus orientalis*

**Mediterranean Salad Burnet** *Poterium verrucosum*  
**Thorny Burnet** *Sarcopoterium spinosum*  
**Almond-leaved Pear** *Pyrus spinosa* (*Pyrus amygdaliformis*)

**Hairy Thorny Broom** *Calycotoma villosa*  
**False acacia** *Robinia pseudacacia*  
**Fodder Vetch** *Vicia villosa*  
**Hairy Yellow Vetchling** *Vicia hybrida*  
**Common vetch** *Vicia sativa*  
*Vicia narbonensis*

*Lathyrus setifolius*  
*Lathyrus ochrus*  
**Blue fenugreek** *Trigonella caerulea*  
**Disc Medick** *Medicago orbicularis*  
**One-flowered clover** *Trifolium uniflorum*  
*Trifolium boissieri*  
**Reversed Clover** *Trifolium resupinatum*  
**Ball cotton clover** *Trifolium pilulare*  
**Star clover** *Trifolium stellatum*  
**Shield clover** *Trifolium clypeatum*  
**Disc trefoil** *Hymenocarpus circinatus*  
**Crown vetch** *Coronilla varia*

**Bermuda Buttercup** *Oxalis pes-caprae*

**Round-leaved geranium** *Geranium rotundifolium*  
**Cut-leaved Crane's-bill** *Geranium dissectum*  
**Herb Robert** *Geranium robertianum*  
**Shining Crane's-bill** *Geranium lucidum*  
**Mallow-leaved Stork's-bill** *Erodium malacoides*

**Pale Flax** *Linum bienne*  
**White flax** *Linum tenuifolium*

**Sun Spurge** *Euphorbia helioscopia*  
**Narrow-leaved Glaucous Spurge** *Euphorbia rigida*  
**Sea Spurge** *Euphorbia paralias*  
**Large Mediterranean Spurge** *Euphorbia characias*  
**Annual Mercury** *Mercurialis annua*

**Fringed rue** *Ruta chalapensis*

**Indian bead tree** *Melia azedarach*

**Turpentine Tree** *Pistacia terebinthus*  
**Mastic Tree** *Pistacia lentiscus*

**Least mallow** *Malva parviflora*

**Cistus creticus** ssp. *creticus*  
**Sage-leaved Cistus** *Cistus salvifolius*

**Tamarisk** sp. *Tamarix* sp.

**Squirting cucumber** *Ecballium elaterium*

**Shepherd's Needle** *Scandix pecten-veneris*  
**Alexanders-like umbellifer** *Smyrniium rotundifolium*  
**Thorow-wax** *Bupleurum gracile*  
**Giant Fennel** *Ferula communis* ssp. *communis*  
**Tordylium** *Tordylium apulum*



**Scarlet Pimpernel** *Anagallis arvensis* (both blue- and scarlet-flowered forms)

**Winged sea lavender** *Limonium sinuatum*

**Oleander** *Nerium oleander* subsp. *oleander*

**Mallow-leaved Bindweed** *Convolvulus althaeoides*

**Borage** *Borago officinalis*

**Viper's bugloss** *Echium vulgare*  
*Echium arenarium*

**Blue Hound's Tongue** *Cynoglossum creticum*

**Undulate anchusa** *Anchusa undulata*

**Wall germander** *Teucrium chamaedrys*

**Henbit Deadnettle** *Lamium amplexicaule*  
subsp. *amplexicaule*

**Marjoram** *Origanum vulgare*

**French Lavender** *Lavandula stoechas*

**Clary sp.** *Salvia* sp.

**White henbane** *Hyoscyamus albus*

a **nightshade** *Solanum elaeagnifolium*

**Nettle-leaved Figwort** *Scrophularia peregrina*

**Shining Figwort** *Scrophularia lucida*

a **Mullein** *Verbascum undulatum*

**Jersey toadflax** *Linaria pelisseriana*

a **Bartsia** *Parentucellia latifolia*

**Common Broomrape** *Orobanche minor*

**Thistle broomrape** *Orobanche reticulata*

**Bear's breech** *Acanthus mollis*

**Pink Valerian** *Centranthus calcitrapae* subsp.  
*calcitrapae*

**Large Venus's Looking-glass** *Legousia speculum-veneris* or *Legousia pentagonica*

**Woolly Chamomile** *Anthemis tomentosa*

a **Mayweed** *Anthemis chia*

**Rayless mayweed** *Anthemis rigida*

**Button weed** *Cotula coronopifolia*

a **Leopard's bane** *Doronicum orientale*

**Field Marigold** *Calendula arvensis*

**Syrian Thistle** *Notobasis syriaca*

**Milk Thistle** *Cynara cornigera*

**Cornflower** *Centaurea cyanus*

**Salsify** *Tragopogon porrifolius*

**Pink Hawksbeard** *Crepis rubra*

**White asphodel** *Asphodelus ramosus*

(*Asphodelus albus* ssp. *albus*)

a **Fritillary** *Fritillaria pontica*

**Drooping Star-of Bethlehem** *Ornithogalum nutans*

**the tall squill!** *Scilla hyacinthoides*

**Tassel Hyacinth** *Muscari comosum*

**Common Grape Hyacinth** *Muscari neglectum*

**Barbary-nut** *Moraea sisyrinchium*

**Common Dragon Arum** *Dracunculus vulgaris*

**Italian arum** *Arum concinatum* (*Arum italicum*)

**Violet bird's nest orchid** *Limodorum abortivum*

**Green-winged Orchid** *Orchis morio* subsp.  
*picta* (also known as Painted Orchid)

**Toothed Orchid** *Orchis tridentata*

**Italian Man Orchid** *Orchis italica*

**Fan-lipped Orchid** *Orchis collina*

**Provence Orchid** *Orchis provincialis*

**Four-spotted Orchid** *Orchis quadripunctata*

**Lesser Yellow Bee Orchid** *Ophrys sicula*  
(*Ophrys lutea* subsp. *minor*)

**Sombre Bee Orchid** *Ophrys fusca*

**Small-flowered Tongue Orchid** *Serapias parviflora*

**Giant Reed** *Arundo donax*

**Common Reed** *Phragmites australis*

**Reedmace** sp. *Typha* sp.

**Sea Club-rush** *Scirpus maritimus*

**Black spleenwort** *Asplenium Adiantum-nigrum*

**Polypody** sp. *Polypodium* sp.

*Cheilanthes persica*

**Brittle bladder fern** *Cystopteris fragilis*

**Bracken** *Pteridium aquilinum*

**Maidenhair Spleenwort** *Asplenium trichomanes*

**Rustyback fern** *Ceterach officinarum*

Thanks, Gerald, for ferns (and many others too!)