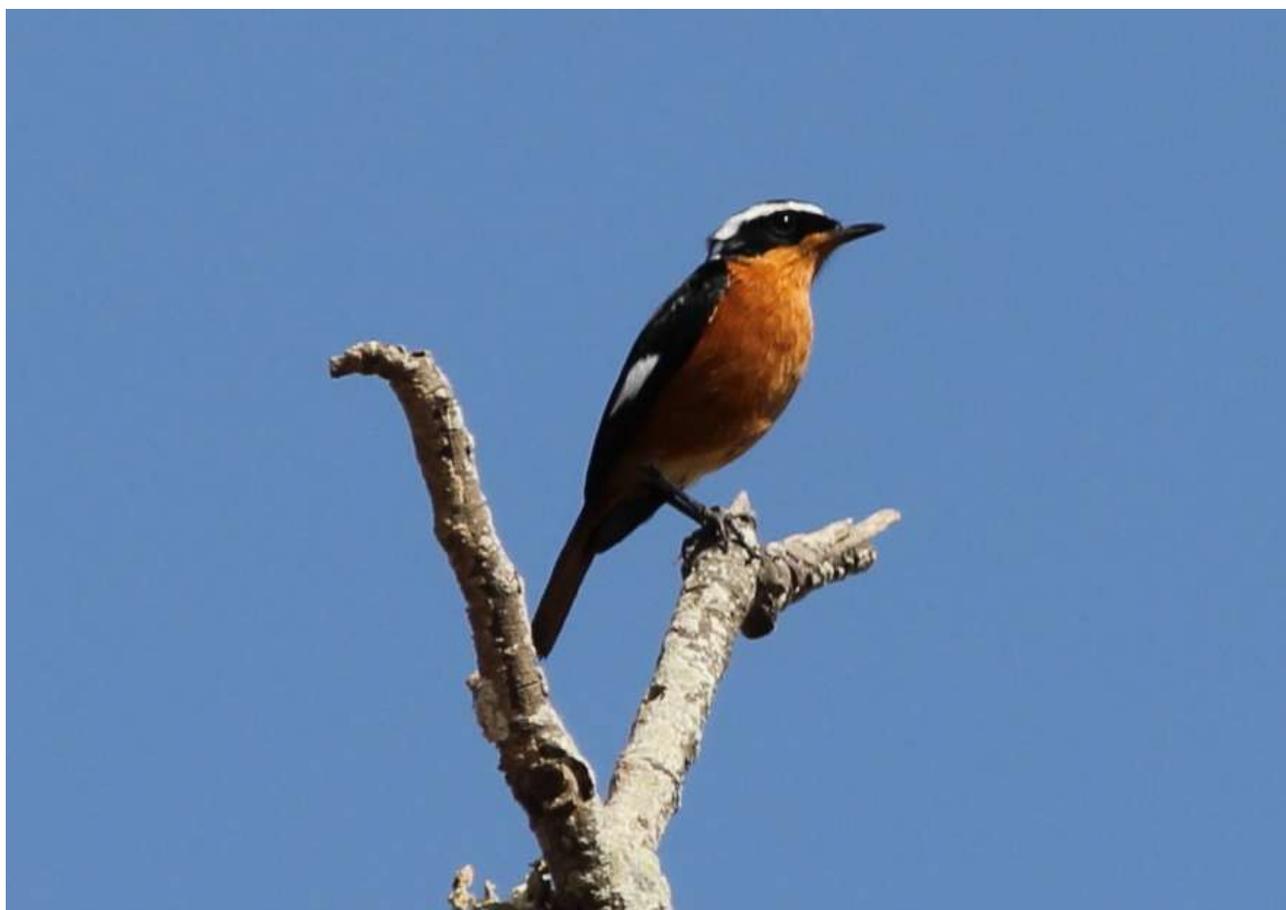


ORNITHOLIDAYS TOUR TO MOROCCO
Atlantic Coast & Southern Desert

26 October – 02 November 2013



Leader: David Walsh

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A Personal Diary

Summary

Ornitholidays have run October tours to Agadir every year since 2007, and this one was every bit as enjoyable as its six predecessors. The pace was relaxed, with for the most part relatively leisurely starts and plenty of time back at the hotel prior to dinner, and yet our ability to find the vast majority of the target species, and see them well, was not compromised at all. A feature of this year's trip was being upgraded to a splendid new hotel for our one night stay in Guelmim: the accommodation there can no longer be classified as 'basic'! We all enjoyed the excellent food in the restaurant at our Agadir hotel too, and at lunchtime we mixed picnics in the shade with tasty tagines in well-chosen locations. The weather this year was simply perfect: lots of sunshine, warm temperatures and light winds, and we were fortunate to have cloud in the desert when we needed it.

On our first day we found Moussier's Redstart and Black-crowned Tchagra on Agadir Kasbah before locating 35 Northern Bald Ibis at Tamri. Making two visits to the Massa valley was as worthwhile as always, allowing us to cover the full range of habitats; Little Swift, Black-bellied Sandgrouse, Brown-throated Martin, Laughing Dove and Black-winged Kite were complemented by wonderful opportunities for us to witness local villagers go about their daily lives. Tristram's Warbler and Black Wheatear were splendidly obliging in the Atlas Mountains near Immouzer, and Paradise Valley was exactly that, and full of butterflies and dragonflies too. The Guelmim leg of the trip provided a high proportion of the top birds as always, with Fulvous Babbler, Scrub and Spectacled Warblers, Trumpeter Finch, Long-legged Buzzard, Cream-coloured Courser, Desert, Red-rumped and White-crowned Wheatears, as well as Thick-billed, Greater Hoopoe, Bar-tailed and Desert amongst the eight species of lark seen during the tour. Red-crested Pochard and Pin-tailed Sandgrouse were trip 'firsts' and the flock of 130 Stone Curlews my 'spectacle of the trip.' In summary, it was great to hear so many positive comments from the group at the end of the week, and I can't wait to return in 2014.

Saturday 26th October

Our late afternoon easyJet flight from Gatwick to Agadir took only three hours and five minutes, surely a record! En route I enjoyed talking to an extended family celebrating a Golden Wedding: it was great witnessing the children's excitement as we spotted Africa for the first time! The question on arrival was.....was it 6.25pm or 7.25pm? I was confident, but wrong, as it turned out to be the latter, Morocco having gone for 'summer time' for the first time in 2013. Nevertheless we soon established that the clocks were to go back tonight, so timings from tomorrow would be as I had expected. Passport control was slow but baggage reclaim was surprisingly quick, and we were able to use the new 'bureau de change' before heading through customs; in the arrivals hall, I was thrilled to find that Houari was to be our driver once again: this year he asked us to call him Mohamed. Via a local stall to pick up water supplies, we made the 35 minute journey to our hotel. The hotel had been rebranded, but the staff were the same; check in was splendidly efficient, with the receptionist speaking good English as always. After dropping the bags in our rooms, we made haste for the restaurant where Larbi was on hand to greet us; he was just one of a number of friendly faces on what was my 11th visit to the hotel. So by 9.15pm we were tucking in to our first dinner and discussing plans for the following morning.

Sunday 27th October

We met on the roof outside the restaurant shortly after 6.45am on what was the first of many perfect mornings. Yellow-legged Gull, Common Bulbul and Sardinian Warbler were present as expected, whilst Garden and European Reed Warblers provided evidence of migration. Pride of place went to the stunning male Spanish Sparrow perched close by and the pair of African Blue Tits in their favourite tamarisk. Eventually it was time to enjoy breakfast. Omelettes cooked to order were popular as always, but a wide selection of salads, cereals, breads, jams, cheese and cold meat were also on offer. Coffee was available from two new machines: progress!

We left just after 8am for the short trip to the Kasbah, a hill just to the north of Agadir overlooking the port, with a sixteenth century building on top which had survived the earthquake that had devastated so much of the city 50 years ago. We admired the view to the south before strolling down the road. It wasn't long before a splendid pair of Moussier's Redstart showed particularly well: a great start! A European Turtle Dove was remarkably obliging; we pined for similar views back home. Round the corner, a cackling sound to the left demanded our attention: a Black-crowned Tchagra was perched right out in the open! We remained almost motionless for half an hour, marvelling at a pair of tchagras at point blank range. One of our most wanted target species was safely under the belt! We enjoyed our first 'Desert' Great Grey Shrikes before heading back to base for a comfort stop and a quick coffee.

At 10.20am we headed up the coast road, a quick stop at the Taghazout pharmacy also producing our first Spotless Starling. Surfers were enjoying themselves on all the beaches, so the gulls had been displaced; as a result there was nothing to delay our journey to Tamri. There the ground was dry, which allowed our driver to navigate a route to the very edge of the lagoon. We noted several Migrant Hawkers and Red-veined Darters before setting up the scopes. The first birds we spotted were five female Red-crested Pochards, a Morocco tick for me. One of the great things about this particular tour is that every year there are surprises! We counted 500 Eurasian Coots: encouragingly, the lagoon was clearly fresh water once again after its 2011 breach. Given that fact, it was surprisingly quiet, so instead we turned our attention to the beach, where there were several hundred Audouin's Gulls alongside Lesser Black-backed and Yellow-legged as well as a roosting group of 18 Kentish Plover. A lizard was enjoyed but remained unidentified as we returned to the bus and headed for lunch.

Our upmarket restaurant was beautifully positioned to the north of the valley, and we ordered a variety of tagines. There was time for coffee and even a spot of shopping before we resumed our birding. The cliffs to the north are wonderfully scenic with spectacular sand dunes, and today they provided a base for us to seawatch: a European Shag of the Moroccan race was the highlight for some, whilst we noted a small number of Cory's Shearwaters and Northern Gannets. As it turned out, seabirds were to be in short supply on this tour.

We returned to a point overlooking the lagoon from the south, and it wasn't long before I found our quarry: a group of 35 Northern Bald Ibises in flight on the far side of the water! Mission accomplished with one of the world's rarest birds. We watched the ibises circle a few times before landing around some white buildings. Through our zooms we had very passable views as they fed oblivious to the presence of the locals. We discussed the article I had read just prior to the trip which had detailed the excellent breeding season (leading to a current world population of 443).

We drifted south, stopping just beyond Cap Rhir when a Barbary Partridge was spotted on a roadside rock. We couldn't relocate it, but managed our first Black Wheatear, a solitary Whinchat and a Barbary Ground Squirrel. It was at this point that we realised the Painted Lady numbers were abnormally high: were we witnessing an invasion? We returned to the hotel at 5.20pm allowing plenty of time to get sorted before dinner and witness our first sunset over the Atlantic. Meeting up in the bar, we reflected on a day in which we had seen some wonderful birds, before making inroads into the wine list in the restaurant. Would we be so fortunate tomorrow?

Monday 28th October

At our pre-breakfast gathering outside the restaurant, we discovered it had rained a little overnight. Migrants were, however, few and far between, although two Northern Wheatears on the roof of an adjacent building looked very sorry for themselves. An Arctic Skua chasing terns was the highlight of my scan around the bay; our first House Bunting was enjoyed at somewhat closer range, and we discussed whether the female 'Moroccan' Common Blackbirds were genuinely darker than those in the UK.

At 8.05am we headed south along the main road, stopping after 35 minutes in the town of Sidi Bibi. In 2006 I had found a colony of Little Swifts in an open-fronted garage, and it was encouraging that the birds were still present, and in increased numbers. There were numerous nests (of mud and feathers) and we saw at least ten birds in flight. I gave the garage attendant a small reward and encouraged him to continue to show an interest in the birds' welfare despite the nuisance factor resulting from their droppings!

As last year, I decided to explore the inland section of the Massa valley from south to north. As we crossed some small fields we noted a number of hirundines, so disembarked. Several were Red-rumped Swallows, and it was great to identify them on jizz as well as plumage. We then stopped at a section of river alongside the old main road. Here we had super views of several Brown-throated Martins, perched as well as in flight; a Little Bittern laughed at us from the reeds. A little further north we parked up and walked across a field towards the river. It was windy and somewhat birdless, but we found our first Lang's Short-tailed Blue as well as a Banded Groundling, a stunning dragonfly. Further on, we walked down another track towards the river and enjoyed our first Glossy Ibises roosting in dead trees; a Tufted Duck was a surprise, whilst a distant Water Rail disappeared all too quickly. Next we drove to an area where the river runs alongside the road. Northern Shovelers were no substitute for the hoped-for Marbled Ducks, but there were more Glossy Ibises to enjoy and photograph, plus a 'write-in' Wood Sandpiper, a splendid adult White-breasted Cormorant and an instructive Moroccan White Wagtail.

At our final morning site, we stopped by some eucalyptus trees and walked north along a short stretch of the river. Water levels were high, so there was little exposed mud for waders, and the wind was keeping the passerines out of view. Nevertheless there was plenty to see. A Black Stork heading south along the valley was a real surprise and two juvenile Eurasian Spoonbills were typically docile. Dragonflies were plentiful in quality and quantity with Violet Dropwing, Sahara Bluetail, Long Skimmer and the colourful Broad Scarlet just three of several species noted. In the shelter of the next set of trees we had our picnic lunch prepared by the driver: fresh bread, sardines, cheese, tomatoes, bananas and oranges. Afterwards we watched a juvenile Bonelli's Eagle and four White Storks drift across the valley before strolling through the fields; Crested Lark, Cirl Bunting and Zitting Cisticola all showing splendidly. I showed the group an African Grass Blue at close quarters: this species is extremely common in the Massa valley.

We made one more stop, finding a scopable Green Sandpiper and our first Spanish Terrapins. There is no doubt that the way to birdwatch this part of the valley is to look at as many sections of open water as time allows. Then it was time to head across the desert to the seaside hamlet of Sidi Wassay with its 'International Camping' but, more importantly for us, new café. Vagrant Emperors were plentiful, another real surprise. A perched Osprey in the desert seemed a little out of place as we made for the 'village bridge' for a 15 minutes taster, seeing a juvenile Black-crowned Night Heron and a wonderful Common Kingfisher. We would return for more on Friday. It took just over an hour to reach the hotel where we arrived at 5.40pm. Over dinner we reflected on a splendidly varied day seeing birds, butterflies, dragonflies and locals, all in very pleasant temperatures.

Tuesday 29th October

A Blue Rock Thrush was the highlight of our early morning birding before we headed into breakfast, where we were somewhat bemused by the high level discussions between the management about the quality of the mint tea!

Having paid our room bills we headed south again, passports safely in hand, this time packed for our one-night stay away from Agadir. The main road is now dualled all the way to the Massa river crossing, so we were enjoying coffee in Tiznit as early as 9.35am. We then drove up from the plains into the Anti-Atlas Mountains where the cacti, red soil and rock formations impressed us as always. It takes a while to cross the plateau before you descend very suddenly through the hairpins, where we made our planned leg-stretch in a convenient pull-in. I was horrified to discover it was being made into a lorry park! I thought we might see nothing, but in the event Moussier's and Black Redstarts, a pair of Black Wheatears and, eventually, a pair of Rock Buntings made the stop splendidly productive. Buoyant, we headed on, soon reaching Guelmim, the 'Gateway to the Sahara', with a population of close to 100,000. After the obligatory photostop at the gateway itself, we checked in at our hotel, which was a new base for me, and at 1pm sat down for the tagine lunch which I had pre-ordered. Our rooms were spacious, clean and well-appointed and more generally this hotel was so much better than anything I had ever encountered in or near Guelmim that I was almost in shock!

After a siesta, we set off again at 2.30pm ready to start our desert birding 'proper'; it was warm, but not too hot. We headed south-east of Guelmim for about 10 minutes and turned off the main road onto a quieter one. The driver knew the drill, and once we were in the prime habitat slowed down for us to scan. Almost immediately we found a superb male Desert Wheatear followed by a pair of Red-rumped Wheatears. Our

counts of these two species were to reach four and 11 respectively during the afternoon. In the desert a stop for one species nearly always produces others, and this was the case once again as we located a small group of Greater Short-toed Larks right by the road as well as an 'elegans' Desert Great Grey Shrike. We headed on through the village of Asrir, and soon afterwards located our first adult White-crowned Wheatear, with a pristine white crown. A beautiful bird despite its simple colours; it was great to be able to compare the tail pattern with that of the Black Wheatear seen earlier in the day.

Two pairs of Trumpeter Finches showed fleetingly before, close to an oasis, we stopped at a set of large bushes and scanned. This was a planned stop, and although we didn't find any babblers it was very worthwhile for the close views of Spectacled Warbler. We then headed back to Asrir and stopped by the prickly pears. I tried playback of Fulvous Babbler, more in hope than expectation having not seen them at this spot for years, so was ecstatic to see a group in the distance almost immediately. They were clearly responsive and it didn't take long before the six birds were perched up only a few metres away. Magic! The groups of Spanish Sparrows nearby played the role of supporting cast.

A raptor passing overhead proved to be a female Western Marsh Harrier; we had great views in this somewhat incongruous setting, and it proved to be our only one of the tour. Finally we headed to a stony hillside by a 'pyramidal' hill, arriving bang on cue at 5.30pm. Shortly before dusk I located a pair of Desert Larks and those who persevered enjoyed respectable scope views before we stood and enjoyed a superb sunset over the desert.

It didn't take long to drive back through the bustling centre of Guelmim, where we counted the carpet shops, and onwards to our hotel; I'd ordered beers and a couple of bottles of wine (courtesy of Ornitholidays) from the supermarket but, along with our dinner of brochettes, they took a little while to arrive. Nevertheless, we remained in good spirits having seen seven of our 15 desert target species, mostly very well. A German ophthalmologist gave me some interesting background information on why Guelmim was developing so fast before it was time to retire and wonder what tomorrow would bring.

Wednesday 30th October

Keen to get into the desert as soon as possible, we met at 6.30am for breakfast in the café and the food arrived soon afterwards. The staff were clearly doing all they could to give a good account of themselves and their fine hotel. The juice resembled a milkshake and the bread was splendidly fresh, accompanied by cheese, jam and, more unusually, olive oil. There was time for a second cup of coffee before we headed off soon after 7.15am. A spur of the moment decision to scan the roadside saltpans from the raised ground to the north paid dividends. Ten Little Ringed plus a single Kentish Plover were routine and a dozen Ruddy Shelduck most welcome, but all these were trumped by the flock of Trumpeter Finches perched up close by; they stayed around long enough for excellent scope views.

A little further down the road we parked up just beyond a bridge for our first 'planned' stop. Leaving the scopes behind to make sure we were ready to use our bins, we walked slowly towards a set of small bushes to the left of Oued Boukila, a narrow wadi. It wasn't long before I heard the call of a Scrub Warbler and we positioned ourselves carefully. Two birds gave fine views, perched up as well as on the ground. This species has real character and we were thrilled to have scored so successfully! An 'Atlas' Long-legged Buzzard kindly flew from one pylon to another, allowing us to admire its tail pattern, before we made haste down the main road.

At km 26, four kilometres before I had intended to stop, a couple of birds flew across the road so we disembarked as quickly as we could. At first we saw nothing, but then a pair of Greater Hoopoe Larks flew in from the right! Irritatingly, they disappeared all too soon, but two sandy-coloured Bar-tailed Larks on the opposite side of the road were well-watched and provided ample compensation. We paused again at km 30, by the famous 'Tan-Tan 100' sign, and had a wonderful 45 minutes. First, a group of Lesser Short-toed Larks showed well, allowing us to note the differences from the Greater Short-toed of the previous day. Then another pair of Hoopoe Larks was found, and these ones stayed put, digging happily at close range: another real highlight of the trip. We were on the verge of leaving when a different lark with a white trailing edge appeared: Thick-billed Lark! It was joined by around 15 others, and we had fabulous views as they fed on the edge of a cultivated area. This was desert birding at its very best.

Feeling pleased with ourselves, we drove on across an agricultural area, noting further Lesser Short-toed and Thick-billed Larks, before heading as far as km 38. A Spectacled Warbler was seen by the bus as we turned around: good timing! We drifted slowly back, scanning all the time. I had one more very specific target and at km 34 it was achieved: three Cream-coloured Coursers were found running in typical fashion not far from the road. This is a must-see species in this area and it was thrilling to have such fine scope views. What a morning we were having; one after another the most sought-after specialities were being enjoyed at close range.

We tried again in all the places I could think of, but it was clear that Temminck's Lark was going to be the one that got away, not for the first time. With the desert hotting up we declared and headed back to the hotel. I had arranged for us to keep our rooms a little beyond midday, allowing time to freshen up and finish packing prior to lunch. A chicken and mushroom dish was much enjoyed as we relaxed and reflected on our morning's work before, at 2pm, we loaded up the bus and headed north. Further Desert, Red-rumped and White-crowned Wheatears, plus several Desert Great Grey Shrikes, delayed our snoozing before we wound our way into the hills. A photo stop near the summit was welcome if typically birdless then, via a tea stop in Tiznit, we made for Agadir, arriving at 5.50pm. The President's rosé was a popular choice to accompany our dinner in the restaurant and we retired very pleased with how the desert leg of the tour had unfolded.

Thursday 31st October

As is traditional on this tour the day after the return from the desert, we delayed our main departure until 8.30am. This allowed for some more leisurely birding in the garden and, for some, a chance to stroll to the beach, where this morning the count of Lesser Black-backed Gulls was well into four figures. At breakfast the mint tea was back and we were impressed with the height from which it was poured into the cups!

The weather was set fair as we headed up via the banana village of Aourir into the western fringes of the Atlas Mountains. We marvelled at the superb scenery, but decided to save our photo stops for later, instead heading straight for the furthest point and pausing only to place our lunch orders. Tristram's Warbler was our main target species today. It is a widespread breeder in the hills above 1,000m, and I chose as always to look for it at my favoured spot with juniper bushes adjacent to the pines. Here it is easy to park the bus off the road and viewing conditions are relatively favourable. Normally patience is required, but today we scored relatively quickly. I soon heard the tell-tale call of a Tristram's, so gathered the group together. The pair weren't especially co-operative, but most of us gained good views with bins and some managed to locate the birds through a scope. A little later, back close to the bus, some of us found a second pair which, with a little encouragement, came very close allowing us wonderful views and the opportunity to take photos. This is one of the most special birds on the tour so it was great to have had even more 'contacts' than usual. Other birds in the area were more elusive, with just one flyover 'Atlas' Crossbill and a pair of Rock Buntings playing hard-to-get. A count of 50 Common Wood Pigeons overhead and a group of European Greenfinches were noteworthy if unexciting. But with Tristram's under our belt, the supporting cast was indeed just that.

We drifted back down the mountain and made several photo stops, and at one of these we found a group of Eurasian Crag Martins low overhead. We then headed for our lunch at a restaurant with a panoramic view over the hills and cliffs; we had a choice of chicken or lamb tagines, omelette or salad. The flowers across the road were splendid as usual and we noted a Hummingbird Hawk-Moth as well as an unprecedented selection of butterflies including Swallowtail, Small Copper, Long-tailed Blue, Cleopatra and Desert Orange Tip.

We descended into the aptly-named Paradise Valley, with its amazing rock formations, pools along the river bed and palm trees, providing stark contrast to the surrounding hills. It was good to see that lots of people from Agadir were out making the most of the wonderful weather and enjoying the fine countryside. We stopped in an area with a good view of the river. Down by the water the dragonflies were wonderful, with blue Epaulet Skimmers and both 'thin' Red-veined and 'broad' Orange-winged Dropwings perching on the rocks. Black-and-yellow Ringed Cascaders were abundant, hunting above the road and the river. We were even offered mint tea by one of the locals picnicking, a very nice touch!

We stopped to buy bananas, noting a Grey Wagtail on the river, before ascending again, via more hairpins, to a beautifully positioned roadside stall selling a variety of gifts including ammonites. En route a covey of Barbary Partridges was seen flying across the road at close range, the first of the week for some of us. Those

forsaking the shopping made the most of the grandstand view back into the valley. Then we turned left onto what was a new road for me; the quick views of Tristram's Warbler earlier on meant that there was time for a short visit to the five-floor Berber Souk in Agadir where it was possible to shop in a hassle-free environment with, unusually, fixed prices! We returned to the hotel at 5.30pm and the sunset today was perhaps the best of the week. A relaxing day in the mountains had provided a lovely contrast to the deserts of the day before and gave us lots to talk about as we headed for dinner, Gerrouane providing today's white wine to complement the President's red.

Friday 1st November

Our last full day, and it started with a bang! A Peregrine Falcon was spotted roosting on a 10th floor balcony! There was time to whizz back to my room for the scope and camera: the lack of 'rust' on the head meant that it was probably a wintering bird from further north.

After breakfast we headed south for the final time, pausing only for an ATM in Sidi Bibi. I had a 9.30am appointment with sandgrouse and didn't want to be late! Our site was a desert area adjacent to an irrigation channel east of Massa along the road towards a reservoir. We parked up and only moments after putting up the scopes the first sandgrouse, appeared followed by two large groups. As the second party came in to land, it was clear that there were two different species involved which was most unexpected! We savoured the male and female Black-bellied Sandgrouse before searching the flock for the two hangers-on, and identified them as Pin-tailed Sandgrouse both on plumage and on call as they took off. What a result! There was time to enjoy a final Desert Great Grey Shrike and some more dragonflies before we headed back to Massa: there was still much to see along the valley. We made for a fine overlook, with the desert to the right, river in front and to the left, and fields opposite us: a really picturesque spot, with locals fishing using wires across the river to move their boats.

At the reserve entrance we parked up in the shade of some eucalyptus trees and strolled towards the sea. The sand bar across the river had been breached in 2011 and the water clearly remained saline: there was just one immature Greater Flamingo and a small selection of common ducks and waders. Nevertheless we enjoyed the vista and the fine Osprey hunting backwards and forwards. A male Moussier's Redstart perched up and allowed itself to be photographed, one of my targets for the day, cementing its place as 'Bird of the Week' in the process!

Picnic in the shade was most welcome before we scoped a Maghreb Magpie, admiring the blue spot behind the eye, and pished in a stunning male North African Chaffinch. It was a hot Morocco day today so we took advantage of a new road to head across the desert to a restaurant called Ksar Massa in the village of Sidi R'bat, for tea in the shade. For some reason tea took a while to appear, but the delay meant we had our binoculars to hand when a flock of medium sized birds appeared over the ridge. We fully expected them to be doves, or perhaps sandgrouse, but they turned out to be Stone Curlews! I counted at least 130 and we watched them glide left, in perfect light, heading first out to sea and then swinging left to land in fields behind the café. What an amazing spectacle: certainly something I had never ever seen before. Whilst waiting for the tea, I rechecked the track towards the reserve and found it sandy and steep so decided not to return with the group so a False Mallow Skipper butterfly remained 'leader-only'.

We spent our final hour back at the village bridge. This has traditionally been one of my favourite birding spots on this tour and after a couple of relatively barren years it was back on top form. First, a Black-winged Kite was found in a dead tree before flying over at point blank range. Then a Common Kingfisher was scoped for ages before both Squacco Heron and Black-crowned Night Heron were watched along the river. I tried to locate the Moroccan Reed Warblers which I had heard on the visit earlier in the week but to no avail.

We weren't quite finished as, once again, the driver came up trumps with a magnificent pair of 'Desert' Little Owls perched on a roadside wall in perfect light! Then we headed back to base for a thoroughly enjoyable last meal in the restaurant, where Driss was thanked for his excellent service. After dinner I headed to the bar to write up some notes for Bryan Bland and his Sunbird group who were arriving the following day, and was surprised to find Ipswich Town's match live on TV. Another Moroccan first!

Saturday 2nd November

After a relaxing final breakfast, we made the 15 minute journey to Oued Souss, formerly a fabulous estuary full of waders, terns, gulls and flamingos. Last year the local authorities had begun to build a new path along the river and I was concerned that the birds might be affected, and so it proved. Nevertheless, we made the most of what was on offer and had some good sightings. Two European Golden Plovers glowed on the nearby mud and Common Greenshanks were typically showy before I turned my attention to the gull flock on the near shore. I located just a single Mediterranean Gull, an adult, but was delighted to find at least two Slender-billed Gulls and we were able to scrutinise them as they sat, swam and, eventually, flew. We moved further towards the sea and after a short walk finally found the Greater Flamingo flock, counting 60 birds, with several Eurasian Oystercatchers in the same area. A European Serin perched up nicely in a bush close to us. Having given the last of my pens to some local children, we headed back to our first spot. After reminding ourselves that camel riding was uncomfortable (seeing some sore French tourists: we didn't ride ourselves, of course!) we passed a barrier and drove down to what had been a bridge. It had, in fact, been washed away by a high tide in 2011. En route, we managed to find a single Black-winged Stilt, our 134th and last species of the trip, before enjoying further views of Slender-billed Gulls.

We'd covered all the possible sites so returned for lunch at the hotel and a relaxing couple of hours thereafter, as I had ensured that we had use of our rooms until 4pm. Then it was time to bid farewell to the waiters, porters and other staff with whom we'd spent the week, and head for the airport. I publicly thanked Mohamed for his splendid driving and help with lunch. It was good to arrive early at the airport. The baggage x-ray was a bit disconcerting, but check-in was quick and we were soon relaxing over coffee and sandwiches. We saw the Sunbird group arrive on the easyJet flight, their leader surprisingly not in his usual shorts! For the fourth year running, the flight itself landed early. Our baggage came remarkably quickly before we said our goodbyes at the end of an enjoyable and successful holiday.

Party List

David Walsh of Ornitholidays and Ipswich, Suffolk
Gareth and Penny Cross of Nottingham
Penny Chambers of Huddersfield, West Yorkshire
Eileen Brookes of Budleigh Salterton, Devon
Les Isles of Reading, Berkshire

Birds of the Trip (voted by the group)

1 st	Moussier's Redstart	6 th	Black-crowned Tchagra
2 nd	Greater Hoopoe Lark	=7 th	Cream-coloured Courser
3 rd	Tristram's Warbler	=7 th	Thick-billed Lark
4 th	Fulvous Babbler	9 th	Stone Curlew
5 th	Scrub Warbler	10 th	Black-crowned Night Heron

Acknowledgements

As is the norm nowadays, the ground arrangements on our 2013 tour went very smoothly thanks to our ground agents. Our driver was always punctual and helpful; he drove safely, found lots of birds, and sorted out our picnic lunches. Our hotel was more efficient than ever and Driss, our young waiter, was particularly keen to help us enjoy our dinners. Thanks to everyone in the group for being so positive throughout the week. We had lots of fun, both in the field and at mealtimes. Special thanks to Gareth Cross for allowing us to include some of his photos in this report.

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November 2013

Itinerary and Weather

- 26th October Late afternoon flight from London Gatwick to Agadir; onward transfer to our hotel.
- 27th October Agadir Kasbah, then north along the coast to Tamri (birding around lagoon and nearby, restaurant lunch in village);
Sunny, light winds, min 17°C, max 26°C.
- 28th October am Sidi Bibi for Little Swifts then the Massa valley (several riverside sites to south of village, picnic lunch);
pm tea at Sidi Wassay, then the 'village bridge'.
Showers overnight, then cloudy followed by sunny intervals, moderate SE winds, min 20°C, max 28°C.
- 29st October am Agadir (via tea in Tiznit, and the Anti-Atlas mountains) to Guelmim;
pm Lunch at hotel then birding in the desert south-east of Guelmim near Asrir as far as Tighmert Oasis;
overnight hotel in Guelmim.
Sunny, light winds, min 20°C, max 28°C.
- 30th October am desert south-west of Guelmim along Tan-Tan road; significant stops at km 12 (salt pans), km 14 (Oued Boukila), km 26, km 30 ("Tan-Tan 100"), km 32-33, km 34-35, driving as far as km 38;
pm Lunch at hotel, then short photo stop in the Anti-Atlas mountains; tea in Tiznit, return to Agadir.
Cloudy am, sunny pm, calm, min 18°C, max 26°C.
- 31st October Immouzzar road in Atlas mountains via Paradise Valley (restaurant lunch); short visit to Berber Souk.
Sunny, calm, min 16°C, max 28°C.
- 1st November am desert along road to barrage, then Massa reserve entrance (picnic lunch);
pm tea/seawatching in Sidi R'bat, then return to 'village bridge'.
Sunny, calm, min 17°C, max 28°C.
- 2nd November am Souss estuary, then lunch at hotel.
pm siesta then transfer to airport for early evening flight to London Gatwick.
Sunny, calm, min 18°C, max 26°C.



Massa Valley

CHECKLIST OF BIRDS SEEN DURING THE TOUR

No of days recorded	Location	Abundance scale
1 2h means seen on 1 day and heard on 2 other days	A = Agadir (north to Tamri) M = Massa valley area G = Guelmim & Anti-Atlas I = Immouzzar road S = Souss estuary	Maximum seen (on one day) 1 = 1-4 2 = 5-9 3 = 10-99 4 = 100-999 5 = 1,000+

Species	No of days recorded	Locations	Abundance Scale	Scientific Name
Ruddy Shelduck	1	G	3	<i>Tadorna ferruginea</i>
Mallard	2	M	1	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>
Northern Pintail	1	M	3	<i>Anas acuta</i>
Northern Shoveler	2	M	3	<i>Anas clypeata</i>
Eurasian Teal	1	M	1	<i>Anas crecca</i>
Red-crested Pochard	1	A	2	<i>Netta rufina</i>
Tufted Duck	1	M	1	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>
Barbary Partridge	2	A	I	<i>Alectoris barbara</i>
Little Grebe	2	M	3	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>
Cory's Shearwater*	1	A	2	<i>Calonectris diomedea</i>
Northern Gannet	5	A M	3	<i>Morus bassanus</i>
Great Cormorant*	4	A M	S	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo sinensis</i>
White-breasted Cormorant*	1	M	1	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo maroccanus/lucidus</i>
European Shag*	1	A	1	<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis riggenbachi</i>
Little Bittern	-	1h M	1	<i>Ixobrychus minutus</i>
Black-crowned Night Heron	2	M	1	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>
Cattle Egret	4	A M	3	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>
Squacco Heron	2	A M	1	<i>Ardeola ralloides</i>
Little Egret	4	A M	S	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>
Grey Heron	5	A M	S	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>
White Stork	1	M	1	<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>
Black Stork	1	M	1	<i>Ciconia nigra</i>
Glossy Ibis	1	M	3	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>
Northern Bald Ibis	1	A	3	<i>Geronticus eremita</i>
Eurasian Spoonbill	1	M	1	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>
Greater Flamingo	2	M	S	<i>Phoenicopterus roseus</i>
Osprey	4	M	S	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>
Bonelli's Eagle	1	M	1	<i>Aquila fasciata</i>
Western Marsh Harrier	1	G	1	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>
"Atlas" Long-legged Buzzard*	1	G	1	<i>Buteo rufinus cirtensis</i>
Eurasian Sparrowhawk	2	M	1	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>
Black-winged Kite	1	M	1	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>
Common Kestrel	7	A M G	S	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>
Peregrine Falcon*	1	M	1	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>
Water Rail	1	M	1	<i>Rallus aquaticus</i>
Common Moorhen	2	M	3	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>
Eurasian Coot	3	A M	4	<i>Fulica atra</i>
Eurasian Oystercatcher	1	M	S	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>
Black-winged Stilt	1	M	S	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>
Stone Curlew	1	M	4	<i>Burhinus oediconemus</i>
Cream-coloured Courser	1	G	1	<i>Cursorius cursor</i>
Little Ringed Plover	2	G	S	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>
Common Ringed Plover	2	M	S	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>
Kentish Plover	2	A G	3	<i>Charadrius alexandrinus</i>
Grey Plover	2	M	S	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>
European Golden Plover	1	M	S	<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>
Dunlin	3	M	S	<i>Calidris alpina</i>
Common Sandpiper	3	M	S	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>
Green Sandpiper	3	M G	1	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>
Wood Sandpiper	1	M	1	<i>Tringa glareola</i>

Common Redshank	1					S	2	<i>Tringa totanus</i>
Common Greenshank	2		M			S	3	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>
Bar-tailed Godwit	2		M			S	1	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>
Eurasian Curlew	2		M			S	3	<i>Numenius arquata</i>
Common Snipe	1		M				1	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>
Arctic Skua	3	A					1	<i>Stercorarius parasiticus</i>
Black-headed Gull	3	A	M			S	3	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>
Slender-billed Gull	1					S	1	<i>Chroicocephalus genei</i>
Mediterranean Gull	1					S	1	<i>Larus melanocephalus</i>
Yellow-legged Gull*	7	A	M			S	4	<i>Larus michahellis</i>
Audouin's Gull	2	A	M				4	<i>Larus audouinii</i>
Lesser Black-backed Gull*	6	A	M			S	5	<i>Larus fuscus</i>
Sandwich Tern	4	A	M			S	2	<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>
Black-bellied Sandgrouse	1		M				3	<i>Pterocles orientalis</i>
Pin-tailed Sandgrouse	1		M				1	<i>Pterocles alchata</i>
Rock Dove (Feral Pigeon)	7	A	M	G	I		3	<i>Columba livia</i>
Common Wood Pigeon	3		M		I		3	<i>Columba palumbus</i>
Eurasian Collared Dove	7	A	M	G			3	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>
European Turtle Dove	2	A	M				1	<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>
Laughing Dove	1		M				2	<i>Streptopelia senegalensis</i>
"Desert" Little Owl*	1		M				1	<i>Athene noctua glaux</i>
Little Swift	1		M				3	<i>Apus affinis galilejensis</i>
Common Kingfisher	2	1h	M		I		1	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>
Crested Lark*	1		M				1	<i>Galerida cristata riggenbachi</i>
Thekla Lark*	7	A	M	G	I	S	3	<i>Galerida theklae</i>
Greater Short-toed Lark	1			G			2	<i>Calandrella brachydactyla</i>
Lesser Short-toed Lark	1	1h	M	G			3	<i>Calandrella rufescens minor</i>
Desert Lark*	1			G			1	<i>Ammomanes deserti payni</i>
Bar-tailed Lark	1			G			1	<i>Ammomanes cinctura arenicolor</i>
Thick-billed Lark	1			G			3	<i>Rhamphocoris clotbey</i>
Greater Hoopoe Lark	1			G			1	<i>Alaemon alaudipes</i>
Common Sand Martin	1		M				1	<i>Riparia riparia</i>
Brown-throated Martin	1		M				2	<i>Riparia paludicola mauritanica</i>
Eurasian Crag Martin	1				I		2	<i>Ptyonoprogne rupestris</i>
Barn Swallow	5	A	M	G		S	2	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>
Red-rumped Swallow	2		M				1	<i>Cecropis daurica rufula</i>
Common House Martin	2		M				2	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>
Meadow Pipit	1	2h	M	G		S	1	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>
White Wagtail*	5	A	M	G		S	3	<i>Motacilla alba alba</i>
"Moroccan" White Wagtail*	1		M				1	<i>Motacilla alba subpersonata</i>
Yellow Wagtail*	1		M				1	<i>Motacilla flava</i>
Grey Wagtail	1				I		1	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>
European Robin	1		M				1	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>
Black Redstart*	2			G	I		1	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros gibraltariensis</i>
Moussier's Redstart	4	A	M	G			2	<i>Phoenicurus moussieri</i>
Northern Wheatear	4	A	M	G			1	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>
White-crowned Wheatear	2			G			1	<i>Oenanthe leucopyga</i>
Black Wheatear	3	A		G	I		2	<i>Oenanthe leucura syenitica</i>
Desert Wheatear	2			G			2	<i>Oenanthe deserti homochroa</i>
Red-rumped Wheatear	2			G			3	<i>Oenanthe moesta</i>
Whinchat	1	A					1	<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>
Common Stonechat	4	A	M	G			1	<i>Saxicola torquatus</i>
Song Thrush	1				I		1	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>
"Moroccan" Common Blackbird*	7	A	M		I	S	3	<i>Turdus merula mauritanicus</i>
Blue Rock Thrush	3	A	M				1	<i>Monticola solitarius</i>
Scrub Warbler*	1			G			1	<i>Scotocerca inquieta theresae</i>
Garden Warbler	1	A					1	<i>Sylvia borin</i>
Blackcap	4	A	M		I		1	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>
Sardinian Warbler	6	A	M		I	S	2	<i>Sylvia melanocephala</i>
Spectacled Warbler	3		M	G			1	<i>Sylvia conspicillata</i>
Tristram's Warbler	1				I		2	<i>Sylvia deserticola</i>
Zitting Cisticola	3		M			S	3	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>
Cetti's Warbler	1	1h	M				1	<i>Cettia cetti</i>

European Reed Warbler	2	A				1	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>
Common Chiffchaff	6	A	M		I S	2	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>
Great Tit	3	A	M	G		1	<i>Parus major excelsus</i>
African Blue Tit*	4	1h	A			1	<i>Cyanistes teneriffae ultramarinus</i>
"Desert" Great Grey Shrike*	6	A	M	G	I	1	<i>Lanius excubitor algeriensis/elegans</i>
Black-crowned Tchagra	1	1h	A	M		1	<i>Tchagra senegalus cucullata</i>
Common Bulbul	7	A	M	G	I S	3	<i>Pycnonotus barbatus</i>
Fulvous Babbler	1			G		2	<i>Turdoides fulva maroccanus</i>
"Maghreb" Common Magpie*	6	A	M		S	2	<i>Pica pica mauritanica</i>
Eurasian Jay	1				I	1	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>
Spotless Starling	7	A	M		I S	3	<i>Sturnus unicolor</i>
House Sparrow	7	A	M	G	I S	3	<i>Passer domesticus</i>
Spanish Sparrow	3	A		G		3	<i>Passer hispaniolensis</i>
"North African" Common Chaffinch*	2	1h		M	G I	1	<i>Fringilla coelebs africana</i>
Common Linnet	2			M	S	1	<i>Carduelis cannabina</i>
European Goldfinch	1	1h		M		3	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>
European Greenfinch	1				I	2	<i>Chloris chloris</i>
European Serin	1	2h		M	S	1	<i>Serinus serinus</i>
"Atlas" Common Crossbill*	1				I	1	<i>Loxia curvirostra poliogyna</i>
Trumpeter Finch*	2				G	3	<i>Bucanetes githagineus zedlitzi</i>
Cirl Bunting	2			M		1	<i>Emberiza cirlus</i>
Rock Bunting	2				G I	1	<i>Emberiza cia</i>
House Bunting*	6	A	M	G		1	<i>Emberiza sahari</i>

Notes on the bird list

The bird list broadly follows the order, nomenclature and taxonomy of the Collins Bird Guide 2nd Edition (Svensson et al) which we used throughout the week, with a number of additions to English names where appropriate to reflect the distinctive subspecies which are found on this tour.

The following gives some background notes on taxonomy/plumage for the species marked * on the list.

Cory's Shearwater

Collins 2nd Edition has plates of two distinct subspecies, Cory's Shearwater (*C.d.borealis*) and Scopoli's Shearwater (*C.d.diomedea*); this distinction was not mentioned in the 1st Edition. They are considered different species by some other authorities. Cory's breeds mainly on islands in the Atlantic (eg the Canaries and the Azores), whilst Scopoli's breeds mainly on islands in the Mediterranean. Both can be observed off Morocco in October/November, but excellent views are needed to separate them and on this tour the only birds we saw were rather distant.

Great Cormorant

The all dark birds seen at various locations were of the race *P.c.sinensis* which breeds in mainland Europe and is an increasingly common winter visitor in Morocco. At Massa, we also saw an adult with a white breast and a dark belly; this form is depicted in the Collins Guide and is colloquially known as 'White-breasted Cormorant', birds being of one of the African races: *P.c.maroccanus* (which breeds in Morocco) or *P.c.lucidus* (which breeds further south). We didn't try to distinguish between these two 'white-breasted' subspecies. We also saw immatures with completely white underparts (eg from the hotel).

European Shag

The race *P.a.riggenbachi* which nests along the coast near Tamri is endemic to Morocco and is considered 'Endangered' as its range is restricted and the population is very small.

'Atlas' Long-legged Buzzard

Both editions of the Collins Guide list the North African subspecies *B.r.cirtensis*, sometimes known as 'Atlas Long-legged Buzzard', with the 2nd Edition having additional plates of this race. We had good views near Guelmim.

Peregrine Falcon

A variety of subspecies occur in Morocco, including one ('atlantis') which may actually be a race of Barbary Falcon. The bird we saw at the hotel had no rufous on the head and was most probably a wintering bird of the race 'calidus'.

Yellow-legged Gull

Older bird books considered this to be a race of Herring Gull. The Collins 1st Edition listed it as a separate species *L.cachinnans*, but in the 2nd Edition it is split further as *L.michahellis*, with *L.cachinnans* now listed as Caspian Gull, the

latter occurring mainly in the east of the region. Yellow-legged is darker on the back than Herring, although not as dark as Lesser Black-backed Gull. We had excellent views, not least from the Agadir hotel balcony early each morning.

Lesser Black-backed Gull

We saw birds of two races, *L.f.graellsii* and *L.f.intermedius* (both of which are illustrated in Collins 2nd Edition); the latter has a darker back.

'Desert' Little Owl

The race in Morocco is *A.n.glaux*, one of the pale forms sometimes known as 'Desert Little Owl'; other, similar, subspecies are illustrated in the Collins Guide. We had superb views of two birds on a wall north of Massa village.

Crested Lark/Thekla Lark

There are a number of races of both species in Morocco; for each, the Collins Guide has illustrations of one of the North African subspecies, showing the ground colour and bill shape. We had excellent views of Thekla at a number of sites and of Crested at Oued Massa in the agricultural fields, allowing us to note the structural and plumage differences between the two species. The race of Crested we saw (*G.c.riggenbachi*) occurs mainly to the west of the Atlas Mountains.

Desert Lark

The Moroccan race *A.d.payni* is illustrated in the Collins Guide as an example of the geographical variation in this species. We had typical views at dusk on the desert hillside near Asrir.

White Wagtail

Most of the birds we saw were winter visitors from Europe of the nominate race *M.a.alba*, but in the Massa valley we had great views of an adult of the uncommon breeding race *M.a.subpersonata* known as 'Moroccan White Wagtail'.

Yellow Wagtail

A variety of races occur in Morocco, the most common of which is Spanish Yellow Wagtail *M.f.iberiae*.

Black Redstart

In the Anti-Atlas Mountains, and near Immouzzar, we saw female types of the race *P.o.gibraltariensis* which is illustrated in the Collins Guide. It is the same race as the one which occurs in the UK.

'Moroccan' Common Blackbird

Compared to UK birds, the female of the race we saw (*T.m.mauritanicus*, known sometimes as 'Moroccan Blackbird') is much greyer and has a yellower bill. It is not illustrated in the Collins Guide.

Scrub Warbler

The race near Guelmim is *S.i.theresae* which is endemic to southwestern Morocco whereas the race in eastern Morocco is *S.i.saharae*. We had several excellent views of birds perching up at Oued Boukila.

African Blue Tit

The Collins 2nd Edition splits African Blue Tit *C.teneriffae* from Blue Tit *C.caeruleus* to include the Canary Island races in the former. In Collins 1st Edition the Canaries birds and North African birds were both listed (and illustrated) only as subspecies of Blue Tit. Other authorities split this 'complex' further into at least four species. The race of African Blue Tit in Morocco is *ultramarinus* which has a wing-bar (unlike the race on Tenerife). All races have a grey-blue, not green, back and a dark, blackish-blue crown. We had great views most mornings in the hotel garden.

'Desert' Great Grey Shrike

In Collins 1st Edition the Moroccan birds were illustrated as *L.e.algeriensis*, a race of Great Grey Shrike, with birds of various races throughout Europe and beyond also considered subspecies of Great Grey. Subsequent to its publication, some other authorities split the birds in North Africa, Iberia and Southern France, calling them Southern Grey Shrike *L.meridionalis*; on previous trips we followed this decision, thus treating *algeriensis* as a race of Southern Grey rather than Great Grey Shrike. However, the Collins 2nd Edition doesn't use the name Southern Grey at all; it has split only the birds from Iberia and Southern France, calling them Iberian Grey Shrike *L.meridionalis*, and leaving the North African birds as subspecies of Great Grey Shrike as in the 1st edition. In the future, it seems likely that the birds we saw in Morocco will actually be split further as Desert Grey Shrike *L.elegans*; this split has already been proposed. Whatever the taxonomy, the birds we saw near the Agadir coast with dingy underparts (*algeriensis*?), and those in the desert areas with a somewhat bigger white wing patch and whiter underparts (*elegans*?), were distinctly different from the ones seen occasionally in winter in the UK.

'Maghreb' Common Magpie

The north-west African race *P.p.mauritanica* is clearly identifiable by the blue spot behind the eye and the very long tail, and is illustrated in the Collins Guide. It has been suggested that this form may warrant specific status as Maghreb Magpie. We had great views at both Massa and Souss.

'North African' Common Chaffinch

North African Chaffinch (*F. c. africana*) is very distinctive, with the male having crown/nape blue-grey, mantle bright green and the breast/belly pale pink. We had wonderful views near the Massa reserve entrance in particular.

'Atlas' Common Crossbill

Common Crossbills gradually become paler from northern Europe down to north-west Africa. The subspecies in Morocco is *poliogyne*, sometimes known as 'Atlas Common Crossbill'; the ground colour of the plumage is ash-grey, the feather tips of the head and body of adult males are pink-red, the rump is uniform rosy-pink, the belly is rosy-red with some white spots/streaks. The song and call are, to the trained ear, different from those of UK birds. Unfortunately we only had a fly-over on this tour.

Trumpeter Finch

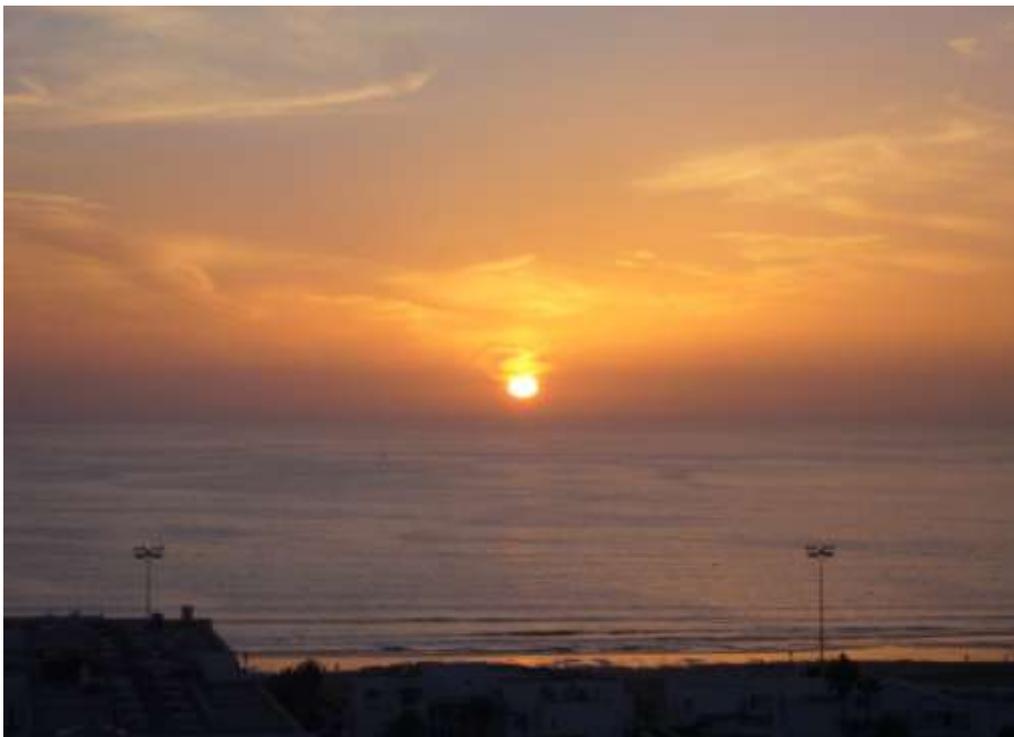
One of four races, *zedlitzi* of southern Spain and North Africa is larger and paler than the race *amantum* seen on the Canary Islands. We had great views near the saltpans south-west of Guelmim.

House Bunting

In the Collins 1st Edition, two subspecies of House Bunting were illustrated. They look very different, and the Collins 2nd Edition splits them into distinct species, House Bunting *Emberiza sahari* (North Africa) and Striolated Bunting *E. striolata* (Middle East).

References

- **The Birds of Morocco** by M. Thevenot, R. Vernon and P. Bergier (BOU 2003)
- **Collins Bird Guide 2nd Edition** by L. Svensson, K. Mullarney and D. Zetterstrom (HarperCollins 2009)
- **Collins Bird Guide 1st Edition** by L. Svensson, K. Mullarney, D. Zetterstrom and P. Grant (HarperCollins 1999)
- **A Birdwatchers' Guide to Morocco** by P. & F. Bergier (Prion 2003)
- **Peregrines and Barbary Falcons in Morocco** (www.go-south.org)
- **Distribution, habitat, identification and taxonomy of Streaked Scrub Warbler in Morocco.** Bergier, P., Thévenot, M., van den Berg, A. B. & The Sound Approach (2013). *Dutch Birding* 35: 107–121. (<http://moroccanbirds.blogspot.com/2013/05/streaked-scrub-warbler-morocco.html>)
- **New treatment of the Grey Shrike complex** (<http://www.uk400clubonline.co.uk/grey-shrike-changes/>)



Atlantic Ocean Sunset

BUTTERFLIES

Swallowtail
 Large White
 Small White
 Desert Orange Tip
 Clouded Yellow
 Cleopatra
 Small Copper
 Long-tailed Blue
 Lang's Short-tailed Blue
 African Grass Blue
 Painted Lady

Papilio machaon
Pieris brassicae
Artogeia rapae
Colotis evagore
Colias crocea
Gonepteryx cleopatra
Lycaena phlaeas
Lampides boeticus
Leptotes pirithous
Zizeeria knysna
Vanessa cardui

DRAGONFLIES

Sahara Bluetail
 Migrant Hawker
 Blue Emperor
 Lesser Emperor
 Vagrant Emperor
 Epaulet Skimmer
 Long Skimmer
 Red-veined Darter
 Broad Scarlet
 Violet Dropwing
 Red-veined Dropwing
 Orange-winged Dropwing
 Banded Groundling
 Ringed Cascader

Ischnura saharensis
Aeshna mixta
Anax imperator
Anax parthenope
Anax ephippiger
Orthetrum chrysostigma
Orthetrum trinacria
Sympetrum fonscolombii
Crocothemis erythraea
Trithemis annulata
Trithemis arteriosa
Trithemis kirbyi ardens
Brachythemis leucosticta
Zygonyx torridus

MAMMALS

Barbary Ground Squirrel
 Sand Rat

Atlantoxerus getulus
Psammomys obesus

REPTILES

Spanish Terrapin

Mauremys leprosa

These lists represent the birds, butterflies, dragonflies, mammals and reptiles seen by the group members on this tour.



Atlas Mountains



Fulvous Babbler



Glossy Ibis



Red-rumped Wheatear



Little Owls



Black-crowned Tchagra



Tristram's Warbler



White-crowned Wheatear



Peregrine Falcon

Front cover: Moussier's Redstart

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