

**South of Salamanca: Birding in Spain's Wild West / Honeyguide Wildlife Holidays
3 - 11 May 2023. Itinerary.**



Salvatierra de Tormes, the reservoir and the mountains of the Sierra de Bejar

Day 1 - Wednesday May 3rd. Depart London Stansted 08:25 arrive Madrid 12:55 and transfer from Madrid Airport to Hotel Salvatierra Rural in **Salvatierra de Tormes**.
Welcoming party at hotel lounge around 5pm Evening walk near village.



Hotel Salvatierra Rural



Castle ruins at Salvatierra.

Day 2- Thursday May 4th Reservoir, mosaic area, and Berrocal de Salvatierra, Sierra de Bejar & Francia Biosphere reserve.

We'll have a morning walk around the Salvatierra area, overlooking the reservoir, with a coffee back at the hotel. We'll then go to the village of Navahombela for a wander through the surrounding mosaic landscape, with its large variety of birds, and also look for interesting wild flowers. Lunch will be at **Bar La Pedriza** in La Tala. After lunch we'll head to the village of Berrocal with its stony slate landscape looking for black-eared wheatear and stone-curlew as well as interesting plants.

Orchids *Orchis champagneuxii*, *Serapias lingua* and *Orchis mascula*; Spanish lavender *Lavandula pedunculata*; grape hyacinth *Muscari comosum*, Spanish lupin *Lupinus angustifolia*.

Serin, cirl bunting, rock sparrow, Spanish sparrow, crested lark, Thekla lark, nightingale, melodious, subalpine & western orpheap warblers, turtle dove, black-eared wheatear, northern wheatear, stone-curlew, black kite, booted eagle, golden eagle.



Spanish sparrow



Berrocal area

Day 3 – Friday May 5th San Estéban de la Sierra, Miranda del Castañar, Sierra de Francia Natural Park.

We'll head west, stopping off on the way to look at a traditional open-air stone wine-press. Then coffee in the village of San Estéban and a walk near the Alagon river below terraced vineyards. Lunch will be at **El Pipero** followed by a visit to a singular forest and the medieval village of **Miranda del Castañar**.

Linaria amethystea; *Aristolochia paucinervis*; Spanish Valerian *Centranthus calcitrapae*, *Arbutus unedo*; *Ruscus aculeatus*; Solomon's seal *Polygonatum odoratum*; Blue pimpernel *Anagallis monelli*, heather, broom, *Anarrhinum bellidifolium*, Narrow leaved helleborine orchid *Cephalanthera longifolia*.

Spanish festoon *Zerinthia rumina*

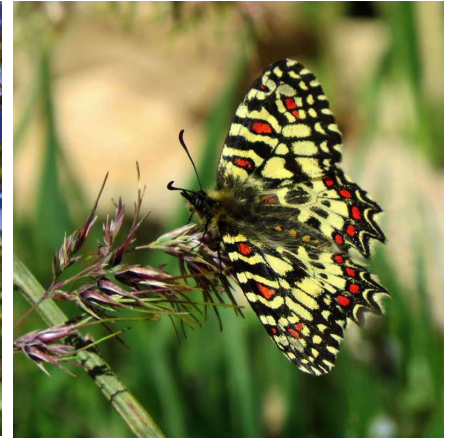
Sardinian warbler, redstart, red-rumped swallow, hawfinch, lesser spotted woodpecker, nightingale, Iberian magpie, W. Bonelli's warbler, booted eagle, Egyptian vulture, griffon vulture, black vulture.



Miranda del Castañar



Blue pimpernel



Spanish festoon

Day 4 – Saturday May 6th Campo de Alba Special Bird Area, Alba and River Tormes

We'll go east to a cereal area, via the reservoir dam, with a short stop on banks for wild flowers and aquatics. In the cereal area we'll look out for steppe land species, including harriers and short-toed larks. We'll have coffee and then visit the Castle Tower at Alba, after which we'll have a picnic by the river and a riverside walk. Alternatively, we can go to Salamanca for a short visit.

Egyptian rockrose *Helianthemum aegyptiacum*, undulated bugloss *Anchusa undulata*, silvery whitlow-wort *Paronychia argentea*.

Montagu's harrier, hen harrier, marsh harrier, lesser kestrel, black-winged stilt, calandria lark, short-toed lark, yellow wagtail, tawny pipit, zitting cisticola, penduline tit.



Montagu's harrier



Iberian yellow wagtail

Day 5 – Sunday May 7th Sangusin & Alagon. Sierra de Bejar & Francia Biosphere reserve

We'll head south west towards the Sierras de Bejar, stopping at some granite boulders to look for orchids and warblers. After a coffee break we'll go on to Horcajo de Montemayor in the Sangusin valley, where we'll wander among Ash groves, looking out for bee-eaters, golden oriole and the elusive black stork, as well as pond turtles, and a variety of flowers and butterflies. We'll picnic by an old mill. After lunch we'll head to the village of Pinedas, for a brief walk overlooking the river Alagon valley.

Granite boulders: Orchids *Orchis champagneuxii* and *Serapias lingua*; Rockrose family: *Tuberaria guttata*; *Helianthemum aegyptiacum*; *Cistus ladanifer*; White broom *Retama monosperma*; *Saxifraga geranioides*; Narrow leaved Ash groves: *Paeonia officinalis*; Toadflax *Linaria amethystea* subsp *amethystea*; *Aristolochia paucinervis*; Alagon valley: Gum rockrose *Cistus ladanifer*; Tree heather; *Pistacia terebinthus*; *Arbutus unedo*.

Iberian Knapweed Fritillary *Melitae phoebe occitanica*

Red-rumped swallow, bee-eater, rock sparrow, serin, melodious warbler, black stork, Egyptian vulture, griffon vulture, black vulture, European and Spanish pond turtle, ocellated lizard.



Granite landscape



Iberian Knapweed Fritillary



Sangusin valley

Day 6 – Monday May 8th Monleón and Quilamas mountains, Sierra de Bejar & Francia Biosphere reserve.

We'll head west to the pretty medieval walled village of Monleón, which overlooks the River Alagon, then look in a nearby granite meadow. After coffee we'll look for woodland flowers, orchids and raptors in Honfría oak and chestnut woods, and on Pico Cervero mountainside, where we'll have our picnic.

Yellow rockrose *Halimium lasianthum* subsp *Alyssoides*, *Linaria*, *Orchis champagneuxii*, Carquesa *Genista tridentata*, *Orchis morio*, *Linum catharticum*, *Valeriana tuberosa*; *Ornithogalum umbellatum*; *Scilla verna*; *Muscari comosum*; *Cistus psilosepalus*; *Anthyllis vulneraria gandogeri*; *Paeonia officinalis*; *Orchis mascula*, *Neotinea maculate*.

Spanish festoon *Zerinthia*; clouded yellow *Colias crocea*;

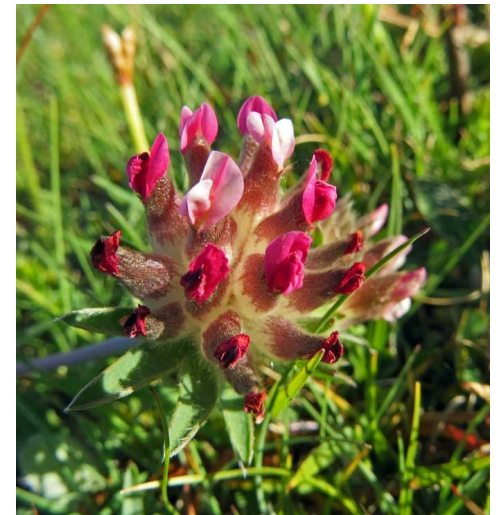
Nightingale, red-rumped swallow, girl bunting, blue rock thrush, woodchat shrike, firecrest, bee-eater, booted eagle, griffon, black and Egyptian vulture.



Castle at Monleón



Pico Cervero



Anthyllis vulneraria

Day 7 - Tuesday May 9th River Tormes, Neila de San Miguel & Tremedal mountain. Biosphere Reserve

We'll go upstream of the Tormes to Puente del Congosto, with its medieval bridge and tower. Here we'll look at wild flowers and birds near the village. After a coffee we'll do some urban birding along the River Tormes walk. We'll have a light lunch at **Casa Rural El Gorgocil** or in the gardens of **El Nido**. After lunch we'll head up the Tremedal mountain via Neila de San Miguel, with its peculiar bell tower.

Riverine woodland, Mediterranean scrub, ancient chestnut groves. High mountain pasture. Puente del Congosto: *Ornithogalum concinnum* and *Ornithogalum umbellatum*, *Astragalus incanus*, *Matthiola fruticosa*, *Filago carpetana*, *Brassica oxyrrhina*, Rockrose *Halimium*. Mountain: *Veronica nevadensis*; *Linaria elegans*; *Orchis champagneuxii*, Pale flax *Linum bienne*.

Queen of Spain fritillary *Issoria lathonia*, small copper *Lycaena phlaes*.

Serin, crag martin, red-rumped swallow, subalpine warbler, melodious warbler, ciril bunting, Thekla lark, woodlark, dipper, blue rock thrush, Iberian magpie, nightingale, golden oriole, black kite, booted eagle, golden eagle, black vulture, short-toed eagle.



Queen of Spain fritillary



Medieval bridge Puente del Congosto



Astragalus and Rockrose

Day 8 – Wednesday May 10th Sierra de Bejar & Candelario. Biosphere Reserve

We'll go up the mountain at La Covatilla to look for Bluethroat, Rock thrush and Ortolan bunting, as well as early mountain flowers. We'll stop for a coffee in Candelario, then visit the interesting remains of a wolf enclosure and an ice house, before going for a woodland walk in the Dehesa de Candelario, looking for the endemic Iberian pied flycatcher and western Bonelli's warbler, as well as honey buzzard and other woodland birds. After this we'll have our picnic and head up the mountain stopping for a short walk along a track to check out some interesting brooms and then on to the Plataforma de Candelario, where we'll listen out for calling quails and look for more early mountain flowers.

High mountain: pine & oak forests, mountain pasture.

Adenocarpus argyrophyllus; *Narcissus rupicola* and *Narcissus bulbocodium*; *Leucanthemopsis pulverulenta*; *Ranunculus abnormis*; *Pedicularis sylvatica*; *Gagea*.

Fat-bellied Saddle Bush-cricket *Pycnogaster sp.cf. jugicol*; Provence hairstreak *Tomares ballus*

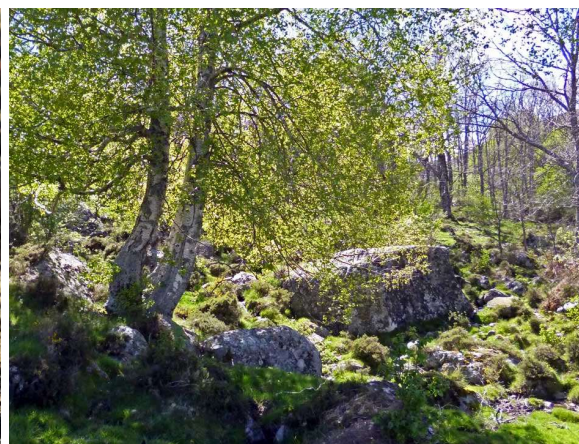
Rock thrush, ortolan bunting, rock bunting, bluethroat, pallid Swift, water pipit, black vulture, crested tit, Iberian pied flycatcher, western Bonelli's warbler, honey buzzard.



Rock thrush



Provence hairstreak



Dehesa de candelario

Day 9– Thursday May 11th Departure to Madrid. Depart Madrid 15:25 arrive Stansted 16:45