

Andalucia and Extremadura (Spain), January 7-14, 2000

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Itinerary

- 7.1. Finnairs charter flight Helsinki - Malaga, 3300 km
- 8.1. Torremolinos - Algeciras - Tarifa Beach - Cadiz, 303 km incl. one hour's driving in Cadiz
- 9.1. Cadiz - Laguna de Medina - Sanlucar de Barrameda - Salinas de Bonanza - Tarelo - Algaida - Lebrija - Sevilla - El Rocio, 274 km
- 10.1. Coto Donana: El Rocio - Coto del Rey - Muro de la C.H.G. - Cerrado Garrido and back, El Acebuche, 82 km
- 11.1. El Rocio - Matalascañas - Huelva, Marismas del Odiel - Sierra de Aracena - Zafra - Caceres, 437 km
- 12.1. Caceres - Torreorgaz - Monfrague - Castuera, 370 km
- 13.1. Castuera - Puerto Mejoral - La Serena - Belalcazar - Cordoba - Laguna Rincon - Laguna Zonar - Fuente de Piedra, 423 km
- 14.1. Laguna Fuente de Piedra - Laguna Dulce - Laguna Salada - Teba - El Chorro - Malaga, Guadalhorce mouth, 184 km. Night flight Malaga - Helsinki.

General Information

Travel

Flights Helsinki-Malaga-Helsinki, without accommodation, cost 1795 FIM per person at the Finnish travel agency Aurinkomatkat. D-category rent-a-car Opel Astra 1.6 Caravan, 23,139 km on the odometer, 1150 FIM a week. The travel agency reserved and charged for the car beforehand. An official of the Lara rent-a-car company met us at the airport. Good service and no problems with the car. Gasoline price was from 122.9 to 125.9 ESP/liter for "Eurosuper".

Food

A breakfast in a beach cafe cost 230 ESP at Torremolinos. A Pizza 925 in Pizzeria "La Bella Italia", Cadiz. Dinner incl. salad, 300 g beef, dessert, water 2250 in "Restaurant Toruno", El Rocio. Dinner cons. of quail, beef, dessert, water 4265 in restaurant-cafeteria "Fonda San Juan", Caceres. Dinner incl. salad, pork chops, dessert, water 1200 in hostel "Los Naranjos", Castuera. Dinner incl. salad, beef once again (knowing your Spanish might save money – we knew not much more than the word "solomillo"), dessert, water 2635, in pension "La Laguna", Fuente de Piedra, and chips, sausage & eggs and coke 950 in a beach cafe at Torremolinos.

Accommodation

A double room cost 5564 ESP incl. 7% tax (list price 5200) in **hotel "Los Jazmines" at Torremolinos; 8025 (7500) in **hotel "Regio 2" at Cadiz; 8561 (8000) in **hotel "El Toruno" at El Rocio; 4997!!(5000) in *hotel "Los Naranjos" at Caceres; 4815 (4500) hotel "Baron del Pozo" at Castuera; 4000 in **pension "La Laguna" at Fuente de Piedra. The accommodation was well signposted in most towns, but on two occasions the sought-after hotel did not exist any more, anyway. A Lonely Planet guide would have been of use.

Guides

- Garcia, Ernest and Paterson, Andrew (1994): *Where to watch birds in Southern Spain: Andalucia, Extremadura and Gibraltar*. Very good, some sites got worse or information otherwise to be renewed (the mouth of the river Guadalhorce), some road numbers altered since.
- Rose, Laurence (1995): *Where to watch Birds in Spain and Portugal*. Not so detailed, but includes Canary Islands, Madeira and Azores.
- Marcone, Alberto: *Trip Report: Spain December 26, 1996 - January 7, 1997*, found on Urs Geiser's homepage: <http://www.crosswinds.net/~birdtrips/TripReports.html>

Maps

- Michelin (1999): *Tourist and Motoring Atlas, Spain & Portugal, 1:400,000*. Good and practical especially on the road.
- Michelin (1999): map leaves numbers 444 *Central Spain* and 446 *Southern Spain, 1:400,000*. Same as the atlas, but more practical especially for route-planning.
- Ministerio de Fomento (1997): *Parque Nacional de Doñana, 1:50.000*. Very detailed, bought in the shop of the information centre "El Acebuche" in April 1998.

Weather

Being prepared to even rainy and cool weather, we were positively surprised by sunshine during the whole trip. In coastal Andalucia daily max temperature was 15-16°C in the afternoon, about ten degrees lower early in the morning, and exceptionally 0°C at Laguna de Medina in the morning of 9.1. It was cooler in Extremadura, the minimum being -1.5°C at eight o'clock east of Caceres in the morning of 12.1., max of that day was +11.5°C, and on next day in La Serena area max +8.5°C.

Detailed Itinerary

7.1.2000 Friday

Arrived at Malaga from Helsinki after 4 h 10 min charter-flight at 21.30. Clear sky, +8°C. In less than one hour we were in the "Lara" rent-a-car office and got our car. Then drove to the nearby holiday resort Torremolinos and after checking one (full) hotel in the center found plenty of room in the ** hotel "Los Jazmines" at Plaza de Lido/Paseo Maritimo, at Lido Beach. The room was a bit damp, otherwise ok. Telephone: (95)238 50 33.

8.1. Saturday: Torremolinos - Algeciras - Tarifa - Cadiz

No hurry to wake up: dawn began not before 7.45, the red sun rose from the sea at about 8.30! Blackbirds were singing and flocks of gulls flying/following the beach. In about one hour's watching on the beach we saw at sea Black-necked Grebe 4, Gannet 16, Balearic Shearwater 62, Razorbill 5. In the bright and warm morning sunshine lots of Spotless Starlings over the resort, ca. 300 Crag Martins in front of the hotels near a cliff at southern end of the Paseo Maritimo, a flying Blue Rock Thrush and a hunting Peregrine. After our own breakfast we found the Peregrine picking a pigeon for breakfast at a building, decorated with text "Cantena Criminal". The Crag Martins sat on the wall of a hotel, within a reach worth trying to catch a photo.

At 11 o'clock we took the N 340 towards Algeciras and changed on the new motorway (fee) at Marbella – could have done that already at Fuengirola. A Coal Tit was singing along with Serins near the filling station at Mijas junction. We made a short stop near Algeciras at the Punta Secreta road to have a look at Gibraltar

and saw also a Red-legged Partridge. Then a picnic-stop at 14 for an hour at the dirt road turning north to Valle del Santuario, just west of the public watchpoint "El Mirador": 19 Griffon Vultures circling overhead, two Common Buzzards, many Sardinian Warblers. Olli found himself a lifer, a Short-toed Treecreeper, by voice. I had to use my Telinga Pro microphone-Sony Walkman combination even to tell the singing Blackcap... Weather sunny, brisk E-wind, +15,5°C.

There was just some Yellow-legged and *Graellsii*-type Lesser Black-backed Gulls at Tarifa harbour. An hour's walk at Tarifa Beach from the football ground to the lagoon of Rio Vega and Rio Jara and back was more productive: 20 Grey Plovers, 50 Kentish Plovers, 80 Sanderlings, a Thick-knee, 23 Sandwich Terns, a smaller *Sterna*-tern and best of all: eight adult Audouin's Gulls, two of which passed us in flying gull flocks and six were swimming in the lagoon. Comparing a yellowish-green Chiffchaff with a more brownish one did not confirm to us the identification of Iberian Chiffchaff.

The evening watch was done some twenty km northwest at a minor road on the north side of N 340 soon after Tahivilla for twenty minutes until 18.30: 14 + 51 Cranes flying and 229 feeding in the fields, eight White Storks, two Marsh Harriers and a hunting Short-eared Owl.

We drove to Cadiz for the night and found the accommodation well signposted, but despite several rounds to find the remarkably well signposted "Hostal Playa" we could not find it – it did not exist anymore! At Av. Andalucía 79 – the main street – we found the good **hotel "Regio 2": 7500 ESP for a double plus 500 for parking.

9.1. Sunday: Cadiz - Laguna de Medina - Sanlucar de Barrameda - Salinas de Bonanza - Tarelo - Algaida - Lebrija - Sevilla - El Rocio

Up at 6.15 and out at 8. Nice morning views from N 443 over the Cadiz Bay, but no site known to us to stop for birding. The virtually empty A 4 (fee) took us soon to the junction No 5 southeast of Jerez, where we took the A 381 towards Laguna de Medina. The car thermometer did show the outside air temperature to be just 0°C, and the vegetation by roadside reminded us of our own potato field in Ivalo after the first August night-frost. An open cafe by the road was a nice surprise – after a hot morning coffee it was a bit easier to leave the warm car at Laguna de Medina. The rising sun soon cleared visibility over the lake.

We walked the south side path. Plenty of small birds in the bushes: Blackcap 40, Song Thrush 12, Sardinian Warbler 7, Chiffchaffs, Chaffinches, five singing Cetti's Warblers and a silent Zitting Cisticola. Olli got short but good views of a male Penduline Tit. Barn Swallows and Sand Martins, ten of each circled over the water. Two passing Carrion Crows were – as well – actually to remain the only ones of the whole trip! In the lake there were 300 Flamingos and several flocks of waterbirds. A surprisingly big number of 340 White-headed Ducks plus 500 Shovelers, 210 Black-necked Grebes, 200 Coots, 100 Mallards being the biggest totals. Additionally Teal 50, Great Crested Grebe 40, Pochard 35, Gadwall 30, Little Egret 20, Greylag Goose 15, Wigeon 1 male, Red-crested Pochard 1 female. Of waders 50 Avocets chased something edible as a team, and there were some Black-winged Stilts, Black-tailed Godwits, Common Snipes and a Ringed Plover, too. An Osprey passed overhead when we left after three hours watching. In the end of our tour we realised that we perhaps should have put in more effort on Crested Coot...

At 13 o'clock we were at the mouth of River Guadalquivir at Sanlucar de Barrameda and a quarter of hour later watching waders at the riverside past Bonanza: ten Bar-tailed Godwits, five Little Stints, a Common Sandpiper and a Whimbrel were new, and a lot more waders, mostly Grey and Kentish Plovers spread around in the distance: the tide was out.

The gate of Salinas de Bonanza was open, and there was a sign "National Park" without any denies concerning trespassing, so we decided that no permits were necessary any more. Lots of waders in the salt pans: Black-tailed Godwit 500, Avocet 300, Redshank 150, Black-winged Stilt 85, Sanderling 30. There

were two small flocks of Shelduck as well, 25 in all. The best bird here was Slender-billed Gull, two adults swimming in a pool and after a while flying to another pool, out of sight.

In the southwestern corner of the nearby pine forest "La Algaida" is a pond called Tarelo. A track leads west to a hide, immediately from where the main road plunges into the forest. We got good views of a Purple Swamp-hen there; another more distant one was walking on the grassy bank. Other nice birds were 100 Pochards, 20 White-headed Ducks, 15 Black-necked Grebes, seven Tufted Ducks and a Kingfisher.

We continued northwards on the not so very good road, which also followed the River Guadalquivir for a while and saw more waders in the Marisma Adventus area, among other things a mixed flock of 200 Little Stints and 40 Dunlins. Then we turned east to Trebujena and drove past Lebrija - an adult male Lesser Kestrel passed us and landed in a field; by using a telescope Olli found it again - to Las Cabezas.

The fast motorway A 4 took us soon to and past Sevilla, where we continued west on motorway A 49 to Bollullos. The junction No 10 was not yet completed, but from south of the town onwards the new dual carriageway A 483 was finished past Almonte, and we reached El Rocio at dusk at 18.30. A double in the **Hotel "El Toruno" was worth the 8000 per night, as was the beef in the neighbouring restaurant. Falling asleep, voices of Flamingos coming in from behind the windows. Total of species seen in two days 95.

10.1. Monday: Coto Doñana; El Rocio - Coto del Rey - Muro de la C.H.G. - Cerrado Garrido and back, El Acebuche

Waking up because of Flamingo voices. After a coffee in the roadside cafe, birdwatching in the room half an hour from 8.40 viewing to the bay in front of the windows and marisma in the background: Greylag 1500, Coot 1000, Black-tailed Godwit 750, Flamingo 600, Avocet a flock of 400, Teal 300, Little Stint 100, Wigeon 50, Pintail 50 etc. A flock of 11 Spoonbills had also spent the night in the bay. Curlew and Greenshank were new species as well. The best hotel room we have had so far.

Outside the hotel we saw several Black Redstarts, and by having a closer look at the edge of the marisma, a Water Pipit, some Ruff and 150 Common Snipes.

We checked the condition of the track, which leads east from El Rocio, starting at the football pitch. The first few hundred metres after the bridge crossing a canal are reasonably soft sandy. The track is better when entering the forest and follows the northern boundary fence of the park. There is a muddy section - now it was dry - after a couple of kilometres, which can be passed by taking almost any one of the paths leading left. Turn right through the first gate ca. 4 km from El Rocio, and a good track leads to a nearby house named Casa de la Canada Mayor and continues elevated several kilometres to marisma, on Muro de la C.H.G. to the new information centre "Cerrado Garrido". The centre, also called the J. A. Valverde centre, can alternatively be reached driving better roads from El Rocio via Villamanrique de la Condesa. The third alternative route through Villafranco from Sevilla and Puebla del Rio is a slow one (HK drove it in April 1998). Jackdaw and Wood Pigeon were the most visible forest birds, but we saw also a Hoopoe, a Green Woodpecker and about 40 Azure-winged Magpies. Several Red Kites and a pale form Booted Eagle circled overhead. The area is known as a former site for Andalucian Hemipode, too, of which there is no recent information, anyway.

While at the marisma we saw a distant adult Spanish Imperial Eagle circling some time in the east over the Coto del Rey - later we saw one nearer, and finally a third individual passed us calling, directly overhead. Checking the area with the telescope revealed three animal carcasses and 15, 18 and 14 Griffon Vultures at them, respectively. Counting the foraging Greylags was interrupted after 2900 birds because of six Barnacle Geese. And still another three Barnacle among the total of 4000 Greylags, all to the west of Muro de la C.H.G. in an area named Punta de los Palos in the map. We also saw 50+20 Pin-tailed Sandgrouse, 50 Fallow Deer, six Red Deer and an unidentified big mouse.

The most prominent bird at Cerrado Garrido was an adult male Peregrine, and we found flocks of 20 and 100 Lesser Short-toed Larks near the bridge west of the information centre.

After driving back on the same track we visited another information centre, El Acebuche near the Matalascanas road before evening and saw a Southern Grey Shrike plus 35 Little Grebes.

The new SEO (Sociedad Espanola de Ornitologia) information centre near our hotel at the edge of the bay of El Rocio looked nice but was closed every time we checked it. The national park information centre "La Rocina" at the southwestern end of the El Rocio bridge was open till 19. Jose Maria Galan gave us plenty of bird-information there, thank you!

11.1. Tuesday: El Rocio - Matalascanas - Huelva, Marismas de Odiel - Sierra de Aracena - Zafra - Caceres

After another night in "Hotel Toruno" we had our morning sandwiches near the SEO centre at the bay of El Rocio or "Boca del Lobo" as it is on the map. Eight Little Ringed Plovers were new for our trip.

We left El Rocio after 10 o'clock and drove 16 kilometres south to Matalascanas, where we did twenty minutes of seawatch: 40 Common Scoters, 25 Gannets, 15 Razorbills and three Great Skuas. Then we drove the new and fast A 494 / N 442 west to Huelva.

At the mouth of River Odiel, at the first crossing after the bridge we turned from A 497 to the "Central causeway" leading to the lighthouse El Espigon. The information centre "Calatilla" by the road near the salt pans had a bird-log.

The tide was out and there was a big gathering of waders in the lagoons, and Flamingos, Little Egrets and Black-winged Stilts in the salt pans. Common Merganser, Oystercatcher and Turnstone were new birds. Among the roosting 600 Lesser Black-backed and 400 Yellow-legged Gulls we found a flock of one 2nd cal and 49 adult Audouin's Gulls – in a more western site than we had expected.

When leaving Huelva we saw 22 White Storks, and one pair was at nest at San Juan de Puerto. The N 435 leading from Huelva to Extremadura was good enough and had almost no lorries, compared with N 630, which we joined at Zafra. A stop at the Sierra Aracena mountains gave us Nuthatch, and we saw also Grey Wagtail and Woodlark.

In darkening night we drove past Merida and were at Caceres at 19.50. The *hotel "Los Naranjos" was situated near the old town centre and was good enough at 5000 ESP for a double, including the tax. White Storks stood on nests on the Church roof here, too, as they had been at Almendralejo, as well.

12.1. Wednesday: Caceres - Torreorgaz - Monfrague - Castuera

Up at 6.30, out at 7.40, and after coffee still in darkness to the road. The car thermometer indicated -1.5°C frost outside the town. We had chosen the small EX-206 (N/C-520 in the Garcia & Paterson guide) of the many possible roads leading to various bustard areas and were at Torreorgaz village at 8.15. Opposite the Bar Extremadura we found the entrance of a track, extending some kilometres northwards, but no longer in excellent condition. The sun rose at 8.45 and, perhaps partly owing the bad condition of the track, we soon found a flock of 34 Great Bustards in the field near the track.

A male Hen Harrier passed us, and we saw a total of 27 Red Kites. Soon we found more small groups of Great Bustards: 2+4+8+12 standing in the fields. There were tens of Golden Plovers and Calandra Larks and 1+13+5+4+3 Black-bellied Sandgrouse. After having found a Group of 51 Little Bustards we enjoyed our breakfast in their vicinity. Two Little Owls stood on a nearby stone pile. The weather was sunny and calm. The temperature rose to +11.5°C.

We left the area choosing a track leading to Sierra de Fuentes village and saw our first Collared Dove since Costa del Sol. After a short visit to Caceres to see the Plaza Mayor in daylight we continued on CC-912 towards Monfrague.

A stop in the "dehesa"-olivetree forest north of Monroy produced a male Spanish Sparrow and the identification of two Thekla Larks among Serins, Chaffinches and Woodlarks. A black Monk Vulture circled overhead together with a few Griffons, and soon we saw two more. Ca. 1000 Wood Pigeons were counted before Torrejon el Rubio.

The Penafalcon cliff in Monfrague was impressive with 70 more Griffons and still more of them at the River Tietar, 203 being our total for the area. The fourth Monk Vulture circled over Mirador de la Bascula. A Great Spotted Woodpecker, a Jay and four Rock Buntings at Tajadillo were new for the trip. Nice area as a whole, but instead of growing our forest bird species tally we decided to draw us nearer to the next good bustard area before the night and left by five o'clock via CC-911 to EX-108. A Cirl Bunting sat in a roadside bush near La Bazagona.

The motorway NV E 90 was fast to drive from Navalморal to Miajadas. In darkness we passed Don Benito, had a closer look at Villanueva de la Serena, and were in Castuera at the edge of Serena plains by eight. The hostel "Los Naranjos", recommended in Garcia & Paterson was to our surprise fully booked so we had to turn back to the hotel "Baron del Pozo", which is situated a couple of kilometres west of the town, at Carretera Valle de la Serena - Andujar, Km 33.3. A double cost 4500 ESP. We had a good but inexpensive – 1200 ESP each – supper back at "Los Naranjos".

13.1. Thursday: Castuera - "Paso de Grullas" - La Serena - Cabeza del Buey - Belalcazar - Cordoba - Laguna Rincon - Laguna Zonar - Puente Genil - Estepa - Fuente de Piedra

One more clear and calm morning, temperature +4.5°C at 7.45. Our first stop was the Crane watchpoint "Paso de Grullas" near Puerto Mejoral, some 9 km east of Castuera along EX 104. Here the temperature was +1°C and the dehesa south of the road lay under thick mist. That did not keep the Cranes out of their daily feeding grounds, and 12 flocks coming from their roost, including a total of 1172 birds, passed us in half an hour starting at 8.35!

After buying the breakfast bread at Cabeza del Buey we explored sides of the road which starts a couple of km west of the town towards Embalse de la Serena and a track leading eastwards from a point 16 km north of the beginning. At the entrance there was among others a sign marked "La Calderuela". Here the bustards were a lot trickier to find than near Caceres the previous morning. Were they all in a big flock, hiding somewhere? After a few km we tried our former method of standing outside the car, having breakfast. That did work to some extent: a group of four Great Bustards and a loose group of four Little Bustards in the greenest pastures. Calandra Larks were numerous here, many of them singing. So were the Sandgrouse: voice+50+4 of Black-bellied and 90+7+2+24 Pin-tailed. A Merlin and several Red Kites. The local farm people passed us smiling and raising hands. Later at a nearby pond another car stopped to "check" us, but presenting our binoculars gave the same result.

We did not want to try the tracks west of the Embalse de la Serena road, and the EX 103 from Embalse del Zujar back to Castuera looked a lot less promising. A short visit back near the only bustards of the morning did not bring anything new, so we decided to leave for Andalucia.

Formally that was actually not very complicated: after a few km south of Cabeza del Buey along A 420 we crossed the administrative border at Rio Zujar in a hilly landscape. North of Belalcazar Olli had a look in the pine forest immediately southeast of the A 420 and CO 451 junction and found six Firecrests and three Dartford Warblers.

The landscape altered completely at Cordoba, which we passed after four o'clock p.m., and we saw two enormous flocks of Calandra Larks, ca. 2500 in all, over the green fields of Guadalquivir valley, near the River Guadajoz. An hour later we were at Laguna Rincon, south of Aguilar. Less surprisingly 400 Mallards, some Coots, Pochards, Little Grebes, Moorhen, a Black-necked Grebe and a Kingfisher. The nearby Laguna de Zonar held among others six Great Crested Grebes, a Marsh Harrier and, settling down to roost, flocks of 190 Cattle Egret and 800 Jackdaws. HK spent a nostalgic moment, having seen his first White-headed Ducks here on the previous visit 25 years ago...

A quick pop in Puente-Genil and then after dark another in Estepa did not reveal any suitable lodging. In Estepa a non-existing hostel was still very well signposted, again, and the other one was full. At Fuente de Piedra we got a double room for ESP 4000 in **pension "La Laguna", which had a convenient location thinking of the next morning, and it served a good dinner.

14.1. Friday: Laguna de Fuente de Piedra - Laguna Dulce - Laguna Salada - Sierra de Teba - El Chorro - mouth of River Guadalhorce - Malaga airport

The morning watch of our last day for this trip begun at the information centre lookout point of Laguna de Fuente de Piedra at 8.20. Some 3500 Lesser Black-backed Gulls roosting on the nearest parts of the shore, 360 more or less distant Flamingos, and in front of us 150 Dunlins and 300 Little Stints. It had been raining during the night, and we lived some exciting moments trying to avoid getting seriously stuck on a surprisingly muddy and slippery track leading from the Sierra de Yeguas road to the lake boundary fence. What luck that it had not been raining during our visit to the Caceres fields!

A short drive on A 360 and then A 362 took us to Laguna Dulce, east of Campillos by 9.40: 250 Flamingos, 40 Avocets, ducks, Dunlins and Black-tailed Godwits. Finding the smaller Laguna Salada southeast of Campillos was not that easy, the pond not being visible from the road. Perhaps it can be viewed from the new road, now still under construction, which will pass Campillos on the southeast. Walking a muddy track across the field was the only method to approach this pond, we found. A young Flamingo was the only bird we saw there - wintering Crested Coot has been seen there not so many years ago. The third lake of this area that we checked, the Laguna de Capacete, was dry.

Now it was time to have a look at the mountains. Garcia & Paterson included several sites en route to Malaga. We first ascended the MA 467 to the nearby Teba village. After stopping for a while because of a flock of 100 Red-billed Chough at the sierra immediately southeast of the village, we stopped again about 5 km east of the village, at the bridge of Rio La Venta because of circling Bonelli's Eagles.

Soon there were four Bonelli's Eagles over the sierra visible at the same time, two of them presenting shortly display flight action, too. At the eastern end of the bridge there is a track on the left hand. We drove it for a hundred metres and found a pair of Black Wheatear and a male Blue Rock Thrush. Crag Martins flew around and were the only birds we found on a short visit in the gorge. A Bonelli's Eagle landed on a rock when we left at 12.50.

The recently straightened A 357 led us about ten km south over the reservoir "Embalse del Guadalteba-Guadalhorce". At Ardales we turned east on the MA 444 and were soon in the montane pine forests of El Chorro area. No small birds this time, but 16 Griffon Vultures – most of them seen from the cafe terrace at Garganta del Chorro – and two Bonelli's Eagles circling overhead.

We drove back to Ardales and from there the good A 357 down to Malaga by four p.m. We still had plenty of time before the term of the car, to have a look at the mouth of the River Guadalhorce, near the airport. To our disappointment this "paraje natural" had been altered into flood walls and gravel fields. Nevertheless there was an interesting gathering of seabirds in front of the river mouth: 1000 Lesser Black-backs, 75 Balearic Shearwaters, 21 Gannets, a Great Skua and a Little Gull. An adult *flava* Yellow Wagtail with a 2nd cal one among the pipits of the gravel field was a kind of a surprise. Still more surprising were the two

parrots which passed us from north to south over the river at 17.25. A flock of eight more flying the same route five minutes later confirmed the identification as Monk Parakeet, *Myiopsitta monachus*. In Garcia & Paterson we read that a feral population (minimum 8-10 pairs) breeds at the Parador de Golf between Malaga and Torremolinos. The Parador was straight over the river – so not such a big surprise any more!

The sun went down. We visited a Torremolinos beach cafe and, after so many solomillos, enjoyed chips, sausage & eggs for 950 ESP each. We returned the car after 2083 km at the Lara airport office at eight o'clock and left Malaga for Finland at 22.50.

Our species total for seven days was 147, not counting the parrot – should we?

Bird List

	8.1.	9.1.	10.1.	11.1.	12.1.	13.1.	14.1.	Total
Little Grebe <i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	-	9	41	3	-	15	-	68
Great Crested Grebe <i>Podiceps cristatus</i>	-	40	-	-	-	6	-	46
Black-necked Grebe <i>P. nigricollis</i>	4	225	-	4	-	2	4	239
Balearic Shearwater <i>Puffinus mauretanicus</i>	62	-	-	-	-	-	65	127
Northern Gannet <i>Morus bassanus</i>	16	-	-	25	-	-	21	62
Great Cormorant <i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	40	50	-	130	7	-	65	292
Cattle Egret <i>Bubulcus ibis</i>	20	30	10	50	2	194	2	308
Little Egret <i>Egretta garzetta</i>	10	70	20	35	-	-	-	135
Grey Heron <i>Ardea cinerea</i>	7	20	10	8	15	2	4	66
White Stork <i>Ciconia ciconia</i>	8	1	4	40	96	21	-	170
Eurasian Spoonbill <i>Platalea leucorodia</i>	-	-	11	-	-	-	-	11
Greater Flamingo <i>Phoenicopterus ruber</i>	-	350	1300	1100	-	-	360	3110
Greylag Goose <i>Anser anser</i>	-	15	7000	200	-	-	-	7215
Barnacle Goose <i>Branta leucopsis</i>	-	-	9	-	-	-	-	9
Common Shelduck <i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	-	25	-	-	-	-	-	25
Eurasian Wigeon <i>Anas penelope</i>	-	1	50	30	6	-	1	88
Gadwall <i>A. strepera</i>	-	30	-	-	-	-	-	30
Common Teal <i>A. crecca</i>	-	50	300	100	-	10	10	470
Mallard <i>A. platyrhynchos</i>	-	115	100	70	15	520	40	860
Pintail <i>A. acuta</i>	-	-	50	40	-	-	1	91
Northern Shoveler <i>A. clypeata</i>	-	500	300	300	-	2	100	1302
Red-crested Pochard <i>Netta rufina</i>	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Common Pochard <i>Aythya ferina</i>	-	135	30	-	-	10	-	175
Tufted Duck <i>A. fuligula</i>	-	7	-	-	-	-	-	7
Common Scoter <i>Melanitta nigra</i>	-	-	-	40	-	-	-	40
Red-breasted Merganser <i>Mergus serrator</i>	-	-	-	7	-	-	-	7
White-headed Duck <i>Oxyura leucocephala</i>	-	360	-	-	-	-	-	360
Red Kite <i>Milvus milvus</i>	-	-	7	1	37	11	-	56
Griffon Vulture <i>Gyps fulvus</i>	19	-	50	-	203	7	23	302
Monk Vulture <i>Aegypius monachus</i>	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	4
Marsh Harrier <i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	2	1	3	7	1	1	-	15
Hen Harrier <i>C. cyaneus</i>	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1

Common Buzzard <i>Buteo buteo</i>	4	5	2	2	6	1	1	21
Spanish Imperial Eagle <i>Aquila adalberti</i>	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	3
Booted Eagle <i>Hieraaetus pennatus</i>	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Bonelli's Eagle <i>H. fasciatus</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	7
Osprey <i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Lesser Kestrel <i>Falco naumanni</i>	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Common Kestrel <i>F. tinnunculus</i>	15	8	2	5	3	3	3	39
Merlin <i>F. columbarius</i>	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	2
Peregrine Falcon <i>F. peregrinus</i>	2	-	1	-	-	-	-	3
Red-legged Partridge <i>Alectoris rufa</i>	1	8	2	-	-	-	4	15
Moorhen <i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	1	35	3	1	-	15	80	135
Purple Swamp-hen <i>Porphyrio porphyrio</i>	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	2
Common Coot <i>Fulica atra</i>	-	230	1400	850	-	55	32	2567
Common Crane <i>Grus grus</i>	294	-	-	-	40	1204	-	1538
Little Bustard <i>Tetrax tetrax</i>	-	-	-	-	51	4	-	55
Great Bustard <i>Otis tarda</i>	-	-	-	-	60	4	-	64
Oystercatcher <i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	-	-	-	-	8	-	-	8
Black-winged Stilt <i>Himantopus himantopus</i>	-	91	30	262	-	-	3	386
Avocet <i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>	-	350	410	351	-	-	40	1151
Stone Curlew <i>Burhinus oediconemus</i>	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Little Ringed Plover <i>Charadrius dubius</i>	-	-	-	8	-	-	-	8
Great Ringed Plover <i>Ch. hiaticula</i>	-	4	1	10	-	-	-	15
Kentish Plover <i>Ch. alexandrinus</i>	50	83	-	5	-	-	-	138
European Golden Plover <i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>	-	-	-	-	56	75	-	131
Grey Plover <i>P. squatarola</i>	20	5	1	100	-	-	-	126
Northern Lapwing <i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	61	5	250	150	350	350	30	1196
Sanderling <i>Calidris alba</i>	80	30	-	31	-	-	38	179
Little Stint <i>C. minuta</i>	-	205	100	40	-	-	300	645
Dunlin <i>C. alpina</i>	53	50	500	300	-	-	150	1053
Ruff <i>Philomachus pugnax</i>	-	-	18	1	-	-	-	19
Common Snipe <i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	-	5	150	8	8	-	-	171
Black-tailed Godwit <i>Limosa limosa</i>	-	503	750	225	-	-	30	1508
Bar-tailed Godwit <i>L. lapponica</i>	-	10	-	-	-	-	-	10
Whimbrel <i>Numenius phaeopus</i>	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Eurasian Curlew <i>N. arquata</i>	-	-	2	15	-	-	-	17
Common Redshank <i>T. totanus</i>	-	152	-	220	-	1	-	373
Greenshank <i>T. nebularia</i>	-	-	2	7	1	-	-	10
Green Sandpiper <i>T. ochropus</i>	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Common Sandpiper <i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	-	2	1	-	-	-	-	3
Turnstone <i>Arenaria interpres</i>	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	4
Great Skua <i>Catharacta skua</i>	-	-	-	3	-	-	1	4
Little Gull <i>Larus minutus</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Black-headed Gull <i>L. ridibundus</i>	70	350	300	700	30	500	400	2350
Slender-billed Gull <i>L. genei</i>	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	2
Audouin's Gull <i>L. audouinii</i>	8	-	-	49	-	-	-	57
Lesser Black-backed Gull <i>L. fuscus</i>	1100	5	12	650	2	+	4500	6269

Yellow-legged Gull <i>L. michahellis</i>	250	40	5	450	-	+	5	750
Sandwich Tern <i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>	25	1	-	6	-	-	1	33
Common/Arctic Tern <i>S. hirundo/paradisaea</i>	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Razorbill <i>Alca torda</i>	5	-	-	15	-	-	-	20
Black-bellied Sandgrouse <i>Pterocles orientalis</i>	-	-	-	-	26	55	-	81
Pin-tailed Sandgrouse <i>Pt. alchata</i>	-	-	70	-	-	123	-	193
Feral Pigeon/Rock Dove <i>Columba livia</i>	100	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Wood Pigeon <i>C. palumbus</i>	-	-	100	-	1000	-	-	1100
Collared Dove <i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	1	-	-	-	1	-	12	14
Little Owl <i>Athene noctua</i>	-	-	-	-	3	2	-	5
Long-eared Owl <i>Asio flammeus</i>	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Common Kingfisher <i>Alcedo atthis</i>	-	2	1	1	1	2	-	7
Hoopoe <i>Upupa epops</i>	-	1	2	4	3	-	-	10
Green Woodpecker <i>Picus viridis</i>	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Great Spotted Woodpecker <i>Dendrocopos major</i>	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Calandra Lark <i>Melanocorypha calandra</i>	-	-	-	-	100	2531	-	2631
Lesser Short-toed Lark <i>Calandrella rufescens</i>	-	-	120	-	-	-	-	120
Crested Lark <i>Galerida cristata</i>	3	10	20	20sp	20,80sp	150sp	40sp	53+
Thekla Lark <i>G. theklae</i>	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	2
Wood Lark <i>Lullula arborea</i>	-	-	-	1	4	-	-	5
Sky Lark <i>Alauda arvensis</i>	20	30	5	3	400	700	-	1158
Sand Martin <i>Riparia riparia</i>	-	10	-	-	-	-	-	10
Crag Martin <i>Ptyonoprogne rupestris</i>	300	1	-	10	21	-	90	422
Barn Swallow <i>Hirundo rustica</i>	-	11	-	-	-	-	-	11
Meadow Pipit <i>Anthus pratensis</i>	17	10	10	10	100	100	2	249
Water Pipit <i>A. spinoletta</i>	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Yellow Wagtail <i>Motacilla flava</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2
Grey Wagtail <i>M. cinerea</i>	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	2
Pied Wagtail <i>M. alba</i>	8	30	10	5	15	45	100	213
Robin <i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	3	20	15	15	25	5	10	93
Black Redstart <i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>	-	-	6	4	4	4	15	33
Common Stonechat <i>Saxicola torquata</i>	7	20	15	15	15	20	10	102
Black Wheatear <i>Oenanthe leucura</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2
Blue Rock Thrush <i>Monticola solitarius</i>	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	2
Blackbird <i>Turdus merula</i>	8	-	5	5	15	2	1	36
Song Thrush <i>T. philomelos</i>	-	12	5	2	30	2	-	51
Cetti's Warbler <i>Cettia cetti</i>	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	5
Zitting Cisticola <i>Cisticola juncidis</i>	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	3
Dartford Warbler <i>Sylvia undata</i>	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	3
Sardinian Warbler <i>S. melanocephala</i>	10	7	7	1	3	1	3	32
Blackcap <i>S. atricapilla</i>	1	42	1	-	2	4	3	53
Chiffchaff <i>Phylloscopus collybita/brehmii</i>	2	40	10	15	10	8	10	95
Firecrest <i>Regulus ignicapillus</i>	-	-	-	-	-	6	-	6
Coal Tit <i>Parus ater</i>	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Blue Tit <i>P. caeruleus</i>	-	-	-	2	1	-	-	3
Great Tit <i>P. major</i>	2	1	1	2	2	2	-	10

European Nuthatch <i>Sitta europaea</i>	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	2
Short-toed Treecreeper <i>Certhia brachydactyla</i>	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Penduline Tit <i>Remiz pendulinus</i>	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Southern Grey Shrike <i>Lanius meridionalis</i>	-	-	1	10	12	9	6	38
Eurasian Jay <i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	2
Azure-winged Magpie <i>Cyanopica cyanus</i>	-	-	49	1	52	12	-	114
Magpie <i>Pica pica</i>	-	-	25	10	6	10	-	51
Red-billed Chough <i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	100
Eurasian Jackdaw <i>Corvus monedula</i>	100	-	300	-	-	850	2	1252
Carrion Crow <i>C. corone</i>	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	2
Common Raven <i>C. corax</i>	-	-	32	2	2	15	-	51
Spotless Starling <i>Sturnus unicolor</i>	17/35sp	-	10/15	30/200	50/100	50/1300	50/100	207
House Sparrow <i>Passer domesticus</i>	100	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Spanish Sparrow <i>P. hispaniolensis</i>	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Common Chaffinch <i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	2	3	6	1	100	5	5	122
European Serin <i>Serinus serinus</i>	16	2	10	-	15	5	1	49
Greenfinch <i>Carduelis chloris</i>	1	-	3	-	5	-	-	9
Goldfinch <i>C. carduelis</i>	30	100	200	30	10	30	5	405
Linnet <i>C. cannabina</i>	45	2	-	3	15	20	15	100
Cirl Bunting <i>Emberiza cirlus</i>	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Rock Bunting <i>E. cia</i>	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	4
Reed Bunting <i>E. schoeniclus</i>	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	2
Corn Bunting <i>Miliaria calandra</i>	7	4	-	5	25	150	20	211
Monk Parakeet <i>Myiopsitta monachus</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	10