



Field Guides Tour Report

**Morocco 2015**

Sep 7, 2015 to Sep 24, 2015

Jesse Fagan

*For our tour description, itinerary, past triplists, dates, fees, and more, please VISIT OUR TOUR PAGE.*



*The rugged, red cliffs near Rissanni yielded a handsome Pharaoh Eagle-Owl -- and some spectacular scenery. Photo by guide Jesse Fagan.*

Another good trip and a very productive one for birds! One of our best totals yet, with scarcely a logistical hiccup, and pretty fine weather throughout. We saw 210 bird taxa, which included a few interesting subspecies (and potential splits), tried our fill of tagine, and witnessed spectacular sunsets and guys charming cobras.

Bird highlights (per y'all) included the thousands of Pin-tailed Sandgrouse seen in the Tadgilt Valley, the lovely and sophisticated looking (and named!), Moussier's Redstart, the unpredictable Hawfinch, the cryptic Egyptian Nightjar (so close, but still took some of us a while to see it), the delicate African Blue-Tit, and what about that Water Rail?! Wow. However, most people were in agreement -- it was hard to best the Waldrapp (Northern Bald Ibis), as it is such a rare bird, critically endangered, and we timed our encounter on the cliffs just perfectly. But, wait! The Pharaoh Eagle-Owl! That was also an experience that was hard to beat, as we were patient and persistent, eventually finding it perched high on the rock wall.

Thanks very much to Oussama, our reliable and ever-ready driver. Thanks to the people of Morocco, for their hospitality. And thanks to all of you for your patience and excellent spotting! All the best birding in the future.

-- Jesse (aka Motmot) from Lima, Peru

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**KEYS FOR THIS LIST**

One of the following keys may be shown in brackets for individual species as appropriate: \* = heard only, I = introduced, E = endemic, N = nesting, a = austral migrant, b = boreal migrant

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**BIRDS**

Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)

**RUDDY SHELDUCK** (*Tadorna ferruginea*) – Our first distant looks were in the Lakes Region (near Ifrane), but we had better numbers (and looks) at Eddahbi Reservoir. An odd distribution, as this species is found in NW Africa, but more commonly in the Middle East.

**GADWALL** (*Anas strepera*) – Good numbers in the Lakes Region.

**MALLARD** (*Anas platyrhynchos*) – Hundreds at most wetlands visited.

**NORTHERN SHOVELER** (*Anas clypeata*) – Also very common. Hundreds on lakes and reservoirs throughout the tour.

**GREEN-WINGED TEAL (EURASIAN)** (*Anas crecca crecca*) – This race differs subtly from the New World variety, as the male lacks the vertical stripe on the side; however, females are nearly identical.

**MARbled TEAL** (*Marmaronetta angustirostris*) – We worked hard to see one at Lac du Sidi, but then found 75 or so in the Lakes Region, and again at Eddahbi Reservoir.

**RED-CRESTED POCHARD** (*Netta rufina*) – A female at Lac du Sidi had us scratching our head. She seemed awfully tame. Thankfully we found a more "wild" looking bird in the coastal estuary as we were leaving our hotel in Skhirat.

**COMMON POCHARD** (*Aythya ferina*) – Good numbers on Lac du Sidi.

**FERRUGINOUS DUCK** (*Aythya nyroca*) – Just a few on Lac du Sidi.

**WHITE-HEADED DUCK** (*Oxyura leucocephala*) – Good numbers of this rare and local duck on Lac du Sidi including a few white-headed males.

#### Numididae (Guineafowl)

**HELMETED GUINEAFOWL** (*Numida meleagris*) – Historically, this species was native to Morocco (subspecies *sabyi*), but has long since been extirpated. The ones we saw near Rabat were of the feral variety. [I]

#### Phasianidae (Pheasants, Grouse, and Allies)

**BARBARY PARTRIDGE** (*Alectoris barbara*) – This NW African endemic was encountered in several places during the tour, but always a bit fleeting. We had a covey in the Zaer region and (very quickly!) a group along the road to Marrakesh. Heard a few other times.

**DOUBLE-SPURRED FRANCOLIN** (*Francolinus bicalcaratus*) – We spent two days getting looks at this species in the Zaer. The first morning one was perched on a snag in the morning fog, but the next morning (without fog) we had small groups running across the road.

#### Podicipedidae (Grebes)

**LITTLE GREBE** (*Tachybaptus ruficollis*) – Good numbers on Lac du Sidi.

**GREAT CRESTED GREBE** (*Podiceps cristatus*) – A showy grebe that we enjoyed at close range on Lac du Sidi and in the Lakes Region.

**EARED GREBE** (*Podiceps nigricollis*) – Very small numbers this year in the Lakes Region and at Eddahbi Reservoir. This species is mainly a winter visitor to NW Africa. Also known as Black-necked Grebe in the Old World.

#### Phoenicopteridae (Flamingos)

**GREATER FLAMINGO** (*Phoenicopterus roseus*) – Good numbers on Lac du Sidi, but also around Eddahbi Reservoir.

#### Procellariidae (Shearwaters and Petrels)

**CORY'S SHEARWATER (BOREALIS)** (*Calonectris diomedea borealis*) – Most of my photos and what we identified on the boat appear to be of this North Atlantic population.

**GREAT SHEARWATER** (*Puffinus gravis*) – At least four individuals were seen on the pelagic out of Agadir.

**MANX SHEARWATER** (*Puffinus puffinus*) – Kate was happy to see this species (one of a few lifers for her) on our pelagic. In the end, we saw three or so individuals.

#### Hydrobatidae (Storm-Petrels)

**EUROPEAN STORM-PETREL** (*Hydrobates pelagicus*) – Very cool to find this species on our pelagic trip. I would estimate we saw four birds.

#### Ciconiidae (Storks)

**WHITE STORK** (*Ciconia ciconia*) – Absent from the desert regions, but good numbers along the coast and in cities-towns where they nest on power poles and on tops of chimneys.

#### Sulidae (Boobies and Gannets)

**NORTHERN GANNET** (*Morus bassanus*) – Seen from the Skhirat coastline, and nice looks on the pelagic. Most were immatures, but a few adults were seen.

#### Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

**GREAT CORMORANT (NORTH ATLANTIC)** (*Phalacrocorax carbo carbo*) – The northern populations (as adults) are all dark below. We saw this subspecies along the coast from Rabat down to Agadir. This population is a winter visitor to Africa.

**GREAT CORMORANT (MOROCCAN)** (*Phalacrocorax carbo maroccanus*) – The NW resident population have striking white underparts. Didn't seem as common as the previous variety, but seen in good numbers along the coast.

#### Ardeidae (Hérons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

**GRAY HERON** (*Ardea cinerea*) – Common at wetland sites. Absent from desert region.

**LITTLE EGRET** (*Egretta garzetta*) – This species and the next were quite possibly the most common herons/egrets seen on the tour.

**CATTLE EGRET** (*Bubulcus ibis*)

**SQUACCO HERON** (*Ardeola ralloides*) – One was seen as we were leaving Skhirat, but also a few others at Eddahbi Reservoir. Generally not very common.

**BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON** (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) – Lots at Eddahbi Reservoir.

#### Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

**GLOSSY IBIS** (*Plegadis falcinellus*) – One was at the coastal mouth as we were leaving our hotel in Skhirat.

**WALDRAPP** (*Geronticus eremita*) – This critically endangered species was seen along the cliffs south of Agadir. It is a very localized and extremely vulnerable population. We had amazing looks at probably 200 individuals which represents 40% of the world's population.

**EURASIAN SPOONBILL** (*Platalea leucorodia*) – A number at Lac du Sidi and fairly common at Eddahbi and again around Agadir.

#### Pandionidae (Osprey)

**OSPREY** (*Pandion haliaetus*) – Singles here and there.

#### Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

**BLACK-SHOULDERED KITE** (*Elanus caeruleus*) – Fairly rare and local in NW Africa, we saw just one in the Zaer.

**EGYPTIAN VULTURE** (*Neophron percnopterus*) – Awesome finding this species in the dump near Boumalne Dades. It was an adult that got up and soared for us before settling again to pick at the trash.

**EUROPEAN HONEY-BUZZARD** (*Pernis apivorus*) – Not many migrants this year, but we did have a small group of ten soaring over the vehicle.

**SHORT-TOED EAGLE** (*Circaetus gallicus*) – A pair of flyovers in the Zaer.

**BOOTED EAGLE** (*Hieraaetus pennatus*) – One of the more common raptors in the Zaer.

**GOLDEN EAGLE** (*Aquila chrysaetos*) – A pair soaring over us as we descended to Marrakesh from Oukaimeden.

**EURASIAN MARSH-HARRIER** (*Circus aeruginosus*) – Several around Lac du Sidi and again around Ourzazate. Often over marshes or wetlands (aptly named!).

**EURASIAN SPARROWHAWK** (*Accipiter nisus*) – Migrants were seen over Lac du Sidi and again in the Lakes Region. We had a vocal pair interacting in the cedar forest near Azrou.

**LONG-LEGGED BUZZARD** (*Buteo rufinus*) – Good numbers in the desert.

#### Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

**WATER RAIL** (*Rallus aquaticus*) – Spectacular encounter (thanks for the suggestion, Tim!) in the Lakes Region with a very responsive bird. We couldn't have had a better encounter.

**PURPLE SWAMPHEN** (*Porphyrio porphyrio*) – Several along the lakeshore at Lac du Sidi.

**EURASIAN MOORHEN** (*Gallinula chloropus*) – Lots at Lac du Sidi and again in the Lakes Region. This species used to be lumped with our Common Gallinule, and looks nearly identical.

**RED-KNOBBED COOT** (*Fulica cristata*) – In Northern Africa, this is a very localized species (though fairly common throughout sub-Saharan Africa). Good numbers were seen in the Lakes Region and again at Eddahbi Reservoir.

**EURASIAN COOT** (*Fulica atra*) – Nice comparison of this species and the previous were made at Lac du Sidi where they were side by side.

#### Burhinidae (Thick-knees)

**EURASIAN THICK-KNEE** (*Burhinus oediconemus*) – Always a good find. We had a close pair by the road in the Zaer and another three at Oued Souss.

#### Recurvirostridae (Stilts and Avocets)

**BLACK-WINGED STILT** (*Himantopus himantopus*) – Good numbers at most wetland sites.

**PIED AVOCET** (*Recurvirostra avocetta*) – A flock of 20 on Aoua Lake (Lakes Region) and a group of 10 on Eddahbi Reservoir. Striking pied plumage.

#### Haematopodidae (Oystercatchers)

**EURASIAN OYSTERCATCHER** (*Haematopus ostralegus*) – Our first were on the beach at Skhirat.

#### Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

**BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER** (*Pluvialis squatarola*) – Or "Gray Plover," we had good numbers around Skhirat.

**KENTISH PLOVER (KENTISH)** (*Charadrius alexandrinus alexandrinus*) – A few on the beach at Skhirat, but larger numbers on Eddahbi Reservoir.

**COMMON RINGED PLOVER** (*Charadrius hiaticula*) – Good numbers around Rabat/Skhirat and again at Eddahbi; though in general, this species tends to prefer more brackish environments.

**LITTLE RINGED PLOVER** (*Charadrius dubius*) – Also good numbers once we made our way inland, as this species tends to prefer more freshwater habitats.

#### Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

**COMMON SANDPIPER** (*Actitis hypoleucos*) – Lots around; seen at most wetland sites.

**GREEN SANDPIPER** (*Tringa ochropus*) – Our first were on Lac du Sidi, but this species was seen frequently throughout the tour.

**SPOTTED REDSHANK** (*Tringa erythropus*) – Our only two were on the beach at Skhirat.

**COMMON GREENSHANK** (*Tringa nebularia*) – Seen at most wetland sites on the tour. Very much like a New World yellowlegs (but without the yellowlegs!).

**WOOD SANDPIPER** (*Tringa glareola*) – A few in the Lakes Region, but better looks at Eddahbi Reservoir.

**COMMON REDSHANK** (*Tringa totanus*) – Common throughout the tour at various sites.

**WHIMBREL (EUROPEAN)** (*Numenius phaeopus phaeopus*) – The European subspecies (possible split in the future) has an obvious white stripe down the back, which we saw in flight.

**EURASIAN CURLEW** (*Numenius arquata*) – A pair on the beach at Skhirat, but at least seven more at Oued Souss in Agadir.

**BAR-TAILED GODWIT** (*Limosa lapponica*) – Several spotted on the mudflats at Oued Souss.

**RUDDY TURNSTONE** (*Arenaria interpres*) – Most days around Skhirat where there is lots of rocky shoreline.

**RUFF** (*Calidris pugnax*) – A pair along the reedy shoreline at Addahbi Reservoir.

**SANDERLING** (*Calidris alba*) – Several around Skhirat and again in Agadir.

**DUNLIN** (*Calidris alpina*) – Mostly juveniles seen.

**LITTLE STINT** (*Calidris minuta*) – Not many around this year. A few seen around Agadir this year.

#### Glareolidae (Pratincoles and Coursers)

**CREAM-COLORED COURSER** (*Cursorius cursor*) – Finally caught up with this odd bird along the Tagdilt Track rummaging around in the trash. This made for interesting photos.

**COLLARED PRATINCOLE** (*Glareola pratincola*) – A juvenile was seen at the Addahbi Reservoir.

#### Stercorariidae (Skuas and Jaegers)

**GREAT SKUA** (*Stercorarius skua*) – Man, what a bird! We saw at least three individuals (1 adult, 2 juv) on our pelagic trip out of Agadir.

**POMARINE JAEGER** (*Stercorarius pomarinus*) – A large adult was seen well on our pelagic trip.

**PARASITIC JAEGER** (*Stercorarius parasiticus*) – Seen on the pelagic trip, but also stealing food from gulls on the beach at Skhirat.

Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)

**SABINE'S GULL** (*Xema sabini*) – Another good one to find on the pelagic. One was an immature, but Joyce spotted an adult as well.

**SLENDER-BILLED GULL** (*Chroicocephalus genei*) – Two on the mudflats at Oued Souss blended so well with the surrounding Black-headed Gulls.

**BLACK-HEADED GULL** (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*) – One of the most common gulls on this tour.

**AUDOUIN'S GULL** (*Ichthyaeus audouinii*) – This year we found good numbers of this species. Our first were on the beach at Skhirat, but again in numbers at Agadir Port and Oued Souss.

**YELLOW-LEGGED GULL** (*Larus michahellis*) – The most common large gull on tour.

**LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL (GRAELLSII)** (*Larus fuscus graellsii*) – Everything that we looked at seemed to be of this subspecies, which are from W Europe & Iceland and winter in NW Africa.

**LITTLE TERN** (*Sternula albifrons*) – Several in the harbour during our pelagic trip.

**BLACK TERN** (*Chlidonias niger*) – Just two at the mouth of the Oued Souss.

**WHISKERED TERN** (*Chlidonias hybrida*) – Four very distant birds were flying over the Addahbi Reservoir.

**COMMON TERN** (*Sterna hirundo*) – Several offshore during our pelagic trip.

**SANDWICH TERN** (*Thalasseus sandvicensis*) – Seen frequently in the coastal areas.

**LESSER CRESTED TERN** (*Thalasseus bengalensis*) – A bird sitting with other terns at the Oued Souss was our only one.

Pteroclididae (Sandgrouse)

**PIN-TAILED SANDGROUSE** (*Pterocles alchata*) – Probably the most amazing phenomenon we witnessed during our trip was approx. 15,000 Pin-tailed Sandgrouse streaming out over the Tagdilt Valley towards the Anti Atlas. This lasted at least one afternoon and into the following morning. What was going on? Was this in response to water resources?

**SPOTTED SANDGROUSE** (*Pterocles senegallus*) – At least 50 were seen as we were leaving Erg Chebbi, but unfortunately took off before we could really see them well.

**BLACK-BELLIED SANDGROUSE** (*Pterocles orientalis*) – A group of 6 were spotted by Randy near Midelt, and later a flyby as we were leaving Erg Chebbi en route to Boumalne Dades.

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

**ROCK PIGEON** (*Columba livia*) – Every single day of the tour! However, the cool thing is we actually saw WILD Rock Pigeons in their native habitat. Our first wild birds were in the Ziz River Valley, but again in the gorges.

**COMMON WOOD-PIGEON** (*Columba palumbus*) – Fairly common in the Lakes Region, but again around Oukaimeden.

**EUROPEAN TURTLE-DOVE** (*Streptopelia turtur*) – I was surprised to see so many around this year, as this bird is usually on its way out (it winters out of N Africa).

**EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE** (*Streptopelia decaocto*) – Another columbid seen everyday of the tour. Not native to Morocco.

**LAUGHING DOVE** (*Streptopelia senegalensis*) – Several on the grounds of our hotel in Erg Chebbi.

Strigidae (Owls)

**PHARAOH EAGLE-OWL** (*Bubo ascalaphus*) – Fun experience finally locating this species in the tall cliffs near Rissanni. We had to work for it, but it paid off in the end!

**LITTLE OWL** (*Athene noctua*) – Seen on more than a few days, which was a surprise. Can be tough to locate.

Caprimulgidae (Nightjars and Allies)

**RED-NECKED NIGHTJAR** (*Caprimulgus ruficollis*) – Two birds gave quick passes during our night outing at Oued Souss. For some, better views desired.

**EURASIAN NIGHTJAR** (*Caprimulgus europaeus*) – Great experience with a vocal and responsive bird while we waited for francolin in the Zaer.

**EGYPTIAN NIGHTJAR** (*Caprimulgus aegyptius*) – Thanks to a little local knowledge and help, we found a bird on a day roost. Very satisfying, close, scope views.

Apodidae (Swifts)

**ALPINE SWIFT** (*Apus melba*) – Singles or pairs of migrants were seen in the Lakes Region and at Oukaimeden.

**COMMON SWIFT** (*Apus apus*) – We had fun separating out this species and the next; overall this species is darker with a slightly more pointed wings. At Addahbi Reservoir we had nice comparisons of both species.

**PALLID SWIFT** (*Apus pallidus*) – See previous species.

**LITTLE SWIFT** (*Apus affinis*)

Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

**COMMON KINGFISHER** (*Alcedo atthis*) – Fairly common around Lac du Sidi, also again at Oued Massa.

Meropidae (Bee-eaters)

**BLUE-CHEEKED BEE-EATER** (*Merops persicus*) – Our first were around Merzouga in the palm plantations, but also a few more on the drive.

**EUROPEAN BEE-EATER** (*Merops apiaster*) – The most common bee-eater seen on the tour, on most days away from the coast.

Coraciidae (Rollers)

**EUROPEAN ROLLER** (*Coracias garrulus*) – One young bird was seen on our drive in the Lakes Region.

Upupidae (Hoopoes)

**EURASIAN HOOPOE** (*Upupa epops*) – A good year for seeing hoopoes as we had one nearly every day.

Picidae (Woodpeckers)

**EURASIAN WRYNECK** (*Jynx torquilla*) – A calling bird was scoped at Oued Massa. Not seen every year.

**GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER** (*Dendrocopos major*) – Several scoped in the taller trees around the lakes north of Ifrane.

**LEVAILLANT'S WOODPECKER** (*Picus vaillantii*) – A NW African endemic that we saw very well north of Ifrane. It remained motionless for a

very long time, so we got to enjoy lengthy scope views.

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

**EURASIAN KESTREL** (*Falco tinnunculus*) – Lots. Most days.

**ELEONORA'S FALCON** (*Falco eleonora*) – A pair of distant birds visited the Lac du Sidi just briefly. They were in direct comparison larger than the hobbies and with the scope one could make out the dark underwing lining.

**EURASIAN HOBBY** (*Falco subbuteo*) – Lots were hawking dragonflies around the edges of Lac du Sidi. A few of the juveniles approach young Eleonora's so it was a bit tricky at times.

**PEREGRINE FALCON** (*Falco peregrinus*) – One distant bird over the towers at Lac du Sidi and another one perched that Heike spotted at Oukaimeden.

Malaconotidae (Bushshrikes and Allies)

**BLACK-CROWNED TCHAGRA** (*Tchagra senegalus*) – Several in the Zaer and another seen briefly (but mostly heard) at Oued Massa.

Laniidae (Shrikes)

**SOUTHERN GRAY SHRIKE (SOUTHERN)** (*Lanius meridionalis algeriensis*) – This coastal subspecies was seen in the scrub around Skhirat. Also around Agadir.

**SOUTHERN GRAY SHRIKE (SOUTHERN)** (*Lanius meridionalis elegans*) – The interior subspecies seen on our birding outside of Marrakesh.

**WOODCHAT SHRIKE** (*Lanius senator*) – One juvenile perched in the taller edge vegetation at Eddahbi Reservoir.

Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)

**EURASIAN JAY** (*Garrulus glandarius*) – Good looks at several groups in the oak and cedar forest around Ifrane.

**EURASIAN MAGPIE (AFRICAN)** (*Pica pica mauritanica*) – Most days in the coastal areas, but away from the desert.

**RED-BILLED CHOUGH** (*Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*) – Large numbers at Oukaimeden.

**YELLOW-BILLED CHOUGH** (*Pyrrhocorax graculus*) – Just six within the larger numbers of the previous species.

**EURASIAN JACKDAW** (*Corvus monedula*) – Large numbers exist in the urban areas around Rabat.

**BROWN-NECKED RAVEN** (*Corvus ruficollis*) – Seen well in the desert region around Erg Chebbi. In good light you can appreciate their brown necks and chests.

**COMMON RAVEN** (*Corvus corax*) – The raven seen in the highlands.

Alaudidae (Larks)

**GREATER HOOPOE-LARK** (*Alaemon alaudipes*) – This large, pleasant looking desert lark was seen a number of times in the Erg Chebbi area.

**DUPONT'S LARK** (*Chersophilus duponti*) – We had to really work for it, but in the end it paid off with very nice scope views of a pair. Found only in Spain and N Africa.

**BAR-TAILED LARK** (*Ammomanes cinctura*) – Singles in the Erg Chebbi area. Also another solitary bird during our long walk on the Tagdilt Track.

**DESERT LARK** (*Ammomanes deserti*) – Several spotted on the side of the road as we left Erg Chebbi. Some of you noted the orangish wash on the sides and underparts, which is a form of geographical variation (some populations are paler, others much darker overall).

**THICK-BILLED LARK** (*Ramphocoris clotbey*) – Incredible numbers in the Tagdilt region. I counted around 45 individuals during our two days. On previous trips the most I had seen were 3 to 5 birds.

**GREATER SHORT-TOED LARK** (*Calandrella brachydactyla*) – Small numbers around Midelt and again in the Merzouga regions.

**CRESTED LARK** (*Galerida cristata*) – With 37 or so subspecies, and lots of individual variation, the "Crekla" identification would trouble us through the tour. However, some key field marks do exist, especially when taken together, so we can say that the majority of what we saw were this species.

**CRESTED LARK (MAGHREB)** (*Galerida cristata randoni*) – The "long-billed" Crested Lark we saw in the Erg Chebbi area, has been split by some authorities as Maghreb Lark. The bill length and its overall paler plumage were quite distinctive.

**THEKLA LARK** (*Galerida theklae*) – This species was confirmed around Midelt and again in the Erg Chebbi area. Seems to prefer more native habitat.

**WOOD LARK** (*Lullula arborea*) – Two were foraging in the short grass above Oukaimeden.

**HORNED LARK** (*Eremophila alpestris*) – We caught up with this species in the highlands around Oukaimeden.

**TEMMINCK'S LARK** (*Eremophila bilopha*) – This species was seen well around the Tagdilt Track.

Hirundinidae (Swallows)

**BANK SWALLOW** (*Riparia riparia*) – Seen most days from Eddahbi Reservoir west to Agadir.

**EURASIAN CRAG-MARTIN** (*Ptyonoprogne rupestris*) – Quite common in the gorges, not surprisingly.

**ROCK MARTIN** (*Ptyonoprogne fuligula*) – One was seen along the sandy cliffs as we made our way to Ait Bouhaddi.

**BARN SWALLOW (WHITE-BELLIED)** (*Hirundo rustica rustica*) – Most days.

**RED-RUMPED SWALLOW** (*Cecropis daurica*) – At least 50 were seen during our time at Oukaimeden.

**COMMON HOUSE-MARTIN** (*Delichon urbicum*) – Not super common, but seen on a few days.

Paridae (Tits, Chickadees, and Titmice)

**COAL TIT** (*Pariparus ater*) – First seen in the Jabaa forest, then again at Oukaimeden.

**GREAT TIT** (*Parus major*) – Common in the Rabat area.

**AFRICAN BLUE TIT** (*Cyanistes teneriffae*) – Also common in the Rabat area, but seen in a few other places as well.

Sittidae (Nuthatches)

**EURASIAN NUTHATCH** (*Sitta europaea*) – Good looks at several individuals (albeit a bit "flighty") in the Jabaa forest.

Certhiidae (Trecreepers)

**SHORT-TOED TRECREEPER** (*Certhia brachydactyla*) – Also in the Jabaa forest and again in the Lakes Region.

Troglodytidae (Wrens)

**EURASIAN WREN** (*Troglodytes troglodytes*) – Unlike mainland Europe this is a local and somewhat rare species in Morocco. We were lucky enough to see one scrambling around a rock wall at Oukaimeden.

*Cinclidae (Dippers)*

**WHITE-THROATED DIPPER** (*Cinclus cinclus*) – Our last new bird that we had to really work at, but was literally seen at the last birding stop on the last day.

*Pycnonotidae (Bulbuls)*

**COMMON BULBUL** (*Pycnonotus barbatus*) – Pretty common in green areas on much of the tour (at least by voice).

*Regulidae (Kinglets)*

**FIRECREST** (*Regulus ignicapilla*) – In the Jabaa forest and again at Oukaimeden.

*Cettiidae (Bush-Warblers and Allies)*

**CETTI'S WARBLER** (*Cettia cetti*) – Seen well on the first day at Lac du Sidi, then we pretty much ignored it; though it was heard in most riparian areas.

*Phylloscopidae (Leaf-Warblers)*

**WILLOW WARBLER** (*Phylloscopus trochilus*) – Several in the Ziz river valley and other riparian zones of the high desert. All these birds are transients through N Africa.

**IBERIAN CHIFFCHAFF** (*Phylloscopus ibericus*) – Really nice to confirm this species at a birding stop along the Oukaimeden road. We studied it for a long time before we decided on its identification. Plumaged more like a Willow Warbler, but it was constantly pumping its tail characteristic of Chiffchaff.

**WESTERN BONELLI'S WARBLER** (*Phylloscopus bonelli*) – A couple in the oasis at Erg Chebbi.

*Acrocephalidae (Reed-Warblers and Allies)*

**EASTERN OLIVACEOUS WARBLER** (*Iduna pallida*) – According to Brahim, this is the species seen anywhere east of Ourzazate, including the individuals we saw at Erg Chebbi. Def more studies needed to sort this cryptic species out (though according to Brahim they sound different; unfortunately ours were not singing!).

**WESTERN OLIVACEOUS WARBLER** (*Iduna opaca*) – The individuals seen along the Oued Massa.

**EURASIAN REED-WARBLER** (*Acrocephalus scirpaceus*) – A couple seen at Erg Chebbi.

*Cisticolidae (Cisticolas and Allies)*

**ZITTING CISTICOLA** (*Cisticola juncidis*) – Nice looks at Lac du Sidi and again at Oued Souss.

*Sylviidae (Sylviid Warblers)*

**BLACKCAP** (*Sylvia atricapilla*) – Just singles at Lac du Sidi and again at Oued Massa (a male).

**GARDEN WARBLER** (*Sylvia borin*) – Very nice, long studies of one at Oued Massa.

**AFRICAN DESERT WARBLER** (*Sylvia deserti*) – This local and difficult to find NW African endemic was seen at a "secret" spot on our way to Erg Chebbi. We had to wander the desert in the heat, however, to locate it!

**TRISTRAM'S WARBLER** (*Sylvia deserticola*) – A NW African endemic breeder that we found at the pass after leaving Midelt. We also found a large group exploring the mountains north of Agadir. Still good numbers around in the highlands; most eventually descend into the lowlands to pass the Winter.

**SUBALPINE WARBLER** (*Sylvia cantillans*) – Singles in the different oasis at Erg Chebbi and around Boumalne Dadis.

**SARDINIAN WARBLER** (*Sylvia melanocephala*) – Very common in the coastal scrub from Rabat to Agadir.

**GREATER WHITETHROAT** (*Sylvia communis*) – One observed very well during our walk along the Oued Massa.

**SPECTACLED WARBLER** (*Sylvia conspicillata*) – Seen in the Erg Chebbi region, where they breed and winter.

*Leiothrichidae (Laughingthrushes and Allies)*

**FULVOUS CHATTERER** (*Turdoides fulva*) – Brahim helped us locate our first in the desert of Erg Chebbi, but we found another group just outside of Ourzazate. NW African endemic.

*Muscicapidae (Old World Flycatchers)*

**SPOTTED FLYCATCHER** (*Muscicapa striata*) – Lots around this year.

**RUFIOUS-TAILED SCRUB-ROBIN** (*Cercotrichas galactotes*) – A pair were in the garden during our visit to see the Egyptian Nightjar.

**EUROPEAN ROBIN** (*Erithacus rubecula*) – Several in the cedar forest at Azrou.

**EUROPEAN PIED FLYCATCHER** (*Ficedula hypoleuca*) – Much fewer around this year in comparison to year's past. However, we still saw a bunch!

**MOUSSIER'S REDSTART** (*Phoenicurus moussieri*) – This flashy redstart, a NW African endemic, was seen first in the Lakes Region, and again at Oued Massa and Oukaimeden.

**COMMON REDSTART** (*Phoenicurus phoenicurus*) – Several in the Zaer and again in Oukaimeden.

**BLACK REDSTART** (*Phoenicurus ochruros*) – Most had left their breeding grounds at Oukaimeden, but a male and a few female-plumaged birds still lingered.

**BLUE ROCK-THRUSH** (*Monticola solitarius*) – Singles in the gorges, but good numbers around the Oukaimeden area.

**WHINCHAT** (*Saxicola rubetra*) – One or two on different days.

**EUROPEAN STONECHAT** (*Saxicola rubicola rubicola*) – Our first were in the Zaer and again towards the end of the tour around Agadir.

**WHITE-TAILED WHEATEAR** (*Oenanthe leucopyga*) – Quite common in the desert areas around Erg Chebbi. Often standing on tops of houses or posts.

**BLACK WHEATEAR** (*Oenanthe leucura*) – This species prefers the rockier areas such as in the gorges, where we saw several.

**NORTHERN WHEATEAR** (*Oenanthe oenanthe*) – Migrants showed up at the mouth of the Oued Souss, literally arriving as we birded the mouth.

**NORTHERN WHEATEAR (BLACK-THROATED)** (*Oenanthe oenanthe seebohmi*) – Seebohm's Wheatear was seen well in the Lakes Region and again around Oukaimeden.

**RED-RUMPED WHEATEAR** (*Oenanthe moesta*) – A pair were first spotted by Joyce and Ian while birding the desert scrub near Midelt.

**BLACK-EARED WHEATEAR** (*Oenanthe hispanica*) – Also near Midelt, we found this species and another spectacular male along the road near Ait Bouhaddi.

**DESERT WHEATEAR** (*Oenanthe deserti*) – Fairly common in the high desert.

*Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)*

**EURASIAN BLACKBIRD** (*Turdus merula*) – Quite common in most green areas.

**MISTLE THRUSH** (*Turdus viscivorus*) – Nice studies in the Lakes Region and one again at Oukaidmeden.

*Sturnidae (Starlings)*

**SPOTLESS STARLING** (*Sturnus unicolor*) – Nesting on the hotel grounds at Skhirat.

*Motacillidae (Wagtails and Pipits)*

**WESTERN YELLOW WAGTAIL** (*Motacilla flava*) – At least one immature, possibly more, we were not able to identify to subspecies.

**WESTERN YELLOW WAGTAIL (ASHY-HEADED)** (*Motacilla flava iberiae*) – This subspecies was first seen at Boumalne Dades (at a small roadside puddle), and later on our last day at Oukaimeden.

**GRAY WAGTAIL** (*Motacilla cinerea*) – One along the Eddahbi Reservoir.

**WHITE WAGTAIL (MOROCCAN)** (*Motacilla alba subpersonata*) – One at the same roadside puddle in Boumalne Dades (along with Western Yellow), and singles later on in the tour.

*Emberizidae (Buntings and New World Sparrows)*

**CIRL BUNTING** (*Emberiza cirius*) – We called up one in the Lakes Region, but seen again at Oukaimeden in the juniper forest.

**ROCK BUNTING** (*Emberiza cia*) – One perched for lengthy scope views in the rocky juniper forest on our way up to Oukaimeden.

**HOUSE BUNTING** (*Emberiza sahari*) – Common in the high desert region.

*Fringillidae (Finches, Euphonias, and Allies)*

**COMMON CHAFFINCH (AFRICAN)** (*Fringilla coelebs africana*) – Uncommon in the Rabat region, but more common in the Lakes Region and mountains.

**TRUMPETER FINCH** (*Bucanetes githagineus*) – Good numbers on the Tagdilt Track.

**EUROPEAN GREENFINCH** (*Chloris chloris*) – Not many around, but several nice looks in the fields around the Lakes Region.

**RED CROSSBILL (NORTH AFRICAN)** (*Loxia curvirostra poliogyna*) – Awesome surprise to find this species (a single female) in the cedar forest below Oukaimeden. Unfortunately, it didn't stick around long.

**EUROPEAN GOLDFINCH** (*Carduelis carduelis*) – Uncommon, but encountered on a number of different days.

**EURASIAN LINNET** (*Carduelis cannabina*) – Very nice scope views on wires in the Lakes Region.

**EUROPEAN SERIN** (*Serinus serinus*) – Same as previous species. Good studies in the ag fields in the Lakes Region.

**HAWFINCH** (*Coccothraustes coccothraustes*) – Another fantastic bird seen very well on our way up to Oukaimeden on the last day.

*Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)*

**HOUSE SPARROW** (*Passer domesticus*) – Very common. Seen everyday.

**SPANISH SPARROW** (*Passer hispaniolensis*) – We found six individuals foraging quietly during our walk along the Oued Massa.

**DESERT SPARROW** (*Passer simplex*) – A NW African endemic seen well (mostly females) at an oasis at the edge of the Sahara.

**ROCK PETRONIA** (*Petronia petronia*) – Hundreds (thousands?) in the Lakes Region.

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## MAMMALS

**BARBARY APE** (*Macaca sylvanus*) – A couple seen in the Giant Cedar forest near Azrou. The only primate in N Africa.

**BARBARY GROUND SQUIRREL** (*Atlantoxerus getulus*) – Good numbers seen in the gorges and a few other rocky areas.

**FAT SAND RAT** (*Psammomys obesus*) – Yes! Found this species at the dump. A trip highlight for most folks. ;-)

**SHORT-BEAKED COMMON DOLPHIN** (*Delphinus delphis*) – Correction. This is what we saw on our pelagic trip. Several large pods following the boat, "bow riding."

**EGYPTIAN MONGOOSE** (*Herpestes ichneumon*) – Heike spotted this mammal running along the edge of the Oued Massa.

**WILD BOAR** (*Sus scrofa*) – Good numbers in the Zaer (where no doubt they are hunted).

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## ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Also, we photographed a bat species at the Taddart Hotel in Midelt. I am still trying to identify it. I hope to find out in the future what this species is! Any help would be much appreciated.

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**Totals for the tour: 210 bird taxa and 6 mammal taxa**