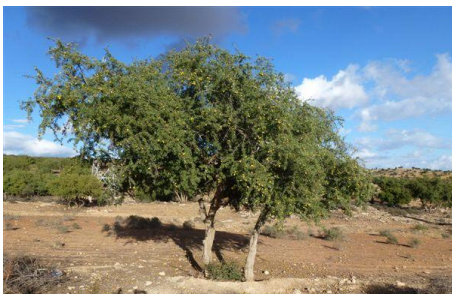


N&S
Wildlife & Walking
Holidays

Honeyguide

WILDLIFE HOLIDAYS

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Morocco
15 – 22 March 2016

Participants

Mike and Val Grogutt
Jill Jordan
Jean Dunn
Malcolm and Helen Crowder
Peter and Elonwy Crook
Peter Bowyer

Graham Harris
Marie Watts
Geoff Morries and Jane Baddeley
Colin Taylor
David and Steph Bennett

Leaders

Richard Hobbs, Sally Ward and Chris Durdin
Report by Chris Durdin, flower list by Richard Hobbs.

Photos by Chris Durdin unless noted otherwise. Other photos by David Bennett (DB), Jean Dunn (JD), Richard Hobbs (RH) and Helen Crowder (HC), all taken on the holiday.

Cover, top row: friendly locals, Moussier's redstart.

Middle row: argan tree, Magreb magpie.

Bottom: breakfast spread, *Cladanthus arabicus* (RH).

Below: the group watching bald ibises, with representatives from GREPOM (BirdLife Morocco) and Souss-Massa National Park (JD).



We stayed at Atlas Kasbah Ecologne <http://atlaskasbah.com/en/> below (DB).



This holiday, as for every Honeyguide holiday, also puts something into conservation in our host country by way of a contribution to the wildlife that we enjoyed. The conservation contribution of £40 per person was supplemented by Gift Aid and we were able to give £800 to GREPOM/BirdLife Morocco – Groupe de Recherche pour la Protection des Oiseaux au Maroc. This is towards the cost of wardens to safeguard nesting bald ibises; see account on pages 4 and 5. At the time of writing, more contributions are coming in towards a further donation to the project.

As at the end of March 2016, the total for all conservation contributions through Honeyguide since 1991 was £105,338.

DAILY DIARY

Tuesday 15 March – Agadir and Atlas Kasbah

This holiday account starts at Agadir airport rather than a UK airport as I'd flown out on the Sunday, to have a couple of days in Morocco before the group's safe arrival. I gather it was a straightforward easyJet flight to Agadir and, after the usual airport processes, not least very slow passport control, we all met up, including with two drivers, both called Mohamed, and two buses. Keen birders noted spotless starlings and some pallid swifts before we were all in the buses to take us to Atlas Kasbah Hotel, a little less than half an hour away, with a great grey shrike on the journey for some. On the first stretch of the journey we crossed the Souss River, with very little water in it on account of the lack of rain all winter, and that drought continued to show almost everywhere in the following week.

There were warm words of welcome from Hassan at Atlas Kasbah, which looks like an impressive conversion from a fortified house but is actually designed from scratch as an eco-lodge. Then it was time for mint tea and to find rooms. We met for lunch of turkey kebabs and rice (cheese in pastry parcels for the vegetarians), all of us on a long table outside but in the shade. There were red-rumped and barn swallows overhead. By now, many in the group had already seen two new birds for life lists, namely bulbuls and house buntings; the pair of buntings also appeared on the table after lunch to find the odd morsel of dropped rice.

After an hour to unpack and settle in, we met at three o'clock to walk through the gardens and a short way beyond. Richard had a fund of stories, explanations about plants, both wild and cultivated in the garden, which had us all absorbed. There were other distractions: the cascade of water features that purifies the hotel's sewage had several Saharan green frogs around the lilies in the top pond, and an Emperor dragonfly buzzed around. Birds included a pair of ciril buntings, bright green greenfinches, blackcap, crested lark, woodchat shrikes and the green-backed *africana* subspecies of chaffinch. More of a surprise was a migrant tree pipit that suddenly dropped in and perched in clear view in a thin tree.



Saharan green frog (JD); greenish black-tip; the knapweed-like *Volutaria maroccana*.

Outside the walls of the garden, the winter's drought was obvious. There were still plants to study, such as *Zizyphus* from the buckthorn family and joint-pine. Some bee-eaters came over and a greenish black-tip butterfly was an excellent find.

The main course at dinner – at seven o'clock, our routine for the week – was an excellent tajine (Moroccan casserole).

"Tea without bubbles is not tea" was the take-home message of Hassan's 'tea ceremony' in the salon after we'd finished our meal and returned napkins to our own pigeon-holes. Making tea, by men, is a traditional part of Moroccan hospitality and he prepared absinthe (wormwood) and mint for us, with sugar reduced to just one large lump in the pot for our tastes. Hassan was happy to explain that tea came to Morocco from Britain in times past.

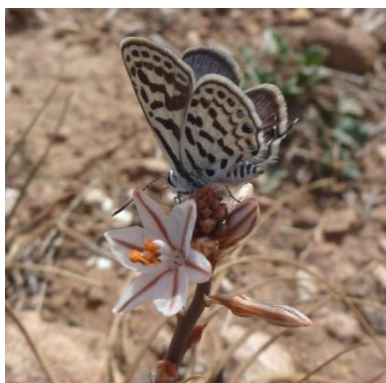
Wednesday 16 March – local walks

Another fine, dry day, with sun appearing over the mountain at about 7:15, which tempted several in the group to look for wildlife before breakfast at eight o'clock. As ever, much of the best watching was at the hotel, including sightings of the distinctive dark-capped African blue tit.

Our morning walk took us through the hotel's garden, where the morning-flowering sweet potatoes were making a good show, then left into the 'village of the eagles'. Our walk was punctuated by many cheery exchanges with local people, usually in French, a second language for them as well as us. Looking down below the road into a walled area it was noticeably greener than elsewhere, with the golden-coloured daisy *Cladanthus arabicus* and a beautiful dock *Rumex vesicarius* especially showy. Butterflies included clouded yellows, Bath white and wall brown. A Moorish tortoise ambled past.

The village was scruffy, like so many areas, with rubbish and partly completed buildings everywhere. Here we took a left turn to find the women's cooperative where a dozen or so local women were hammering away with stones to prepare argan nuts, later to be processed into cooking and beauty products. Nearby we watched a pair of black wheatears and a hoopoe flew through; two or three times little groups of bee-eaters came over. It was distinctly hot as the path deteriorated somewhat to complete the circuit back to the hotel, where we had an excellent lunch of carrot soup and salad.

Our afternoon walk was in the other direction, though the dry argan forest and alongside equally parched arable. In the hotel garden we found long-tailed blue butterflies and there was a chance to enjoy a pair of Moussier's redstarts. A short way along the track beyond the road was a mating pair of gorgeous common tiger blue butterflies, with stripy bodies as tigerish as the black and white underwing pattern. A couple of notable flowers were the rockrose *Helianthemum canariense* and a pretty Moroccan toadflax *Linaria maroccana*.



Common tiger blue butterfly, this one on hollow-leaved asphodel; the butterfly's larval food plant, *Zizyphus lotus*; *Linaria maroccana*.

We heard a stone-curlew and there were several woodchat shrikes, though the main bird interest was in the recently cultivated arable where a small flock of curlew buntings mixed with greenfinches and the distinctive local chaffinches. David picked up on a little owl in a rugged argan tree, but it disappeared into a hole. Just beyond the goats there were three Barbary ground squirrels clambering over huge boulders in a low cliff. Several of the group saw a honey buzzard overhead.

Back at base, from the crenulations on the hotel's terrace, a fine great grey shrike was on show, while on the ground floor H el ene was talking to several of the ladies in the group about natural products used for health, in local traditions and as beauty treatments.

Dinner was accompanied by a man playing the five-string guitar that was living in the salon, and the penny dropped for David and me that we'd previously re-tuned it to what for this evening's player was the wrong tuning. The main course was followed by a birthday cake with a large, dramatic sparkler for Peter B. After some telephone diplomacy by Hassan to put in place tomorrow's meeting at the bald ibises, checklists were completed and a few of us looked at Jupiter from the terrace, though some wispy cloud meant it was less clear than last night with just one moon showing.

Thursday 17 March – Bald Ibises and Cap Rhir

The early risers heard a nightingale in the garden. We were away sharp at 9:30, with picnics organised for everyone, roughly 50:50 vegetarian and non-vegetarian. Our first stop was at Atacad o, the warehouse-sized store at the bottom of the road to Atlas Kasbah, to use the cash machine for some but mostly to buy water, wine and various odds and ends.

There were two surprises as we journeyed round the north of Agadir and along the coast road: camels, and two people picking up litter, which especially pleased Val. We also drove alongside a huge cemetery, used for Moslems, Jews and Christians, we learnt. A town we passed through seemed mostly to sell bananas, with enormous bunches hanging from almost every roadside shop; another was all surfing gear, on account of the availability of fine Atlantic breakers rolling onto broad, sandy beaches.

Our main destination this morning was the nesting cliffs of bald ibises at Tamri, where a black-eared wheatear was perching out in the open as we arrived. There we met three people from GREPOM/BirdLife Morocco, led by Mohamed Dakki, GREPOM's President. Also with the welcoming group was Oubrou Widade of Souss-Massa National Park, and she gave a succinct introduction to the conservation challenges for bald ibises, which is managed as a partnership between GREPOM and the National Park. Numbers tell a success story: when the project started in 1994, there were 225 birds and 60 pairs.



The bald ibises' nesting cliff, and a Barbary falcon which landed nearby (DB).

Now there are 500 birds and 116 pairs, and last year breeding success was high. Study has shown that they do less well in drought years, which are becoming more frequent, so this year is likely to be poor. The research done by RSPB/BirdLife showed that the open vegetation we were seeing around us is ideal, with about 30 per cent ground cover: thicker than that and it is difficult for the birds to forage for scorpions, lizards and large insects. Water points are valuable, so the birds don't need to travel great distances to drink, and keeping those topped up is one task of the two local wardens (also with us, and part of a wider team of seven wardens). The wardens' main role in the nesting season, February-May, is ensuring that the ibises are free from disturbance. We also learnt that GREPOM's funding for wardens has dried up, so our holiday's donation of £800 is quite a lifeline, funding pay and expenses for two wardens for two months.

We walked the very short distance to the sandy edge of the cliff top and there they were, some 50 bald ibises sitting on nests on wide ledges overlooking the sea. As well as watching these, a 'ki ki ki' call alerted us to a Barbary falcon also on the cliffs. After 15 minutes or so, we retreated to the buses and had our picnics. Dipcadi – 'brown bells' – was a nice discovery here and a fine short-toed eagle came low overhead.

A little south of here we stopped just north of Cap Rhir's lighthouse to explore a section of the extraordinary coastal habitat. Cactus-like spurges were mixed with equally succulent-style groundsels, and on one of the former was the specialist parasitic flower of *Striga gesnerioides*, a kind of broomrape. Sandy patches had tiny stocks and the dark-centred marigold *Calendula stellata*. It was windy but still warm by the sea where gannets and lesser black-backed gulls flew over the large breakers and there was a distant great white egret on the shore. There was another short-toed eagle as we returned to the buses.

Our final stop was a drink in a coastal bar at Taghazoute. Sally went for a paddle in the sea and Colin on a camel provided entertainment and a photo-opportunity.

Friday 18 March – Berber day

Jill and Graham, this time with me, heard the nightingale again before breakfast, later seen by Helen on the ground near the peacocks.

Our 'Berber day' took us for quite a long drive southeast, beyond the airport and to coffee in the town of Ait Baha. Beyond that we visited an 'agadir', which means bank, as a store for important goods for the local community. Many of these are now derelict, but this one was known to driver Mohamed as still in good condition and he was our guide here, together with the local and impressively agile man from the agadir.



Street scene in Ait Baha; Honeyguiders survey storage arrangements in the old agadir (JD).

Outside were large threshing circles. Inside the fortified store were 101 rooms, several stories high, still padlocked and available for storage: once that was grain and other essentials, today perhaps more mundane things. Our local guide also dropped a bucket into the water store and used it to top up the bowls for three tortoises, one big, one medium-sized and one tiny. As ever, Richard found many plants of interest, including the heliwort *Scrophularia scopolii* and a nightshade *Solanum heterophyllum*.

We had our picnic at the agadir. Outside we found a new butterfly for the week: a splendid false baton blue.

We moved to a reservoir which still held water despite the drought. Two ruddy shelducks were the star birds, with a few coots and a little grebe. There were also a little ringed plover and a common sandpiper on the reservoir margin, plus both yellow and white wagtails. A nice find was the day-flying syntomid moth *Amata alicia* (also known as *Syntoma alicia*), a striking-looking insect with white spots on black wings and red stripes on its abdomen (photo on page 11).



False baton blue on heliotrope; ruddy shelducks.

Goats clambering in argan trees to eat the fruit (and spit out the seeds) were a feature of part of the return journey. The white storks seen by some on the outward journey had vanished from the rubbish dump area, so we didn't stop.

We were back in good time, allowing a pre-dinner gathering for Richard to talk to us about cultural, political and ethnic points of interest, much of which were insights from driver-cum-guide Mohamed that before were only within earshot of those at the front of the main bus.

Those taking a dip in the hotel swimming pool were delighted to see two little swifts in with the common swifts and red-rumped swallows around Atlas Kasbah.

Saturday 19 March – local walk to Elmaasa, and Agadir souk

A robin around the water treatment area was a new bird for the week before breakfast. With a ten o'clock start there was time to birdwatch from the terrace level of Atlas Kasbah, mostly bee-eaters in the valley below, but we also heard a distant Barbary partridge. In the garden we paused to look at a banded argiope spider *Argiope trifasciata* on its web. Richard led us to the nearby village of Elmaasa, a short walk though more dry, open argan forest, which included a few goats climbing in the trees. Plants included *Mesembryanthemum crystelinum* with its remarkable crystalline appearance on the foliage. There was a black wheatear in the village on one of the many unfinished properties.

We then experienced some extraordinary, impromptu hospitality. Most of us were invited into the house of a lady speaking French rather rapidly and we squeezed into the family salon. In the meantime, Richard had judged that all of us would be more than was practical, so led about a third of the group further up the road, where a blue rock thrush was on show on a building top. The lady made coffee and introduced her husband, another Mohamed and a herbalist by profession, who prepared mint tea. We made small talk in French as well as we could, and just enjoyed this gift of friendship to strangers.

It was the itinerary's free afternoon, though Sally had arranged an optional outing to the souk in Agadir, which most of the group were pleased to do. Our guide led us through the huge covered market, starting with the best bit, the food market: amazing spreads included fruits, vegetables, spices and olives. Then onwards we went past pots, pans and teapots, clothes, electrical goods (including twin tub washing machines) and gift stalls. In a little square within the souk, food and water was supplied to some grateful house buntings. We had half an hour to shop before rejoining the bus and an unexpected call at a place doing demonstrations of argan, spice, honey and herbal products – run by a relative of our guide, I presume. But the well-rehearsed patter was done with charm and good humour, and we all left smelling a little nicer and some with purchases.



Colourful souk scenes: vegetables (HC), spices (DB) and shoes (JD).

As dusk approached, a flock of some 200 white storks were seen from Atlas Kasbah, looking for somewhere to settle for the night before continuing their migration north into Europe.

After dinner some of the group gathered for music. Talent, musical genius and inspirational are a few words that don't describe what was on show in the salon. Though in mitigation, it was an unfamiliar guitar with a missing string!

Sunday 20 March – Souss-Massa National Park

This morning's new bird was a turtle dove, first heard from the terrace then seen in the garden.

Today's transport was five 4x4s that took us to Souss-Massa National Park's information centre. The National Park's director gave some words of welcome, and Oubrou from the bald ibis visit was there too with some students who later quizzed group members about why they came to Morocco and what we might like to see at the centre. After the military group left the building our 'official' guide – same guy as yesterday in the souk – gave us a background briefing on the National Park, the reintroduction projects in train and other matters. What is happening is that two extensive, though fenced, areas of the National Park are being used to build up a stock of three mammal species – addax, scimitar oryx and dorcas gazelle – and one bird, the North African subspecies of ostrich, to repopulate various areas across North Africa.

We then left to see them, driving safari-style through the first area. This had groups of addax, with their strangely shaped horns, dorcas gazelles and ostriches. It was at first a surprise that non-native eucalyptus trees had not been removed but the existence of a browse line, then later some cut branches being eaten by an oryx, showed that they are not as unpalatable as we supposed. More surprising were some feral dogs, and it remains a puzzle why they are not removed or controlled. There was a corral for rounding up mammals ready for moving into the wild elsewhere and a smaller corral-type structure where us human mammals could get out and watch with binoculars and telescopes.



Oued-Souss Massa National Park, with ostriches (JD); scimitar oryx.

We drove out of one huge enclosure and into the next where the star mammals were oryx, often close to the vehicles and giving good photo opportunities. There were more gazelles, too. Beyond that area we stopped for our picnic under some trees. Not far up the road from here we tried without luck for cream-coloured coursers in a place Mohamed had recently seen them, and the short-toed larks in that area didn't settle.

Our afternoon walk was at the sandy estuary of Oued Souss on the northern edge of the National Park, adjacent to Agadir. On the way there was a flock of white storks over the Souss River, which could also be seen in the distance from where we stopped.

The tide was quite high, which seem to concentrate the greater flamingos immediately opposite the car park, a flock of some 300. Alongside them, as well as many gulls and cormorants, were oystercatchers, curlews and a tightly-packed group of Sandwich terns.

There was a fierce wind, though warm, which made birdwatching an effort. Holding hats we walked through the saltmarsh vegetation. A stone-curlew flew from a large area of tidal debris of wood, plastic and discarded shoes. A quad bike then flushed the Kentish plovers we were trying to watch and its driver, a policeman, stopped to caution us about photographing by the guarded Royal Palace, the wall of which ran along the back of the saltmarsh. We had been looking in that direction: there was a small group of spoonbills, heads tucked in and hiding their bills. A cormorant of the race *morrocanus* flew low over us, showing its white underparts and the white thigh patch of a breeding adult bird. We watched more Kentish plovers, heard a greenshank and groups of both grey plovers and black-winged stilts flew past. We walked back to the buses along the estuary's edge where horses and carts were being taken for a run on the sand flats which were expanding as the tide ebbed.



Greater flamingos, Oued Souss (DB)

Back at base, there was time for some of those not now suffering with colds and wheezes to go for a local walk in the perfect early evening light. After dinner and checklists we listened to cicadas and frogs, then looked through the telescope at Jupiter and four moons from the terrace.

Monday 21 March – Paradise Valley

Two surprises before breakfast: rain (though not a lot) and for Peter C a good view of a black-crowned tchagra.

Our drive northeast took us past the remains of pre-earthquake Agadir, now in effect an extensive cemetery. The scenery changed into steep slopes and then the wide gorge of Paradise Valley, as we stopped to walk by the date palms. There was a brief shower at that point, but it didn't come to much. We followed the road up the gorge – though a very shallow 'up' – following the river, inevitably low this dry year but with enough water in it for a kingfisher to flash past David and grey wagtails that stayed with us for most of the time. There were even small, trout-like fish and a frog. Up on the crags there was the occasional black wheatear; later in the walk there were crag martins, house martins and red-rumped swallows all together in a feeding group. Raptors were mostly absent, as usual, apart from kestrels and a fine short-toed eagle. As ever Richard found many interesting plants, including the juniper relative *Tetraclinis articulata*, a Moroccan lavender and fine flowering examples of the mullein *Verbascum sinuatum*.

We picnicked on some rocks by the river – Mohamed was following with the buses – accompanied by serins up high and a nosed grasshopper. We walked a little farther up the valley and then had a lift to a café, in which Mohamed and his colleague who drove the Pajero soon got stuck into the kitchen to move things along. The shop we stopped at soon afterwards had a wonderful selection of fossils, minerals, plates and ornaments, but the hard sell made it quite the opposite of retail therapy.

We were back at base soon after four o'clock, giving time to settle bills, pack and go into the garden and beyond. Peter C was quick to get out and was rewarded with a white-crowned black wheatear. A little later, Colin and I mostly just got a good soaking: real rain this time, including a rainbow, but given the dry winter you couldn't begrudge them the change in weather.

At our final evening meal we were able to meet and thank the cooks, as well as collecting everyone's holiday highlights noted below.

Tuesday 22 March – Agadir and home

Shortly after first light, and the keenest birdwatchers were in the Atlas Kasbah garden. We were following up the sightings and sounds heard (including by Mohamed) of black-crowned tchagra. Our patience was rewarded with excellent views of a bird on the outside then atop an argan tree in the garden. In both cases it was making its attractive whistling call, somewhere between a willow warbler and golden oriole in quality. It's a famously elusive, skulking bird, so was a fine way to conclude the week.

A slightly early breakfast at 07:30 allowed a departure at nine o'clock for the late morning flight back to Gatwick, a little delayed and surprising us by coming into North Terminal, but otherwise routine.

Holiday highlights

These were collected on the final evening (before the main sighting of the black-crowned tchagra!) The Hotel Atlas Kasbah and its friendly staff were nominated by popular acclaim.

- Colin Little swifts; laughing dove; 'you lovely people'.
Peter B So much to see close to the hotel; bald ibis.
David Getting a photo of the Moussier's redstart; accessibility of local birds.
Steph Bald ibis; Barbary falcon; addax and oryx.
Peter C Hospitality in the village; the cheerful bulbuls.
Elonwy Bald ibis, Barbary falcon, the Berber village agadir.
Marie The agadir; the accidental tea party.
Jane Bulbul; culture e.g. souk and vegetables, morning sounds from the mosque, the agadir.
Geoff So many birds to see easily; Euphorbia plant community; the company.
Malcolm Moussier's redstart; black wheatear; turtle dove; informal tea party and when our host said it was "A surprise for me, too."
Helen Seeing the bald ibises and understanding how vulnerable they are; with the added bonus of a Barbary falcon.
Jill Flamingos; bulbuls; bee-eaters, oryx and gazelles.
Jean Impromptu tea party; the agadir; shrikes.
Mike Tea party; argan tree (and goats!); hotel oasis for wildlife; Colin being mistaken by Mohamed as an American!
Val Everything so different; insects such as the warty grasshopper; seeing Jupiter's moons.
Graham Barbary falcon and bald ibis.
Richard Location; the company; house buntings.
Sally Being able to have really close up views of the house bunting, Moussier's redstart and woodchat strike - without binoculars.
Chris Moussier's redstart (also relief as it was on the front cover of the brochure!); common tiger blue butterflies; impromptu hospitality.



House bunting, common bulbuls, black wheatear (DB).

WILDLIFE LISTS

BIRDS

Names follow Collins Bird Guide. Scientific names noted are distinctive local subspecies. NP = National Park.

Ostrich	Captive-breeding population of North African ostrich <i>Struthio camelus camelus</i> , also called red-necked ostrich or Barbary ostrich, in Souss-Massa NP.
Little grebe	At the reservoir on 18/3
Gannet	At sea near Cap Rhir, 17/3
Cormorant	Seen on two days, a good view of <i>moroccanus</i> at Oued Souss
Grey heron	Reservoir and Oued Souss
Cattle egret	A large flock, c.100, as we approached Oued Souss
Little egret	1 at Oued Souss
Great white egret	Singles on a beach near Cap Rhir, 17/4 and at Oued Souss
White stork	c.200 migrants at Atlas Kasbah, 19/4 and c.60 in a flock at Oued Souss
Northern bald ibis	On the nesting cliffs at Tamri
Spoonbill	6 at Oued Souss
Greater flamingo	300 at Oued Souss
Ruddy shelduck	2 at the reservoir on 18/3
Mallard	In flight, Oued Souss
Honey buzzard	1 over on local walk, 16/3
Short-toed eagle	3 singles, 2 on 17,3, 1 on 21/3
Kestrel	Seen daily
Barbary falcon	With bald ibises on cliffs at Tamri
Barbary partridge	Heard on 2 days from Atlas Kasbah
Coot	At the reservoir and seen on a roadside pool
Oystercatcher	c.20 at Oued Souss
Black-winged stilt	A tight flock of c.10 at Oued Souss
Stone-curlew	Heard several times at or near Atlas Kasbah; 1 flying at Oued Souss.
Grey plover	c.10 at Oued Souss
Kentish plover	Several little flocks, c.40 in total, at Oued Souss
Little ringed plover	1 at the reservoir
Whimbrel	Heard at Oued Souss
Curlew	Beach near Cap Rhir, 17/4, 6 at Oued Souss
Greenshank	Heard at Oued Souss
Common sandpiper	1 at the reservoir
Lesser black-backed gull	Seen 3 days, always coastal
Yellow-legged gull	Seen 5 days, coastal and inland
Sandwich tern	50 at Oued Souss
Feral pigeon	Seen most days
Woodpigeon	Seen on 3 days, commonest in Souss/Massa NP
Collared dove	Daily at Atlas Kasbah
Turtle dove	20/3 and 21/3 at Atlas Kasbah
Laughing dove	Daily at Atlas Kasbah
Little owl	1 near Atlas Kasbah
Common swift	Most days, especially over Atlas Kasbah
Pallid swift	2 at the airport on arrival but not seen again
Little swift	2 over Atlas Kasbah 18/3 & 19/3
Bee-eater	Groups over and settling near Atlas Kasbah every day
Hoopoe	Heard or seen daily at Atlas Kasbah
Kingfisher	1 in Paradise Valley
Short-toed lark	Groups in Souss/Massa NP, but distant
Crested lark	Daily at Atlas Kasbah
Crag martin	Paradise Valley
Barn swallow	Daily at Atlas Kasbah
Red-rumped swallow	Daily at Atlas Kasbah
House martin	Paradise Valley
Tree pipit	4 days at Atlas Kasbah, perhaps the same bird
White wagtail	Seen on 3 days, mostly around villages, but not well enough to find the <i>subpersonata</i> subspecies
Yellow wagtail	2 at the reservoir; the male was the European blue-headed <i>flava</i> race
Grey wagtail	Paradise Valley
Common bulbul	Common, daily at Atlas Kasbah
Nightingale	At Atlas Kasbah on 17/3 & 18/3
Robin	At Atlas Kasbah on 19/3
Moussier's redstart	Daily at Atlas Kasbah
Northern wheatear	3 with mammals in Souss/Massa NP
Black-eared wheatear	Male at Tamri
Black wheatear	Seen on 4 days, mostly in villages
White-crowned black wheatear	1 reported at Atlas Kasbah, 21/3
Blue rock thrush	Elmaasa village
Blackbird	Daily at Atlas Kasbah
Zitting cisticola	Oued Souss
Subalpine warbler	On the first 6 days, mostly at Atlas Kasbah

Sardinian warbler	Daily at Atlas Kasbah
Blackcap	Recorded on 5 days, at Atlas Kasbah
Chiffchaff	On the first 6 days, mostly at Atlas Kasbah
African blue tit	Seen on the first 3 days at Atlas Kasbah, but not subsequently
Great tit	Daily at Atlas Kasbah
Black-crowned tchagra	At Atlas Kasbah, seen especially well on the final day
Great grey shrike	Almost daily, especially around Atlas Kasbah
Woodchat shrike	Common, daily at Atlas Kasbah
'Magreb' magpie	The distinctive <i>mauritana</i> subspecies seen daily
Spotless starling	Almost daily, often in towns as we drove
House sparrow	Daily at Atlas Kasbah
Chaffinch	<i>africana</i> daily at Atlas Kasbah and surrounding farmland
Serin	In Souss/Massa NP and Paradise Valley
Greenfinch	Daily at Atlas Kasbah
Goldfinch	Souss/Massa NP
Linnet	Paradise Valley
Cirl bunting	Daily at Atlas Kasbah and surrounding farmland
House bunting	Daily at, on and inside Atlas Kasbah; in all villages and Agadir souk

MAMMALS

* Souss-Massa National Park's reintroduction project

Barbary ground squirrel	Addax *	Scimitar oryx *	Dorcas gazelle *
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REPTILES & AMPHIBIANS

Spur-thighed (Moorish) tortoise <i>Testudo graeca</i>	North Africa green frog <i>Rana saharica</i>
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BUTTERFLIES

Swallowtail	Large white	Bath white	Greenish black-tip	Clouded yellow	Small copper	Long-tailed blue
Lang's short-tailed blue	Common tiger blue	False baton blue	Red admiral	Painted lady	Wall brown	

OTHER INVERTEBRATES

Blue Emperor dragonfly <i>Anax imperator</i>	Syntomid moth <i>Amata (=Syntomis) alicia</i>
Striped hawk moth <i>Hyles livornica</i>	Nosed grasshopper <i>Acrida ungarica</i>
Cicada <i>Cicada</i> sp. heard, species unknown	Fire bug <i>Pyrrhocoris apterus</i>
Bee-fly sp.	Banded argiope spider <i>Argiope trifasciata</i>



Banded argiope spider *Argiope trifasciata*; long-tailed blue (DB); syntomid moth *Amata alicia*; nosed grasshopper *Acrida ungarica*.



PLANTS

Nomenclature mostly follows Thorogood, 2016

AROUND HOTEL AND VILLAGE

Ephederaceae	
<i>Ephedra altissima</i>	tall joint pine
Asparagaceae	
<i>Asparagus acutifolius</i>	A spiny asparagus
Juncaceae	
<i>Juncus acutus</i>	Sharp rush
Poaceae	
<i>Lamarkia aurea</i>	Golden dog's tail grass
Typhaceae	
<i>Typha domingensis</i>	
Papaveraceae	
<i>Papaver rhoeas</i>	Common poppy
<i>Fumaria bastardii</i>	A fumitory
Plumbaginaceae	
<i>Plumbago capensis</i>	A pale blue leadwort
<i>Limonium sinuatum</i>	Winged sea lavender
Polygonaceae	
<i>Rumex vesicarius</i>	A beautiful dock with pink fruits
<i>Emex spinosa</i>	Spiny dock
Caryophyllaceae	
<i>Spergularia media</i>	Large sea spurrey
Asphodelaceae	
<i>Asphodelus fistulosus</i>	Hollow leaved asphodel
Cataceae	
<i>Opuntia ficus-indica</i>	Prickly pear
Euphorbiaceae	
<i>Euphorbia helioscopia</i>	Sun spurge
<i>E. peplis</i>	Petty spurge
<i>Acalypha wilksiana</i>	A bronze leaved ornamental
Fabaceae	
<i>Melilotis indicus</i>	Small melilot
<i>M. altissimus</i>	Tall melilot
<i>Lotus creticus</i>	Cretan birdsfoot trefoil
<i>L. ornithopiodes</i>	A birdsfoot trefoil
<i>Ononis natrix</i>	Large yellow restharrow
<i>Scorpiurus muricatus</i>	A scorpion vetch
<i>Onobrychis caput-galli</i>	Cockscomb sainfoin
Rhamnaceae	
<i>Rhamnus lycoides</i>	A buckthorn
<i>Zizyphus lotus</i>	
Zygophyllaceae	
<i>Fagonia cretica</i>	A caltrop
Resedaceae	
<i>Reseda luteola</i>	Weld
<i>R. alba</i>	White mignonette
Scrophularaceae	
<i>Misopates orontium</i>	Weasel's snout or lesser snapdragon
Brassicaceae	
<i>Sisymbrium altissimum</i>	Tall rocket
Malvaceae	
<i>Hibiscus rosa-sinensis</i>	Hibiscus
<i>Gossypium hirsutum</i>	Upland cotton
Sapotaceae	
<i>Argania spinosa</i>	Argan
Primulaceae	
<i>Anagalis arvensis</i>	A blue 'scarlet' pimpernel
Apocynaceae	
<i>Nerium oleander</i>	Oleander
<i>Periplocca angustifolia</i>	A silky milkweed
Boraginaceae	
<i>Echium horridum</i>	A red bugloss
<i>Heliotropium europaeum</i>	Heliotrope
Solanaceae	
<i>Nicotiana glauca</i>	A tree-like tobacco
Convolvulaceae	
<i>Convolvulus altheoides</i>	Mallow-leaved bindweed
<i>C. siculum</i>	A very small blue bindweed

Plantaginaceae

<i>Kickxia elatine</i>	A fluellin
<i>K. sagitata</i>	Arrow leaved fluellin
<i>Linaria maroccana</i>	A colourful toadflax
<i>Plantago afra</i>	A branched plantain
<i>Myoporum laetum</i>	Myoporum or ngaio
Acanthaceae	
<i>Justicia adhtoda</i>	A white exotic (in garden)
Bignoniaceae	
<i>Jacaranda mimosifolia</i>	jacaranda
Lamiaceae	
<i>Lavandula dentata</i>	Toothed lavender
<i>L. multifida</i>	A lavender
Asteraceae	
<i>Chrysanthemum coronarium</i>	Crown daisy
<i>Volutaria maroccana</i>	Bluish knapweed relative
<i>Catananche arenaria</i>	A cupid's dart
<i>Cladanthus arabicus</i>	Yellow/orange daisy
<i>Launea arborescens</i>	A 'wire-netting' bush
<i>Xanthium spinosum</i>	Spiny cocklebur

CAP RHIR AND BALD IBIS SITE

Asparagaceae	
<i>Muscari gussonii</i>	A tassel hyacinth
<i>Dipcadi serotinum</i>	A brown 'bluebell'
Frankeniaceae	
<i>Frankenia laevis</i>	A large sea heath
<i>F. thymifolia</i>	A smaller sea heath
Plumbaginaceae	
<i>Limonium sinuatum</i>	Winged sea lavender
Polygonaceae	
<i>Polygonum maritimum</i>	Sea knotgrass
Caryophyllaceae	
<i>Polycarpea nivea</i>	An allseed
<i>Spergularia fimbriata</i>	A large pink spurrey
Euphorbiaceae	
<i>Euphorbia officinarum</i>	A spiny spurge
<i>E. regis-jubae</i>	A 'tree' spurge
<i>E. paralias</i>	Sea spurge
Fabaceae	
<i>Ononis natrix</i>	Large yellow restharrow
<i>Lotus cytisoides</i>	A hairy bird's foot trefoil
<i>Medicago maritima</i>	Sea medick
Brassicaceae	
<i>Eruca sativa</i>	Rocket
<i>Malcolmia litorale</i>	A stock relative
Boraginaceae	
<i>Anchusa humulis</i>	A small alkanet
<i>Buglossoides sp.</i>	A gromwell
Solanaceae	
<i>Lycium intricatum</i>	A Duke of Argyll's tea plant
Convolvulaceae	
<i>Cuscuta approximata</i>	A dodder
Lamiaceae	
<i>Salvia aegyptica</i>	A clary
Orobanchaceae	
<i>Striga gesnerioides</i>	A pink parasite
<i>Cistanche phelypaea</i>	A yellow broomrape relative
Apiaceae	
<i>Thapsia transtagana</i>	A yellow carrot relative
<i>Pseudorlaya miniscula</i>	A tiny stiff white carrot relative
Asteraceae	
<i>Kleinia anteuphorbia</i>	A succulent 'groundsel'
<i>Calendula stellata</i>	A small pot marigold
<i>Reichardia tingitana</i>	A handsome dandelion relative
Geraniaceae	
<i>Erodium maritimum</i>	Sea storksbill
<i>E. hesperium</i>	A storksbill

'AGADIR' DAY AND RESERVOIR	
Solanaceae	
<i>Solanum heterophyllum</i>	A nightshade
Scrophulariaceae	
<i>Scrophularia scopolii</i>	
Aizoaceae	
<i>Aizoon canariense</i>	Aizoon
Geraniaceae	
<i>Erodium touchyanum</i>	A storksbill
Fabaceae	
<i>Retama monosperma</i>	A white broom relative (round pods)
Brassicaceae	
<i>Sinapis arvensis</i>	A rocket
Asteraceae	
<i>Calendula stellata</i>	A pot marigold
<i>Pallenis spinosa</i>	A spiny yellow daisy
<i>Cladanthus arabicus</i>	An orange/yellow daisy
<i>Centaurea solstitialis</i>	St. Barnaby's thistle
<i>C. sphaerocephala</i>	A pink spiny knapweed
OUED SOUSS NATIONAL PARK	
Cistaceae	
<i>Helianthemum canariense</i>	Canary rockrose – pale yellow
Fabaceae	
<i>Ononis natrix</i>	Large yellow restharrow
Asteraceae	
<i>Asteriscus pinifolius</i>	A pale yellow daisy
<i>Echinops spinosus</i> ssp. <i>spinosus</i>	The spiniest globe thistle (Moroccan form)
OUED SOUSS ESTUARY	
Chenopodiaceae	
<i>Atriplex glauca</i>	Glaucous orache
<i>Atriplex portulacoides</i>	A shrubby orache
<i>Anthrocnemon macrostachyum</i>	A perennial glasswort
<i>Sueda ifniensis</i>	A shrubby seablite
<i>Salsola kali</i>	Prickly saltwort
<i>S. oppositifolia</i>	A local saltwort
Tamariscaceae	
<i>Tamarix africanus</i>	A tamarisk
<i>T. mascatensis</i>	A tamarisk
Brassicaceae	
<i>Cakile maritima</i>	Sea rocket

Plumbaginaceae	
<i>Limonium sinuatum</i>	Winged sea lavender
<i>Frankenia boissieri</i>	A sea heath
ELMAASA VILLAGE	
Aizoaceae	
<i>Mesembryanthemum cristelinum</i>	Ice plant
Solanaceae	
<i>Hyoscyamus albus</i>	Henbane
<i>Solanum nigrum</i>	Black nightshade
Asparagaceae	
<i>Agave siselana</i> (heterophyla)	Sisal
Asteraceae	
<i>Anvillea garcinii</i>	A shrubby yellow daisy
PARADISE VALLEY	
Cupressaceae	
<i>Tetracinus declinata</i>	A juniper relative
Araceae	
<i>Phoenix dactylyfera</i>	Date palm
Smilacaceae	
<i>Smilax aspera</i>	Smilax
Hypericaceae	
<i>Hypericum aegypticum</i>	A St. John's wort
Fabaceae	
<i>Parkinsonia</i> sp.	An ornamental tree
<i>Coronilla emerus</i>	A shrubby crown vetch
<i>Ceratonia silqua</i>	Carob
Anacardaceae	
<i>Rhus trifoliata</i>	A sumac
Scrophulariaceae	
<i>Verbascum sinuatum</i>	A mullein
Verbenaceae	
<i>Vitex agnus-castus</i>	The chaste tree (kebabs)
Asteraceae	
<i>Pulicaria mauritanica</i>	A fleabane
Boraginaceae	
<i>Trichodesma calcaratum</i>	A borage relative – bluish and yellow
Plumbaginaceae	
<i>Limonium lobatum</i>	An annual sea lavender
Pteridophyta	
<i>Adiantum capillus-veneris</i>	Maidenhair fern



Dodder *Cuscuta approximata* scrambling over cactus-like euphorbias; *Hypericum aegypticum* in Paradise Valley; *Dipsacis serotinum* ('brown bells').