



Honeyguide

WILDLIFE HOLIDAYS

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Lesvos
17 – 24 April 2024

Participants

Andrew Killick)
Colin Taylor
Ken Leggett
Pat Harding

Denise Back
Jackie & Ray Guthrie
Carol Keene
Clare Warman

Leaders

Rob Lucking and Steve Cale

Report by Rob Lucking.

Photos by Steve Cale and Rob Lucking.

Cover: greater flamingos taking flight, with black-winged stilt; collared flycatcher (SC).

We stayed at the Malemi Hotel in Skala Kallonis www.malemi.com.



Most of the group at Agiosos (RL) Colin & Ken were elsewhere.

As with all Honeyguide holidays, £40 of the price of the holiday was put towards conservation work, in this the Hellenic Ornithological Society. HOS, BirdLife Greece, is based in Athens and its work covers the whole of Greece and its islands. Honeyguide's donation to HOS this year was £1370, from Crete and Lesvos holidays combined. This was made up of £40 per person, an additional donation of £200 and supplemented by gift aid through the Honeyguide Wildlife Charitable Trust. It takes our running total of donations to HOS since our first Crete group in 1995 to £16,325. The total for all conservation contributions through Honeyguide since 1991 is £152,142, to April 2024.

ITINERARY

Weds 17 April: Early morning flight from Stansted to Lesvos. Transfer to Malemi Hotel in Skala Kalloni. Lunch Skala Kalloni. Afternoon Kalloni Salt pans

Thursday 18 April: Pre-breakfast walk around Kalloni Pool. Morning Metochi Lake. Afternoon Achladeri Forest.

Friday 19 April: Pre-breakfast walk to Christou River. Morning Tsiknias River, Skala Kalloni & Agia Ioannis chapel. Lunch Apothika. Afternoon Makara, with stops on route.

Saturday 20 April: Morning drive west to Ipsilou Monastery with stops on the way and Sigri for coffee. Lunch Faneromeni. Afternoon Faneromeni & Skala Kalloni

Sunday 21 April: Pre-breakfast walk around Kalloni Pool. Morning Mikri Limni, stopping at various locations on the way. Lunch Agiassos. Afternoon woodland above Agiassos & Kalami Pool.

Monday 22 April: Pre-breakfast trip to Metochi Lake. Morning at Petrified Forest. Lunch at Petrified Forest. Afternoon drive to Eressos with stops on the way.

Tuesday 23 April: Pre-breakfast walk to Christou River. Morning drive to Molivos with stops on the way. Lunch at Skala Sikiminias. Afternoon Napi Valley

Wednesday 24 April: Packing & drive to airport for return flight to Stansted

DAILY DIARY

Wednesday 17 April

The group met at Stansted in readiness for the Jet2 flight to Lesvos. Virtually everybody on the flight was a birdwatcher as evidenced by the preponderance of khaki clothing! The flight arrived earlier than scheduled and after sorting out the paperwork for the vehicles we were soon on our way to the Malemi Hotel in Skala Kalloni, our base for the week.

After checking in, we had lunch in Skala Kalloni and then headed out to Kalloni salt pans, stopping on route on the bridge crossing the Tsiknias river. From the river bridge we watched our first wood sandpipers while ca. 20 each of little egret and glossy ibis fed in the river. A jay of the eastern race with a jet black cap gave good views as it bathed in the river.

The Kalloni saltworks is one of the most celebrated birding sites on Lesvos. The shallow salt pans are flooded with sea water which is allowed to evaporate leaving behind salt which then harvested and the process starts again. As well as salt, the pans are also full of food for migrating birds and the location of the Kalloni salt works at the north of the Gulf of Kalloni explains why they consistently draw in large number of waterbirds.

Upon arrival the most obvious birds were the flamingos, several thousand of which were feeding on the central pans. There were several groups of waders in the shallow pans close to the road and among the ubiquitous black-winged stilts and avocets were ruff, marsh sandpipers, spotted redshank and greenshank. A ring-tailed harrier flew across in front of us and thanks to some quick snapping by Andrew, we were quickly able to confirm the identification as a female hen harrier. Another birder kindly alerted us to two broad-billed sandpipers further long the road and we soon located them in another flock of waders, mostly ruffs but with around 40 little stints and two black-tailed godwits.

Our final stop at some wet grassland along the southern edge of the salt pans revealed a small flock of yellow wagtails, mostly black-headed but at least one blue-headed, a small group of black storks, grey herons, glossy ibis and ten ruddy shelducks.

Thursday 18 April

The pre-breakfast group walked the short distance to the pool in front of the Kalloni Bay hotel. A nightingale sang from some scrub next to the hotel and we heard our first eastern olivaceous warbler with its rhythmic, scratchy song. A water rail showed briefly and two common snipe sculled under a tamarisk bush.

After breakfast we headed out to Metochi Lake, stopping on route at the bridge crossing the Christou River. A large flock of greater flamingos fed at the river mouth and we saw our first purple herons flying in upriver.

Driving along the track to Metochi Lake we saw and heard our first orphean warbler and a few lucky folk saw a wryneck that perched up on a fence next to the minibus before flying off into the olive groves. We parked the vehicles and walked the dirt track leading to the lake. Notable among the wayside flora was Nottingham catchfly – a very rare plant in the UK but widespread in southern Europe. We also saw the vivid blue and

white undulate anchusa and the waxy red flowers of pomegranate planted in a nearby smallholding. Several of the ditches leading off the lake had patrolling lesser emperor dragonflies as well as Balkan terrapins. We also found two types of gall on downy oak - a leaf-borne marble type gall and an acorn-borne 'hedgehog' gall similar to a robin's pincushion.



Balkan terrapins (SC).

Reaching the lake we searched for, and eventually saw, one of our target birds – little crane. We eventually saw 3 or 4 of these diminutive birds but never well as they kept to cover and rarely ventured out into the open for long. A few of the group saw little bittern and squacco heron.

Lunch beckoned and so we headed to the relative cool of Achladeri Forest, an easily accessible part of the extensive Calabrian pine woodland that covers the western slopes of Mount Olympus. A golden oriole called a couple of times as we ate but never showed itself. A couple of serins were slightly more obliging but were constantly chased by the local chaffinches. Our target species was Krüper's nuthatch. Some of the group had frustratingly brief views of one but it was soon lost to sight and despite much searching, we failed to relocate it. There was plenty of other wildlife to look at though. Denise and Jackie found a lovely patch of large Venus' looking glass and several specimens of the Star of Bethlehem *Ornithogallum narbonense*. We walked along the track leading uphill in our continued search for the nuthatch and found an impressive owl-fly *Libelloides longicornis* resting up in the vegetation.

As time was moving on, we decided to leave the nuthatch for another day and made a final stop at the coastal wetlands at Mesa where two pygmy cormorants had been reported. We did not see them but did find our first common sandpiper and Kentish plover of the holiday.



Achladeri Forest (RL); owl-fly or ascalaphid *Libelloides longicornis* (SC).

Friday 19 April

The pre-breakfast walk was to the mouth of the Christou river to the west of Skala Kalloni. On the beach crest we found three-horned stock and buckshorn plantain and further along a couple of nice specimens of forked catchfly. The river mouth held several hundred greater flamingos, their calls sounding remarkably like croaking frogs. We had good views of two Kentish plovers and three little ringed plovers together allowing a good comparison of the two species along with around 40 little stints. A distant curlew was the first for the holiday.

After breakfast we jumped into the vehicles and drove a short distance to the mouth of the Tsiknias river to the east of Skala Kalloni. On the way we stopped to look at our first bee-eaters of the holiday, having heard them earlier on the pre-breakfast walk. Out on a sand bar at the mouth of the river were three spur-winged plovers – a scarce migrant bird on Lesvos – along with several common terns and two little terns. The saltmarsh plants were interesting with both buttonweed and rayless mayweed allowing close comparison.

Coffee beckoned so we decamped to one of the cafes in Skala Kalloni before driving to the western side of Kalloni Gulf. First stop was the small chapel at Agia Ioannis. On the walk up we saw the Mytiline bright bush-cricket and several butterflies including an orbed red-underwing skipper. A black stork flew overhead and we saw the largest flock of swifts so far on the holiday, among which was a single alpine swift. At the top from the chapel both black and pale-throated forms of black-eared wheatear showed well alongside several stonechats and two whinchats.



Orbed red-underwing skipper (SC), Mytiline bright bush-cricket (RL).

Our lunchtime stop was the quaint fishing village of Apothika and we soon found spots to sit and eat and enjoy the views over Kalloni gulf. Some of the group discovered that the taverna was open and enjoyed a post-lunch coffee. A local fishing boat came in with its catch of lobster and flatfish. A large colony of yellow-legged gulls nested on an offshore island and we saw our first Mediterranean shags. A melodious song had us puzzled for a while until we managed to track down the singer – an eastern orphean warbler. The Greek god Orpheus was famous for his musical skills, hence the name Orphean warbler. While tracking down the warbler, we stumbled across our first orchids of the holiday – *Anacamptis sancta* or holy orchid. This orchid typically flowers from late April and is one that previous Honeyguide holidays to Lesvos has missed.



Isabelline wheatear, female with nesting material; short-toed eagle (SC).

After Apothika, we made our way slowly down a dirt track to the beach at Makara, stopping several times on the way. Our first stop was triggered by a rock nuthatch which unfortunately only a few of the group managed to see. However there was compensation nearby in the form of a pair of Isabelline wheatears and a pair of short-toed eagles. Another stop produced a fine male blue rock thrush and finally a mixed flock of yellow wagtails with at least two subspecies and intergrades including black-headed, blue headed and 'superciliaris' – basically black-headed with a white supercilium.

Down at the beach there was a large flock of yellow-legged gulls and two ruffs and a common sandpiper by the bridge. In the entrance to a sheep field we found a clump of Roman nettle with its distinctive round fruits and Mediterranean hartwort with its fruit that look like a set of false teeth.

Saturday 20 April

It rained heavily overnight and the morning dawned grey and cloudy with scattered showers. It was a slightly earlier start this morning as the plan was to head over to the west coast of Lesbos in the hope that some migrant birds had been grounded by the inclement weather. An idle check of a Eucalyptus tree in the hotel car park revealed a roosting scops owl – probably the one that had been calling around the hotel at night - and everyone enjoyed good views of this diminutive owl.



A two owl day: scops owl this morning, long-eared owl later (SC).

We headed off towards the coastal town of Sigri. Back in the day this was a good upper-body workout as the old road twisted and turned up the gradients and passed through numerous small towns and villages. The new road (opened by the Greek prime minister the day before and so new that Google Maps didn't even show it!) was less exhausting, even though many of the old roadside pull-ins we used to stop at are no more. We did find one place to pull in off the road and look over the oak woodland. Nightingales sang around us and we saw two sparrowhawks which from photographs were identified as Levant sparrowhawk. We added a few new flowers to the list – nettle-leaved bellflower, pink hawksbeard and the pea *Vicia narbonensis* with its pale yellow flower and dark purple lip.

It was probably a bad sign that we couldn't see Ipsilou monastery because of the low cloud but we drove to the top anyway. People with waterproof coats, gloves and woolly hats were very grateful of them. Those in shorts probably regretted their decision! Needless to say we saw very few birds but the monastery was interesting to look around and several of the group visited the small museum there.

We all needed a hot drink to warm up, so we entered the first taverna we found in Sigri and ordered coffees. The rain started to clear but it was still very windy – even the usually calm Sigri bay looked a bit rough – so we decided to drive north to Faneromeni to find a bit of shelter and to eat our packed lunches. The two vehicles got separated but we eventually found each other. Those in the minibus had good views of spotted, pied and collared flycatcher – often at least two species in the same binocular view. We had fleeting flight views of several hoopoes. We parked up by Faneromeni Beach but it was too windy to eat out so lunch was consumed in the vehicle.

After lunch we found some shelter from the wind behind a tamarisk and scanned the sea. Hundreds of Yelkouan shearwaters were foraging in the bay along with a couple of the larger Scopoli's shearwater. A

flock of ducks were later identified from photos as pintails. Looking inland we saw our first female Montagu's harrier.



Yelkouan shearwaters (SC).

We headed away from Faneromeni, stopping to again look at a mix of flycatchers and chats - there had clearly been a big grounding of migrant birds. Unfortunately, the Petrified Forest Park had closed by the time we got there – no problem, we'll come back another day! On the drive back out we saw Cretzschmar's bunting – a nice male that perched out in the open for long enough for everyone to enjoy good scope views, along with more Isabelline, northern and black-eared wheatears.

Our last stop was in a small village near Skala Kalloni where a pair of long-eared owls were breeding. We eventually found an adult roosting in a Eucalyptus and this provided a nice symmetry to the day – starting and finishing with an owl!



Cretzschmar's bunting and a ciril bunting, for comparison (SC).

Sunday 21 April

The pre-breakfast walk was again the short distance to Kalloni Pool. The overhead wires by the hotel held four species of hirundine – 30+ sand martins, 3 red-rumped swallows plus the usual house martins and swallows. The pool held both black and blue-headed wagtails plus the usual wood sandpipers & black-winged stilts.

First stop after breakfast was the bridge over the Tsiknias River where in addition to the usual wood sandpipers and little-ringed plovers was a green sandpiper. A Balkan marsh frog also showed well on a rock. A little further down the road was a male Montagu's harrier.

We carried on past Achladeri, busy today with horse boxes, and stopped a little further on in the pine woods in an area that on previous Honeyguide holidays had been good for orchids. We quickly found some good spikes of violet limodore (or violet birdsnest orchid), a species that parasitises fungi. We also found several spikes of Provence orchid but most had gone over and we could only find a single spike in flower.

Our next stop was the pine forest next to Mikri Limni which in recent years has proven to be a more reliable site for Krüper's nuthatch. With some patience and perseverance, we saw two birds foraging in the pine trees, but they were very active and difficult to see well. A long-tailed tit, of the eastern race *tephronotus* with a black bib and a lack of pink tones on the underparts, was much more obliging. Around the dried up lake were several woodchat shrikes.

We then headed up to the mountain village of Agiassos, a fascinating town with an ancient Wisteria covering the town square. We took the opportunity to browse the many shops and have a coffee outside the Panagia ti Vrefokratousa (church of the Virgin Mary). We then collected our packed lunches from the vehicles and walked out of the village into the adjacent sweet chestnut woodland in the foothills of Mount Olympus. This part of the holiday was more botanical than birdy but we did record our first robins and wren. The flowers were the stars of the show with bright red and pink crown anemones, the more subtle *Fritillaria pontica*, the delicate *Ornithogalum nutans* and hairy birthwort with its extraordinary pipe-like flower. We saw another spike of Provence orchid and several narrow-leaved helleborines but none of the expected *Ophrys* orchids we usually find in the area. We subsequently discovered that it had been a very dry spring and it was likely that the *Ophrys* orchids had flowered early. Some of the more energetic participants had walked further up into the higher level meadows and reported fantastic displays of wild flowers.



Fritillaria pontica, with a wasp that has just left it; hairy birthwort (SC).

We retraced our steps back to the vehicles and headed back to the lowlands, stopping at Kalami pool where we saw four pygmy cormorants – a scarce species in spring in Lesvos. The same pool gave us good views of a squacco heron in flight and a brief purple heron. A quick look at Kalloni salt pans revealed a single cattle egret – a new species for the holiday and again, a rare bird in Lesvos. The water levels in the pans closest to the road had increased since our last visit and many of the small waders had moved on. Two whinchats showed well next to the vehicles and a flock of 20+ glossy ibis remained in the pools in the grassland between the salt pans and the sea.

Monday 22 April

Up a little earlier this morning for the pre-breakfast trip to Metochi Lake. It was worth it though with exceptional views of little bittern and three squacco herons along with better views of both male and female little crakes.

After breakfast, we headed into Kalloni to get a slow puncture in a minibus tyre fixed and then headed back out west to the Petrified Forest. Some of the group took the opportunity to stretch their legs and walked the 3km route through the forest while others took a more gentle pace closer to the visitor building. We saw a range of birds including eastern orphean warbler, eastern subalpine warbler, our first red-backed shrike (a splendid male) & Cretzschmar's bunting. Only one fleeting view of cinereous bunting though. Those who did the long walk around the park saw a spur-thighed tortoise & found a rock nuthatch nest. We saw a few more Lepidoptera with several marbled white butterflies and the day-flying moth *Synaphe moldavica*. The parched vegetation held a few sacred orchids and the spectacular *Lysimachia purpurea*, also known as purple loosestrife but not the same species we call purple loosestrife in the UK! While having lunch Colin found a male Rüppell's warbler, an unusual record for this part of the island.

After lunch drove slowly back along the entrance road to the Petrified Forest park in our continued search for cinereous bunting. Wheatears were very evident with black-eared, northern & Isabelline along with several Cretzschmar's buntings. Those in Steve's car saw a cinereous bunting on the side of the road. Those in the minibus didn't!

We then drove to the bottom of Ipsilou monastery for another attempt at cinereous bunting. At least two golden orioles flew between trees at the bottom of the valley and there were again plenty of wheatears and Cretzschmar's bunting. But again no cinereous – this was starting to get frustrating! We decided to have one more crack at the elusive bunting at another site before heading to Eressos for a much-needed coffee. Again no buntings but we were rewarded by finding a black stork nest with three eggs on a rock face on the opposite side of the valley. A raven had a nest very close to the stork and, while we were watching, we saw one of the black stork pair fly in to the nest, closely pursued by a raven who we presume was hoping to sneak in and steal an egg from the stork nest as the adult birds swapped over incubation duties.

We found a nice coffee shop in Eressos and as we settled down, a call from Colin alerted us to the presence of two laughing doves that had flown in to perch on some nearby overhead power lines. Laughing dove is a widespread species in Sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East, and southern Asia and over the last two decades, the species has expanded its distribution northwards and nested in Lesvos for the first time in 2022.

On our way back we finally saw a cinereous bunting on power lines along the side of the road. Just goes to show that you should never give up!

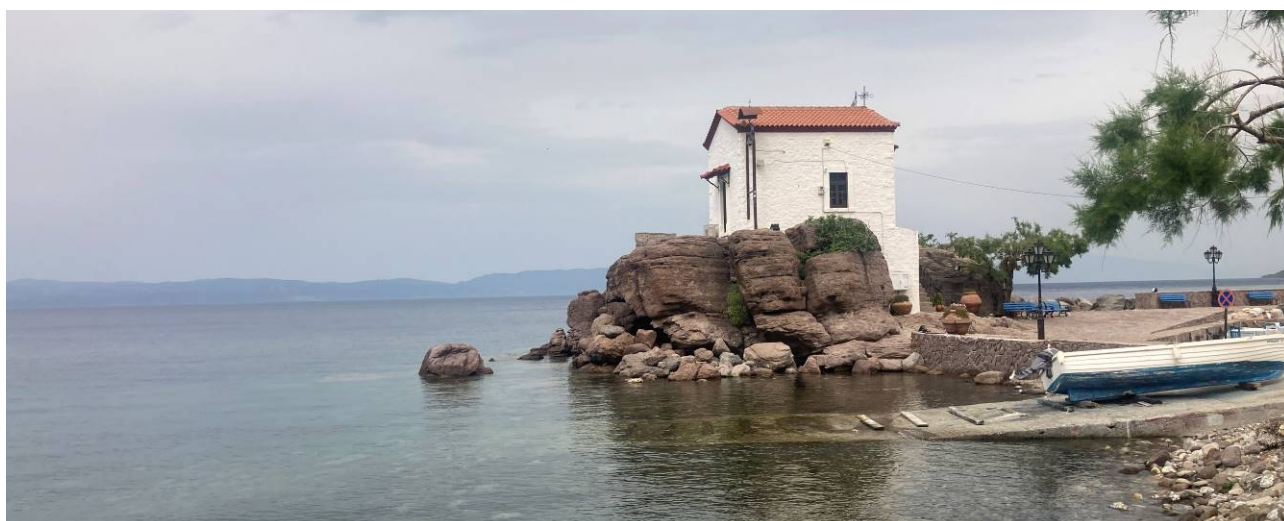
Tuesday 23 April

Our last full day on Lesvos and the pre-breakfast group returned to the Christou river where we saw a flock of 13 grey herons, single greenshank and a small flock of little stints. A raptor flying high overhead turned out to be an osprey.

Our plan today was to travel to the north coast of Lesvos, stopping at various sites en route and back to Skala Kalloni through the Napi Valley. Our first stop was at a viewing point on the road to Molivos that has now been adopted by visiting birders as the Kalloni Raptor Watch Point. Here we saw common buzzard and fantastic views of a male cirl bunting carrying food. Conscious that we might be disturbing the cirl buntings we carried on the up the road towards Molivos and stopped at a pull in where a rough track – passable only by 4x4 – leads to the village of Napi. This was much more productive and we saw masked shrike, peregrine, buzzard and red-backed shrike along with great views of eastern subalpine warbler.

The town of Molivos (also known as Mithymna) was our designated coffee stop. The harbour can be a good place to see Audouin's gull and so this is where we headed. Unfortunately, there were no Audouin's gulls today but the walk back up to the vehicles produced a male blue rock thrush, white admiral butterfly and a large starred agama lizard.

The coast road to Skala Sikaminias is very scenic but can be quite rough, and it hadn't changed since I was last in Lesvos in 2010! We took it slowly though and enjoyed the views. We came across a couple of large flocks of yellow-legged gulls but nothing more interesting was with them although a Mediterranean shag gave close views as sat out on a rock. As we entered Skala Sikiminias a Cleopatra butterfly flew alongside the minibus briefly.



Skala Sikiminias (RL).

We had our lunch in the picturesque harbour of Skala Sikiminias with its chapel dedicated to the Mermaid Madonna.

Back on metalled roads, we headed to the town of Mandamados with its stork nest atop a high chimney and then down a minor road through the Napi Valley, an open expanse of olive groves and scattered oak trees. Pulling in at a convenient lay-by we scanned the woodland finding at least six golden orioles, some which sat out in the open allowing for brilliant scope views. On a nearby rock escarpment we had our first good views of western rock nuthatches followed by a pair of sombre tits that appeared to be nesting in a nearby downy oak. A pair of European nuthatches completed our nuthatch hat-trick!

After doing the daily log, we shared our **holiday highlights**:

Andrew - little bittern	Jackie - <i>Fritillaria pontica</i> & bee-eaters
Colin - all the warblers	Carol - golden orioles & bee-eaters
Ken – golden orioles and little bittern	Clare - subalpine warbler & the cirl bunting carrying food
Pat - golden orioles & the shearwaters at Faneromeni	Steve - short-toed eagle & Rüppell's warbler
Ray - seeing little ringed plover especially well	Rob - golden orioles
Denise - the black stork nest & Ipsilou monastery	

Wednesday 24 April

No organised pre-breakfast walk today to allow for last minute packing. After breakfast we said our good-byes to the George and his team at the Malemi Hotel who looked after us splendidly all week and headed off to the airport. After a couple of missed turns we made it to the airport in one piece. We returned the cars and made our way through to the departure lounge for our return flights home.

WILDLIFE LISTS

Birds

Little grebe	1 Metochi Lake 18/4; 2 Metochi Lake 22/4; 1 roadside pool at Mandamados 23/4
Great-crested grebe	1 in the Gulf of Kalloni viewed from Mesa 21/4
Scopoli's shearwater	2 off Faneromeni 20/4
Yelkouan shearwater	100s off Faneromeni Beach 20/4
Cormorant	1 over Kalloni Gulf 17/4, 20/4 & off Faneromeni Beach 20/4; Skala Kalloni 23/4
Shag	Several on island offshore from Makara 19/4; Sigris 20/4; road to Skala Sikiminia 23/4
Pygmy cormorant	4 Kalami Pool (nr Mesa) 21/4
Little bittern	1 Metochi Lake 18/4; 1 Metochi Lake 22/4
Squacco heron	1 Metochi Lake 18/4; 1 Kalloni Pool 20/4; 1 Kalami Pool 21/4; 3 Metochi Lake 22/4; 1 on way to airport 24/4
Cattle egret	1 Kalloni salt pans 21/4
Little egret	Ca 20 from Tsiknias River Bridge 17/4; several from bridge over Christou River 18/4; 4 Parakila Marsh (passed on way to Agia Ioannis) 18/4; seen from bridge over Christou River & at Kalloni salt pans 21/4; Christou River 23/4
Great white egret	1 seen from minibus when passing Kalloni salt pans 17/4
Grey heron	ca. 4 Kalloni salt pans 17/4; 2 Christou River 18/4; 1 Tsiknias river 19/4; 1 Petrified Forest 22/4
Purple heron	2 Christou River, 2 Metochi Lake 18/4; 1 Kalami Pool 21/4;
Black stork	5 Kalloni salt pans 17/4; seen from vehicle 18/4; 2 Agia Ioannis 19/4; 2 Mesa 21/4; pair at nest on road to Eressos 22/4
White stork	1 from Tsiknias river bridge, 1 Kalloni salt pans 17/4; 1 Mesa 18/4; 1 Tsiknias river 19/4; 2 Kalloni salt pans 21/4; one on nest in Mandamados 23/4
Glossy ibis	24 Tsiknias river bridge, 20+ Kalloni salt pans 17/4; Christou River 18/4 & 21/4; ca 20 Kalloni salt pans 21/4
Greater flamingo	Common Kalloni salt pans 17/4; several hundred Christou River 18/4; several hundred Christou River 19/4 & 23/4

Ruddy shelduck	10 Kalloni salt pans 17/4; Christou River 18/4; 2 Christou River & 2 in flight nr Makara 19/4; 2 Faneromeni 20/4; 2 Mesa 21/4; 2 Petrified Forest 22/4;
Shelduck	2 Kalloni salt pans 17/4; Christou River 18/4; 2 Christou River 19/4; Kalloni salt pans 21/4
Pintail	At least 9 in flight over the sea off Faneromeni Beach 20/4
Short-toed eagle	1 between Mesa & Achladeri 18/4; 2 nr Makara 19/4; 2 nr Kalloni salt pans 21/4; 2 Petrified Forest 22/4; two Napi Valley 23/4
Marsh harrier	1 Kalloni salt pans 17/4 & 21/4
Hen harrier	Female Kalloni salt pans 17/4
Montagu's harrier	2 Faneromeni 20/4; male nr Kalloni salt pans 21/4
Sparrowhawk	1 Christou River 18/4
Levant Sparrowhawk	2 from roadside stop near Vatoussa 20/4
Buzzard	1 Achladeri 18/4; 1 nr Makara 19/4; 1 nr Petrified Forest 20/4; 1 in pine woods between Achladeri & Mikri Limni 21/4; 1 nr Petrified Forest 22/4; Kalloni raptor watchpoint 23/4
Osprey	1 Christou River 23/4
Kestrel	1 nr Kalloni 17/4; 2 nr Makara 19/4; 1 Faneromeni 20/4; 1 Petrified Forest 22.4
Red-footed falcon	1 very dark female over the sea at Faneromeni 20/4
Peregrine	1 from road to Molivos 23/4
Chukar	1 on drive back from Makara 19/4; 2 Petrified Forest 22/4; 2 Napi Valley 23/4
Water rail	1 Kalloni Pool. 18/4
Little crane	3-4 Metochi Lake 18/4 & 22/4
Moorhen	2 Metochi Lake, ca 20 Mesa 18/4; 1 Kalami Pool 21/4; 1 Metochi Lake 22/4; 1 roadside pool at Mandamados 23/4
Coot	2 Metochi Lake 18/4 & 22/4; 1 roadside pool at Mandamados 23/4
Black-winged stilt	Common Kalloni salt pans 17/4; Kalloni Pool, Mesa 18/4; several on Kalloni Pool 20/4; Kalloni pool & Kalloni salt pans 21/4; Christou River 23/4
Avocet	30+ Kalloni salt pans 17/4 & 21/4; Christou River 23/4
Little ringed plover	1 Tsiknias river bridge 17/4; Mesa 18/4; 3 Christou River 19/4; 1 Faneromeni Beach 20/4; 1 Tsiknias river bridge 21/4
Kentish plover	1 Mesa 18/4; 2 Christou River 19/4
Spur-winged plover	1 Christou River 18/4; 3 Tsiknias River 19/4
Little stint	40+ Kalloni salt pans 17/4; 10 Tsiknias River 18/4; 40+ Christou river 19/4 & 23/4
Curlew sandpiper	2 Kalloni salt pans 17/4
Broad-billed sandpiper	2 Kalloni salt pans 17/4
Ruff	200+ Kalloni salt pans 17/4; 2 Makara 19/4; 1 Kalloni salt pans 21/4
Snipe	2 Kalloni pool 18/4, 20/4, 21/4
Curlew	1 Christou River 19/4
Black-tailed godwit	2 Kalloni salt pans 17/4
Spotted redshank	18+ Kalloni salt pans 17/4
Marsh sandpiper	10+ Kalloni salt pans 17/4
Greenshank	3+ Kalloni salt pans 17/4; 1 Christou River 23/4
Wood sandpiper	8 Tsiknias river bridge; 5 Kalloni salt pans 17/4; several Kalloni Pool 20/4; Kalloni Pool, Tsiknias river & Kalami pool 21/4; Christou River 23/4

Common sandpiper	1 Mesa 18/4; 1 Makara 19/4
Yellow legged gull	Common throughout the island
Caspian tern	2 Christou River 18/4
Sandwich tern	4 Tsiknias River 18/4; 1 Kalloni Beach 20/4
Common tern	3 Kalloni salt pans 17/4; 15 Tsiknias river 18/4; 4+ Tsiknias River 19/4; 20+ Faneromeni Beach 20/4; 2 Kalloni salt pans 21/4
Little tern	2 Christou River 19/4
Woodpigeon	7 Achladeri Forest 18/4; 1 Mikri Limni 21/4
Collared dove	Common throughout in all towns and villages
Turtle dove	5+ Faneromeni 20/4; heard only 23/4.
Laughing dove	2 Eressos 22/4
Scops owl	1 calling from hotel grounds nightly and found at roost in a Eucalyptus tree next to the hotel on 20/4
Long-eared owl	1 roosting near Skala Kalloni 20/4
Little owl	1 seen on a wall from Rob's vehicle, 19/4
Swift	1 around hotel Skala Kalloni 17/4; several Metochi Lake 18/4; 50+ Agia Ioannis 19/4; Faneromeni 20/4; Agiassos 21/4
Alpine swift	Seen from vehicles between airport & Skala Kalloni 17/4; 1 Agia Ioannis 19/4, 2 Mikri Limni 21/4
Bee-eater	Heard Christou River & 50+ Tsiknias River 19/4; Faneromeni 20/4 & heard in flight nr Molivos 23/4
Hoopoe	1 Kalloni salt pans 17/4; 1 Metochi Lake 18/4; several around Faneromeni 20/4
Wryneck	1 Metochi Lake 18/4
Crested lark	Common throughout
Sand martin	2 Metochi Lake 18/4; 1 Christou River 19/4; Skala Kalloni 20/4; 30+ on wires Skala Kalloni 21/4
Crag Martin	2 in front of black stork nest from road to Eressos 22/4
Swallow	Seen daily
Red-rumped swallow	1 Tsiknias river bridge 17/4: 1 Kalloni Pool, 1 Christou River, 2 Metochi Lake 18/4; several around Skala Kalloni & Agia Ioannis 19/4; 20+ Skala Kalloni 20/4; 3 Skala Kalloni 21/4
House martin	Seen daily
Black-headed wagtail	10+ Kalloni salt pans 17/4: 4 Mesa 18/4; in mixed flocks of yellow wagtails nr Makara 19/4; Faneromeni 20/4; Kalloni Pool & Kalami Pool 21/4
Blue-headed wagtail	1 Kalloni salt pans 17/4; in mixed flocks of yellow wagtails nr Makara 19/4; Kalloni Pool & Kalami Pool 21/4
White wagtail	1 Tsiknias river bridge 17/4
Nightingale	Several singing around hotel 18/4, 19/4, 20/4, 21/4; from roadside stop nt Vatoussa 20/4; around Agiassos 21/4
Redstart	Male Faneromeni 20/4
Whinchat	5 Achladeri 18/4; 2 Agia Ioannis 19/4; several Faneromeni 20/4; 2+ Kalloni salt pans 21/4
Stonechat	1 seen from vehicle 18/4; 3+ Agia Ioannis & nr Makara 19/4; 1 NR Petrified Forest 20/4
Isabelline wheatear	Pair nr Makara 19/4; 1 Petrified Forest 20/4; several at Petrified Forest, Ipsilou and road to Eressos 22/4

Northern wheatear	2-3 nr Makara 19/4; 1-2 Petrified Forest 20/4; several at Petrified Forest, Ipsilou and road to Eressos 22/4
Black-eared wheatear	2 Mesa 18/4; both black-throated & pale-throated forms Agia Ioannis & nr Makara 19/4; several in various locations on the western side of the island 20/4; common around Petrified Forest, Ipsilou & road to Eressos 22/4
Blue rock thrush	Male nr Makara 19/4; male Molivos 23/4
Blackbird	Small number seen throughout
Cetti's warbler	Heard at virtually all wetland sites visited
Reed warbler	2 Metochi Lake 18/4 & 22/4
Great reed warbler	1 heard Metochi Lake 18/4 & 22/4
Eastern olivaceous warbler	Around Kalloni Pool and Metochi Lake 18/4; Skala JKalloni & Tsiknias River 19/4; Skala Kalloni & Faneromeni 20/4; Skala Kalloni 21 & 22/4
Eastern subalpine warbler	2 Achladeri Forest 18/4; several in Petrified Forest 22/4; several at various roadside stops on 23/4
Sardinian warbler	1 Achladeri Forest 18/4
Rüppell's warbler	1 male Petrified Forest 22/4
Eastern orphean warbler	1 Metochi Lake 18/4; 1 Apothika 19/4; 1 Petrified Forest 22/4
Whitethroat	1 Petrified Forest 22/4
Blackcap	2 Eressos 22/4
Spotted flycatcher	1 Achladeri Forest 18/4; several Faneromeni 20/4
Collared flycatcher	1 Achladeri Forest 18/4; several Faneromeni 20/4
Pied flycatcher	Several Faneromeni 20/4; 1 Petrified Forest 22/4
Long-tailed tit	Achladeri Forest 18/4; 1 Mikri Limni 21/4
Sombre tit	1 Agia Ioannis 19/4; 2 Napi Valley 23/4
Blue tit	Small numbers seen and heard in suitable habitat throughout
Great tit	Small numbers seen and heard in suitable habitat throughout
Krüper's nuthatch	1 Achladeri Forest 18/4; 2 Mikri Limni 21/4
Eurasian nuthatch	2 Napi Valley 23/4
Western rock nuthatch	1 nr Makara 19/4; 1 Ipsilou Monastery 20/4; nest found in Petrified Forest 22/4; 1 Napi Valley 23/4
Golden oriole	Heard Achladeri Forest 18/4; at least 2 in valley below Ipsilou Monastery 22/4; 6+ Napi Valley 23/4
Red-backed shrike	1 Petrified Forest 22/4; 1 from roadside stop en route to Molivos 23/4
Woodchat shrike	3 Metochi Lake 18/4; 3+ Faneromeni 20/4; 3+ Mikri Limni 21/4; 1 Metochi Lake, 1 Petrified Forest 22/4
Masked shrike	1 Achladeri Forest 18/4; 1 Sigri 20/4; 1 from roadside stop en route to Molivos 23/4
Jay	1 Tsiknias river bridge 17/4; 1 Metochi Lake 18/4; 2 Faneromeni 20/4; Mikri Limni 21/4
Hooded crow	Common throughout
Raven	Small numbers seen throughout, especially in upland areas
House sparrow	Common but outnumbered by Spanish sparrow
Spanish sparrow	Very common throughout. Colonies nesting in dead fronds of palms around the hotel
Chaffinch	Common in wooded areas
Serin	2-3 Achladeri Forest 18/4
Greenfinch	1 Tsiknias river bridge 17/4; around Skala Kalloni & in Achladeri Forest 18/4; Skala Kalloni 19/4

Goldfinch	Small number seen throughout
Linnet	3 on road to Petrified Fires 22/4
Cirl bunting	1 Achladeri Forest 18/4; 1 nr Makara 19/4
Cinereous bunting	Singles at Petrified Forest, access road to Petrified Forest & from road to Eressos 22/4
Cretzschmar's bunting	1 nr Makara 19/4; 2 nr Petrified Forest 20/4
Corn bunting	Very common throughout.

MAMMALS

Eastern Hedgehog *Erinaceus concolor* - several road casualties

Common pipistrelle - outside hotel most evenings (identified with bat detector)

Beech marten *Martes foina* - several road casualties

AMPHIBIANS & REPTILES

Levant Marsh Frog *Pelophylax bedriagae* - heard more often than seen.

Spur-thighed Tortoise *Testudo graeca* - 1 seen by walkers at Petrified Forest. Three dead by side of road near Sikininia

Balkan Terrapin *Mauremys rivulata* - common in river mouths and at Metochi Lake

Starred agama *Laudakia stellio* - seen at Molyvos & in Napi Valley

Balkan Green Lizard *Lacerta trilineata* - occasionally disturbed in vegetation

European Glass Lizard *Pseudopus apodus* - 1 road casualty

BUTTERFLIES

Swallowtail *Papilio machaon*

Scarce Swallowtail *Iphiclides podalirius*

Eastern Festoon *Zerynthia cerisy*

Large White *Pieris brassicae*

Small White *Artogeia rapae*

Eastern Dappled White *Euchloe ausonia*

Orange Tip *Anthocharis cardamines*

Clouded Yellow *Colias crocea*

Black-veined white *Aparia crataegi*

Cleopatra *Gonepteryx cleopatra*

Southern white admiral *Ladoga populi*

Small Copper *Lycaena phlaeas*

Holly Blue *Celastrina argiolus*

Southern comma *Polygonia egea*

Painted Lady *Vanessa cardui*

Small Heath *Coenonympha pamphilus*

Small skipper

Orbed red-underwing skipper *Spialia orbifer*

Levantine skipper *Thymelicus hyrax*

MOTH

Synaphe moldavica - a day-flying moth

DRAGONFLIES & DAMSELFLIES

Odalisque *Epallage fatime*

Blue-tailed Damselfly *Ischnura elegans*

Lesser emperor *Anax parthenope*

Scarce (Blue) Chaser *Libellula fulva*

Red-veined darter *Sympetrum fonscolombii*

OTHER INVERTEBRATES

Yellow-and-black Flat-backed Millipede

owl-fly *Libelloides longicornis*

Mytilene Bright Bush-cricket - *Poecilimon mytilenensis*



Holy orchid, Provence orchid and violet birdsnest orchid (RL).

Plants

The most incomplete of the lists. Common plants from northern Europe generally omitted.

Trees and shrubs (except those noted in families below)

Calabrian pine *Pinus halepensis* ssp. *brutia*
Stone pine *Pinus pinea*
Italian cypress *Cupressus sempervirens*
Sweet chestnut *Castanea sativa*
Kermes oak *Quercus coccifera*
Downy oak *Quercus pubescens*
Fig *Ficus carica*
Oriental plane *Platanus orientalis*
Indian bead tree *Melia azedarach*
Tamarisk sp. *Tamarix* sp.
Wild olive *Olea europea* subsp. *oleaster* ?
Oleander *Nerium oleander* subsp. *oleander*
California fan palm *Washingtonia filifera* - widely planted and used for nesting by Spanish sparrows
Canary Island date palm *Phoenix canariensis*

Rafflesia family

Cytinus *Cytinus hypocistis* ssp. *clusii* (*Cytinus ruber*)

Nettle family

Roman nettle *Urtica pilulifera*
Birthwort family
Hairy birthwort *Aristolochia hirta*

Fathen family

Glasswort sp. *Salicornia* sp.
Sea purslane *Halimione portulacoides*

Aizoon family

Red hottentot fig *Carpobrotus acinaciformis*

Pink family

Nottingham catchfly *Silene nutans*
Forked catchfly *Silene dichotoma*
Mediterranean catchfly *Silene colorata* subsp. *colorata*
Maiden pink *Dianthus deltoides* (Petrified Forest - assumed planted)

Buttercup family

Crown anemone *Anemone coronaria*
Water-crowfoot sp. *Ranunculus* sp. Probably *fucoides*
Small-flowered buttercup *Ranunculus parviflorus*
Celery-leaved buttercup *Ranunculus sceleratus*
Poppies
Common field poppy *Papaver rhoeas*
Rough Poppy *Roemeria sicula*
Yellow-horned poppy *Glaucium flavum*

Fumitory family

Common fumitory *Fumaria officinalis*
Ramping fumitory *Fumaria capreolata* a simplification of a complex and difficult group.

Crucifers – cress family

Three-horned Stock *Matthiola tricuspidata*
Lesvos alyssum *Alyssum lesbiacum* abundant on, and a marker for, serpentine rocks that chromium is mined from and is toxic to many plants

Mignonettes

White mignonette *Reseda alba*

Stonecrops

Navelwort sp. *Umbilicus* sp.

Rose family

Mediterranean salad burnet *Poterium verrucosum*
[*Sanguisorba minor* ssp. *magnoli*]
Thorny burnet *Sarcopoterium spinosum*
Almond-leaved pear *Pyrus spinosa* (*Pyrus amygdaliformis*)

Pea family

Judas tree *Cercis siliquastrum*
Yellow vetchling *Lathyrus aphaca* or something very similar with smaller, pale yellow flowers
Narrow-leaved lupin *Lupinus angustifolius*
Tree medick *Medicago arborea* planted
False acacia *Robinia pseudacacia*.
Reversed clover *Trifolium resupinatum*
Ball cotton clover *Trifolium pilulare*
Star clover *Trifolium stellatum*
Woolly clover *Trifolium tomentosum*
One-flowered clover *Trifolium uniflorum*
Hairy yellow vetchling *Vicia hybrida*
Common vetch *Vicia sativa*
Vicia narbonensis
Vicia melanops
Fodder vetch *Vicia villosa*
Cocks-comb sainfoin *Onobrychis caput-galli*

Cranesbills and storksbills

Cut-leaved cranesbill *Geranium dissectum*
Shining cranesbill *Geranium lucidum* Above Agiassos.
Herb Robert *Geranium robertianum*

Flaxes

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

Spurges

Sun spurge *Euphorbia helioscopia*
Euphorbia myrsinites abundant on roadside and pine forest
Sea spurge *Euphorbia paralias*
Large Mediterranean spurge *Euphorbia (characias) wulfenii*

Pistacio family

Turpentine tree *Pistacia terebinthus* A frequent component of maquis.
Mastic tree *Pistacia lentiscus* A frequent component of maquis.

Mallows

Musk mallow *Malva moschata*
Common mallow *Malva sylvestris* perhaps surprisingly the usual mallow on Lesvos
Althea sp. Probably Pale Hollyhock *Alcea biennis*

Rockrose family

Cistus creticus ssp. *creticus* This and sage-leaved cistus frequently predominate in the garrigue.
Sage-leaved cistus *Cistus salvifolius*

Cucumber family

Squirting cucumber *Ecballium elaterium*

Umbellifers – carrot family

Thorow-wax sp. *Bupleurum* sp.
Sea holly *Eryngium maritimum*
Giant fennel *Ferula communis* subsp. *communis*

Perfoliate alexanders *Smyrniolum perfoliatum*
Water dropwort sp. *Oenanthe* sp.
In a roadside ditch near Kalloni Salt pans. Could be narrow-leaved water dropwort *Oenanthe silaifolia*.
Shepherd's needle *Scandix pecten-veneris* Frequent in grassy places.
Tordylium or Mediterranean hartwort *Tordylium apulum*

Primrose family

Scarlet pimpernel *Anagallis arvensis*
Abundant. Both blue- and scarlet-flowered forms were seen.
Ivy-leaved sowbread *Cyclamen hederifolium*
Not in flower. Above Agiassos
Purple loosestrife *Lysimachia atropurpurea*

Thrift family

Winged sea lavender *Limonium sinuatum*

Borage family

Borage *Borago officinalis*
Blue houndstongue *Cynoglossum creticum*
Alkanet *Anchusa officinalis*
Undulate anchusa *Anchusa undulata*
Viper's bugloss *Echium vulgare*
Echium arenarium

Labiates – mint family

Henbit deadnettle *Lamium amplexicaule* subsp. *amplexicaule*
French lavender *Lavandula stoechas* Frequent in garrigue.
Clary sp. *Salvia* sp.
Bellardia

Potato family

a nightshade *Solanum elaeagnifolium*

Figwort family

Shining figwort *Scrophularia lucida*
a mullein *Verbascum undulatum* Frequent on roadside verges.
a mullein *Verbascum sinuatum*
Jersey toadflax *Linaria pelisseriana*

Broomrapes

Broomrape sp. *Orobancha* sp.
Common broomrape *Orobancha minor*
Thistle broomrape *Orobancha reticulata*

Acanthus family

Bear's breeches *Acanthus mollis*

Plantains

Buck's-horn plantain *Plantago coronopus*
Ribwort plantain *Plantago lagopus*
Sea plantain *Plantago maritima*.

Bellflower family

Nettle-leaved bellflower *Campanula trachelium*
Large Venus's looking-glass *Legousia speculum-veneris*

Composites – daisy family

Woolly chamomile *Anthemis tomentosa*
a mayweed *Anthemis chia* Grassy places and neglected arable land.
Rayless mayweed (= rayless chamomile) *Anthemis rigida*
Field marigold *Calendula arvensis*
Cornflower *Centaurea cyanus* Near the 'bandstand' on the Kalloni to Petra road.
Crown daisy *Chrysanthemum coronarium*

Corn marigold *Chrysanthemum segetum*
Pink hawkbeard *Crepis rubra*
Frequent on roadside verges in the Ipsilou Monastery area, and growing in profusion near the 'bandstand'
Button weed *Cotula coronopifolia*
a leopardsbane *Doronicum orientale*
Salsify *Tragopogon porrifolius*
Syrian thistle *Notobasis syriaca* Roadside verges and open wasteground.
Milk thistle *Silybum marianum*
Slender thistle *Carduus pycnocephalus*
Star Hawkbit *Rhagadiolus stellatus*

Monocotyledons

Lily family

White asphodel *Asphodelus ramosus* (*Asphodelus albus* subsp. *albus*) Abundant throughout the island
A fritillary *Fritillaria pontica* Above Agiassos
Gladiolus *Gladiolus* sp
Tassel hyacinth *Muscari comosum* Frequent in Drooping star-of-Bethlehem *Ornithogalum nutans*
Star-of-Bethlehem *Ornithogalum umbellatum*
Narbonne Star-of-Bethlehem *Ornithogalum narbonnense*

Yam family

Black bryony *Tamus communis* Agiassos.

Arums

Common dragonarum *Dracunculus vulgaris*
Large cuckoo pint *Arum concinatum* (*Arum italicum*)

Orchids

Violet bird's nest orchid *Limodorum abortivum*
Green-winged orchid *Orchis morio* subsp. *picta* (also known as Painted orchid)
Provence orchid *Orchis provincialis*
Holy orchid *Anacamptis sancta*
Small-flowered tongue-orchid *Serapias parviflora*
Narrow-leaved helleborine *Cephalanthera longifolia*

Grasses, rushes etc

Large quaking grass *Briza maxima*
Winter wild oat *Avena sterilis*
Marram grass *Ammophila arenaria*
Giant reed *Arundo donax* Introduced.
Harestail *Lagurus ovatus*
Common reed *Phragmites australis*
Reedmace sp. *Typha* sp. Possibly *T. domingensis*.
Common spike-rush *Eleocharis palustris*
Sea club-rush *Scirpus maritimus*
Sea rush *Juncus maritimus*

Ferns

Rustyback *Ceterach officinarum*
Bracken *Pteridium aquilinum*