



Field Guides Tour Report

Hungary & Romania: The Best of Eastern Europe 2018

Apr 21, 2018 to May 7, 2018

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For our tour description, itinerary, past triplists, dates, fees, and more, please [VISIT OUR TOUR PAGE](#).



Here is our group, looking intently at a well-hidden European Scops-Owl in the city park in Szekelyudvarhely. This was just one of the adventures we had on this tour!
Photo by guide Lajos Nemeth-Boka.

Our Hungary and Romania 2018 tour took place as usual around the last week of April and first week of May. Amazingly, though, the weather couldn't have been more different from two of our past three tours. We didn't experience any of the cold we'd had before, and instead enjoyed a wonderful sunny European Spring throughout the whole tour.

As usual, we began in Bucharest where many of the group took an optional pre-tour extension to this historic city. The following day found us driving east to Tulcea on the Danube River, where we boarded our floating hotel and were soon on our way into the sprawling delta. We spent three nights on this small 'ship', enjoying some fabulous meals, friendly staff, and of course, great birding. Our private cabins were all on the main vessel, while we were pulled from place to place by a small tug and had the use of a small shallow-hulled boat to enter the more narrow channels. Just some of the highlights we saw during three days aboard were 15 species of ducks and geese, including a magnificent Red-breasted Goose which at this time should have been far away in Siberia. Red-crested Pochard were another favorite, as were Ferruginous Duck and Garganey. Red-necked and Great-crested were the favorites of the four species of grebes we saw, while other waterbird highlights included Pygmy Cormorant, Dalmatian Pelican, Squacco Heron, and Eurasian Spoonbill. Shorebirds included Pied Avocet, Black-tailed Godwit, and Ruff in a variety of exotic plumages. All three marsh terns (Black, White-winged and Whiskered) were seen in breeding plumage, while gulls included Little, Caspian and Pallas's. Birds of prey were also variable, with Eurasian Marsh-Harrier being the most common, but we also saw at least 20 White-tailed Eagles, a Long-legged Buzzard, and several smart-looking Red-footed Falcons. On land (or near to it), highlights were Eurasian Hoopoe, Black Woodpecker, Bearded Reedling (just gorgeous), Eurasian Penduline-Tit, Great Reed and Savi's warblers, European Pied Flycatcher, and Reed Bunting.

After our return to Tulcea we made a day drive inland to the Babadag Hills, the Cheia Dobrodgea Gorge, and finally to Constanta on the Black Sea coast. It was a varied day, with species including Gray Partridge, Black Stork, Short-toed Snake-Eagle, Little Owl, European Roller, Greater Short-toed, Calandra, and Crested larks, Sombre Tit, Common Nightingale, Pied and Isabelline wheatears, Yellowhammer, and Ortolan Bunting. We also had two new mammals - European Souslik (sort of like a Prairie Dog) and Red Fox.

The following day was largely a travel day, but first we headed to the beach and nearby lagoons where large numbers of migrant shorebirds were present (19 species in all). Spanish Sparrows breeding in the lower side of an active White Stork's nest was another notable sighting before we began the long drive to Brasov - a medieval city to the northwest and near to Bran (Dracula's) Castle. Indeed, we began the following day with a visit to this famous touristic site - perhaps the most visited castle in the whole of Eastern Europe. We then continued on for lunch in Viscri, a traditional Saxon village with a fortified church and now a World Heritage site. Birding included a stop at the Sin Paul Fishponds and several sites along the Lesser Spotted Eagle flyway. New birds today included Little Bittern, Lesser Spotted Eagle, Northern Goshawk, Eurasian Green Woodpecker, Great Gray Shrike, Eurasian Jay, Eurasian Skylark, European Stonechat, Fieldfare and Mistle Thrush.

Moving on, we spent three nights based at Desag which enabled us to visit the Bicaz Gorge, Liben Forest and Mt. Hargita - all varied habitats and each with its own special birds. Just some of the highlights while based here were 3 Western Capercaillie (2 walking right on the road), Eurasian Pygmy-Owl (close and perched in the open), Alpine Swift, Coal, Crested, Marsh and Willow tits, Wallcreeper (wonderful looks this year), White-throated Dipper, Goldcrest, Firecrest, European Robin, Gray Wagtail, Tree Pipit, Eurasian Bullfinch, Red Crossbill and Eurasian Siskin. And, for those who went to the nearby bear hide, 2 Brown Bears.

Continuing further west, we made stops in a nearby village to see the traditionally carved Szekler Gates, and then in a city park where we enjoyed European Scops-Owl, Syrian Woodpecker, Eurasian Nuthatch, striking male Collared Flycatchers and European Serin. Our journey west took us through many traditional villages and the rich farmlands of Transylvania, finally arriving in the late afternoon for a two night stay at our charming hotel in Coltesti. The main birding here was around the local farms where they still practice strip farming and often plough with horses. Birding highlights included Golden Eagle (for some), European Bee-eater, Peregrine Falcon, Red-backed Shrike, Woodlark, Eurasian Crag-Martin, Red-rumped Swallow, Greater Whitethroat, and European Greenfinch.

The final four nights of our tour were in Hungary, where we began in the east at the Foldes Wetland, passed through Hortobagy, and then headed west to Kiskunsag - an extensive area of grassland, controlled farmland, marshes, woodland and heath, all near to Budapest. Birding across this region was great, as we not only added new species, but also had repeated chances to refresh our memories or catch up on anything we may have missed earlier. Our most memorable birds here were large numbers of waterbirds at Foldes, 2 Common Quail flushed from a grassy field, 4 or 5 Imperial Eagles (with great views of a close low bird in flight), displaying Great Bustards, Eurasian Thick-knee, Mediterranean Gull, Long-eared Owl, Eurasian Nightjar, more flocks of European Bee-eaters and Rollers, Lesser and Middle spotted woodpeckers, 2 Black Woodpeckers (flying right over our heads), a breeding colony of Red-footed Falcons, Lesser Gray Shrike, Eurasian Golden Oriole, Long-tailed Tit, Short-toed Treecreeper, Eurasian River Warbler (just great looks at this normally really shy bird), Barred Warbler, Hawfinch, and Eurasian Linnet.

The tour finished with a farewell lunch near Budapest, and then for those interested, a night in Budapest, followed by another optional city tour.

Our next tour to Hungary and Romania with Terry Stevenson and Lajos Nemeth-Boka runs April 27 to May 13, 2019.

It was wonderful traveling with all of you. 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*) – Very common in the Danube Delta, the Foldes Wetland, and around Hortobagy; in all we saw about 1000.

RED-BREASTED GOOSE (*Branta ruficollis*) – Totally unexpected and a major highlight of the tour; we had great scope views of 1 in the Danube Delta.

MUTE SWAN (*Cygnus olor*) – Very common in the Danube Delta (where we saw about 1000), plus much smaller numbers elsewhere.

COMMON SHELDUCK (*Tadorna tadorna*) – Seven in the Danube Delta, and 4 at Vadu Marshes.

GARGANEY (*Spatula querquedula*) – Common and widespread at wetlands throughout the tour; in all we saw about 140.

NORTHERN SHOVELER (*Spatula clypeata*) – About 70 in the Danube Delta, and 10 at the Foldes Wetland.

GADWALL (*Mareca strepera*) – About 100 in the Danube Delta, and 50 at the Foldes Wetland.

EURASIAN WIGEON (*Mareca penelope*) – Two in the Danube Delta, 4 at Foldes Wetland, and 6 at Hortobagy.

MALLARD (*Anas platyrhynchos*) – Very common and widespread throughout the tour.

NORTHERN PINTAIL (*Anas acuta*) – Two in the Danube Delta, and 1 at Foldes Wetland.

GREEN-WINGED TEAL (EURASIAN) (*Anas crecca crecca*) – Two at the Foldes Wetland.

RED-CRESTED POCHARD (*Netta rufina*) – Great looks at 10 (mostly males) in the Danube Delta.

COMMON POCHARD (*Aythya ferina*) – About 55 in the Danube Delta, and 6 at the Foldes Wetland.

FERRUGINOUS DUCK (*Aythya nyroca*) – Repeated good looks at about 120 in the Danube Delta, 4 at Sin Paul Fishponds, and 10 at the Foldes Wetland.

TUFTED DUCK (*Aythya fuligula*) – Nine in the Danube Delta.

COMMON GOLDENEYE (*Bucephala clangula*) – One in the Danube Delta for a few of the group, and then good looks at 5 there for all of us.

Phasianidae (Pheasants, Grouse, and Allies)

COMMON QUAIL (*Coturnix coturnix*) – Most of the group saw 2 in flight at Kiskunsag.

RING-NECKED PHEASANT (*Phasianus colchicus*) – Very common and widespread.

GRAY PARTRIDGE (*Perdix perdix*) – Half of the group had good looks at a pair near the Babadag Hills.

WESTERN CAPERCAILLIE (*Tetrao urogallus*) – Normally considered very difficult, so it was amazing this tour with everyone seeing 2 (or 3) along the road up Mt. Hargita.

Podicipedidae (Grebes)

LITTLE GREBE (*Tachybaptus ruficollis*) – Singles in the Danube Delta, and at the Foldes Wetland.

RED-NECKED GREBE (*Podiceps grisegena*) – Nice looks at about 18 of these gorgeous grebes in the Danube Delta.

GREAT CRESTED GREBE (*Podiceps cristatus*) – Another beautiful grebe; we saw about 140 in the Danube Delta, 6 at Sin Paul Fishponds, and 6 at Kiskunsag.

EARED GREBE (*Podiceps nigricollis nigricollis*) – Ten and then 4 in the Danube Delta.

Ciconiidae (Storks)

BLACK STORK (*Ciconia nigra*) – One over the Cheia Dobrodgea Gorge, and then another distant flying bird at Kiskunsag.

WHITE STORK (*Ciconia ciconia*) – Super looks in towns and villages throughout the tour, with many birds on their nests.

Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

PYGMY CORMORANT (*Microcarbo pygmeus*) – Formerly considered very uncommon, but really increasing in recent years; we saw about 300 in the Danube Delta.

GREAT CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax carbo*) – Two hundred and fifty in the Danube Delta, and 20+ at the Foldes Wetland.

Pelecanidae (Pelicans)

GREAT WHITE PELICAN (*Pelecanus onocrotalus*) – Several large flocks in the Danube Delta (perhaps totaling 600), and 20 at the Foldes Wetland.

DALMATIAN PELICAN (*Pelecanus crispus*) – Great looks at about 90 in the Danube Delta, and 6 at the Foldes Wetland.

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

GREAT BITTERN (*Botaurus stellaris*) – Heard in the Danube Delta and at Sin Paul Fishponds. [*]

LITTLE BITTERN (*Ixobrychus minutus*) – Some of the group saw 1 in flight at the Sin Paul Fishponds.

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

PURPLE HERON (*Ardea purpurea*) – Small numbers in the Danube Delta, at Vadu Marshes, Foldes and Kiskunsag; in all we saw about 25.

GREAT EGRET (*Ardea alba*) – About 130 in the Danube Delta, 2 at Sin Paul Fishponds, and another dozen at a variety of wetlands in Hungary.

LITTLE EGRET (*Egretta garzetta*) – Two hundred in the Danube Delta, 10 at Vadu Marshes, and 1 at Foldes Wetland.

SQUACCO HERON (*Ardeola ralloides*) – Good looks at about 80 (mainly in breeding plumage) in the Danube Delta.

BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) – About 120 in the Danube Delta.

Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

GLOSSY IBIS (*Plegadis falcinellus*) – One hundred and fifty in the Danube Delta, and 12 at Vadu Marshes.

EURASIAN SPOONBILL (*Platalea leucorodia*) – We saw 2 of these beautiful spoonbills in the Danube Delta, and then about another 20 in the Foldes to Hortobagy area.

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

SHORT-TOED SNAKE-EAGLE (*Circaetus gallicus*) – Singles over the Babadag Hills, and at Kiskunsag.

LESSER SPOTTED EAGLE (*Clanga pomarina*) – Three, including a close perched bird, near Viscri.

BOOTED EAGLE (*Hieraetus pennatus*) – One on the way to Tulcea, and 3 in the Babadag Hills.

IMPERIAL EAGLE (*Aquila heliaca*) – Four (or 5) in the Kiskunsag area included magnificent views of a pair flying around and perching on a nest.

GOLDEN EAGLE (*Aquila chrysaetos*) – A distant flying bird was seen at Coltesti.

EURASIAN MARSH-HARRIER (*Circus aeruginosus*) – Common throughout the tour with total of about 100.

PALLID HARRIER (*Circus macrourus*) – Four single birds were seen near Tulcea, at the Babadag Hills, and then near Vadu.

MONTAGU'S HARRIER (*Circus pygargus*) – Single birds were in the Danube Delta, near the Babadag Hills, and at Kiskunsag; in total we saw about 9.

EURASIAN SPARROWHAWK (*Accipiter nisus*) – Singles were seen in 5 widespread areas of woodland.

NORTHERN GOSHAWK (*Accipiter gentilis*) – One from the view point over-looking Brasov.

WHITE-TAILED EAGLE (*Haliaeetus albicilla*) – Twenty-two in the Danube Delta, and 1 at Hortobagy.

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

LONG-LEGGED BUZZARD (*Buteo rufinus*) – One from the boat in the Danube Delta, and then 1 near the Babadag Hills.

Otididae (Bustards)

GREAT BUSTARD (*Otis tarda*) – Three distant birds during our first day at Kiskunsag, and then fabulous scope views of a displaying male and 2 females as we enjoyed a picnic breakfast on day two.

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

EURASIAN MOORHEN (*Gallinula chloropus*) – Seven in the Danube Delta.

EURASIAN COOT (*Fulica atra*) – About 50 in the Danube Delta, and 20 at Sin Paul Fishponds.

Burhinidae (Thick-knees)

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

Recurvirostridae (Stilts and Avocets)

BLACK-WINGED STILT (*Himantopus himantopus*) – Widespread at a variety of wetlands, with a total of about 250.

PIED AVOCET (*Recurvirostra avosetta*) – Five in the Danube Delta, 30 at Vadu Marshes, and 40 at the Foldes Wetland.

Haematopodidae (Oystercatchers)

EURASIAN OYSTERCATCHER (*Haematopus ostralegus*) – Some of the group saw 2 on the way to Tulcea.

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER (*Pluvialis squatarola*) – One at Vadu Marshes.

NORTHERN LAPWING (*Vanellus vanellus*) – Common and widespread - especially in farm fields.

KENTISH PLOVER (*Charadrius alexandrinus*) – One at Vadu Marshes.

COMMON RINGED PLOVER (*Charadrius hiaticula*) – Four at Vadu Marshes.

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

EURASIAN CURLEW (*Numenius arquata*) – Two singles in the Danube Delta, and 6 at the Foldes Wetland.

BLACK-TAILED GODWIT (*Limosa limosa*) – Thirty in the Danube Delta, and 20 at Vadu Marshes.

RUFF (*Calidris pugnax*) – The most numerous sandpiper with a total of about 700 which included a variety of colorful breeding plumage males.

CURLEW SANDPIPER (*Calidris ferruginea*) – About 100 at Vadu Marshes.

TEMMINCK'S STINT (*Calidris temminckii*) – One at Vadu Marshes.

SANDERLING (*Calidris alba*) – Five on the Black Sea coast.

DUNLIN (*Calidris alpina*) – Ten (in breeding plumage) at Vadu Marshes.

LITTLE STINT (*Calidris minuta*) – Twenty at Vadu Marshes.

COMMON SNIPE (*Gallinago gallinago*) – Some of the group saw 1 at Vadu Marshes.

COMMON SANDPIPER (*Actitis hypoleucos*) – Singles in the Danube Delta and at Vadu Marshes.

GREEN SANDPIPER (*Tringa ochropus*) – Three in the Danube Delta.

SPOTTED REDSHANK (*Tringa erythropus*) – One in breeding plumage at Vadu Marshes.

COMMON GREENSHANK (*Tringa nebularia*) – Small numbers at a variety of widespread wetlands.

WOOD SANDPIPER (*Tringa glareola*) – About 140 in the Danube Delta, 6 at Vadu Marshes, and 3 at Sin Paul Fishponds.

COMMON REDSHANK (*Tringa totanus*) – One at Vadu Marshes.

Glareolidae (Pratincoles and Coursers)

COLLARED PRATINCOLE (*Glareola pratincola*) – Six (and others more distant) at Vadu Marshes.

Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)

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

LITTLE GULL (*Hydrocoloeus minutus*) – We saw 20 of the lovely gulls in the Danube Delta, and about 15 at the Vadu Marshes.

MEDITERRANEAN GULL (*Ichthyaetus melanocephalus*) – About 20 near their colony at Kiskunsag.

PALLAS'S GULL (*Ichthyaetus ichthyaetus*) – One in breeding plumage in the Danube Delta, and an immature at the Vadu Marshes.

YELLOW-LEGGED GULL (*Larus michahellis*) – About a dozen in the Hortobagy-Kiskunsag area.

CASPIAN GULL (*Larus cachinnans*) – About 250 in the Danube Delta and along the Black Sea coast.

CASPIAN TERN (*Hydroprogne caspia*) – About a dozen in the Danube Delta.

BLACK TERN (*Chlidonias niger*) – Most common in the Danube Delta (200), but we also saw about 50 elsewhere, including many in fine breeding plumage.

WHITE-WINGED TERN (*Chlidonias leucopterus*) – We saw these striking gorgeous terns together with the other 'marsh terns' in the Danube Delta, Sin Paul Fishponds, the Foldes Wetlands, and at Hortobagy.

WHISKERED TERN (*Chlidonias hybrida*) – Birds in breeding plumage were seen in the Danube Delta, and at Foldes and Hortobagy.

COMMON TERN (*Sterna hirundo*) – Five in the Danube Delta, about 80 at Vadu Marshes, 6 at the Foldes Wetland, and 6 at Kiskunsag.

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

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

COMMON WOOD-PIGEON (*Columba palumbus*) – Common and widespread.

EUROPEAN TURTLE-DOVE (*Streptopelia turtur*) – Four at Kiskunsag.

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

Cuculidae (Cuckoos)

COMMON CUCKOO (*Cuculus canorus*) – Heard almost daily and about 16 seen.

Strigidae (Owls)

EUROPEAN SCOPS-OWL (*Otus scops*) – Good looks at a well hidden bird in a city park at Szekelyudvarhely.

EURASIAN PYGMY-OWL (*Glaucidium passerinum*) – Great looks this year with a very responsive bird in the forest high on Mt. Hargita.

LITTLE OWL (*Athene noctua*) – One in a quarry near the Babadag Hills.

LONG-EARED OWL (*Asio otus*) – One in a nest box at the Foldes Wetland.

Caprimulgidae (Nightjars and Allies)

EURASIAN NIGHTJAR (*Caprimulgus europaeus*) – Good looks at a male in the heathland during an after dinner outing near our Sarlopszta Hotel.

Apodidae (Swifts)

ALPINE SWIFT (*Apus melba*) – About 35 at Bicaz Gorge, and a dozen at the Torda Gorge.

COMMON SWIFT (*Apus apus*) – Six at Brasov, and 20 in the Hungary-Romania border area.

Upupidae (Hoopers)

EURASIAN HOOPOE (*Upupa epops*) – Widespread in small numbers; in all we saw about 30.

Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

COMMON KINGFISHER (*Alcedo atthis*) – About 25 in the Danube Delta were more than usual.

Meropidae (Bee-eaters)

EUROPEAN BEE-EATER (*Merops apiaster*) – Fabulous looks at Europe's most colorful bird; we saw about 30 at Coltesti, and 100+ at Kiskunsag.

Coraciidae (Rollers)

EUROPEAN ROLLER (*Coracias garrulus*) – Five in the Danube Delta, 2 near Foldes, and 9 at Kiskunsag.

Picidae (Woodpeckers)

LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER (*Dendrocopos minor*) – Two singles in the grounds of the Sarlopszta Hotel.

MIDDLE SPOTTED WOODPECKER (*Dendrocopos medius*) – Nice looks at 1 at Kiskunsag.

GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER (*Dendrocopos major*) – Three in the Danube Delta, 1 at Sighisoara Forest, and 1 at Kiskunsag.

SYRIAN WOODPECKER (*Dendrocopos syriacus*) – Nice looks at 1 in the city park at Szekelyudvarhely.

EURASIAN THREE-TOED WOODPECKER (*Picoides tridactylus*) – Great looks at a close pair high on Mt. Hargita.

BLACK WOODPECKER (*Dryocopus martius*) – Singles in the Danube Delta and at Mt. Hargita, and then 2 at Kiskunsag.

EURASIAN GREEN WOODPECKER (*Picus viridis*) – One of the group saw 1 near Brasov, and then we all had good scope views during our picnic lunch at the Sighisoara Forest.

GRAY-HEADED WOODPECKER (*Picus canus*) – Three in the Danube Delta, and 1 at the Sighisoara Forest.

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

EURASIAN KESTREL (*Falco tinnunculus*) – Common and widespread.

RED-FOOTED FALCON (*Falco vespertinus*) – Fabulous looks this year, with about 6 in the Danube Delta, and about 40 between Foldes and Kiskunsag.

MERLIN (*Falco columbarius*) – One in the Danube Delta.

EURASIAN HOBBY (*Falco subbuteo*) – Four in the Danube Delta, 2 at the Babadag Hills, and 2 at Kiskunsag.

SAKER FALCON (*Falco cherrug*) – Two at Hortobagy.

PEREGRINE FALCON (*Falco peregrinus*) – One at Torda Gorge.

Laniidae (Shrikes)

RED-BACKED SHRIKE (*Lanius collurio*) – One in the Danube Delta, and then about 20 from Coltesti west to Kiskunsag.

GREAT GRAY SHRIKE (*Lanius excubitor*) – Two near Desag.

LESSER GRAY SHRIKE (*Lanius minor*) – Ten in the Hortobagy and Kiskunsag areas.

Oriolidae (Old World Orioles)

EURASIAN GOLDEN ORIOLE (*Oriolus oriolus*) – About 14 between Foldes, Hortobagy, and Kiskunsag.

Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)

EURASIAN JAY (*Garrulus glandarius*) – Small numbers in a variety of mainly open woodland; in all we saw about 10.

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

EURASIAN JACKDAW (*Corvus monedula*) – Very common and widespread.

ROOK (*Corvus frugilegus*) – Very common and widespread.

HOODED CROW (*Corvus cornix*) – Yet another common and widespread corvid.

COMMON RAVEN (*Corvus corax*) – One near Tulcea, about 10 in the Brasov to Desag area, and a dozen around Coltesti.

Panuridae (Bearded Reedling)

BEARDED REEDLING (*Panurus biarmicus*) – Great looks at a pair in the Danube Delta, and then a single at the Foldes Wetland.

Alaudidae (Larks)

GREATER SHORT-TOED LARK (*Calandrella brachydactyla*) – One in the open country near Cheia Dobrodgea Gorge.

CALANDRA LARK (*Melanocorypha calandra*) – Two near the Cheia Dobrodgea Gorge, and 1 near Vadu.

WOOD LARK (*Lullula arborea*) – One at Torda Gorge.

EURASIAN SKYLARK (*Alauda arvensis*) – Small numbers in a variety of farmland; in all we saw about 20.

CRESTED LARK (*Galerida cristata*) – One near the Cheia Dobrodgea Gorge, and 2 at Kiskunsag.

Hirundinidae (Swallows)

BANK SWALLOW (*Riparia riparia*) – About 20 in the Danube Delta.

EURASIAN CRAG-MARTIN (*Ptyonoprogne rupestris*) – About 16 in the Runki Gorge near Coltesti.

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

RED-RUMPED SWALLOW (*Cecropis daurica*) – Ten in the Runki Gorge.

COMMON HOUSE-MARTIN (*Delichon urbicum*) – Small numbers (mainly in villages) from Desag to Kiskunsag.

Paridae (Tits, Chickadees, and Titmice)

COAL TIT (*Periparus ater*) – Four singles in the Desag to Mt. Hargita area.

CRESTED TIT (*Lophophanes cristatus*) – Some of the group saw 2 in the Liben Forest.

SOMBRE TIT (*Poecile lugubris*) – Good looks for everyone in the Babadag Hills.

MARSH TIT (*Poecile palustris*) – One at Mt. Hargita.

WILLOW TIT (*Poecile montanus*) – Two at Desag, and 1 at the Liben Forest.

EURASIAN BLUE TIT (*Cyanistes caeruleus*) – Widespread in small numbers; in all we saw about 40.

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

Remizidae (Penduline-Tits)

EURASIAN PENDULINE-TIT (*Remiz pendulinus*) – We saw 2 single males in the Danube Delta, and then a third male gathering nesting material at Kiskunsag.

Aegithalidae (Long-tailed Tits)

LONG-TAILED TIT (*Aegithalos caudatus*) – One at our Sarlopuszta Hotel.

Sittidae (Nuthatches)

EURASIAN NUTHATCH (*Sitta europaea*) – Six in the Szekelyudvarhely city park, and 2 at Coltesti.

Tichodromidae (Wallcreepers)

WALLCREEPER (*Tichodroma muraria*) – It took some time, but eventually we had great looks at a bird feeding along the cliff face at Bicaz Gorge.

Certhiidae (Treecreepers)

SHORT-TOED TREECREEPER (*Certhia brachydactyla*) – One at the Sarlopuszta Hotel.

Cinclidae (Dippers)

WHITE-THROATED DIPPER (*Cinclus cinclus*) – Two at Bicaz Gorge, and then another 2 at Desag.

Regulidae (Kinglets)

GOLDCREST (*Regulus regulus*) – Three in the Liben Forest.

FIRECREST (*Regulus ignicapilla*) – Nice looks at 1 in the Liben Forest.

Phylloscopidae (Leaf Warblers)

WILLOW WARBLER (*Phylloscopus trochilus*) – Heard in the Danube Delta. [*]

COMMON CHIFFCHAFF (*Phylloscopus collybita*) – Common as a heard species, and seen in about 4 widespread locations.

Acrocephalidae (Reed Warblers and Allies)

SEDGE WARBLER (*Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*) – Singles in the Danube Delta, and at the Foldes Wetland.

EURASIAN REED WARBLER (*Acrocephalus scirpaceus*) – One seen (and many heard) in the Danube Delta.

GREAT REED WARBLER (*Acrocephalus arundinaceus*) – Widespread and very vocal in reed beds; in all we saw about 6, with many others heard only.

Locustellidae (Grassbirds and Allies)

EURASIAN RIVER WARBLER (*Locustella fluviatilis*) – Fantastic looks at this super skulker at Kiskunsag.

SAVI'S WARBLER (*Locustella luscinioides*) – Good scope views from our boat in the Danube Delta.

Sylviidae (Sylviid Warblers)

EURASIAN BLACKCAP (*Sylvia atricapilla*) – Three in the Danube Delta.

GARDEN WARBLER (*Sylvia borin*) – One in the Danube Delta.

BARRED WARBLER (*Sylvia nisoria*) – Two at Kiskunsag.

LESSER WHITETHROAT (*Sylvia curruca*) – Small numbers in the Danube Delta, the Desag area, and at Kiskunsag.

GREATER WHITETHROAT (*Sylvia communis*) – One at Coltesti.

Muscicapidae (Old World Flycatchers)

SPOTTED FLYCATCHER (*Muscicapa striata*) – Singles at Coltesti and Kiskunsag.

EUROPEAN ROBIN (*Erithacus rubecula*) – Three around our hotel at Desag.

COMMON NIGHTINGALE (*Luscinia megarhynchos*) – Heard frequently and seen in the Babadag Hills and at the Sarlopuszta Hotel.

RED-BREASTED FLYCATCHER (*Ficedula parva*) – Seen by one of our group in the Liben Forest area.

EUROPEAN PIED FLYCATCHER (*Ficedula hypoleuca*) – Nice looks at a male in the Danube Delta.

COLLARED FLYCATCHER (*Ficedula albicollis*) – Super looks at 3 males (or more) in the Szekelyudvarhely city park.

COMMON REDSTART (*Phoenicurus phoenicurus*) – Widespread in small numbers, with a total of about 9.

BLACK REDSTART (*Phoenicurus ochruros*) – Fairly common in a variety of towns and villages; in all we saw about a dozen.

WHINCHAT (*Saxicola rubetra*) – Four near the Babadag Hills, 4 near Foldes, and a dozen at Kiskunsag.

EUROPEAN STONECHAT (*Saxicola rubicola*) – A total of 7 were seen in a variety of widespread open farmland.

NORTHERN WHEATEAR (*Oenanthe oenanthe*) – Four in the open country on the way to Cheia Dobrodgea Gorge, and 1 at Kiskunsag.

PIED WHEATEAR (*Oenanthe pleschanka*) – Nice looks at 2 at the Cheia Dobrodgea Gorge.

ISABELLINE WHEATEAR (*Oenanthe isabellina*) – One in the open grassland east of the Babadag Hills.

Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)

EURASIAN BLACKBIRD (*Turdus merula*) – About 7 in the Mt. Hargita area, 16 from Foldes west to Kiskunsag.

FIELDFARE (*Turdus pilaris*) – Two at Bran (Dracula's) Castle, 8 at Desag, and 5 around Coltesti.

MISTLE THRUSH (*Turdus viscivorus*) – One at Bran Castle, 1 at Szekelyudvarhely, and 1 at Kiskunsag.

Sturnidae (Starlings)

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

Motacillidae (Wagtails and Pipits)

WESTERN YELLOW WAGTAIL (*Motacilla flava*) – Small numbers (mainly near wetlands); in all we saw about 100.

GRAY WAGTAIL (*Motacilla cinerea*) – Two along the stream in the Bicaz Gorge.

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

TAWNY PIPIT (*Anthus campestris*) – Small numbers in open grasslands near Cheia Dobrodgea Gorge, Vadu, and at Kiskunsag.

RED-THROATED PIPIT (*Anthus cervinus*) – We scoped a distant bird at Kiskunsag.

WATER PIPIT (*Anthus spinoletta*) – One at Mt. Hargita.

Emberizidae (Old World Buntings)

YELLOWHAMMER (*Emberiza citrinella*) – Widespread in small numbers with a total of about a dozen.
ROCK BUNTING (*Emberiza cia*) – Super looks this year; a single bird in the Runki Gorge.
ORTOLAN BUNTING (*Emberiza hortulana*) – Another uncommon bunting we saw well; this one was at the Cheia Dobrodgea Gorge.
REED BUNTING (*Emberiza schoeniclus*) – Five in the Danube Delta, and 2 at the Foldes Wetland.
CORN BUNTING (*Emberiza calandra*) – Very common in open farmland throughout the tour.

Fringillidae (Finches, Euphonias, and Allies)

COMMON CHAFFINCH (*Fringilla coelebs*) – Common and widespread in wooded areas.
HAWFINCH (*Coccothraustes coccothraustes*) – One in flight in the Danube Delta, and then great looks for 3 pax at a park near our hotel at Hajdoszobszly.
EURASIAN BULLFINCH (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*) – Fabulous scope views of 1 on Mt. Hargita.
EUROPEAN GREENFINCH (*Chloris chloris*) – Fairly common around Desag and at Kiskunsag.
EURASIAN LINNET (*Linaria cannabina*) – Three at Kiskunsag.
RED CROSSBILL (*Loxia curvirostra*) – Several good looks at about 6 birds high on Mt. Hargita.
EUROPEAN GOLDFINCH (*Carduelis carduelis*) – Common in villages and farmlands.
EUROPEAN SERIN (*Serinus serinus*) – One at Desag, and 2 at Szekelyudvarhely city park.
EURASIAN SISKIN (*Spinus spinus*) – Four on the higher slopes of Mt. Hargita.

Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)

HOUSE SPARROW (*Passer domesticus*) – Very common and widespread.
SPANISH SPARROW (*Passer hispaniolensis*) – About a dozen were nesting in a White Storks nest at Vadu.
EURASIAN TREE SPARROW (*Passer montanus*) – Common and widespread.

MAMMALS

EUROPEAN BROWN HARE (*Lepus europaeus*) – Most common at Kiskunsag (12+), but we also saw about 4 others in a variety of widespread farmland.
EUROPEAN SOUSLIK (*Spermophilus citellus*) – We saw a total of about 50 in the Babadag Hills to Vadu area.
RED FOX (*Vulpes vulpes*) – Singles near the Babadag Hills, and at Coltesti.
BROWN (INCL. GRIZZLY) BEAR (*Ursus arctos*) – Two at the bear hide near Desag.
WILD BOAR (*Sus scrofa*) – Three adults, and then 2 adults and 3 young in the Danube Delta.
RED DEER (*Cervus elaphus*) – Some of the group saw 1 at Mt. Hargita.
ROE DEER (*Capreolus capreolus*) – Fairly common in small numbers; in all we saw about 25.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Totals for the tour: 209 bird taxa and 7 mammal taxa