



Honeyguide

WILDLIFE HOLIDAYS

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Algarve and Alentejo
5 – 12 November 2019

Participants

David & Steph Bennett
Everard Daniel

Mel & Ann Leggett
Barbara Wheeler

Leaders

Rob Macklin, Lara Broom from SPEA, Domingos Leitão from SPEA for two days.
Holiday report and lists by Rob Macklin.

Photos by David Bennett and Lara Broom, except group photo (below) by Domingos Leitão.
Cover: little bittern and kingfisher, Quinto do Lago (DB).



We stayed in the Alte Hotel for 5 nights www.altehotel.com
and the Hotel Mira Sagres for 2 nights www.hotelmirasagres.com



[The group birdwatching at Quinto do Lago \(LB\).](#)

As with all Honeyguide holidays, part of the price of the holiday was put towards a conservation project, this year supporting the promotion of SPEA in the Algarve. The bank transfer to SPEA from the Honeyguide Wildlife Charitable Trust was £300, made up of each group member's conservation contribution supplemented by Gift Aid. Our donation helps to fund a stand that, with the help of a local group of supporters, SPEA says will: "increase our street actions to promote and raise awareness about SPEA's work in the Algarve. We need more members everywhere, but especially in the Algarve, where there are still lots of damaging developments to fight against." Up to the end of 2019, the total for all conservation contributions through Honeyguide since 1991 was £134,062. The total donated to SPEA since 2005 now totals £6,282.

INTRODUCTION

This was Honeyguide's fourth trip to the Algarve and Alentejo and we were fortunate enough to experience a dry and sunny week although the region was very dry and crying out for substantial rainfall. The first part of the holiday was based at Alte and included visits to superb wetland sites such as Castro Marim, Salgados Lagoons and Quinto do Lago as well as the steppes around Castro Verde. At Castro Marim large numbers of birds included great views of Caspian terns, spoonbills and avocets, an amazing 80 Audouin's gulls and seven delicate slender-billed gulls. At Castro Verde we were so lucky to see both great and little bustards in the morning, two black vultures, two merlins, three black-shouldered kites and an amazing 65 red kites. Salgados lagoons came up trumps with a whole range of waterbirds including 170 glossy ibises while Quinto do Lago weighed in with many species of waterfowl but particularly great views of little bittern and kingfisher together.

The remaining two days were in the west of the Algarve with visits to the Alvor estuary, Budens marsh and Sagres. At the Alvor estuary we were treated to huge numbers of birds including 120 griffon vultures soaring on a thermal, 220 white storks flying onto the marshes joining greater flamingos, spoonbills and grey herons in a mighty throng! Not forgetting a superb view of a female bluethroat! At Sagres we witnessed the migration of many short-toed and booted eagles, a new experience for many of the group. Yet another superb week in the Algarve and Alentejo in excellent company and with good weather.

DAILY DIARY

Tuesday 5 November – to the Algarve

"What a difference a day makes!" We left the fog and rain behind at Luton Airport as we flew at 39,000 feet in our Airbus 319/320 arriving at Faro thirty minutes early thanks to a strong tail wind. The Luton contingent met up with Lara at the airport and we were soon joined by David and Steph who flew in from Birmingham.

After sorting out the paperwork for the buses we were soon on our way to Alte. A cattle egret and several yellow-legged gulls were the only wildlife on offer as we sped along the motorway arriving at the Alte Hotel in mid-afternoon with the sun shining and temperatures in the high teens.

After booking into our rooms we took a late afternoon walk out the back of the hotel. Before we left Rob had a hummingbird hawk-moth outside his room with both black redstart and siskin in the hotel garden. Walking around the back of the hotel we saw several chiffchaffs, maybe a score of meadow pipits plus blackbird, stonechat and great tit. After a fine evening meal, we turned in looking forward to the expeditions of the coming week.



View from Alte Hotel (DB).

Wednesday 6 November – Rocha da Pena, Benemola Spring & Barranco do Velho

Dense fog at dawn soon cleared to give a bright, mainly sunny day with a light breeze and temperatures peaking at 19°C. Before breakfast several meadow pipits and goldfinches, a blue tit and two stonechats were out the back of the hotel. Our first port of call was the limestone massif of Rocha da Pena rising some 500 metres above Pena village. We walked up the main track towards the base of the massif and almost immediately Steph found our first viewable male Sardinian warbler showing off his black cap, white throat and striking red eye; many more were seen flitting through the scrub during the morning. A red-legged partridge called from high up on the massif while the lower scrub hosted two black redstarts, two stonechats and three blackcaps. High up on the ridge a blue form quickly turned into a splendid male blue rock thrush giving us all good views through the telescopes before being joined by another male. A common buzzard drifted along the ridge being half-heartedly mobbed by several of the fifty or so crag martins. Invertebrates were not to be left out as we spotted several gaudy clouded yellow butterflies plus a superb swallowtail down by the parked bus.

After coffee in the local bar (the owner here never looks very cheerful) we headed off to our lunch spot at Benemola Spring. We settled down in a small cropped area where a 'pear-shaped' quince provoked much discussion; birds were few and far between here, just two song thrushes and a single robin. We quickly moved on to Barranco do Velho, a protected area of heathland-type vegetation dominated by gum cistus, lavenders and masses of strawberry trees – sampling the ripe fruits of the last along the way. Our first find of note was a female red-veined darter showing off her diagnostic blue lower eyes. More invertebrates included several hornets chewing out wood from tree branches, pointed out by Mel, and a single Lang's short-tailed blue butterfly feeding on daphne flowers.



How does he do it? Domingos finds and catches a snake.
Group members looking at a Lang's short-tailed-blue at Barranco do Velho (LB).

Birds were difficult at first with just small groups of chaffinches and goldfinches plus two stonechats. As the afternoon wore on, Lara spotted a large raptor over the heath which turned out to be a ringtail hen harrier, its white rump shining brightly in the late afternoon sun. Soon after two common buzzards came into view being mobbed by crag martins before another buzzard also appeared on the scene. A large eagle then flew over the distant part of the heath, too far away for a positive identification but was probably a Bonelli's eagle. As we were about to leave the area Ann and Barbara picked up a singing woodlark and the last of five jays flew through the scrub. After dinner Domingos Leitão, the executive director of SPEA, arrived at the hotel to join us for the next two days.

Thursday 7 November – Castro Marim & Rio Formosa Natural Park at Tavira

Overnight rain and early fog soon cleared leading to a mainly sunny and breezy day with temperatures climbing to 20°C. After an earlier breakfast we sped down the *autoestrada* to the 2000 hectare reserve of Castro Marim on the Guadiana estuary and the border with Spain.

We parked just off the main road and walked up a track with open water on one side and scrub, followed by a carob plantation on the other. Our first birds were a group of 12 spoonbills feeding in the shallows then put to flight by a female marsh harrier hunting over the saltmarsh. On the open water more than 350 coots were joined by 15 little grebes and three great crested grebes. Three Sandwich terns were fishing here while a little egret and two grey herons stalked the water's edge. On the landward side Domingos picked out a delightful male Dartford warbler, an unusual bird here, while three red-legged partridges moved through the carob plantation. Birds just kept on coming as a little tern was spotted fishing off the point, ten Audouin's gulls flew over towards the lagoons, five turnstones flew past and a magnificent Caspian tern came very close showing off its huge 'carrot-like' red bill.

As the day warmed up we found a few invertebrates including clouded yellow, painted lady and small copper butterflies plus three migrant hawk dragonflies – one of the hawkers was bright blue and we thought it might be the much rarer southern migrant hawk but the picture on David's excellent camera proved otherwise!



Red-veined darter; migrant hawk (DB).

As we approached a series of lagoons a fan-tailed warbler (*aka* zitting cisticola) put in a brief appearance while a small group of 15 sanderlings on the open mud were joined by a little stint and a ringed plover. The lagoons here are partially sheltered by a series of banks and were consequently stuffed full of birds. The most obvious of these were 140 colourful greater flamingos, mainly adults but a few duller juveniles in the flock. They were joined by a host of wading birds including 60 avocets, 50 black-winged stilts, several redshanks and dunlins. Closer inspection revealed a single greenshank and two relatively scarce spotted redshanks. Further searching among the yellow-legged and lesser black-backed gulls turned up seven splendid slender-billed gulls.

Out on the open water were 130 shelducks, a large count for this area, while the surrounding banks held 20 roosting cormorants and eight, wholly unexpected common terns – four species of terns in one morning! As we began to retrace our steps three white storks drifted over while Barbara was the only one to spot a kingfisher dashing over the water. A truly spectacular morning at Castro Marim was fittingly concluded by an osprey flying in low over the plantation giving us all excellent views – just brilliant!



"A spectacular morning at Castro Marim was concluded by an osprey flying in low" (DB).

After coffee in a local bar we drove the short distance to the visitor centre where we enjoyed our packed lunches on the picnic tables. On the way in we spotted three black-winged stilts and two greenshanks while over lunch a white stork flew over and a corn bunting was found in the scrub.

After lunch we found many tiny white daffodils *Narcissus serotinus* in flower but just one specimen of autumn squill and merendera – not surprising given the recent drought producing an arid landscape. Out on the nearby lagoons we soon spotted many waders including 20 black-winged stilts, 20+ curlew sandpipers and 400 dunlins. Best of all were three more Caspian terns on the lagoon banks, their bright red bills gleaming in the sunlight. As we walked up the slope to get a panoramic view across the saltmarsh a female marsh harrier appeared and a kestrel was hunting over the grassland.

This new set of lagoons were full of birds with 16 spoonbills, 30 greater flamingos, 20 avocets, 31 black-tailed godwits and assorted redshanks, grey plovers, a greenshank and our only Kentish plover of the day. A flock of 45 cormorants were resting on the banks and Domingos spotted an Iberian grey shrike out on the saltmarsh. He then turned over several rocks and came up with a superb horseshoe whip snake for everyone to see, though a spiny-footed lizard was just too quick to be caught. On the way back to the bus two Thekla larks joined two crested larks on the main track.

Our last stop of the day was part of the Rio Formosa Natural Park at Tavira; most of the lagoons here were very dry but we did encounter a large gull roost. As we looked through the flock, we were astounded to find at least 70 Audouin's gulls, mostly adults, and three more Caspian terns among many yellow-legged and lesser black-backed gulls, while eight Mediterranean gulls flew in to join the throng. At the back of the pools eight pintails lifted off and two kestrels were having an altercation over the mountains of salt bringing to an end a superb day in the Algarve.



Spoonbills, Castro Marim (DB).

Friday 8 November – Castro Verde & Casevel

A sunny but cool start to the day with temperatures rising to only 17°C with a brisk northerly wind. Today we drove north to the steppes and dry grasslands at Castro Verde, an SPA (Special Protection Area) for birds. As we approached Castro Verde, we saw four red kites plus our first of many carrion crows. Out on the steppes the bus was brought to a shuddering halt as we spotted 21 little bustards on the grassland – a very unexpected treat as this species is in decline and can be very hard to find. At this spot an Iberian grey shrike posed well for us on the phone wires, 40 or so lapwings took flight and 46 cattle egrets were foraging amongst the livestock. Just as we were congratulating ourselves on our good fortune a superb black-shouldered kite came into view and while hunting had a major altercation with a slightly smaller male kestrel. Several red kites were on the wing in this area and a blob on distant rocks turned out to be the only little owl of the trip.

Moving on we soon came across several great bustards in flight, following their trajectory along the road until we found the whole flock of an amazing 49 birds in full view out on the dry grassland; another four birds flew off and out of sight. We could hardly believe our luck in getting both species of bustards so quickly! We continued our drive around the very quiet roads in this area encountering a distant flock of 60 azure-winged magpies while the fields were full of skylarks, meadow pipits and linnets.

We made another stop on a higher ridge to scan the grasslands when Ann spotted a superb black vulture coming straight at us and at low level before we spotted another bird higher in the sky – usually a difficult species to find so getting two at once was really special. We drove on a little farther, spotting another grey shrike on the wires before noticing six large shapes overhead that turned out to be six griffon vultures that quickly gained height and were lost to view.

Our last stop of an eventful morning was on a ridge overlooking a farmstead where we encountered our first mammal, a rabbit, but also brief views of a hoopoe and Dartford warbler.



Great bustards at Castro Verde (DB).

Just outside the farm buildings we found a huge show of flowering merendera; as we were admiring this flower fest a male merlin flashed by showing his brilliant grey-blue back to good effect swiftly followed by a ringtail (could be male or female) hen harrier: merlins often hunt with harriers to catch any birds that are flushed!

After an amazing morning, it was time for coffee in Sao Marcos community centre then a short drive to the hilltop church of Senhora de Aracelis at 276 metres above sea level, providing panoramic views across Portugal and into Spain.



The hilltop church of Nossa Senhora de Aracelis and the view from the top (LB).

Over lunch, painted lady, red admiral and peacock butterflies were noted and it seemed a good choice for a group photograph before Domingos had to leave the group and return to Lisbon. Just before we left the church we spotted a gaggle of 40-odd azure-winged magpies in the fields below us. We then took a track across the farmland where we had good views of a Thekla lark, a corn bunting and seven red-legged partridges although four hoopoes only gave fleeting views.

Our next destination was a small wetland on the outskirts of Castro Verde. Our first birds here were six spoonbills feeding in the shallows at the far end in company with two grey herons. On the muddy edges we found four common snipe and a common sandpiper, 13 little grebes continually dived for food in the deeper water and 30 lapwings flew in and settled on the mud. Between the lunch spot and this wetland we tallied another 20 red kites.

We had one more site scheduled for the day, an abandoned railway station at Casevel, north of Castro Verde. As we approached the village we were treated to superb views of a black-shouldered kite hovering on the edge of the main road below us and then bumped into another bird further along the road. We took a rather tortuous track from the village hoping we did not have to retrace our steps in the dark but soon came upon the station. Here we caught up with two more hoopoes giving excellent views before finding a male merlin perched up on a distant pile of rocks. On closer inspection twenty blobs in the fields turned out to be red kites on the ground before another 30 were found nearer the village – 65 red kites in one day. As we turned for home on the proper village road we found at least 50 cattle egrets by a small reservoir before encountering another 120 in three flocks, presumably on their way to roost, bringing to an end a fantastic day in the Alentejo.

Saturday 9 November – Salgados Lagoons & Quinto do Lago

Warm and sunny today with a light breeze and temperatures up to 18°C. Today's explorations took us to two wetland sites on the coast of the Algarve. Our first stop was at the Salgados Lagoons on the south side of Pera; the water levels were very low here but there was still enough water to hold a whole range of species. Eight white storks and 12 spoonbills were busily feeding along with seven grey herons and a little egret while several glossy ibises were showing really well right in front of the group. Wildfowl were very much to the fore and we logged 60+ shovelers, 25 teals, two gadwalls, four pintails and at least 20 pochards. Several species of wader were taking full advantage of the lagoon's muddy edges including 20 black-tailed godwits, a single bar-tailed godwit, six avocets, five sanderlings and an unexpected six ruffs; all the waders were being continually spooked by two hunting marsh harriers!



View over Lagoa dos Salgados (LB).

A shepherd appeared with four dogs plus a hungry flock of sheep and goats and three cattle egrets were perched on their backs waiting to snap up any disturbed insects or amphibians. Back out on the lake a purple swamp-hen swam ungainly through the water and closer inspection of the gulls turned up two splendid adult Audouin's gulls. A fan-tailed warbler then landed right in front of us allowing cameras to click away and Rob had the briefest encounter with a male bluethroat. Several red-veined darter dragonflies were in tandem and egg-laying on the water's edge and to complete a splendid morning 170 glossy ibises flew in from the west – an incredibly spectacular show.



A cattle egret in prime position to watch fighting goats (DB).

The local bar was closed for the winter, so we stopped for coffee on the motorway before arriving in Quinto do Lago in early afternoon. After our lunches in the field we made our way along the track to the lake spotting over 24 gannets flying high along the shoreline.

As we arrived at the lake three glossy ibises were feeding with coots on the golf course and a Cetti's warbler sang briefly from deep cover on the water's edge. The lake was full of wildfowl including scores of shoveler and gadwall, 40+ pochards, three wigeons, five pintails and two tufted ducks. Up to 20 little grebes were very active and we counted at least five, somewhat ungainly, purple swamp-hens giving us all great views. We finally caught up with azure-winged magpies, after brief views earlier in the week, as a 100 strong flock poured out of the stone pines flying right over us and perched out in the open.

The star of the day then revealed itself – a juvenile little bittern quietly fishing on the edge of the reeds by the hide giving everyone the most amazing views. A kingfisher then flew in and perched just above the bittern, an incredible slice of luck for the spellbound group. More highlights were two hoopoes showing very well and we found a black-headed weaver's nest superbly camouflaged in the reedmace but could only get the briefest of views of the bird. Flowers were in short supply on this trip thanks to the arid conditions, but we did find flowering horseshoe vetch and a purple viper's bugloss, *Echium plantagineum*, here.

By this time the tide had receded exposing open mud where we found four curlews, nine grey plovers, 14 ringed plovers and four turnstones. Another superb bird-filled day was completed by an exceptionally close fan-tailed warbler foraging among Hottentot figs. Time to head back for our last night at the splendid Alte Hotel before me moved west to Sagres.



Fan-tailed warbler foraging among Hottentot figs; bluethroat (DB).

Sunday 10 November – Alvor Estuary, Budens Marsh & Boca do Rio

A sunny but breezy day with temperatures climbing to 17°C. Our first destination was the Alvor Estuary overlooked by the large town of Lagos on its western edge. No sooner had we arrived when we saw 120 griffon vultures soaring overhead on a thermal and rapidly gaining height; the birds had completely disappeared within a few minutes so we were incredibly fortunate to get such a privileged view – five minutes later and we would have missed them!



Soaring griffons (DB).

As we organised ourselves in the car park a smart male black redstart was on a farm building, a lone swallow flashed across the marsh before Lara spotted a small brown bird on the edge of the saltmarsh. This turned out to be an adult female bluethroat which continued to forage on the mud edge allowing us all to get brilliant views – particularly for Everard as this was a 'lifer'.

The excitement did not end there as another huge flock of birds hovered into view before dropping onto the saltmarsh; these were white storks and we tallied up an amazing count of 220 birds. They were joined on the marshes by 60 greater flamingos, 15 spoonbills, 40 grey herons and 14 little egrets providing an amazing avian spectacle. We then spotted another bluethroat which quickly vanished into deep cover and the marsh-edge scrub was alive with wintering chiffchaffs. A female marsh harrier began hunting over the area as did both common buzzard and kestrel, two Sandwich terns were busily fishing in the lagoon and our final sighting here was a female greenfinch. On the way out of the area we spotted yet another black-shouldered kite perched up in a dead tree giving us all more good views.

After a well-earned coffee we drove on to a little-known wetland called Budens Marsh where we had our picnics. Just as we were about to tuck in an osprey drifted slowly overhead followed by two ravens. After lunch we walked up the track bordering the marsh finding smilax, teasel and a yellow thistle (Spanish oyster plant *Scolymus hispanicus*) in flower. The birding was rather quiet until we found our first eagle of the trip, a pale phase booted eagle drifting along the ridge. A white wagtail then flew in followed by another new bird, a grey wagtail. As we were walking back to the bus a female marsh harrier glided over the reeds before perching up and attracting the unwanted attention of several azure-winged magpies.

We then drove the short distance to Boca do Rio where we encountered several gannets and both male and female black redstarts. With time to spare we moved on to the coastal resort of Salema and on the way spotted the earlier osprey on the ground out in the middle of a field – very unusual behaviour. After hot drinks and beers at Salema, Everard discovered that his Tilley hat (bought on the Isle of Mull) was missing so we searched the van and restaurant to no avail. All seemed lost so we headed back to Boca do Rio in faint hope and there it was on the roadside where we had photographed the osprey! Time to head to our hotel Mira Sagres in Vila do Bispo and just before dark Rob spotted 22 cattle egrets following the plough on farmland from the back of the hotel. In contrast to recent years our evening meal was at a nearby restaurant 'O Palheiro' run by two Brazilian ladies and we all enjoyed a hearty meal washed down with local wine.



Black redstart; pale phase booted eagle (DB).

Monday 11 November – Sagres

A very breezy day with sunny periods and occasional light showers to 18°C. Our first port of call was to be Cabo de Sao Vicente just west of Sagres and on the way we spotted a booted eagle on the outskirts of the town. Arriving at the Cape before the tourist coaches rolled in, our first bird was a male blue rock thrush perched out in the open while a minimum of four black redstarts were around the lighthouse area. A real thrill was to have two peregrines right above us for several minutes, an exhilarating experience. We then drove the short distance to Belchite Fort which was well sheltered from the keen northerly wind and found five more black redstarts on the cliffs.

With the morning gathering pace it was time to move on to the Cabranesa viewpoint for raptor migration, the highest point in the area. We did not have to wait long as many birds of prey were on the move and over the course of the next 90 minutes we watched 27 short-toed eagles and at least six booted eagles – an amazing experience of visible migration (*aka vis mig*). Flocks of finches were moving through the area – chaffinches, greenfinches, goldfinches and siskins – and we were lucky enough to find four woodlarks feeding on the ground by the bus. With no recent rain to speak of there was no sign of flowering crocuses but we did find large yellow restharrow in flower and dwarf fan palm. We had our picnic lunches out in the field before retreating to 'O Vigia' café for coffees. Rob wrote up the day's sightings in the bird log here.

After our refreshment break, we drove the roads and tracks across the heath and fields bordering the coast but this area was particularly quiet although we did turn up another pale phase booted eagle, at least six kestrels and five lapwings. We then moved on to the bay at Martinhal where we picked up two ringed plovers and a common sandpiper before another five booted eagles drifted into view over the trees giving us a total of twelve for the day.

Our last stop was along the tracks through the fields and scrub behind Vila do Bispo; up to 40 cattle egrets were found across this area and at least 100 white wagtails were feeding on ploughed land but the highlight was a flock of 120 golden plovers out on the short grassland, looking particularly golden in the late afternoon light. This brought to an end our explorations of the Algarve and Alentejo and was completed by a splendid and jolly meal at 'O Palheiro' restaurant in Vila do Bispo. On the way to the restaurant Lara spotted a Moorish gecko well camouflaged at the base of a shop door.

After the final log check Lara explained that the £300 donated to SPEA from this trip would go towards setting up a recruitment strategy in the Algarve. The total donated to SPEA from various Honeyguide groups in Portugal since 2005 now totals £6282.

Holiday highlights

Steph	Large flocks and sheer volume of birds; merendera.
David	Little bittern; good photographic opportunities.
Ann	Griffon vultures at Alvor.
Mel	Male merlin twice, from front and back.
Barbara	Sheer volume of birds; two peregrines at Sagres.
Everard	Bluethroat at Alvor; azure-winged magpies.
Lara	Griffon vultures at Alvor; sheer number of birds.
Rob	Little bittern and little bustards.



White storks, Alvor estuary (DB).



Greater flamingos, Castro Marim (DB).

WILDLIFE LISTS

BIRDS

Little grebe	Peak counts of 15 at Castro Marim & 20 at Quinto do Lago.
Great crested grebe	Three at Castro Marim.
Gannet	Peak count of 24 off Quinto do Lago.
Cormorant	Up to 70 at Castro Marim.
Little bittern	One juvenile at Quinto do Lago.
Cattle egret	Highest count of 210 at Castro Verde.
Little egret	Seen at several sites, max.14 at Alvor Estuary.
Great white egret	Single birds at Castro Marim & Salgados Lagoons.
Grey heron	Peak of 40 at Elvor Estuary.
Glossy ibis	Peak of 187 at Salgados Lagoons.
White stork	Huge peak of 220 at Alvor Estuary.
Spoonbill	Peak counts were 28 at Castro Marim & 25 at Quinto do Lago.
Greater flamingo	Peak of 170 at Castro Marim.
Shelduck	A high count of 130 at Castro Marim.
Wigeon	Three at Quinto do Lago.
Gadwall	Peak of 80 at Quinto do Lago.
Mallard	Recorded at four sites in small numbers.
Pintail	Eight at Rio Formosa, five at Salgados Lagoons & five at Quinto do Lago.
Shoveler	60+ at Salgados Lagoons & 100+ at Quinto do Lago.
Teal	25 at Salgados Lagoons.
Pochard	20 at Salgados Lagoons & 40 at Quinto do Lago.
Tufted duck	Just two at Quinto do Lago.
Black-shouldered kite	Three at Casto Verde & one at Alvor Estuary.
Red kite	An amazing 65 at Castro Verde & Casevel.
Griffon vulture	Six at Castro Verde & 120 at Alvor Estuary.
Black vulture	Two at Castro Verde.
Osprey	One at Castro Marim & two around Budens Marsh.
Buzzard	Peak of 14 at Castro Verde.
Short-toed eagle	27 at Sagres.
Marsh harrier	Two at Castro Marim, two at Salgados Lagoons, one at Alvor Estuary & one at Budens Marsh.
Hen harrier	Ringtails at Barranco do Velho & Castro Verde.
Booted eagle	One at Budens Marsh & 12 at in Sagres area.
Common kestrel	Widespread and relatively common.
Peregrine	Two at Cabo De Sao Vicente.
Merlin	Single birds at Castro Verde & Casevel.
Red-legged partridge	Peak of 23 at Castro Verde.
Moorhen	Noted at several wetland sites.
Purple swamp-hen	One at Salgados Lagoons & five at Quinto do Lago.
Coot	Peak of 350 at Castro Marim.
Little bustard	21 at Castro Verde.
Great bustard	53 at Castro Verde.
Black-winged stilt	70 at Castro Marim & 10 at Salgados Lagoons.
Avocet	80 at Castro Marim & six at Salgados Lagoons.
Ringed plover	Peak of 14 at Quinto do Lago.
Kentish plover	One at Castro Marim.
Golden plover	120 at Vila do Bispo.
Grey plover	Two at Castro Marim & nine at Quinto do Lago.
Lapwing	Peak of 100 at Castro Verde.
Turnstone	Six at Castro Marim & four at Quinto do Lago.
Sanderling	20 at Castro Marim & five at Salgados Lagoons.
Little stint	One at Castro Marim.
Curlew sandpiper	20 at Castro Marim.
Dunlin	400 at Castro Marim.
Ruff	Six at Salgados Lagoons.
Snipe	Three at Castro Verde & one at Salgados Lagoons.
Black-tailed godwit	30 at Castro Marim & 20 at Salgados Lagoons.
Bar-tailed godwit	One at Salgados Lagoons.
Curlew	Four at Quinto do Lago.

Redshank	Peak of 30 at Castro Marim.
Spotted redshank	Two at Castro Marim.
Greenshank	Four at Castro Marim.
Common sandpiper	Two at Castro Marim & singles at Castro Verde & Martinhal.
Mediterranean gull	Eight at Rio Formosa at Tavira.
Black-headed gull	Widespread & common at coastal sites.
Slender-billed gull	Seven at Castro Marim.
Audouin's gull	80 at Rio Formosa at Tavira & two at Salgados Lagoons.
Yellow-legged gull	Widespread & common.
Herring gull	One at Salgados Lagoons.
Lesser black-backed gull	Peak of 40 at Castro Marim/Rio Formosa at Tavira.
Sandwich tern	Three at Castro Marim, two at Alvor Estuary and four at Salema.
Caspian tern	Seven at Castro Marim.
Little tern	One at Castro Marim.
Common tern	Eight at Castro Marim.
Feral pigeon	Widespread & common.
Woodpigeon	Widespread but uncommon.
Collared dove	Widespread & common.
Little owl	One at Castro Verde.
Kingfisher	Single birds at Castro Marim & Quinto do Lago.
Hoopoe	At least seven at Castro Verde & two at Quinto do Lago.
Iberian green woodpecker	One calling at Castro Marim.
Calandra lark	Heard at Castro Verde.
Crested lark	Widespread & common.
Thekla lark	Recorded at Castro Marim, Castro Verde & Sagres.
Woodlark	One at Barranco do Velho & four at Sagres.
Skylark	Common at Castro Verde.
Crag martin	Peak of 70 at Rocha Da Pena.
Barn swallow	One at Alvor Estuary.
Meadow pipit	Widespread & common.
Grey wagtail	One at Budens Marsh.
White wagtail	Peak of 100+ at Vila do Bispo.
Wren	One at Alte.
Robin	Widespread in small numbers.
Bluethroat	One at Salgados Lagoons & two at Alvor Estuary.
Black redstart	Peak of 11 in Sagres area.
Stonechat	Widespread and reasonably common.
Blue rock thrush	Two at Rocha Da Pena & one at Sagres.
Blackbird	Widespread and reasonably common.
Song thrush	Noted in small numbers.
Cetti's warbler	One heard at Quinto do Lago.
Fan-tailed warbler	One at Castro Marim, two at Salgados Lagoons & one at Quinto do Lago.
Dartford warbler	One at Castro Marim & one at Castro Verde.
Sardinian warbler	Widespread & common.
Blackcap	Three at Rocha da Pena & one at Budens Marsh.
Chiffchaff	Widespread & common.
Blue tit	One at Alte.
Great tit	Two at Alte & two at Rocha Da Pena.
Iberian grey shrike	Peak of six at Castro Verde.
Jay	Five at Rocha da Pena/Barranco do Velho.
Magpie	Widespread and common.
Azure-winged magpie	Widespread and common, peak of 100+ at Quinto do Lago.
Jackdaw	Two at Salgados Lagoons
Carrion crow	Widespread and common at Castro Verde.
Raven	Three at Castro Verde, two at Budens Marsh & two at Sagres.
Spotless starling	Widespread & common.
House sparrow	Widespread & common.
Black-headed weaver	One and nest at Quinto do Lago.
Chaffinch	Widespread & common.
Greenfinch	Large numbers moving through Sagres.
Goldfinch	Widespread & common.
Siskin	Two at Alte & heard overhead at Sagres.
Linnet	100 at Castro Verde.
Corn bunting	One at Castro Marim but common at Castro Verde.



Part of a flock of glossy ibises dropping into Salgados lagoon (DB).

MAMMAL & REPTILES				
Rabbit	Stripe-necked terrapin	Horseshoe whip snake	Moorish gecko	Spiny-footed lizard

BUTTERFLIES			
Swallowtail	Small white	Clouded yellow	Red admiral
Painted lady	Peacock	Small copper	Lang's short-tailed blue

OTHER NOTABLE INVERTEBRATES			
Hummingbird hawk-moth	Red-veined darter	Migrant hawk	Yellow scorpion
Hornet	Portuguese millipede <i>Ommatoiulus</i> cf. <i>moreleti</i>		



Buthus occitanus, common yellow scorpion (LB).



Clouded yellow on lesser calamint (DB).



Merendera filifolia at Castro Verde (DB).



Horseshoe whip snake (DB).

PLANTS

Numbers on the right refer to Blamey & Grey-Wilson, *Mediterranean Wild Flowers*.

Other references were: *Wildflowers of Britain & Europe* – Fitter, Fitter & Blamey,
and *Wild Flowers of the Algarve* – Thorogood & Hiscock.

P = planted.

SPERMATOPHYTES		
Conifers		
Araucariaceae		
<i>Araucaria heterophylla</i>	Norfolk Island pine	
Pinaceae Pine family		
<i>Pinus pinea</i>	stone pine	3
<i>Pinus pinaster</i>	maritime pine	5
Cupressaceae Cypress family		
<i>Juniperus phoenicea</i>	Phoenician juniper	17
ANGIOSPERMS		
Moraceae Mulberry family		
<i>Ficus carica</i>	fig	42
Fagaceae Oaks		
<i>Castanea sativa</i>	sweet chestnut	23
<i>Quercus coccifera</i>	kermes oak	24
<i>Quercus rotundifolia</i>	holm oak	26
<i>Quercus suber</i>	cork oak	27
Chenopodiaceae Goosefoot family		
<i>Arthrocnemum macrostachya</i>	a perennial glasswort	84
<i>Suaeda vera</i>	shrubby seablite	94
<i>Halimione vulgaris</i>	sea purslane	100
Aizoaceae Aizoon family		
<i>Carpobrotus edulis</i>	Hottentot fig	115
Brassicaceae Cabbage family		
<i>Matthiola incana</i>	hoary stock	327
<i>Lobularia maritima</i>	sweet Alison	336
Rosaceae Rose family		
<i>Eriobotrya japonica</i>	Japanese loquat	429
<i>Cydonia oblonga</i>	quince	
Fabiaceae Pea family		
<i>Ceratonia siliqua</i>	carob	431
<i>Ulex parviflorus</i>	small-flowered gorse	473
<i>Spartium junceum</i>	Spanish broom	481
<i>Ononis natrix</i>	large yellow restharrow	556
<i>Hippocrepis ciliata</i>	a horseshoe vetch	
Anacardiaceae Pistacio family		
<i>Pistacia lentiscus</i>	mastic tree or lentisc	865
Thymelaeaceae Daphne family		
<i>Daphne gnidium</i>		936
Cistaceae Rockrose family		
<i>Cistus albidus</i>	grey-leaved cistus	961
<i>Cistus salviifolius</i>	sage-leaved cistus	965
<i>Cistus ladanifer</i>	gum cistus	971
Tamaricaceae Tamarix		
<i>Tamarix africana</i>	tamarix	1016
Cactaceae Cactus family		
<i>Opuntia maxima</i>	prickly pear	1040

Punicaceae Pomegranate family		
<i>Punica granatum</i>	pomegranate	1064
Umbelliferae Carrot family		
<i>Eryngium maritimum</i>	sea holly	1073
<i>Daucus carota</i>	wild carrot	1168
Ericaceae Heath family		
<i>Arbutus unedo</i>	strawberry tree	1176
<i>Erica australis</i>	Spanish heath	1181
Oleaceae Olive family		
<i>Olea europea</i>	olive	1248
Apocynaceae Oleander family		
<i>Nerium oleander</i>	oleander	1256
Solanaceae Nightshade family		
<i>Solanum dulcamara</i>	woody nightshade	
Convolvulaceae Bindweed family		
<i>Ipomoea purpurea</i>	common morning glory	1319
Boraginaceae Borage family		
<i>Echium plantagineum</i>	purple viper's bugloss	1383
Lamiaceae Mint family		
<i>Lavandula stoechas</i>	French lavender	1528
<i>Calamintha nepeta</i>	lesser calamint	1499
Plantaginaceae Plantain family		
<i>Plantago coronopus</i>	buck's-horn plantain	1696
Dipsacaceae Teasel family		
<i>Dipsacus fullonum</i>	wild teasel	1732
Asteraceae Daisy family		
<i>Asteriscus maritimus</i>	yellow sea aster	1848
<i>Carlina corymbosa</i>	flat-topped carline thistle	1920
<i>Scolymus hispanicus</i>	Spanish oyster plant	2020
MONOCOTYLEDONS		
Liliaceae Lily family		
<i>Asphodelus aestivus</i>	common asphodel	2089
<i>Merendera filifoli</i>	merendera	2132
<i>Scilla autumnalis</i>	autumn squill	2189
<i>Smilax aspera</i>	common smilax	2222
<i>Crocus serotinus</i>		2325
Agavaceae		
<i>Agave americana</i> P	agave	2253
Amaryllidaceae		
<i>Pancratium maritimum</i>	sea daffodil	2270
Palmae Palm family		
<i>Chamaerops humilis</i>	dwarf fan palm	2357
Gramineae		
<i>Typha angustifolia</i>	lesser reedmace	
<i>Arundo donax</i>	giant reed	2494
<i>Phragmites australis</i>	common reed	