

100+ Birds Malaga Bird Watching Tour (2016.12.21)
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A challenge in the shortest day of the year...

Click here for the complete list of birds: <http://www.birdaytrip.es/blog/item/624-100-birds-malaga-bird-watching-tour-december-costa-del-sol-andalucia-southern-spain>

I was very glad that the Tawny Owl welcomed me to Montes de Malaga with a very sweet hooting after a few months missing. Temperature was 7°C.

The woods were very quiet and looking very nice after the rains. The streams are flowing again after too many months. The novelty today was the arrival of many Siskins.

A northwest breeze was blowing at the Mouth of the Guadalhorce making the observation of small birds very difficult. Anyway, we had very good views of Booted Eagle, Black-necked Grebe, Kentish Plover and White-headed Duck.

Bluethroat, Common Waxbill, Hoopoe, Avocet, Greenshank and Green Sandpiper soon showed up at Zapata, where the landscape is very different since the last week floods.

The Valley of the Guadalhorce gave us Great Egret and Water Pipit.

Little birds were very quiet around El Chorro in late afternoon. We could spot lots of Griffon Vultures and the Bonelli's Eagle in the cliffs but only the Dartford Warbler performed a nice show for us.

The Cranes, Little Bustards, Iberian Grey Shrike and a gorgeous Black-winged Kite showed up in the farmlands. There are more Flamingos in the lake but news about the optimal level of the Laguneto have not yet reached other parts of Andalusia...

In the end I got only 83 species. Everything counts. December will not always provide a quiet shiny day for bird watching, surprises not always show up and the short days make you keep moving all the time making it impossible to sit and wait for some birds to pop up.

On the other hand, reducing the search of little mountain birds to a tangential short call to El Chorro in late afternoon can have been a mistake and we should have had a look to El Torcal before the walk at the mouth of the river. January will still be a difficult challenge before migrants start coming but we will try to make it work that way.



Hoopoe (*Upupa epops*)



Greater Flamingo (*Phoenicopterus roseus*)



Black-necked Grebes (*Podiceps nigricollis*)



Kentish Plovers (*Charadrius alexandrinus*)



Kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*)



Shovelers (*Anas clypeata*) and White-headed Ducks (*Oxyura leucocephala*)



Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*)



Avocet (*Recurvirostra avosetta*)



Greenshank (*Tringa nebularia*)



Water Pipit (*Anthus spinoletta*)



Dartford Warbler (*Sylvia undata*)



Little Bustards (*Tetrax tetrax*)



Black-winged Kite (*Elanus caeruleus*)



White Wagtail (*Motacilla alba*)



lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*)



Little Owl (*Athene noctua*)



Laguneto