

Trip Report — Spain: La Mancha, Coto Donana & Extremadura 2025

April 19-May 1, 2025 with Godfried Schreur & Willy Perez



Here is the active group at Parque El Retiro in the center of Madrid, watching Iberian Green Woodpecker before the city came alive with runners and dog walkers. Photo by guide Willy Perez.

Our Spain birding adventure was a journey through nature, culture and friendship. If you're dreaming of a birding trip that blends wild beauty with deep history, Spain is the place to be. Our recent tour through this spectacular country delivered everything we could have hoped for: rare birds, unforgettable landscapes, charming villages, and a group of birders who turned into fast friends.

From the Heart of Madrid to the Winds of La Mancha, we kicked off our journey in the center of the big capital, where city parks surprised us with great sightings like Short-toed Treecreeper, Iberian Green Woodpecker and

Long-tailed Tit. With its rich history and vibrant energy, Madrid was the perfect place to begin.



Some of us are enjoying the stunning view of the old windmills, but at the same time others are watching a Great Spotted Cuckoo and Godfried is telling us a great history.

Next, we journeyed down south into the open plains of La Mancha, the land of Don Quijote. The flat landscapes dotted with ancient windmills and shimmering lagoons were teeming with waterbirds. Common Shelducks, Northern Lapwing and many Greater Flamingos kept us busy. But the highlight was watching a Great Spotted Cuckoo flit past those iconic molinos. It was a surreal mix of history and nature.



Lois Wood got a fantastic photo of this Iberian Green Woodpecker. This species spends a lot of time on the ground looking for ants and other insects.

As we headed south into Andalucía, the scenery shifted to rolling hills blanketed in olive trees. Andújar National Park greeted us with blooming Gum Rockrose bushes, Dartford and Sardinean Warblers, and Iberian Magpie. But the show stopper was a female Iberian Lynx and her two cubs giving us a magical, extended viewing. One of those "you had to be there" moments.



This Little Owl got very angry when a mongoose came to close to him. Doug Clark captured this stunning moment that doesn't happen so often in nature.

Timeless El Rocío and the bird filled wetlands of Doñana were just spectacular. Staying in El Rocío was like stepping back 200 years. Sandy roads, horses tied outside bars, and locals who've preserved their unique way of life, it was simply unforgettable.

Right next door, Doñana National Park offered a birders' paradise, with White-headed and Marbled Ducks, Flamingos, Herons, and the spectacular sighting of Pin-tailed Sandgrouse. This was easily one of the group's top moments.



Pin-tailed Sandgrouse was unanimously voted as a bird of the trip, and David Woods got this superb photo of a pair.

Our time in Extremadura was a raptor lover's dream. At Los Llanos de Cáceres, Great and Little Bustards strutted through the fields, while overhead we spotted the Spanish (Imperial) Eagle. In Monfragüe National Park, vultures ruled the skies. Griffon and Cinereous vultures were very numerous, and there were even nesting Black Storks at the dramatic Salto del Gitano viewpoint.

We wrapped up the tour in the Sierra de Gredos, where snow capped mountains served as a stunning backdrop to our final birding. Even the hotel car park was alive with birds and Crested Tits, Common Firecrest and the elusive and rare Citril Finch were present for our delight.



Eurasian Spoonbills were seen several times along the way, and here Cindy Hamilton captured a great shot of pair in their nesting colony.

Yes, we were here for the birds but this tour was also a cultural feast. From the breathtaking Mosque, the Cathedral of Córdoba with so much art and history, to the medieval charm of Trujillo and Ávila, each stop added depth to our journey.

Some personal highlights? Watching Pin-tailed Sandgrouse with full sunshine in Doñana. The cubs of the Iberian Lynx in Andújar. And the quiet joy of hearing the Crested Tits call in the still mountain air.



The landscape was simply spectacular, and this photo shows one example of it. Martha Vandervoort took this beautiful photo of Sierra de Gredos.

And oh, the food. Each meal was a celebration of Spanish flavors, local wines, fresh ingredients, and plates that left us smiling (and maybe a little full). Our farewell dinner in Madrid was the perfect send off, filled with laughter, toasts, and reflection.

But truly, what made this trip special was the group. Adventurous, curious, kind, this was a crew that made every moment better. A big thank you to each of you for bringing such great energy and heart to this journey. We came for the birds, but we left with much more.



Jan Wood got this nice photo of the rare Citril Finch that was feeding just outside of the hotel in Navarredonda de Gredos.

Other wildlife seen along the way:

European Rabbit (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*)

Red Fox (*Vulpes vulpes*)

Iberian Lynx (*Lynx pardinus*)

Eurasian Wild Pig (*Sus scrofa*)

Common Fallow Deer (*Dama dama*)

Western Red Deer (*Cervus elaphus*)

Iberian Ibex (*Capra pyrenaica*)

Egyptian Mongoose (*Herpestes ichneumon*)

Spanish Pond Turtle (*Mauremys leprosa*)

Red-Eared Slider Turtle (*Trachemys scripta*)

Wall Lizard (*Podarcis guadarramae*)

Green Iberian Wall Lizard (*Podarcis virescens*)

Common Gecko (*Tarentola mauritanica*)

Iberian Grass Snake (*Natrix astreptophora*)

Old World Swallowtail Butterfly (*Papilio machaon*)

You can see my complete trip report on eBird at this link: <https://ebird.org/tripreport/377639>

Until the next adventure, abrazos from Godfried and Willy (reporting)

Field Guides Birding Tours-Spain : La Mancha, Coto Donana & Extremadura 2025 (With Godfried Schreur & Willy Perez)



20 – 30 Apr 2025 (11 days) [Link-only](#)



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 Willian Perez



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

 **190**

Species Observed












 **68**





















Checklists





















LIFERS  41 





















Species Observed





















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8	Graylag Goose <i>Anser anser</i>	▶  3
41	Common Shelduck <i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	▶  7
8	Northern Shoveler <i>Spatula clypeata</i>	▶  3
14	Gadwall <i>Mareca strepera</i>	▶  6
87	Mallard <i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	▶  18
1	Green-winged Teal <i>Anas crecca</i>	▶  1
5	Marbled Duck <i>Marmaronetta angustirostris</i> 	▶  4
49	Red-crested Pochard <i>Netta rufina</i> 	▶  8
34	Common Pochard <i>Aythya ferina</i>	▶  7





















6	Ferruginous Duck	<i>Aythya nyroca</i>	▶  1
35	White-headed Duck	<i>Oxyura leucocephala</i> ✓	▶  3
2	Common Quail	<i>Coturnix coturnix</i> ✓	▶  4
16	Red-legged Partridge	<i>Alectoris rufa</i>	▶  5
1	Rock Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i> *	▶  8
20	Stock Dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>	▶  1
90	Common Wood-Pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	▶  18
19	European Turtle-Dove	<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>	▶  5
24	Eurasian Collared-Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	▶  12
58	Pin-tailed Sandgrouse	<i>Pterocles alchata</i> ✓	▶  3
7	Great Bustard	<i>Otis tarda</i> ✓	▶  4
2	Little Bustard	<i>Tetrax tetrax</i>	▶  1
2	Great Spotted Cuckoo	<i>Clamator glandarius</i> ✓	▶  1
5	Common Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>	▶  7
1	Red-necked Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus ruficollis</i> ✓	▶  1
105	Alpine Swift	<i>Tachymarptis melba</i> ✓	▶  4
81	Common Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>	▶  13
7	Pallid Swift	<i>Apus pallidus</i> ✓	▶  2
3	Water Rail	<i>Rallus aquaticus</i>	▶  3
16	Eurasian Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	▶  11





















22	Eurasian Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>	▶  7
4	Red-knobbed Coot	<i>Fulica cristata</i> ✓	▶  1
1	Western Swampen	<i>Porphyrio porphyrio</i>	▶  2
2	Eurasian Thick-knee	<i>Burhinus oedicanus</i>	▶  1
18	Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>	▶  6
X	Pied Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>	▶  1
40	Eurasian Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	▶  1
24	Common Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	▶  2
5	Little Ringed Plover	<i>Thinornis dubius</i>	▶  1
2	Northern Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	▶  1
10	Kentish Plover	<i>Anarhynchus alexandrinus</i>	▶  1
7	Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>	▶  1
23	Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	▶  9
1	Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>	▶  1
7	Common Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>	▶  2
3	Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>	▶  2
1	Ruddy Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>	▶  1
3	Curlew Sandpiper	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>	▶  1
200	Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>	▶  1
25	Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>	▶  1





















11	Collared Pratincole	<i>Glareola pratincola</i>	✓	▶  3
15	Slender-billed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus genei</i>		▶  1
15	Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>		▶  6
10	Audouin's Gull	<i>Ichthyaelus audouinii</i>	✓	▶  1
4	Mediterranean Gull	<i>Ichthyaelus melanocephalus</i>		▶  1
X	Yellow-legged Gull	<i>Larus michahellis</i>		▶  1
5	Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>		▶  3
20	Little Tern	<i>Sternula albifrons</i>		▶  1
7	Gull-billed Tern	<i>Gelochelidon nilotica</i>		▶  7
26	Whiskered Tern	<i>Chlidonias hybrida</i>		▶  6
49	Black Tern	<i>Chlidonias niger</i>		▶  2
30	Sandwich Tern	<i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>		▶  1
802	Greater Flamingo	<i>Phoenicopterus roseus</i>		▶  8
10	Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>		▶  6
6	Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>		▶  5
32	Eared Grebe	<i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>	✓	▶  5
11	Black Stork	<i>Ciconia nigra</i>		▶  5
137	White Stork	<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>		▶  20
1	Northern Gannet	<i>Morus bassanus</i>		▶  1
21	Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>		▶  9





















9	Glossy Ibis <i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>	▶  8
5	Eurasian Spoonbill <i>Platalea leucorodia</i>	▶  6
1	Little Bittern <i>Botaurus minutus</i> ✓	▶  1
8	Black-crowned Night Heron <i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>	▶  5
33	Little Egret <i>Egretta garzetta</i>	▶  9
4	Squacco Heron <i>Ardeola ralloides</i>	▶  2
38	Western Cattle-Egret <i>Ardea ibis</i>	▶  7
6	Great Egret <i>Ardea alba</i>	▶  4
11	Gray Heron <i>Ardea cinerea</i>	▶  11
12	Purple Heron <i>Ardea purpurea</i>	▶  9
5	Egyptian Vulture <i>Neophron percnopterus</i> ✓	▶  4
31	Cinereous Vulture <i>Aegypius monachus</i> ✓	▶  21
157	Eurasian Griffon <i>Gyps fulvus</i>	▶  22
11	Short-toed Snake-Eagle <i>Circaetus gallicus</i>	▶  9
18	Booted Eagle <i>Hieraaetus pennatus</i>	▶  13
6	Spanish Eagle <i>Aquila adalberti</i> ✓	▶  4
3	Golden Eagle <i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>	▶  3
2	Bonelli's Eagle <i>Aquila fasciata</i> ✓	▶  1
1	Eurasian Goshawk <i>Astur gentilis</i>	▶  1
19	Western Marsh Harrier <i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	▶  10

2	Montagu's Harrier	<i>Circus pygargus</i>	▶  2
8	Red Kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>	▶  8
67	Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>	▶  28
2	Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	▶  2
1	Eurasian Scops-Owl	<i>Otus scops</i> ✓	▶  1
8	Little Owl	<i>Athene noctua</i>	▶  7
12	Eurasian Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>	▶  9
58	European Bee-eater	<i>Merops apiaster</i>	▶  8
1	Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	▶  1
8	European Roller	<i>Coracias garrulus</i>	▶  3
2	Eurasian Wryneck	<i>Jynx torquilla</i>	▶  1
2	Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>	▶  2
5	Iberian Green Woodpecker	<i>Picus sharpei</i>	▶  5
30	Lesser Kestrel	<i>Falco naumanni</i>	▶  1
13	Eurasian Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	▶  9
3	Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	▶  3
10	Monk Parakeet	<i>Myiopsitta monachus</i> *	▶  1
X	Eurasian Golden Oriole	<i>Oriolus oriolus</i> ✓	▶  1
4	Iberian Gray Shrike	<i>Lanius meridionalis</i>	▶  3
11	Woodchat Shrike	<i>Lanius senator</i> ✓	▶  8

4	Eurasian Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	▶  3
41	Iberian Magpie	<i>Cyanopica cooki</i> ✓	▶  6
36	Eurasian Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	▶  12
4	Red-billed Chough	<i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i>	▶  1
25	Eurasian Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>	▶  5
4	Carrion Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>	▶  2
12	Common Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>	▶  8
11	Coal Tit	<i>Parus ater</i>	▶  5
3	Crested Tit	<i>Lophophanes cristatus</i>	▶  3
18	Eurasian Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	▶  8
25	Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	▶  13
2	Wood Lark	<i>Lullula arborea</i>	▶  4
4	Eurasian Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	▶  1
18	Thekla's Lark	<i>Galerida theklae</i> ✓	▶  6
7	Crested Lark	<i>Galerida cristata</i>	▶  5
15	Greater Short-toed Lark	<i>Calandrella brachydactyla</i>	▶  3
30	Calandra Lark	<i>Melanocorypha calandra</i> ✓	▶  3
3	Mediterranean Short-toed Lark	<i>Alaudala rufescens</i> ✓	▶  1
11	Zitting Cisticola	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>	▶  7
3	Melodious Warbler	<i>Hippolais polyglotta</i>	▶  3

1	Sedge Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>	▶  1
25	Common Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>	▶  9
5	Great Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus arundinaceus</i> ✓	▶  4
2	Savi's Warbler	<i>Locustella luscinioides</i> ✓	▶  1
26	Bank Swallow	<i>Riparia riparia</i>	▶  3
46	Eurasian Crag-Martin	<i>Ptyonoprogne rupestris</i>	▶  13
366	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	▶  22
249	Western House-Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>	▶  16
21	European Red-rumped Swallow	<i>Cecropis rufula</i>	▶  11
5	Western Bonelli's Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus bonelli</i> ✓	▶  4
1	Common Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	▶  1
X	Iberian Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus ibericus</i> ✓	▶  1
33	Cetti's Warbler	<i>Cettia cetti</i>	▶  12
9	Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>	▶  6
7	Eurasian Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	▶  5
2	Garden Warbler	<i>Sylvia borin</i>	▶  2
22	Sardinian Warbler	<i>Curruca melanocephala</i>	▶  12
1	Western Subalpine Warbler	<i>Curruca iberiae</i> ✓	▶  1
7	Greater Whitethroat	<i>Curruca communis</i>	▶  6
2	Spectacled Warbler	<i>Curruca conspicillata</i>	▶  1

7	Dartford Warbler	<i>Curruca undata</i>	▶  4
4	Common Firecrest	<i>Regulus ignicapilla</i>	▶  3
6	Eurasian Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>	▶  3
10	Short-toed Treecreeper	<i>Certhia brachydactyla</i>	▶  5
9	Eurasian Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	▶  8
71	Spotless Starling	<i>Sturnus unicolor</i> ✓	▶  25
4	Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	▶  3
36	Eurasian Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	▶  18
2	Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>	▶  2
3	European Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	▶  5
70	Common Nightingale	<i>Luscinia megarhynchos</i>	▶  14
1	European Pied Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula hypoleuca</i>	▶  1
2	Common Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>	▶  2
10	Black Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>	▶  4
7	Blue Rock-Thrush	<i>Monticola solitarius</i>	▶  4
1	Whinchat	<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>	▶  1
17	European Stonechat	<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>	▶  12
6	Northern Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	▶  2
1	Western Black-eared Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe hispanica</i> ✓	▶  1
2	Black Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe leucura</i> ✓	▶  1

10	Common Waxbill	<i>Estrilda astrild</i>	* ✓	▶  1
10	Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>		▶  3
42	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>		▶  21
32	Spanish Sparrow	<i>Passer hispaniolensis</i>	✓	▶  9
12	Eurasian Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>		▶  4
3	Rock Sparrow	<i>Petronia petronia</i>	✓	▶  2
2	Gray Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>		▶  2
9	Western Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>		▶  7
12	White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>		▶  7
1	Water Pipit	<i>Anthus spinoletta</i>		▶  1
44	Common Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>		▶  16
41	European Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>		▶  15
29	Eurasian Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>		▶  11
13	Red Crossbill	<i>Loxia curvirostra</i>		▶  2
63	European Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>		▶  25
5	Citril Finch	<i>Carduelis citrinella</i>	✓	▶  1
50	European Serin	<i>Serinus serinus</i>		▶  22
65	Corn Bunting	<i>Emberiza calandra</i>		▶  14
20	Rock Bunting	<i>Emberiza cia</i>	✓	▶  9
4	Cirl Bunting	<i>Emberiza cirlus</i>	✓	▶  2

8

Ortolan Bunting

Emberiza hortulana

3

ADDITIONAL TAXA

4

Thekla's/Crested Lark

Galerida theklae/cristata

2

X

House/Spanish Sparrow

Passer domesticus/hispaniolensis

1