



Honeyguide

WILDLIFE HOLIDAYS

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Tarifa & Gibraltar 9 – 16 March 2015

Holiday participants

John and Jan Croft
Stephen and Helen Burrell
Julia Maynard
Suzanne Hunter
Lesley Scott

Leaders

Frank Vargas and Chris Durdin

Our base was Huerta Grande www.huertagrande.com
El Grupo Ornitológico del Estrecho (GOES) www.grupoornitologicodelestrecho.org

Report by Chris Durdin

All photos in this report were taken during the holiday week,
those initialled JC by John Croft, the rest by Chris Durdin.

Cover: top – Lusitanian sundew *Drosophyllum lusitanicum*; and northern bald ibis;
middle – monarch on bougainvillea in Gibraltar's botanic gardens; Barbary macaque; and Barbary nut iris;
bottom – Caspian tern and Audouin's gulls on Playa de los Lances (JC).



Left: the group has a break in Casemates Square, Gibraltar.
Above: a Sardinian warbler ringed by GOES (JC).

As with all Honeyguide holidays, part of the price was put towards a conservation project, in this case for El Grupo Ornitológico del Estrecho (GOES – The Ornithological Group of the Strait), who we met at one of their regular ringing places on 14 March.

The conservation contribution of £40 per person was supplemented by gift aid from those eligible, rounded up to a donation of 500€ / £420 given to GOES. This is our fifth donation to GOES, the five donations totalling 2848€. The total for conservation contributions from all Honeyguide holidays since 1991 to March 2015 is £98,200.

Daily diary

Monday 9 March – Gibraltar to Huerta Grande

The easyJet flight circled round Gibraltar and landed smoothly, facing east. We were in the process of being instructed to take a bus to the terminal “For your safety” when suddenly contrary advice led to a change: “You’re walking.” That was the practical option given the short distance; we were soon collecting bags and walking to the border. It’s one of those strange things about travel: it’s a lot shorter to walk to another country – from Gibraltar into Spain – than it is to get to the departure gate at Gatwick North Terminal. Katrin, our host, was there across the road in La Línea with the red Huerta Grande minibus, and it wasn’t a great problem to get seven of us and suitcases in and away. Katrin remarked on the Bermuda buttercups – she knew the script about being invasive and from South Africa – but from her perspective it was more that she linked them coming into bloom with Honeyguide’s arrival. The positives of warm sunshine and the Mediterranean trees and shrubs somehow outweighed the urban sprawl of Algeciras, and half an hour and a few white storks later we were in Pelayo and at Huerta Grande. Julia, Lesley and Suzanne were settled into the Commandant’s House and the rest of us in the Spy’s House, though the process was nicely interrupted by a monarch butterfly outside the former. As Helen had set her heart on seeing a monarch, that was a great starting bonus. Half an hour later we gathered and sat down to a lovely lunch.

The afternoon excursion was a gentle stroll around Huerta Grande. Several monarchs were with us around various sunny spots and southern speckled woods appeared in both sun and shade. We admired the deep brown flowers of the rather local birthwort *Aristolochia baetica* on a fence-line. Looking up from the mosaic relief of the Strait of Gibraltar there were distant views of buzzard, sparrowhawk and short-toed eagle with the many griffon vultures. A wall lizard scuttled along a wooden walkway, from where we could see a cattle egret with some black pigs. Three blackcaps fed on hawthorn berries and we had good views of a firecrest. Julia was alert to crested tits in the pines round the log cabins where I found a last-lingering bloom of Iberian friar’s cowl *Arisarum simorhinum*. Continuing past the climbing wall, a strange song was Iberian chiffchaff and there were brief bursts of short-toed tree creeper song, too.

Frank joined us in the late afternoon and we fetched the minibus from Algeciras. The group gathered fairly early for dinner, in view of the early start, did a quick run through of the plant checklist and then added two more species after a short walk up the entrance lane to see one-flowered squill and haresfoot fern. Stripeless tree frogs were calling as we left the centre and headed back to our rooms for an early night.

Tuesday 10 March – La Janda and sea trip from Algeciras

The Iberian chiffchaff was singing again this morning, before and after breakfast, and again when we returned in the early evening. It continued all week.

We drove west, past countless wind turbines of an early design and banks of lentisc and dwarf fan palm, turning off the road above the remnant wetland of La Janda. Immediately there were corn buntings, stonechats and fan-tailed warblers in the farmland, and a short-toed eagle flew in and landed on a pylon. A birdwatcher from the Isles of Scilly who stopped to have a word with us was the first to see a distant black-shouldered kite that at first flew out of view but soon settled on a bare branch on a distant tree, at times accompanied by two spotless starlings that demonstrated what a small raptor this is. The scope also came into service to look at paperwhite narcissi in the field and Lesley noticed a red pheasant’s eye, though we couldn’t get close to either plant.

Walking down the road we paused to admire a squirting cucumber in flower, on which were the distinctive orange gourd ladybirds that specialise on this plant. The first new butterfly was a green-striped white that settled on a charlock, but I missed the second: a Spanish festoon enjoyed by many in the group as I retrieved the minibus. Along the way some saw a Kentish plover on a muddy scrape and a green sandpiper flew away from a ditch. Down at the bottom of the hill a black stork soared over us for several minutes and we admired paper wasps, from a discreet distance, building ‘nests’ under a metal traffic barrier.

Moving on towards Barbate we turned, crossed a bridge and paused by some small cliffs alongside a road. Here we were lucky enough to enjoy great views of four northern bald ibises. These are now self-supporting pairs from the major reintroduction project nearby, including two looking after a nest in this surprisingly disturbed location. Looking down, a butterfly with ‘tails’ caught our eye and Helen managed a clear photo that clinched the ID as the introduced species geranium bronze. Farther along the road there were more bald ibises on another section of low cliff, and twice we saw groups of ibises high in the sky as we drove. They seem to be getting well re-established here.

Lunch was on the edge of an industrial estate, but with a view over Barbate estuary and a mix of sun and shade and places to sit. A retama – a white broom – was in superbly dense flower nearby (see photo on page 8) and apple-of-Sodom plants were an interesting curiosity on open ground.

In the meantime, Frank was laying out the picnic prepared by his friends – a kind of Spanish *meze*, as it had a Greek twist with ideas Frank has picked up from living in Greece.

A look at the Barbate estuary was the plan, but news of places on a trip to go to watch cetaceans offshore prompted a change. We headed east again, stopping at Huerta Grande to pick up an extra layer of clothing, then onto Algeciras port, arriving in very good time for the planned four o'clock departure. Once the rest of those coming on board were there – a Swedish group, most wearing identical baseball caps – the Turmares boat moved into Algeciras Bay.



All at sea: Gibraltar from the Strait (JC); gannet (JC); common dolphin.

It's a great way to see Gibraltar and you couldn't have wished for a warmer or calmer March day. Wildlife-wise, though, it was initially quiet: just yellow-legged and black-headed gulls, then a close view of a gannet. We were well into the Strait, towards Ceuta in North Africa, when the first dolphins appeared. A striped dolphin breached and flopped three times. John and Frank saw a distant shearwater, perhaps Cory's. Then we encountered some common dolphins: far from brilliant views but one showed a dorsal fin and some of its back on the right hand side of the boat. There was no sign of the orcas recently sighted in this part of the sea. The boat headed back to port, though slowed at one point while one of the crew descended into the engine compartment with a cylinder of string: as Frank said, if there was a problem and it could be fixed with string, then it couldn't be a serious problem. There were more fine views of Gibraltar and time to engage at least some of the Swedish group in conversation.

Wednesday 11 March – Los Alcornocales Natural Park, Palmones estuary and Punta Carnero

A short-toed eagle was there to welcome us at Valdeinfierno in Los Alcornocales Natural Park, a crag martin flew past and then a steady trickle of griffon vultures, gaining height on an early thermal. Perhaps better still were two subalpine warblers. But it was botanical specialities that were the main attraction, mostly close to the small car park. The star species proved easy to find, at least once you had your eye in for them: many plants of *Drosophyllum*, the Lusitanian sundew, were in a patch of bare ground in very good numbers, albeit the distinctive leaves rather than flowers. A splash of brilliant blue was the unusual milkwort *Polygala microphyllum* and there were lots of the yellow rockrose *Halimium atriplicifolium*. Three types of yellow gorse or broom types included a winged broom, later pinned down as *Genista tridentata*. By the fence opposite the car park was patch of the tiny valerian *Fedia*, the deep red flowers of asparagus pea and a magnificent specimen of the figwort *Scrophularia sambucifolia* by the same barbed wire fence as it was for last year's group. The milkwort, broom and figwort aren't in the Mediterranean flowers book, an illustration of the sometimes tricky botany in this corner of coastal Spain.



From the left: Small-leaved milkwort *Polygala microphyllum*; *Halimium atriplicifolium*; asparagus pea; and figwort *Scrophularia sambucifolia*.

It was a distinctly hot morning and layers of clothing were left in the minibus before we walked along the track. In many ways we'd seen the best of the plants already but nonetheless several new ones were added, including strawberry tree, white-flowered tree heather (in addition to the pink-flowered Iberian heath by the *Drosophyllum*), and several sawfly orchids. Part way along two members of the group opted to take an early stroll back to the minibus and others pushed on as far as a wooded corner with a stream.

I was hoping we'd find large tortoiseshell here, as last year, but though there was no luck on that we did have close views of two Spanish festoons. A woodlark sang as did Iberian chiffchaff, we saw long-tailed tits and heard Iberian green woodpecker and nuthatch. Earlier we'd seen wall brown and other butterflies on the walk back included swallowtail and green hairstreak.

Everyone gathered in the shade for lunch and we spread out our food in the back of the minibus as usual. Yesterday Katrin had bought four new picnic chairs for exactly this kind of occasion, and they came in useful today. Gazpacho started another excellent picnic and we overcame the slight miscount with the tortilla that I had cut into eight instead of nine pieces.



Another day, another picnic; we all admired the magnetic salt and pepper pots; the group at Palmones with Gibraltar in the background (JC).

After lunch we went to the coast, firstly to the small town and compact estuary at Palmones. After a drink in a café in the town square – Suzanne's rather literal iced coffee was interesting – we simply wandered over to the intertidal area, which we could observe very comfortably from the adjacent path or sitting on a small wall. There was a good variety of waders, albeit in low numbers: redshank, ringed plover, grey plover, dunlin, common sandpiper, greenshank and curlew, and a couple of Sandwich terns were fishing. Suzanne showed us a firebug crawling over her hand. Two spoonbills refused to show their bills and there was a very, very distant osprey.

Our final stop of the day was Punta Carnero, a high point on the coast on the edge of the Strait of Gibraltar Natural Park. A male Cleopatra butterfly dashed past the minibus as we arrived. The coastal scrub below us had a constant to-ing and fro-ing of Sardinian warblers plus stonechats and a single black redstart; there was also a blue rock thrush in the middle distance. Stephen found a hummingbird hawkmoth. Far out to sea there were flashes of jumping dolphins. While scanning for these, John drew our attention to a small group of shearwaters that, by the way they moved, must have been Balearic shearwaters. A few Sandwich terns and a single gannet also came past. Botanical points of interest included double-flowered Bermuda buttercups, the yellow daisy *Astericus maritimus* and another yellow daisy, the white-hairy *tomentosum* form of rock marigold.

It was a short hop – 10 or 15 minutes – back to Huerta Grande, passing a short-toed eagle on a rock close to the main road, with plenty of spare time before checklists and dinner.

Thursday 12 March – El Puerto de Santa María wetlands and Bonanza salt pans

I was last into breakfast and a short-toed eagle passed low overhead just at that moment. But that was just the start. As we all gathered to leave at nine o'clock there was a stream of migrant raptors. The majority were black kites: they seemed almost white underneath, looking at first like more short-toed eagles, but it was because they were catching the bright early morning sun on their underwings. Also just arriving from Morocco – which as usual we could see across the Strait – were griffon vultures. A little searching revealed an adult Egyptian vulture and two short-toed eagles. A wonderful moment, and a reminder that Huerta Grande is perfectly located for watching migrating birds of prey. There was a monarch butterfly in the car park as well.

Today we were spread between two minibuses with Juan Luis driving a pillarbox red Huerta Grande vehicle. Ninety minutes later we had driven up the motorway and through the ugly outskirts of the town of El Puerto de Santa María to arrive at the lagoons of the same name. We'd left in warm sunshine and driven into cloud, and it was distinctly chilly and windy here. On Laguna Juncosa, the rushy first lake, a small flock of red-crested pochards was easy to find in among the many coots. A little searching revealed a 'real' pochard and, more importantly, several purple swamp-hens. It was noisy with little grebes and there was a black-necked grebe, too. Julia found a gorgeous male garganey surrounded by water crowfoot (*right*), plus a gadwall nearby. New flowers at this point were star-of-Bethlehem and the prostrate knapweed *Centaurea pullata*.



We walked past the prickly pear hedge towards Salada, the second lagoon, near which were many rosettes of mandrakes, including one with two flowers. We learnt that there are daft legends about them in Spain as well as in Britain. Two Iberian hares ran along a fenceline: the first leapt over the fence with style and power. The tricky view over this more enclosed lake was made worse by two people on horseback who rode through the shallows just before we arrived. Nonetheless there were scores of shovelers, two flamingos and a trio of black-necked grebes, inevitably all by now on the lake's far side. We moved onto Chica lagoon, over which a male marsh harrier flew. It wasn't easy but we did find two white-headed ducks here.

Some walked and some had a lift – Frank had sensibly asked Juan-Luis to fetch a minibus – which helped a quicker return to Juncosa on a day when the timetable was a little tight. We had our picnic spread here – by now the weather had warmed considerably – and then headed off. We stopped at a café for a drink/comfort break and carried onto and through Sanlúcar and then to Bonaza salt pans on the edge of the Coto Doñana. This was where two buses were especially useful: a window for everyone in those places where to get out of the buses would disturb the birds.

Slender-billed gulls were there in very good numbers, a hundred or more, some a distinct pink colour on the breast. A remarkably tame cage bird with a red cheek – perhaps a cut-throat finch – appeared at our feet but before it could be photographed it disappeared under the minibus, perhaps to keep away from the dog that had temporarily adopted us. Big flocks of dunlins buzzed round, though small waders were struggling today as there was a lack of bare mud. So it was longer-legged waders that were most evident: large numbers of black-winged stilts, avocets and godwits of both species. There were flamingos, too, and smaller numbers of other waders like Kentish plover and redshanks. A few ruffs and little stints were harder to find. At the far end of the salt pans a male Montagu's harrier flew past as did two booted eagles, one pale phase and one dark phase. It was time to leave and a steady two-hour drive got us back to base with half an hour to spare before dinner.



Slender-billed gull and flamingos at Bonanza.

Friday 13 March – Bolonia and Playa de los Lances

There was quite a change in the weather today, with a chilly west wind for the first half of the day. We postponed the visit to the beach at Tarifa and made stops at two points near the cliffs at Bolonia, which gave protection from the wind. The first holds a colony of griffon vultures: there were a few on nests, though some were tricky to see well, and many more in a constant movement overhead. Kestrels mobbed a raven at one point, though mostly the birds seemed to live amicably alongside each other. There was also a distant blue rock thrush on a cliff top. We walked almost as far as a shelter for birdwatching, but there was no need to use it. We were on the point of leaving when two Egyptian vultures joined the griffons over the cliff, giving good views of this declining species. Frank explained how local studies of the usual 3-4 pairs of Egyptian vultures suggest a turnover in that they are not the same birds each year, evidenced by differing face patterns and ringed juveniles not returning.

The second stop offered views over Roman Bolonia towards the sea and up to the cliffs in the other direction, including an opening high on the cliff face where there are cave paintings – but you'd only see them if you could get up there and were allowed behind protective metalwork. There were more griffons but no sign of a rock bunting. A shrub with red berries was *Daphne gnidium*.

It was a short drop down the hill to the site of the former Roman port and fish-processing factory at Bolonia, now under active restoration and an understandably popular visitor attraction – with free entry to citizens of the European Union. To start with it was a chance for loos and a hot drink, albeit from a machine, but also a convenient place for our picnic. By now it was warm, shirt-sleeve weather, as it was as we then took our own unguided tours of Roman Bolonia. A rhinoceros beetle by the ticket booth was taken to a place of safety. There's a map/leaflet in English and good information boards in Spanish and English, so it proved an easy place to understand. I was struck by how much bigger it was than this time last year, expanded elements including a necropolis and the fish-processing area near the sea.

It makes a relaxing afternoon stroll, not least as the place is alive with small birds such as fan-tailed warblers, stonechats, Sardinian warblers and goldfinches, and Suzanne told us of a close encounter with a crested lark as she sat quietly. Jan and John found a large ocellated lizard that disappeared down a hole and there was also a very green Andalusian wall lizard. Flowers included bright red Italian sainfoin and southern birdsfoot trefoil. Helen and Stephen managed close-up photos of a green-striped white butterfly. I had the same opportunity with a Spanish festoon, and clouded yellows dashed past in their usual hurry.



Roman Bolonia, with Bermuda buttercup; Italian sainfoin; griffon vulture (JC).

We fixed a 3:30 rendezvous in the car park from which we drove to Playa de los Lances beach at Tarifa. Immediately a tame hoopoe posed for us on the track. A few metres on we found our first Barbary nut irises; there were large numbers of sand crocuses and sheets of silvery paronychia. Down at the lagoon on the sandy beach it couldn't have been easier to find our sought-after birds. A Caspian tern was fishing and soon settled next to a group of 14 Audouin's gulls, conveniently separate from the many yellow-legged gulls. The bulk of the waders were sanderlings, and one of the few dunlins was gaining its summer plumage black belly. Grey, ringed and Kentish plovers completed the list – we didn't find the turnstones that both Frank and I were convinced we heard. Kentish plovers in a sea of Barbary nut irises were a particularly nice find. The gulls all moved when a black kite flew over, then again as a man walked along the beach. It was time to retreat from the sometimes cool breeze and after a stop for fuel we returned to Huerta Grande.

Saturday 14 March – Los Alcornocales Natural Park and La Janda

We met the guys from El Grupo Ornitológico del Estrecho (GOES – The Ornithological Group of the Strait) in one of their regular ringing patches, some wild olive scrub on the edge of Algeciras. We saw a Sardinian warbler and chiffchaff in the hand and heard from Ricardo and Jose Luis how the resident blackcaps have shorter wings (like the German blackcaps that take the short hop to winter in the UK) and gain less fat than the many wintering birds. We handed over the Honeyguide donation of 500 euros (see also page 2) which has funded DNA analysis in local tawny owls, which will form part of a paper that is being submitted for publication.

It was easy to be distracted, though, as a nearby sunny bramble patch had several butterflies, including Spanish festoon, small copper and green hairstreak. However the morning's best butterflies came as we walked around the area, namely several bright yellow and orange male Moroccan orange-tips. Frank's friend Paco was with us, as a GOES team member but also as he's also a reptile expert, and twice he turned rocks and caught immature ocellated lizards. Green-flowered birthwort – another rather local species – was another good find.

We returned to Huerta Grande where lunch was laid out in the shade. In the hot early afternoon we had a siesta, during which short-toed treecreeper was singing and a crested tit appeared in the Algerian oaks by the centre.

The afternoon's outing was a return to La Janda. There was only one good wet area, which had 14 spoonbills and a couple of glossy ibises. The best of the waders were little ringed plovers, plus lapwing, snipe and green sandpiper. Moving on, much of La Janda was dry and unproductive. There were a couple of purple swamp-hens in a ditch, a few marsh harriers and occasional buzzards, red-legged partridges and released pheasants. By a bridge was white horehound, our only new plant here, and green-striped white butterflies.

Farther on, rough pasture land of wild olive and asphodel looked promising but produced no birds. A permanent pond had single glossy ibis, spoonbill and black-winged stilt. Before we turned, repeated counts produced a minimum of 18 glossy ibises in another area. Retracing our steps, we paused again by the one wet area where some shovelers had joined the mallards and two water pipits fed near the now much closer little ringed plovers.

Sunday 15 March – Gibraltar

A cloud from the east – a ‘Levanter’ – was hanging over Gibraltar as we parked by the road in La Línea close to the border, a free and easy arrangement on Sundays. The cloud stayed there all day, a case of Gibraltar making its own weather. Across the border we caught the no 5 bus to Casemates Square, walked through Main Street and caught the cable car to the top of the Rock. Through the cloud you could see several fine plants of *Scilla peruviana* and a Barbary macaque mother protecting her baby from the east wind, and many hundreds of yellow-legged gulls on the old concrete water catchments now being restored to sand dune habitat. We went into the café for a hot drink.

Julia caught the cable car down again and the rest of us walked down through the nature reserve that covers the upper rock. As we descended there were many excellent flowers and plants, including Gibraltar candytuft, rock marigold and scrubby scorpion vetch (the lists at the end of the report include many noted in Gibraltar). One of the macaques had to be chased off when it jumped briefly on Jan, and we looked with some surprise at another delinquent clasping a vehicle wing mirror, looking for all the world as though it was studying its iPad. We lunched part way down, beyond the macaques. The sun came out as we walked the lower roads of the Rock’s nature reserve, bringing out the butterflies: Spanish festoon, Cleopatra and Moroccan orange-tip. A hummingbird hawkmoth proved surprisingly easy to watch; blink and it had gone. There wasn’t much to see apart from building work from the viewpoint over the southern tip of the Rock, though there was a small and distinctly green Andalusian wall lizard that stayed still, safely beyond the fence line. Elsewhere, John was able to watch and photograph courting lizards.

Dropping out of the nature reserve we split up, though we all went through the fine botanic gardens where monarchs proved easy to see as we’d hoped. Some succeeded in finding an ice cream shop and everyone was at the 4 o’clock rendezvous in Casemates Square. We caught the bus back to the border and were home in good time. We bade farewell to Frank and I took him to Algeciras, also returning the Europcar minibus.

Alejandro, the coordinator of migration study group Migres, was at Huerta Grande and he joined us for dinner later, along with student Luna who is looking at patterns of wintering lapwings to see if she can find evidence to link their decline with climate change. Over dinner we collected everyone’s holiday highlights.

Monday 16 March – Gibraltar and home

A very prompt departure at nine o’clock and, in Katrin’s minibus, we were soon at the border in La Línea and could see that the weather was clear in Gibraltar today. You have to hope that the roadworks around the frontier will also make the walk to the airport terminal a little easier but, that apart, the return journey to Gatwick was straightforward.

Holiday highlights, as nominated by group members.

- Jan** Bald ibis, Spanish festoon.
John Bird ringing; bald ibis; slender-billed gulls.
Helen Monarch and Spanish festoon; purple swamp-hen with red-crested pochards; Barbary ape ‘with iPad’.
Stephen Spanish festoon and monarch; purple swamp-hen and slender-billed gulls; Lusitanian sundew and *Scrophularia sambucifolia*.
Julia Garganey in water crowfoot; Egyptian vulture; birdsong. Favourite plant: sundew.
Lesley Sundew; retama; garganey in water crowfoot.
Suzanne Crested lark beside her; Bonanza; bald ibis.
Chris Daily Iberian chiffchaff; raptor migration over Huerta Grande.



Barbary macaque with ‘iPad’ and Lesley with retama bush, two holiday highlights.

Species lists

BIRDS

Little grebe	Several at Juncosa lake, 12 th .
Black-necked grebe	On both Juncosa and Salada lakes at Puerto Santa María, 12 th .
Balearic shearwater	A distant group from Punta Carnero cliff top on 11 th were probably this species.
Gannet	At sea on the pelagic trip from Algeciras, 10 th , and from Punta Carnero on 11 th .
Cormorant	Recorded every day.
Grey heron	Recorded on four days.
Little egret	Recorded on six days.
Great white egret	Recorded on three days.
Cattle egret	Recorded daily, often with livestock and groups going to roost.
Black stork	1 over La Janda, 10 th .
White stork	Recorded every day.
Glossy ibis	Bonanza on 12 th , the most was a fairly modest group of 18 at La Janda on 14 th .
Northern bald ibis	On their cliff nest sites near Barbate on 10 th , and flying over the road in the same general area.
Spoonbill	Recorded on three days: 2 at Palmones, 11 th ; 7 at Bonanza, 12 th ; 11 and a single at La Janda on 14 th .
Greater flamingo	Good numbers at Bonanza salt pans, 12 th , also Salada lake the same day.
Shelduck	At Bonanza salt pans, 12 th and La Janda, 14 th .
Mallard	Recorded on four days.
Teal	Recorded at Santa María lakes, 12 th .
Garganey	A fine male in water crowfoot at Juncosa lake, 12 th .
Gadwall	At Juncosa lake, 12 th .
Shoveler	Recorded on 3 days, and in large numbers on Puerto Santa María lakes, 12 th .
Red-crested pochard	A good group on Juncosa lake, 12 th .
Pochard	A few with red-crested pochards at Juncosa lake & more at Salada lake, 12 th .
White-headed duck	Two distant birds on Chica lagoon, 12 th .
Osprey	A very distant bird at Palmones, 11 th .
Black-shouldered kite	1 at La Janda, 10 th .
Black kite	Recorded on three days, with some arriving over Huerta Grande on 19 th and 12 th . One flew over and disturbed the gulls at Playa de los Lances, 13 th .
Griffon vulture	Seen on 6 days, overhead at Huerta Grande and on nests at Bolonia cliffs.
Egyptian vulture	1 over Huerta Grande on 12 th and two over Bolonia cliffs, 13 th .
Short-toed eagle	Seen on the first four days, including over Huerta Grande.
Marsh harrier	Recorded on 2 days, 12 th & 14 th .
Montagu's harrier	A male at Bonanza, 12 th .
Sparrowhawk	1 over Huerta Grande, 9 th .
Buzzard	Recorded on five days, all appeared to be resident birds.
Booted eagle	Singles on 2 days plus two – one dark phase, one light – at Bonanza on 12 th .
Kestrel	Seen almost every day.
Red-legged partridge	Recorded on four days.
Moorhen	Recorded on three days
Purple swamp-hen (purple gallinule)	Good views at Juncosa lake, 12 th , where some were going to nests. Also 2 at La Janda.
Coot	Lots at Juncosa Lake, 12 th .
Black-winged stilt	Lots at Bonanza salt pans, 12 th and 1 at La Janda, 14 th .
Avocet	Scores at Bonanza salt pans, 12 th .
Lapwing	5 at La Janda, 14 th .
Grey plover	Recorded on three days at the various coastal sites of Palmones, Playa de los Lances and Bonanza.
Little ringed plover	About 10 at La Janda, 14 th
Ringed plover	Recorded on three days at coastal sites, as for grey plover.
Kentish plover	1 on the first visit to La Janda, several at Bonanza on 12 th and also at Playa de los Lances, 15 th .
Snipe	2 at La Janda on 14 th
Ruff	At Bonanza salt pans, 12 th .
Black-tailed godwit	Many at Bonanza salt pans, 12 th .
Bar-tailed godwit	A small flock at Bonanza salt pans, 12 th .
Curlew	1 at Palmones, 10 th and heard at Bonanza salt pans, 12 th .
Redshank	Recorded on three days.
Greenshank	Recorded on two days.
Green sandpiper	At La Janda on both visits.
Common sandpiper	Recorded on two days
Sanderling	1 only at Bonanza but a good flock in winter plumage at Playa de los Lances.

Dunlin	At 3 coastal locations: Bonanza salt pans, Palmones and Playa de los Lances.
Little stint	A few at Bonanza salt pans.
Audouin's gull	14 at Playa de Los Lances, 13 th .
Yellow-legged gull	Seen daily, often in big numbers.
Black-headed gull	Recorded on four days.
Slender-billed gull	Not counted but perhaps 100 at Bonanza salt pans, 12 th .
Caspian tern	1 at Playa de los Lances, 13 th .
Sandwich tern	Fishing at Palmones and offshore from Punta Carnero, 11 th .
Feral pigeon	Seen daily.
Woodpigeon	Recorded on 3 days, including at Huerta Grande.
Collared dove	Seen almost daily.
Great spotted cuckoo	1 flew through at La Janda on 10 th .
Tawny owl	Heard at Huerta Grande on the last three nights.
Hoopoe	Showed beautifully at Playa de los Lances, also seen three other days.
Great spotted woodpecker	Seen or heard every day at Huerta Grande.
Green woodpecker	Heard at Huerta Grande and in Los Alcornocales NP.
Crested lark	Recorded on five days.
Woodlark	Singing at Valdeinfierno, 11 th .
Crag martin	Recorded on four days.
Swallow	Seen every day.
House martin	Seen on two days.
Yellow wagtail	Seen on two days, but not well enough to identify subspecies.
White wagtail	Seen on three days.
Meadow pipit	Recorded on four days.
Water pipit	2 on the second visit to La Janda, 14 th .
Wren	Heard (usually) or seen daily at Huerta Grande.
Duncock	Heard at Valdeinfierno, 11 th .
Robin	Seen daily at Huerta Grande.
Stonechat	Seen on four days.
Black redstart	Seen on three days.
Blue rock thrush	Distant birds at Punta Carnero and at Bolonia.
Blackbird	Seen daily at Huerta Grande, also on Gibraltar.
Song thrush	One ringed at Palmones and recorded on 7 th at Huerta Grande.
Cetti's warbler	Heard (usually) or seen daily at Huerta Grande.
Zitting cisticola / fan-tailed warbler	Singing birds seen on five days.
Sedge warbler	One seen at La Janda on 10 th .
Reed warbler	One heard at La Janda on 14 th .
Sardinian warbler	Seen or heard every day, including at Huerta Grande, and in the hand at the ringing demonstration.
Blackcap	Seen daily, including at Huerta Grande
Whitethroat	One seen at La Janda on 10 th .
Subalpine warbler	2 at Valdeinfierno, 11 th .
Chiffchaff	Seen or heard daily.
Iberian chiffchaff	Heard daily and occasionally seen at Huerta Grande.
Firecrest	Heard on six days at Huerta Grande and seen well on the arrival day, 9 th .
Long-tailed tit	Seen at Valdeinfierno on 11 th .
Crested tit	Seen well at Huerta Grande on two days.
Blue tit	Daily at Huerta Grande.
Great tit	One day at Huerta Grande.
Nuthatch	Heard at Valdeinfierno on 11 th .
Short-toed treecreeper	Singing at Huerta Grande on three days.
Jay	Noted on two days at Huerta Grande.
Jackdaw	Recorded on four days.
Raven	Recorded on three days.
Carrion crow	Recorded on two days.
Spotless starling	Seen daily.
House sparrow	Seen daily.
Chaffinch	Daily at Huerta Grande.
Serin	Daily at Huerta Grande, and elsewhere.
Greenfinch	Regularly at Huerta Grande, and some big flocks at La Janda.
Goldfinch	Seen every day except on Gibraltar, including some big flocks at La Janda.
Linnet	Seen or heard every day, including some big flocks at La Janda.
Corn bunting	On four days, seen best at La Janda.

REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS

Ocellated lizard	Roman Bolonia, also at the olive grove near Algeciras
Andalusian wall lizard	Huerta Grande, Roman Bolonia and a pair 'courting' in Gibraltar
Moorish gecko	Huerta Grande
Stripeless tree frog	Heard daily at Huerta Grande
Spiny toad	Huerta Grande



Ocellated lizard; Andalusian wall lizards courting (JC); and Moorish gecko.

BUTTERFLIES

Swallowtail	Spanish festoon	Large white
Small white	Green-striped white	Clouded yellow
Cleopatra	Moroccan orange-tip	Monarch
Speckled wood	Wall brown	Green hairstreak
Small copper	Common blue	Geranium bronze
Red admiral	Painted lady	



Speckled wood; small copper; Spanish festoon; Moroccan orange-tip (JC).

OTHER NOTABLE INVERTEBRATES

African mantis <i>Sphrodomantis viridis</i> – dead and larval case	Violet carpenter bee
Paper wasp <i>Polistes</i> sp.	Rhinoceros beetle <i>Copris hispanus</i>
<i>Pimelia fornicata</i> a darkling beetle	Gourd ladybird <i>Henosepilachna elaterii</i>
<i>Oxythyrea funesta</i> a flower chafer	<i>Tropinota hirta</i> a hairy chafer
<i>Lygaeus equestris</i> a ground bug	Egyptian locust
Pine processionary moth (tents)	Hummingbird hawkmoth
Silver-Y moth	<i>Ocnogyna baetica</i> , the winter webworm moth (caterpillar)



Left to right: *Lygaeus equestris* a ground bug; Rhinoceros beetle *Copris hispanus*; Gourd ladybird *Henosepilachna elaterii*; *Pimelia fornicata*, a darkling beetle (not to scale).

MAMMALS

Common dolphin	Striped dolphin	Barbary macaque	Egyptian mongoose – one dashed across the road; also roadkill
Iberian hare	Rabbit	Iberian mole (roadkill)	

PLANTS

Numbers refer to Blamey & Grey-Wilson, *Mediterranean Wild Flowers*.

Polunin refers to Polunin & Smythies, *Flowers of south-west Europe*.

The Flowers of Gibraltar was a valuable reference both on the Rock and in Spain.

Where there is no number, sometimes these are plants in floras from northern Europe

e.g. *Wild Flowers of Britain & Europe* by Fitter, Fitter & Blamey.

Some are planted species, marked P. nif = not in flower. G: noted especially on Gibraltar.

Common northern European plants e.g. shepherd's purse, groundsel, are not usually noted.

Planted trees are noted when of special interest.

Pinaceae – pines		
<i>Pinus pinea</i>	stone / umbrella pine	3
<i>Pinus nigra</i>	black pine	4
Betulaceae – birch family		
<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>	alder	
Fagaceae – oaks		
<i>Quercus suber</i>	cork oak	27
<i>Quercus canariensis</i>	Algerian oak	30
Urticaceae – nettle family		
<i>Urtica membranacea</i>	membranous nettle	49
Aristolochiaceae – birthworts		
<i>Aristolochia baetica</i>	Andalusian birthwort	58
<i>Aristolochia paucinervis</i>	green-flowered birthwort	(Not in Blamey or Polunin)
Polygonaceae – dock family		
<i>Polygonum crispus</i>	curled dock	
<i>Rumex bucephalophorus</i>	horned dock	78
Chenopodiaceae – fathen family		
<i>Sarcocornia fruticosa</i>	shrubby glasswort	83
<i>Halimione portulacoides</i>	sea purslane	100
Amaranthaceae – amaranth family		
<i>Achyranthes sicula</i>	achyranthes	G
Phytolaccaceae – pokeweed family		
<i>Phytolacca dioica</i>	Ombú	113 P
Caryophyllaceae – pink family		
<i>Paronychia argentea</i>	paronychia	136
<i>Spergularia media</i>	greater sea-spurrey	144
<i>Silene colorata</i>	Mediterranean campion	180
Lauraceae – laurel family		
<i>Laurus nobilis</i>	sweet bay	199
Ranunculaceae – buttercup family		
<i>Clematis cirrhosa</i>	virgin's bower or December clematis	208 G
<i>Adonis</i> sp.	pheasant's-eye	
<i>Ranunculus</i> sp.	water crowfoot sp.	
<i>Ranunculus sceleratus</i>	celery-leaved buttercup	251 nif
<i>Ranunculus ficaria</i> subsp. <i>ficariiformis</i>	lesser celandine – the more robust southern form	252a
Papaveraceae – poppies		
<i>Papaver argemone</i>	prickly poppy	287
Fumariaceae – fumitories		
<i>Fumaria capreolata</i>	ramping fumitory	303
Cruciferae – cress/cabbage family		
<i>Biscutella megacarpaea</i>	Biscutella, a buckler mustard	G
<i>Lobularia maritima</i>	sweet Alison	336
<i>Iberis gibraltarica</i>	Gibraltar candytuft	347 G
<i>Sinapsis arvensis</i>	charlock	359
<i>Raphanus raphanistrum</i>	wild radish	369
Resedaceae – mignonette family		
<i>Reseda alba</i>	white mignonette	375 G
<i>Reseda phyteuma</i>	corn mignonette	378
Droseraceae – sundews		
<i>Drosophyllum lusitanicum</i>	drosophyllum, a sundew	381 nif

Crassulaceae – stonecrop family		
<i>Sedum sediforme</i>	yellow stonecrop	382 G nif
<i>Umbilicus rupestris</i>	navelwort	396
Leguminosae – pea family		
<i>Cercis siliquastrum</i>	Judas tree	430 P
<i>Ceratonia siliqua</i>	carob	431
<i>Acacia dealbata</i>	'mimosa' or silver wattle	432 P
<i>Calycotome spinosa</i>	spiny broom	452
<i>Teline monspessulana</i>	teline	459
<i>Genista tridentata</i>	a winged broom	
<i>Lygos monosperma</i>	retama (a white broom)	480
<i>Galega officinalis</i>	goat's rue	490
<i>Astragalus lusitanicus</i>	Iberian milk-vetch	504
<i>Psoralea bituminosa</i>	pitch trefoil	508
<i>Lathyrus ochrus</i>		552
<i>Lotus creticus</i>	southern birdsfoot trefoil	632
<i>Tetragonobulus purpureus</i>	asparagus pea	682
<i>Coronilla emerus</i>	scorpion vetch or false senna	693
<i>Coronilla valentina</i>	shrubby scorpion vetch	695 G
<i>Hedysarum coronarium</i>	Italian sainfoin or French honeysuckle	710
Oxalidaceae – sorrel family		
<i>Oxalis pes-caprae</i>	Bermuda buttercup	735
Geraniaceae – geranium family		
<i>Geranium molle</i>	dovesfoot cranesbill	741
<i>Geranium rotundifolium</i>	round-leaved cranesbill	743
<i>Geranium dissectum</i>	cut-leaved cranesbill	745
<i>Geranium robertium</i>	herb robert	747
<i>Erodium malacoides</i>	mallow-leaved storksbill	752
<i>Erodium cicutarium</i>	common storksbill	761
Linaceae – flax family		
<i>Linum bienne</i>	pale flax	777
Euphorbiaceae – spurges		
<i>Euphorbia helioscopia</i>	sun spurge	799
<i>Euphorbia peplus</i>	petty spurge	807
<i>Euphorbia squamigera</i>	warty spurge	G
<i>Mercurialis annua</i>	annual mercury	820
<i>Ricinus communis</i>	castor oil plant	824
Rutaceae – rue family		
<i>Ruta angustifolia</i>	narrow-leaved rue	828
Meliaceae – Persian lilac family		
<i>Melia azedarach</i>	Indian bead tree or Persian lilac	843 P
Polygalaceae – milkwort family		
<i>Polygala microphylla</i>		(Polunin 696b)
Anacardiaceae – pistacio family		
<i>Pistacia lentiscus</i>	mastic tree or lentisc	865
Rhamnaceae – buckthorn family		
<i>Rhamnus alaternus</i>	Mediterranean buckthorn	885
Thymelaeaceae – daphne family		
<i>Daphne gnidium</i>	daphne	936
<i>Thymelea hirsuta</i>		942
Cistaceae – rock-rose family		
<i>Cistus albidus</i>	grey-leaved cistus big pink fls	961
<i>Cistus salviifolius</i>	sage-leaved cistus small white fls	965
<i>Cistus ladanifer</i>	gum cistus big white fls	971
<i>Halimium atriplicifolium</i>		976
Tamaricaceae – tamarix family		
<i>Tamarix africana</i>		1016
Cucurbitadeae – cucumber family		
<i>Echballium elaterium</i>	squirting cucumber	1032

Cactaceae – cactuses		
<i>Opuntia</i> sp.	prickly pear	
Umbelliferae – umbellifers / carrot family		
<i>Smyrniolus olustatum</i>	Alexanders	1087
<i>Ferula tingitana</i>	Tangier giant fennel	1142 G
Ericaceae – heather family		
<i>Arbutus unedo</i>	strawberry tree	1176
<i>Erica arborea</i>	tree heath white fls	1178
<i>Erica australis</i>	Spanish heath pink fls	1181
Primulaceae – primrose family		
<i>Anagallis arvensis</i>	scarlet pimpernel	1198
Rubiaceae – bedstraw family		
<i>Rubia peregrina</i>	wild madder	1305
<i>Sherardia arvensis</i>	field madder	
Oleaceae – olive family		
<i>Olea europaea</i>	olive	1248
<i>Olea europaea</i> spp. <i>oleaster</i>	wild olive	1248a
Apocynaceae – oleander family		
<i>Vinca difformis</i>	intermediate periwinkle	1263
Asclepiadaceae – milkweeds		
<i>Asclepias curassavica</i>	bloodflower, an alien species from America	nif
Convolvulaceae – bindweeds		
<i>Ipomoea purpurea</i>	morning glory	1319
<i>Convolvulus altheoides</i>	mallow-leaved bindweed	1331 G
Boraginaceae – borage family		
<i>Lithodora diffusa</i>	scrambling gromwell	1351
<i>Cerintho major</i> var. <i>purpurascens</i>	honeywort	1367
<i>Echium plantagineum</i>	purple viper's bugloss	1383
<i>Borago officinalis</i>	borage	1395
<i>Cynoglossum creticum</i>	houndstongue	
Labiatae – mint family		
<i>Teucrium fruticans</i>	tree or shrubby germander	1429
<i>Prasium majus</i>	Spanish hedge-nettle	1444 G
<i>Marrubium vulgare</i>	white horehound	1445
<i>Phlomis purpurea</i>	purple Jerusalem sage	1465 nif
<i>Mentha suaveolens</i>	round-leaved or apple mint	1523 Huerta Grande
<i>Rosmarinus officinalis</i>	rosemary	1526
<i>Lavandula stoechas</i>	French lavender	1528
<i>Lavandula dentata</i>	toothed lavender	1530
<i>Salvia verbenaca</i>	wild clary	1545
<i>Stachys arvensis</i>	field woundwort	
Solanaceae – potato family		
<i>Solanum nigrum</i>	black nightshade	1563
<i>Mandragora autumnalis</i>	mandrake	1573
<i>Solanum sodomaceum</i>	apple of Sodom	1565
Scrophulariaceae – figwort family		
<i>Scrophularia sambucifolia</i>		(Polunin 1216)
<i>Verbascum sinuatum</i>		1601 nif
<i>Antirrhinum majus</i> subsp. <i>cirrhigerum</i>	snapdragon	1609 G
<i>Veronica cymbalaria</i>	a speedwell	1646
<i>Cymbalaria muralis</i>	ivy-leaved toadflax	1632
Orobanchaceae – broomrapes		
<i>Orobanche ramosa</i>	Branched broomrape	1655 G
Acanthaceae – acanthus family		
<i>Acanthus mollis</i>	bear's breech	1690 nif
Caprifoliaceae – honeysuckles		
<i>Lonicera implexa</i>	a honeysuckle	1713 G
<i>Viburnum tinus</i>	laurestinus	1711

Valerianaceae – valerian family		
<i>Fedia cornucopiae</i>	fedia	1720
<i>Centranthus calcitrapa</i>	cut-leaved valerian	1725 G
Compositae – daisy family		
<i>Anacyclus valentinus</i>	a buttonweed	Polunin 1414a
<i>Arctotheca calendula</i>	Cape daisy	
<i>Anthemis arvensis</i>	corn mayweed	
<i>Bellis annua</i>	annual daisy	1791
<i>Bellis sylvestris</i>	southern daisy	1793
<i>Bidens triparta</i>	trifid bur marigold – disturbed, damp ground at Huerta Grande	
<i>Phagnalon saxatile</i>	rock phagnalon	1833
<i>Dittrichia viscosa</i>	aromatic inula	1842 nif
<i>Astericus maritimus</i>	yellow sea aster	1848
<i>Chrysanthemum coronarium</i>	crown daisy	1895
<i>Calendula suffruticosa</i>	rock marigold	1907 G
<i>Calendula suffruticosa</i> subsp. <i>tomentosa</i>	rock marigold	1907a
<i>Calendula arvensis</i>	field marigold	1908
<i>Cirsium eriophorum</i>	woolly thistle	1956 nif
<i>Galactites tomentosa</i>	galactites	1971
<i>Silybum marianum</i>	milk thistle	1982
<i>Centaurea calcitrapa</i>	red-star thistle	1990
<i>Centaurea pullata</i>		2006
<i>Cichorium intybus</i>	chicory	2023
<i>Hyoseris radiata</i>	hyoseris	2032 G
<i>Urospermum dalecampii</i>	urospermum	2039
Liliaceae – lily family		
<i>Asphodelus fistulosus</i>	hollow-leaved asphodel	2087
<i>Asphodelus aestivus</i>	common asphodel	2089
<i>Aloe arborescens</i>	tree or sword aloe	2101 G
<i>Ornithogalum narbonense</i>	a star-of-Bethlehem	2171
<i>Urginea maritima</i>	sea squill	2163 nif
<i>Scilla peruviana</i>		2183 G
<i>Scilla monophyllus</i>	one-leaved squill	2187
<i>Asparagus albus</i>		2214 G
<i>Ruscus hypoglossum</i>	large or southern butcher's broom	2220
<i>Smilax aspera</i>	smilax or sarsaparilla	2222
<i>Allium triquetrum</i>	three-corned leek	2229
<i>Pancratium maritimum</i>	sea daffodil	2270 nif
<i>Narcissus papyraceus</i>	paperwhite narcissus	2276
<i>Zantedeschia aethiopica</i>	calla lily	P
Dioscoreaceae – yam family		
<i>Tamus communis</i>	black bryony	2282
Iridaceae – iris family		
<i>Gynandrisis sisyrinchium</i>	Barbary nut iris	2305
<i>Romulea bulbocodium</i> (= <i>R. clusiana</i>)	a sand crocus	2314
Araceae – arum family		
<i>Arisarum simorrhinum</i>	friar's cowl	2378
<i>Freesia refracta</i>	freesia	G
Palmae – palms		
<i>Chamerops humilis</i>	dwarf fan palm	2357
Orchidaceae – orchids		
<i>Ophrys fusca</i>	sombre bee orchid	2424
<i>Ophrys tenthredinifera</i>	sawfly orchid	2442
Gramineae – grasses		
<i>Arundo donax</i>	giant reed	2494
<i>Phragmites australis</i>	reed	

Pteridophyta – ferns		
<i>Adiantum capillus-veneris</i>	maidenhair fern	2522
<i>Asplenium obovatum</i>	a black spleenwort	2529
<i>Davallia canariensis</i>	hare's foot fern	
<i>Polypodium cambricum</i>	southern polypody	
<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>	bracken	



Friar's cowl
Arisarum simorrhinum



Gibraltar candytuft
Iberis gibraltarica



Centaurea pullata



Yellow sea aster
Astericus maritimus



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