

## Tour Report

# Armenia – Cranes, Raptors & Culture

29 August – 10 September 2019

Pale long-legged buzzard



Male sand lizard



Amberd fortress



Mountain chiffchaff



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Tour Leaders: John Muddeman & Vasil Ananian with five participants

Despite being in its fourth consecutive year, this year's tour was different from the previous three. Starting a couple of degrees cooler at the beginning was a decided bonus, allowing us to walk more easily during the first few days. However, the mixed weather for the second half (fortunately, it rained during the night at the beginning) did change the general mixture of birds to a degree, and also thwarted one chance of a high mountain visit.

The birds were, consequently, perhaps even richer than normal, and we made several excellent additions to the growing tour list, including grey-headed swamphen, one of less than ten records ever for the country and even a lifer for Vasil our guide! A juvenile red-necked grebe on Lake Sevan raised questions over whether it had bred nearby in an area with improving aquatic vegetation, especially since the last confirmed record was in 1995. Osprey, sanderling, red-necked phalarope and European turtle dove were all scarce or very scarce migrants that just require some luck to find them, even though the latter's population has sadly plummeted here as throughout the rest of Europe. Little owl and lesser spotted woodpecker are discrete residents that we hadn't come across before, while the moustached warbler gave itself away by singing, though refused to appear. Fortunately, a late rufous-tailed scrub robin gave itself away, after being brilliantly found by Vasil, providing a superb last day bonus for the group.

It wasn't all birds though, with plenty of other wildlife enjoyed as well, including a superb Shelkovnikov's tree frog, two species of positively identified meadow lizards (which are a tricky group), a very obliging large male sand lizard, plenty of foxes and Bezoar ibex, at least 35 species of butterflies, including a brand new site for the scarce Mediterranean skipper, plus a fine selection of late dragonflies, including the first record of a species for the country, though this is still pending positive ID!

The modified itinerary, to reduce travelling and also avoid three single nights in the middle of the trip, was much improved, while the cultural visits to historic sites were as impressive as ever.

## **Day 1: Arrive Yerevan**

### **Thursday 29 August 2019**

*Weather: 27°C with a moderate breeze*

Our respective flights from London and Madrid arrived at Charles de Gaulle airport Paris in good time, and despite a little delay on leaving there, we arrived on time, a little after dark, in Yerevan. We were met by Vasil our naturalist guide and Vaharam our driver and transferred by minibus to the hotel where we had dinner almost straightaway in order to be rested for our first day out.

## Day 2: Charents Arch, Geghard Monastery, Garni Temple & Yerevan city tour

Friday 30 August 2019

*Weather: mild start, warming to 32°C max under thin cloud; thundery in the evening (but no rain)*

The day dawned sunny and warm in Yerevan and after a 7.30am breakfast we headed out an hour later with Rafa, our excellent cultural guide. He suggested going into the mountains first, as we had an afternoon visit booked in Yerevan, which turned out to be the perfect plan.

Rafa gave us an excellent potted history of Armenia as we climbed out of Yerevan. Once at a certain altitude, and as we swung to the south-east, we suddenly gained (albeit hazy) views of the snow and ice-clad peak of Mount Ararat in eastern Turkey, with Little Ararat also clear off to its side. We lost this view though during the course of the morning as the day grew warmer and the haze increased.

A refreshing cooler breeze was blowing along the edge of the mountains as made our first stop to take a proper view of Ararat, this time on foot, at the Charent's Arch. This small monument was built to honour this Armenian poet's work at a favourite viewpoint. In addition to hearing a few more historical details, we also listened to some beautiful local singing and then started hearing and seeing birds. A few European bee-eaters adorned some wires up the slope where the first of a few red-backed shrikes perched, waiting for prey. A calling tree pipit caught my attention, then, a surprise male common stonechat sat atop a bush. I tried to set the scope up on it and got an eastern black-eared wheatear briefly in view instead. Indeed, with a couple of dark local common buzzards drifting around below us, then a small flock of migrant lesser kestrels spiralling up in front and almost overhead, we knew it was going to be good. A distant lesser spotted eagle soared up but then drifted slowly away, while the flat-winged profile of a European honey-buzzard, also circling in the distance, was more convincing.

Back down at the bush below us, another red-backed shrike led to the discovery of a fine covey of adult and still-growing chukar partridges. These were a very good find, as they can be tricky. Three Eurasian golden orioles then flew across the hillside slightly above us, then a flock of bee-eaters drifted over and, just as we were leaving, two 'tip-tipping' corn buntings sped past just in front. This was a superb start.

Driving past good numbers of perched European bee-eaters, lesser kestrels and even our first European rollers on wires, not far along the road we came to a quick halt again as three raptors spiralled low overhead – two Levant sparrowhawks and another lesser kestrel. A very high long-legged buzzard and another common buzzard cruised overhead, though two lesser spotted eagles were circling much closer than the earlier bird and a short-toed eagle drifted high over us as well.

We finally made it to Geghard, where Eurasian crag martins were playing in the light breeze along the little cliffs and half a dozen red-billed choughs mobbed a fine adult golden eagle as it cruised along the ridgetop. After our cultural visit to this remarkable monastery we took a few minutes outside by the little river, noting a few butterflies including small whites, a sooty copper and cardinal fritillaries of most note, plus a few dragonflies including migrant hawkers and a vagrant darter of the tiny *decoloratum* form.

The remarkable ancient Garni Temple was enjoyed during a fairly quick visit. Views down over the wonderful organ-pipe basalt rock structures in the cliffs below also included more bird observations of note, including a fine flock of 'chittering' Alpine swifts, a lovely freshly plumaged juvenile booted eagle which did a little 'out-and-back' below us in the gorge, plus a fine adult Egyptian vulture which also did an 'over and back' flight overhead.

We enjoyed a quick but very tasty lunch back down in Yerevan before heading to the truly remarkable Matenadaran, the main repository for books and written material relating to Armenia's ancient culture. To see original fragments of paper, parchment, bark and even papyrus dating back to the 5th and 6th centuries is impressive enough in itself, but to see 13th and 14th century facsimiles of work dating back centuries before, or original illustrated books from the 12th century was just as extraordinary. Next stop was a quick tour of the Genocide Museum and Monument, with some frankly harrowing images and information relating to the Armenian genocide in what is now modern Turkey, which though remembered as being in 1915, started a long time before. It was sobering to see that in the UK only England (though excluding the city of Derby), has not yet accepted that there is sufficient evidence to officially declare that it was genocide.

Leaving the museum at 5pm as it shut, we headed back through heavy traffic for a quick 20-minute break at the hotel to freshen up and drop off our optics. We then popped out again to the Mother Armenia Monument, which overlooks central Yerevan, for a short trip before dropping down via Republic Square for a sumptuous dinner at a fine restaurant. Walking back to the hotel, with a couple of diversions (which helped us to start working off some of the food!) we came past the cascade and, after bidding our farewells to Rafa, finally arrived with enough time for a quick call-over of the day's sightings!

Golden eagle was voted bird of the day.

### **Day 3: Armash Fishponds, Shaghap Road, Agarakadzor**

#### **Saturday 31 August 2019**

*Weather: mild start with a moderate breeze, warming to about 30°C max. under broken cloud, then cooler and stiller in the evening*

The heavily overcast skies allowed us to reach the Armash fishponds in generally cooler than expected conditions and under light cloud. The lack of weekend traffic made the route to Vaharam easier, and with Vasil now accompanying us as our naturalist guide we made a good team.

A few birds, including our first white storks and western cattle egrets, were noted in fields as we passed over the Araks River Valley. There were also a few European rollers and lesser grey shrikes adorning the wires, as well as plenty of European bee-eaters (as usual). Our first blue-cheeked bee-eater, the first of at least 30 seen during the day, was on a wire shortly before the entrance, but we soon added more inside. A pool off to one side in short grassland held a few waders, including a lovely juvenile white-tailed lapwing which sprang into the air revealing its striking wing pattern in flight.

Given the generally cool and breezy conditions, we decided to take the moderately long walk down alongside the nearest pools; we walked along the top of the bank which was easier since it had recently been roughly cut. Birds down in or near the first pool included an adult white-tailed lapwing, wood, green and common sandpipers, a single little ringed plover and Temminck's stint, plus a few western yellow wagtails in the surrounding grass. Bearded reedlings starting 'pinging' from the reeds, and while the sound was heard regularly throughout the length of the walk, it wasn't until we were near the end that we finally all saw some. Others noted a couple of very flighty Eurasian penduline tits, but a single flock of about 30 at the far end was remarkable, though atypically jumpy. Various Eurasian reed warblers kept us occupied as they fed in the adjacent reeds or flicked across the track in front, only occasionally being visible. Two great reed warblers flew briefly across at one point, as well as a couple of strikingly coloured sedge warblers which showed well too. However, a singing moustached warbler refused to come out.

Waders on the grassy side continued to increase in number as we progressed and passed a couple more pools, including two more adult white-tailed plovers, ruff, common redshank, a couple of juvenile little stints, then surprises in the shape of two Kentish plovers and three juvenile red-necked phalaropes. An elegant marsh sandpiper rounded off the haul.

It was the larger birds on and adjacent to the open water which then took most of our attention, with large numbers of whiskered, and a few white-winged, terns adorning wires or gracing the huge lakes. A few Armenian gulls on posts were looked at early on, along with the first of a few common kingfishers. Clouds of pygmy cormorants sped low from one pool to another, numbering in their thousands, though only a couple of great cormorants were seen (and which provided a contrast). Grey and purple herons leapt from the reeds at times, with a few passing little egrets, and just two great egrets, a late bonus. Thousands of Eurasian coots were present on a couple of pools, with a smattering of garganey, northern shoveler and mallards, plus slightly larger numbers of gadwall, red-crested pochard and ferruginous duck, plus good numbers of little and great crested grebes too. A few squacco herons added a touch of pastel colour, a male little bittern bounced across in flight, but a purplish ball up in the reeds, albeit hundreds of metres away across a pond, was a real bonus: a grey-headed swamphen. This is a very rare visitor to Armenia, with under ten records to date ever, and it was a lifer for Vasil.

There was a little time for other wildlife too, with small red-eye and common bluetail damselflies and a few broad scarlet dragonflies, including a completely blue pruinose individual (a presumed very adult female), plus a surprisingly well marked Mediterranean skipper, which turned out to be in a completely new location for the species in the country.

With increasing midday heat, we called up the 4x4s to come and get us and were more than happy to be driven back to the only shaded area around, beside *the* picnic table under a Russian olive. A short rest ensued before we ate our picnic lunch a little after 1pm, though we were soon off again afterwards in slightly freshening conditions with a very welcome strengthening breeze. A short walk to look for flooded areas in the periphery of the main lakes was unsuccessful, but a fine perched short-toed snake eagle, plus juvenile lesser grey shrike and adult blue-cheeked bee-eater close to one another on the same wire were

fine sights, while a few male common and Christoph's blues were active along the bank. A Menetries's warbler dashed low over the ground and dived into low bushes twice, though a pair of crested larks showed a little better. A few marsh frogs and another colourful common kingfisher in a clear water channel rounded off our visit and we decided to return to the minibus.

A couple of Eurasian hoopoes and a few more crested larks along the track on our way back to the minibus were evidence of the slightly cooler conditions, while a short stop in the minibus beside that first pond came up trumps when a common snipe (one of two along this stretch) was spotted squatting in the mud, and both common ringed plover and a ruddy turnstone dropped in from nowhere, just for seconds, before simply vanishing equally as fast.

We took a back road to head towards our hotel, so avoiding some major roadworks, stopping just once on the way for a textbook long-legged buzzard, which finally gave good views. Next we were able to add more red-backed shrikes and European bee-eaters to the day's tally, plus five rock sparrows and a fine adult Egyptian vulture which even came down briefly to snatch a small dead bird off the road before gliding off with it.

We checked into our hotel then went out for an hour nearby in the late afternoon. Though it seemed quiet, the final species number for the day included our first Eurasian tree sparrows, common ravens, white-throated dipper, grey wagtail and (adult) Syrian woodpecker, as well as watching a fine adult golden eagle try to hunt a few chukar partridges (despite being dive-bombed by a couple of red-billed choughs).

With lots of lesser kestrels heading past the hotel into the town to roost on our return, it was really a rather good finale to a terrific day.

White-tailed lapwing was voted bird of the day.

#### **Day 4: Arpa River gorge, Gndevank; lunch by Arpa, Amaghu Road**

#### **Sunday 1 September 2019**

*Weather: slightly mixed, with a cloudy and cooler start; largely sunny and hot early afternoon, turning breezy; still in the evening*

Heading towards our first site we stopped on the roadside for a passing Levant sparrowhawk. By good fortune it suddenly started to drop, finally coming to perch on a pile of boulders not too far away where we could enjoy it in the scopes. We managed some good views before it moved off, and we then admired a male eastern black-eared wheatear nearby. Next we saw what we thought at first was a sparrowhawk dashing amongst the bushes, but which on closer inspection proved to be a juvenile common cuckoo; we enjoyed some excellent extended views while it posed obligingly for the cameras. A few birds were passing overhead, including seven Alpine swifts and a calling, migrating tawny pipit.

The cooler and quite still start meant that we were able to take a good look from an old bridge looking along a good stretch of the Arpa river and its flanking willow-dominated woodlands. A white-throated dipper was immediately visible, with flighty garden warblers and spotted flycatchers, the first of many of the latter during the morning, plus a couple of fly-over mistle thrushes and calling common chaffinch. A common kingfisher flashed under the bridge before perching briefly. The first of several Syrian woodpeckers was heard, as was a Eurasian jay.

Lots of Eurasian crag martins were resting on or feeding in front of the cliffs low above us, and single Levant and Eurasian sparrowhawks circled over at different times, though no other raptors were noted. It was surprisingly hard work teasing the small birds out from the scattered bushes on the rubble slopes below the cliffs or on the crags themselves. The first of a few blue rock thrushes were seen high on the crags, though it took much more time to locate a pair of eastern rock nuthatches, despite their deep calls echoing off the cliffs. The higher-pitched western rock nuthatches also chiming in simply refused to appear at all.

Butterflies caught our attention for a while, with some lovely fresh sage skippers, and some – always impressively large – cardinal fritillaries. A few other species, including hermit and woodland grayling also made an appearance, especially in and around the roadside flowers. Despite a hot sun breaking through at times, it was still relatively cool for many species.

We decided to drive further on and then walk up to the ancient, but still active, Gndevank monastery. More butterflies strung the group out as we went, with the more bird-oriented amongst us finding rock buntings and long-tailed tits as well as other species, and those trailing behind Damon and Ripart's anomalous blues. We all enjoyed a white morph booted eagle which cruised over, though it was the backmarkers who noted two long-legged buzzards circling over the cliffs. The beautiful khachkars and other engraved stones outside the monastery included a couple of intriguing hunting scenes, while the immediate surroundings were also interesting to wildlife, including our first European robin and a common rosefinch feeding on fruits in the crown of a mulberry tree. A few Radde's wall lizards walked, or ran, up and down the outside walls, while a pristine western rock nuthatch nest was pasted into the top of an arch at one end of the building, delighting all. A couple of great banded grayling butterflies as we descended were a fine addition.

Lunch was taken at a lovely restaurant adjacent to the Arpa River, with spotted flycatcher, white wagtail and a brief garden warbler to further liven proceedings, but we rounded off with a trip out onto a hot and sunny semi-desert site on a rocky hillside, where water leaking from a pipe attracts wildlife. At first it was extremely quiet, though our first Eurasian kestrel put in a noisy appearance and a female eastern black-eared wheatear gave fine close views, including while hiding in the shade under the edge of a rock. As we waited, more appeared including a pair of common ravens going over, followed by a superb bearded vulture, then an Egyptian vulture and, finally, a peregrine falcon. More eastern black-eared wheatears, including several very dapper males, a couple of blue rock thrushes and a noisy – and sometimes flighty – group of chukars showed this arid area held far more life than we first thought. Both eastern and western rock nuthatches were present, while the prize for rarity went to an admittedly rather scruffy Persian wheatear, here a little way from its known breeding range. The warblers in the bushes were just too flighty to be seen well, though included lesser and common whitethroats plus garden and an eastern Orphean warbler.

We finished by driving to a viewpoint looking along the valley towards the impressive Noravank Monastery and, as we were in the shade and the wind had dropped, it was very pleasant. Indeed, with the scopes we carefully scanned the opposite slopes and cliffs, and spotted the first Bezoar ibex with binoculars, despite the great distance. Possibly it was the time of day too, since as we watched and relocated this individual, we found it was part of a mobile group; we then noted another individual, and then started to see more and more. A couple of males were seen, though the great majority were females and kids or immatures. We stayed a little longer than originally planned though, since we were aware that one of Armenia's four known Caucasian leopards inhabits the area; the allure of potentially seeing it (however unlikely it may be realistically!) was too great to ignore.

With the temperature cooling, many more birds were suddenly active on the roadsides as we returned, and while we paused for two corn buntings (though a flock was actually present), a pair of adult woodchat shrikes made for a fine end to the day.

Today's bird of the day was the common cuckoo!

#### **Day 5: Vedi Gorge, Noravank (monastery & lunch)**

#### **Monday 2 September 2019**

*Weather: slightly mixed, with cloudy and cooler start; largely sunny and hot early afternoon; breezy later in the afternoon; still evening*

Lightning, followed by thunder and then rain, meant that we all woke even earlier than planned – at five to four! The planned 4x4 trip to the high mountains was clearly off, due to both the rain and lightning.

Breakfast consisted of our planned picnics plus a coffee or tea, taken in the dining room as usual, and we left an hour later than scheduled under breaking cloud and brightening skies. With the forecast indicating that rain and thunderstorms would return in the afternoon, removing any chance of going up the mountain later in the day, we rearranged the schedule and headed back towards Vedi along the better road. This was clearly a good move, as three large raptors were circling off to one side – a Eurasian griffon vulture with two cinereous vultures. Moving on, we soon stopped again, this time for another two cinereous vultures, plus single Levant and Eurasian sparrowhawks, a lesser kestrel, our first isabelline wheatear and single calling tawny and tree pipits, showing that plenty of birds were on the move!

We approached Vedi along a heavily modified track (compared to previous years), though it meant we had less walking to do, and with temperatures not even reaching 30°C and with a notable breeze in our faces as we returned, it was still hot but very bearable. The birds were correspondingly good too, despite the fact that the wadi was drier than in previous years and no open standing water could be found at the main spring. Two lesser grey shrikes rubbed shoulders in a disturbed area with a red-backed, plus eastern black-eared and isabelline wheatears, while we added good numbers of the last three species as we progressed as well as two woodchat shrikes and perhaps double figures of Finsch's wheatear. Two lesser short-toed

larks flew across calling, though it was rather quiet until we were almost into a steep-sided wadi. Here there was a much higher density of wheatears; a few raptors also eventually appeared, including two Levant sparrowhawks, while a high-passing long-legged buzzard had a male pallid harrier paralleling it, albeit probably hundreds of metres higher up. A stunning adult bearded vulture cruised over against the light, only to swing round and eventually glide effortlessly down the valley low above us, its wingtip almost skimming the adjacent rocks and affording wonderful views.

Noisy eastern rock nuthatches and dapper Finsch's wheatears entertained us as we progressed, while a little owl dropped from an unseen roost in a small cliff and sped quickly up the gorge and out of sight. With patience we enjoyed some quite good, albeit sometimes distant views of both eastern Orphea and a juvenile barred warbler, while a noisy flock of rock sparrows well above us on the ridge made regular flights and finally came down to festoon a small bush on the slope for all to enjoy. Two common rock thrush were an unexpected species here – possibly migrants dropped by the night's rain. We also briefly saw a presumed Upcher's warbler; however, it was too far away to say it definitely wasn't an eastern olivaceous warbler and, frustratingly, it simply vanished without trace. Our return to the vehicle was greatly enlivened by a smart black stork, circling up as it drifted along the ridge.

We headed back for a late but delicious fish lunch at Noravank, noting the increasingly darker skies as the clouds increased and, indeed, just as we stepped out to visit the monastery, a few big drops of rain fell, though then just as quickly stopped. The very still conditions appeared very good for watching, but birds were remarkably coy to reveal themselves, and it took persistence to find them. A few eastern black-eared wheatears and eastern rock nuthatches, plus plenty of blue rock thrushes were becoming familiar, along with the soft 'tchik' of the Syrian woodpeckers, though we also finally saw two European goldfinches perched high in a dead tree. Shortly before finally leaving, as the wind turned fresh and heavy rain threatened, a flurry of activity ensued, with golden eagle, bearded vulture and Eurasian sparrowhawk, plus an unidentified sparrowhawk and unidentified kestrel also going over. We headed down to the vehicle as quickly as possible and light rain set in as we started back. Perfect timing! Indeed, quite heavy and persistent rain continued for a few hours until about 9pm.

Our bird of the day was eastern rock nuthatch

## **Day 6: Selim (Vardenyats) Pass, Lichk lakes, Lake Sevan west shore & Dilijan**

**Tuesday 3 September 2019**

*Weather: largely crystal clear and cool, with some broken cloud later*

We made our exit just after 8.30am as planned, though not before we had recorded a couple of noisy Eurasian hobbies and a 'tchucking' Syrian woodpecker from their bedroom window.

We started the quite slow route up towards Lake Sevan, pausing at one point for a Levant sparrowhawk which landed on a cable; we had a good view of it in the morning light and could clearly see that it was a fine juvenile. A large dark shape on the horizon turned out to be an adult golden eagle; about 10 lesser

kestrels went past, while amongst the numerous swallows and martins hawking around, a group of European bee-eaters started their ascent, and an adult male Levant sparrowhawk sneaked past along a roadside belt of trees. A distant flock of large birds caught our attention – a surprise flock of great cormorants. Not a bad start.

Another stop significantly higher up, this time for a short-toed snake eagle, also produced common and long-legged buzzards, another migrant Levant sparrowhawk circling up, two Eurasian hobbies on a nearby pylon, flighty lesser and common whitethroats and calling chukar.

Our main stop revealed a wealth of birds at the pass area, with over 40 species recorded in the end, including a family party of grey partridge plus a surprise common quail, lots of common swifts moving east, a bounty of raptors including single European honey-buzzard, cinereous vulture, western marsh harrier and Levant sparrowhawk, three short-toed snake eagles, two booted eagles, six black kites, at least ten common/steppe buzzards, a few long-legged buzzards and both lesser and common kestrels. This was far from all, however, with red-backed shrikes, a Eurasian reed warbler, blue rock thrushes, rock sparrows, tree and water pipits, five common rosefinches, a cracking single ortolan bunting and Eurasian wryneck as well. A flock of at least a dozen Asian crimson-winged finches was also fantastic, but not as accessible and not so admired. We rounded off with a quick visit to the ancient *caravanserai* where we imagined large numbers of animals and people holed-up inside against the threat of perhaps wolves or bad weather outside.

The montane steppe, as we continued, housed a remarkable number of long-legged and steppe/common buzzards plus a couple of lesser spotted eagles, while a small farmstead ahead was simply astounding. A single black redstart caught our eye there first, but then bit by bit other birds began to appear. Two European rollers sat on rocks in the nearby steppe, and a passing sparrowhawk flushed a large flock of almost 150 starlings up from nowhere (these were all juvenile rose-coloured starlings), then a couple of rock sparrows showed well on the wires just in front. Whinchat and ortolan bunting popped up onto a small ruin. A group of black redstarts, including a fine *semirufus* type bird then followed, while in a small rough field in front, an accentor call ‘shivered’ and we decided to wait. First one, then two, then three Radde’s accentors flew up onto the wires to show off, with up to three ortolan buntings and two common rosefinches following suit in turn. One of the group moved over to get pictures and we then realised he had a bluethroat right in front. It all culminated with the incredible sight of a rose-coloured starling, two ortolan buntings, three Radde’s accentors, a bluethroat and a red-backed shrike perched simultaneously in close proximity on two thin wires. A magical birding moment.

We took a light sit-down lunch in Martuni, then headed off in the strong sun (but cool air) to walk out to a couple of lakes nearby. It seemed quiet by the site’s standards, but still yielded a wonderful haul of birds. As we got out, ten long-legged buzzards wheeled overhead together, before disappearing almost immediately. The first of two lesser spotted eagles for the site circled low off to one side, while a Levant sparrowhawk sprang up from the ground and dashed off. 25 glossy ibis wheeled overhead for some time before finally heading off; at least three citrine wagtails graced the banks of a small river, mountain chiffchaffs peeped from the bushes and one was finally seen well, in addition to a lovely Cetti’s warbler on our return. The nearby pools held rather high water levels, but a few ferruginous ducks and a female tufted duck with six young, plus at least 20 eclipse garganey were pleasing to see. Two purple herons took off with

a group of grey herons as we took up an elevated viewing point. A blue-cheeked bee-eater called from within the large group of European bee-eaters present, but remained unseen; not so a superb juvenile little bittern, which was sitting on the edge of the reedbed. A male northern goshawk cruised through, taking a swipe at a western marsh harrier as it went. Finally, a couple of water rails 'sharmed' from the dense bulrush beds and we returned with yet more fantastic sightings for the day.

The rest of the afternoon was taken up with the drive to our accommodation deep in the woods at Dilijan. There was time for a quick turnaround before going out nearby for a delicious dinner.

### **Day 7: Margahovit village area; Dilijan (lunch); Hagartsin Monastery**

#### **Wednesday 4 September 2019**

*Weather: slightly mixed, with a cloudy and cooler start; largely sunny and hot early afternoon, turning breezy later on; a still evening*

We made a prompt start at 5am, despite some tired faces. With stars visible over the hotel, the decision to switch the itinerary for the Thursday plan looked sound, and we decanted into three 4x4 jeeps before commencing the trip high up into the high mountains on rather unmaintained tracks.

Getting up into good habitat for a few species requires a degree of difficulty, and several of the group found the last 10-15 minutes of the slow and rough 4x4 ride a challenge. But, shortly after dawn and just after breaking through the tree-line, as we started to clear the cloud clinging to the mountainside, we finally came to a halt, looking up over mountain pastures studded with small bushes and with cascades of large scree. The conditions were good, despite the cloud occasionally enveloping us, and we quickly set about scanning the mountain slopes with the scopes. Nothing was visible at first, despite the first of numerous water pipits calling as small groups flitted across the hillsides, but with persistence I finally spotted the head and shoulders of our target peering over the ridge. A male Caucasian grouse was apparently keeping an eye on us, and while we could see it, it was little more than a silhouette at that distance, and partly against the rising sun. Further scanning then revealed a small group of brown hen-like birds, these seemingly being a female and two large young, much lower down and closer, though again the light wasn't great, and they kept low to the ground, disappearing among the grass and bushes for much of the time.

A juvenile Montagu's harrier cruised past out over the valley, seemingly trying to stay above the cloud, and indeed reappeared again as the cloud in front started to billow up, circling slowly up against the sun and just above the clouds, before finally moving off along the valley. A few other birds could be seen, but with the cloud now rising and starting to block our views most of the time, we walked on to a small ridge, using the cloud as cover, though could not relocate the females closer. Dunnock, twite, tree and water pipits, Eurasian linnets, common chaffinches and a couple of common rosefinches were present around us, judging by the calls, though only a few birds were actually visible in a couple of close rowan bushes just ahead.

Back in the vehicles we advanced along the track again, this time flushing a male Caucasian grouse from rocks nearby, which flew low straight into the cloud beside us. Getting out as quietly as we could, we got ready and to our delight, about 60m away, it was sitting tight on the grass as the cloud around us dissipated and gave us great views. It shot off all too soon, though with a distinctive intermittent whistle from the whirring wings between the long glides, and eventually went back into cloud around the next bend in the mountain. Four more then rose from behind us in quick succession, all looking remarkable as they whirred and then glided for many hundreds of metres over the sea of cloud below us before being finally enveloped in the white shroud. Magic!

We walked quite a bit of the way down, looking for more mountain-dwelling species, but with swirling cloud and quite chilly damp conditions, we decided that the walk in itself was good and enjoyed the last few autumn flowers still out, including one very late Caucasian rhododendron, two very different gentians, an Alpine aster and a few others. A couple of calling fly-by twite frustratingly refused to stop.

We also stopped again once down below the cloud layer and just at the lower edge of the forest, where it turned into meadows, though birdlife was remarkably quiet to begin with. An eagle called, sounding rather like short-toed, but it turned out to be a sky-diving lesser spotted. Four common crossbills went over at height, 'chupping' as they went. A Eurasian jay or two called from the nearby forest, as did single great spotted and European green woodpeckers, while in the adjacent thickets a 'ticking' European robin or two hid, flighty red-backed shrikes disappeared behind bushes, an even flightier Eurasian sparrowhawk shot across a glade, plus a couple of calling mountain chiffchaffs could be heard in the willows, but it was hard work. Vasil heard a frog calling though, and narrowed it down to within a square metre or so, and there was a stunning brilliant green Shelkovnikov's tree frog right out in the open, on top of the vegetation in a small ditch. Some large (and loud) brown bush crickets also caught our attention, plus two very familiar butterflies: meadow brown and speckled wood.

We finally returned to our accommodation for a short break, where a bit of strong sunshine drew out a number of Armenian meadow lizards and significant numbers of butterflies, though only Geoff and I were out to enjoy them, before we had to head off to Dilijan for a particularly tasty lunch.

The remainder of the afternoon was basically taken up with a visit to the Hagartsin Monastery complex, the main parts of which date back to the 12th and 13th centuries. In addition to the historic interest, we also enjoyed an interesting session on woodland and migrant birds, starting immediately after setting foot out of the vehicle with at least three male *samamiscus* common redstarts on the roadside. Two of these were stunning individuals with their large white wing patches. After looking round the complex, including enjoying a small roost of horseshoe bats in one building, our main attention was drawn to a small impenetrable glade below us, where a mass of nettles and willowherb, plus fruiting elder and other bushes, was attracting good numbers of small birds. Eurasian blue and great tits, a calling coal tit, a pair of gorgeous Eurasian nuthatches, a furtive Eurasian treecreeper, a few more common redstarts, European robins and common chaffinches kept us looking at almost constant movement, but with a sprinkling of gems amongst them. A reed-like warbler came out to forage in the tall herbs, and we soon deduced it was a marsh warbler, based on various plumage features, even if a dunnock – which did exactly the same in the same spot just minutes later – was less cryptic. Ted also drew our attention to a very dull bird which was

appearing sporadically in some dead twigs in deep shade under an elder; and to my delight, it was a thrush nightingale. Sadly, it then decided to play hide (mostly) and seek (twice) before disappearing for good, but it made a grand finale to the day. Bird of the day was (not surprisingly) the chicken. Sorry, Caucasian grouse.

## **Day 8: Gull Island (Sevan); Dilijan forest**

### **Thursday 5 September 2019**

*Weather: chilly start with dense cloud; largely sunny at Lake Sevan and warm in the early afternoon; overcast, warm and mainly still in the late afternoon/evening*

Breakfast began at 7.30am as usual; there were some slightly tired faces on account of a terrific thunderstorm which passed directly over the hotel at about 2am (though two of us never heard a thing). Indeed, the torrent of brown water cascading down the little stream below the rooms was testament to the intensity of the rain, as was the thick pall of chilly dense cloud hanging low over the surroundings and cloaking the forest.

With a large group of long-tailed, Eurasian blue, coal and great tits, plus a calling Eurasian nuthatch in the trees adjacent to the car park, it was a good start. I was also lucky enough to hear a Eurasian wren calling by the stream, and even a white-throated dipper 'tick' as it sped under the little footbridge and briefly landed on a rock in plain sight.

The dense cloud and storms had clearly had a significant impact on migrating birds, and as we drove down towards the main road, so a European roller was noted in flight heading west, and down (away) from the cloud. Then another, then two more, then five more, then incredibly, as we got out and watched, a total of exactly 100 passed overhead 'fleeing' from the cloud. A European turtle dove – very scarce here now compared to 15 or 20 years ago – which sat close to a lesser grey shrike on the wires on the opposite side of the valley was also indicative of the 'fall'.

Taking the old road over the Dilijan pass was also a good move. Again, thick cloud cloaked the slopes and made viewing difficult, but a rock bunting came up off the roadside and went up onto a rocky outcrop, as did an isabelline wheatear. A flock of birds ahead included a Eurasian golden oriole, lots of common chaffinches, several calling common rosefinches, various tits, a Eurasian jay or two and then a superb female lesser spotted woodpecker, which finally gave good views to all. Another sparsely leaved treetop, shrouded in the cloud, held another 11 European rollers – to our amazement

Fortunately, the chilly conditions quickly gave way to sun once we'd cleared the pass, and we dropped down towards Lake Sevan to a large supermarket, complete with a remarkable bounding house sparrow and fly-over dark morph booted eagle, to buy our picnic lunch before continuing down the west side of the lake to the Gull Island area.

The open steppe was very quiet, though as we headed towards the point and views over the islands, so a few more birds became apparent. We started with a bang with a juvenile red-necked grebe, the first we've recorded on this tour, and immediately making us wonder if it was locally bred. The first of numerous black-necked and great crested grebes graced the water nearby, while the abundant local Armenian gulls on their breeding islands kept up a cacophony, as throughout. Other migrants included single common and wood sandpipers, common snipe and sedge warbler, with the first of several western yellow wagtails for the day. Five greater short-toed larks flushed as we walked on, while four ruddy shelduck and a decent group of great cormorants were briefly seen on one island, though given boat disturbance later on, some 11 shelduck and 300 cormorants flew out from round the back of the island later on.

A flock of birds on the opposite side of the lake, visible against the cloud pouring down over the mountain slopes towards Azerbaijan, stopped us dead in our tracks. Demoiselle cranes on active migration, but how on earth could they have come through that cloud?! It made little difference, as around 120 of these remarkable birds were flying hard over the lake and towards us, pushed by the moderate south-easterly breeze, though after just perhaps 10 minutes, had slid past to the south of us and continued off over the montane steppe. Perhaps a lone group that had been dumped by the storms of the night before, that needed to clear this cloud barrier? This seemed the most likely explanation until we later saw two more, though the first of these, comprised of some 34 birds, passed to the north of us before circling upwards to show off their pale grey backs and black flight feathers nicely; the second, of around 200 birds, frustratingly veered north and skirted round the edge of the lake and presumably directly over Sevan town itself before circling up and disappearing off west. Wow!

The bay held over 30 black-necked grebes on the open water, two juvenile sanderlings along the sandy shore, plus an adult dunlin for the back markers, while behind them in the pine plantation, plenty of passerine migrants were present. Mountain chiffchaffs were calling insistently from the onset and showed well, while at least four 'ticking' red-breasted flycatchers, including one red-throated male were noted by everyone, at least for a few seconds, which was a real bonus given their typically furtive behaviour. The water beyond the point held over 100 more black-necked grebes and a flock of motley-plumaged white-winged terns cavorted over the water, with hundreds of common coots bobbing close to the emergent sedge and reedbeds. While no more cranes appeared, keeping an eye on the sky just in case turned up trumps with a large blackish eagle going over, which from photos was confirmed as an adult steppe eagle.

A relaxing picnic lunch was taken in very pleasant conditions in the welcome shade of the edge of the plantation nearby, with mountain chiffchaffs plus red-breasted and spotted flycatchers calling nearby throughout, before we finally headed back towards Dilijan. Incredibly, a dense layer of cloud and strong cold wind were still blowing at the pass, though as we dropped down the far side, this turned to almost still, clear, overcast and mild conditions near the bottom of the valley. After a restorative hot drink, we took a walk near the main river for nearly an hour, with another lesser spotted woodpecker, passing booted eagle, black kite and Alpine swift, plus calling kingfisher of most note, then returned for a break before dinner.

Bird of the day was red-breasted flycatcher.

## Day 9: Dilijan hotel, Vanadzor, Stepanavan lakes, Vardakar & Gusanagyugh res.

### Friday 6 September 2019

*Weather: mostly cloudy, cool start, partly breaking and largely sunny late afternoon and then mild. Windy during afternoon drive, but very still all morning and late evening! Thunderstorms at night*

With a little time after a quick normal breakfast, a couple of birds started off the day well, including the first Eurasian wren for the trip and a surprise adult purple heron flying over shortly after breakfast, which had presumably been downed by the thick cloud during the night. A couple of grey wagtails for Ted were appreciated too.

Heading north and west we made an impromptu stop in Vanadzor when we saw a good flock of raptors going over. Indeed, this stream of birds lasted for over 20 minutes and involved over a thousand black kites, plus a few Eurasian sparrowhawks, a couple of European honey-buzzards and our first juvenile pallid harrier, despite these being at height. It was a remarkable sight and, not surprisingly, our presence caught the attention of plenty of the passing locals. More black kites dominated when we made a comfort stop further ahead, with a few added passing corn buntings as well, and common/steppe and long-legged buzzards were everywhere, while the first two days' lesser spotted eagles were noted at distance. Eventually we reached our destination, noting a couple of whinchats in the meadows, though with high water levels, the muddy edges to the lake were lacking and so were many birds. However, little, great crested and a pack of black-necked grebes, abundant common coots and a couple of common moorhens, a few common pochard, garganey and slightly more common teal, a mobile group of white-winged terns and just as mobile western yellow wagtails were all noted. Vasil found a bluethroat, while flushed common snipe and Eurasian skylarks were too quick for most. Western marsh harriers, around 200 black kites, a distant short-toed eagle and a couple of lesser spotted eagles were enjoyed, as were a few white storks striding through the cut fields in their search for food. Numerous marsh frogs livened up the edge of the lake, while at another lake, encircled by a broad belt of the rare white water lily, very few birds were noted. We did see a fine red fox as we were arriving – it scurried towards the thick vegetation to hide. Other wildlife delights included a couple of butterflies, small spreadwing damselfly and, of greatest interest, a fine male sand lizard, found under a rock by Vasil, and a much more mobile Armenian meadow lizard also caught by him. Another nearby lake was also rather full and rather quiet, so we finally pulled ourselves away, noting a pair of common stonechats in a rough field and returned to Vanadzor for a very late lunch.

We headed towards our accommodation, but decided, given good roads for much of the drive, to visit a couple of wetlands. First, a rather dry reservoir housed a fine number of smart ruddy shelducks, great cormorants, Armenian gulls, plus a single northern shoveler, three eclipse garganey and a few Eurasian teal, but not a single wader to our surprise. Another reservoir, almost on the Turkish border was much more interesting with highlights including a fine group of black-crowned night herons, a squacco heron, a few more white-winged terns and a sky which, at times, was teeming with abundant barn swallows and common swifts feeding on the edge of some storm clouds. Frustratingly, a small group of pratincoles feeding high in flight amongst them sadly vanished without trace just after we'd started off in the vehicle to get closer, as the rain started to fall.

We headed back to our guesthouse, which was brand new and came down again for a lovely dinner, finally with Gyumri, a decent beer.

Bird of the day was Dalmatian pelican.

## **Day 10: Vardakar & Gusanagyugh reservoirs, Lake Arpi area**

### **Saturday 7 September 2019**

*Weather: overnight and early morning thunderstorms; cloudy and cool start; chill wind in the Arpi area, though cloud breaking and sunnier from early afternoon. Thunderstorms again in the evening*

Pre-breakfast birds in the beautiful cool, crystal-clear air in and close to the garden were good, even if only heard from our beds by most. A single common chiffchaff and a couple of mountain chiffchaffs sang their slightly different songs, as did some much noisier western rock nuthatches in the surroundings, while two Syrian woodpeckers drummed at different pitches for almost an hour. Singing black redstart and the odd jingling European goldfinch were pleasing additions to the soundscape and Geoff added a spotted flycatcher to the growing garden list!

Another normal 8.30am start, after a good breakfast, saw us heading west. We quickly dropped back into the Vardakar reservoir as we had yesterday, and were delighted to find a group of 16 pelicans resting there – 15 Dalmatian and one great white, which gave excellent views. Just over 30 ruddy shelducks looked gorgeous in the early morning light, while the features on the 18 eclipse garganey and handful of Eurasian teal were easier to spot (with the light behind us); a small gaggle of ducks included a fine male common pochard and a lovely grey and white black-necked grebe. About 35 wheezing rock sparrows cheered up the steppe behind us.

The road across towards the Turkish border provided us with a few more treats. Firstly, in the form of a superb adult steppe eagle perched on a large boulder out amongst the fields and, remarkably, just a few hundred metres from where we'd seen one the previous year. This finally moved off as a couple of shepherds and their herd approached, giving us flight views too. Secondly, and not much further ahead, we stopped for a small harrier circling low off to one side and were treated to an adult male Montagu's harrier spiralling quite slowly up in terrific light, while a large common starling flock contained three rose-coloured starlings and a lovely single European turtle dove sitting, looking lonely, on a cable.

The Gusanagyugh reservoir was busy as the previous day, but given that nothing new was evident and even the black-crowned night herons appeared to be sitting in exactly the same spots in the bulrushes as the previous evening (were they plastic?!), we moved on quickly to Gyumri (picking out a flock of northern lapwings in a roadside field en route) to assemble picnic ingredients at a large local supermarket. Even here over the building, small numbers of raptors were high up, heading south, including black kites, a couple of Eurasian sparrowhawks, two probable pallid harriers and a male western marsh harrier.

The drive up to the Lake Arpi turn off was relatively uneventful. We stopped briefly for an adult steppe eagle which was circling low over the road, but quickly moved off as we got out; we also noted dozens of buzzards, most of which were long-legged and of just about every colour shade possible, including one or two stunning black morphs.

It was chilly with a stiff northern breeze on the track towards the lake, which was presumably why there were so few small birds evident as we cruised slowly along the 16km entrance track. A lovely fox, with a long skinny grey tail, tipped with a strikingly large white blob, scampered across the hillside amongst the rocks – the first of three we enjoyed during the day.

The first main stop was at a small lake behind a small mountain village. A stiff cold wind was blowing into our faces and when the broken cloud came over, it felt even colder. While very little appeared to be present at first, this was partly due to a superb pale morph booted eagle passing back and forth, low across the far side, though this also came right over, passing very close a couple of times. Lots of birds were actually present, including around 100 northern shoveler, almost 80 garganey, a small number of Eurasian teal and plenty of tufted ducks (including a few young), plus lesser numbers of mallard, a couple of gadwall and a fine, albeit eclipse-plumaged, northern pintail and stunning adult male ferruginous duck. Not bad! A few black-necked, and plenty of little, grebes and lots of Eurasian coots completed the waterbirds, while three wood sandpipers, a green sandpiper, a gorgeous female citrine wagtail and several water pipits and white wagtails rounded off a good tally.

The drive to the main lake seemed less eventful, but included several fine migrant northern wheatears, plus two families of common cranes (distantly off to one side), and a common rock thrush half-hidden on top of a wall. With the park office closed at the weekend we continued round towards the visible Turkish border, with the main lake, this year with much better water levels than last, well off to our side.

A chill wind was blowing as we disembarked from the bus, though we bore it out under the fast-moving broken cloud, almost immediately noting a large flock of over 130 feeding greylag geese at their only breeding site in the country. Very distantly, six Eurasian spoonbills, a great egret and a couple of ruddy shelducks were noted in flight, with a few foraging white-winged terns, plus black-headed and Armenia gulls in addition. Unusually, very few other large birds were present on a wide expanse of meadows behind one village. A group of six great white pelicans flew in from the east, dropped as they crossed the lake looking for a suitable landing spot, then finally turned, gained height and were lost as they headed towards the far southern end of the lake.

We returned, noting the remarkable number of buzzards, mostly long-legged, which are present in the area.

Bird of the day was Dalmatian pelican (though pallid harrier came a close second!).

## Day 11: Pempzashen garden, Mt Aragats; Lake Kari & Amberd Fortress

Sunday 8 September 2019

*Weather: heavy overnight rain and early morning thunderstorms; cold and wet start; cloud lifting at Mt Aragats, though cold. Mixed thunderstorms and a few sunny spells in the afternoon. Light rain at Yerevan, and about 20°C.*

Another normal start saw us in the garden for a few minutes admiring Hovannes's vodka still, and there was even a mountain chiffchaff or two.

Weather-wise, it was a dull and threatening start, but a wet steppe eagle perched in a roadside tree close to the village was a great find. Another adult, this time on the ground, was also enjoyed along a stretch of open agricultural 'steppe' where long-legged buzzards were plentiful and a huge flock of 300+ common linnets were a fine sight. We stopped again close to the Armenian alphabet memorial, where after a bit of searching we came across a patch of burnt ground, busy with small birds picking grasshoppers off the blackened ground. Nearly ten common stonechats 'rubbed boulders' with a few strikingly pale Siberian stonechats of the formerly recognised *armenicus* race, in a confusing melee. A few red-backed shrikes, common and lesser whitethroats, a female common redstart, at least five tree and a single fine tawny pipit made it a good stop.

Winding our way slowly and carefully up towards the summit revealed almost no birds until we noticed a small flock of raptors off to one side. Incredibly, single griffon, black and bearded vultures were circling with a few buzzards, with the griffon and black hanging around for the rest of the day here.

Approaching Lake Kari three Alpine accentors were noted flying onto banks above the road, but once we'd parked, we took a quick look at the water pipits and white wagtails along the edge of the lake before starting the unusually cold walk down – cold winds, chilled by the fresh overnight snow hidden by the dense pall of cloud above us, lazily tried to go through, and not round, us. Generally, and perhaps not surprisingly, small numbers of birds were seen, including three Alpine accentors, plentiful water pipits, moderate numbers of black redstarts and northern wheatears, three red-billed choughs flying noisily overhead, plus another fine common rock thrush.

We finally took the bus down to a small picnic table to eat our normal fare, with the rest of the afternoon spent down at the 7th century Amberd Fortress and nearby area. A short walk along a stream produced only a brief flying ring ouzel male and even briefer views of white-throated dipper, but we concluded with a walk around the Amberd Fortress and church area enjoying the views, particularly as the sun came out almost from the start. The steep slopes of the promontory are out of reach for practical reasons, but house numerous small fruiting bushes where ring ouzels were occasionally 'chacking'; at least ten finally flew out, across a gorge and deep into the bushes in front of us as a close to the day's observations.

Bird of the day was Alpine accentor.

## Day 12: Vedi, Khor Virap monastery area

Monday 9 September 2019

*Weather: cool, wet start with dense cloud; dry and brighter later on, turning chilly in the breeze, though mainly still mid-afternoon/evening.*

Although we had set aside this day for another shot at finding Caspian snowcock, the mixed weather we'd been experiencing this year decided otherwise. At least the later start enabled us to check-in online for our return flights the following morning. Having had to (unwillingly) call off the chance the day before, our decision was at least upheld as we progressed out of Yerevan under a solid mantle of cloud which then turned to rain. This got denser as we travelled, to the point where the driver just decided to stop a couple of times for a few minutes each, just short of our first site in order to field a couple of phone calls, so giving us the delay necessary for the rain to pass slowly over. Light rain was still falling as we passed through large puddles along the entrance track; the adjacent stream bed actually had flowing water in parts, something neither I nor Vasil had ever seen here in this semi-desert. It was fun to watch how the water had advanced down one of the channels driven by the run-off from the hills nearby, making it a little tricky to cross at one point, while just 45 minutes later it had simply gone.

With some other rain still present from the preceding days, pools of water were all over the place and the cool conditions were obviously a game-changer for the local birds, which were remarkably quiet. A wet short-toed snake eagle flew off from a nearby power pole, probably glad to be able shake off some of the water, while a few red-backed shrikes, eastern black-eared and Finsch's wheatears and lesser whitethroats kept us busy as they flicked from bush to bush or rock to rock. Two young red foxes were also feeding on the abundant black berries smothering a buckthorn, unaware of our presence.

The rain had also darkened the soil, making the abundant dry whitish stems of the peculiar *Lepidium vesicarium*, with its inflated nodes, very evident. It had also made finding some of the other small inhabitants of the area much easier, both as they were slow in the cold, but easy to spot if they moved, and because of their sandy colour, normally almost impossible to spot in the harsh light conditions. A small straw-coloured grasshopper, looking like a grass stem, was the first, followed by a large female praying mantis in a mat of green caper, which went into a fixed cryptic pose, despite being handled. The dry soil under flat surface stones was also attractive to the common lesser Asian scorpion and we found four quite quickly, while the rain had also enticed a tiny horned praying mantis nymph to hatch out as well, despite the late date.

We walked to another small spot I knew, which turned out to be perfect. The large group of corn buntings, feeding on the wet tracks 'pit-pitted' and moved off in front, leaving a bathing isabelline wheatear behind. A pair of eastern rock nuthatches called from the distance, while a pair of westerns called close, then came to feed intermittently down in a small gully. The bushes, standing vegetation and small crags here were busy with birds. A lesser whitethroat rubbed shoulders with a few of its larger common cousins, and up to ten Menetries's warblers zipped back and forth, occasionally and characteristically waving their darker tails cocked in the air. An isabelline wheatear mixed with more of the ever-attractive Finsch's plus a couple of

close and particularly smartly plumaged autumn eastern black-eared wheatears, while a call from Vasil led us to track down a very flighty but superb autumn-plumaged rufous-tailed scrub-robin of the grey-backed *syriacus* form. An unexpected bonus and yet another new bird for this tour.

We finally called it quits here and moved on to find somewhere more agreeable for lunch – a covered picnic table that we found in a lovely apricot orchard proved to be ideal.

We finished the day overlooking the Turkish border at the Khor Virap monastery complex. A ringtail Montagu's harrier hunted amongst the tamarisk scrub behind an extensive area of tall reeds in front, a few blue-cheeked bee-eaters fed over the edge of the marsh, pygmy cormorants, common coots, common moorhen and little grebe all fed in a small water channel in front, while behind the reedbed, a large raptor topped a tall post. Despite the distance it was clearly a fine osprey, feeding on a large fish draped over the top of the pole. Our 200th bird species! And looking back towards the minarets in the Turkish villages, a flock of gull-like birds heading down the River Aras turned out to be a flock of winter-plumaged gull-billed terns!

We moved position to try to look over the border area better. Nothing new was seen though, so we retraced our route, returning through a small cemetery, watching a Eurasian hoopoe high on a slope, then a fine little owl we flushed on the way, while some of the group set about trying to get pictures of another Menetries's warbler which was dashing between the camel's-thorn bushes. Vasil and I set about trying to track down a strangely calling cricket without success, but time was running out and we decided to call it a day.

We returned to Yerevan for a decent break and time to at least start packing before heading out for our final dinner at one of the innumerable restaurants in the capital.

Bird of the day was eastern black-eared wheatear.

### **Day 13: Return home**

#### **Tuesday 10 September 2019**

*Weather: overcast and cool in Yerevan*

After a very simply hot drink plus cake breakfast we boarded the bus for the last time and headed to the airport. As we'd set off before rush hour we arrived in just over 15 minutes, dropped off our bags and went flight side. The flight to Paris went without incident, landing on time and, after saying our goodbyes, we took our respective flights back to London and Madrid.

# Checklist



	Common Name	Scientific Name	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8	Day 9	Day 10	Day 11	Day 12
	<b>BIRDS</b>												
1	Greylag goose	<i>Anser anser</i>									✓		
2	Ruddy shelduck	<i>Tadorna ferruginea</i>							✓	✓	✓		
3	Garganey	<i>Anas querquedula</i>		✓			✓			✓	✓		
4	Northern shoveler	<i>Anas clypeata</i>		✓			✓			✓	✓		
5	Gadwall	<i>Anas strepera</i>		✓			✓		✓	✓	✓		
6	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>		✓			✓			✓	✓		
7	Northern pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>									✓		
8	Eurasian teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>					✓		✓	✓	✓		
9	Red-crested pochard	<i>Netta rufina</i>		✓									



10	Common pochard	<i>Aythya ferina</i>		✓						✓	✓		
11	Ferruginous duck	<i>Aythya nyroca</i>		✓			✓				✓		
12	Tufted duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>					✓				✓		
13	Caucasian grouse	<i>Lyrurus mlokosiewiczi</i>						✓					
14	Chukar partridge	<i>Alectoris chukar</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						✓
15	Grey partridge	<i>Perdix perdix</i>					✓						
16	Common quail	<i>Coturnix coturnix</i>					✓						
17	Little grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>		✓			✓		✓	✓	✓		✓
18	*Red-necked grebe	<i>Podiceps grisegena</i>							✓				
19	Great crested grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>		✓			✓		✓	✓	✓		
20	Black-necked grebe	<i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>					✓		✓	✓	✓		
21	Black stork	<i>Ciconia nigra</i>				✓							
22	White stork	<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	

23	Glossy ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>					✓						✓
24	Eurasian spoonbill	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>								✓			
25	Little bittern	<i>Ixobrychus minutus</i>		✓			✓						
26	Black-crowned night heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>								✓	✓		
27	Squacco heron	<i>Ardeola ralloides</i>		✓						✓			
28	Western cattle egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>		✓									✓
29	Grey heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>		✓			✓			✓	✓		
30	Purple heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>		✓			✓			✓			
31	Great egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>		✓								✓	
32	Little egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>		✓			✓		✓				
33	Great white pelican	<i>Pelecanus onocrotalus</i>								✓			
34	Dalmatian pelican	<i>Pelecanus crispus</i>								✓	✓		
35	Pygmy cormorant	<i>Microcarbo pygmeus</i>		✓									✓

36	Great cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>		✓			✓		✓	✓	✓		
37	*Western osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>											✓
38	Bearded vulture	<i>Gypaetus barbatus</i>			✓	✓						✓	
39	Egyptian vulture	<i>Neophron percnopterus</i>	✓	✓	✓								
40	European honey-buzzard	<i>Pernis apivorus</i>	✓				✓		✓	✓			
41	Griffon vulture	<i>Gyps fulvus</i>				✓						✓	
42	Cinereous vulture	<i>Aegypius monachus</i>				✓	✓					✓	
43	Short-toed snake eagle	<i>Circaetus gallicus</i>	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓		✓
44	Lesser spotted eagle	<i>Clanga pomarina</i>	✓				✓	✓		✓			
45	Booted eagle	<i>Hieraetus pennatus</i>	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓
46	Steppe Eagle	<i>Aquila nipalensis</i>							✓		✓	✓	
47	Golden eagle	<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>	✓	✓		✓							
48	Levant sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter brevipes</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						

49	Eurasian sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
50	Northern goshawk	<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>					✓						
51	Western marsh harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
52	Pallid harrier	<i>Circus macrourus</i>				✓				✓	✓		
53	Montagu's harrier	<i>Circus pygargus</i>		✓				✓		✓	✓		✓
54	Black kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>	✓				✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
55	Long-legged buzzard	<i>Buteo rufinus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
56	Common buzzard (inc. steppe)	<i>Buteo buteo (inc. vulpinus)</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
57	Water rail	<i>Rallus aquaticus</i>		✓			✓			✓			
58	*Grey-headed swamphen	<i>Porphyrio poliocephalus</i>		✓									
59	Common moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>		✓			✓			✓	✓		✓
60	Eurasian coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>		✓			✓		✓	✓	✓		✓
61	Demoiselle crane	<i>Grus virgo</i>							✓				



62	Common crane	<i>Grus grus</i>									✓		
63	Pied avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>		✓									
64	Northern lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>									✓		✓
65	White-tailed lapwing	<i>Vanellus leucurus</i>		✓									
66	Common ringed plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>		✓					✓				
67	Little ringed plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>		✓									
68	Kentish plover	<i>Charadrius alexandrinus</i>		✓									
69	Ruddy turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>		✓									
70	Ruff	<i>Calidris pugnax</i>		✓							✓		
71	Temminck's stint	<i>Calidris temminckii</i>		✓									
72	*Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>							✓				
73	Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>							✓				
74	Little stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>		✓									



75	Common snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>		✓					✓	✓			
76	*Red-necked phalarope	<i>Phalaropus lobatus</i>		✓									
77	Common sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>		✓					✓				
78	Green sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>		✓	✓		✓				✓		
79	Common redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>		✓			✓						
80	Marsh sandpiper	<i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>		✓									
81	Wood sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>		✓					✓		✓		
82	Black-headed gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>							✓		✓		
83	Armenian gull	<i>Larus armenicus</i>		✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
84	Gull-billed tern	<i>Gelochelidon nilotica</i>											✓
85	Whiskered tern	<i>Chlidonias hybrida</i>		✓			✓		✓	✓	✓		
86	White-winged tern	<i>Chlidonias leucopterus</i>		✓			✓		✓				
87	Rock dove	<i>Columba livia</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

88	Stock dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>		✓									
89	Common wood pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
90	*European turtle dove	<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>							✓		✓		
91	Eurasian collared dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	✓	✓						✓			
92	Laughing dove	<i>Spilopelia senegalensis</i>	✓	✓									
93	Common cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>			✓								
94	*Little owl	<i>Athene noctua</i>				✓							✓
95	Alpine swift	<i>Tachymarptis melba</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓				
96	Common swift	<i>Apus apus</i>		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓			
97	European roller	<i>Coracias garrulus</i>	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
98	Common kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>		✓	✓				✓				
99	Blue-cheeked bee-eater	<i>Merops persicus</i>		✓			✓						✓
100	European bee-eater	<i>Merops apiaster</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

101	Eurasian hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓
102	Eurasian wryneck	<i>Jynx torquilla</i>					✓						
103	*Lesser spotted woodpecker	<i>Dryobates minor</i>							✓				
104	Syrian woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos syriacus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	
105	Great spotted woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>					✓	✓	✓				
106	European green woodpecker	<i>Picus viridis</i>						✓	✓				
107	Lesser kestrel	<i>Falco naumanni</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			
108	Common kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
109	Eurasian hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>			✓	✓	✓				✓		
110	Peregrine falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>			✓								
111	Red-backed shrike	<i>Lanius collurio</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
112	Lesser grey shrike	<i>Lanius minor</i>		✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
113	Woodchat shrike	<i>Lanius senator</i>			✓	✓							

114	Eurasian golden oriole	<i>Oriolus oriolus</i>	✓			✓			✓				
115	Eurasian jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	
116	Eurasian magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
117	Red-billed chough	<i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓						✓	
118	Western jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
119	Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>		✓			✓			✓	✓		✓
120	Hooded crow	<i>Corvus cornix</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
121	Northern raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓
122	Coal tit	<i>Parus ater</i>						✓	✓	✓			
123	Eurasian blue tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>				✓		✓	✓	✓			
124	Great tit	<i>Parus major</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
125	Eurasian penduline tit	<i>Remiz pendulinus</i>		✓									
126	Bearded reedling	<i>Panurus biarmicus</i>		✓									

127	Eurasian skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>					✓			✓	✓	✓	
128	Crested lark	<i>Galerida cristata</i>		✓		✓							✓
129	Greater short-toed lark	<i>Calandrella brachydactyla</i>							✓				
130	Lesser short-toed lark	<i>Alaudala rufescens</i>				✓							
131	Sand martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓			
132	Barn swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
133	Eurasian crag martin	<i>Ptyonoprogne rupestris</i>	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓			✓	
134	Common house martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>			✓	✓	✓		✓				
135	Cetti's warbler	<i>Cettia cetti</i>	✓	✓			✓		✓			✓	
136	Long-tailed tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>			✓				✓				
137	Willow warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	
138	Common chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>		✓							✓	✓	
139	Mountain chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus sindianus</i>					✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	

140	Great reed warbler	<i>Acrocephalus arundinaceus</i>		✓									
141	*Moustached warbler	<i>Acrocephalus melanopogon</i>		✓									
142	Sedge warbler	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>		✓					✓	✓			
143	Eurasian reed warbler	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>		✓			✓						
144	Marsh warbler	<i>Acrocephalus palustris</i>						✓					
145	Eastern olivaceous/Upcher's warbler	<i>Iduna pallida</i> / <i>Hippolais languida</i>				✓							
146	Eurasian blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	✓						✓				
147	Garden warbler	<i>Sylvia borin</i>			✓	✓							✓
148	Barred warbler	<i>Sylvia nisoria</i>				✓							
149	Lesser whitethroat	<i>Sylvia curruca</i>	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓
150	Eastern orphean warbler	<i>Sylvia crassirostris</i>				✓							
151	Common whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>			✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓
152	Menetries's warbler	<i>Sylvia mystacea</i>		✓		✓							✓

153	Eurasian wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>								✓			
154	Eurasian nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>						✓	✓				
155	Western rock nuthatch	<i>Sitta neumayer</i>	✓		✓	✓					✓	✓	✓
156	Eastern rock nuthatch	<i>Sitta tephronota</i>			✓	✓							✓
157	Eurasian treecreeper	<i>Certhia familiaris</i>						✓	✓				
158	Rosy starling	<i>Pastor roseus</i>					✓				✓		
159	Common starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	✓	✓					✓		✓		✓
160	Ring ouzel	<i>Turdus torquatus</i>										✓	
161	Common blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>			✓		✓	✓				✓	
162	Mistle thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>			✓							✓	
163	*Rufous-tailed scrub robin	<i>Cercotrichas galactotes</i>											✓
164	Spotted flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓
165	European robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>			✓			✓					

166	Bluethroat	<i>Luscinia svecica</i>					✓			✓			
167	Thrush nightingale	<i>Luscinia luscinia</i>						✓					
168	Common nightingale	<i>Luscinia megarhynchos</i>	✓										
169	Red-breasted flycatcher	<i>Ficedula parva</i>							✓				
170	Black redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>					✓				✓	✓	
171	Common redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>						✓	✓			✓	✓
172	Common rock thrush	<i>Monticola saxatilis</i>				✓					✓	✓	
173	Blue rock thrush	<i>Monticola solitarius</i>			✓	✓	✓						
174	Whinchat	<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>					✓			✓	✓	✓	
175	European stonechat	<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>	✓							✓		✓	
176	Siberian stonechat	<i>Saxicola maurus</i>										✓	
177	Northern wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>					✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
178	Isabelline wheatear	<i>Oenanthe isabellina</i>				✓			✓				✓

179	Eastern black-eared wheatear	<i>Oenanthe (h.) melanoleuca</i>	✓		✓	✓				✓			✓
180	Finsch's wheatear	<i>Oenanthe finschii</i>				✓							✓
181	Persian wheatear	<i>Oenanthe xanthopyrna</i>			✓								
182	White-throated dipper	<i>Cinclus cinclus</i>		✓	✓							✓	
183	House sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
184	Eurasian tree sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>		✓									✓
185	Rock sparrow	<i>Petronia petronia</i>		✓		✓	✓				✓		
186	Alpine accentor	<i>Prunella collaris</i>										✓	
187	Radde's accentor	<i>Prunella ocularis</i>					✓					✓	
188	Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>						✓					
189	Western yellow wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>		✓			✓		✓	✓	✓		
190	Black-headed wagtail	<i>Motacilla (flava) feldegg</i>		✓					✓				
191	Citrine wagtail	<i>Motacilla citreola</i>					✓		✓		✓		



192	Grey wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>		✓	✓				✓	✓			
193	White wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
194	Tawny pipit	<i>Anthus campestris</i>			✓	✓						✓	
195	Tree pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
196	Water pipit	<i>Anthus spinoletta</i>					✓	✓			✓	✓	
197	Common chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>			✓		✓	✓	✓				
198	Asian crimson-winged finch	<i>Rhodopechys sanguineus</i>					✓						
199	Common rosefinch	<i>Carpodacus erythrinus</i>			✓		✓	✓	✓				
200	Red crossbill	<i>Loxia curvirostra</i>						✓					
201	European greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>					✓	✓			✓	✓	
202	Twite	<i>Linaria flavirostris</i>						✓			✓		
203	Common linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>					✓			✓	✓	✓	
204	European goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

205	Corn bunting	<i>Emberiza calandra</i>	✓		✓	✓				✓			✓
206	Rock bunting	<i>Emberiza cia</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓			✓	
207	Ortolan bunting	<i>Emberiza hortulana</i>					✓				✓		
208	Common reed bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>		✓									
	<b>MAMMALS</b>	<b>MAMMALIA</b>											
1	Brown rat	<i>Rattus norvegicus</i>											✓
2	Common vole	<i>Microtus arvalis</i>						✓					
3	European water vole	<i>Arvicola amphibius</i>		Prints									
4	Musk rat	<i>Ondatra zibethicus</i>								✓			
5	Mehely's horseshoe bat?	<i>Rhinolophus mehelyi</i>						✓					
6	Golden-backed jackal	<i>Canis aureus</i>		Prints									
7	Red fox	<i>Vulpes vulpes</i>								✓	✓		✓

8	Wild goat/Bezoar ibex	<i>Capra aegagrus</i>			✓								
	<b>REPTILES &amp; AMPHIBIANS</b>	<b>REPTILIA &amp; AMPHIBIA</b>											
1	Caucasian agama	<i>Laudakia caucasia</i>			✓								
2	Rock/wall/meadow lizard spp.	<i>Lacerta/Podarcis/Darevskia spp.</i>	✓										
3	*Radde's meadow lizard	<i>Darevskia raddei</i>			✓								
4	*Armenian meadow lizard	<i>Darevskia armeniaca</i>						✓		✓			
5	Strauch's racerunner	<i>Eremias strauchi</i>				✓							
6	*Sand lizard	<i>Lacerta agilis</i>								✓			
7	Medium green lizard	<i>Lacerta media</i>					✓						
8	Dice snake	<i>Natrix tessellata</i>											
9	*Coin-marked snake	<i>Hemorrhois nummifer</i>											
10	*Cat snake	<i>Telescopus fallax</i>											



11	Blunt-nosed viper	<i>Macrovipera lebetina</i>											
12	Green toad	<i>Bufo variabilis</i>						✓	✓				
13	Shelkovnikov's tree frog	<i>Hyla orientalis</i>						✓					
14	Marsh frog	<i>Pelophylax ridibundus</i>		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓		
	<b>BUTTERFLIES</b>												
1	Mallow skipper	<i>Carcharodus alceae</i>			✓								
2	Sage skipper	<i>Muschampia proto</i>			✓								
3	Grizzled skipper spp.	<i>Pyrgus spp.</i>	✓						✓				
4	*Mediterranean Skipper	<i>Gegenes nostradamus</i>		✓									
5	(False) Small white	<i>Pieris (pseudo)rapae</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			
6	Large white	<i>Pieris brassicae</i>							✓				
7	Eastern bath white	<i>Pontia edusa</i>			✓	✓							

8	Clouded yellow	<i>Colias croceus</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		
9	Eastern pale clouded yellow	<i>Colias erate</i>			✓		✓	✓			✓		
10	Small copper	<i>Lycaena phlaeas</i>			✓								
11	Sooty copper	<i>Lycaena tityrus</i>	✓										
12	Holly Blue	<i>Celastrina argiolus</i>	✓		✓								
13	Christoph's blue	<i>Plebejus christophi</i>		✓									
14	Brown argus	<i>Plebejus (Aricia) agestis</i>	✓										
15	Anatolian blue argus	<i>Plebejus crassipunctus</i> ( <i>Ultraaricia</i> )					✓						
16	Damon Blue type	<i>Agrodiaetus cf damon</i>			✓								
17	Ripart's anomalous blue	<i>Agrodiaetus ripartii</i>			✓								
18	Common blue	<i>Polyommatus icarus</i>		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		
19	Adonis blue	<i>Polyommatus bellargus</i>			✓			✓	✓		✓		
20	*Speckled wood	<i>Pararge aegeria</i>						✓					



21	Small heath	<i>Coenonympha pamphilus</i>	✓			✓							
22	Large wall brown	<i>Lasiommata maera</i>			✓								
23	Meadow brown	<i>Maniola jurtina</i>						✓		✓			
24	Dusky meadow brown	<i>Hypenophele lycaon</i>			✓	✓							
25	Hermit	<i>Chazara briseis</i>			✓								
26	*Great banded grayling	<i>Brintesia circe</i>			✓				✓				
27	Klug's tawny rockbrown	<i>Pseudochazara pelopea</i>			✓								
28	White-edged rockbrown	<i>Hipparchia parisatis</i> (Euhipparchia)				✓							
29	Tree grayling	<i>Hipparchia statilinus</i> (Neohipparchia)	✓		✓								
30	Southern white admiral	<i>Limenitis (Azuritis) reducta</i>			✓								
31	Red admiral	<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>									✓		
32	*Painted lady	<i>Vanessa cardui</i>			✓							✓	

33	*Comma	<i>Polygonia c-album</i>	✓										
34	*Comma	<i>Polygonia c-album</i>	✓										
35	Cardinal	<i>Argynnis pandora</i>	✓		✓			✓	✓				
	<b>MOTHS</b>	<b>LEPIDOPTERA</b>											
1	Hummingbird hawkmoth	<i>Macroglossum stellatarum</i>	✓		✓					✓			
2	Garden tiger	<i>Arctia caja</i>	✓										
3	Jersey tiger	<i>Euplagia quadripunctaria</i>	✓										
	<b>DAMSELFLIES AND DRAGONFLIES</b>	<b>ODONATA</b>											
1	Small Red-eye	<i>Erythromma viridulum</i>		✓									
2	Blue-tailed damselfly	<i>Ischnura elegans</i>		✓						✓			

3	Common bluet	<i>Enallagma cyathigerum</i>							✓				
4	Small spreadwing	<i>Lestes viridis</i>								✓			
5	Migrant hawkler	<i>Aeshna mixta</i>	✓						✓				
6	Broad scarlet (darter)	<i>Crocothemis erythraea</i>		✓									
7	Yellow-winged darter	<i>Sympetrum flaveolum</i>								✓			
8	Common darter	<i>Sympetrum striolatum</i>			✓								
9	Red-veined darter	<i>Sympetrum fonscolombii</i>		✓					✓				
10	Southern darter	<i>Sympetrum meridionale</i>	✓		✓								
11	Moustached/vagrant darter	<i>Sympetrum vulgatum decoloratum</i>										✓	
	<b>OTHER INSECTS</b>	<b>INSECTA</b>											
1	Brown bush cricket sp.	<i>Psorodonotus specularis</i>						✓					
2	Brown bush cricket sp.	??						✓					



3	Giant bush cricket	<i>Saga ephippigera</i>											
4	Field cricket	<i>Gryllus campestris</i>							✓				
5	Eastern cricket	<i>Modicogryllus frontalis</i>							✓				
6	Long-headed grasshopper	<i>cf Acrida ungarica</i>											✓
7	Rhino beetle sp.	??								✓			
8	Praying mantis sp.	<i>Mantis religiosa</i>											✓
9	Horned praying mantis	<i>Empusa sp.</i>											✓
	<b>OTHER TAXA</b>												
1	Roman snail	<i>Helix pomatia</i>					✓						
2	Lesser Asian scorpion	<i>Mesobuthus eupeus</i>											✓