

Extremadura in Spring

Dates: 31 March to 6 April

Leaders: John Muddiman and Tim Earl

Participants: Steve Blackburn, Sarah Costeloe, Peter Reynolds, Roger and Rose Evison, Roy Keay, Rosemary Marshall, Chris Milner, Martin Olive, Brian and Christine Surfleet, Anne Both

It is difficult to imagine a more perfect setting for birdwatchers to shrug off the winter blues and enjoy birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, flowers, butterflies and even fish, in such abundance.

Besides the glorious setting, we stayed in the comfortable and charming Finca Santa Marta – a converted olive-oil farm 10km from the pretty country town of Trujillo.

The trip started with a couple of stops along the road from Madrid to Trujillo, enabling us to see the first **Barn Swallows** and **House Martins** of the year.

Corn Buntings are super abundant in central Spain but their calls can be confused with those of **Serin**, which are also common birds, and we spent a few moments sorting the two out.

As we crossed into Extremadura a kettle of raptors greeted us – it included the rare **Black (Cinereous), Griffon** and uncommon **Egyptian vultures**.

Our major stop was at the Arro Campo Reservoir, one of the few places in Europe where **Purple Gallinule** can be seen. The resident birds played to the gallery, delighting us with their squabbles and squawks.

It was a pair of **Purple Herons** which stole the show, however, as they performed a most elegant display-flight over the reed beds in which they breed.

The heron family features prominently in this stop and **Little Bittern, Little** and **Cattle egrets**, plus **Grey Heron** were all added to the list.

Warblers were excellent here too with **Zitting Cisticula (Fan-Tailed Warbler) Sedge, Cetti's** and **Savi's** heard and observed well.

Spanish Sparrows and **Stonechats** added to the variety of this fabulous introduction to birding in Extremadura.

The entrance to our hotel, the Finca Santa Marta, is marked with dead trees in which **White Storks** nest. We were pleased to see them at the end of the long afternoon.

Tiredness soon went, however, as **Azure-Winged Magpies, Red-rumped Swallows** and **Spotless Starlings** were admired from the car park.

Owls rounded off the day as we were able to pick out the calls of **Little** and **European Scops** from the chorus of frogs and toads singing in nearby pools.

Steve picked up the calls of a **Wryneck** at day-break the following morning. This was followed by **Green Sandpiper** and **Little Ringed Plover** seen by the group feeding in the corner of a field which was still flooded from the extensive winter rains and adding to John's extensive bird list for the hotel grounds.

We stopped in Trujillo to study **Pallid Swifts** in perfect light on the way to our first morning on the steppes. A mini-masterclass was held as the finer points of identification were revealed by John.

The rolling steppes of Extremadura are one of Europe's rarest habitats and a major reason for coming to this beautiful part of Spain.

Getting out onto the Belen Plain really stepped up the pace with our first shrikes, **Southern Grey** and **Red-Backed**, plus a fly-past pair of **Black-Bellied Sandgrouse** within minutes.

We spent the day in utter bliss exploring the plain and enjoying the new wildlife each stop brought.

Raptors were well represented with Griffon, Black and Egyptian vultures in the air and feeding at various sites. A **Golden Eagle** put in an appearance along with a pale-phase **Booted**

Eagle, Marsh and Montagu's harriers were seen as were **Buzzard** and vast numbers of **Black Kites**.

But it was the prospect of bustards which took us to the plains and we were not disappointed with nine **Great** and six **Little bustards**. The Greats are huge creatures which give off an air of supremacy. Little Bustards are also large, except when compared with Great Bustard, and are real characters. They were present in only small numbers this year and we were deprived of their somewhat vulgar 'pffft' calls.

One of the least common birds of prey in Europe is the **Lesser Kestrel** and we were delighted to see lots soaring and hovering over the grasslands. They breed in Trujillo and swarm out over the plains to hunt insects, beetles and small rodents.

Calandra, Crested and Short-toed larks vied with each other as they sang over the steppes, Zitting Cisticulas bobbed over cornfields and a group of **Rock Sparrows** ended the day's delights.

Trujillo was the venue for our second morning where, besides buying a few necessities such as batteries and postcards, we watched the resident White Storks which nest on every building. Their stick-nests provide homes for **House Sparrows** and **Jackdaws** which are quite happy to raise their young in ground-floor apartments housed under the storks' families. Trujillo's most exciting residents make up the huge colony of Lesser Kestrels which breed in the town's roof-tops.

These delightful birds, so difficult to separate from common Kestrel, are sometimes present in flocks of more than 50, swooping above the town. They nest under pan-tiles and display to their mates with no comprehension of the pleasure given to 14 pairs of binoculars pointing their way.

After a morning in the town we set off for a delightful spot on the River Tozo which runs down to a large lake. We ate our packed lunches with Griffon and Black vultures overhead, **Stonechats** trying to convince us they sing like Dunnocks and a host of wild flowers around our feet.

The walk down to the lake took two hours, although it was just short of a kilometre in distance – a reflection of the super wildlife experience we enjoyed.

John was on form finding **Viperine** and **Ladder snakes** under a log and a **Spanish Psammodromus** lizard. Butterflies were flitting around the flowers while a succession of birds, including **Osprey, Red Kite, Short-toed Eagle, Hoopoe** and **Bee-eaters** delighted us. The lake is home to hundreds of ducks in winter and a few of these were still in residence – Mallard in the main but with **Teal** and **Pochard** for variety.

Black-winged Stilts, Greenshanks and a **Common Sandpiper** flew the flag for the waders while a migrant **Willow Warbler** and a pair of **Long-tailed tits** represented the small brown jobs.

After the walk we jumped back into the minibuses for another drive across the plains where we saw a flock of 29 Great Bustards including a huge 'plains master' which made a poor attempt at displaying to a group of females nearby.

Our route to Monfrague National Park took us over the Rio Tozo further upstream the following morning and in a car park next to the stream we examined a pair of **Crested Larks** closely, trying to make them into **Thekla Larks**, without success. They suddenly flew up calling as a dog **Red Fox** ran down the path, its mate crossing the road to our left. They had been flushed by a park warden in a Land Rover.

As we all exchanged comments about the lucky sighting, John picked up the song-flight of a Thekla Lark showing its grey underwings as it fluttered and sang above our heads.

The Rio Almonte, some distance further along the bouncy road to the park, produced a few **Crag Martins, Red-backed Shrikes** and a **Mistle Thrush**.

On arrival in the park we climbed by foot to the summit at Castle ?? where besides the stunning views across the whole area, a **Black Redstart** and a **Blue Rock Thrush** sang to us as we admired a **Red-legged Partridge** which posed on a rock for 15 minutes.

Rock Bunting was also at the summit, singing from the ruins while the eagle-eyed among us were able to see the eye-colour of passing Griffon Vultures.

A few minutes down the road saw us again piling out of the buses at the incredible Penna Falcon look-out where we ate lunch surrounded by song birds and watching a vast colony of Griffon Vultures who shared the cliff opposite with **Black Storks**.

An attempt to find Eagle Owl failed – its nest site of last year had been taken over by a Griffon.

Our return to the hotel was late following the action-packed day but we were content with the results.

We pulled triumph from the jaws of disaster the following morning when John's bus blew an engine while he was in Trujillo trying to get a diesel leak fixed.

Tim took the group for a walk down the former main road past the hotel grounds into an area of olive groves. A fluting **Wood Lark** performed its display-flight overhead several times as if to say 'this is a Spanish greeting to compensate for your disrupted morning'. Its pals joined in and soon we had seen a flock of seven Bee-eaters hawking their prey from a nearby telephone wire, two Hawfinches, three Blue Rock Thrushes and a small flock of Crag Martins which had come down from the mist-shrouded hills nearby.

Shuttling the group to a reservoir half-an-hour away gave us the afternoon in another brilliant area. **Black-necked Grebes** vied with **Black-throated Wheatears** for the best 'ooh' exclamation from everyone while a flock of more than 200 cattle egrets which were following a plough added a touch more of the exotic.

Rice fields nearby were the next stop on our eventful day. Smoke was drifting overhead as the dry stubble from last year's crop was burned.

As we were watching large flocks of **Red Avadavats** and **Common Waxbills** in the bramble hedges, the calls of birds caught our attention. Four **Collared Pratincoles** were swooping through the smoke above us as they hawked insects flushed by the fires.

These waders are tern-like in flight and have a call similar to Hobby. They are enigmatic species and difficult to see. These had clearly read the text books and we were delighted to see such unusual behaviour.

Tim shuttled the group back to the hotel but recognised a spot on the rolling plain where we discovered four Great Bustards displaying in earnest. Like giant puffballs with legs they strutted around the fields watched by 14 females and immature males.

Adding to this theatrical event were Calandra Larks which provided the musical backdrop.

This was one of the great highlights of the trip as displaying bustards are never easy.

The performance was still going as the second group passed through – albeit in the final stages – but they had the further reward of seven Little Bustards which flew past as we watched the bigger cousins.

John led a pre-breakfast walk up to pines above the Finca Santa Marta where a pair of Rock Sparrows was found close to the rust-coloured stripped trunks of **Cork Oaks**.

Our day's excursions started with a visit to Santa Marta de Magasca where we had great views of **Great Spotted Cuckoos** being mobbed by **Magpies** which act as hosts to this southern European speciality. The cuckoos have a call quite unlike their northern cousins – a harsh chatter.

Nearby we watched a male Hoopoe feeding its mate – a choosy sole which had to be tempted with only the finest morsels.

The plains outside Santa Marta are cultivated – a feature which attracts and hides sandgrouse. We searched the ploughed fields for ages until two male and one female Black-bellied Sandgrouse were discovered. Getting all the 'scopes onto them and then making sure everyone had seen the birds proved almost as difficult. Another group of three were found giving slightly better views. John heard Pin-tailed Sandgrouse calling but we were unable to find them.

As usual, Extremadura presented us with compensation in the form of a field full of displaying Montagu's Harriers. What a spectacle... the males swooped and soared above the females, sometimes passing food to them, their underwings flashing the lines of spots which separate the species from other grey harriers.

Lunch was eaten above the Rio Magasca, a deep gorge used by raptors to gain height. The full range was seen again, identified quite easily with the experience of the last few days.

Most of them, that is... an immature **Bonelli's Eagle** was a first for the trip, to be followed a few minutes later by an adult.

Six Booted Eagles were seen – both pale and dark phased – together with a couple of Short-toed. This was turning into a raptor bonanza.

We turned our eyes downwards, however, when a **Kingfisher** was called on the bank of the river. Once admired most heads went heavenwards, except for Tim's – he picked up a **Black**

Wheatear flitting across the river. It hid among rocks for some time but eventually condescended to show itself to the group.

A late coffee in the town (where the castle is up for sale at 300m pesetas – a snip) was followed by a last birding site to look for the elusive and beautiful **Black-shouldered Kite** – with success. Brian found one sitting on a bush in the distance, eating something at first and then preening.

A **Quail** called from a nearby field to be joined by the distinctive call of Little Bustard, to the mirth of most.

Almost at the point of leaving a young immature Golden Eagle drifted over giving us spectacular views to the delight of the whole group... except the leaders. We were in a quandary. Having seen four of the five eagles possible should we return to the Finca or try for the last – Spanish Imperial?

The latter choice was made – getting the big five in one day is difficult. And so it proved too. There were no birds on a secret nest site visited on the way back.

Ironically, Spanish Imperial Eagle was one of the birds we saw the following morning as we drove through Monfrague National Park on our way back to Madrid Airport. We had seen the big five in a 24-hour period, but not on the same day.

In what had become a tradition for this trip we continued adding new species of birds to the list with a superb flock of 32 **Alpine Swifts** low over a bridge in the park.

Soon we were forced into the pre-Easter traffic around Madrid, but it seemed not to matter. Everyone went quiet as the birds of Extremadura slipped behind us and we were all left dipping into happy memories.

Tim Earl & John Muddiman

This was voted a brilliant trip by many of the participants. We enjoyed outstanding birds in excellent weather. The group made friends almost instantly and enjoyed each other's company while the leaders performed their duties with a combination of great skill and humour.

ANOTATED LIST

GREBES

Little grebe
Great crested grebe

Black-necked (Eared) grebe

CORMORANTS

Great cormorant

HERONS, EGRETS & BITTERNs Ciconiiformes

Grey heron

Purple heron

Little egret

Cattle egret

Little bittern

STORKS

Black stork

White stork

SWANS, GEESE & DUCKS

Gadwall

Green-winged teal

Mallard

Common pochard

OSPREY

Podicipediformes

Tachybaptus ruficollis

Podiceps cristatus

Podiceps nigricollis

Pelecaniformes

Phalacrocorax carbo

Ardea cinerea

Ardea purpurea

Egretta garzetta

Bubulcus ibis

Ixobrychus minutus

Ciconiiformes

Ciconia nigra

Ciconia ciconia

Anseriformes

Anas strepera

Anas crecca

Anas platyrhynchos

Aythya ferina

Falconiformes

Podicipedidae

A few almost daily

Common on most lakes and reservoirs

Embalse de Sierra Brava (10+ 4th)

Phalacrocoracidae

Small numbers various

Ardeidae

Embalse de Arrocampo (10+ small numbers daily

Embalse de Arrocampo (20+)

Embalse de Arrocampo (1)

Various (max 200+ Madrigalejo rice fields 4th)

Embalse de Arrocampo (1)

Ciconiidae

Monfrague (max three pairs 3rd)

Abundant

Anatidae

Embalse de Arro Campo (3)

Embalse del Tozo (20+ on 2nd)

Embalse del Tozo (six on 2nd)

A few daily

Embalse del Tozo (one on 2nd)

Pandionidae

Osprey	Pandion haliaetus	Embalse del Tozo (one on 2nd)
HAWKS, EAGLES & KITES	Falconiformes	Accipitridae
Black-shouldered kite	Elanus caeruleus	Near Monroy (one on 5th)
Red kite	Milvus milvus	Several daily
Black kite	Milvus migrans	Abundant
Egyptian vulture	Neophron percnopterus	Singles most days, Monfrague (10+ on 3rd)
Eurasian griffon	Gyps fulvus	Abundant
Cinereous vulture	Aegypius monachus	Several daily
Short-toed eagle	Circaetus gallicus	One or two most days, Monfrague (six on 3rd)
Western marsh-harrier	Circus aeruginosus	Embalse de Arrocampo (pair)
Northern harrier	Circus cyaneus	Belen Plain (one on 1st)
Montague's harrier	Circus pygargus	Belen Plain (male on 2nd)
Eurasian sparrowhawk	Accipiter nisus	Singles every day, Santa Marta de Magasca (22 on 5th)
Eurasian buzzard	Buteo buteo	Monfrague (two on 2nd)
Spanish eagle	Aquila adalberti	Several daily
Golden eagle	Aquila chrysaetos	Monfrague (4th-year bird on 3rd, adult on 5th)
Bonelli's eagle	Hieraetus fasciatus	Belen Plain (singles 1st and 2nd), near Monroy (immature on 5th)
Booted eagle	Hieraetus pennatus	Rio Almonte (two adults and immature on 5th)
FALCONS & CARACARAS	Falconiformes	Falconidae
Lesser kestrel	Falco naumanni	Abundant Trujillo and Belen Plain
Eurasian kestrel	Falco tinnunculus	A few daily
Peregrine falcon	Falco peregrinus	Monfrague (two males and female on 3rd)
PHEASANTS & PARTRIDGES	Galliformes	Phasianidae
Red-legged partridge	Alectoris rufa	Common in suitable habitat.
Common quail	Coturnix coturnix	Heard on 1st, 4th and 5th
RAILS, GALLINULES & COOTS	Gruiformes	Rallidae
Water rail	Rallus aquaticus	Embalse de Arrocampo (4)
Purple swamphen	Porphyrio porphyrio	Embalse de Arrocampo (10+)
Common moorhen	Gallinula chloropus	A few on larger ponds
Eurasian coot	Fulica atra	Embalse del Tozo (two on 2nd)
BUSTARDS	Gruiformes	Embalse Sierra Brava (eight on 4th)
Great bustard	Otis tarda	Otididae
Little bustard	Tetrax tetrax	Maximum 29 Belen Plain
AVOCETS & STILTS	Charadriiformes	A few daily Belen Plain
Black-winged stilt	Himantopus himantopus	Recurvirostridae
THICK-KNEES	Charadriiformes	Embalse del Tozo (20+ 2nd)
Eurasian thick-knee	Burhinus oedicephalus	Burhinidae
PRATINCOLES & COURSERS	Charadriiformes	Pair Belen Plain 1st + 2nd
Collared pratincole	Glareola pratincola	Glareolidae
PLOVERS & LAPWINGS	Charadriiformes	Madrigalejo rice fields (four on 4th)
Little ringed plover	Charadrius dubius	Charadriidae
SANDPIPERS	Charadriiformes	Finca Santa Marta (two 1st)
Common snipe	Gallinago gallinago	Trujillo (eight 2nd)
Common greenshank	Tringa nebularia	Scolopacidae
		Embalse de Arro Campo (5)
		Embalse del Tozo (two 2nd)

Green sandpiper	Tringa ochropus	Singles on most ponds Belen Plain
Common sandpiper	Actitis hypoleucos	Singles Trujillo and Embalse de Tozo on 2nd
GULLS	Charadriiformes	Laridae
Lesser black-backed gull	Larus fuscus	Embalse Sierra Brava (four on 4th)
Black-headed gull	Larus ridibundus	Embalse del Tozzo (one 2nd)
SANDGROUSE	Pterocliiformes	Pterocliidae
Black-bellied sandgrouse	Pterocles orientalis	Belen Plain (two on 2nd) Santa Marta de Magasca (six on 5th)
PIGEONS & DOVES	Columbiformes	Columbidae
Rock dove	Columba livia	Common in towns
Common wood-pigeon	Columba palumbus	Various (10+)
Eurasian collared-dove	Streptopelia decaocto	Finca Santa Marta (up to five daily)
CUCKOOS	Cuculiformes	Cuculidae
Great spotted cuckoo	Clamator glandarius	Belen Plain (two on 2nd) Santa Marta de Magasca (five on 5th)
Common cuckoo	Cuculus canorus	Several daily from the 4th
OWLS	Strigiformes	Strigidae
European scops-owl	Otus scops	Finca Santa Marta, heard daily (nightly)
Little owl	Athene noctua	Finca Santa Marta, seen daily
SWIFTS	Apodiformes	Apodidae
Alpine swift	Tachymarptis melba	Monfrague NP (32 on 6th)
Pallid swift	Apus pallidus	Trujillo (colony of about 60)
KINGFISHERS	Coraciiformes	Alcedinidae
Common kingfisher	Alcedo atthis	Singles Embalse de Arro Campo (31st) and Rio Almonte (2nd)
BEE-EATERS	Coraciiformes	Meropidae
European bee-eater	Merops apiaster	Parties of up to 10 birds seen daily
HOOPOES	Coraciiformes	Upupidae
Eurasian hoopoe	Upupa epops	Up to five seen daily
WOODPECKERS	Piciformes	Picidae
Eurasian wryneck	Jynx torquilla	Finca Santa Marta (one heard on 1st by Steve)
Great spotted woodpecker	Dendrocopos major	Finca Santa Matra bird head drumming daily, seen occasionally
Green woodpecker	Picus viridis	Madrid (one on 31st)
LARKS	Passeriformes	Alaudidae
Calandra lark	Melanocorypha calandra	Common on the plains (max 20+ Belen Plain 1st)
Greater short-toed lark	Calandrella brachydactyla	Belen Plain (two on 1st) Zorit Plain (two on 4th) Rio Almonte (one on 5th)
Crested lark	Galerida cristata	Abundant
Thekla lark	Galerida theklae	Rio Tozo (one on 3rd)
Wood lark	Lullula arborea	Finca Santa Marta (two singing over the orchards daily) singles elsewhere
SWALLOWS	Passeriformes	Hirundinidae
Bank swallow	Riparia riparia	Aldeacentenara Madronera (one on 1st) Embalse Sierra Brava (three on 5th)
Eurasian crag-martin	Hirundo rupestris	Abundant Monfrague and other high places
Barn swallow	Hirundo rustica	Abundant

Red-rumped swallow
House martin

Hirundo daurica
Delichon urbica

Common, up to 30 most days.
Most villages have big colonies
but 250+ pairs at the bridge in
Monfrague NP

WAGTAILS & PIPITS

White wagtail
Meadow pipit

Passeriformes
Motacilla alba
Anthus pratensis

Motacillidae

Common, up to six daily
A few seen most day (max four
Zorita Plain on 4th)
Belen Plain (three on 2nd)

Water pipit

Anthus spinoletta

WRENS

Winter wren

Passeriformes
Troglodytes troglodytes

Troglodytidae

Finca Santa Marta (one in the
woodpile daily) a few elsewhere.

THRUSHES

Blue rock-thrush

Passeriformes
Monticola solitarius

Turdidae

Monfrague (five pairs on 3rd)
Finca Santa Marta (three on 4th)
Common, a few daily
Singles most days (max three
on 1st)

Eurasian blackbird

Turdus merula

Mistle thrush

Turdus viscivorus

CISTICOLAS

Zitting cisticola

Passeriformes
Cisticola juncidis

Cisticolidae

Abundant

OLD WORLD WARBLERS

Cetti's warbler

Passeriformes
Cettia cetti

Sylviidae

Embalse de Arro Campo (four
on 31st) Madrigalejo rice fields
(six on 4th)

Savi's warbler

Locustella luscinioides

Embalse de Arro Campo (two on
31st)

Sedge warbler

Acrocephalus schoenobaenus

Embalse de Arro Campo
(one on 31st)

Willow warbler

Phylloscopus trochilus

Singles heard and seen on 2nd,
4th and 6th

Iberian chiffchaff

Phylloscopus brehmii

Blackcap

Sylvia atricapilla

Monfrague Castle (one on 3rd)

Sardinian warbler

Sylvia melanocephala

A few most days including a pair
at Finca Santa Marta

Dartford warbler

Sylvia undata

Common, a few males heard or
seen daily

Aldeacentenara Madronera (six
displaying males 1st) Monfrague
(one on 3rd)

OLD WORLD FLYCATCHERS

European robin

Passeriformes

Common nightingale

Erithacus rubecula
Luscinia megarhynchos

Muscicapidae

Monfrague (one heard on 3rd)

Black redstart

Phoenicurus ochruros

Common stonechat

Saxicola torquata

Black wheatear

Oenanthe leucura

Northern wheatear

Oenanthe oenanthe

Madrigalejo rice fields (two on
4th) Monfrague (one on 6th)

Monfrague (three pairs on 3rd)

Abundant

Rio Almonte (one on 5th)

A few seen daily on the plains
including Greenland race *O. o.*

leucorrhoea on 1st

Embalse Sierra Brava three
males (two white-throated, one
black-throated form) and one
female on 4th

Black-eared wheatear

Oenanthe hispanica

Aegithalidae

Common, pairs seen daily

LONG-TAILED TITS

Long-tailed tit

Passeriformes
Aegithalos caudatus

CHICKADEES & TITS

Great tit

Passeriformes
Parus major

Blue tit

Cyanistes caeruleus

Paridae

Common

Common

NUTHATCHES

Eurasian nuthatch

Passeriformes

Sitta europaea

Sittidae

Aldeacentenara Madronera (two
on 1st)

CREEPERS

Short-toed treecreeper

SHRIKES

Southern grey shrike

Woodchat shrike

CROWS & JAYS

Azure-winged magpie

Black-billed magpie

Red-billed chough

Eurasian jackdaw

Common raven

STARLINGS

Spotless starling

OLD WORLD SPARROWS

House sparrow

Spanish sparrow

Rock petronia

WAXBILLS & ALLIES

Common waxbill

Red avadavat

FINCHES

Chaffinch

European greenfinch

European goldfinch

Eurasian linnnet

European serin

BUNTINGS

Cirl bunting

Rock bunting

Reed bunting

Corn bunting

Passeriformes

Certhia brachydactyla

Passeriformes

Lanius meridionalis

Lanius senator

Passeriformes

Cyanopica cyana

Pica pica

Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax

Corvus monedula

Corvus corax

Passeriformes

Sturnus unicolor

Passeriformes

Passer domesticus

Passer hispaniolensis

Petronia petronia

Passeriformes

Estrilda astrild

Amandava amandava

Passeriformes

Fringilla coelebs

Carduelis chloris

Carduelis carduelis

Carduelis cannabina

Serinus serinus

Passeriformes

Emberiza cirrus

Emberiza cia

Emberiza schoeniclus

Emberiza calandra

Certhiidae

Common, seen and heard daily

Laniidae

Common, up to 10 seen daily

Common, up to six seen daily

Corvidae

Common, up to 50 seen daily

Common, up to 20 seen daily

Monfrague (Pair on 3rd)

Common, especially in Trujillo

Common, up to 10 seen daily

Sturnidae

Abundant

Passeridae

Abundant

Common, flocks of up to 30
seen dailyFinca Santa Marta (a pair in the
orchard daily) Belen Plain (three
on 2nd)**Estrildidae**Madrigalejo rice fields (35+ on
4th)Madrigalejo rice fields (100+ on
4th)**Fringillidae**

Common

A few seen including a flock of
12 on 4th

Abundant

Common, up to 10+ seen daily

Abundant

EmberizidaeFinca Santa Marta (a pair
nesting in the garden) a few
elsewhere

Monfrague (three pairs on 3rd)

Embalse de Arro Campo (three
on 31st)

Abundant