

Trip Report — Beyond the Ports of Portugal: A Birds & Wine Tour 2024

April 22-May 3, 2024 with Marcelo Padua & Miguel Realinho



The city of Mertola was our base to explore southern Portugal giving us access to several habitats and allowing us to enjoy great birds such as European Roller, Great Bustard, Montagu's Harrier and many others. Photo by guide Marcelo Padua.

2024 marked the end of a series of extremely dry years in Portugal and as a result we enjoyed a full spectacle of birds and wild flowers on our tour. We kicked things off in Porto with some great Port Wine, some fado music, excellent food and a quick birding stop at the mouth of the Douro that yielded some good looks at several shorebirds including a Red Knot that still retained much of its breeding plumage, some Sanderlings at the shore line, Kentish Plovers and a large number of Whimbrels, as well as our first passerines that are typical of the European continent, such as Dunnock,

European Stonechat, European Greenfinch and the bubbly European Goldfinch.



Red-legged Partridges can be hard to spot but we had multiple good looks during our tour. Photo by guide Marcelo Padua.

Our time in Porto was short but memorable, and then we set out to explore the Douro Valley and the wilder side of this beautiful river. As we wended our way up the Douro and got closer to Spain, we made stops that produced good looks at Greater Whitethroat, and enjoyed a wine tasting while seeing European Serins and the scarce Eurasian Tree Sparrow, and some colorful male Eurasian Linnets. Our day ended at the lovely medieval village of Castelo Rodrigo and put us in position to explore the Douro along the border of Spain and had us enjoying some great looks at increasingly rare vultures in Europe, including the magnificent Eurasian Griffon and the elegant Egyptian Vulture. We also saw some iconic birds such as the Eurasian Hoopoe, Short-toed Snake-eagles and many others. The scenery was spectacular and a picnic lunch had us enjoying Alpine Swifts flying at eye level alongside the vultures.



Our tour visits Portugal at a particularly nice time of the year for wild flowers, but this year was especially beautiful. This patch of Rock Lavender was exceptionally beautiful during our visit to the Faia Brava Reserve. Photo by guide Marcelo Padua.

Our hosts in the north were kind enough to share with us their passion for conservation, and we had the privilege of visiting the reserve they created to conserve habitat and to rewild a small patch of Portugal. Then we started making our way south and across the Tagus river into a completely different landscape that came with its own, with different wine culture, cuisine, architecture and a fresh set of birds. We birded for days in crop fields and grasslands and enjoyed wonderful looks at unique birds such as the Great and Little Bustards, Montagu's Harriers, Iberian Green Woodpeckers, Eurasian Golden Orioles and more White Storks than anyone could care to count. We feasted on game meat and paired it with the hearty wines produced in the warm south and learned about the rich history of this area that was once an important part of the route to the Mediterranean sea. This

history as laid out, layer upon layer, in the archeological excavations in the lovely town of Mertola.



This pair of Egyptian Vultures soared overhead as we enjoyed a wonderful picnic lunch in the Douro Internacional Natural Park in the North. Photo by guide Marcelo Padua.

Our tour finished close to Lisbon and yet seemingly at a very remote corner of Portugal as our lodge sat in a forested corner of the beautiful Serra de Arrabida. From there we explored the Estuary of the Tagus and connected with Eurasian Pratincoles, Bar-tailed Godwits and several other shorebirds that stop here on their way south, before exploring some forested areas in search of the discreet Iberian Chiffchaff and charismatic Eurasian Nuthatches.

This was an amazing year and if it hadn't been for a few of our fellow travelers falling ill it would have been a perfect vintage of the Birds and Wines of Portugal. I hope all of you remember the good times we had and look back at Portugal with a different perspective after visiting this amazing country.



Eurasian Tree Sparrows are becoming increasingly rare but we had great looks at them during our visit to Quinta da Pacheca Winery. Photo by guide Marcelo Padua.

In addition to all the great birds and mammals we saw, we enjoyed a broad diversity of Portuguese wines along our tour route. Here is a list of the wines we enjoyed.

WINERY, WINE, VINTAGE, REGION, TYPE OF WINE

Graham's, Six Grapes, No Vintage, Porto, Port

Graham's, Late Bottled Vintage, 2018, Porto, Port

Graham's, Tawny Port, 10 Years. Porto, Port

Symington Family Estates, Altano Naturalmente Douro, 2021, Douro, White Wine

Quinta do Vesuvio, Pombal do Vesuvio, 2020, Douro, Red Wine

Graham's, Tawny Port, 20 Years. Porto, Port

Calem, Fine White, No Vintage. Porto, Port

Calem, Tawny, 10 Years, Porto. Port

Sogevinus, Curva Douro DOC, 2022, Douro, White Wine

Bursmester, Douro DOC, 2021, Douro, Red Wine
Burmester, Tawny Porto, 30 Years, Porto, Port
Pacheca, Grande Reserva, 2021, Douro, White Wine
Pacheca, Grande Reserva Touriga Nacional, 2016, Douro, Red Wine
Pacheca, Tawny Port, 30 Years. Porto, Port
Pacheca, Vintage Port, 2019, Porto. Port
Pacheca, Douro Superior, 2018, Douro White Wine
Casa Agricola Manuel Joaquim Caldeira, Fronteira Reserva, 2018, Douro Red Wine
Anselmo Mendes, Muros Antigos, 2023, Vinho Verde, White Wine
Quinta de Pedra, Alvarinho, 2018, Vinho Verde, White Wine
CARM, Vinha da Urze, 2022, Douro, Rose Wine
A.C. Figueira de Castelo Rodrigo, Castelo Rodrigo, 2017, Terras da Beira, Sparkling wine
Quinta de Vale de Pios, Vale de Pios, 2017, Douro, Red Wine
Cabecas do Reguengo, Vira Cabecas, 2022, Alentejo (Portalegre). White Wine
Cabecas do Reguengo. Solsticio, 2020, Alentejo (Portalegre). Red Wine
Cabecas do Reguengo. Seiva, 2017, Alentejo (Portalegre). Red Wine
Cabecas do Reguengo, Respiro Lagar, 2021, Alentejo (Portalegre). White Wine
Howard's Folly, Tres Anforas, 2022, Alentejo (Portalegre). White Wine
Tapada do Chaves, Tapada do Chaves Reserva, 2017, Alentejo (Portalegre). Red Wine
Blandy's, Bual Madeira Dry, 5 years, Madeira, Fortified Wine
Esporao, Monte Velho, 2022, Alentejo. White Wine
Esporao, Quinta dos Murcas, 10 Years Port, Porto. Port
Esporao, Monte Velho, 2022, Alentejo. Red Wine
Esporao, Colheita, 2022, Alentejo. Red Wine
Esporao, Reserva, 2021, Alentejo. Red Wine
Esporao, Reserva, 2022, Alentejo. White Wine
Esporao, Colheita, 2022, Alentejo. White Wine
Herdade da Bombeira, Mario Grande Escolha, 2022, Alentejo, Red Wine
Herdade da Bombeira, Flor do Guadiana, 2022, Alentejo, White Wine
Ferreira, Dona Antonia, Reserva Tawny, Port

Herdade da Malhadinha Nova, Monte da Peceguina, 2023, Alentejo. White Wine
Herdade da Poupá, Poupinha, 2021, Alentejo. Red Wine
Francisco Fernandes Garcia, Convento da Tomina, 2022, Alentejo, Red Wine
Vidigueira, Ato IV A inspiracao, 2022, Alentejo, White Wine
Herdade dos Grous, Reserva, 2014, Alentejo. Red Wine
Herdade dos Grous, Reserva, 2021, Alentejo. Red Wine
Herdade dos Grous, Reserva, 2022, Alentejo. White Wine
Herdade dos Grous, Late Harvest, 2015, Alentejo, Fortified Wine
Herdade da Malhadinha Nova, Monte da Peceguina, 2022, Alentejo. Red Wine
Jose Carlos R.R.C. Palma, Balanches, 2022, Alentejo. Red Wine
Adega Mayor, Reserva, 2021, Alentejo. White Wine
Adega Mayor, Reserva, 2021, Alentejo. Red Wine
Quinta do Valdoeiro, Chardonnay, Bairrada, 2022, White Wine
José Maria Da Fonseca, Duque de Palmela, 2022, Peninsula de Setubal, Red Wine
Valado, V Rose, 2021, Douro, Rose Wine
MTJ Portugal, Malpic, 2022, Peninsula de Setubal, Rose Wine
Terras do Grifo, Grande Reserva, 2014, Douro Superior, Red Wine
Companhia das Lezírias, Tyto Alba, 2020, Tejo, Red Wine
Aveleda, Vale D. Maria Vinha de Matim, 2021, Douro, White Wine
Aveleda, Vale D. Maria Vinhas Velhas, 2020, Douro, Red Wine
Aveleda, Arco D'aguieira, 2017, Bairrada, Red Wine
Aveleda, Vale D. Maria Vinhas do Sabor, 2021, Douro, White Wine
Quinta do Piloto, Moscatel de Setubal Superior, 2013, Setubal, Fortified Wine

You can see my complete trip report on eBird at this link: <https://ebird.org/tripreport/419518>

Thanks for traveling with us!
—Marcelo Padua

Field Guides Birding Tours -- BEYOND THE PORTS OF PORTUGAL: A BIRDS AND WINE TOUR



22 Apr – 3 May 2024 (12 days) Link-only



Portugal

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 Marcelo Padua



For a narrative summary of this tour, including a Field Guides photo gallery and additional media for this trip...

 **156**
 **45**
LIFERS  1 

Species Observed

[Show all details](#)

2	Egyptian Goose <i>Alopochen aegyptiaca</i> *	▶  1
17	Common Shelduck <i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	▶  3
1	Northern Shoveler <i>Spatula clypeata</i>	▶  1
8	Gadwall <i>Mareca strepera</i>	▶  3
51	Mallard <i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	▶  9
1	Northern Pintail <i>Anas acuta</i>	▶  1
1	Green-winged Teal <i>Anas crecca</i>	▶  1
11	Red-crested Pochard <i>Netta rufina</i>	▶  2
2	Common Quail <i>Coturnix coturnix</i>	▶  2
8	Red-legged Partridge <i>Alectoris rufa</i>	▶  5
33	Rock Pigeon <i>Columba livia</i> *	▶  4
26	Common Wood-Pigeon <i>Columba palumbus</i>	▶  12
4	European Turtle-Dove <i>Streptopelia turtur</i>	▶  4
24	Eurasian Collared-Dove <i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	▶  9
9	Black-bellied Sandgrouse <i>Pterocles orientalis</i>	▶  2
9	Great Bustard <i>Otis tarda</i>	▶  2
2	Little Bustard <i>Tetrax tetrax</i>	▶  2
2	Common Cuckoo <i>Cuculus canorus</i>	▶  2
6	Alpine Swift <i>Tachymarptis melba</i>	▶  1
X	Common Swift <i>Apus apus</i>	▶  1

5	Pallid Swift	<i>Apus pallidus</i>	▶  5
5	Eurasian Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	▶  4
5	Eurasian Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>	▶  2
4	Western Swampen	<i>Porphyrio porphyrio</i>	▶  2
3	Eurasian Thick-knee	<i>Burhinus oedicephalus</i>	▶  2
30	Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>	▶  4
40	Pied Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>	▶  1
50	Black-bellied Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>	▶  1
X	Common Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	▶  1
5	Kentish Plover	<i>Anarhynchus alexandrinus</i>	▶  3
34	Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>	▶  2
6	Eurasian Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>	▶  2
4	Bar-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>	▶  1
40	Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa</i>	▶  1
3	Long-billed Dowitcher	<i>Limnodromus scolopaceus</i>	▶  1
5	Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	▶  3
6	Common Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>	▶  1
1	Spotted Redshank	<i>Tringa erythropus</i> ✓	▶  1
1	Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>	▶  1
3	Ruddy Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>	▶  2
2	Red Knot	<i>Calidris canutus</i>	▶  1
6	Ruff	<i>Calidris pugnax</i>	▶  1
5	Curlew Sandpiper	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>	▶  2
11	Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>	▶  2

30	Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>	▶  3
6	Little Stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>	▶  2
45	Collared Pratincole	<i>Glareola pratincola</i>	▶  2
1	Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	▶  1
30	Yellow-legged Gull	<i>Larus michahellis</i>	▶  1
6	Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>	▶  1
10	Little Tern	<i>Sternula albifrons</i>	▶  4
6	Gull-billed Tern	<i>Gelochelidon nilotica</i>	▶  1
1	Black Tern	<i>Chlidonias niger</i>	▶  1
3	Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>	▶  1
20	Sandwich Tern	<i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>	▶  1
50	Greater Flamingo	<i>Phoenicopterus roseus</i>	▶  1
5	Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	▶  3
11	Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>	▶  3
31	White Stork	<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>	▶  11
9	Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	▶  4
79	Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>	▶  6
46	Eurasian Spoonbill	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>	▶  4
2	Little Bittern	<i>Botaurus minutus</i>	▶  1
2	Black-crowned Night Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>	▶  2
23	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	▶  7
14	Western Cattle-Egret	<i>Ardea ibis</i>	▶  3
11	Gray Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	▶  8

9	Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>	▸  2
1	Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	▸  1
4	Egyptian Vulture	<i>Neophron percnopterus</i>	▸  3
1	European Honey-buzzard	<i>Pernis apivorus</i>	▸  1
4	Cinereous Vulture	<i>Aegypius monachus</i>	▸  2
92	Eurasian Griffon	<i>Gyps fulvus</i>	▸  9
6	Short-toed Snake-Eagle	<i>Circaetus gallicus</i>	▸  5
10	Booted Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus pennatus</i>	▸  8
2	Spanish Eagle	<i>Aquila adalberti</i> Sensitive	▸  2
1	Golden Eagle	<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>	▸  1
1	Bonelli's Eagle	<i>Aquila fasciata</i>	▸  1
6	Western Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	▸  4
1	Montagu's Harrier	<i>Circus pygargus</i>	▸  1
11	Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>	▸  8
6	Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	▸  5
1	Little Owl	<i>Athene noctua</i>	▸  1
6	Eurasian Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>	▸  6
8	European Bee-eater	<i>Merops apiaster</i>	▸  4
2	Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	▸  2
5	European Roller	<i>Coracias garrulus</i>	▸  1
1	Iberian Green Woodpecker	<i>Picus sharpei</i>	▸  1
11	Lesser Kestrel	<i>Falco naumanni</i>	▸  3
4	Eurasian Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	▸  4

6	Eurasian Golden Oriole	<i>Oriolus oriolus</i>	▶  4
1	Iberian Gray Shrike	<i>Lanius meridionalis</i>	▶  1
3	Woodchat Shrike	<i>Lanius senator</i>	▶  3
6	Eurasian Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	▶  3
23	Iberian Magpie	<i>Cyanopica cooki</i>	▶  4
13	Eurasian Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	▶  7
10	Eurasian Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>	▶  1
9	Carrion Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>	▶  6
3	Common Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>	▶  3
3	Coal Tit	<i>Parus ater</i>	▶  2
1	Crested Tit	<i>Lophophanes cristatus</i>	▶  1
8	Eurasian Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	▶  6
12	Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	▶  9
6	Wood Lark	<i>Lullula arborea</i>	▶  4
5	Thekla's Lark	<i>Galerida theklae</i>	▶  3
9	Crested Lark	<i>Galerida cristata</i>	▶  5
17	Greater Short-toed Lark	<i>Calandrella brachydactyla</i>	▶  5
11	Calandra Lark	<i>Melanocorypha calandra</i>	▶  2
24	Zitting Cisticola	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>	▶  6
9	Common Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>	▶  2
8	Great Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus arundinaceus</i>	▶  3
1	Savi's Warbler	<i>Locustella luscinioides</i>	▶  1
14	Bank Swallow	<i>Riparia riparia</i>	▶  3

21	Eurasian Crag-Martin	<i>Ptyonoprogne rupestris</i>	▶  6
43	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	▶  12
90	Western House-Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>	▶  8
5	European Red-rumped Swallow	<i>Cecropis rufula</i>	▶  2
1	Western Bonelli's Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus bonelli</i>	▶  1
12	Cetti's Warbler	<i>Cettia cetti</i>	▶  4
7	Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>	▶  2
9	Eurasian Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	▶  5
1	Western Orphean Warbler	<i>Curruca hortensis</i>	▶  1
26	Sardinian Warbler	<i>Curruca melanocephala</i>	▶  12
3	Western Subalpine Warbler	<i>Curruca iberiae</i>	▶  3
1	Greater Whitethroat	<i>Curruca communis</i>	▶  1
2	Dartford Warbler	<i>Curruca undata</i>	▶  2
1	Common Firecrest	<i>Regulus ignicapilla</i>	▶  1
2	Eurasian Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>	▶  2
4	Short-toed Treecreeper	<i>Certhia brachydactyla</i>	▶  4
5	Eurasian Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	▶  5
65	Spotless Starling	<i>Sturnus unicolor</i>	▶  13
1	Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	▶  1
23	Eurasian Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	▶  12
9	European Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	▶  5
12	Common Nightingale	<i>Luscinia megarhynchos</i>	▶  6
7	Black Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>	▶  5

6	Blue Rock-Thrush	<i>Monticola solitarius</i>	▶  5
18	European Stonechat	<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>	▶  11
3	Western Black-eared Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe hispanica</i>	▶  2
15	Yellow-crowned Bishop	<i>Euplectes afer</i> *	▶  3
5	Common Waxbill	<i>Estrilda astrild</i> *	▶  2
2	Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	▶  1
76	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	▶  15
5	Spanish Sparrow	<i>Passer hispaniolensis</i>	▶  3
2	Eurasian Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>	▶  1
15	Western Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>	▶  4
12	White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	▶  8
20	Common Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	▶  6
1	Hawfinch	<i>Coccothraustes coccothraustes</i>	▶  1
20	European Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>	▶  11
15	Eurasian Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>	▶  8
32	European Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	▶  13
18	European Serin	<i>Serinus serinus</i>	▶  12
9	Corn Bunting	<i>Emberiza calandra</i>	▶  6
1	Rock Bunting	<i>Emberiza cia</i>	▶  1
5	Cirl Bunting	<i>Emberiza cirlus</i>	▶  5

ADDITIONAL TAXA

X	Common/Pallid Swift	<i>Apus apus/pallidus</i>	▶  2
4	swallow sp.	<i>Hirundinidae sp.</i>	▶  1