



Field Guides Tour Report

Hungary & Romania: The Best of Eastern Europe 2019

Apr 27, 2019 to May 13, 2019

Terry Stevenson & Lajos Nemeth-Boka

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



A highlight of the tour was seeing a group of 18 Great Bustards, including three displaying males. Participant Joshua Horner took this lovely photo of one of the males in a field near Kiskunsag, Hungary.

Our 2019 Spring Hungary and Romania tour was our 5th to the region, and proved to be a great success finding all the main target species, and with a really good group of super people too.

As usual, we started in Bucharest where most of the group took the optional city tour, but then we were off to Tulcea - gateway to the Danube Delta, where we boarded our 'floating hotel' for a three night stay. Joined by local guide, Christian, we took the main river itself, before heading in to a series of narrower and shallower channels in our smaller boat. After each excursion we'd return to the floating hotel for meals, drinks, and of course our private cabins. This is truly a great way to start the tour where just some of the highlights were: large numbers of Grey-lag geese and Mute Swans, a variety of waterfowl including Garganey and Ferruginous Duck, Red-necked and Great Crested grebes, 3 Pallas's Gulls, Black, White-winged and Whiskered terns (all in breeding plumage), the rather localized Pygmy Cormorant, Great White and Dalmatian pelicans, 6 species of heron and egrets, Glossy Ibis, Eurasian Spoonbill and Common Kingfisher. Landbirds included Common Cuckoo, Eurasian Marsh and Pallid harriers, at least 11 White-tailed Eagles, Grey-headed Woodpecker, Eurasian Hobby, Red-backed Shrike, Eurasian Jackdaw, Eurasian Magpie, 2 fabulous male Bearded Reedlings, Eurasian Blue Tit, Eurasian Penduline-tit, Eurasian Reed Warbler, Common Redstart, and Reed Bunting. And though mammals are very few here, we did all enjoy European River Otter.

After returning to Tulcea, we left our boat behind and drove through the Babadag Hills to the Cheia Dobrogea Gorge, and on to our hotel near Constanta. Highlights this day were nesting White Storks, Booted Eagle, Levant Sparrowhawk, Common and Long-legged buzzards, Little Owl at a day roost, Eurasian Hoopoe, Eurasian Bee-eater, a pair of Woodchat Shrikes, Greater Short-toed, Calandra, and Crested larks, good looks at the very localized Sombre Tit, Northern, Pied and Isabelline wheatears, Eurasian Linnet, and Ortolan Bunting. Cute European Souslik were our most notable mammal of the day.

We now had mainly a travel day as we headed north-west to the historical city of Brasov, but first we spent a few hours at the Vadu Marshes and the Black Sea coast. The marshes provided further views of many species we'd seen in the Danube Delta, but we also added Common Shelduck, Black-

winged Stilt, Pied Avocet, a variety of shorebirds including Black-tailed Godwit, Spotted Redshank and Curlew Sandpiper in breeding plumage, plus Collared Pratincole, and an attractive pair of Little Gulls.

After a night in Brasov (and a visit to the Black Church for those who wanted) we then went to Dracula's Castle (more correctly known as Bran Castle). Rather touristy yes, but the whole group said it was definitely worth the visit. We then had lunch at a farm in the World Heritage village of Viscri, before more birding at and around the San Paul Fish Ponds. Highlights today were Stock Dove, Little Ringed Plover, Lesser Spotted Eagle, Great Gray and Lesser Gray shrikes, Common Raven, European Robin and Fieldfare, while mammals included Red Fox and Roe Deer.

The following day had us making a trip to the high slopes of Mt. Hargita, where sadly a huge storm had brought down hundreds of trees and we were unable to follow our usual track. However the day still provided us with some good birds and we all enjoyed Eurasian Wryneck, Eurasian Three-toed Woodpecker, Eurasian Nutcracker, Coal and Crested tits, 2 striking male Collared Flycatchers, Ring Ousel, European Greenfinch, and European Siskin. One or two of our group also got to see the shy Western Capercaillie, first on the ground, and then as it was flushed from high in a tree.

Our next port of call was the spectacular Bicaz Gorge where our main target would be Wallcreeper, and it was just amazing this year as Lajos spotted 1 within just a few minutes of our arrival. And then, with a little patience, we all managed to see 3 as they chased each other around and slowly made their way down the rocks of this massive gorge. After lunch we continued on to the medieval city of Sighisoara (picking up Firecrest and Goldcrest along the way). To date we'd had nice weather, but now the rain set in, making birding the Sighisoara Forest a challenge indeed. However this group was up for it, and we slowly added Tawny Owl, Middle and Great spotted woodpeckers, Eurasian Nuthatch and Song Thrush. Luckily the rain took a bit of a break and we all enjoyed a walk in the old part of this famous city. Then it was on to Coltesti in the heart of the Transylvanian countryside, where shortly before our hotel, we found a beautiful Black Stork right next to the road.

During a day around Coltesti (thankfully the rain had now passed) we added Eurasian Green Woodpecker, Wood Lark, Eurasian Crag Martin, Red-rumped Swallow, Greater Whitethroat,

Yellowhammer, and after some effort, Rock Bunting.

We now drove in to Hungary, with a birding stop at the Foldes Wetland shortly after crossing the border. We were also in the famous Hortobagy National Park - although just where the park actually begins and ends is hard to tell. Our main birds in this area were many more waterbirds, with Eurasian Wigeon, Little Grebe, and a flock of 25 Common Cranes and Dunlin being new. In the farmlands we added European Honey-buzzard, a distant Imperial Eagle, 2 Saker Falcons, Sedge Warbler, a very obliging Common Nightingale, and for 3 of our group, a rare Bluethroat.

Our final destination was Kiskunsag near Budapest, here given local information, or accompanied by a local guide (and warden) Miki, we found all our main target species: Red-crested Pochard, Common Quail, about 18 fabulous Great Bustards with some males displaying, a much closer Imperial Eagle, Eurasian Nightjar, Eurasian Thick-knee, Eurasian Curlew, Mediterranean Gull, Little Bittern, Long-eared Owl, Syrian and Black woodpeckers, Short-toed Treecreeper, and Savi's Warbler. European Brown Hare and Roe Deer were also common.

For those who wanted, there were optional one or two day city tours, while the rest of us headed home. Safe Journey!

Our next Hungary & Romania tour runs 25 April to 11 May 2020.

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 wetlands throughout the tour, with a total of about 250.

MUTE SWAN (*Cygnus olor*) – Very common in the Danube Delta where we saw about 600, and then about 50 at Kiskunsag.

COMMON SHELDUCK (*Tadorna tadorna*) – Five at Vadu, 1 at San Paul Fish Ponds, and about 45 at the Foldes Wetland.

GARGANEY (*Spatula querquedula*) – Nice looks at males in breeding plumage at the Danube Delta and Vadu; with a total of 8.

NORTHERN SHOVELER (*Spatula clypeata*) – Seven at the Foldes Wetland.

GADWALL (*Mareca strepera*) – Small numbers in the Danube Delta, Vadu, and Foldes; in all we saw about 40.

EURASIAN WIGEON (*Mareca penelope*) – We saw a single male at the Foldes Wetland.

MALLARD (*Anas platyrhynchos*) – Common and widespread at wetlands throughout the tour.

RED-CRESTED POCHARD (*Netta rufina*) – Great scope views of about 30 at Kiskunsag.

COMMON POCHARD (*Aythya ferina*) – Fairly common on open wetlands; in all we saw about 200.

FERRUGINOUS DUCK (*Aythya nyroca*) – Common in the Danube Delta, where we saw about 130, and then 15 at San Paul, and 20 at Kiskunsag.

Phasianidae (Pheasants, Grouse, and Allies)

COMMON QUAIL (*Coturnix coturnix*) – Most of the group saw 1, which was flushed in the Kiskunsag grasslands.

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

WESTERN CAPERCAILLIE (*Tetrao urogallus*) – Some of us saw 1 high on Mt. Hargita.

Podicipedidae (Grebes)

LITTLE GREBE (*Tachybaptus ruficollis*) – Two at Foldes, and 5 at Kiskunsag.

RED-NECKED GREBE (*Podiceps grisegena*) – We had nice looks at about 30 of these beautiful grebes in the Danube Delta.

GREAT CRESTED GREBE (*Podiceps cristatus*) – Another gorgeous grebe; we saw about 140 in the Danube Delta, 1 at Foldes, and 3 at Kiskunsag.

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

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves).

ROCK PIGEON (*Columba livia*) – Very common and widespread.

STOCK DOVE (*Columba oenas*) – Five together near San Paul.

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

EUROPEAN TURTLE-DOVE (*Streptopelia turtur*) – One in the Hortobagy area, and then 9 at Kiskunsag.

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

Otididae (Bustards).

GREAT BUSTARD (*Otis tarda*) – Good looks at this star attraction of the Hungarian plains; we saw a total of about 18 including 3 displaying males.

Cuculidae (Cuckoos).

COMMON CUCKOO (*Cuculus canorus*) – Common and widespread with a total of about 60.

Caprimulgidae (Nightjars and Allies).

EURASIAN NIGHTJAR (*Caprimulgus europaeus*) – One at Kiskunsag.

Apodidae (Swifts).

ALPINE SWIFT (*Apus melba*) – Eight at the Bicaz Gorge.

COMMON SWIFT (*Apus apus*) – Widespread in small numbers; in all we saw about 30.

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots).

CORN CRAKE (*Crex crex*) – Heard at Kiskunsag. [*]

EURASIAN MOORHEN (*Gallinula chloropus*) – Five in the Danube Delta, and 6 at San Paul Fish Ponds.

EURASIAN COOT (*Fulica atra*) – Common at a variety of scattered wetlands; in all we saw about 550.

Gruidae (Cranes).

COMMON CRANE (*Grus grus*) – We were extremely lucky this tour and saw a close flock of 25, presumably on their way to the northern breeding grounds.

Burhinidae (Thick-knees).

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

Recurvirostridae (Stilts and Avocets).

BLACK-WINGED STILT (*Himantopus himantopus*) – About 80 at Vadu, 70 at Foldes, and 2 at Kiskunsag.

PIED AVOCET (*Recurvirostra avosetta*) – Fifty at Vadu Marshes, and 20 at Foldes.

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings).

NORTHERN LAPWING (*Vanellus vanellus*) – About 50 at Hortobagy and Kiskunsag, and a few others at widespread sites elsewhere.

COMMON RINGED PLOVER (*Charadrius hiaticula*) – Three at Vadu and the Black Sea coast.

LITTLE RINGED PLOVER (*Charadrius dubius*) – One at San Paul Fish Ponds.

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies).

EURASIAN CURLEW (*Numenius arquata*) – Five at Kiskunsag.

BLACK-TAILED GODWIT (*Limosa limosa*) – Two in the Danube Delta, 15 at Vadu, and 20 at Foldes included many in breeding plumage.

CURLEW SANDPIPER (*Calidris ferruginea*) – Twelve at Vadu included several in breeding plumage.

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

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

DUNLIN (*Calidris alpina*) – We saw a flock of about 40 at the Foldes Wetland.

LITTLE STINT (*Calidris minuta*) – One at Vadu, and about 20 at San Paul.

COMMON SNIPE (*Gallinago gallinago*) – One at Vadu.

COMMON SANDPIPER (*Actitis hypoleucos*) – One in the Danube Delta, 1 at Foldes, and 2 at Kiskunsag.

SPOTTED REDSHANK (*Tringa erythropus*) – Two in the Danube Delta, 2 at Vadu, and 1 at Kiskunsag.

WOOD SANDPIPER (*Tringa glareola*) – About 150 in the Danube Delta, and 250 at Vadu.

COMMON REDSHANK (*Tringa totanus*) – Five at Vadu, and 2 at Foldes.

Glareolidae (Pratincoles and Coursers).

COLLARED PRATINCOLE (*Glareola pratincola*) – Ten in the Danube Delta were distant and flying, but we then had good scope views of about 75 at the Vadu Marshes.

Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers).

BLACK-HEADED GULL (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*) – Very common at all wetlands throughout the tour; in all we saw about 1400.

LITTLE GULL (*Hydrocoloeus minutus*) – One of our group saw 1 on the way to the Danube Delta, and then we all had super scope looks at 2 birds in the Vadu Marshes.

MEDITERRANEAN GULL (*Ichthyaeus melanocephalus*) – Five at Kiskunsag.

PALLAS'S GULL (*Ichthyaeus ichthyaeus*) – Three (all adults in breeding plumage) in the Danube Delta.

YELLOW-LEGGED GULL (*Larus michahellis*) – Several at the Foldes Wetland.

CASPIAN GULL (*Larus cachinnans*) – About 120 in the Danube Delta, and 60 at Vadu.

CASPIAN TERN (*Hydroprogne caspia*) – One in the Danube Delta.

BLACK TERN (*Chlidonias niger*) – Fabulous looks, together with the other marsh terns in the Danube Delta, and then others at Vadu, and Kiskunsag; in all we saw about 280.

WHITE-WINGED TERN (*Chlidonias leucopterus*) – Another striking marsh tern we saw in the Danube Delta and at Vadu.
WHISKERED TERN (*Chlidonias hybrida*) – More widespread than the other marsh terns; we saw these in the Danube Delta, at Vadu, Foldes, and Kiskunsag.
COMMON TERN (*Sterna hirundo*) – About 60 in the Danube Delta, 150 at the Vadu colony, and 6 at Foldes.

Ciconiidae (Storks)

BLACK STORK (*Ciconia nigra*) – Great close looks at 1 in a river bed near Coltesti.
WHITE STORK (*Ciconia ciconia*) – Common and widespread, especially in villages where they were breeding; in all we saw about 140.

Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

PYGMY CORMORANT (*Microcarbo pygmeus*) – Formerly considered endangered, but now increasing and we saw about 450 in the Danube Delta.
GREAT CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax carbo*) – Three hundred in the Danube Delta, and 2 at Foldes.

Pelecanidae (Pelicans)

GREAT WHITE PELICAN (*Pelecanus onocrotalus*) – About 120 in the Danube Delta, and 4 at Vadu Marshes.
DALMATIAN PELICAN (*Pelecanus crispus*) – Thirty-three in the Danube Delta, and 2 near Vadu.

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

GREAT BITTERN (*Botaurus stellaris*) – Heard at Vadu and Foldes. [*]
LITTLE BITTERN (*Ixobrychus minutus*) – Four along a couple of channels in the Kiskunsag area.
GRAY HERON (*Ardea cinerea*) – Very common and widespread.
PURPLE HERON (*Ardea purpurea*) – Widespread in wetlands with reed beds; in all we saw about 50.
GREAT EGRET (*Ardea alba*) – Most common in the Hortobagy and Kiskunsag areas, but we also saw a few in the Danube Delta, Vadu and Foldes.
LITTLE EGRET (*Egretta garzetta*) – At least 100 in the Danube Delta, and a few others at scattered wetlands elsewhere.
SQUACCO HERON (*Ardeola ralloides*) – About 220 in the Danube Delta, and 5 at Hortobagy.
BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) – Seventy in the Danube Delta, and 5 at Hortobagy.

Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

GLOSSY IBIS (*Plegadis falcinellus*) – About 120 in the Danube Delta, and 50 at Vadu.
EURASIAN SPOONBILL (*Platalea leucorodia*) – Four in the Danube Delta, 20 at Foldes, and 3 at Kiskunsag.

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

EUROPEAN HONEY-BUZZARD (*Pernis apivorus*) – One at Hortobagy.
LESSER SPOTTED EAGLE (*Clanga pomarina*) – Singles on the way to Tulcea, and at Odorheiu Secuesc.
BOOTED EAGLE (*Hieraaetus pennatus*) – One at the Babadag Hills.
IMPERIAL EAGLE (*Aquila heliaca*) – Two very distant birds at Kiskunsag, and then a third much closer bird in the same area.
EURASIAN MARSH-HARRIER (*Circus aeruginosus*) – Common and widespread with a total of about 70.
PALLID HARRIER (*Circus macrourus*) – Singles in the Danube Delta, the Babadag Hills, and at Kiskunsag.
MONTAGU'S HARRIER (*Circus pygargus*) – We saw a male near Babadag, and then 2 females in the Hortobagy-Kiskunsag area.
LEVANT SPARROWHAWK (*Accipiter brevipes*) – One in flight over the Babadag Hills.
EURASIAN SPARROWHAWK (*Accipiter nisus*) – One at Kiskunsag.
WHITE-TAILED EAGLE (*Haliaeetus albicilla*) – Fabulous looks in the Danube Delta, where we saw at least 11, plus 1 at Hortobagy, and 1 at Kiskunsag.
COMMON BUZZARD (*Buteo buteo*) – Common and widespread; in all we saw about 60.
LONG-LEGGED BUZZARD (*Buteo rufinus*) – Nice looks at 1 on the way to the Cheia Dobrogea Gorge.

Strigidae (Owls)

EURASIAN SCOPS-OWL (*Otus scops*) – Very difficult this year, with 4 heard in the Odorheiu Secuesc City Park, and then 1 at Coltesti, but unfortunately none were seen. [*]
LITTLE OWL (*Athene noctua*) – One in a quarry near Tulcea, and then 1 at Coltesti, and a way distant bird at Hortobagy.
TAWNY OWL (*Strix aluco*) – Our best sightings ever, with 1 at Sighisoara Forest, and then 2 right by our rooms at Kiskunsag.
LONG-EARED OWL (*Asio otus*) – We saw an adult and 2 juveniles at Kiskunsag.

Upupidae (Hoopoes)

EURASIAN HOOPOE (*Upupa epops*) – Widespread in small numbers; in all we saw about 40.

Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

COMMON KINGFISHER (*Alcedo atthis*) – About 40 in the Danube Delta.

Meropidae (Bee-eaters)

EUROPEAN BEE-EATER (*Merops apiaster*) – Thirty in the Babadag area, 15 at Hortobagy, and 50 at Kiskunsag.

Coraciidae (Rollers)

EUROPEAN ROLLER (*Coracias garrulus*) – One near Cheia Dobrogea Gorge, 1 at Hortobagy, and 9 at Kiskunsag.

Picidae (Woodpeckers)

EURASIAN WRYNECK (*Jynx torquilla*) – One was seen nicely at Odorheiu Secuesc, and then 3 others heard at Coltesti, Hortobagy and Kiskunsag.
EURASIAN THREE-TOED WOODPECKER (*Picoides tridactylus*) – Great looks at 2 on Mt. Hargita.
MIDDLE SPOTTED WOODPECKER (*Dendrocoptes medius*) – One on our hotel bird-feeder at Sighisoara.
GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER (*Dendrocopos major*) – Singles at Sighisoara, Hortobagy, and Kiskunsag.

SYRIAN WOODPECKER (*Dendrocopos syriacus*) – Two at Kiskunsag.

GRAY-HEADED WOODPECKER (*Picus canus*) – Two in the Danube Delta, and 1 at Odorheiu Secuesc.

EURASIAN GREEN WOODPECKER (*Picus viridis*) – Singles at Coltesti and Hortobagy.

BLACK WOODPECKER (*Dryocopus martius*) – Great looks at a male, and a juvenile in a nest hole at Kiskunsag.

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras).

EURASIAN KESTREL (*Falco tinnunculus*) – Common and widespread; in total we saw about 80.

RED-FOOTED FALCON (*Falco vespertinus*) – Widespread in small numbers, with great looks at Kiskunsag; in all we saw about 40.

EURASIAN HOBBY (*Falco subbuteo*) – About 20 in the Danube Delta, and 1 at Kiskunsag.

SAKER FALCON (*Falco cherrug*) – Two in the Hortobagy area.

PEREGRINE FALCON (*Falco peregrinus*) – Singles in the Danube Delta, Sighisoara, and Coltesti.

Laniidae (Shrikes).

RED-BACKED SHRIKE (*Lanius collurio*) – We saw a total of about a dozen in a variety of widespread open woodlands.

GREAT GRAY SHRIKE (*Lanius excubitor*) – One near Viscri, and 2 near Coltesti.

LESSER GRAY SHRIKE (*Lanius minor*) – One near Viscri.

WOODCHAT SHRIKE (*Lanius senator*) – Total unexpected, but we were lucky and all had great views of a pair near Cheia Dobrogea Gorge.

Oriolidae (Old World Orioles).

EURASIAN GOLDEN ORIOLE (*Oriolus oriolus*) – Heard in at least six areas and seen twice flight in the Danube Delta and at Hortobagy.

Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies).

EURASIAN JAY (*Garrulus glandarius*) – Seen briefly by some of the group at either Babadag Hills, or at Sighisoara.

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

EURASIAN NUTCRAKER (*Nucifraga caryocatactes*) – Two singles at Mt. Hargita.

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

ROOK (*Corvus frugilegus*) – Another very common and widespread corvid.

HOODED CROW (*Corvus cornix*) – Most common in the Danube Delta, but also widespread in small numbers elsewhere; in all we saw about 300.

COMMON RAVEN (*Corvus corax*) – Widespread in small numbers from Bran (Dracula's) Castle onwards; in total we saw about 30.

Panuridae (Bearded Reedling).

BEARDED REEDLING (*Panurus biarmicus*) – A favorite for most of the group; we saw 2 males and a female in the Danube Delta.

Alaudidae (Larks).

GREATER SHORT-TOED LARK (*Calandrella brachydactyla*) – Six on the grassy plains near Cheia Dobrogea Gorge.

CALANDRA LARK (*Melanocorypha calandra*) – Three in the farmlands near Cheia Dobrogea Gorge.

WOOD LARK (*Lullula arborea*) – Great close scope views of 1 at Coltesti.

EURASIAN SKYLARK (*Alauda arvensis*) – Small numbers near Cheia Dobrogea Gorge, Hortobagy, and Kiskunsag.

CRESTED LARK (*Galerida cristata*) – Two on the grassy plains near Cheia Dobrogea Gorge, 2 at Vadu, and singles at Hortobagy and Kiskunsag.

Hirundinidae (Swallows).

BANK SWALLOW (*Riparia riparia*) – Widespread (and mainly near water); in total we saw about 90.

EURASIAN CRAG-MARTIN (*Ptyonoprogne rupestris*) – About 10 along the gorge near Coltesti.

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

RED-RUMPED SWALLOW (*Cecropis daurica*) – Six along the gorge near Coltesti.

COMMON HOUSE-MARTIN (*Delichon urbicum*) – Widespread around towns and villages.

Paridae (Tits, Chickadees, and Titmice).

COAL TIT (*Parus ater*) – Three in the Mt. Hargita area.

CRESTED TIT (*Lophophanes cristatus*) – One in the high pine forest on Mt. Hargita.

SOMBRE TIT (*Poecile lugubris*) – Great looks at this localized species in the woodlands on Babadag Hills.

EURASIAN BLUE TIT (*Cyanistes caeruleus*) – About 15 in the Danube Delta.

GREAT TIT (*Parus major*) – Common and widespread; in all we saw about 60.

Remizidae (Penduline-Tits).

EURASIAN PENDULINE-TIT (*Remiz pendulinus*) – Great looks at a male in the Danube Delta.

Aegithalidae (Long-tailed Tits).

LONG-TAILED TIT (*Aegithalos caudatus*) – Five in the Danube Delta.

Sittidae (Nuthatches).

EURASIAN NUTHATCH (*Sitta europaea*) – One at Odorheiu Secuesc, 4 at Sighisoara, and 1 at Kiskunsag.

Tichodromidae (Wallcreeper).

WALLCREEPER (*Tichodroma muraria*) – Just fantastic this year, with great views of at least 3 at Bicaz Gorge.

Certhiidae (Treecreepers).

SHORT-TOED TREECREEPER (*Certhia brachydactyla*) – Nice looks at 1 at our hotel near Budapest.

Cinclidae (Dippers).

WHITE-THROATED DIPPER (*Cinclus cinclus*) – We saw a pair along the stream at Bicaz Gorge.

Regulidae (Kinglets).

GOLDCREST (*Regulus regulus*) – We saw singles at Mt. Hargita and Liben Forest.

COMMON FIRECREST (*Regulus ignicapilla*) – Fantastic close looks at 1 at Liben Forest.

Phylloscopidae (Leaf Warblers).

WOOD WARBLER (*Phylloscopus sibilatrix*) – One heard in the Danube Delta. [*]

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

COMMON CHIFFCHAFF (*Phylloscopus collybita*) – Many heard, and seen in the Danube Delta and at Kiskunsag.

Acrocephalidae (Reed Warblers and Allies).

SEDGE WARBLER (*Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*) – One in the Danube Delta, about a dozen at Hortobagy, and 6 at Kiskunsag.

EURASIAN REED WARBLER (*Acrocephalus scirpaceus*) – Three in the Danube Delta, 3 at Vadu, and 2 at Kiskunsag.

GREAT REED WARBLER (*Acrocephalus arundinaceus*) – About 50 at Kiskunsag, and a few others in reed beds elsewhere.

Locustellidae (Grassbirds and Allies).

SAVY'S WARBLER (*Locustella luscinioides*) – Fantastic looks at 1 at Kiskunsag, and a more distant bird in the Danube Delta.

Sylviidae (Sylviid Warblers).

EURASIAN BLACKCAP (*Sylvia atricapilla*) – Singles in the Danube Delta, Babadag Hills, Odorheiu Secuesc, and Kiskunsag.

LESSER WHITETHROAT (*Sylvia curruca*) – Heard in the Danube Delta. [*]

GREATER WHITETHROAT (*Sylvia communis*) – Nice looks in the open woodland at Coltesti.

Muscicapidae (Old World Flycatchers).

SPOTTED FLYCATCHER (*Muscicapa striata*) – Small numbers in a variety of woodlands; in all we saw about 15.

EUROPEAN ROBIN (*Erithacus rubecula*) – Singles at Bran Castle, Mt. Hargita, and Sighisoara.

COMMON NIGHTINGALE (*Luscinia megarhynchos*) – Super looks at a singing bird right in the open at Hortobagy.

BLUETHROAT (*Luscinia svecica*) – Some of the group saw 1 at Hortobagy.

EUROPEAN PIED FLYCATCHER (*Ficedula hypoleuca*) – One in the Danube Delta.

COLLARED FLYCATCHER (*Ficedula albicollis*) – Nice looks at 2 males in the Odorheiu Secuesc City Park.

COMMON REDSTART (*Phoenicurus phoenicurus*) – Three males in the Danube Delta.

BLACK REDSTART (*Phoenicurus ochruros*) – Widespread, with a total of about 20.

WHINCHAT (*Saxicola rubetra*) – Two in the Babadag Hills, and 3 at Kiskunsag.

EUROPEAN STONECHAT (*Saxicola rubicola*) – Small numbers in a variety of open farmland.

NORTHERN WHEATEAR (*Oenanthe oenanthe*) – About 10 in the Babadag and Vadu area.

PIED WHEATEAR (*Oenanthe pleschanka*) – We saw a male and then a female in the Cheia Dobrogea Gorge.

ISABELLINE WHEATEAR (*Oenanthe isabellina*) – Six on the way to the Cheia Dobrogea Gorge.

Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies).

MISTLE THRUSH (*Turdus viscivorus*) – Two in the Liben Forest area.

SONG THRUSH (*Turdus philomelos*) – Small numbers from Sighisoara to Coltesti, and Kiskunsag.

EURASIAN BLACKBIRD (*Turdus merula*) – Fairly common away from the Danube Delta; in all we saw about 35.

FIELDFARE (*Turdus pilaris*) – Thirty in the Mt. Hargita area were by far the most, but we also saw singles at Bran Castle, and Hortobagy.

RING OUZEL (*Turdus torquatus*) – Nice looks at 4 on the high slopes of Mt. Hargita.

Sturnidae (Starlings).

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

Motacillidae (Wagtails and Pipits).

GRAY WAGTAIL (*Motacilla cinerea*) – Three at Mt. Hargita, and 2 at Bicaz Gorge.

WESTERN YELLOW WAGTAIL (*Motacilla flava*) – Small numbers were widespread especially around wetlands; in all we saw about 90.

WESTERN YELLOW WAGTAIL (FELDEGG) (*Motacilla flava feldegg*) – Seven in the Danube Delta and Vadu Marshes.

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

TAWNY PIPIT (*Anthus campestris*) – One on the grassy plains near Cheia Dobrogea Gorge.

MEADOW PIPIT (*Anthus pratensis*) – One on the grassy plains near Cheia Dobrogea Gorge.

TREE PIPIT (*Anthus trivialis*) – One near the Liben Forest.

Fringillidae (Finches, Euphonias, and Allies).

COMMON CHAFFINCH (*Fringilla coelebs*) – Common and widespread.

EUROPEAN GREENFINCH (*Chloris chloris*) – Ten in the Odorheiu Secuesc City Park, and 2 at Kiskunsag.

EURASIAN LINNET (*Linaria cannabina*) – Two at Cheia Dobrogea Gorge, 1 at San Paul, and 8 at Coltesti.

EUROPEAN GOLDFINCH (*Carduelis carduelis*) – Widespread in small numbers; in total we saw about 70.

EUROPEAN SERIN (*Serinus serinus*) – Three in the Odorheiu Secuesc City Park.

Emberizidae (Old World Buntings).

CORN BUNTING (*Emberiza calandra*) – Common and widespread in farmlands throughout the tour.

ROCK BUNTING (*Emberiza cia*) – Difficult this year, but eventually we all got good looks in the gorge near Coltesti.

YELLOWHAMMER (*Emberiza citrinella*) – Four at Coltesti, and 1 at Kiskunsag.

ORTOLAN BUNTING (*Emberiza hortulana*) – Nice scope views of 2 in the Babadag Hills.

REED BUNTING (*Emberiza schoeniclus*) – Two females in the Danube Delta, and then a male at Hortobagy, and 2 more females at Kiskunsag.

Passeridae (Old World Sparrows).

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

SPANISH SPARROW (*Passer hispaniolensis*) – About a dozen bathing in a road side pool near Cheia Dobrogea Gorge.

EURASIAN TREE SPARROW (*Passer montanus*) – Widespread in small numbers; with a total of about 100.

MAMMALS

EUROPEAN BROWN HARE (*Lepus europaeus*) – About 40 in the Hortobagy to Kiskunsag area.

EUROPEAN SOUSLIK (*Spermophilus citellus*) – Six on the grassy plains near Cheia Dobrogea Gorge.

EUROPEAN RED SQUIRREL (*Sciurus vulgaris*) – Two singles at Sighisoara.

RED FOX (*Vulpes vulpes*) – Singles in the San Paul and Mt. Hargita areas.

EUROPEAN RIVER OTTER (*Lutra lutra*) – One in the Danube Delta.

ROE DEER (*Capreolus capreolus*) – One near San Paul, and then about 50 in the Hortobagy to Kiskunsag area.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Other notable creatures seen on the tour included;

Edible Frog; hundreds heard and a few seen in the Danube Delta.

Pond Frog; 1 in the Danube Delta.

Yellow-bellied Toad; 1 near Sighisoara.

Alpine Newt; about 10 at Bicaz Gorge.

European Pond Terrapin; 6 at Kiskunsag.

Green Lizard; 1 at our hotel at Kiskunsag.

Grass Snake; 1 in the Danube Delta.

European Adder; some of our group saw a fox kill 1 at Mt. Hargita.

Totals for the tour: 196 bird taxa and 6 mammal taxa