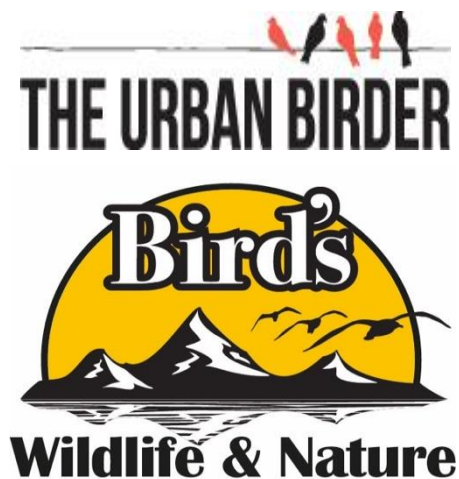




Extremadura

April 19 – April 26+ 2025

TRIP REPORT



David and Chris enjoying another great day !

Spain - Extremadura - 2025

19th April – 26th April 2025

TOUR SUMMARY:

This tour started as soon as we left Madrid Airport. Well, after a two-hour drive as we crossed the border into Extremadura with Castille y Mancha. We stopped at a couple of sites around Embalse de Valdecañas where we picked up the first of the Eurasian Griffon and Cinereous Vultures, Booted Eagles, Lesser Kestrels, White Storks and Gull-billed Terns that would punctuate the remainder of this Spanish adventure. Next, we dropped in Embalse de Arrocampo for a scooch around. This venue, after the world famous Monfragüe National Park, is the site most visited by birders and has had a host of rarities found there over the years. Our visit concluded with views of Western Swamphen, Little Bittern, Purple Herons, Black Kites, Eurasian Spoonbills and more Gull-billed Terns. We were also lucky to hear a reeling Savi's Warbler. When we neared Cáceres, our base for the next three nights, we stopped off at the Embalse de Guadiloba where we scored Thekla's, Crested and Calandra Larks plus at least eight Great Bustards.

The next few days in the Cáceres Province was spectacular with multiple sightings of all the eagles – Golden, Spanish Imperial, Booted, Short-toed and the rarer Bonelli's Eagles. Western Marsh Harriers, Eurasian Hoopoes, Iberian Grey and Woodchat Shrikes, Greater Short-toed Larks, European Bee-eaters, European Red-rumped Swallows, Pallid Swifts and Corn Buntings were all regularly seen with a supporting cast of European Rollers, Black-winged Kites, Black-bellied Sandgrouse, daily Great Bustards, the odd Montagu's Harrier plus Black Storks, Egyptian Vultures, Stone Curlews, Eurasian Golden Orioles and a migrant male Pied Flycatcher.

The second part of the holiday was spent in southern part of Extremadura in the Badajoz Province which is scarcely visited by most other bird tour companies. We spent four nights based in Extremadura's regional capital, Mérida. The most famous birding spot in this province is from the Roman Bridge in the capital city. We saw nothing new for the list from the actual bridge apart from performing Alpine Swifts, that along with attendant Pallid Swifts, were swooping very close to us as they came to and from their nests beneath our feet in the arches of the ancient bridge. Plus, along the river we discovered a Penduline Tit nest that was being tended to by a male. Nearby the bridge we also caught up with the region's one and only Monk Parakeet squawking away!

Our subsequent time in this little birded region was well rewarded. Several sightings of all the eagle species plus more Black-winged Kites (including a pair displaying), an unexpected additional singing Savi's Warbler, more Eurasian Golden Orioles, both shrikes, Short-toed Treecreepers, Red-billed Choughs, Tawny Pipit and some unexpected Whimbrel flocks.

There were two prime moments of the tour. The first was when we visited the vast La Serena sierras in the east of Badajoz Province. Here we enjoyed unrivalled close-up views of displaying Little Bustards – sometimes down to just 20 feet right out in the open. We also had amazing views of the other Spanish steppe specialities like both species of sandgrouse, Great Bustard and plentiful Montagu's Harriers.

The second moment was an encounter with not one but two Iberian Lynx. We had to stake them out at a site not too far from Mérida and were treated to two separate prolonged views of a male and then a female. What a privilege and a great way to end the tour!

Finally, we did see other wildlife including the abundant Iberian Pond Turtle, Iberian Wall Lizard and a single, rather large, Montpellier Snake. We also managed to glance downwards when not looking at birds to notice a variety of butterflies including Scarce Swallowtail, Painted Lady, the attractive Provençal Fritillary and the absolutely stunning Spanish Festoon.

We look forward to welcoming you to our next Extremadura tour. You won't be disappointed!

HIGHLIGHTS

Either for rarity value, excellent views or simply a group favourite.

- Spanish Imperial Eagle
- Black-winged Kite
- Great Bustard
- Bonelli's Eagle
- Black-bellied Sandgrouse
- Iberian Green Woodpecker
- Ortolan Bunting
- Eurasian Golden Oriole
- Red-billed Chough
- Blue Rock Thrush
- Calandra Lark
- Collared Pratincole
- Eurasian Stone-curlew
- Cinereous Vulture
- Golden Eagle
- Little Bustard
- Pin-tailed Sandgrouse
- European Roller
- Alpine Swift
- Eurasian Penduline Tit
- Short-toed Treecreeper
- Iberian Magpie
- Western Orphean Warbler
- Common Nightingale
- Monk Parakeet
- Gull-billed Tern
- Eurasian Whimbrel
- Western Orphean Warbler
- Little Bittern
- Montagu's Harrier
- European Bee-eater
- Black Wheatear
- Little Owl
- Iberian Grey Shrike
- Rock Bunting
- Common Waxbill
- Pallid Swift
- Black Tern
- Western Swamphen
- Lesser Kestrel
- Golden Eagle
- Booted Eagle
- Provencal Fritillary
- Spanish Festoon
- 2 Iberian Lynx

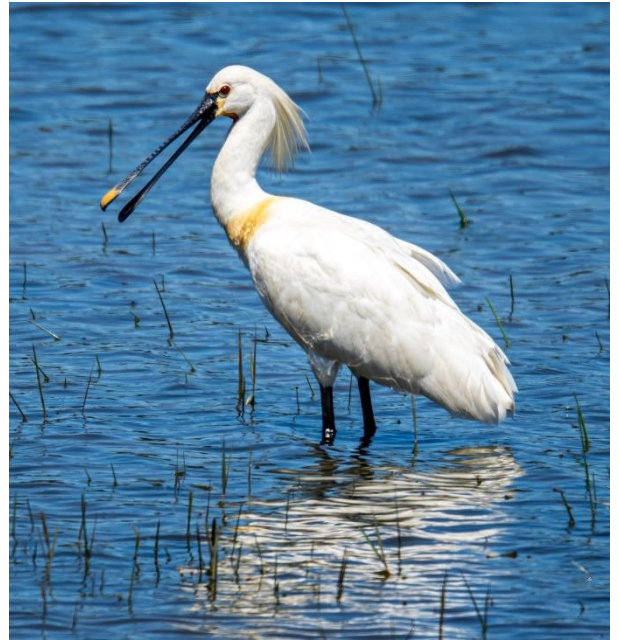


The beautiful Guadinana River (David Lindo)

Our first days in Extremadura saw a wealth of birds with incredible views of many.



Our first Gull-billed Terns were seen elegantly flying around the Embalse de Valdecañas



The wetlands around Embalse de Arrocampo produced wonderful views of Eurasian Spoonbill



This baby Stonechat entertained us !



The Thekla's Lark was seen well in the dry desert habitats

European Bee-eaters are always a colourful addition to our wonderful bird sightings and never disappoint.



And a few more exciting birds included this Iberian Grey Shrike and the gorgeous European Roller

Next on our target list was the Great Bustard and we had incredible views of these huge birds on a daily basis! Wow !



We had great views of many raptors including displaying Black-winged Kites



Even the Common Buzzards came in and posed for photographs



Flocks of Eurasian Whimbrel were a surprise!

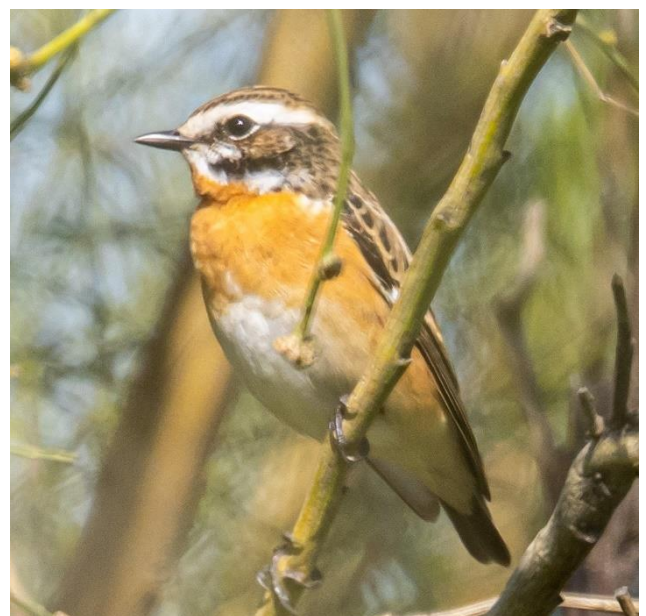
The vast meadows and grasslands of Embalse de Alcollarín full of flowers and insect was breathtaking!



La Serena was our site to see the declining Little Bustard and we were so thrilled to see them up close and personal



It was here that we enjoyed our views of Black-bellied Sandgrouse and the superb Little Bustard

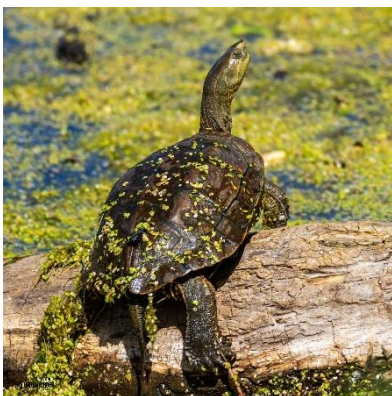


The Iberian race of Yellow Wagtail shone bright in the meadows and dainty Whinchats sat bold upon the taller weeds.

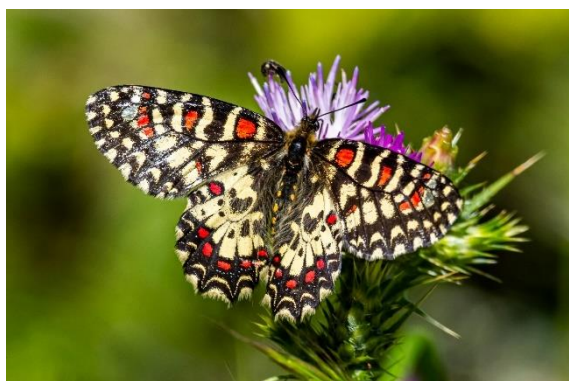
The delightful Little Owl can be seen sitting out during the day-time and this one gave us stunning views.



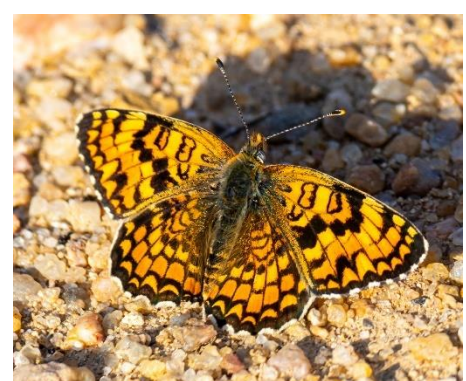
And, if the many birds and incredibly scenery were not enough then the butterflies and other creatures just added to our wonderful experience



Iberian Pond Turtle



Spanish Festoon – What a Butterfly!



Provencal Fritillary

WILDLIFE LIST for Extremadura, Spain 2025

A = Number of species recorded on tour

H = Heard Only

This list is in line with IOC WORLD BIRD LIST v(15.1) and as such names may be different than some of the field guides and other taxonomy's

A	BIRD SPECIES	SCIENTIFIC NAME
1	Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>
2	Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>
3	Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>
4	Little Bittern	<i>Ixobrychus minutus</i>
5	Black-crowned Night Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>
6	Western Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>
7	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>
8	Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>
9	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>
10	Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>
11	White Stork	<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>
12	Black Stork	<i>Ciconia nigra</i>
13	Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>
14	Eurasian Spoonbill	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>
15	Eurasian Griffon Vulture	<i>Gyps fulvus</i>
16	Cinereous Vulture	<i>Aegypius monachus</i>
17	Egyptian Vulture	<i>Neophron percnopterus</i>
18	Golden Eagle	<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>
19	Spanish Imperial Eagle	<i>Aquila adalberti</i>
20	Short-toed Snake Eagle	<i>Circaetus gallicus</i>
21	Bonelli's Eagle	<i>Aquila fasciata</i>
22	Booted Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus pennatus</i>
23	Red Kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>
24	Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>
25	Black-winged Kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>
26	Western Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>
27	Montagu's Harrier	<i>Circus pygargus</i>
28	Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>
29	Eurasian Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>
30	Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>
31	Lesser Kestrel	<i>Falco naumanni</i>
32	Common Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>
33	Egyptian Goose	<i>Alopochen aegyptiaca</i>
34	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>
35	Gadwall	<i>Mareca strepera</i>
36	Northern Shoveler	<i>Spatula clypeata</i>
37	Red-legged Partridge	<i>Alectoris rufa</i>
38	Common Quail	H <i>Coturnix coturnix</i>
39	Water Rail	H <i>Rallus aquaticus</i>
40	Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>
41	Eurasian Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>
42	Western Swampen	<i>Porphyrio porphyrio</i>
43	Great Bustard	<i>Otis tarda</i>

44	Little Bustard		<i>Tetrax tetrax</i>
45	Black-winged Stilt		<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>
46	Eurasian Stone Curlew		<i>Burhinus oedicnemus</i>
47	Collared Pratincole		<i>Glareola pratincola</i>
48	Little Ringed Plover		<i>Charadrius dubius</i>
49	Common Sandpiper		<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>
50	Common Greenshank		<i>Tringa nebularia</i>
51	Spotted Redshank		<i>Tringa erythropus</i>
52	Eurasian Whimbrel		<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>
53	Black-headed Gull		<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>
54	Lesser Black-backed Gull		<i>Larus fuscus</i>
55	Gull-billed Tern		<i>Gelochelidon nilotica</i>
56	Little Tern		<i>Sternula albifrons</i>
57	Black Tern		<i>Chlidonias niger</i>
58	Black-bellied Sandgrouse		<i>Pterocles orientalis</i>
59	Pin-tailed Sandgrouse		<i>Pterocles alchata</i>
60	Feral Pigeon		<i>Columba livia</i>
61	Common Woodpigeon		<i>Columba palumbus</i>
62	Eurasian Collared Dove		<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>
63	European Turtle Dove		<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>
64	Common Cuckoo		<i>Cuculus canorus</i>
65	Greater Spotted Cuckoo	H	<i>Clamator glandarius</i>
66	Tawny Owl	H	<i>Strix aluco</i>
67	Little Owl		<i>Athene noctua</i>
68	Common Swift		<i>Apus apus</i>
69	Pallid Swift		<i>Apus pallidus</i>
70	Alpine Swift		<i>Tachymarptis melba</i>
71	Common Kingfisher		<i>Alcedo atthis</i>
72	European Bee-eater		<i>Merops apiaster</i>
73	European Roller		<i>Coracias garrulus</i>
74	Eurasian Hoopoe		<i>Upupa epops</i>
75	Monk Parakeet	H	<i>Myiopsitta monachus</i>
76	Great Spotted Woodpecker	H	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>
77	Iberian Green Woodpecker		<i>Picus sharpei</i>
78	Thekla's Lark		<i>Galerida theklae</i>
79	Crested Lark		<i>Galerida cristata</i>
80	Greater Short-toed Lark		<i>Calandrella brachydactyla</i>
81	Calandra Lark		<i>Melanocorypha calandra</i>
82	Sand Martin		<i>Riparia riparia</i>
83	Eurasian Crag Martin		<i>Ptyonoprogne rupestris</i>
84	Barn Swallow		<i>Hirundo rustica</i>
85	European Red-rumped Swallow		<i>Cecropis rufula</i>
86	Western House Martin		<i>Delichon urbicum</i>
87	Tawny Pipit		<i>Anthus campestris</i>
88	White Wagtail		<i>Motacilla alba</i>
89	Grey Wagtail		<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>
90	Yellow Wagtail		<i>Motacilla flava</i>
91	Mistle Thrush		<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>
92	Common Blackbird		<i>Turdus merula</i>
93	Blue Rock Thrush		<i>Monticola solitarius</i>
94	Common Nightingale		<i>Luscinia megarhynchos</i>
95	European Stonechat		<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>
96	Whinchat		<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>

97	Black Wheatear		<i>Oenanthe leucura</i>
98	Pied Flycatcher		<i>Ficedula hypoleuca</i>
99	Zitting Cisticola		<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>
100	Eurasian Blackcap		<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>
101	Sardinian Warbler		<i>Curruca melanocephala</i>
102	Western Orphean Warbler		<i>Curruca hortensis</i>
103	Common Reed Warbler		<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>
104	Great Reed Warbler	H	<i>Acrocephalus arundinaceus</i>
105	Cetti's Warbler		<i>Cettia cetti</i>
106	Savi's Warbler	H	<i>Locustella luscinioides</i>
107	Melodious Warbler	H	<i>Hippolais polyglotta</i>
108	Great Tit		<i>Parus major</i>
109	Blue Tit		<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>
110	Eurasian Penduline Tit		<i>Remiz pendulinus</i>
111	Long-tailed Tit	H	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>
112	Short-toed Treecreeper		<i>Certhia brachydactyla</i>
113	Iberian Grey Shrike		<i>Lanius meridionalis</i>
114	Woodchat Shrike		<i>Lanius senator</i>
115	Iberian Magpie		<i>Cyanopica cooki</i>
116	Eurasian Magpie		<i>Pica pica</i>
117	Western Jackdaw		<i>Coloeus monedula</i>
118	Red-billed Chough		<i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i>
119	Northern Raven		<i>Corvus corax</i>
120	Spotless Starling		<i>Sturnus unicolor</i>
121	Eurasian Golden Oriole		<i>Oriolus oriolus</i>
122	House Sparrow		<i>Passer domesticus</i>
123	Spanish Sparrow		<i>Passer hispaniolensis</i>
124	Eurasian Tree Sparrow		<i>Passer montanus</i>
125	Common Waxbill		<i>Estrilda astrild</i>
126	Common Chaffinch		<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>
127	Common Linnet		<i>Linaria cannabina</i>
128	European Goldfinch		<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>
129	European Greenfinch		<i>Chloris chloris</i>
130	European Serin		<i>Serinus serinus</i>
131	Cirl Bunting		<i>Emberiza cirlus</i>
132	Rock Bunting		<i>Emberiza cia</i>
133	Ortolan Bunting		<i>Emberiza hortulana</i>
134	Corn Bunting		<i>Emberiza calandra</i>

A	OTHER SPECIES	SCIENTIFIC NAME
1	Eurasian Lynx	<i>Lynx lynx</i>
2	Red Fox	<i>Vulpes vulpes</i>
3	Egyptian Mongoose	<i>Herpestes ichneumon</i>
4	European Pond Turtle	<i>Emys orbicularis</i>
5	Montpellier Snake	<i>Malpolon monspessulanus</i>
6	Iberian Scarce Swallowtail	<i>Iphiclides feisthamelii</i>
7	Painted Lady	<i>Vanessa cardui</i>
8	Provençal Fritillary	<i>Melitaea deione</i>
9	Spanish Festoon	<i>Zerynthia rumina</i>