



Honeyguide

WILDLIFE HOLIDAYS

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Morocco
11 – 18 March 2025

Participants

Christine Chapman and Patrick Cordingley
Daphne Rumball
Denise Back
Tim and Cheryl Hunt

Karin and Brennan Aunger
Mervin Nethercoat and Denise Carter
David Wilkins
David and Judith Brown

Leaders

Richard Hobbs, Sally Ward and Chris Durdin.
Report by Chris Durdin, flower list by Richard Hobbs.



The group by the Koran school near Askoti Gorge.

Photos, all taken on the holiday, by Mervin Nethercoat and Dave Wilkins (see initials); others by Chris Durdin.

Cover, top: *Cistanche phelypaea* by the coast road and Moussier's redstart (MN).
Bottom: Atlas Kasbah Ecolodge (DW) <http://atlaskasbah.com/en/>.



Atlas Kasbah written in English, Arabic and Berber¹, on Atlas Kasbah's entrance gates.

This holiday, as for every Honeyguide holiday, also puts something into conservation in our host country by way of a contribution to the wildlife that we enjoyed. The conservation contribution of £40 per person was supplemented by Gift Aid and we were able to give £600 to GREPOM/BirdLife Morocco – Groupe de Recherche pour la Protection des Oiseaux au Maroc. This is towards the cost of wardens to safeguard nesting bald ibises. Dr Khadija Bourass, Directrice executive of GREPOM/BirdLife Maroc, says: "We sincerely appreciate your generous donation. Your support means a lot to us and contributes significantly to our efforts. Thank you once again for your kindness and generosity." At the end of March 2025, the total for all conservation contributions through Honeyguide since 1991 was £156,337.

¹ Berbers now call themselves amazigh (m), tamazight (f) or imazighen (plural) en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Berbers.

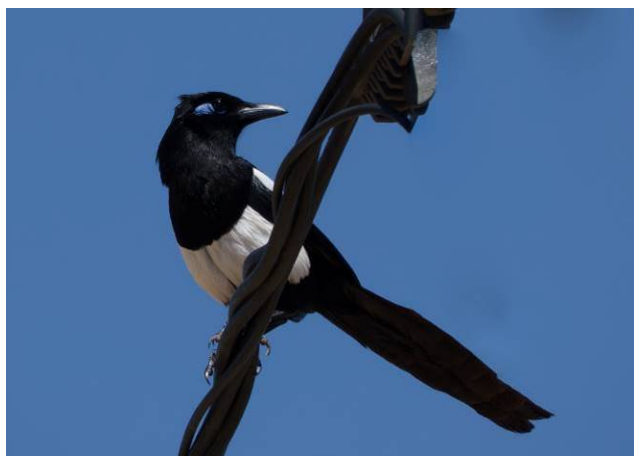
DAILY DIARY

Tuesday 11 March – Agadir and Atlas Kasbah

Everyone gathered at Gatwick as planned, routine for most of us though a complicated journey for Karin and Brennan on account of airport strikes in Germany, which meant a change of plan involving a bus to Amsterdam and a hurriedly booked flight to Gatwick from there. The flight – which had lots of spare seats – went well; in Agadir there were a few questions asked at passport control and where baggage is scanned, though none of this was a problem. Sally found our bus driver; we loaded up and the journey to Atlas Kasbah took rather less than the expected 30 minutes. Though there were puddles at the airport following recent rain, the overall look of the countryside reflected the dry winter just gone.

We lent our passports to the reception team (for form-filling), found our rooms and soon after met for basil tea and a light lunch of soup and salad. After that several of us watched birds from the swimming pool area. Three species of swift were a highlight – common, pallid and little – and the local house bunting perched among Atlas Kasbah's turrets. We gathered at three o'clock to be guided by Richard, starting in Atlas Kasbah's garden. Two Sahara marsh frogs were in the water filtration ponds, we had good views of a bulbul and found African chaffinch and blackcap around a bare fig tree. Going into the adjacent countryside, the lack of flowers was even more evident, though Richard found several species of interest, such as large yellow retharrow, ziziphus, a kickxia (fluellen) in a ditch and a local version of toothed lavender. Thekla lark and Magreb magpie perched in the open: for these, and for several other birds the telescope helped with good views.

At the end of the stony track some ramshackle buildings and fencing half-hid a collection of goats, sheep, chickens and rubbish piles, which seemed to attract laughing doves. Having found the best angle to look, there were at least four perching on fences. There was also a single male Spanish sparrow with the house sparrows. We turned right to complete a triangular route, soon finding a woodchat shrike, then more later plus great grey shrike, too. All this was in sunshine, albeit with a cool breeze, and the weather turned chillier during the evening. Dinner was at 7:15, just after staff had broken their Ramadan fast, tonight for us a tasty tajine of beef and vegetables, or vegetable tajine for the group's vegetarians. Then it was time for an early night, given everyone's early starts.



Magreb magpie (MN); laughing dove (DW).

Wednesday 12 March – local walks

A Moussier's redstart on an exposed perch as we gathered outside the breakfast room at 08:00 was a fine start to the day. The redstart was there again at lunchtime, and regularly for the rest of our holiday.

The day started cool and cloudy, though it became steadily warmer. We turned left out of Atlas Kasbah's entrance and towards the village. As we walked alongside the wall round the cemetery there was a bird of prey, its white belly and shape confirming it as an adult Bonelli's eagle, which flew towards us and the village – called Tighanimine Elbaz, which means 'eagle village' in Berber. Like yesterday there were three species of swifts on the move, but you had to be quick or lucky to pick out a pallid or little swift. In the village there were the inevitable house buntings and excellent views of spotless starlings. Towards the end of the village there was a new road over the wadi, which was holding back water on one side where there was the sound of marsh frogs, and one that showed well.

We were puzzled by a fancy new blue door, which was ajar revealing some attractive furniture and a mosaic floor. That soon led to an invitation to visit this new tourism development within the village. Merv tuned and played a guitar. Just beyond here Dave W was alert to a black wheatear, then two, a pair, which proved

cooperative, as did a Thekla lark on a pole. Someone caught sight of a Barbary ground-squirrel scampering in a distant dry gully, then two more appeared on a much closer stone structure. By this time we had a dog accompanying us, and either that or us disturbed two Barbary partridges. A little further on we managed to re-find them by a low wall at the back of an open area. We crossed the wadi, finding a Bibron's agama that thought it was hidden in dead vegetation: it took a bit of describing to explain where it was, though the easy way of seeing it through the scope worked well. We returned to base in good time, managing to keep the dog on the right side of Atlas Kasbah's gates.



An inviting blue door; Sahara ground-squirrel (MN); Thekla lark (DW).

After lunch at Atlas Kasbah, three opted for a quiet afternoon at base and most of us had another local walk. We started on the same track as yesterday then along some of the dirt road that forms part of a long-distance camel trail. Helmeted guineafowl, peacocks, turkeys and Muscovy ducks were unexpected birds on show, though we had heard the peacocks yesterday. Near this smallholding there were at least two long-tailed, chestnut-coloured birds that could only have been nightingales, though they soon disappeared from view. Great grey and woodchat shrikes, chiffchaff, Sardinian warbler, Thekla lark, common swifts and ground-squirrels all put in appearances, and Richard clambered into an irrigated area to fetch us samples of *Volutaria maroccana* and *Lotus cytisoides*, a birdsfoot trefoil. The wildlife was somewhat overshadowed by the amount of rubbish strewn and dumped, horribly out of place in the Argan Forest biosphere reserve. We managed to re-find a laughing dove, which Sally had missed yesterday.

After dinner they lit an outside wood fire for us; on a cloudy night the sounds were mostly of cicadas and Ramadan. Late this evening it rained.



Volutaria; great grey shrike (DW) and woodchat shrike (DW).

Thursday 13 March – Agadir souk and Paradise Valley

All of us plus picnics fitted into one small bus, and we were soon at our first stop of the day, a huge Carrefour supermarket on the edge of Agadir. Our main reason for calling here was to get cash from an ATM (Moroccan currency is not available in the UK); various other purchases were made, but not of alcohol as this was not on sale during Ramadan.

We continued to Agadir's huge souk, where a new parking area meant the bus could leave us at gate 15 and stay there. We had an enjoyable hour wandering, looking and shopping: purchases included spices, honey, olives and slippers. No-one lost their bearings – all too easy given the souk's size – and we gathered as

planned where we'd come in. Our route took us past Agadir's port and the huge cemetery which is the last resting place for many of the 12,000-15,000 people killed in the earthquake in 1960, then onwards through 'banana village', as our driver put it.



In Agadir's souk.

Our main excursion today was walking in Paradise Valley, starting with coffee. This had an unexpected addition as our bus driver took us to a particular café – a relative's, presumably – which had a lovely botanic garden growing a variety of herbs and medicinal plants, with (of course) a shop with more shopping opportunities. All this was followed by Moroccan style coffee or mint tea. In Paradise Valley we found just about enough rocks to sit on to eat the picnics supplied by Atlas Kasbah.

The weather was a mixture of sun and cloud with none of the rain that showed in some forecasts. However last night's rain had impacts: the river through the valley was running quicky and was coloured brown by sediment, and the road that provides the only walking route in the valley was covered in silt in several places. Most of the cars kept to the 20kph speed limit and we coped without getting badly muddy. Opposite our informal picnic spot a group of 11 Sahara pond terrapins (*Mauremys leprosa saharica*) had gathered on a dry rock by the river. There were also two new birds here: grey wagtail and moorhen.



Blue rock thrush (DW), Sahara pond terrapins (DW).

A little farther along the road, Chrissie was alert to a thrush that flew onto a rock: a super male blue rock thrush, which stayed on two particular rocks – one of which was covered in droppings, so presumably a favourite perching place – so it was easy to share telescope views. The other birds of note were two adult Bonelli's eagles that flew over together. Richard pointed out many plants, including a shrubby St John's-wort *Hypericum aegypticum*, a scorpion-vetch and *Trichodesma calcarata*, a relative of borage. In the souk some of us had seen euphorbia honey, and everywhere today there were the cactus-like spiny plants of *Euphorbia officinarum*, known locally as 'honey cactus'. However, this afternoon's honey bees were clustered on the tiny flowers of lentisc (gum mastic). These apart, the mixed weather meant few invertebrates on show today, just

the odd Bath white and painted lady butterfly. Earlier our bus had driven past us and turned around somewhere ahead; at 3:30 he picked up everyone and we returned through Paradise Valley. We passed Agadir's new football stadium under construction² as we returned to Atlas Kasbah.

The evening started with our usual routine of checklists at 6:30 and dinner at 7:15, tonight eel and vegetables cooked in tajines. These were followed by Hélène and Hassan with their 'tea ceremony', as we sat, shoes off, in the salon. That flowed into a question-and-answer session giving insights into life in Morocco. Then it rained again – welcome rain for Morocco, if a little less ideal for us. The Atlas Kasbah team scurried around checking rooms, in some cases replacing mosquito netting with plastic sheeting.

Friday 14 March – Bald Ibises and Cap Rhir

A brightly coloured serin could be seen from the terrace by the swimming pool this morning, and a double-rainbow in another direction.



Serin at Atlas Kasbah (MN); cactus-like *Euphorbia officinarum* 'honey cactus'.

It was a wet day, and we'd shuffled the itinerary in the hope that the rain would be over by the time we'd finished the drive around the edge of Agadir and north up the coast. Here the habitat almost everywhere is patchy, low coastal scrub dominated by spiny euphorbias, including where we stopped by the lighthouse at Cap Rhir. Gannets flew past at sea, sometimes singly, most in small groups. Then two large black birds appeared: bald ibises. At first they flew from view, though soon returned; then there were three and finally 11 in flight. Then the rain returned, happily not for long, and we retreated to the bus.

The next stop was unscheduled, prompted by patches of yellow spikes by the road – flowering *Cistanche phelypaea*. Hassan our driver found somewhere safe to pull in for us to take photos. There was a single cattle egret on some shanty-type buildings across the road.



Dunes at Tamri.

² Phase 1 for the 2025 African Nations Cup, phase 2 for the World Cup in 2030.

Another day, another town selling huge hands of bananas. Not long after Tamri town we had our main stop of the morning to try to see northern bald ibises near their nesting cliffs. The guides knew that it is also an area well-used by people, though we were somewhat taken aback to find a line-up of quadbikes for joy-riding over the dunes, plus several camels available for rides. Oddly, it didn't seem to matter: we walked a short way and bald ibises were immediately obvious on an open area in the dunes. Some – and there about 12 ibises coming and going – were mixing with yellow-legged gulls in a pool of water. Occasionally one would pick up something suitable as nesting material and fly off towards the low cliffs over the sea where they nest, though out of sight for us. The occasional tourist or scrambler-type bike came past, and the ibises seemed unconcerned. The GREPOM warden, named Omar, saw us and came over, probably partly to check we were not going to come towards the nesting area, perhaps also just to have a chat. The younger generation in Morocco all speak English, though Omar and I slowly exchanged greetings and information in French, a second language for both of us.



Bald ibis (MN); *Thapsi garganica*.

A great grey shrike and several Thekla larks were the other birds of note here today. The most obvious flowers were some short versions of a normally large yellow umbellifer, *Thapsi garganica*. Some saw *Dipcadi* (brown bells) and there was a small Duke-of Argyll's tea plant *Lycium intricatum*. We had our picnics sitting in the dunes, by which time the weather was warm and sunny. Several in the group here saw a spiny-footed lizard.

On the return journey south, we paused for another five bald ibises, and Hassan stopped to buy mussels from a young man on the roadside. We all stopped for an hour in the busy seaside town of Taghazout where we split up to have drinks in the many bars overlooking the sea. Today you could see why this part of the Atlantic coast is popular with surfers, and one wave gave Dave W a bit of a soaking.

During the evening it rained again.

Saturday 15 March – Souss-Massa National Park

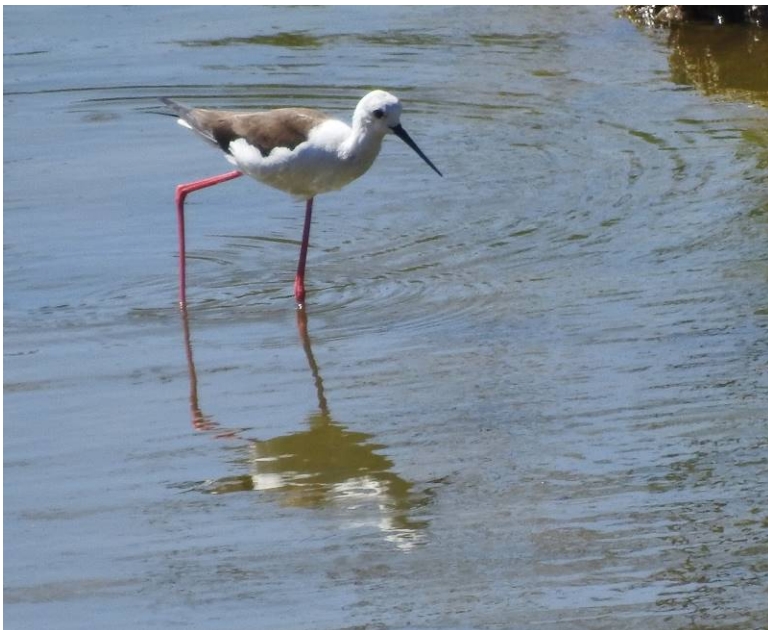
A dry and sunny morning – and that continued all day – that started in the usual way with a leisurely breakfast and 9:15 departure. The drive was quicker than we expected: two years ago there were road works, now there was a new road that helped us arrive after about an hour. We parked in the shade at Oued Massa, the river Massa in the Souss-Massa National Park, and our morning consisted of an out-and-back walk along a quiet road running parallel to, though higher than, the river. Almost immediately a large bird was flying away from us upriver – an osprey. It turned around, flew back in our direction and past us, so we all had excellent views.



The group at Oued Massa.

There were a few waders on the water's edge: greenshank, three black-winged stilts, and common sandpiper, then a group of 14 ruffs flew in, and with them was a wood sandpiper. A spoonbill flew downriver, and not surprisingly there was a heron and little egret. Moorhens and a small group of little grebes were on the water, and adjacent scrub had the usual birds such as Sardinian warbler, Moussier's redstart and a hidden Cetti's warbler.

Further along, a small, harvested area in a field of lucerne had a pair of stonechats, and several swallows were feeding here. A zitting cisticola called and some managed to see the flying dot making the noise. We were lucky to see two Barbary partridges that clambered up a rocky slope; there was the brightest greenfinch I can recall seeing, and a laughing dove flew through. It was another day where butterflies were occasional and fast-flying, and only some distant dragonflies were reported. Botanically, although some areas were lush and green there wasn't much of note, though there was a nice sea-heath. It looked like the star plant here might not be out at all, though for the group that walked the farthest we found a group of desert thumbs *Cynomorium coccineum* (various other names are used, including the misleading Maltese fungus) among suaeda (sea-blite), on which it's a parasite. It had attendant flies, which pollinate it, drawn in by scent. Richard sniffed it and reported an unpleasant scent; I smelt it and it seemed unremarkable. As we walked back to the bus Dave W found a melodious warbler. We had our picnics in the shade near the parked bus.



Black-winged stilt (DW); desert thumbs.

We then moved from the southern part of the National Park to the northern edge of the National Park, which meant quite a drive to reach the Souss estuary. We reached this via a large area of dry eucalyptus, arriving at

first somewhere unfamiliar to the guides, a new road that included a new bridge over the intertidal estuary. This worked out well as we were able to stop by the bridge to look at the large numbers of birds. It was the greater flamingos that had first caught our eye: I estimated that there were around 300. They had gathered there but were mostly inactive, just an occasionally raised wing, in their usual way. There must have been some 50 spoonbills, mostly in a big group, plus a scattering of little egrets, herons and cormorants. I was scanning in case there was something more unusual and we'd started to look at two rather distant ruddy shelducks. Then two ruddy shelducks flew past, which was much better. A big flock of gulls was a mixture of yellow-legged and black-headed. Waders included more stilts and greenshanks, a single redshank, a common sandpiper flying over the water and a single curlew. Dave W found some distant shovelers.

We moved on to our usual stopping place by the Royal Palace, which underlined that we'd done well to spend time by the bridge as a combination of a high tide, lots of people and camels and Royal security meant that it just didn't work for birdwatching today. Most people were unimpressed by the one new bird here: 20 or so woodpigeons flying around.

Dinner was different tonight, in a room upstairs, seated on cushions around low tables. Then, taking advantage of a clear sky, M'bark from Atlas Kasbah led a short excursion into astronomy on the top level of the building. He pointed out Mars high above us, Orion, the Plough / Ursa Major / 'big bear' and the Pole Star. Jupiter and four moons showed well through my telescope and, finally, the Pleiades (Seven Sisters).

Sunday 16 March – Askoti Gorge

Early riser Dave W caught sight and took a photo of a black-crowned tchagra, while looking out from our usual birdwatching spot by the pool. The rest of us had to make do with serins and two hoopoes. Later it came to light that Cheryl had photographed a tchagra at Oued Massa.

It's expected that we take a local guide on this day in the itinerary, today a guide named Brahim. A very short drive took us to the starting point, near a mosque and a school to study the Koran. We started in an area that looked down on the gorge, noticeably green after the rain, and here we found a Moroccan hairstreak and many storksills in flower. We then walked down towards the gorge. Birds here were the usual suspects such as woodchat shrike, Thekla larks, African chaffinches and bulbuls. A big cluster of dates high on a palm attracted birds, not surprisingly: blackcap, Sardinian warbler and bulbul. A distant girl bunting didn't stay long enough on its perch. Oleander flowers had two species of flower chafer, and the seeds supported a large number of oleander seed bugs in various stages of growth.

At the gap though the gorge's columns you could see the impact of recent rain, and some stayed back as the walking had a rough stretch. There were two new butterflies, African babel blue and Moroccan orange-tip, and a butterfly described to me was probably a knapweed fritillary. From the other side of the gorge 'gates' we picked out a Barbary ground squirrel on a high point, later replaced by two climbing humans. Pools of water here supported several pairs of African green toads, plus long strings of toad spawn. A grey wagtail flew through.



African green toads, with strings of toad spawn.

On the way back to the bus there was a black wheatear, this one on an argan tree rather than a building. The plan was to drive a very short distance to a lunch spot with shade. Unfortunately, neither driver nor guide knew this spot and didn't listen to Sally's advice as we passed it. But we found somewhere else which was fine for eating picnics. Brahim didn't know our usual walk back to Atlas Kasbah, so those walking back (others

returned by bus) went along the road instead. We had good views of woodchat shrike, a brief view of cir bunting and a new butterfly, namely greenish black-tip. As we walked, everyone knew Brahim and he knew everyone, on account of him teaching for 25 years at the local school. It was heartening to see how many former pupils embraced him warmly, including a gang of lads repairing the road. It wasn't long before we were back in our local village of Tighanimine Elbaz, where I was able to buy an ice cream and all the walkers passed Brahim's former school. We spent the rest of the afternoon relaxing at Atlas Kasbah.

The penny had dropped as we gathered this morning that big letters spelling out AGADIR had disappeared from the car park. I saw them now behind a wall, now AIDRAG.

Monday 16 March – local walk

We started our morning walk at the women's cooperatives down the road. The party split to start with, with half of us shopping in the smaller cooperative, before joining the rest of the group in the larger cooperative that includes working areas to make argan products. The tour here meant wearing factory white coats, and hair nets for some. Today there wasn't the usual large group of women working on account of Ramadan. If they'd been here, they would first remove the outer layer of the fruit, revealing a nut that was then crushed. We'd heard the other day that all the fruit of one argan tree can produce just half a litre of oil. They also showed us a small machine that can do this, though the mechanised process is avoided as then the employment and social aspects of the women's cooperative would be lost. Most made purchases, from anti-aging cream to goat's milk soap.

We walked to the village of Elmaasa, a short walk through more dry, open argan forest. Rain had given a boost to plant growth, and in the village we found white henbane and a big clump of the yellow daisy *Anvillea garcinii*. At the far end of the village there was a fine view over Agadir, now in the sunshine after a cool and cloudy start to the day. Some group members found a black wheatear, and some a black-eared wheatear, the first (of the latter) for the week.



View from road into Elmaasa over open – but dry – argan woodland.

After lunch at Atlas Kasbah, some enjoyed a free afternoon, while others took part in one of two arranged activities. Karin, Dave W and I had a wildlife walk, repeating the route of the first morning, while saying hello and shaking hands with many friendly residents. The amount of water in the wadi at the far end of the village was much less than five days ago though was enough to have an African green toad, and another called from a hidden location. The Barbary ground-squirrel was on the same pile of stones. The birds were mostly as expected, including both great grey and woodchat shrike, until a group of bee-eaters appeared. The bee-eaters, at least 15, selected patches of tall giant reed to settle within a fenced area of palms and bougainvillea in the wadi.

Meanwhile, about half of the group took part in a Moroccan cookery course led by M'bark. That evening, the results of their good work appeared on the dinner table: namely pastry parcels as starters, chicken tajine and a filo pastry dessert with a custard and crushed nut topping.



Bee-eaters (DW)

Tuesday 17 March – Agadir and home

Has a return journey ever been so straightforward? We had breakfast at 08:00 as usual, after which the Atlas Kasbah team collected suitcases that were loaded into the bus. Hassan, our driver for the week, was with us again for a journey of just 20 minutes to the airport. Airport procedures – including an extra hold bag for Karin – all worked smoothly. and we had the unusual experience of our flight leaving before its scheduled departure time.

Holiday highlights, as nominated by group members

Brennan: bald ibis; African green toad.
 Karin: bald ibis; Moussier's redstart; argan tree and everything to do with it; Oued Massa. Atlas Kasbah.
 David B: knowledge of guides; bald ibis.
 Judith: Askoti Gorge & spawning toads; osprey; many other lovely times and wonderful birds and plants.
 Mervin: Cistanche; brown bluebell; serin; Moussier's redstart; *Tulostoma* fungus; the company.
 Denise C: strange plants e.g. twin-fruited silkweed & *Withania*; collared doves nest-building; swallows over the swimming pool; Atlas Kasbah experience.
 Tim: bald ibis; friendly people everywhere.
 Cheryl: people, their openness, smiles, the children; black-crowned tchagra.
 Denise B: toads; rugged coastline; cookery course; Agadir souk; tea ceremony with questions-and-answers.
 Dave W: Oued Massa; people.
 Daphne: bald ibis; Askoti Gorge & toads; hospitality and tea ceremony.
 Patrick: osprey and walk at Oued Massa; souk and man who plays frisbee with pancakes.
 Chrissie: river walk at Oued Massa; sand dunes and ibises at Tamri.
 Richard: rushing water in Paradise Valley, which is behind the erosion you see there.
 Sally: Oued Massa morning; Atlas Kasbah staff, food and garden.
 Chris: bald ibis; osprey; common birds at Atlas Kasbah e.g. house buntings, bulbuls, Moussier's redstart.



Spiny-footed lizard *Acanthodactylus erythrurus* (DW), Tamir; Sahara marsh frog, Atlas Kasbah.

WILDLIFE LISTS

MAMMAL, REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS

Barbary ground squirrel	African green toad	Spiny-footed lizard
Sahara marsh frog	Sahara pond terrapin	Bibron's agama

BIRDS

For interest, these were the 'write-ins' on this year's list, not recorded in previous years: shoveler and golden eagle.

Little grebe	6 at Oued Massa, 15/3
Gannet	A steady movement at sea near Cap Rhir, 14/3
Cormorant	Seen on 15/3, though none were clearly the <i>moroccanus</i> subspecies
Grey heron	Oued Massa and Oued Souss, 15/3
Cattle egret	Seen on three days, including 2 over Atlas Kasbah, 17/3
Little egret	Oued Massa, 15/3
White stork	Seen from the bus on three days
Northern bald ibis	11 at Cap Rhir, 12 near the nesting cliffs at Tamri, 5 on the coast between these, all 14/3
Spoonbill	1 at Oued Massa and c.50 at Oued Souss, 15/3
Greater flamingo	c.300 at Oued Souss, 15/3
Ruddy shelduck	4 at Oued Souss, 15/3
<i>Muscovy duck</i>	<i>Presumably domestic birds in 2 places, noted as feral populations may establish.</i>
Shoveler	6 at Oued Souss, 15/3
Buzzard	Reported locally on 12/3

Golden eagle	1 sub-adult seen by two of us over Atlas Kasbah, 11/3
Bonelli's eagle	Adult over the village, 12/3, 2 Paradise Valley, 13/3
Kestrel	Seen on 6 days
Barbary partridge	2 seen well on local walk, 12/3; heard in Paradise Valley; 2 at Oued Massa 15/3
Quail	Heard at Oued Massa, 15/3
<i>Helmeted guineafowl</i>	<i>Used to occur in Morocco, now only domestic. Group near Atlas Kasbah.</i>
Moorhen	Paradise valley and Oued Massa
Black-winged stilt	3, Oued Massa and 10, Oued Souss, 15/3
Avocet	A tight flock at Oued Souss
Ruff	14 at Oued Massa
Curlew	1, Oued Souss
Redshank	1, Oued Souss
Greenshank	Several at both Oued Massa and Oued Souss
Common sandpiper	Oued Massa and Oued Souss
Wood sandpiper	2 at Oued Massa
Black-headed gull	Lots at Oued Souss
Yellow-legged gull	Seen 4 days, coastal and inland
Feral pigeon	Seen most days
Woodpigeon	About 20 flying around at Oued Souss
Collared dove	Daily, including on a nest, at Atlas Kasbah
Turtle dove	Heard by Chris on local walk, 12/3
Laughing dove	1, Oued Massa. Up to 4 near Atlas Kasbah with fenced livestock
Alpine swift	1 seen by Dave W over Askoti Gorge, 16/3
Common swift	Most days, especially over Atlas Kasbah
Common swift	Picked out among common swifts over Atlas Kasbah, 11/3 and 12/3
Common swift	Picked out with common swifts over Atlas Kasbah, 11/3 and 12/3
Bee-eater	Heard on the first three days. 15 settling near Atlas Kasbah, 17/3
Hoopoe	Seen on three days, including from Atlas Kasbah
Thekla lark	Daily at and around Atlas Kasbah and elsewhere
Crag martin	Paradise Valley, 13/3
Barn swallow	Daily, including at Atlas Kasbah
House martin	Seen on three days, usually fleeting views
White wagtail	1 flew past at Tamri, 14/3
Grey wagtail	Singles on 13/3 (Paradise Valley) and 16/3 (Askoti Gorge)
Common bulbul	Common, daily at Atlas Kasbah
Moussier's redstart	On show every day at Atlas Kasbah, and in villages
Stonechat	6, Oued Massa, 15/3
Black-eared wheatear	1, 17/3, Elmaasa village
Black wheatear	Seen on 3 days, in villages and Askoti Gorge
Blue rock thrush	Paradise Valley, 13/3
Blackbird	Daily at Atlas Kasbah
Cetti's warbler	Heard at Oued Massa, 15/3
Zitting cisticola	Oued Massa, 15/3
Sardinian warbler	Daily, especially near Atlas Kasbah
Blackcap	Daily, especially at Atlas Kasbah
Melodious warbler	Oued Massa, 15/3
Chiffchaff	Daily, especially at Atlas Kasbah
Great tit	Almost daily at Atlas Kasbah
Black-crowed tchagra	Photographed at Oued Massa, 15/3, and Atlas Kasbah, 16/3, though only one person on each occasion. Reported singing at Atlas Kasbah, 17/3.
Great grey shrike	Seen on 5 days, especially close to Atlas Kasbah
Woodchat shrike	Seen on 4 days, especially close to Atlas Kasbah
Magreb magpie	Seen daily
Spotless starling	Seen on 4 days, in local villages and in towns as we drove.
House sparrow	Daily at Atlas Kasbah
Spanish sparrow	A well-marked male near livestock on a local walk, 11/3; single at Oued Massa.
African chaffinch	Now recognised as a species. Daily, especially at Atlas Kasbah and surrounds
Serin	Heard or seen 5 days, including at Atlas Kasbah
Greenfinch	5 days, at Atlas Kasbah and Oued Massa
Girl bunting	Heard on 11/3, seen 16/3
House bunting	Daily at, on and inside Atlas Kasbah; in all villages and Agadir souk

BUTTERFLIES		
Large white	Moroccan orange-tip	Knapweed fritillary
Small white	Clouded yellow	Red admiral
Bath white	Moroccan hairstreak	Painted lady
Greenish black-tip	African babul blue	



Moroccan orange-tip; greenish black-tip (DW); bath white on heliotrope (MN).

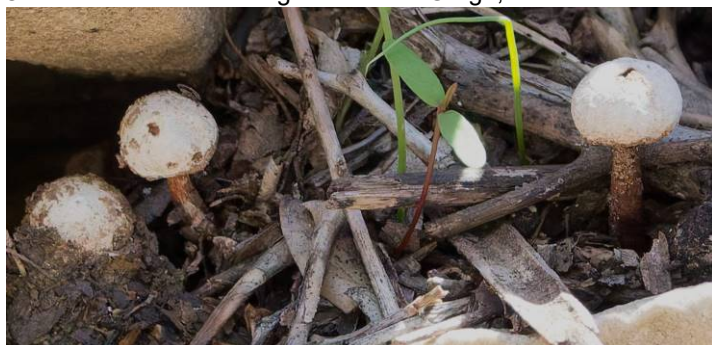
OTHER INVERTEBRATES	
Hummingbird hawk-moth <i>Macroglossum stellatarum</i>	Oleander seed-bug <i>Caenocoris nerii</i>
Blue emperor dragonfly <i>Anax imperator</i>	Darkling beetle <i>Pimelia chrysomeloides</i>
Egyptian locust <i>Anacridium aegyptiacum</i>	Spotted flower-chafer <i>Oxythrea funesta</i>
Firebug <i>Pyrhocoris apterus</i>	Hairy flower-chafer <i>Tropinota hirta</i>
A red-and-black seed bug <i>Spilostethus pandurus</i>	Honey bee <i>Apis mellifera</i>



One photo, two chafer species. Left is *Oxythrea funesta*, and the two on the right are *Tropinota hirta*, on oleander (MN).

Fungi

On the return walk along the Askoti Gorge, we noticed whitish



spheres and assumed they might be snail shells. However, closer examination revealed them to be the stalked puffballs of the genus *Tulostoma*. In Britain, *T. brumale* is the uncommon species but without microscopic examination this cannot be determined for our specimens. As used to be the case in Britain, it was found in the upper courses of a stone wall. The nearby geology was partially sedimentary containing many fossils and remains of shells of various species so it is likely this is a type of limestone which would also fit the substrate of this species of fungus. Contributed by Mervin Nethercoat.

PLANTS

AROUND HOTEL & GARDENS	
Casuarinaceae	
<i>Casuarina equisetiforme</i>	An Australian conifer
Asparagaceae	
<i>Asphodelus fistulosus</i>	A small white asphodel
Fabaceae	
<i>Ononis natrix</i>	Large yellow restharrow
<i>Acacia longifolia</i>	Long-leaved wattle
<i>Melilotis albus</i>	White melilot
<i>Acacia tortilis</i>	a dwarf mimosa
<i>Genista scorparius</i>	a spiny broom
<i>Retama retam</i>	a white retama
<i>Ceratonia siliqua</i>	Carob
Rhamnaceae	
<i>Zizyphus lotus</i>	Zizyphus
Zygophyllaceae	
<i>Fagonia arabica</i>	Fagonia
Resedaceae	
<i>Reseda luteola</i>	Weld
Brassicaceae	
<i>Eruca sativa</i>	Wild rocket
Punicaceae	
<i>Punica granatum</i>	Pomegranate
Oleaceae	
<i>Olea europaea</i>	Olive
Malvaceae	
<i>Hibiscus rosa-sinensis</i>	A red hibiscus
Sapotaceae	
<i>Argania spinosa</i>	Argan tree
Apocynaceae	
<i>Periploca angustifolia</i>	A twin-fruited silkweed
Boraginaceae	
<i>Echium angustifolium</i>	A soft red bugloss
<i>Heliotropium europaeum</i>	A cherry-pie
Solanaceae	
<i>Nicotiana glauca</i>	Tree tobacco
Plantaginaceae	
<i>Myoporum laetum</i>	Myoporum
Convolvulaceae	
<i>Convolvulus althaeoides</i>	A pretty pink bindweed
<i>Ipomoea batatas</i>	Sweet potato
Bignoniaceae	
<i>Jacaranda mimosifolia</i>	Jacaranda
Lamiaceae	
<i>Lavandula (dentata) maroccana</i>	A lavender
Asteraceae	
<i>Cladanthus arabicus</i>	A fine leaved golden daisy
<i>Volutaria maroccana</i>	A knapweed relative
<i>Pallenis aquaticus</i>	Pale yellow daisy with spiny bracts
<i>Calendula aegypticum</i>	A marigold
CAP RHIR AND TAMRI	
Frankeniaceae	
<i>Frankenia laevis</i>	Sea-heath
Euphorbiaceae	
<i>Euphorbia officinarum</i>	A spiny spurge
<i>Euphorbia regis-jubae</i>	A shrubby, much-branched spurge
Fabaceae	
<i>Lotus cytisoides</i>	A bird's foot trefoil
Brassicaceae	
<i>Malcomia littorea</i>	A stock relative

Solanaceae	
<i>Lycium intricatum</i>	A Duke of Argyll's tea plant
Orobanchaceae	
<i>Cistanche phelypaea</i>	A large yellow broomrape relative
Apiaceae	
<i>Thapsia garganica</i>	A yellow carrot relative
Asteraceae	
<i>Kleinia anteuophorbia</i>	A very succulent daisy
<i>Reichardia tingitana</i>	A dark-centred dandelion relative
<i>Waironia saharae</i>	A succulent shrub
Aizoaceae	
<i>Aizoon canariense</i>	Aizoon
<i>Mesembryanthemum crystallinum</i>	A white-flowered Livingstone-daisy
<i>Carpobrotus achanachiformis</i>	Hottentot/sour fig
SOUSS- MASSA NATIONAL PARK	
Poaceae	
<i>Phragmites australis</i>	Common reed
Anacardiaceae	
<i>Pistacia atlanticus</i>	A pistachio nut relative
Urticaceae	
<i>Forsskaolea tenacissima</i>	A nettle relative
Chenopdiaceae	
<i>Suaeda iffniensis</i>	A sea-blite
<i>Salsola oppositifolia</i>	A saltwort
<i>Arthrocnemum macrostachyum</i>	A perennial samphire/glasswort
Aizoaceae	
<i>Aizoon canariense</i>	Aizoon
<i>Mesembryanthemum crystallinum</i>	A wet and fleshy white-flowered Livingstone-daisy
<i>Carpobrotus achanaciformis</i>	Hottentot/sour fig
Zygophyllaceae	
<i>Fagonia cretica</i>	Fagonia
Frankeniaceae	
<i>Frankenia boisseri</i>	A sea-heath
Tamaricaceae	
<i>Tamarix sp.</i>	A tamarisk
Balanphoraceae	
<i>Cynomorium coccineum</i>	Maltese fungus or red dog-turd- a phallic parasite
Nitrariaceae	
<i>Nitraria retusa</i>	A white-flowered shrub
Geraniaceae	
<i>Erodium hesperium</i>	A stork's bill
ASKOTI GORGE	
Ephedraceae	
<i>Ephedra altissima</i>	A joint-pine
Asparagaceae	
<i>Asphodelus fistulosus</i>	Hollow-leaved asphodel
Smilacaceae	
<i>Smilax aspera</i>	Smilax
Anacardiaceae	
<i>Rhus trifoliata</i>	A sumach
<i>Rhus pentaphylla</i>	A sumach, with edible fruits
<i>Pistacia atlanticus</i>	A pistachio nut relative
Capparaceae	
<i>Capparis spinosa</i>	Caper

Areceaceae	
<i>Phoenix dactylifera</i>	Date palm
Lamiaceae	
<i>Thymus maroccana</i>	A long-flowered thyme
<i>Salvia ericalyx</i>	A rosemary
Plantaginaceae	
<i>Kickxia sagittata</i>	A fluellen
Araliaceae	
<i>Hedera Algeriensis</i>	An ivy
Geraniaceae	
<i>Erodium sp</i>	a very pretty large flowered storksbill
ELMAASA VILLAGE	
Agavaceae	
<i>Agave sisalana</i>	Sisal
Aizoaceae	
<i>Aizoon canariense</i>	Aizoon
Cactaceae	
<i>Opuntia ficus-indica</i>	A large-fruited prickly pear
<i>Opuntia delenii</i>	A purple-fruited prickly pear
Solanaceae	
<i>Solanum heterophyllum</i>	Orange-fruited nightshade
<i>Hyoscyamus albus</i>	White henbane
Boraginaceae	
<i>Heliotropium crispum</i>	A cherry-pie
<i>Echium horridum</i>	A red bugloss
Asteraceae	
<i>Anvillea garcinii</i>	A yellow daisy bush
<i>Cladanthus arabicus</i>	Orange daisy, feathery leaves
<i>Volutaria maroccana</i>	A knapweed relative
<i>Centaurea solstitialis</i>	Yellow star-thistle
PARADISE VALLEY	
Cupressaceae	
<i>Tetracinus declinata</i>	A juniper relative
Smilacaceae	
<i>Smilax aspera</i>	Smilax
Areceaceae	
<i>Phoenix dactylifera</i>	Date palm
Plumbaginaceae	
<i>Limonium lobatum</i>	A sea-lavender
Hypericaceae	
<i>Hypericum aegypticum</i>	A shrubby St. John's wort
Euphorbiaceae	
<i>Euphorbia officinarum</i>	A spiny spurge
<i>Ricinus communis</i>	Caster-oil plant
Boraginaceae	
<i>Trichodesma calcarata</i>	Pale blue and white with swept back petals
Scrophulariaceae	
<i>Verbascum sinuatum</i>	A mullein
Verbenaceae	
<i>Vitex agnus-castus</i>	The chaste tree
Typhaceae	
<i>Typha domingensis</i>	A reed mace
Juncaceae	
<i>Juncus acutus</i>	Sharp rush



Withania frutescens



Calendula aegypticum



Anvillea garcinii



Lycium intricatum, a Duke of Argyll's tea plant