



Field Guides Tour Report

Morocco 2019: Canary Islands Pre-Tour Extension

Sep 3, 2019 to Sep 8, 2019

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The Teide Volcano on the island of Tenerife is the highest point in Spain at 12,198 feet, although it is technically a long way from the mainland. It is also the fourth highest volcano in the world and last erupted in 1909. Photo by guide Jesse Fagan.

A rather successful trip to the Canary Islands despite a setback on Gran Canaria with respect to the blue chaffinch (the large recent fires couldn't have helped). We enjoyed excellent weather and conditions for most of trip; the blue skies and nice weather made for a memorable day up at Teide Volcano (the highest point in Spain!) and cloud cover on Fuerteventura was a welcome relief when scanning coastal deserts. Our ferry ride to La Gomera was quite productive as we tallied hundreds of Cory's Shearwaters, a few Barolo, and one Bulwer's! All in all, a fun trip to the islands. Thanks for joining me and happy birding in 2019 and beyond.

Jesse aka Motmot (from Jo'berg, South Africa)

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

BIRDS

Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl).

RUDDY SHELDUCK (*Tadorna ferruginea*) – Good numbers at Los Molinos Reservoir on Fuerteventura.

Phasianidae (Pheasants, Grouse, and Allies).

BARBARY PARTRIDGE (*Alectoris barbara*) – Seen on several islands. An introduced species here. [I]

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves).

ROCK PIGEON (*Columba livia*) [I]

BOLLE'S PIGEON (*Columba bollii*) – La Gomera: Around 3 or 4 individuals were seen in flight only. [E]

LAUREL PIGEON (*Columba junoniae*) – La Gomera: We saw one well in the scope, but distant. A few others were flying around, but fast and hard to get on well. [E]

EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE (*Streptopelia decaocto*) [I]

Pteroclididae (Sandgrouse).

BLACK-BELLIED SANDGROUSE (*Pterocles orientalis*) – Resident on Fuerteventura; we saw large flocks flying around and one group on the ground that we scoped.

Otididae (Bustards)

HOUBARA BUSTARD (CANARY IS.) (*Chlamydotis undulata fuertaventurae*) – 5:15 pm seemed to be the magic hour when this species began to show well. Seen at Tindaya on Fuerteventura.

Apodidae (Swifts)

ALPINE SWIFT (*Apus melba*) – A rare swift for the islands that we saw on Grand Canaria.

PLAIN SWIFT (*Apus unicolor*) – Seen well on several islands including Tenerife, La Gomera, and Gran Canaria.

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

EURASIAN COOT (*Fulica atra*) – Around 50 individuals at Los Molinos Reservoir.

Recurvirostridae (Stilts and Avocets)

BLACK-WINGED STILT (*Himantopus himantopus*) – Large numbers at Los Molinos Reservoir.

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

LITTLE RINGED PLOVER (*Charadrius dubius*) – Three were seen at Los Molinos Reservoir.

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

DUNLIN (*Calidris alpina*) – One juvenile was at Los Molinos Reservoir.

COMMON SANDPIPER (*Actitis hypoleucos*) – The next three "common" sandpiper species were seen foraging around the edge of Los Molinos Reservoir on Fuerteventura.

COMMON GREENSHANK (*Tringa nebularia*)

COMMON REDSHANK (*Tringa totanus*)

Glareolidae (Pratincoles and Coursers)

CREAM-COLORED COURSER (*Cursorius cursor exsul*) – Good spotting by the group to locate a pair in the rocky coastal plain on Fuerteventura.

Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)

YELLOW-LEGGED GULL (*Larus michahellis*) – The common large gull on all the islands.

Procellariidae (Shearwaters and Petrels)

BULWER'S PETREL (*Bulweria bulwerii*) – One was seen from the ferry between La Gomera and Tenerife.

CORY'S SHEARWATER (BOREALIS) (*Calonectris diomedea borealis*) – Hundreds (or more) on the ferry ride between La Gomera and Tenerife.

BAROLO SHEARWATER (*Puffinus baroli*) – Four individuals seen on the ferry from Tenerife to La Gomera.

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

GRAY HERON (*Ardea cinerea*) – Large numbers roosting on the hills above Los Molinos Reservoir.

LITTLE EGRET (*Egretta garzetta*) – Small numbers at Los Molinos Reservoir.

CATTLE EGRET (*Bubulcus ibis*) – Just one or two on Fuerteventura.

Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

EURASIAN SPOONBILL (*Platalea leucorodia*) – One lonely bird was at Los Molinos on Fuerteventura.

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

EGYPTIAN VULTURE (*Neophron percnopterus majorensis*) – A juvenile surprised us at Los Molinos Reservoir. This is the only island in the Canary Islands where it is found.

COMMON BUZZARD (CANARY IS.) (*Buteo buteo insularum*) – Seen on all the islands.

Upupidae (Hoopoes)

EURASIAN HOOPOE (*Upupa epops*) – Fairly common on Fuerteventura.

Picidae (Woodpeckers)

GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER (CANARIAN) (*Dendrocopos major canariensis*) – The subspecies on Tenerife where we saw many individuals in the pine forest.

GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER (CANARIAN) (*Dendrocopos major thanneri*) – The subspecies on Gran Canaria; also common in the pine forest.

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

EURASIAN KESTREL (*Falco tinnunculus*) – Common on all the islands.

PEREGRINE FALCON (BARBARY) (*Falco peregrinus pelegrinoides*) – Seen in flight a couple of times on Fuerteventura.

Laniidae (Shrikes)

GREAT GRAY SHRIKE (SAHARA) (*Lanius excubitor koenigi*) – Maybe some confusion in the taxonomy of this species, but for now, this is the subspecies on the islands. Seen on Tenerife and Fuerteventura.

Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)

COMMON RAVEN (*Corvus corax*) – Common on all the islands.

Alaudidae (Larks)

LESSER SHORT-TOED LARK (*Alaudala rufescens polatzeki*) – Large numbers (mostly in flight) on Fuerteventura.

Paridae (Tits, Chickadees, and Titmice)

AFRICAN BLUE TIT (*Cyanistes teneriffae teneriffae*) – The nominate form was seen on Tenerife and La Gomera.

AFRICAN BLUE TIT (*Cyanistes teneriffae ultramarinus*) – The subspecies seen super well at Betancuria on Fuerteventura.

Regulidae (Kinglets).

GOLDCREST (TENERIFE) (*Regulus regulus teneriffae*) [E]

Phylloscopidae (Leaf Warblers).

WILLOW WARBLER (*Phylloscopus trochilus*) – Good numbers in the tamarisk bushes on Fuerteventura. Appeared as if a large migrant/wintering group had just arrived.

CANARY ISLANDS CHIFFCHAFF (*Phylloscopus canariensis*) – This endemic was seen very nicely on Tenerife and La Gomera. [E]

Sylviidae (Sylviid Warblers).

SARDINIAN WARBLER (*Sylvia melanocephala*) – Awesome looks at resident birds on Fuerteventura.

GREATER WHITETHROAT (*Sylvia communis*) – One was seen briefly on Fuerteventura.

SPECTACLED WARBLER (*Sylvia conspicillata*) – Roughly in the same area as the previous species; we had very nice looks at this species.

Muscicapidae (Old World Flycatchers).

SPOTTED FLYCATCHER (*Muscicapa striata*) – One wintering bird on Fuerteventura.

EUROPEAN PIED FLYCATCHER (*Ficedula hypoleuca*) – Small numbers wintering on Gran Canaria and Fuerteventura.

FUERTEVENTURA STONECHAT (*Saxicola dacotiae*) – We enjoyed nice looks at this endemic near La Olivia. [E]

Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies).

EURASIAN BLACKBIRD (*Turdus merula*) – Seen on Tenerife and La Gomera.

Motacillidae (Wagtails and Pipits).

BERTHELOT'S PIPIT (*Anthus berthelotii*) – Good numbers seen well on Fuerteventura. A near-endemic to the Canary Islands.

Fringillidae (Finches, Euphonias, and Allies).

COMMON CHAFFINCH (CANARY IS.) (*Fringilla coelebs canariensis*) – Large numbers at our feet on La Gomera. One was also seen on Gran Canaria.

BLUE CHAFFINCH (TENERIFE) (*Fringilla teydea teydea*) – We had nice looks at six individuals at two different locations on Tenerife. [E]

TRUMPETER FINCH (*Bucanetes githagineus*) – Seen on Fuerteventura.

EURASIAN LINNET (*Linaria cannabina*) – Also seen on Fuerteventura.

ISLAND CANARY (*Serinus canaria*) – Seen well on several islands including Tenerife, Gran Canaria, and Fuerteventura.

Passeridae (Old World Sparrows).

SPANISH SPARROW (*Passer hispaniolensis*) – Small numbers were around on Fuerteventura.

MAMMALS

BARBARY GROUND SQUIRREL (*Atlantoxerus getulus*) – Sort of creepy when the ground moves! Introduced to Fuerteventura. [I]

BOTTLENOSE DOLPHIN (*Tursiops truncatus*) – A pod of 10 or so were near shore during our optional pelagic trip.

SHORT-FINNED PILOT WHALE (*Globicephala macrorhynchus*) – On the optional pelagic and again on the ferry ride to La Gomera.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Other Critters List:

1) Western Canaries Lizard or Tenerife Lizard (*Gallotia galloti*) = Good numbers in the lava field below Teide Volcano on Tenerife. Endemic to the islands of Tenerife and La Palma.

Totals for the tour: 55 bird taxa and 3 mammal taxa