



Field Guides Tour Report

Hungary & Romania: The Best of Eastern Europe 2015

Apr 25, 2014 to May 11, 2014
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For our tour description, itinerary, past triplists, dates, fees, and more, please [VISIT OUR TOUR PAGE](#).



Eurasian Marsh-Harrier (Photo by participant David Woods)

Our inaugural Hungary & Romania tour took us from the Danube Delta and the Black Sea coast to the Carpathian Mountains, Torda Gorge, and Hortobagy and Kiskunsag national parks. With our itinerary beginning in Bucharest and finishing in Budapest, many of the group added extra days to see some of the historical sites in these two famous cities.

Our birding began after a five-hour drive to Tulcea, the gateway to the Danube Delta. Once aboard our floating hotel, we headed into the delta with a small 'tug' pulling us and an extra third, smaller boat to allow us to venture into some of the smaller, shallower, side channels where most of the birds are found. We spent three nights here, mooring up at different spots and then using the smaller boat for excursions. The weather turned out to be much colder than the norm, but we slowly added a great selection of waterbirds including 11 species of waterfowl (Red-crested Pochard and Ferruginous Duck were two of the less common ones), Red-necked and Great Crested grebes (nesting and displaying), Pygmy Cormorant (hundreds), Great White and Dalmatian pelicans, a good variety of herons and egrets, Glossy Ibis, Eurasian Spoonbill, Ruff (with several males in exotic breeding plumage), Collared Pratincole, Caspian Gull, and Black, White-winged, and Whiskered terns (all in breeding plumage). Trees along the banks were perches for White-tailed Eagle, and the reedbeds held Savi's Warbler, Bearded Reedling, and Eurasian Penduline-Tit. Our walks on land produced a variety of open woodland species, varying from Common Cuckoo to Eurasian Hoopoe, Gray-headed Woodpecker, Spotted Flycatcher, Northern Wheatear, and Corn Bunting.

We then spent two nights based at Constanta on the Black Sea coast, here we explored woodlands in the Dobrodgea area and the extensive wetlands that run for hundreds of kilometers to the north. Just some of our more memorable sightings included White Storks on their nests (one pair with Spanish Sparrows breeding in the underside of these huge twig structures), Steppe Eagle (rare here), Booted Eagle, Long-legged Buzzard, hundreds more herons, shorebirds, gulls, and terns, European Roller, Middle Spotted Woodpecker, Red-backed Shrike, Calandra, Greater Short-toed, Crested, and Sky larks, Sombre Tit, Eurasian Nuthatch, Willow Warbler, Blackcap, Common Nightingale, Black Redstart, Ortolan Bunting, European Greenfinch, Hawfinch, and a delightful little rodent known as Souslik.

We then headed west to our base at Desag near Mt. Hargita in the Carpathian Mountains. During three nights here we visited the Bicaz Gorge, where Wallcreeper was a highlight on the cliff face and a very tame White-throated Dipper was along the rocky stream. In the open country we enjoyed Lesser Spotted Eagle, Northern and Lesser Gray shrikes, Fieldfare, Ring Ouzel, Water Pipit, European Goldfinch, and Serin, while in the forests Eurasian Pygmy-Owl, Crested and Coal tits, and fabulous close Firecrest were all seen well. Even the local city park provided highlights, with Collared Flycatcher in the day and European Scops-Owl at night. Most fabulous though was a visit to a blind where Brown Bears put on a fabulous show; for more than two hours we watched interactions between two mothers with their young, another lone female, a younger male, and finally a large male as they fed on the provided meat and offal -- sometimes walking in front of us only a few meters away!

The final part of our birding in Romania was to the Apuseni Hills and Torda Gorge. Based in a lovely hotel, we saw our first Black Stork and watched a Golden Eagle on a nest with two young, while other additions to our list included Little Owl, Alpine Swift, Wood Lark, Eurasian Crag-Martin, Red-rumped Swallow, Greater Whitethroat, Rock Bunting, and Yellowhammer.

We then began the Hungarian part of our tour with a two night stay at Hortobagy National Park -- a mix of controlled traditional farmland, marshes, woodland, and "Puszta" grassland. In addition to many species of waterbirds we had enjoyed previously, we added Common Crane, Black Woodpecker (super close views), Eurasian Green Woodpecker, beautiful male and female Red-footed Falcons, Saker Falcon, Eurasian Golden Oriole, Marsh Tit, Short-toed Treecreeper, and Moustached Warbler (for a few of the group).

For our last stop we stayed in the Kiskunsag National Park near to Budapest. Our main target here was Great Bustard, for this is their European stronghold. We were not disappointed, seeing at least a dozen during our first afternoon. Once again the marshes held a wealth of waterbirds, while in the farmlands we saw Gray Partridge, Black Stork, Eurasian Thick-knee, wonderful Mediterranean Gulls in breeding plumage, Imperial Eagle (unfortunately only a distant silhouette), Syrian Woodpecker, and Barred Warbler. Most bizarre however was on our final morning when most of the group saw a Great Bittern -- standing right in the open in the middle of the road!

Till next time, good birding!

--Terry

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)

GRAYLAG GOOSE (*Anser anser*) – Common at a variety of widespread wetlands throughout the tour; in total we saw about 600.

MUTE SWAN (*Cygnus olor*) – Most common in the Danube Delta (where we saw over 400), but we also saw about another 100 near the Black Sea coast and at Hortobagy.

COMMON SHELDUCK (*Tadorna tadorna*) – Five in the Danube Delta, 30+ in the marshes near Vadu, and 2 at the Foldes Wetland.

GADWALL (*Anas strepera*) – Common and widespread at wetlands throughout the tour, in all we saw about 300.

MALLARD (*Anas platyrhynchos*) – Very common and widespread at wetlands throughout the tour; in all we saw about 750.

NORTHERN SHOVELER (*Anas clypeata*) – We saw a total of 11 at a variety of widespread wetlands.

GARGANEY (*Anas querquedula*) – We saw about 120 of these attractive ducks in the Danube Delta and the marshes near the Black Sea coast.

GREEN-WINGED TEAL (EURASIAN) (*Anas crecca crecca*) – We saw a single male at the Foldes Wetland.

RED-CRESTED POCHARD (*Netta rufina*) – A pair flew over us in the Danube Delta, then we had much better looks at a pair near Vadu, and finally a third pair were seen distantly at Hortobagy.

COMMON POCHARD (*Aythya ferina*) – Fairly common at a variety of scattered wetlands; with a total of about 120.

FERRUGINOUS DUCK (*Aythya nyroca*) – Widespread in small numbers; with a total of about 70.

Phasianidae (Pheasants, Grouse, and Allies)

GRAY PARTRIDGE (*Perdix perdix*) – Becoming increasingly uncommon, so we were lucky to have a pair briefly in flight at Torda Gorge, and then great close looks at Kiskunsag.

COMMON QUAIL (*Coturnix coturnix*) – We all heard birds calling in two or three areas of farmland, and then one of our group saw 1 in flight at Hortobagy.

RING-NECKED PHEASANT (*Phasianus colchicus*) – Common and widespread throughout the tour.

Podicipedidae (Grebes)

LITTLE GREBE (*Tachybaptus ruficollis*) – Brief looks at a pair at Kiskunsag.

RED-NECKED GREBE (*Podiceps grisegena*) – Fabulous looks at this attractive grebe in the Danube Delta; in all we saw about 30.

GREAT CRESTED GREBE (*Podiceps cristatus*) – Most common in the Danube Delta where we saw about 60, and then half a dozen others at a couple of widespread wetlands.

EARED GREBE (*Podiceps nigricollis nigricollis*) – About 20 in the Danube Delta.

Ciconiidae (Storks)

BLACK STORK (*Ciconia nigra*) – One at Torda Gorge, 2 at Hortobagy, and 4 at Kiskunsag.

WHITE STORK (*Ciconia ciconia*) – Very common throughout the tour, with numerous nests in many villages we drove through; a highlight of the tour to see this species doing so well.

Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

GREAT CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax carbo*) – Most common in the Danube Delta (c. 500), and a few others elsewhere.

PYGMY CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax pygmaeus*) – Recently increasing in numbers, we saw at least 700 in the Danube Delta, and another 40+ at several scattered wetlands.

Pelecanidae (Pelicans)

GREAT WHITE PELICAN (*Pelecanus onocrotalus*) – About 55 in the Danube Delta, and 40 in the wetlands along the Black Sea coast.

DALMATIAN PELICAN (*Pelecanus crispus*) – A trip highlight was getting close views of this quite uncommon species in the Danube Delta; where we saw about 45, we also saw a dozen near Constanta.

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

GREAT BITTERN (*Botaurus stellaris*) – Heard in 5 different wetlands, and then amazingly (for most of the group) 1 was standing right on the road at the Kiskunsag marshes.

GRAY HERON (*Ardea cinerea*) – Common and widespread.

PURPLE HERON (*Ardea purpurea*) – Common in wetlands with reed beds.

GREAT EGRET (*Ardea alba*) – Common and widespread; with a total of about 180.

LITTLE EGRET (*Egretta garzetta*) – Most common in the Danube Delta, and a few others at scattered wetlands elsewhere.

SQUACCO HERON (*Ardeola ralloides*) – About 250 in the Danube Delta, and 1 at Hortobagy.

BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) – About 400 in the Danube Delta.

Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

GLOSSY IBIS (*Plegadis falcinellus*) – Ninety in the Danube Delta.

EURASIAN SPOONBILL (*Platalea leucorodia*) – Great to see this species in full breeding plumage; we saw a total of about 140 in the Danube Delta and at Hortobagy.

Pandionidae (Osprey)

OSPREY (*Pandion haliaetus*) – One at the Sinpaul Fish Ponds.

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

EUROPEAN HONEY-BUZZARD (*Pernis apivorus*) – Singles at Dobrodgea, Mt. Hargita, and Hortobagy.

LESSER SPOTTED EAGLE (*Clanga pomarina*) – One was seen briefly on the way to Tulcea, and then we all had good looks near Desag; we saw a total of about 8.

BOOTED EAGLE (*Hieraaetus pennatus*) – One over the Danube Delta, and 3 in the Dobrodgea area.

STEPPE EAGLE (*Aquila nipalensis*) – One over the farmland on the way to Constanta.

IMPERIAL EAGLE (*Aquila heliaca*) – We saw the silhouetted head of a bird on a nest at Kiskunsag.

GOLDEN EAGLE (*Aquila chrysaetos*) – Good scope views of a bird standing on a nest with 2 chicks at Torda Gorge.

EURASIAN MARSH-HARRIER (*Circus aeruginosus*) – Common throughout the tour; in all we saw about 120.

NORTHERN HARRIER (EURASIAN) (*Circus cyaneus cyaneus*) – One over the Danube Delta.

PALLID HARRIER (*Circus macrourus*) – We saw a single female in the Dobrodgea area.

MONTAGU'S HARRIER (*Circus pygargus*) – Four in the Dobrodgea area, and 1 at Kiskunsag.

WHITE-TAILED EAGLE (*Haliaeetus albicilla*) – Five in the Danube Delta (included a very close old adult that just wouldn't fly), and 2 at Hortobagy.

COMMON BUZZARD (*Buteo buteo*) – Common and widespread throughout the tour.

LONG-LEGGED BUZZARD (*Buteo rufinus*) – We saw one soaring over the forest at Dobrodgea.

Otididae (Bustards)

GREAT BUSTARD (*Otis tarda*) – Good scope views of at least 12 (including some displaying birds) at Kiskunsag.

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

WATER RAIL (*Rallus aquaticus*) – Heard at the Sinpaul Fish Ponds.

LITTLE CRAKE (*Porzana parva*) – Heard at the Sinpaul Fish Ponds and at Kiskunsag, but despite our efforts they just wouldn't show.

EURASIAN MOORHEN (*Gallinula chloropus*) – Widespread in small numbers.

EURASIAN COOT (*Fulica atra*) – Common in the Danube Delta, and then a few others at a variety of scattered wetlands.

Gruidae (Cranes)

COMMON CRANE (*Grus grus*) – Forty distantly in the Danube Delta, and then about another 50 in flight at Hortobagy.

Burhinidae (Thick-knees)

EURASIAN THICK-KNEE (*Burhinus oedicnemus*) – Two singles at Kiskunsag.

Recurvirostridae (Stilts and Avocets)

BLACK-WINGED STILT (*Himantopus himantopus*) – Widespread, with a total of about 120.

PIED AVOCET (*Recurvirostra avocetta*) – Great looks at this attractive avocet at a variety of wetlands, and birds on nests at the Foldes Wetland.

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

NORTHERN LAPWING (*Vanellus vanellus*) – Widespread in farmlands and wetlands throughout the tour.

KENTISH PLOVER (*Charadrius alexandrinus*) – Two in the wetland near Vadu.

LITTLE RINGED PLOVER (*Charadrius dubius*) – Two singles in the Danube Delta, and 1 at Foldes Wetland.

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

COMMON SANDPIPER (*Actitis hypoleucos*) – Singles near Tulcea, Cheile Dobrogei Gorge, and at Hortobagy.

SPOTTED REDSHANK (*Tringa erythropus*) – Two at the marshes near Vadu, and then 1 at the Foldes Wetland; all were in at least partial breeding plumage.

COMMON GREENSHANK (*Tringa nebularia*) – Two singles in the Danube Delta.

MARSH SANDPIPER (*Tringa stagnatilis*) – One in the Danube Delta.

WOOD SANDPIPER (*Tringa glareola*) – The most common and widespread sandpiper with a total of about 200.

COMMON REDSHANK (*Tringa totanus*) – About 15 near the Black Sea coast, 2 at the Foldes Wetland, and 1 at Hortobagy.

WHIMBREL (*Numenius phaeopus*) – One at Kiskunsag.

EURASIAN CURLEW (*Numenius arquata*) – Two at Foldes Wetland, and 2 at Hortobagy.

BLACK-TAILED GODWIT (*Limosa limosa*) – About 30 in the Danube Delta, 2 at Foldes Wetland, and 1 at Kiskunsag.

BAR-TAILED GODWIT (*Limosa lapponica*) – One in the Chitus marshes along the Black Sea coast.

RUFF (*Calidris pugnax*) – Great looks at several males in breeding plumage in the Danube Delta; one of the more common shorebirds with a total of about 500.

CURLEW SANDPIPER (*Calidris ferruginea*) – Great to see 10 in breeding plumage at the marshes near Vadu.

SANDERLING (*Calidris alba*) – About 20 along the Black Sea coast.

DUNLIN (*Calidris alpina*) – We saw a distant flock of about 20 at the Foldes Wetland.

LITTLE STINT (*Calidris minuta*) – About 40 in the marshes near Vadu.

COMMON SNIBE (*Gallinago gallinago*) – Singles at Vadu and Sinpaul Fish Ponds.

Glareolidae (Pratincoles and Coursers)

COLLARED PRATINCOLE (*Glareola pratincola*) – Twenty-five in the Danube Delta, 60 at the Chitus marshes, and 5 at Kiskunsag.

Stercorariidae (Skuas and Jaegers)

POMARINE JAEGER (*Stercorarius pomarinus*) – A few of the group saw 1 in flight along the Black Sea coast.

Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)

SLENDER-BILLED GULL (*Chroicocephalus genei*) – Fifteen flew along the Black Sea coast.

BLACK-HEADED GULL (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*) – Very common and widespread.

LITTLE GULL (*Hydrocoloeus minutus*) – One in the Danube Delta.

MEDITERRANEAN GULL (*Ichthyaeetus melanocephalus*) – Fabulous looks at about 18 (together with Black-headed Gulls) in the farmland at Kiskunsag.

YELLOW-LEGGED GULL (*Larus michahellis*) – Recently split from the following species at least 3 were identified at Hortobagy.

CASPIAN GULL (*Larus cachinnans*) – Owing to confusion with the previous species not all were positively identified, however the common dark-eyed birds in the Danube Delta and around Constanta were definitely this species.

LITTLE TERN (*Sternula albifrons*) – One along the Black Sea coast.

BLACK TERN (*Chlidonias niger*) – Great to see and compare this and the following two species at a variety of wetlands; we saw a total of about 40 - all in breeding plumage.

WHITE-WINGED TERN (*Chlidonias leucopterus*) – Gorgeous in breeding plumage; in total we saw about 90.

WHISKERED TERN (*Chlidonias hybrida*) – Yet another 'marsh tern' that we saw breeding plumage; about 350 in all.

COMMON TERN (*Sterna hirundo*) – Twenty in the Danube Delta, and about 100 (including a breeding colony) in the marshes near Vadu.

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

ROCK PIGEON (*Columba livia*) – Common in towns and villages throughout the tour.

STOCK DOVE (*Columba oenas*) – Six at the Brown Bear hide near Desag.

COMMON WOOD-PIGEON (*Columba palumbus*) – Fairly common and widespread; we saw a total of about 50.

EUROPEAN TURTLE-DOVE (*Streptopelia turtur*) – One at Hortobagy, and 4 at Kiskunsag.

EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE (*Streptopelia decaocto*) – Very common and widespread.

Cuculidae (Cuckoos)

COMMON CUCKOO (*Cuculus canorus*) – Seen almost daily throughout the tour, with a total of about 55.

Strigidae (Owls)

EUROPEAN SCOPS-OWL (*Otus scops*) – Great looks at three in the City Park at Odorheiu Secuiesc.

EURASIAN PYGMY-OWL (*Glaucidium passerinum*) – Wonderful close scope views at Mt. Hargita.

LITTLE OWL (*Athene noctua*) – One near our hotel in Coltesti.

Apodidae (Swifts)

ALPINE SWIFT (*Apus melba*) – Some of the group saw 1 at Torda Gorge.

COMMON SWIFT (*Apus apus*) – Ten near Vadu, and 2 at Mt. Hargita.

Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

COMMON KINGFISHER (*Alcedo atthis*) – About a dozen in the Danube Delta.

Meropidae (Bee-eaters)

EUROPEAN BEE-EATER (*Merops apiaster*) – We had small migrating flocks at Dobrodgea, Hortobagy, and Kiskunsag.

Coraciidae (Rollers)

EUROPEAN ROLLER (*Coracias garrulus*) – One of Europe's most colorful birds; we saw about 40 at a variety of widespread sites.

Upupidae (Hoopoes)

EURASIAN HOOPOE (*Upupa epops*) – Widespread in small numbers.

Picidae (Woodpeckers)

LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER (*Dendrocopos minor*) – Some of the group saw 1 feeding in dead reeds from out boat in the Danube Delta.

MIDDLE SPOTTED WOODPECKER (*Dendrocopos medius*) – Good looks at 1 in the Dobrodgea area, and then 3 in the Nagy Forest of Debrecen.

GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER (*Dendrocopos major*) – Three in the Danube Delta, 1 at Odorheiu Secuiesc, and 1 at Nagy Forest of Debrecen.

SYRIAN WOODPECKER (*Dendrocopos syriacus*) – After a good deal of trying we finally all got great looks at Kiskunsag.

EURASIAN THREE-TOED WOODPECKER (*Picoides tridactylus*) – Heard at Mt. Hargita.

BLACK WOODPECKER (*Dryocopus martius*) – Some of the group saw 1 briefly from the boat in the Danube Delta, and then we all got wonderful looks in the Nagy Forest of Debrecen.

EURASIAN GREEN WOODPECKER (*Picus viridis*) – Heard near Dobrodgea, and then seen in the Nagy Forest of Debrecen.

GRAY-HEADED WOODPECKER (*Picus canus*) – At least 3 in the Danube Delta, and then 1 at Dobrodgea.

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

EURASIAN KESTREL (*Falco tinnunculus*) – Fairly common and widespread.

RED-FOOTED FALCON (*Falco vespertinus*) – Four in the Danube Delta area, and then great close looks at 6 in the Foldes Wetland.

EURASIAN HOBBY (*Falco subbuteo*) – Common in the Danube Delta and around Dobrodgea.

SAKER FALCON (*Falco cherrug*) – We scoped a distant bird on a pylon near Hortobagy.

Laniidae (Shrikes)

RED-BACKED SHRIKE (*Lanius collurio*) – Small numbers along the Black Sea coast, in the Apuseni Hills, at Hortobagy, and at Kiskunsag.

NORTHERN SHRIKE (*Lanius excubitor*) – One along the road to Desag.

LESSER GRAY SHRIKE (*Lanius minor*) – Singles at Desag and Hortobagy.

Oriolidae (Old World Orioles)

EURASIAN GOLDEN ORIOLE (*Oriolus oriolus*) – Two at Hortobagy, and 4 at Kiskunsag.

Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)

EURASIAN JAY (*Garrulus glandarius*) – Small numbers at a variety of widespread forest sites.

EURASIAN MAGPIE (*Pica pica*) – Very common and widespread.

EURASIAN JACKDAW (*Corvus monedula*) – Common and widespread in and around villages throughout the tour.

ROOK (*Corvus frugilegus*) – Common and widespread in and around villages throughout the tour.

HOODED CROW (*Corvus cornix*) – Very common throughout the tour.

COMMON RAVEN (*Corvus corax*) – Small numbers (about 12) in the Mt. Hargita area, and the Apuseni Hills.

Panuridae (Bearded Reedling)

BEARDED REEDLING (*Panurus biarmicus*) – We saw these gorgeous birds in the Danube Delta, at Sinpaul Fish Ponds, and at Hortobagy.

Alaudidae (Larks)

CALANDRA LARK (*Melanocorypha calandra*) – Briefly for some on the way to Tulcea, but then good close views for everyone in the Dobrodgea farmlands.

GREATER SHORT-TOED LARK (*Calandrella brachydactyla*) – One was seen well on a track in the Dobrodgea farmlands.

CRESTED LARK (*Galerida cristata*) – Small numbers at Dobrodgea, Hortobagy, and Kiskunsag.

SKY LARK (*Alauda arvensis*) – Small numbers in a variety of open farmland.

WOOD LARK (*Lullula arborea*) – One in the Apuseni Hills.

Hirundinidae (Swallows)

BANK SWALLOW (*Riparia riparia*) – About a dozen in the Danube Delta, and 10 at Hortobagy.

EURASIAN CRAG-MARTIN (*Ptyonoprogne rupestris*) – Two in the Apuseni hills.

BARN SWALLOW (*Hirundo rustica*) – Very common and widespread.

RED-RUMPED SWALLOW (*Cecropis daurica*) – Six in the Apuseni Hills.

COMMON HOUSE-MARTIN (*Delichon urbicum*) – Widespread in small numbers.

Paridae (Tits, Chickadees, and Titmice)

SOMBRE TIT (*Poecile lugubris*) – Difficult, but eventually we all got good looks at 1 in the Dobrodgea area.

MARSH TIT (*Poecile palustris*) – One was feeding young at a nest hole in the Nagy Forest of Debrecen.

WILLOW TIT (*Poecile montanus*) – We saw pairs in the Desag area, and at Odorheiu Secuiesc.

COAL TIT (*Periparus ater*) – We saw about 10 in the Mt. Hargita - Desag area.

CRESTED TIT (*Lophophanes cristatus*) – We saw 3 of these attractive birds at the Liban Pass Forest.

GREAT TIT (*Parus major*) – Common and widespread.

EURASIAN BLUE TIT (*Cyanistes caeruleus*) – Fairly common and widespread.

Remizidae (Penduline-Tits)

EURASIAN PENDULINE-TIT (*Remiz pendulinus*) – We saw 4 (including a pair at a nest) in the Danube Delta.

Aegithalidae (Long-tailed Tits)

LONG-TAILED TIT (*Aegithalos caudatus*) – Eight in the Danube Delta, and 6 in the Apuseni Hills.

Sittidae (Nuthatches)

EURASIAN NUTHATCH (*Sitta europaea*) – Small numbers at Dobrodgea, near Odorheiu Secuiesc, and at the Nagy Forest of Debrecen.

Tichodromidae (Wallcreeper)

WALLCREEPER (*Tichodroma muraria*) – We saw 2 or 3 on the huge limestone cliffs at Bicaz Gorge.

Certhiidae (Trecreepers)

EURASIAN TRECREEPER (*Certhia familiaris*) – One in the Liban Pass Forest.

SHORT-TOED TRECREEPER (*Certhia brachydactyla*) – Some of the group saw 1 at the Nagy Forest of Debrecen.

Cinclidae (Dippers)

WHITE-THROATED DIPPER (*Cinclus cinclus*) – Fabulous close looks at a bird along the river at Bicaz Gorge.

Regulidae (Kinglets)

GOLDCREST (*Regulus regulus*) – Two at Liban Pass Forest, and 1 at Mt. Hargita.

FIRECREST (*Regulus ignicapilla*) – Fantastic close looks at a responsive bird at Liban Pass Forest.

Phylloscopidae (Leaf-Warblers)

WILLOW WARBLER (*Phylloscopus trochilus*) – Two near Vadu.

COMMON CHIFFCHAFF (*Phylloscopus collybita*) – We saw a total of about 5 in the Danube Delta and Mt. Hargita areas.

Acrocephalidae (Reed-Warblers and Allies)

MOUSTACHED WARBLER (*Acrocephalus melanopogon*) – Largely due to windy conditions we struggled to see this bird, but a few of the group eventually saw 1 at either Hortobagy or Kiskunsag.

SEDGE WARBLER (*Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*) – One in the Danube Delta, 6 at the Sinpaul Fish Ponds, and 1 at Hortobagy.

EURASIAN REED-WARBLER (*Acrocephalus scirpaceus*) – Small numbers were seen at a variety of widespread wetlands.

GREAT REED-WARBLER (*Acrocephalus arundinaceus*) – Good looks at Sinpaul Fish Ponds, Hortobagy, and Kiskunsag.

Locustellidae (Grassbirds and Allies)

SAVI'S WARBLER (*Locustella luscinioides*) – Two in the Danube Delta, 1 near the Black Sea coast, and 2 at Hortobagy.

Sylviidae (Sylviid Warblers)

BLACKCAP (*Sylvia atricapilla*) – Singles near Dobrodgea and at the Liban Pass Forest.

BARRED WARBLER (*Sylvia nisoria*) – Despite the windy conditions we all got good looks at 1 in the Kiskunsag area.

LESSER WHITETHROAT (*Sylvia curruca*) – Small numbers in the Danube Delta, near Vadu, and at Odorheiu Secuiesc.

GREATER WHITETHROAT (*Sylvia communis*) – Singles at Apuseni Hills and Kiskunsag.

Muscicapidae (Old World Flycatchers)

SPOTTED FLYCATCHER (*Muscicapa striata*) – Singles in the Danube Delta, at Dobrodgea, and Odorheiu Secuiesc.

COMMON NIGHTINGALE (*Luscinia megarhynchos*) – This super skulker was seen by some of the group in the forests near Dobrodgea, and in the Nagy Forest of Debrecen.

EUROPEAN PIED FLYCATCHER (*Ficedula hypoleuca*) – Seen by one of our group near Coltesti.

COLLARED FLYCATCHER (*Ficedula albicollis*) – Good looks at this stunning bird at Odorheiu Secuiesc, and in the Nagy Forest of Debrecen.

COMMON REDSTART (*Phoenicurus phoenicurus*) – Singles in the Danube Delta, Odorheiu Secuiesc, and Hortobagy.

BLACK REDSTART (*Phoenicurus ochruros*) – Two at in the Cheile Dobrogei Gorge, and then a couple of singles at Bicz Gorge, and in the Apuseni Hills.

WHINCHAT (*Saxicola rubetra*) – Singles in the Mt. Hargita area and Hortobagy.

EUROPEAN STONECHAT (*Saxicola rubicola*) – Widespread in small numbers; with a total of about a dozen.

NORTHERN WHEATEAR (*Oenanthe oenanthe*) – We saw a total of about 20 at a variety of widespread scattered sites.

PIED WHEATEAR (*Oenanthe pleschanka*) – Six in the Cheile Dobrogei Gorge.

ISABELLINE WHEATEAR (*Oenanthe isabellina*) – One in the Dobrodgea area.

Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)

RING OUZEL (*Turdus torquatus*) – Nice looks at about 10 on the higher slope of Mt. Hargita.

EURASIAN BLACKBIRD (*Turdus merula*) – Widespread in a variety of forest and woodland throughout the tour.

FIELDFARE (*Turdus pilaris*) – We saw about a dozen in the Mt. Hargita to Apuseni Hills area.

SONG THRUSH (*Turdus philomelos*) – One at Mt. Hargita.

MISTLE THRUSH (*Turdus viscivorus*) – Five in the Desag to Mt. Hargita area.

Sturnidae (Starlings)

EUROPEAN STARLING (*Sturnus vulgaris*) – Very common and widespread.

Prunellidae (Accentors)

DUNNOCK (*Prunella modularis*) – Three at Mt. Hargita, and 1 at Hortobagy.

Motacillidae (Wagtails and Pipits)

WESTERN YELLOW WAGTAIL (*Motacilla flava*) – Fairly common and widespread; with a total of about 150 (also see the following form which some authorities now split).

WESTERN YELLOW WAGTAIL (BLACK-HEADED) (*Motacilla flava feldegg*) – Sometimes split as Black-headed Yellow Wagtail we saw about 40 at a variety of scattered wetlands.

GRAY WAGTAIL (*Motacilla cinerea*) – Four in the Bicz Gorge.

WHITE WAGTAIL (*Motacilla alba*) – Common and widespread.

TAWNY PIPIT (*Anthus campestris*) – Some of the group saw 1 in the farmland near Constanta.

TREE PIPIT (*Anthus trivialis*) – Singles at Liban Pass Forest and at Mt. Hargita.

RED-THROATED PIPIT (*Anthus cervinus*) – Nice looks at 3 birds in breeding plumage at the Sinpaul Fish Ponds.

WATER PIPIT (*Anthus spinoletta*) – One on the higher slopes of Mt. Hargita.

Emberizidae (Buntings and New World Sparrows)

YELLOWHAMMER (*Emberiza citrinella*) – One near Desag, and about 8 in the Apuseni Hills.

ROCK BUNTING (*Emberiza cia*) – Nice looks at 1 in the Apuseni Hills.

ORTOLAN BUNTING (*Emberiza hortulana*) – Good scope views of this attractive bunting in the Cheile Dobrogei Gorge.

REED BUNTING (*Emberiza schoeniclus*) – Small numbers in reed beds at a variety of widespread wetlands.

CORN BUNTING (*Emberiza calandra*) – Common and widespread.

Fringillidae (Finches, Euphonias, and Allies)

COMMON CHAFFINCH (*Fringilla coelebs*) – Very common in wooded and forested areas throughout the tour.

EUROPEAN GREENFINCH (*Chloris chloris*) – Six in the Dobrodgea area, and 1 at Kiskunsag.

EUROPEAN GOLDFINCH (*Carduelis carduelis*) – Fairly common and widespread from Mt. Hargita to the Hungarian plains.

EURASIAN LINNET (*Carduelis cannabina*) – Some of the group saw singles in the Desag area.

EUROPEAN SERIN (*Serinus serinus*) – Three at Odorheiu Secuiesc, and 1 at Debrecen.

HAWFINCH (*Coccothraustes coccothraustes*) – Singles at Dobrodgea, Odorheiu Secuiesc, and the Nagy Forest of Debrecen.

Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)

HOUSE SPARROW (*Passer domesticus*) – Very common and widespread.

SPANISH SPARROW (*Passer hispaniolensis*) – We saw about 8 at Vadu village.

EURASIAN TREE SPARROW (*Passer montanus*) – Widespread in small numbers.

MAMMALS

EUROPEAN BROWN HARE (*Lepus europaeus*) – Most common in the Hortobagy area, and 1 in the Danube Delta.

EUROPEAN SOUSLIK (*Spermophilus citellus*) – About 50 in the Dobrodgea area.

EUROPEAN RED SQUIRREL (*Sciurus vulgaris*) – Two near Desag, 1 at Mt. Hargita, and 1 at the Nagy Forest of Debrecen.

RED FOX (*Vulpes vulpes*) – One in the Dobrodgea area, and then 2 at the Brown Bear hide near Desag.

BROWN (INCL. GRIZZLY) BEAR (*Ursus arctos*) – An absolutely fabulous experience as we watched mothers with young, a young male, another female, and finally a big male from the hide near Desag.

WILD BOAR (*Sus scrofa*) – We had distant views of one in the Danube Delta.

ROE DEER (*Capreolus capreolus*) – Widespread in small numbers; with a total of about 40.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Totals for the tour: 203 bird taxa and 7 mammal taxa