

TRANSYLVANIA BIRDING TOUR 2017

with **SAKERTOURS**

27 May – 3 June 2017



'Caucasian' Shore Lark (János Oláh)

Leader: Tamás Zalai

We have been visiting Transylvania for over 20 years and nowadays it is a rising destination on the European tourism market because of its amazing natural environment. This tour was designed to visit superb forests and habitats as well as to see some key birds and Carpathian Brown Bears! We could not afford not to include a visit to the birth place of Vlad Tepes alias Dracula. This tour is also linkable with our Danube Delta tour and for overseas visitors this combination is an amazing 15 days experience in Romania! We have been running shorter extensions for many years but it was the first time that this Transylvania Birding Tour was running. It was a great start for this itinerary with a very impressive 145 species recorded in just a mere 7 days birding. We have visited some impressive mountain areas and forests as well as really scenic limestone valleys and gorges and seen many great birds! The tour is designed for late spring so we are able to visit some high altitude habitats to look for the balcanica race of the 'Caucasian' Shore Lark which is not an easy bird to see in Europe. The weather was very kind to us and this year's highlights included Grey Partridge and Hazel Grouse, a nice selection of raptors such as Golden and Lesser Spotted Eagles, European Honey Buzzard, Goshawk, Eurasian Hobby, some spectacular owls like Ural, Eagle, Tawny and Scops Owls, eight species of breeding woodpeckers including superb views of the rare and declining White-backed Woodpecker and also Three-toed Woodpecker, Wallcreeper, Eurasian Nutcracker, Crested, Willow and Sombre Tits, Red-breasted and Collared Flycatchers, Ring Ouzel, Rufous-tailed Rock Thrush, Thrush Nightingale, River and Barred Warblers, Ortolan and Rock Buntings. We have also seen Carpathian Brown Bears from our

superb hides as well as in the forest! The tour was a great experience and fantastic late spring birding!

Saturday, 27th of May

After we all gathered at Bucharest airport we left the hot lowlands behind as soon as we could and climbed up to the Eastern Carpathians. We saw Ferruginous Ducks and Whiskered Terns on the early part of the drive but not much else. Traffic was pretty bad as lot of people were heading to the cooler Carpathians for the weekend. Late afternoon we arrived to our comfortable accommodation just at the forest edge in the Bucegi Mountains. The temperature was very pleasant comparing the hot wheater we had in Bucharest. We had an optional walk in the forest but really it was getting too late so there was not much activity. We had a nice dinner and an early night.



Male Grey-headed Woodpecker (János Oláh)

Sunday, 28th of May

Just before breakfast we made a short walk around our accommodation. Here we had our first taste of the Carpathian birding, with Common and Black Redstarts, Grey Wagtail, Willow and Coal Tits, Bullfinch but the highlight for the morning was a stunning female Grey-headed Woodpecker posed in the scope as long as we wanted.

After a nice breakfast we drove to the Busteni cable car and not much later we were on the 'roof of the Carpathians' close to the famous Babele cliffs. Much to our delight we very quickly located our main target for the day: the striking and rare 'balcanica' race of Shore Lark (a pontentional split as Caucasian Shore Lark). As we headed further to the alpine zone Water Pipit became abundant and we enjoyed some scope views of two Common Crossbills. We spent the rest of the day up there around 2200 meters and had more views of the Shore Lark, but the Alpine Accentor eluded us. Unfortunately there was heavy traffic on the mountain so it was late afternoon by the time we got back to the hotel. After dinner however we had an optional walk to a nearby mature beach forest to look for Ural Owl. We saw a pair of Collared Flycatchers and a few thrushes but no sign of the owl. After an hour of searching we gave up and started to drive back to the hotel when suddenly a fine Ural Owl was spotted

from the bus. The bird flew away but we got out and followed it until everybody had nice scope views of this large owl! What a fantastic bird to finish our first day birding!



Adult Ural Owl in the Bucegi Mountains (János Oláh)

Monday, 29th of May

Before breakfast we were out again and added Crested Tit to our list plus had an overflying flock of Common Crossbills and better views of Bullfinches as they were feeding close by. And this time a calling male Grey-headed Woodpecker was sunbathing on a top of the dead tree and later feeding on the ground just a mere 5 meters from us! After breakfast we tried another cable car at Sinaia, and from the register building we picked up an immature male Common Rosefinch. At the top we had another Shore Lark and some flowering Carpathian Rhododendrons and the already familiar alpine birds but no Alpine Accentor. On the way back we made a short stop in an old, mature beech forest just to have scope views of an immature male Red-breasted Flycatcher as it was singing its heart out. After the busy morning we packed up and left for the long journey to the limestone area of Torockó. After we passed the Bucegi Mountains we crossed several old Saxon villages and finally entered to the heart of Transylvania. On the way we had our first soaring Lesser Spotted Eagles too. Before we to our nicely situated accommodation we made a short stop at the limestone gorge of Kőköz, where after the rain we enjoyed good activity with Peregrins flying around and a singing male Rock Bunting perched on the top of the cliffs. We also had some Eurasian Crag Martins and two Red-rumped Swallows collecting mud right in front of us. Both of these species are on the most northern border of their distribution range and were very welcome additions to our growing list. After we occupied our accommodation for the next two days and as soon as we finished our dinner a European Scops Owl started calling and we got excellent scope views of this smart bird.



Corncrake was showing well near Torocko (János Oláh)

Tuesday, 30th of June

Our pre-breakfast birding was very productive as there were birds all around us just as we got out of the van! Marsh Warbler was common and we got superb looks as these loud-mouthed birds were singing away but even better we got our scope on the shy Eurasian River Warbler in a thick streamside bush. Other goodies included Wryneck, Northern Grey Shrike, Red-backed Shrike, Fieldfares, Common Whitethroat and several Ortolan Buntings. After breakfast we drove a short distance to a lovely meadow and managed to see a calling Corncrake. What a special bird to see as it is singing its rather unmusical scratchy song.



Male Grey Partridge (left) and Ortolan Bunting (János Oláh)

The substantial rain the previous day brought out some goodies and we had more Red-rumped Swallows, heard more River Warblers and saw a male Green Woodpecker. The top star birds of the morning were a pair of the sharply declining Grey Partridge and a nice male Barred Warbler! Raptors were out as well and we had Golden Eagle, European Honey-Buzzard, Goshawk and a Eurasian Hobby. We headed back to our hotel for a nice lunch and after a little siesta we drove to the most impressive limestone crag called “Székelykő”. Here we had at least 12 different Rock Buntings, a nice pair of Golden Eagle, a displaying Rufous-tailed Rock Thrush, several Alpine Swifts but a rather fast-moving Sombre Tit remained ‘leader only’. All in all it was a very birdy and action-packed day at this most wonderful limestone valley. The birding day was followed by a superb traditional dinner!

Wednesday, 1st of June

Despite it was raining when we got up and did our pre-breakfast birding and had a similar selection to the previous morning with nice views of Corncrake again! After breakfast we left the Torockó area behind and drove towards our last base: the mighty Hargita Mountains. We stopped a few times along the way, first for a roadside perched Lesser Spotted Eagle and later we had a nice time at a small colony of the colorful European Bee-Eaters where a Black Stork was a bonus. We continued our drive towards the Hargita Mountain and had our picnic lunch in a lovely old beech and oak woodland with Collared Flycatchers, Tawny Owls, Black and Middle Spotted Woodpeckers.



Tawny Owl (János Oláh)

As we were about to leave the rare and declining White-backed Woodpecker started to drum and it did not take long to track him down and we got prolonged scope views of a stunning male! This species needs old forest with lots of dead wood on the ground so no wonder why it is declining so quickly in Europe with the modern forestry habits. After this great success we still had time to visit Sighisoara (Segesvár) where we made a short walk in the ancient town and visited the birth-place of the ‘blood thirsty’ Vlad Tepes or as it is more commonly known:

Dracula. Our last stop of the day was by the Küküllő river, where we saw a singing Thrush Nightingale and several Garden Warblers. We were ready for a nice dinner by the time we arrived to our final accommodation in the base of the Hargita Mountains.



Male White-backed Woodpecker near Segesvár (Zoltán Baczó)

Thursday, 2nd of June

This turned out to be a rainy day! We started early and drove towards the Görgény Basin. En route we had excellent views of a Spotted Nutcracker perched on the top of a pine. Now it was time to drive to the fabulous Békás (Bicaz) Gorge. This is a fantastic location – apparently the most scenic of all Carpathian gorges – and one of the easiest to see the sought-after Wallcreeper. It is not only easy to get to (by car) but holds several pairs of these unique birds. This year we needed to work harder for this species as we were unlucky with weather. Despite we found the breeding crevice only a few of us managed to have quick looks before it started to rain. We took shelter in a nearby restaurant for lunch and later were back to the breeding site but the rain if anything got even heavier. We decided to give up and drove to our

bear hides. The last few hundred meter we had to walk and as we approached the hide a male Hazel Grouse was glimpsed by some of us. The bear activity was amazing and we quickly forget the rainy day with hard work when we had six different Carpathian Brown Bears in front of the hide which was surely one of the most memorable experience for this tour. But the icing on the cake was finding probably the same male Hazel Grouse roosting as we were silently walking back to our bus. It is not often you can watch a male Hazel Grouse through the scope! It was a memorable day indeed!



Male Hazel Grouse in the Hargita Mountains (Attila Szilágyi)

Friday, 3rd of June

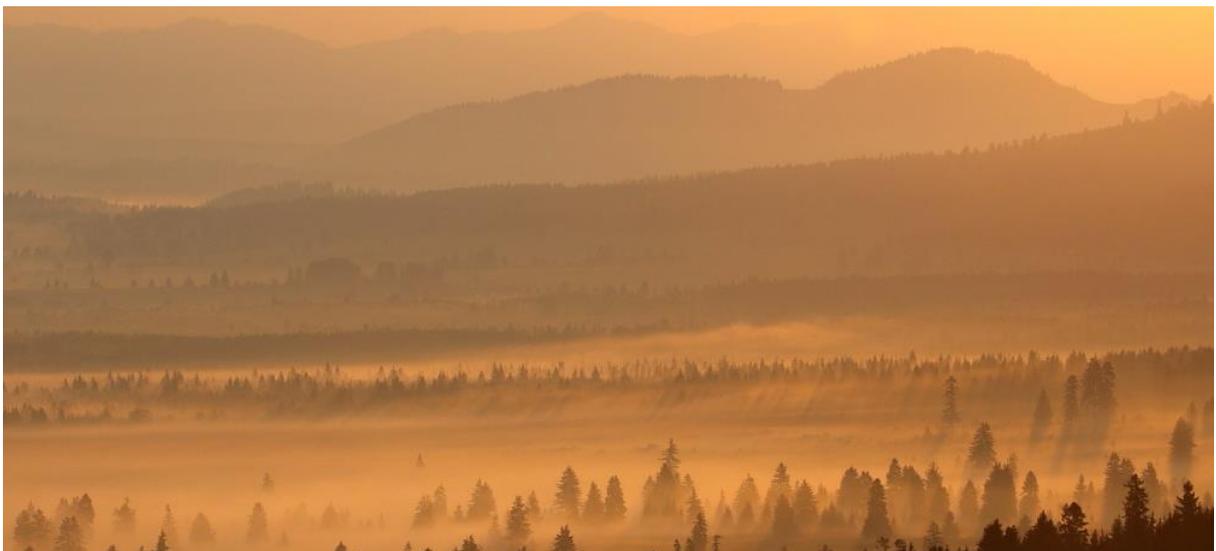
After a nice breakfast we drove towards the top of the Madarasi Hargita Mountain. As we were driving up slowly a pair of Black Woodpeckers flew across the road - a good omen for the day we thought! First when we got over 1500 meters it was windy and quiet, but we still managed to find two Ring Ouzels of the distinctive "alpestris" race with those amazing scaly undersides. There were cute Crested and a few 'Alpine' Willow Tits around plus Firecrest. The undoubted star of the morning was a drumming female Three-toed Woodpecker. We watched her for 10 minutes and everybody could count her toes in the scope. As we got our main target and the weather was getting better we quickly drove back to Békás Gorge where we had good looks of the pair this time as they changed several times in the breeding crevice. Our day was not finished with this however and we headed to a cliff face to look for another owl. First we had a male Golden Oriole as well as a Grey-headed Woodpecker. We did not wait long though when a nice adult Eurasian Eagle-Owl perched out in full view still in daylight! What a fantastic sighting to finish the day and the tour too! This was followed by a farewell dinner with some nice local billberry brandy and wine!



Wallcreeper in the Békás (Bicaz) Gproge (János Oláh)

Saturday, 4th of June

As it was our last morning we headed towards Bucharest. On the way we stopped at the forested park of Székelyudvarhely, where we added Spotted Flycatcher to our list. A quick visit to the Szentpál Fishponds was rewarded with great looks of Ferruginous Ducks, Savi's, Great Reed, Reed, Segde and Marsh Warblers, Yellow Wagtail, a confiding pair of Bearded Tits and two quite late migrant White-winged Black Terns. Not long after we left the fishponds a Lesser Grey Shrike was spotted from the van, as the last addition to our list. We also had a massive count of 25 Lesser Spotted Eagles on the drive. After this the only thing left was to drive back to the airport where the tour finished. No doubt in a few days we experienced the amazing landscape, habitats and birds of Transylvania and managed to see a wide range of special birds of Central Europe and the mighty Carpathians.



Dawn in Transylvania (János Oláh)



Female Three-toed Woodpecker in the Hargita Mountains (Attila Szilágyi)

SYSTEMATIC BIRD LIST

Species which were heard but not seen are indicated by the symbol (H).

Species which were not personally recorded by the leader are indicated by the symbol (NL).

Species which were seen only by the leader are indicated by the symbol (LO).

Hazel Grouse *Bonasa bonasia*: A brilliant scope views of a roosting male next to the Brown Bear hide.

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*: A pair was seen near Torockó with another one heard there. It is such a rare event to see this declining bird nowadays.

Common Quail *Coturnix coturnix* (H): It was only heard on one occasion at Torockó.

Common Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*: Only a few observations throughout the tour.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*: Only two on the way to the airport.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*: A few were seen during the tour.

Common Pochard *Aythya ferina*: We saw a few birds at Szentpál Fishponds.

Ferruginous Duck *Aythya nyroca*: A few from the bus on our first day but later we enjoyed some nice males at Szentpál Fishponds.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*: It was common on the fish ponds at Szentpál Fishponds.

Black Stork *Ciconia nigra*: A single circling near Kiskapus.

White Stork *Ciconia ciconia*: Still a very common breeder in the villages in Transylvania.

Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*: A few were seen at Szentpál.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*: Small numbers were recorded during the tour.

Great Egret *Egretta alba*: One was seen flying (LO).

Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*: A single bird followed ships while we driving from Bucegi (NL). A recently established breeder.

Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*: Fairly common throughout the tour.

Eurasian Hobby *Falco subbuteo*: We had two different sightings in Torockó and near the Békás Gorge.

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*: Two birds were observed near Torockó and a singleton at Békás Gorge.

Western Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*: Only a few sightings.

Eurasian Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*: A circling bird as we approached the Békás Gorge (LO).

Northern Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*: A bird shot across the road near Sinaia (LO).

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*: It was quite common throughout the tour.

European Honey Buzzard *Pernis apivorus*: A singleton was seen two times near Torockó.

Lesser Spotted Eagle *Aquila pomarina*: A total of some 40 were seen, but the best view were obtained on our last day as we travelled towards the airport. We saw some 20 near a recently mowed field. The flagship bird of the Carpathians with over 2000 breeding pairs!



Adult Lesser Spotted Eagle (János Oláh)

Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos*: Two birds were seen near Torockó.

Corncrake *Crex crex*: We managed to see one individuals near Torockó.

Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*: A single one was seen and more heard at Szentpál Fishponds.

Eurasian Coot *Fulica atra*: Several seen in the wetlands we have visited throughout the tour.

Northern Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*: We had only one overflying bird on our first day from the van.

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*: Several were seen at Szentpál Fishponds.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*: Two were seen at Szentpál Fishponds.

Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus*: A few flock were seen at the wetlands.

Caspian Gull *Larus cachinnans*: We saw several individual on our first day as we crossed the lowlands.

Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybridus*: A few were seen in a colony near Brassó.

White-winged Tern *Chlidonias leucopterus*: Two late individuals were seen at Szentpál Fishponds.

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*: A few were seen in the Hargita region.

Common Wood Pigeon *Columba palumbus*: Fairly common throught the tour.

European Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur*: Two were seen in the Küküllő-valley near Kiskapus.

Eurasian Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*: Very common in the villages.

Common Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*: A few heard throught the tour and three were seen at Torockó.

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*: We had a family party at Segesvár forest.

Ural Owl *Strix uralensis*: Long scope views of a single bird on our first full day near Sinaia.

Eurasian Eagle Owl *Bubo bubo*: Prolonged scope studies of a bird perched on a cliff.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*: We picked up one individual in the Küküllő-valley.

European Scops Owl *Otus scops*: Excellent looks of a bird near Torockó.

Common Swift *Apus apus*: Small numbers were seen at Bucegi and Békás Gorge.

Alpine Swift *Apus melba*: Seen at Bucegi, Torockó and Békás Gorge in small numbers.

European Bee-eater *Merops apiaster*: We had good looks at several individuals in a colony just next to the road.



Bee-eaters are amazing (János Oláh)

Eurasian Hoopoe *Upupa epops*: A single overflying one remained leader only (LO).

Eurasian Wryneck *Jynx torquilla*: Good scope views of one near Torockó.

White-backed Woodpecker *Dendrocopos leucotos*: Excellent views of this rare and declining species near Segesvár. A drumming male on a dead topped tree.

Middle Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos medius*: After some brief views everybody could enjoy one in the scope.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*: Regularly seen throughout the tour.

Eurasian Three-toed Woodpecker *Picoides tridactylus*: We had a brilliant prolonged looks of a female bird in the Hargita mountains.

Black Woodpecker *Dryocopus martius*: Three sightings of this largest European woodpecker throughout the tour.

European Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*: A male perched on a telegraph pole near Torockó.

Grey-headed Woodpecker *Picus canus*: A female and a male next day near Sinai gave excellent looks. Later heard near Székelyudvarhely.

Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio*: This lovely bird was commonly encountered on the tour.

Lesser Grey Shrike *Lanius minor*: We had a five birds in the Homoród-valley on our final day.

Great Grey Shrike *Lanius excubitor*: We saw several birds on this tour.

Eurasian Golden Oriole *Oriolus oriolus*: A few heard and seen, with some scope views for some of us.

Eurasian Jay *Garrulus glandarius*: It was commonly seen throughout the tour.

Common Magpie *Pica pica*: A frequently encountered bird throughout the tour.

Spotted Nutcracker *Nucifraga caryocatactes*: Great views of this often secretive breeding bird in the Hargita. Several more were heard.



Eurasian Nutcracker is such a wonderful bird (János Oláh)

Western Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*: Very common throughout the tour.

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*: A frequently encountered bird throughout the tour.

Hooded Crow *Corvus corone*: A widespread bird throughout the tour.

Common Raven *Corvus corax*: Seen daily.

Marsh Tit *Parus palustris*: A few were seen.

Willow Tit *Parus montanus*: It was regular in the higher elevation pine forests.

Sombre Tit *Parus lugubris*: A fast moving bird was seen by the leader near Torockó (LO).

Coal Tit *Parus ater*: Fairly common in the Carpathian Mountains.

Crested Tit *Parus cristatus*: We had several good views of this magnificent little bird at higher elevations.

Great Tit *Parus major*: It was common throughout the tour.

Blue Tit *Parus caeruleus*: Only two were seen.

Crag Martin *Ptyonoprogne rupestris*: Up to four birds were observed near Torockó.

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*: Very common throughout.

Red-rumped Swallow *Cecropis daurica*: We had good views of at least six birds near Torockó. This is a rare breeder in the Carpathian Basin.

Northern House Martin *Delichon urbica*: Very common throughout the tour.

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*: First we had a family party at Torockó.

Horned Lark *Eremophila alpestris*: At least three were seen of this rare and striking subspecies.

Crested Lark *Galerida cristata*: Not a common bird in Transylvania with a single observation during the tour.

Eurasian Skylark *Alauda arvensis*: A widespread bird on the grassy areas.

Wood Lark *Lullula arborea*: We had good views near Torockó, where still quite common.

River Warbler *Locustella luscinioides*: We heard several near Torockó and scoped a single bird next to the road.



River Warbler is a real Central European speciality (János Oláh)

Savi's Warbler *Locustella luscinioides*: A singleton at Szentpál Fishponds.

Great Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus arundinaceus*: Several at Szentpál.

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*: A few at Szentpál.

European Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*: A few at Szentpál.

Marsh Warbler *Acrocephalus palustris*: Commonly heard and seen throughout the tour but our best views were at Torockó.

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*: It was commonly encountered throughout the tour.

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*: It was commonly heard throughout the tour and several were seen.

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*: We saw about four different birds at the Küküllő floodplain.

Barred Warbler *Sylvia nisoria*: Good views of this striking warbler near Torockó.

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*: Only a few heard and seen throughout the tour.

Common Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*: We saw this species regularly around Torockó.

Bearded Reedling *Panurus biarmicus*: A pair scoped at Szentpál Fishponds.

Firecrest *Regulus ignicapillus*: It was seen a few times in the coniferous forests of the Carpathian Mountains.

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*: Like the previous species, it was seen in the several times.

Winter Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*: It was regularly heard in the mountains but only seen once.

Eurasian Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*: It was common throughout.

Wallcreeper *Tichodroma muraria*: Two were seen at Békás Gorge. After the first day's semi success we needed to spend the following afternoon there too.

Eurasian Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*: It was seen a few occasions.

Common Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*: One of the most common species and was seen all along the tour virtually in every habitat.

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*: We saw two birds on the Hargita Mountain. This is the more scaly "alpestris" race here.



Ring Ouzel 'alpestris race' with extensive scaling (János Oláh)

Eurasian Blackbird *Turdus merula*: Fairly common.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*: We had plenty during the tour.

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*: A common bird in the Carpathians.
Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*: A few were seen in the Hargita.
European Robin *Erithacus rubecula*: Several sightings of this shy forest bird.
Thrush Nightingale *Luscinia luscinia*: Almost everyone had a look on a single singing male.
Common Nightingale *Luscinia megarhynchos* (**H**): A distant bird sang near Torockó.
Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*: A very common birds of the villages all along the tour. We saw several at various places but usually in small numbers.
Common Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*: Several birds were seen near our accommodations at Sinaia and Zetelaka.
Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*: Only a pair we had near Torockó.
Common Stonechat *Saxicola torquata*: A fairly common bird.
Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*: A few were seen on the higher elevations.
Rufous-tailed Rock Thrush *Monticola saxatilis*: We managed to see a male near Torockó.
Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*: Several were seen in a forested park of Székelyudvarhely.
Red-breasted Flycatcher *Ficedula parva*: A singing subadult male was giving excellent looks near Sinaia.



Immature male Red-breasted Flycatcher (János Oláh)

Collared Flycatcher *Ficedula albicollis*: We had several excellent looks of different birds of this very handsome species throughout the tour.
White-throated Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*: We had singletons at Békás Gorge and in the Hargita.
House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*: It was fairly common in or around human settlements.
Eurasian Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*: Less common than the previous species, but still widespread.
Dunnock *Prunella modularis*: One singing male in the Hargita (LO).

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*: Some “feldegg” type birds at Szentpál Fishponds.
Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*: It was a widespread bird.
White Wagtail *Motacilla alba*: It was fairly common throughout the tour.
Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*: Several birds were seen.
Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta*: The commonest bird on the top of the Bucegi mountains.
Common Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*: A very common bird in most wooded habitat.
European Serin *Serinus serinus*: Several were seen in the forested parks.
European Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris*: It was seen frequently in human settlements.
European Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*: It was seen frequently in human settlements.
Common Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*: It was fairly common.
Eurasian Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*: Excellent looks of three birds close to our accommodation at Sinaia.
Common Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*: We saw a few birds in the Carpathian Mountains throughout the tour.
Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*: We had a few birds at Segesvár forest.
Common Rosefinch *Carpodacus erythrinus*: We had a single subadult male near the cable car at Sinaia. We were lucky with that observation, because we had no choice to visit our regular place later on.



Immature Common Rosefinch (Zoltán Baczó)

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*: It was fairly common near the open forests.
Rock Bunting *Emberiza cia*: We managed to get good looks of several birds near Torockó.
Ortolan Bunting *Emberiza hortulana*: Only observed near Torocko where is quite widespread.
Common Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*: Several individuals at Szentpál Fishponds.
Corn Bunting *Miliaria calandra*: Fairly widespread throughout the tour.



Carpathian Brown Bear in the Hargita Mountains (János Oláh)

MAMMALS

Red Fox *Vulpes vulpes*: One was seen from the van.

Brown Bear *Ursus arctos*: A total of six individuals were seen from the hide. And another one near the Békás Gorge. What a superb mammal!

Red Deer *Cervus elaphus*: Four individual was seen near Zetelaka.

Western Roe Deer *Capreolus capreolus*: It was regularly seen throughout the tour.

Red Squirrel *Sciurus vulgaris*: Several sightings in the mountains.