

100+ Birds Malaga Challenge (2016.06.17)
by BIRDAYTRIP
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I got exactly 100 species this month!

Believe it or not, it was 11°C at Montes de Malaga when I got there at 5:30 so, wearing shorts and a light polartec made feel a bit cold while waiting for my friends to wake up... There were not many night singers today, just several Scops Owls scattered around the woods. The only special observation was a Peregrine that flew from north to south over the ridge with the first lights of the day.

As usual, El Torcal was a great source of both typical mountain birds like Rock Sparrow, Blue Rock Thrush, Rock and Cirl Buntings and Thekla Lark and also breeding small passerines like Orphean Warbler, Subalpine, Melodious and Bonelli's Warblers and Black-eared Wheatears. Have you ever been surrounded by a clutch of Wrens? It's funny to have so many little shys calling around you!

After breakfast I headed to the Laguna de Fuente de Piedra. It is nice to compare the similar songs of Reed and Great Reed Warblers, the latter resembling the calls of the frogs. I found the surprise of the day at the Laguneto: a Marbled Duck! There was also a late unexpected Whiskered Tern flying around.

My tour around the farmlands was not as productive as I expected. I was not my friends fault: maybe I was too confident of the length of the day in June that I spent too much time looking for the Azure-winged Magpie out of the regular route, or took too much time taking pictures at El Torcal, who knows, that I got to the farmlands when it was too hot for life to show up. So, after a short lunch break under an olive tree that gave me a nice couple of Booted Eagles, an Iberian Grey Shrike, and some Alpine Swifts, I found myself well behind my target with almost 20 species for the 100 target.

I still had El Chorro for some mountain birds I missed at El Torcal, and decided to go direct to the mouth of the Guadalhorce after that.

It was good at El Chorro: Griffon Vulture (surprisingly absent at El Torcal!), Egyptian Vulture!, Bonelli's Eagle, Crag Martin and Black Wheatear. Not bad, I just missed two friends... Next time!

Once at the Guadalhorce, I headed straight to the Rio Viejo for sea birds. I was 11 birds short! First Yellow-legged Gulls flying to the sea, Little Egret at La Casilla, a few Monk Parakeets flying around, Little Ringed Plovers from the Rio Viejo hide with two unexpected Spoonbills. Still 6 species to record when I arrived to the Rio Viejo near the sea: Slender-billed Gull, Kentish Plover and Sandwich Tern (Gull-billed Terns were already on the list from Fuente de Piedra). What was that lying on the little island? Oh my God, I am not sure! Then, good, three unexpected Redshanks!

I went to have a look at the east branch of the river in search for more gulls. I just found a young bird in a terrible light. It could be... but I am not sure! I was determined for my last resource: a last call to Zapata. When going back near the Rio Viejo again, another unexpected: a Greenshank! Only one to go! And then I found what I had been looking at all the time there: a lonely Pallid Swift coming from the city... 100!

It was 20:30 and still time enough for a call to Zapata in search for the “+”. But it is Euro2016 time and Spain plays tonight...

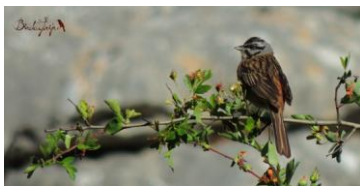
Click here for the complete list of birds: <http://www.birdaytrip.es/blog/item/572-100-birds-costa-del-sol-bird-watching-challenge-malaga-andalucia-southern-spain-2016-06-17>



Melodious Warbler (*Hippolais polyglotta*)



Cirl Bunting (*Emberiza cirius*)



Rock Bunting (*Emberiza cia*)



Thekla Lark (*Galerida theklae*)



Subalpine Warbler (*Sylvia cantillans*)



Sardinian Warbler (*Sylvia melanocephala*)



Black-eared Wheatear (*Oenanthe hispanica*)



Marbled Duck (*Marmaronetta angustirostris*)



Bee-eater (*Merops apiaster*)



Booted Eagle (*Aquila pennata*)



Griffon Vulture (*Gyps fulvus*)



Woodchat Shrike (*Lanius senator*)



Bonelli's Eagle (*Aquila fasciata*)



Black Wheatear (*Oenanthe leucura*)



Slender-billed Gull (*Chroicocephalus genei*)



Spoonbills (*Platalea leucorodia*)