

ORNITHOLIDAYS' TOUR TO HUNGARY
Crane Spectacular & Wild Goose Chase

03 – 09 November 2012



Leaders: Gabor Simay and Paul Rogers

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A Personal Diary

Saturday 3rd November

It is early morning when the British contingent meets at London Heathrow Terminal 3 for our flight to Budapest. Help is at hand to negotiate the automated check-in before we have our passports and luggage checked in a more traditional fashion. The two hour flight is punctual, smooth and trouble free, helped by a 100 mph tail wind, as indeed is passport control and customs. Once reunited with our luggage we meet Gabor our bird guide for the week and our driver Zoltan. Our party is complete when Don is waiting in the arrivals hall; luckily he flew into Hungary a few days earlier from New York missing the ravages of Superstorm Sandy.

We soon leave the suburbs of the capital behind and head over the flat landscape where Common Buzzards sit on roadside trees and small flocks of Common Magpies fly across the road. A garage is a safe place to have our picnic lunch, the main roads have no pull-offs or toilets. A female Black Redstart flits from post to post on the edge of a car compound.

An hour or so later we are standing on a grassy barrage across the River Tisza that forms a large lake. Large mature willows and elderly fishermen dot the banks; load drumming on one of the large trunks draws our attention to a Black Woodpecker that takes to the air giving us superb views in the sunshine. On the water are the expected Mallards, Black-headed Gulls and Great Crested Grebe, not expected are several Black-legged Kittiwakes. A real rarity in the country. More surprises are in store as Common Goldeneyes and Great Northern, Black-throated and Red-throated Divers along with Common Pochards, Tufted Duck and a Greater Scaup are also present. A Slavonian Grebe is the final special species for this most fruitful of starts.

As the light fades, at about 4.15 pm, we travel to our hotel near Nádudvar on the edge of the Hortobágy National Park. It is dark when we reach the National Park so its delights will have to wait until tomorrow. We are soon settled into our spacious warm rooms with time to relax and enjoy a drink before dinner. It has been a long day of travelling and we retire early for some much needed sleep.

Sunday 4th November

It is a fine mild morning that greets us outside reception at 6.30 am. The large reed-fringed lake adjacent to the hotel is still and quiet but the air is filled with the wonderful sounds of Common Cranes, Greylag and Greater White-fronted Geese heading for their feeding grounds. A gentle stroll by the lake is not very productive but we enjoy the autumn colours enhanced by the bright sunshine and the sight of several Roe Deer feeding amongst the stubble in a large field. A Common Kingfisher is a blue flash as it flies across the lake.

After breakfast we head for a vast area of steppe, known as *puszta* in Hungary, near Angyalhaza. The short grassland is maintained by traditional farming methods and the use of native breeds of livestock, Grey Cattle and Racka Sheep. The *puszta* is dotted with wells, long barns, and dead stumps where sits a Peregrine Falcon. Common Buzzards line our route, ahile Crested Larks, Corn Buntings, and a pair of Great Grey Shrikes sits on telegraph wires.

A farm track takes us deep into the heart of the steppe to an area used as a stopping off place by migrating Dotterel. The clear blue skies and hot sunshine make our walk over the sheep grazed grassland even more enjoyable. Hen Harriers hunt nearby and families of Common Cranes criss-cross the sky at regular intervals. It is late in the season and most of our quarry will have left for wintering grounds to the south and our hope for a late individual fails to materialise despite much diligent searching. The summer has been the driest for nearly a century but recent autumnal rains have made the tracks slippery and when the mini-bus get stuck in a deep rut, the word "Pushta" takes on a new meaning.

The drained Virágoskút Fishponds are attractive to both wildfowl and cranes and our destination for the late morning when the geese return from their feeding grounds. Stops on route for photographs of Common Cranes in the fields and an adult Eastern Imperial Eagle are essential. At the ponds the flocks of geese are distant but several juvenile White-tailed Eagles feeding on the dead fish regularly disturb the geese and fortunately drive them closer. There are about 15,000 birds, the vast majority are Greater White-fronted, but somewhere amongst them will be Red-breasted and Lesser White-fronted; the Wild Goose Chase is on. The light is excellent the sun is behind us, making life a little easier, particularly for the trained eye, and Gabor soon finds two Red-breasted Geese. They are in the nearest line and their small size and striking colours make them easy to pick out through the telescopes. A Lesser White-fronted Goose provides more of a challenge as it spends most of the time asleep and is very similar in plumage to its larger neighbours. Eventually all of the group see this rare bird, it is one of the Siberian race, the endangered Scandinavian individuals have already left for their wintering grounds in Greece. Northern Lapwings, Eurasian Teal, Grey Herons and Black-tailed Godwits are more familiar to us and given scant attention. It is good to have these two sought after species on the list so early in the tour. Lunch is a substantial affair in a hotel in Balmazújváros, particularly Clive's vegetarian platter.

The grasslands to the north of the town are home to large numbers of European Susliks, the main prey of Saker Falcon in the summer, although the rodents are now hibernating, the raptors often stay faithful to their territory in the winter seeking out other prey species, particularly Feral Pigeons. The birds use the pylons as look out posts but there is no sign of them today but a Long-legged Buzzard is some compensation.

As the day wears on the bird population at the fishponds changes as the geese leave to feed and the cranes come to roost. As the light fades the distant calls of the cranes become louder and long lines of elegant black silhouettes stretch in every direction. We watch spellbound as the calls fill the air and the numbers reach into thousands. Slowly they turn into the wind, extend long legs and touch down onto the safety of the soft mud in effortless fashion. A recent count estimates a record number of 112,000 this year in the Hortobágy, and we are watching some 30,000 or so. Only short flights of White-tailed Eagles briefly disturb them but a low flying Northern Goshawk has a more dramatic effect.

Skins of Greater White-fronted Geese fly in the opposite direction and just when we think that the last line has passed over, yet more appear and the number of geese probably equals the number of cranes. It is amazing to see so many birds in the air at the same time.

Dinner is in the impressive baronial hall at the hotel after which we celebrate Anita's birthday with a cake and drinks.

Monday 5th November

Pre-breakfast is very quiet due to a strong wind keeping the passerines deep in cover, even the cranes are flying closer to the ground. The weather forecast is not too encouraging so we were hoping to take the small railway at The Great Fishponds and spend some time in hides. The railway was used for transporting reeds but is now a summer tourist attraction and only runs on special occasions. Our special booking is cancelled due to essential maintenance to the track so Plan B is adopted after breakfast and we visit fishponds at Elep. One muddy pond has been particularly fruitful over the last week but a combination of strong winds and disturbance by a digger has forced the birds way into the distance and identification not easy. Only a female Western Marsh Harrier offers close views. The struggle against the elements is an unequal one so we leave to explore the grasslands in the south of the park.

The large sugar refinery at Kaba has been closed due to restrictions by the EU but a small artificial overspill pond remains. Here are several Little Grebes and a single Green Sandpiper bobs along the water's edge. The fate of several Marsh Terrapins trapped on the slippery plastic membrane must be an uncertain one.

Fragments of dead thistle roll over the puszta like mini-tumbleweeds propelled by the stiff wind. Hen Harriers find the conditions helpful as they effortlessly search the short grass for prey, a pair of Saker Falcons regularly hunts here but there is no sign of them today. Only a Common Skylark is a new sighting but several Common Buzzards and four Roe Deer pose for the photographers.

A stop for fuel in Berettyóújfalu provides the opportunity for us to refuel with a strong cup of coffee before on to a wetland managed by the National Park near Földes, this is Gabor's local patch. A high well-built viewing platform offers an excellent vantage point but shaking telescopes make viewing difficult. However, we manage to see two Red-breasted Geese amongst the thousands of Greylags and Greater White-fronted. A large herd of Water Buffalo look a little out of place but their love of mud and water keeps the area free of reeds and a valuable breeding area for several wader species and winter feeding area for wildfowl would be lost.

A flat soft sparsely vegetated area looks very unpromising but we dutifully follow Gabor's instruction and walked slowly over it in line abreast. Soon several Common Snipe take to the air at our approach, next two Jack Snipe burst into the air from right under our feet. This is a difficult species to find at the best of times but particularly in the Hortobágy as they are migrants.

Our picnic lunch is taken in a series of buildings, used as barracks for Soviet soldiers but now under renovation as an education centre for school children. In the grounds tall poplar trees sport nest boxes for Red-footed Falcons, the birds have long since gone, radio tagging confirming Angola as their wintering grounds.

The last destination of the day is a reservoir known as K11. Now the wind has abated a little, birding is easier and more comfortable. A group of 27 Pygmy Cormorants is a pleasant surprise as, like the falcons, they too move south at the approach of winter. Mallard, Gadwall and Eurasian Coot are here in high numbers mixed with them are several Eurasian Wigeon and two Ferruginous Ducks. A dashing Peregrine Falcon causes the birds to take flight but it perches on a small island for us to see through the telescopes. Not so a Common Kingfisher that is just a blue flash that fails to land, much to Anita's annoyance. Tonight it is flocks of Common Starlings that fly overhead before dropping into roost in a large reed bed.

The heavy rain forecast finally arrives as we head back to base but now it is pitch black, we have made the most of the day, fingers are crossed in the hope that the depression will pass during the night. Dinner is again a good one followed by much storytelling and raucous laughter - most enjoyable.

Tuesday 6th November

Thankfully the rain has passed through during the night and we awake to a fine still sunny morning. Lines of cranes fly high against a sky coloured by the rising sun. After breakfast we spend some time in the hotel grounds. Here Tree Sparrows flit from hedge to path and back again, a Eurasian Treecreeper climbs the trunk of a large willow tree on the banks of the lake. A European Robin skulks in the middle of a Dog Rose bush, its red breast matched by hips on the arching thorny branches. A small stand of Ash Trees on the bend of the drive often attract Eurasian Bullfinches to the "keys" and this year is no exception, this is a species which is not common in Hungary, but this is a reliable site.

The fine still weather encourages us to try for Great Bustard, a species high on everyone's wants list. Yesterday's rain makes the muddy track to the southern grasslands impassable and we may have a long walk ahead, but good fortune is on our side as a group of 15 are clearly visible as we disembark. The sun is behind us and the group as near as we could wish. Through the telescopes it is possible to see every detail of these impressive but wary birds; the flock is of male birds, the white moustaches of some adult males showing well. At this time of the year the sexes form separate flocks and a more distant flock may well be females; in all there are 32 birds in view. They are fantastic views and we watch spell bound for an hour or so and a flock of Serins overhead is the only thing that briefly diverts our attention. Slowly the birds walk into a feed of rape and feed in a relaxed fashion, here the farmers are "managed" to sow crops which are beneficial to the bustards particularly as winter feed otherwise they would move out of the area.

Flushed with success we try once again for Saker Falcon, a species that is becoming elusive. Again we fail to find one and stop to take some photographs of cranes feeding close to the road. As we watch Chris points out a bird with colour rings; digital images are useful to see the colours accurately and we may be able to find the history of the bird, with the help of some of Gabor's colleagues.

Hortobágy Village is not only a tourist hotspot but a reliable site for another special species, Syrian Woodpecker. On the edge of the village a small field bordered by trees brings instant success after a brief

burst of play-back. A female perches close enough for us to see clearly the whiter open face and pink rather than red under tail coverts. The National Park Visitor Centre has a few post cards for friends back home but I suspect we will back before they reach their destinations. The ancient Csarda serves us an excellent goulash and a fruit pie, as it is mid-week and out of season it is a quiet and relaxing experience.

Hortobágy-halastó is the small settlement near to the Great Fishponds and where we should have started our train journey but today we walk along the willow-lined banks searching for Bearded Reedlings and Penduline Tits. The wind has strengthened and diggers refurbishing the fish ponds reduce the chances of success. We walk as far as the second rail station named after Konrad Lorenz one of the naturalists instrumental in the formation of the National Park. Tree Sparrows are plentiful and a Great Egret sits on a bank, Clive points out a Goldcrest in a tangle of willows, close by is another new species for us a Chiffchaff but there is no sign of our target birds. Perhaps we used up all our luck this morning but a Little Owl sitting on a chimney means we finish on a high. We are back in good time to relax before dinner.

Wednesday 7th November

Before breakfast we walk to the far end of the lake hoping to find Otters as I have been lucky enough to see them here on previous tours but the waters are still and empty today. We have to make do with the sight and sounds of Common Cranes – what a hardship!

First stop of the day is at a drained fishpond near a bridge over the River Keleti-föcsatorna. Here are a good number of birds including Black-headed Gulls, Eurasian Curlew, Northern Lapwings, a small flock of Dunlin, a Common Snipe, two Grey Plovers and a small wader. A strong cold wind makes our eyes water and viewing through the scopes is a little difficult. Eventually after much discussion and consulting various books we all agree that we are watching a Pectoral Sandpiper. This is a species from the New World but surprisingly seen here on a regular basis - a special sighting.

We return to the vehicle to warm up and head for Debrecen, Hungary's second city and home of the University where Gabor studied. In just under an hour we are clear of the city and its light traffic, parking by the edge of the Great Forest, another National Park. Just inside this ancient woodland with its magnificent majestic oaks, new species soon start to appear. First Eurasian Nuthatches call as they climb along the twisted trunks; Marsh Tits mingle with Long-tailed, including the white headed race, plus Blue and Great Tits. A Black Woodpecker calls as it flies through the trees but we are unable to locate it. A mixed flock feeds at the top of a mature tree and amongst them is a Middle Spotted Woodpecker. It is a species that we hoped for and the sunshine highlighted its diagnostic all red crown.

The wide track is edged with Spindle Trees their pink and orange fruits add a splash of colour to our leisurely walk. A Short-toed Treecreeper responds to Gabor's playback and allows excellent views. We have only walked a few hundred yards with hardly a dull moment; another highlight is the sight of two Hawfinches perched long enough for us to admire through the telescopes, as flock of 20 or so fly overhead the sun emphasizing their broad white wing panels. It is a wonderful habitat where we enjoy another picnic in the warm sun on the edge of the Great Forest.

Our exploration of the northern part of the Hortobágy continues this afternoon with a visit to the township of Balmazújváros. It is a well known winter roost of Long-eared Owls and one of the highlights of this tour. In the middle of the town the gardens provide a sanctuary for these impressive birds. Just a few yards from the bus pairs of large amber eyes blink blearily at us. First one pair then another, then another, two more in this tree, the count continues ... eleven, twelve.....twenty three, twenty four.....thirty five, thirty six....forty seven, forty eight.... the final number is sixty two. These are more special moments; let's hope the photographs do justice to the experience.

We end the day visiting a wetland important for cranes and breeding waders, the area is kept free from reeds and unwanted vegetation by a herd of Woolly Pigs, that dig up roots and rhizomes. No doubt the apples left over from lunch were a real delicacy - they have to thank Anita for their treat. A restaurant and lodge are in the early stages of construction – may be this is where we shall stay on future tours!

Saker Falcon still eludes us and is becoming a troublesome but Gabor is keen to find this special and scarce raptor. Again we fail to find it on another line of pylons; yet again the skies are full of cranes and geese so our search is not a complete failure.

Thursday 8th November

The hunt for Saker continues on a grassland area, which is also a traditional wintering area for Great Spotted Eagle but much to Don's disappointment they have not returned yet. A distant White-tailed Eagle and a Rough-legged Buzzard are the only birds of prey that we can find. Moving to another area, and yet another line of pylons, we at last hit the jack pot not one, but two, Saker Falcons perched on a distant pylon. They could be closer but the large size, brown back and pale head are clear for us to see, we enjoy the sight of this rare bird with perhaps only 600 pairs in Europe. We all heave a sigh of relief, particularly Gabor.

Penduline Tits and Bearded Reedlings share reed beds and willows so the area around Virágoskút fishponds should hold both species and is worthy of exploration. Syrian and Great Spotted Woodpeckers sit high in a mature White Polar and allow direct comparison. Play back encourages a response from Penduline Tits but unfortunately the flight views are all too brief. A small group of Bearded Reedlings fly in front of us for much better views and as we watch from the banks of the pond two males investigate at close range, the thick tangled roots and reeds make photography a little difficult. It is late in the morning and the geese are returning to their daytime roost, skein after skein, line after line, land on the mud. Working carefully through the Greater White-fronted Geese we find a single Lesser White-fronted and two Red-breasted Geese. The numbers are estimated to be some 40,000 - the sight and sound of such large numbers taking to the air when disturbed by a juvenile White-tailed Eagle is another wonderful sight. Interestingly a low flying Peregrine Falcon sighted by Clive does not have the same dramatic effect.

A csarda close to the River Tisza is famed for its fish soup and for the fish lovers the dish does not disappoint, the carp and catfish would have been farmed locally. The small streams and ditches on the edge of the Darassa grasslands are our last hope for good views of Penduline Tit but despite a thorough search they remain elusive. A mixed flock of Tree and House Sparrows and Common Chaffinches holds one last surprise for us, a single Brambling. Nearby is the large Lake Kondas, an important roosting area for the Common Cranes. As the light fades and the sun sets we stand on the edge of a small copse by a farmstead, we are on the flight path of the cranes. Tucked under the edge of the trees the cranes do not see us and pass directly overhead. Again the sound of line after line of Common Cranes only 20 metres above us is magical. The numbers seem never ending and most evocative as they fly against the red skies and setting sun. This roost is the largest in the Hortobágy, numbering some 50,000 or more. It truly is a "Crane Spectacular" and an experience that will remain with us for a long time.

Friday 9th November

Our flight to London is at mid-day so we have no time for bird watching and immediately after breakfast we finish our packing, load the minibus and start the journey home. The weather is dull and wet as we pass the last groups of cranes in the fields. The three hour journey is along good roads punctuated with lots of Common Buzzards perched on posts. Near the airport we take a short break for a leg stretch and a cup of coffee. At the Liszt Ferenc Airport we say goodbye to Don who is staying on in Budapest before continuing on his travels. The flight to Heathrow is comfortable but our two hour flight is extended when we are stacked for some 20 minutes before we land. Cases and luggage are waiting at the carousel after we have passed through passport control and here we say fond farewells to new found friends.

Acknowledgements

Many thanks go to Gabor for guiding us around the Hortobágy and finding us so many birds, without him our list would have been very much shorter. Thanks also to Zoltan for his safe driving and never complaining about driving over the same rutted tracks time after time. Most of all, thanks to all of you for joining us on this special tour with such enthusiasm and good humour. I am sure like me you will have many magical memories from, cranes against a blood red sky, to the penetrating amber eyes of Long-eared Owls. Many thanks for travelling with us and I hope to see you again in the not too distant future.

E. Paul Rogers
Ornitholidays
29 Straight Mile
Romsey Hampshire
SO51 9BB
Tel : 01794 519445
E-mail : info@ornitholidays.co.uk

November 2012

Itinerary and Weather

- 3 November Early morning flight from LHR to Budapest – Lake Tisza – Hotel Trófea
Sunny periods max 14°C
- 4 November Angyaláza Puszta – Virágoskút Fishponds – Lunch in Balmazújváros- Northern Grasslands
– Virágoskút Fishponds
Fine and sunny with a light wind max 14°C
- 5 November Elep and fishponds – Kaba ponds – Grasslands and wetlands near Földes – K 11 Reservoir
Strong cold northerly wind – overcast – rain late afternoon max 12°C
- 6 November Trófea grounds - Hortobágy village – Hortobágy-halásztó.
Fine and sunny – cloudy with light wind late afternoon max 14°C
- 7 November River Keleti fishponds - Debrecen Great Forest – Balmazújváros – Tetétlen.
Dry and fine sunny morning overcast afternoon max 12°C
- 8 November Balmazújváros – Virágoskút fishponds – Tiszacsege lunch –Darassa grasslands.
Dry with long sunny periods light breezes max 13°C
- 9 November Mid-day International Flight to LHR
Dull with light rain max 14°C

CHECKLIST OF SPECIES SEEN DURING THE TOUR

No of days recorded	Abundance scale
1 2h means seen on 1 day and heard on 2 other days	(max for any one day)
	1 = 1 - 4
	2 = 5 - 9
	3 = 10 - 99
	4 = 100 - 999
	5 = 1000+

SPECIES	No of days recorded	Abundance scale	SCIENTIFIC NAME
Mute Swan	2	3	<i>Cygnus olor</i>
Red-throated Diver	1	1	<i>Gavia stellata</i>
Black-throated Diver	1	1	<i>Gavia arctica</i>
Great Northern Diver	1	1	<i>Gavia immer</i>
Greater White-fronted Goose	6	5	<i>Anser albifrons</i>
Lesser White-fronted Goose	2	1	<i>Anser erythropus</i>
Greylag Goose	5	3	<i>Anser anser</i>
Red-breasted Goose	3	1	<i>Branta ruficollis</i>
Common Shelduck	1	1	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>
Eurasian Wigeon	1	2	<i>Anas penelope</i>
Gadwall	1	3	<i>Anas strepera</i>
Eurasian Teal	5	4	<i>Anas crecca</i>
Mallard	7	4	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>
Northern Pintail	1	2	<i>Anas acuta</i>
Northern Shoveler	3	2	<i>Anas clypeata</i>
Common Pochard	1	3	<i>Aythya ferina</i>
Ferruginous Duck	1	1	<i>Aythya nyroca</i>
Greater Scaup	1	1	<i>Aythya marila</i>
Tufted Duck	1	3	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>
Common Goldeneye	1	3	<i>Bucephala clangula</i>
Common Pheasant	7	3	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>
Little Grebe	1	2	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>
Great Crested Grebe	2	3	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>
Slavonian Grebe	1	1	<i>Podiceps auritus</i>
Great Cormorant	6	3	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>
Pygmy Cormorant	2	3	<i>Phalacrocorax pygmeus</i>
Great Egret	5	2	<i>Egretta alba</i>
Grey Heron	6	2	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>
White Stork	1	1	<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>
White-tailed Eagle	3	2	<i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i>
Eastern Imperial Eagle	1	1	<i>Aquila heliaca</i>
Western Marsh Harrier	1	1	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>
Hen Harrier	4	2	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>
Long-legged Buzzard	1	1	<i>Buteo rufinus</i>
Common Buzzard	7	3	<i>Buteo buteo</i>
Rough-legged Buzzard	2	1	<i>Buteo lagopus</i>
Saker Falcon	1	1	<i>Falco cherrug</i>
Peregrine Falcon	3	1	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>
Eurasian Sparrowhawk	5	1	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>
Northern Goshawk	1	1	<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>
Common Kestrel	5	1	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>
Common Coot	1	4	<i>Fulica atra</i>
Common Crane	7	5	<i>Grus grus</i>
Great Bustard	1	3	<i>Otus tarda</i>
Grey Plover	1	1	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>
Northern Lapwing	6	4	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>
Dunlin	3	3	<i>Calidris alpina</i>
Pectoral Sandpiper	1	1	<i>Calidris melanotos</i>
Green Sandpiper	1	1	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>
Spotted Redshank	2	2	<i>Tringa erythropus</i>

Common Greenshank	1	1	<i>Tringa nebularis</i>
Black-tailed Godwit	1	1	<i>Limosa limosa</i>
Eurasian Curlew	3	4	<i>Numenius arquata</i>
Common Snipe	2	2	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>
Jack Snipe	1	1	<i>Lymnocyptes minimus</i>
Ruff	2	2	<i>Philomachus pugnax</i>
Black-headed Gull	7	4	<i>Larus ridibundus</i>
Common Gull	4	3	<i>Larus canus</i>
Caspian Gull	7	4	<i>Larus argentatus</i>
Yellow-legged Gull	3	2	<i>Larus cachinnans</i>
Little Gull	1	1	<i>Larus minutus</i>
Black-legged Kittiwake	1	2	<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>
Rock Dove (Feral Pigeon)	7	4	<i>Columba livia</i>
Stock Dove	2	3	<i>Columba oenas</i>
Eurasian Collared Dove	7	4	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>
Little Owl	1	1	<i>Athene noctua</i>
Long-eared Owl	1	3	<i>Asio otus</i>
Common Kingfisher	3	1	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>
Black Woodpecker	2	1	<i>Dryocopus martius</i>
Middle Spotted Woodpecker	1	1	<i>Dendrocopos medius</i>
Great Spotted Woodpecker	3	1	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>
Syrian Woodpecker	2	1	<i>Dendrocopus syriacus</i>
Crested Lark	3	1	<i>Galerida cristata</i>
Common Skylark	3	1	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>
Meadow Pipit	1	1	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>
European Robin	2	1	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>
Black Redstart	3	1	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>
Common Stonechat	1	1	<i>Saxicola torquata</i>
Mistle Thrush	2	2	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>
Eurasian Blackbird	6	2	<i>Turdus merula</i>
Mistle Thrush	4	3	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>
Fieldfare	3	3	<i>Turdus pilaris</i>
Common Chiffchaff	1	1	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>
Goldcrest	3	1	<i>Regulus regulus</i>
Winter Wren	-	1h	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>
Great Tit	5	2	<i>Parus major</i>
Coal Tit	1	1	<i>Periparus ater</i>
European Blue Tit	4	1	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>
Marsh Tit	1	2	<i>Poecile palustris</i>
Long-tailed Tit	1	3	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>
Bearded Reedling	2	2	<i>Panurus biarmicus</i>
Eurasian Penduline Tit	1	1	<i>Remiz pendulinus</i>
Eurasian Nuthatch	1	1	<i>Sitta europae</i>
Eurasian Treecreeper	1	1	<i>Certhia familiaris</i>
Short-toed Treecreeper	1	1	<i>Certhia brachydactyla</i>
Great Grey Shrike	4	1	<i>Lanius excubitor</i>
Eurasian Jay	-	1h	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>
Common Magpie	7	3	<i>Pica pica</i>
Western Jackdaw	3	3	<i>Corvus monedula</i>
Hooded Crow	7	3	<i>Corvus cornix</i>
Rook	7	5	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>
Common Raven	1	1	<i>Corvus corax</i>
Common Starling	7	4	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>
House Sparrow	7	3	<i>Passer domesticus</i>
Tree Sparrow	7	4	<i>Passer montanus</i>
Common Chaffinch	4	1h	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>
Brambling	1	1	<i>Fringilla montifringilla</i>
Common Linnet	3	2	<i>Carduelis cannabina</i>
European Goldfinch	4	3	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>
European Greenfinch	3	2	<i>Carduelis chloris</i>
Eurasian Siskin	1	2	<i>Carduelis spinus</i>
Eurasian Bullfinch	3	1	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>
Hawfinch	1	3	<i>Coccothraustes coccothraustes</i>

Corn Bunting	1	1	<i>Miliaria calandra</i>
Reed Bunting	6	3	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>
Yellowhammer	2	1	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>
MAMMALS			
Red Fox	2	1	<i>Vulpes vulpes</i>
Roe Deer	7	3	<i>Capreolus capreolus</i>
Brown Hare	2	1	<i>Lepus capensis</i>
REPTILES			
Marsh Terrapin			
INSECTS			
Red Admiral			
Migrant Hawker			

This list represents those species seen by party members of this tour.





Common Cranes



Common Cranes



Goose flock



Great Bustard flock



Bearded Reedling



Woolly Pig



Long-eared Owl



Syrian Woodpecker



Trofea Lake

Front cover: Common Cranes at sunset

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