



Photo: Eurasian Hoopoe, by Faísca

12 Days Portugal & Spain Birdwatching Programme (Group Tour)

Lisbon Estuaries & Extremadura

(Group size: Maximum 7 Participants)

Birds & Nature Tours Portugal

Overview

Two different countries, two different regions, two different cultures, all in the same trip. One thing in common though: great birds! And even better than that: different birds!

These two regions complement each other perfectly. The Lisbon estuaries are superb for wetland bird species and the Extremadura, only just over the border from Portugal, is known worldwide for the huge variety of land birds, particularly steppe and rock loving birds.

This birding programme designed by Birds & Nature Tours Portugal enables you to visit several species rich areas without needing to travel long distances.

In practical terms, you will find within half an hour's drive from Lisbon city centre and its International Airport the Tagus Estuary and the Sado Estuary Nature Reserves. These two remarkable protected wetland areas have extensive bird lists that include Greater Flamingo, White Stork, Eurasian Spoonbill, Glossy Ibis, Little Bittern, Squacco and Purple Herons, Booted Eagle, Black-winged Kite, Purple Swamphen, Little Bustard, Collared Pratincole, Little Owl, Pallid Swift, Eurasian Hoopoe, Common Kingfisher, European Bee-eater, Bluethroat, Sardinian, Dartford, Savi's and Melodious Warblers, Iberian Chiffchaff, Iberian Grey and Woodchat Shrikes, Iberian Magpie, Spotless Starling, Rock Sparrow, European Serin and an excellent selection of ducks, waders, gulls and terns. A short drive to Cape Carvoeiro should provide an excellent opportunity for participants to see a wide range of sea bird species as well.

After a comfortable journey by motorway, we cross the border into the Spanish region of Extremadura in order to visit complementary biotopes and consequently new bird species. Here, we shall visit both the Monfragüe National Park and the plains of Cáceres, Magasca and Trujillo, among other interesting spots. These two protected areas boast a fantastic bird list that includes Great and Little Bustards, Common Crane, Black Stork, Iberian Imperial, Golden and Bonelli's Eagles, Eurasian Black, Griffon and Egyptian Vultures, Red Kite, Montagu's Harrier, Lesser Kestrel, Stone Curlew, Black-bellied and Pin-tailed Sandgrouses, Turtle Dove, Great Spotted Cuckoo, Eurasian Eagle Owl, Eurasian Scops Owl, Red-necked Nightjar, Alpine and White-rumped Swifts, European Roller, Iberian Green Woodpecker, Calandra Lark, Eurasian Crag Martin, Red-rumped Swallow, Tawny Pipit, Rufous Bush Robin, Black-eared and Black Wheatears, Blue Rock Thrush, Western Orphean, Spectacled and Western Subalpine Warblers, Crested and Penduline Tits, Red-billed Chough, Golden Oriole, Spanish Sparrow, Hawfinch and Cirl and Rock Buntings.

All this birding activity is combined with visits to some of the most interesting historical and cultural sites of Portugal and Spain, namely Lisbon, a vibrant capital city, and Trujillo and Mérida, two historical towns in Extremadura, which are also fascinating from the urban birding perspective. We'll have numerous opportunities to sample Portugal and Spain's many culinary delights and great wines.

Itinerary

Day 1 – Transfer from Lisbon Airport (or from your Lisbon hotel). Travel to Alcochete. Visit several areas and a variety of habitats within the Tagus Estuary Nature Reserve, including the inter-tidal mudflats and salt marshes of Hortas, the salt pans of Atalaya, Ribeira das Enguias and Samouco and the Barroca d’Alva rice fields and pastures. Overnight stay at the Hotel Quinta da Praia das Fontes, in Alcochete (or equivalent).

Day 2 – Visit other interesting sites and habitats in the Tagus Estuary Nature Reserve, including the open fields, rice fields, reed beds, lagoons, inter-tidal mudflats and salt marshes of the Ponta da Erva area. During the breeding season, we visit a heronry on the river Tagus. Overnight stay at the Hotel Quinta da Praia das Fontes (or equivalent).

Day 3 – Visit the cliffs and shore at Cape Carvoeiro, to the north of Lisbon. Visit the Óbidos lagoon and the Tornada marshes. Overnight stay at the Hotel Quinta da Praia das Fontes (or equivalent).

Day 4 – Visit the cork oak woodlands of Pancas (Tagus estuary) and the Sado Estuary Nature Reserve - the salt pans, inter-tidal mudflats, salt marshes and rice fields of Mitrena, Mourisca, Zambujal, Comporta and Carrasqueira. Overnight stay at the Hotel Quinta da Praia das Fontes (or equivalent).

Day 5 – Travel to Trujillo, in Extremadura, Spain. Visit the Trujillo area, including the town, which is well known for its rich community of urban birds. Visit the plains near Monroy. Overnight stay at the Hotel Hospedería Parque de Monfragüe, in Torrejon el Rubio (or equivalent).

Day 6 – Visit the bluffs and hills of the Monfragüe National Park, namely several viewing points (the Salto del Gitano/Peña Falcón, the Monfragüe castle, the Cardenal bridge and the Tajadilla). Overnight stay at the Hotel Hospedería Parque de Monfragüe (or equivalent).

Day 7 – Visit the Monfragüe National Park, with other sites including the Báscula, the Higuera and the Portilla del Tiétar viewing points. Visit the Arrocampo reservoir. Overnight stay at the Hotel Hospedería Parque de Monfragüe (or equivalent).

Day 8 – Visit the rolling plains (Llanos) of Cáceres, Magasca and Trujillo. Overnight stay at the Hotel Hospedería Parque de Monfragüe (or equivalent).

Day 9 – Visit other places in the Llanos de Cáceres, Magasca and Trujillo. Overnight stay at the Hotel Hospedería Parque de Monfragüe (or equivalent).

Day 10 – Visit the Alcollarín reservoir and the Llanos de Campo Lugar. Overnight stay at the Hotel Hospedería Parque de Monfragüe (or equivalent).

Day 11 – Return to Lisbon, visiting on the way the town of Mérida (which offers numerous birding opportunities, namely at the Roman bridge), and the Alange reservoir, for rock loving species. Overnight stay at the Hotel Zenit, in Lisbon (or equivalent).

Day 12 – Visit the city of Lisbon, including the main squares and avenues, the Baixa (downtown area), some of the hilltop districts, the Castle of São Jorge, the cathedral and, in Belém (the historic area from which the Portuguese caravels departed to discover the world), the Monument to the Discoveries and two UNESCO World Heritage Sites: the beautiful Tower of Belém and the Jerónimos Monastery. Overnight stay at the Hotel Zenit (or equivalent). End of programme.

Price

3.640 Euros per person. Price includes guide fees (including a professional historian guide in Lisbon), transfer from the airport/hotel, ground transport (in air-conditioned vehicles), accommodation (including breakfast), meals (lunches in local cafes and dinners in local restaurants, including quality wine at dinner), bottled water throughout the tour, free use of optical equipment (quality binoculars and telescopes) and field guides, bird list, entrance fees to private or protected areas, entrance fees to museums and historical and cultural sites (in Lisbon), a contribution of 60 Euros to our Conservation Project in the Guadiana Valley Natural Park (Portugal), participant's accident insurance and VAT. Single supplement: 480 Euros. Not included are flights and items of a personal nature.

Note

The tours start and end in Lisbon. If you need accommodation for the nights before and/or after the tour, we are happy to help. We suggest you discuss your flight details with us before booking your flights. These are small group tours with a maximum of 7 participants. We guarantee that any tour will run for 2 people or more.

For enquiries, please contact us:

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