



Honeyguide

WILDLIFE HOLIDAYS

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WESTERN RHODOPES OF BULGARIA
20 – 27 JUNE 2018

Holiday participants

Bruce and Sarah Bennett	Julie Sherwood
Russell and Sara Gomm	Peter and Joan Truckle

Leaders

Chris Gibson and Vladimir (Vlado) Trifonov

Our hosts at the Hotel Yagodina are Mariya and Asen Kukundjiev – www.yagodina-bg.com

Report and lists by Chris Gibson. Photos by Chris Gibson unless otherwise indicated.

Cover: Top – Chamois.

Middle – Crepuscular Burnet moth; Large Blue butterfly; ascalaphid *Libelloides macaronius*.

Bottom – botanical riches near Zmeitsa.



Above – Yagodina from St. Iliya.

As with all Honeyguide holidays, part of the price of the holiday was put towards local conservation work. The conservation contributions from this holiday raised £340, namely £40 per person topped up by Gift Aid through the Honeyguide Wildlife Charitable Trust.

That money goes towards the protection of *Lilium rhodopaeum*. The Rhodope lily is a scarce endemic flower of the Western Rhodopes, found on just a handful of sites in Bulgaria and just over the border in Greece, about half of which have no protection. Honeyguide group leader Vlado Trifonov is recognised as the leading authority on the Rhodope lily and our funds cover Vlado's monitoring and management on the site visited by the Honeyguide group. We have an additional sum earmarked for *Lilium rhodopaeum* ready for when the need arises.

The total for all conservation contributions through Honeyguide since 1991 to July 2018 is £124,860.

DAILY DIARY

Wednesday 20 June: the way there

Departure from Stansted was delayed for more than an hour by air traffic congestion, so we landed in a very humid Plovdiv at just after 9pm, and a very hot 26°C. After meeting Vlado, my co-leader, and Petr, our driver for the first few days, we loaded cases into the bus, and had our first wildlife experience of the trip: huge, piebald pine chafers swarming around the car park.

Then it was straight to Yagodina, though the delay meant we didn't get to the hotel until around 00.40am. But the portents were good: just a few kilometres before our destination, a polecat ran onto the road in front of the bus, and continued there for five hundred metres or more, despite ample opportunities to get out of the way. As if it was waving us onward to a good holiday, as Russell later expressed it.

Thursday 21 June: Trigrad Gorge, and the valley above Trigrad

After a delicious, leisurely, late breakfast of local yoghurt, bread, jams, cheese and baked items, we were ready for our first venture out. As far as the car park: our attention was soon taken by hooded crows, common swifts and serins overhead, a white wagtail on the road, and red-rumped swallows and tree sparrows on electricity wires. Indeed, on one nearby building, a half-built red-rumped swallow nest had been taken over by the local pair of tree sparrows.

Now sunny and warm, we headed to Trigrad in the next valley, and stopped first at the mouth of the gorge, at the famous wallcreeper site. Sadly, it seems these birds have now truly departed the area as a breeding bird, and we had to 'make do' with crag martins and a swirling mass of a hundred or more alpine swifts, hurtling around in a chickering throng. From that viewpoint, we spotted the rosettes of *Haberlea*, a local endemic African-violet, and the seedheads of *Valeriana montana*, a Bulgarian Red Data species. And in flower there were splendid patches of blue *Campanula orphanidea* and white Rhodope sandwort.

Walking up the road through the gorge to the Devil's Throat, we found a range of other plants, such as rock pink, together with still-flowering *Haberlea* deep in the Throat, and an array of insects becoming active as the sun penetrated the depths: chimney-sweeper and speckled yellow moths, small pearl-bordered fritillary, and the attractive, hairy larva of a gypsy moth. As we approached the village, a sombre goldenring posed exceptionally well for the photographers, with a range of jewel-like chrysomelid beetles, a battered green hairstreak and a confiding Queen-of-Spain fritillary. *Digitalis lanata* was flowering profusely, along with the greeny-purple, almost malevolent flowers of henbane. Deadly but beautiful, nonetheless.



Sombre goldenring; Persian whorlflower; Queen-of-Spain fritillary.

We took lunch in a local restaurant, in fact one which had opened only a week earlier. And what a spread they served for us: enormous salads, fried yellow cheese slabs, followed by complimentary doughnuts. And wild strawberries from the garden, tiny flavour bombs which have a particular relevance to the area, 'Yagodina' being the Bulgarian for 'wild strawberry'.

Back in the bus we headed further up the valley for the afternoon walk, via an unscheduled stop to take in a wonderful flowering patch of Persian whorlflower, more in one clump than I have ever seen flowering in the whole area before on previous trips. The upper valley was rather quiet bird-wise, save for dippers in the river, a few red-backed shrikes and jays in the hedges, and crag martins on the isolated farmsteads. But in other aspects it was teeming with life. Butterflies salting in pools included heath fritillary, silver-studded, Chapman's, Amanda's and Escher's blues, and giant lacewings fluttered in an ungainly manner around the riverside bushes. Zebra and Roman snails were abundant in the damp areas, and the air was full of the song of field crickets.

The roadside meadows were simply stunning, a patchwork of flowers including stately *Campanula moesiacana*, yellow rattle, tall pink, large milkwort and sticky catchfly, with equally stunning flying jewels – rose chafers, Balkan coppers and transparent burnets. Ironwort *Sideritis montana* demanded a close-up view of its tiny bicolored yellow-and-purple flowers, and the orchids included many fragrant, a few marsh and a single twayblade.

With some difficulty we extracted ourselves from the beauty of these meadows (possible only because we knew there would be many more to come through the week) and headed home via the ‘honeypot’, a retail therapy opportunity to buy delicious local honey, jam, herbs and herbal teas.

A delightful day in all respects, albeit tiring in the heat; after the first of many excellent dinners at Hotel Yagodina, an early night was in order!



Ironwort

Friday 22 June: Trigrad to Yagodina

An early morning walk before breakfast around Yagodina gave opportunities to see well the black redstarts and other village birds which tend to hide away in the heat of the day; sadly, no black woodpeckers seemed to have territories around the village as in previous years, but we found a family party of green woodpeckers, and a noisy group of ten ravens.

A sunny, calm morning provided good conditions for today’s walk, from Trigrad to Yagodina, although as the day progressed, cloud started to bubble up, and eventually a sharp wind, before a couple of very heavy rain storms: thankfully, by that time all were safely back in the hotel. The walk back is some 7km, and the signs suggest it takes a couple of hours. But being Honeyguide, we spent rather longer on it...more like seven hours in fact for some!



Longhorn beetle *Agapanthia dahlia*; *Ajuga laxmannii*; blue-spot hairstreak.

The gradual ascent from Trigrad along a forest track affords excellent views of the valley and gorge, down clearings in the largely coniferous woodland, and passes some dramatic folded rocks, a window into the cataclysmic formation of the Rhodopes through continental collision. More whorlflower lit up the trackside, along with noble mullein, the very stately *Carduus thoemeri*, limestone woundwort, and the demure, but beautiful, *Ajuga laxmannii*.

Of course, insects were attracted to these floral riches, and included slender Scotch and crepuscular burnets, and dew moth, while an Apollo butterfly put in a brief appearance, but never gave more than fleeting views. A few burnt orchids and helleborines added orchid interest, with scrambled-egg lichen for the lichenophiles. Although none were actually seen (the woods were very quiet apart from jays and a few coal tits and firecrests), the abundant evidence of red squirrel feeding spoke of a large population, particularly a large dining-table stone covered in pine cone scales.

We had our picnic lunch in a meadow at the highest point of the walk, surrounded by viper’s-bugloss, marbled whites, and both black-veined white butterflies and black-veined moth. A walk around the meadow afterwards produced many further delights, including woodland grayling (taking a close interest in our clothing), a pristine blue-spot hairstreak and eastern large heath.

Down and ever downwards for the afternoon. Mostly in forest at first, with crested tits purring (seen by Julie at least), interesting plants like pinewood orchid and *Daphne oleoides* were restricted mostly to clearings, apart from those saprophytes with no requirement for light – bird’s-nest orchid and yellow bird’s-nest.

As we descended out of the woods into the agricultural plains above Yagodina, yellowhammers and red-backed shrikes became quite numerous, along with a few stonechats and corn buntings. Scarce copper, orbred red-underwing skipper and large blue were among the butterflies adorning the meadows, spectacularly so in the case of the copper, with, on the final approach to the village, a road-casualty purple emperor.

Saturday 23 June: Borino, Zmeitsa, Dospat and Satovcha

Perhaps it was due to the cool, misty, cloudy start (such a contrast to the tales we were hearing of a British heatwave!) but there were no takers for a pre-breakfast walk. Instead, watching from the hotel produced a roe deer browsing along the edge of the woodland across the valley. Although it threatened rain all day, in fact we again avoided it completely until we were in the bus coming home...



Roe deer seen from the hotel; white storks at Dospat.

First stop, just before Borino, produced a suite of farmland birds, with good views of red-backed shrike and corn bunting, ortolan bunting and quail only heard, and not a crex from the corncrakes. Too cold perhaps? Rose campion looked spectacular in the verges, along with tassel hyacinth, and a large area of disturbed ground nearby was the result of wild boar rooting, perhaps for the *Muscaria* bulbs.

A gentle stroll along a quiet road near Zmeitsa took us through one of the richest botanical areas of the whole trip, culminating in a beautiful area by the river, a swathe of colour highlighted with pink thrift, scarlet pinks, and white Spanish catchfly. Other interesting plants included thyme broomrape, conical catchfly, *Hypericum cerastioides* and forking spleenwort. A couple of tree pipits displayed and sang from the trees, both red-backed and lesser grey shrikes were seen from the bus, and a brief black woodpecker call led to the bird being seen by just one of the group.



Balkan copper; *Centaurea nervosa*.

As elsewhere butterflies were numerous, although less flighty given the weather. Balkan coppers especially adorned the sodden grass, with a few scarce coppers and Glanville fritillaries, and a large wartbiter was followed lumbering its way through the vegetation.

A few kilometres down the road, we pulled to a halt in Dospat to watch a white stork on a roof, then realised we were parked right under its nest, complete with adult and chick. Then it was into the Hotel Panorama for lunch, overlooking the vast hydroelectric reservoir; doubling as a trout farm, cormorants and yellow-legged gulls were in evidence, while the skies above thronged with house martins.

South of the reservoir lie the Satovcha meadows, two of which provided much of interest for our afternoon perambulation. Located on schist, rather than the limestone of much of the rest of the week, these meadows were subtly different floristically. The first, a dry pasture area, once we managed to get across the road given the long wedding procession (part of which we had shared the Panorama with earlier) driving along the road, differed most obviously in the abundance of shrubby *Chamaecytisus hirsutus*, together with other specialities reflecting the geology such as *Trifolium incarnatum* ssp. *molinieri* (echoes of The Lizard here: same geology, same plant), *Centaurea nervosa* with mop-headed flower bracts, and a large example of burnt orchid. A couple of white storks gave superb flight views, sombre tits showed to Bruce and Sally, and both golden oriole and bee-eater were heard in the far distance, the far distance which also gave stupendous views to Rila and Pirin mountains and deep into Greece. Indeed, our mobiles, logging on to a Greek network, were welcoming us into the country several kilometres from the border.

The second of our afternoon stops was at a very damp, sloping meadow, with meadowsweet, cotton-grass and ragged-Robin, plus a profusion of orchids: *Dactylorhiza cordigera* and *baumanniana*, with robust hybrids between the two; lax-flowered, of the local form *Orchis elegans*; and sac-flowered and bug orchids, the latter two coming to the end of flowering.

Back at the hotel, the rain stopped in the evening leaving a lovely night. While most were watching the World Cup, just a few of us heard a local scops owl, celebrating Sweden's goal against Germany....

Sunday 24 June: Yagodina to Yagodinska Cave; Kojari

The pre-breakfast walk attracted a couple of participants; apart from the 'usual suspects' all we saw of note was a roe deer behind the sawmill, and heard just a single peep from last night's scops owl.

The cool weather actually benefited us as we trudged up the hill behind the hotel after breakfast, quite a long slog, enlivened by an array of ex-soviet vehicles, many reduced to mere skeletons. But out on the hilltop meadows, the sun broke through, and so did the insects. Marbled whites and heath fritillaries flew in every direction, and a couple of large blues were much appreciated, along with several ascalaphids, basking and not yet warm enough to be zipping around as they are prone to do.



Red helleborine; dog stinkhorn (Sara Gomm); toothed wintergreen.

Then into the woods, on the in-places-steep path down to Yagodinska cave. Pine, spruce and firs predominated higher up, with impressive stands of beech in the lower and more humid valleys. At least ten species of orchid on the way down included fly, frog, coralroot, and huge numbers of red helleborine, with greenish and toothed wintergreens, fly honeysuckle and asarabacca adding to the botanical delights. Occasional crested tits and marsh tits emerged from the foliage, and Julie also got a brief view of a (dark brown) red squirrel. Meanwhile in the deep shade, Sara in particular was getting to grips with the fungi, most distinctive being a dog stinkhorn.

We ate our picnic with a welcome cold drink outside the café by the cave, with dippers performing in the river oblivious to the Sunday afternoon crowds. We then drove up to the top of the valley, around Kojari. No such luck as the last Honeyguide group there seeing bears, but our weather was much better and the flowers, butterflies and views simply superb. A corncrake called from the meadows by the meandering stream, and a hobby entertained for several minutes, hunting dragonflies overhead, flying amongst – and almost the same size as – alpine swifts.



Giant lacewing; scarlet tiger moth.

The flowery verges, as always, abounded in butterflies, here with marsh and pearl-bordered fritillaries very numerous, together with a few large blues, purple-shot and scarce coppers, the latter especially burning orange splashes onto our retinas when nectaring from orange *Geum coccineum* flowers. Several dramatically coloured scarlet tiger moths fluttered heavily around the verges, occasionally coming to rest for all to see, and other dramatic insects included some large horse-flies: always worth keeping an eye on, because of the painful bite of some species but also for their beautiful and characteristic eye-patterns and colours.

As we waited for the bus to collect us, with Vlado's help we talked to a couple of local ladies who had just come down from the valley slopes where they had been collecting clover in sacks. These are collected (with a payment of 2 lev/kg) by the man who also buys foraged mushrooms from them; the clover is then dried and made into one of the many local herbal teas. They also told us they also regularly see bears feeding in the meadows, but don't fear them- they leave each other alone, a very refreshing attitude to hear compared with the often irrational levels of fear shown towards bear populations elsewhere in Europe.

Monday 25 June: St Iliya

After breakfast, the last wisps of low cloud were just burning off the peak of St Iliya, fortunately so as that was where we were headed, in a skilfully-driven four-wheel-drive truck, up seemingly impossible terrain. Yes, it was an 'interesting' forty minutes, but we arrived safely (if a little shaken) at the top, in pleasant warmth with little wind; looking over the mountains to the north, we could pick out a mother and calf chamois grazing on the rocky slopes. Then it was out onto the Eagle's Eye, a cantilevered platform with a 600m stomach-churning sheer drop below. What stunning views, including kestrels on the cliffs, a couple of closer chamois, and white patches of cushion-growing *Cerastium decalvans*.



Two views from St. Iliya.

Then it was a gradual descent all the way, and for some, all the day, back to Yagodina. First a couple of kilometres or so along the ridge, through rocky limestone grassland and scattered open pine forest. A woodlark serenaded us beautifully from a tree-top song-post, and the impressions left in various mud patches spoke of the nightly mammal activity in these parts: one particular patch had wild cat, wolf/large dog, fox, marten, smaller mustelid and wild boar prints, while large fungi with their caps chewed off, and huge overturned boulders, suggested the foraging of bears.

Plants included some splendid examples of the endemic Rhodope golden-drops, the distinctive first-year rosette dying back in the second year as the flowering spike, almost Christmas-tree like in form, is produced. Peach-leaved bellflower, and mountain and wall germander were flowering here more abundantly than elsewhere during the week.



Fledgling red-rumped swallow; Rhodope golden-drops; female ladybird spider.

With light winds and rising humidity, butterflies were out in abundance, especially marbled whites, heath fritillaries, silver-studded blues, brown argus, painted ladies and woodland graylings. In addition, red-necked and feathered footmen, among the usual burnets, represented the day-flying moths. And then the *pièce-de-résistance*, across a clearing, from a range of 10m, I spied a large black spider resting on the vegetation. On closer examination, not just black but with a bright orange front: it was a female ladybird spider. My yelp of excitement brought the nearest folks running (well, just Sara, actually): we watched it for a few seconds, before she (the spider!) decided to retreat into her silken tube. And despite the spider-wrangling efforts of the group, the best the rest can say they saw was two pairs of legs trying to grab hold of the decoy grass-stem.

As we took lunch in the shelter at the end of the ridge, accompanied by a watchful female red-backed shrike, a passing hare, and a zebra jumping-spider, the darkening skies started to produce some rain. Sporadic rain continued as we worked our way downhill, but not sufficient to prevent examination of the fungi and butterflies on the way. A Nickerl's fritillary, tiny and distinctly at the edge of its range, was due reward for perseverance in spite of the weather, as a large ant-lion flew around, albeit never settling to enable identification.

And so the group arrived back at the hotel at different times during the afternoon. Some opted for drinks in the hotel, others to catch up on sleep, and yet others (the majority!) took the opportunity for a wander round Yagodina, soaking up the lifestyle, the views and the wildlife...even at this stage, new butterflies were being found as evidenced by the photos of spotted and knapweed fritillaries I was shown at our pre-dinner meeting. After dinner, Russell and I wandered outside at dark to try and find more of the fireflies I had glimpsed the previous evening. And in the space of ten minutes we found maybe ten of the winking sprites, flying and at rest in the immediate surroundings of the hotel. A nightjar was picked up in very distant 'song', but no scops owl or bats tonight.

Tuesday 26 June: Devinska Gorge

Fortunately the weather forecast proved pessimistic for today's trip to Devinska Gorge, close by the nearest major town Devin, source of the bottled water we had been drinking all week. Instead of the forecast continual rain, it was just cool, cloudy and occasionally damp, a far cry from the reports of a heatwave back home.

Too cold for much insect activity, the Gorge which is usually full of exciting butterflies could produce only a handful of torpid marbled whites, with cream-spot tiger, nine-spotted moths, various bush-crickets and a beautifully stripe-eyed horsefly in similar states of inactivity. But the last points to one advantage of such weather: when else can you feel happy at staring into the beauty of a horsefly's eyes apart from when it is too cold to bite you?



Devinska Gorge

Birds are perhaps less affected by the weather, and indeed the tumbling river supported many noisy grey wagtails and a few dippers, and the gorge had singing wrens, although the hoped-for golden eagle never made an appearance overhead. Nor did anything else apart from house martins. Very fresh, cherrystone-filled marten scats kept us hoping (in vain) for a glimpse, but we had to be satisfied with the ever-present watery soundscape and the wonder of the rocky riverscape, especially the upper gorge views from the wooden cliff walkway.



Martagon lily; dipper; stripe-eyed horsefly.

Of course, plants are also more reliable in adverse weather, even if they do not all show their flowers to perfection. Greater butterfly-orchids bloomed well in the rock beech woods, along with tall skullcap and green-flowered foxglove; golden alyssum and stonecrops on the rocks, with the local speciality King Boris's cinquefoil, albeit the latter had finished flowering; and golden stands of *Telekia speciosa* by the river. Most spectacular of all, there were martagon lilies flowering in the cliffted section, while the cave near the entrance to the gorge held flowering *Campanula lanata*. Unfortunately the large, pale bell flowers, first time I had seen them open, were nigh on impossible to photograph, growing in the deep gloom out of cracks in the roof of the cave.

Lichens, lower plants and fungi, likewise, provided much of interest even in the dull damp shade, the fungi in particular in a remarkable diversity of forms, from agarics to boletes, and brackets to coral- and tooth-fungi.

One other advantage of the poor weather was that the gorge was relatively quiet: It can be very busy on a better day. Signs of its use by locals included the 'flower trees' festooned with coloured cotton bracelets. It is customary to wear the bracelets for health and happiness, then to seal the magic by hanging them in a flowering tree (here *Cornus mas*) after seeing the first stork of spring.

The gorge bar proved popular for coffee and/or beer as we regrouped at the end of the walk, and also as the forecast downpour commenced. Not surprisingly, there were no takers for a planned dipper stop by the river, so it was straight back to the hotel. A little early, but that allowed time for anticipatory packing, and also an early dinner given the planned visit by the 'Yagodina Grannies' that evening. True to form, we were suitably entertained with traditional song and dance, which soon became participatory, and when it moved on to the dressing-up challenge, Sara and Russell responded magnificently, she in her colourful, voluminous outfit, and he the perfect garden gnome, with a very fetching flower in his hat. Long traditional dances ensued, before mutating seamlessly into Boney M and Abba, the grannies seemingly unstoppable.

Finally it was bedtime, but not before a few minutes on the patio to savour the incongruity of fireflies with a backdrop of thumping Europop, as the scops owl continued his forlorn lament across the road.

Wednesday 27 June: The way home, via Shiroka Laka, Stoykite and Plovdiv

Overnight the rain started with a vengeance, coming down very heavily to the sound of thunder on the hills. And still it was pouring at first light. Given that we had a full day of visits planned on the way back to the airport for our evening flight, some remapping of the day was in order. Placing reliance on the details of the local forecast proved justified, and by delaying departure for 30 minutes we actually managed to avoid every spell of significant rain throughout the day.

First we headed to Shiroka Laka, spotting a black stork at a fish-farm on the way; Shiroka Laka has a remarkable Orthodox church which the Ottomans allowed to be built if it could be done in 38 days. It was, and still is, a powerful symbol against religious oppression. The river running through the village, indeed all the rivers we saw, were in full spate and carrying huge sediment loads from erosion and landslips.

Then to Stoykite, one of only around ten wild localities for Rhodope lily, and the site of the monitoring and conservation project supported by this Honeyguide trip through the years. Although the grass was too long and wet for us to see the lilies close up, we could see them flowering well in the distance, and it was gratifying for me to see the apparent benefits of the resources Honeyguide has been able to provide. From the same viewpoint, Sally spotted a wild boar snuffling on the far hillside, fortunately not too close to the lilies and their bulbs....A few new plants also attracted our attention during the only patch of sunshine all day, including the brown-flowered *Nonea pulla*, yellowish *Trifolium pannonicum*, and alpine woundwort, as the song of field crickets rose to a crescendo before the cloud and rain swept across once again.

Vlado had previously negotiated changing our planned evening meal at Hvoyna to earlier in the day, when rain was likely, so that was next stop. And what a meal, a delicious array of Rhodopean specialities, followed by mouthwatering baked lamb. We also there took the opportunity to reflect on the past week and ask for everyone's best bits, which were, in no particular order:

Russell – the polecat on our way to Yagodina, running furiously and seemingly waving us on to a great holiday; and the evident excitement shown by yours truly, despite having been there several times before, when I spotted something special - in particular the black stork, and the female ladybird spider.

Bruce – another vote for the polecat, but also the wonderful concentration of wild flowers all over the countryside.

Sally – Devinska Gorge, ‘truly gorgeous’, and the remarkable floral riches, especially the blue flowers for which she has a particular fondness.

Sara – yet another polecat vote, and also the ‘peak flower-richness moment’, those meadows at Zmeitsa.

Julie – the stunning views from the ‘diving board’ on St Iliya, and her personal moments communing with a pair of firecrests.

Pete – some great views of buzzards in the treetops, and the magnificent Roman snail out for a slither in Shiroka Laka.

Joan – scarce copper, almost impossibly bright, and the ladies of the village taking their cow to and from the pastures each morning and evening.

Vlado – Persian whorlflower, in such wonderful bloom, and simply the melding of landscape, nature and people that characterises the Rhodope.

And finally, me – again the whorlflower, best I have ever seen and such a beautiful flower; the sheer abundance of creatures of all kinds; and of course, that spider.....

With rain still falling, we then headed straight to Plovdiv, our intention being to visit the natural history museum – a roof over our heads – for the last hour of the afternoon before we needed to be at the airport. Vlado again managed to call in some favours (he was at university with the Director of the museum) and arrange for us to visit as a group, and to be given a guided tour of the (living) butterfly house on the top floor.

Then we had time to explore the rest of the museum ourselves, a ‘proper’ museum full of specimens, well curated and presented in English as well as Bulgarian, not a single push button, bell or whistle in sight which seems *de rigueur* nowadays to keep the children entertained. But all the kids there seemed quite happy with the specimens and their imaginations....

While inside, down came the rain again, as those who opted for a quick tour of the historic city found out. Then it was back to the bus for a final twenty minutes to the airport, spotting our first jackdaw of the week. After saying farewell to Vlado and Iliyan, the short wait for the desk to open was enlivened by Spanish sparrows nesting under the terminal canopy, with bee-eaters and skylarks flying around the car park. And again it started raining: our luck held out right to the very end. Little did we realise how lucky we were to even get to the airport: Vlado contacted me a couple of days later to say that because of the torrential rains, flooding, landslides and road closures were the order of the day, and a State of Emergency had been declared.

It is always a privilege to lead a tour to somewhere like the Rhodopes: this year was no exception. A true Honeyguide experience: a window into a world where people are part of the environment, not imposed upon it. Where the agricultural and forestry systems seem actively to encourage ‘all kinds of everything’ in the natural world. At these times when evidence is growing about major declines in insect life throughout western Europe, places like the Rhodopes help us remember what the rest of the continent should (and hopefully still can) be like.

LISTS

You may realise that the lists provided, especially for the insects, are somewhat more extensive than is normal for a Honeyguide report. In part, this is testament to the incredible richness of the Western Rhodopes, but it is also in recognition of the fact that there are few readily-available sources of information in English about the wildlife of the area.

I am hugely grateful to Judith for the innumerable hours she has spent since my return, seeking out names for the many bugs and beasties I photographed. I must stress however that I take full responsibility for any misidentifications which may have crept in, something which is highly likely as many 'identifications' should be better characterised as 'best fits' to western European species for which identification material is more readily available.

Also I am indebted to Russell and Sara Gomm for providing lists of lichens and fungi respectively, and for sharing their expertise so willingly with others on the trip, including me! The same caveats apply as to the above: any errors are mine, not theirs.

In general, localities are not given for groups other than birds, as we stayed most of the time in a tight area around Yagodina, and almost anything we saw could reasonably be expected to be seen almost anywhere around there in the right habitat.

BIRDS	
Cormorant	Dospat Reservoir
Grey Heron	Kojari
White Stork	Several around Dospat, including birds on a nest
Black Stork	One near Shiroka Laka
Mallard	Devin
Common Buzzard	The commonest raptor, seen most days in small numbers
Kestrel	Small numbers most days
Hobby	One hunting in the valley at Kojari
Corncrake	Heard near Kojari
Quail	Heard near Borino
Yellow-legged Gull	Dospat Reservoir
Feral Pigeon	Common, especially in towns and villages; some true Rock Dove types in the gorges
Woodpigeon	Very occasional around Yagodina
Collared Dove	Common around the lowland settlements, and a very small number around Yagodina and Trigrad
Scops Owl	One singing regularly at Yagodina
Nightjar	Heard churring distantly from Yagodina
Common Swift	Common
Alpine Swift	Common, especially in Trigrad Gorge
Bee-eater	Plovdiv Airport; heard from Satovcha
Green Woodpecker	Seen or heard most days
Great Spotted Woodpecker	Seen or heard most days
Black Woodpecker	One heard and seen fleetingly at Zmeitsa
Skylark	At Plovdiv Airport
Woodlark	Seen and heard well on St. Iliya and above Yagodina
Crag Martin	Common in suitable rocky habitats
Barn Swallow	Common everywhere
Red-rumped Swallow	Common, more so than on previous trips; breeding in Yagodina
House Martin	Common; breeding in villages and on cliff faces; huge numbers over Dospat Reservoir
Tree Pipit	Two singing at Zmeitsa
Grey Wagtail	Common in all rivers; several fledged broods
White Wagtail	Common around water and in villages
Dipper	Frequent in all upland rivers
Wren	One of the most obvious birds, by song, in all mountain forests and gorges
Dunnock	St Iliya
Robin	Common in the forests
Black Redstart	A constant feature of all towns and villages
Stonechat	Several in agricultural fields above Yagodina
Blackbird	Fairly common
Song Thrush	Occasionally heard in the mountain forests; seen in Yagodina
Mistle Thrush	Seen occasionally around upland forest habitats
Blackcap	Common in forest areas, especially near streams, and around the villages
Garden Warbler	One singing in Yagodina
Chiffchaff	Abundant in the mountain forests; still singing well
Goldcrest	Common
Firecrest	Small numbers in several lightly forested areas
Long-tailed Tit	Occasional family parties around Yagodina and elsewhere
Marsh Tit	Occasional in mixed tit flocks
Willow Tit	With other tits on St Iliya

Crested Tit	Surprisingly scarce; heard occasionally, seen on St. Iliya
Sombre Tit	Two at Satovcha
Coal Tit	Common, and noisy in all forest areas
Blue Tit	Common
Great Tit	Common
Red-backed Shrike	Fairly common in upland agricultural habitats and scrub
Lesser Grey Shrike	One at Zmeitza
Treecreeper	Occasional in conifer forests
Golden Oriole	Heard from Satovcha
Jay	Frequent in the forests
Magpie	Very common
Hooded Crow	Common
Raven	Seen in small numbers every day
Starling	A few birds seen most days
House Sparrow	Common in some towns and villages, including Trigrad and Devin
Tree Sparrow	Largely replaces House Sparrows in some villages, such as Yagodina
Chaffinch	Common
Serin	Fairly common, especially around villages
Greenfinch	Very thinly scattered
Goldfinch	Fairly common
Linnet	Small numbers in several places
Bullfinch	The occasional bird at Yagodina and Devin Gorge
Yellowhammer	Present, and reasonably abundant, in agricultural uplands
Cirl Bunting	Two on St. Iliya
Ortolan Bunting	A singing male at Borino
Corn Bunting	Fairly common in agricultural areas

MAMMALS

Red Squirrel	Much in evidence from their nibbled cones, but seen only briefly and not by all
Brown Hare	St Iliya; droppings also frequently seen
Mole	Hills very obvious in some mountain pastures
Marten sp.	Scats in Devin Gorge; tracks on St Iliya
Polecat	One seen well by night just below Yagodina
Badger	Tracks, paths and foraging signs
Brown Bear	Foraging signs on St Iliya
Wolf	Tracks (possibly large dog?) both on St Iliya and above Trigrad
Red Fox	Tracks in mud, St Iliya
Wild Cat	Tracks in mud, St Iliya
Wild Boar	Abundant rootings on the edge of the forests; tracks in mud St Iliya; one seen by day at Stoykite
Roe Deer	Seen around Yagodina
Chamois	Four seen from St. Iliya peak

Very surprisingly, given that the western Rhodopes are one of the bat diversity hotspots of Europe, we did not encounter any bats, despite deploying a bat detector around Yagodina on several occasions.

REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS

Common Wall Lizard	Common Toad
Common around rocks and walls	Occasionally seen, sometimes dead, around Yagodina

BUTTERFLIES

Apollo	Glanville Fritillary	Silver-studded Blue
Large White	Lesser Spotted Fritillary (larvae)	Mazarine Blue
Small White	Spotted Fritillary	Chapman's Blue
Wood White	Marsh Fritillary	Escher's Blue
Black-veined White	Nickerl's Fritillary	Amanda's Blue
Clouded Yellow	Heath Fritillary	Small Blue
Berger's Clouded Yellow	Speckled Wood	Large Blue
Brimstone	Large Wall Brown	Brown Argus
Red Admiral	Wall Brown	Balkan Copper
Painted Lady	Woodland Grayling	Purple-shot Copper
Peacock	Ringlet	Scarce Copper
Comma	Great Banded Grayling	Small Copper
Small Tortoiseshell	Woodland Ringlet	Blue-spot Hairstreak
Purple Emperor	Meadow Brown	Green Hairstreak
High Brown Fritillary (incl forma <i>cleodoxa</i>)	Eastern Large Heath	Duke-of-Burgundy
Niobe Fritillary	Chestnut Heath	Grizzled Skipper
Queen-of-Spain Fritillary	Small Heath	Orbed Red-underwing Skipper
Pearl-bordered Fritillary	Marbled White (incl forma <i>procida</i>)	Large Skipper
Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary	Adonis Blue	Small Skipper
Knapweed Fritillary	Common Blue	Essex Skipper

MOTHS			
Macromoths (Scientific names given only for non-British species)			
Hummingbird Hawk-moth	Clouded Buff	Small Purple-barred	
Golden-yellow Wave <i>Idaea aureolaria</i>	Cream-spot Tiger	Spotted Sulphur	
Chimney-sweeper	Scarlet Tiger	Narrow-bordered Five-spot Burnet	
Common Heath	Red-necked Footman	Six-spot Burnet	
Latticed Heath	Feathered Footman	Transparent Burnet	
Speckled Yellow	Dew Moth	Crepuscular Burnet <i>Zygaena carniolica</i>	
Black-veined Moth	Buff Ermine	Woodland Burnet <i>Zygaena osterodensis</i>	
Drab Looper	Gypsy Moth (larva)	Slender Scotch Burnet	
Lead Belle	Poplar Kitten	Forester	
Treble Bar	Heart and Dart	Scarce Forester	
Small Argent-and-Sable	Silver Y	Nine-spotted Moth <i>Syntomis phegea</i>	
Grass Eggar (larva)	Burnet Companion		
Micromoths			
<i>Adela cuprella</i>	a metallic longhorn moth	<i>Hedya salicella</i>	a tortrix
<i>Taleporia tubulosa</i>	a tubular bagworm case	<i>Chrysocrambus craterella</i>	a grass moth
<i>Psyche casta</i>	a bagworm	<i>Crambus pascuella</i>	a grass moth
<i>Coleophora vibicella</i>	large black pistol cases on <i>Chamaecytisus</i>	<i>Udea ferrugalis</i>	Rusty-dot Pearl
<i>Anthophila fabriciana</i>	Nettle-tap	<i>Udea olivalis</i>	a pyralid
<i>Pammene aurana</i>	a golden-marked tortrix	<i>Scoparia pyralella</i>	a pyralid
<i>piblema foenella</i>	a white-marked tortrix	<i>Pterophorus pentadactyla</i>	Large White Plume
DRAGONFLIES AND DAMSELFLIES			
<i>Cordulegaster bidentata</i>	Sombre goldenring		
OTHER INVERTEBRATES			
Mollusca Molluscs			
<i>Cepaea hortensis</i>	White-lipped Banded Snail	<i>Zebrina detrita</i>	Zebra Snail
<i>Helix pomatia</i>	Roman Snail	<i>Arion ater</i>	Large Black Slug
Diplopoda Millipedes			
<i>Tachypodiulus</i> sp. a black millipede			
Arachnida Spiders and relatives			
<i>Pardosa</i> sp.	a wolf-spider	<i>Philodromus</i> sp.	a running-crab spider
<i>Aranaeus diadematus</i>	Garden Spider	<i>Xysticus cristatus</i>	a ground crab-spider
<i>Aculipeira ceropegia</i>	Oak-leaf Spider	<i>Salicus scenicus</i>	Zebra Jumping-spider
<i>Araniella</i> sp.	Cucumber Spider	<i>Tetragnatha</i> sp.	a stretch-spider
<i>Enoplognatha ovata</i>	a comb-footed spider	<i>Eresus kollari</i>	Ladybird Spider
<i>cf Agroeca brunnea</i>	a sac-spider	<i>Aceria exilis</i>	a mite gall on Lime
<i>Pisaura mirabilis</i>	Nursery-web Spider	<i>Aceria lateannulatus</i>	a mite gall on Lime
<i>Oxyopes heterophthalmus</i>	Lynx Spider	<i>Aceria macrotrichus</i>	a mite gall on Hornbeam
Ephemeroptera Mayflies			
<i>Ephemerella danica</i>			
Orthoptera Grasshoppers and Crickets			
<i>cf Euthystira brachyptera</i>	a bright green grasshopper	<i>Isophya speciose</i>	a wingless green bush-cricket
<i>Poecilimon macedonicus</i>	a colourful bush-cricket	<i>Leptophyes punctatissima</i>	Speckled Bush-cricket
<i>Poecilimon thoracicus</i>	a bush-cricket	<i>Metrioptera roeselii</i>	Roesel's Bush-cricket
<i>Decticus verrucivorus</i>	Wart-biter	<i>Depressotetrix depressus</i>	a ground-hopper
<i>Tettigonia viridissima</i>	Great Green Bush-cricket	<i>Gryllus campestris</i>	Field Cricket
Neuroptera Lacewings and Antlions			
<i>Libelloides macaronius</i> an ascalaphid	<i>Chrysopa carnea</i> a green lacewing	<i>Osmylus fulvicephalus</i>	Giant Lacewing
Mecoptera Scorpion flies			
<i>Panorpa meridionalis</i>	a scorpion fly	<i>cf Limnephilus lunatus</i>	Cinnamon Sedge
Hemiptera Bugs			
<i>Spilostethus saxatilis</i>	a red-and-black ground bug	<i>Dolycoris baccarum</i>	Hairy Shield-bug
<i>Lygaeus equestris</i>	a red-and-black ground bug	<i>Tritomegas sexmaculatus</i>	Rambur's Pied Shield-bug
<i>Heterogaster urticae</i>	Nettle Bug	<i>Carpocoris fuscispinus</i>	a large brown shield-bug
<i>Camptopus lateralis</i>	a broad-headed bug	<i>Himacerus mirmicoides</i>	Ant Damsel-bug
<i>Deraeocoris ruber</i>	a brown-and-red plant bug	<i>Coreus marginatus</i>	Squash Bug
<i>Leptoterna dolabrata</i>	a plant bug	<i>Phymata crassipes</i>	Flattened Assassin-bug
<i>Closterotomus fulvomaculatus</i>	a blackish plant bug	<i>Notonecta</i> sp.	Back-swimmer
<i>Pyrrhocoris apterus</i>	Fire Bug	<i>Cercopis arcuate</i>	a large black-and-red froghopper
<i>Corizus hyoscyami</i>	a red-and-black bug	<i>Philaenus spumarius</i>	Common Froghopper
<i>Graphosoma italicum</i>	Millwall Bug	<i>Lepyronia coleoptrata</i>	a froghopper
<i>Eurydema oleracea</i>	a red-and-black shield-bug	<i>Aphrophora alni</i>	Alder Spittle-bug
<i>Eurydema ventralis</i>	a peach-and-black shield-bug	<i>Aphis fabae</i>	Black Bean Aphid on <i>Rumex</i>
<i>Palomena prasina</i>	Green Shield-bug	<i>Aphis sambuci</i>	Elder Aphid

Hymenoptera Bees, Wasps, Ants and Sawflies			
<i>Pontania proxima</i>	a sawfly bean-gall on willow	<i>Formica rufa</i>	Wood Ant
<i>Pontania pedunculi</i>	a sawfly gall on willow	<i>Xylocopa violacea</i>	Violet Carpenter-bee
<i>Tenthredo mesomela</i>	a sawfly with fluorescent green patches	<i>Apis mellifera</i>	Honeybee
<i>Megalodontes</i> sp.	a sawfly	<i>Bombus lapidaries</i>	Red-tailed Bumblebee
<i>Diplolepis rosae</i>	Robin's-pincushion Gall on Rose	<i>Bombus terrestris</i>	Buff-tailed Bumblebee
<i>Osmia</i> sp.	a mason bee	<i>Bombus pascuorum</i>	Common Carder-bee
<i>Polistes</i> sp.	a paper wasp	<i>Thyreus histrionicus</i>	a black-and-white bee
Diptera Flies			
<i>Aulagromyza coenigera</i>	a fly mine on Honeysuckle	<i>Poecilobithrus nobilitatus</i>	Semaphore Fly
<i>Phytomyza fulgens</i>	a fly mine on Clematis	<i>Chrysotoxum cautum</i>	a hoverfly
<i>Mikiola fagi</i>	a gall-midge on Beech	<i>Chrysotoxum festivum</i>	a hoverfly
<i>Dasineura urticae</i>	a gall-midge on Nettle	<i>Cheilosia illustrate</i>	a hoverfly
<i>Nephrotoma crocata</i>	a yellow-marked crane-fly	<i>Volucella pellucens</i>	Pellucid Hoverfly
<i>Tipula vernalis</i>	a brown crane-fly	<i>Volucella zonaria</i>	Hornet Hoverfly
<i>Hemipenthes morio</i>	a bee-fly	<i>Episyrphus balteatus</i>	Marmalade Hoverfly
<i>Anthrax anthrax</i>	a bee-fly	<i>Eristalis nemorum</i>	a hoverfly
<i>Stratiomys singularior</i>	Flecked General	<i>Myathropea florea</i>	Batman Hoverfly
<i>Tabanus cf autumnalis</i>	a horse-fly	<i>Sphaerophoria scripta</i>	a slender hoverfly
<i>Hybomitra bimaculata</i>	a stripe-eyed horse-fly	<i>Syrphus ribesii</i>	a hoverfly
<i>Rhago scolopaceus</i>	Snipe-fly	<i>Myopa picta</i>	a thick-headed fly
<i>Chrysopilus cristatus</i>	Black Snipe-fly	<i>Clytiomya continua</i>	a tachinid fly
<i>Empis tessellata</i>	a dance-fly		
Coleoptera Beetles			
<i>Carabus intricarius</i>	a huge purple ground beetle	<i>Phytoecia nigripes</i>	a longhorn beetle
<i>Cetonia aurata</i>	Rose Chafer	<i>Leptura aethiops</i>	a black longhorn beetle
<i>Protaetia affinis</i>	a metallic green chafer	<i>Pachytodes cerambyciformis</i>	a blotched longhorn beetle
<i>Hoplia argentea</i>	a small, iridescent chafer	<i>Agapanthia dahlii</i>	a greenish longhorn
<i>Eupotosia mirifaca</i>	a black chafer	<i>Musaria affinis</i>	a red-and-black longhorn beetle
<i>Polyphylla fullo</i>	Pine Chafer	<i>Stictoleptura maculicornis</i>	a brownish longhorn beetle
<i>Oxythrea funesta</i>	a spotted flower chafer	<i>Lagria hirta</i>	a hairy darkling beetle
<i>Trypocopris vernalis</i>	Spring Dumbledor	<i>Coccinella septempunctata</i>	Seven-spot Ladybird
<i>Geotrupes stercorarius</i>	Dor Beetle	<i>Harmonia axyridis</i>	Harlequin Ladybird
<i>Mylabris variabilis</i>	a red-and-black oil-beetle	<i>Subcoccinella 24-punctata</i>	24-spot Ladybird
<i>Rhagonycha fulva</i>	Hogweed Bonking-beetle	<i>Hippodamia variegata</i>	Adonis Ladybird
<i>Cantharis livida</i>	a soldier-beetle	<i>Ceratomegilla notata</i>	a ladybird
<i>Cantharis flavilabris</i>	a soldier-beetle	<i>Exochomus quadripustulatus</i>	Pine Ladybird
<i>Cantharis nigricans</i>	a soldier-beetle	<i>Blaps</i> sp.	Churchyard Beetle
<i>Cantharis pellucida</i>	a soldier-beetle	<i>Timarcha tenebricosa</i>	Bloody-nosed Beetle
<i>Cantharis obscura</i>	a soldier-beetle	<i>Leptinotarsa decemlineata</i>	Colorado Beetle
<i>Malachius bipustulatus</i>	Common Malachite Beetle	<i>Chrysomela populi</i>	Red Poplar Leaf-beetle
<i>Trichodes apiarius</i>	a red-and-black chequered beetle	<i>Chrysomela vigintipunctata</i>	Spotted Willow Leaf-beetle
<i>Luciola lusitanica</i>	Fire-fly	<i>cf Plagiosterna aenea</i>	a purple leaf-beetle
<i>Capnodis tenebricosa</i>	a jewel-beetle	<i>Chrysolina fastuosa</i>	a shiny, multi-coloured leaf-beetle
<i>Rutpela maculata</i>	Black-and-yellow Longhorn Beetle	<i>Chrysolina herbacea</i>	Mint Leaf-beetle
<i>Paracorymbia maculicornis</i>	a red-brown longhorn beetle	<i>Chrysolina polita</i>	a red-and-green leaf-beetle
<i>Anastrangalia sanguinolenta</i>	a reddish longhorn beetle	<i>Clytra quadripunctata</i>	a red, spotted leaf-beetle
<i>Stenurella melanura</i>	Black-striped Longhorn Beetle	<i>Cryptocephalus bipunctatus</i>	a red, spotted leaf-beetle
<i>Stenurella septempunctata</i>	a black-spotted, red longhorn	<i>Lilioceris lilii</i>	Lily Beetle
<i>Stenopterus rufus</i>	a swollen-thighed longhorn beetle	<i>Apoderus coryli</i>	Hazel Leaf-roller
<i>Rhagium inquisitor</i>	Inquisitive Longhorn		

FUNGI			
<i>Agaricus campestris</i>	Field Mushroom	<i>Gloeophyllum sepiarium</i>	Rusty-gilled Polypore
<i>Agaricus arvensis</i>	Horse Mushroom	<i>Stereum hirsutum</i>	False Turkey Tail
<i>Amanita pantherine</i>	Panther Cap	<i>Trametes versicolor</i>	Turkey Tail
<i>Amanita virosa/ verna</i>		<i>Fomitopsis pinicola</i>	Red-belted Bracket
<i>Clitocybe gibba</i>		<i>Pycnoporus cinnabarinus</i>	a spectacularly coloured bracket, orangey upper and bright magenta tints on the underside pores.
<i>Hygrocybe conica</i>	a waxcap + 1 unidentified species	<i>Lycoperdon perlatum</i>	a puffball
<i>Lactarius deterrimus</i>		<i>Lycoperdon utriformis</i>	a puffball
<i>Leucopaxillus giganteus</i>		<i>Mutinus caninus</i>	Dog Stinkhorn
<i>Marasmius oreades</i>	Fairy-ring Mushroom	<i>Hypocreah alutacea</i>	a club fungus, possibly extinct in UK
<i>Russula spp.</i>	at least 6 species	Coral fungi	at least two unidentified species
<i>Tricholoma spp.</i>		<i>Tremella mesenterica</i>	Orange Brain Fungus
<i>Boletus spp.</i>		<i>Aureobasidium microstictum</i>	Rust on Solomon's-seal
<i>Leccinum sp (possibly varicolor)</i>		<i>Phragmidium tuberculatum</i>	Rust on Rose
<i>Hydnus rufescens</i>	a tooth fungus	<i>Triphragmium ulmariae</i>	Rust on Meadowsweet
LICHENS			
Fruticose (Bush-like) species		Foliose (Leaf-like) species	
<i>Usnea ceratina</i>	Beard Lichen	<i>Xanthoria parietina</i>	Sunburst Lichen
<i>Usnea florida</i>		<i>Peltigera membranacea</i> ?	<i>Parmelia pastellifera</i> and other spp.
<i>Hypogymnia physodes</i>		<i>Peltigera didactyla</i>	<i>Lecanora muralis</i>
<i>Bryoria fuscescens</i>		<i>Lasalla pustulata</i>	Rock Tripe
<i>Cladonia spp. including furcata, foliacea, chlorophaeia and pyxidata</i>		<i>Caloplaca flavescens</i> and other spp.	
Crustose species		Powdery species	
<i>Rhizocarpon geographicum</i>	Map Lichen	<i>Fulgensia fulgens</i>	Scrambled Egg Lichen
<i>Pyrenula spp.</i>		<i>Lepraria incana</i>	
<i>Verrucaria spp.</i>			
<i>Candelariella (aurella ?)</i>			



Beard Lichen (Russell Gomm); Hornet Hoverfly; Gypsy Moth caterpillar.

PLANTS

FERNS AND ALLIES	
<i>Asplenium adiantum-nigrum</i>	Black Spleenwort
<i>Asplenium ruta-muraria</i>	Wall-rue
<i>Asplenium septentrionale</i>	Forking Spleenwort
<i>Asplenium trichomanes</i>	Maidenhair Spleenwort
<i>Ceterach officinarum</i>	Rustyback Fern
<i>Equisetum ramosissimum</i>	Branched Horsetail
<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>	Bracken
<i>Selaginella helvetica</i>	
CONIFERS	
<i>Abies alba</i>	Silver Fir
<i>Juniperus communis</i>	Juniper
<i>Picea abies</i>	Norway Spruce
<i>Pinus nigra</i>	Black Pine
<i>Pinus sylvestris</i>	Scots Pine
HIGHER PLANTS	
Aceraceae	Maple family
<i>Acer campestre</i>	Field Maple
<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>	Sycamore
Apiaceae	Carrot family
<i>Aegopodium podagraria</i>	Ground-elder
<i>Angelica sylvestris</i>	Wild Angelica
<i>Chaerophyllum aureum</i>	Golden Chervil
<i>Eryngium campestre</i>	Field Eryngo
<i>Heracleum mantegazzianum</i>	Giant Hogweed
<i>Heracleum sibiricum</i>	Green Hogweed
<i>Laserpitium siler</i>	Laserwort
<i>Orlaya grandiflora</i>	White Laceflower
<i>Pastinaca hirsuta</i>	Hairy Parsnip
<i>Sanicula europaea</i>	Sanicle
<i>Seseli rhodopeum</i>	
<i>Seseli rigidum</i>	Rigid Moon-carrot
Aristolochiaceae	Birthwort family
<i>Asarum europaeum</i>	Asarabacca
Asclepiadaceae	Milkweed family
<i>Vincetoxicum hirundinaria</i>	Swallow-wort
Asteraceae	Daisy family
<i>Achillea clypeolata</i>	Yellow Yarrow
<i>Achillea nobilis</i>	Noble Yarrow
<i>Anthemis tinctoria</i>	Yellow Chamomile
<i>Arctium minus</i>	Lesser Burdock
<i>Artemisia vulgaris</i>	Mugwort
<i>Aster alpinus</i>	Alpine Aster
<i>Aster amellus</i>	European Michaelmas-daisy
<i>Carduus thoermeri</i>	
<i>Carlina acanthifolia</i>	Acanthus-leaved Carline-thistle
<i>Carlina corymbosa</i>	Clustered Carline-thistle
<i>Centaurea nervosa</i>	
<i>Centaurea triumfettii</i>	Squarrose Knapweed
<i>Cirsium appendiculatum</i>	Balkan Thistle
<i>Cirsium ligulare</i>	
<i>Erigeron acris</i>	Blue Fleabane
<i>Hypochaeris maculata</i>	Spotted Cat's-ear
<i>Inula aschersoniana</i>	
<i>Inula hirta</i>	
<i>Jurinea mollis</i>	
<i>Leontodon hispidus</i>	Hairy Hawkbit
<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>	Ox-eye Daisy
<i>Mycelis muralis</i>	Wall-lettuce
<i>Petasites hybridus</i>	Butterbur
<i>Tanacetum corymbosum</i>	
<i>Telekia speciosa</i>	Large Yellow Ox-eye
<i>Tragopogon pratensis</i>	Goat's-beard
<i>Tussilago farfara</i>	Colt's-foot

Betulaceae	Birch family
<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>	Alder
<i>Alnus viridis</i>	Green Alder
Boraginaceae Borage family	
<i>Anchusa barrelieri</i>	False Alkanet
<i>Cynoglossum officinale</i>	Hound's-tongue
<i>Cynoglossum officinale</i> ssp. <i>rotatum</i>	
<i>Echium vulgare</i>	Viper's-bugloss
<i>Nonea pulla</i>	
<i>Onosma arenarium</i>	Golden-drops
<i>Onosma rhodopaea</i>	Rhodope Golden-drops
<i>Sympytum ottomanum</i>	Turkish Comfrey
Brassicaceae Cabbage family	
<i>Arabis turrita</i>	Towercress
<i>Aurinia saxatilis</i>	
<i>Berteroa incana</i>	
<i>Cardamine impatiens</i>	Narrow-leaved Bittercress
Campanulaceae Bellflower family	
<i>Asyneuma limonifolium</i>	
<i>Campanula glomerata</i>	Clustered Bellflower
<i>Campanula lanata</i>	
<i>Campanula lingulata</i>	
<i>Campanula moesiaca</i>	
<i>Campanula orphanidea</i>	
<i>Campanula scheuchzeri</i>	
<i>Campanula sparsa</i>	
<i>Trachelium rumelianum</i>	Throatwort
Caprifoliaceae Honeysuckle family	
<i>Lonicera xylosteum</i>	Fly Honeysuckle
<i>Sambucus ebulus</i>	Dwarf Elder
<i>Sambucus nigra</i>	Elder
<i>Viburnum lantana</i>	Wayfaring-tree
Caryophyllaceae Campion family	
<i>Arenaria rhodopaea</i>	Rhodope Sandwort
<i>Cerastium decalvans</i>	
<i>Dianthus deltoides</i>	Maiden Pink
<i>Dianthus giganteus</i>	Large Pink
<i>Dianthus petraeus</i>	Rock Pink
<i>Herniaria glabra</i>	Smooth Rupturewort
<i>Lychnis coronaria</i>	Rose Campion
<i>Lychnis flos-cuculi</i>	Ragged-robin
<i>Lychnis viscaria</i>	Sticky Catchfly
<i>Minuartia verna</i>	Spring Sandwort
<i>Moenchia mantica</i>	
<i>Myosoton aquaticum</i>	Water Chickweed
<i>Scleranthus perennis</i>	Perennial Knawel
<i>Silene armeria</i>	
<i>Silene conica</i>	Conical Catchfly
<i>Silene dichotoma</i>	Forked Catchfly
<i>Silene fabrioides</i>	
<i>Silene noctiflora</i>	Night-flowered Catchfly
<i>Silene otites</i>	Spanish Catchfly
<i>Silene roemerii</i>	
<i>Silene saxifraga</i>	
<i>Silene viridiflora</i>	
<i>Silene vulgaris</i>	Bladder Campion
Celastraceae Spindle family	
<i>Euonymus latifolius</i>	
Cistaceae Rock-rose family	
<i>Fumana procumbens</i>	
<i>Helianthemum nummularium</i>	Rock-rose
Clusiaceae St. John's-wort family	
<i>Hypericum cerastoides</i>	Aaron's Beard
<i>Hypericum perforatum</i>	Perforate St. John's-wort
Cornaceae Dogwood family	
<i>Cornus mas</i>	Cornelian-cherry
<i>Cornus sanguinea</i>	Dogwood

Corylaceae Hazel family	
<i>Carpinus orientalis</i>	Eastern Hornbeam
<i>Corylus avellana</i>	Hazel
<i>Ostrya carpinifolia</i>	Hop-hornbeam
Crassulaceae Stonecrop family	
<i>Sedum acre</i>	Biting Stonecrop
<i>Sedum album</i>	White Stonecrop
<i>Sedum hispanicum</i>	Glaucous Stonecrop
Cuscutaceae Dodder family	
<i>Cuscuta epithymum</i>	Common Dodder
Cyperaceae Sedge family	
<i>Carex hirta</i>	Hairy Sedge
<i>Eriophorum latifolium</i>	Broad-leaved Cotton-grass
Dipsacaceae Teasel family	
<i>Knautia arvensis</i>	Field Scabious
<i>Knautia drymeia</i>	Hungarian Widow-flower
<i>Morina persica</i>	Persian Whorlflower
<i>Scabiosa rhodopensis</i>	Rhodopean Scabious
Euphorbiaceae Spurge family	
<i>Euphorbia amygdaloides</i>	Wood Spurge
<i>Euphorbia cyparissias</i>	Cypress Spurge
<i>Euphorbia myrsinifolia</i>	Rock Spurge
<i>Euphorbia nicaeensis</i>	
<i>Euphorbia seguieriana</i>	
<i>Mercurialis ovata</i>	
Fabaceae Pea family	
<i>Anthyllis vulneraria</i>	Kidney-vetch
ssp. <i>bulgarica</i>	
<i>Astragalus angustifolius</i>	Spiny Milk-vetch
<i>Astragalus glycyphyllos</i>	Wild Liquorice
<i>Chamaecytisus hirsutus</i>	Clustered Broom
<i>Coronilla emerus</i>	Scorpion-vetch
<i>Coronilla varia</i>	Crown Vetch
<i>Dorycnium herbaceum</i>	Prostrate Canary-clover
<i>Genista carinalis</i>	
<i>Genista januensis</i>	Genoa Broom
<i>Genista rutilica</i>	
<i>Hippocrepis comosa</i>	Horseshoe Vetch
<i>Lathyrus laxiflorus</i>	
<i>Lathyrus niger</i>	Black Pea
<i>Lathyrus pratensis</i>	Meadow Vetchling
<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>	Bird's-foot-trefoil
<i>Medicago lupulina</i>	Black Medick
<i>Melilotus albus</i>	White Melilot
<i>Onobrychis alba</i>	White Sainfoin
<i>Onobrychis vicifolia</i>	Sainfoin
<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>	False Acacia
<i>Trifolium alpestre</i>	Purple Globe Clover
<i>Trifolium aureum</i>	Large Hop Trefoil
<i>Trifolium glomeratum</i>	Clustered Clover
<i>Trifolium hybridum</i>	Alsike Clover
<i>Trifolium incarnatum</i>	Long-headed Clover
ssp. <i>molinieri</i>	
<i>Trifolium medium</i>	Zig-zag Clover
ssp. <i>balcanicum</i>	
<i>Trifolium montanum</i>	
<i>Trifolium ochroleucon</i>	Sulphur Clover
<i>Trifolium pannonicum</i>	
<i>Trifolium pratense</i>	Red Clover
<i>Trifolium spadiceum</i>	
<i>Vicia cassubica</i>	
<i>Vicia cracca</i>	Tufted Vetch
Fagaceae Beech family	
<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>	Beech
ssp. <i>moesiaca</i>	
<i>Quercus dalechampii</i>	Dalechamp's Oak
Geraniaceae Crane's-bill family	
<i>Geranium dissectum</i>	Cut-leaved Crane's-bill
<i>Geranium lucidum</i>	Shining Crane's-bill

Geraniaceae (cont'd)	
<i>Geranium macrorrhizum</i>	Rock Crane's-bill
<i>Geranium pyrenaicum</i>	Pyrenean Crane's-bill
<i>Geranium robertianum</i>	Herb-Robert
<i>Geranium sanguineum</i>	Bloody Crane's-bill
Gesneriaceae African-violet family	
<i>Haberlea rhodopensis</i>	Rhodopean Haberlea
Globulariaceae Globularia family	
<i>Globularia aphyllanthes</i>	
<i>Globularia cordifolia</i>	Matted Globularia
Iridaceae Iris family	
<i>Gladiolus palustris</i>	Marsh Gladiolus
Juglandaceae Walnut family	
<i>Juglans regia</i>	Walnut
Lamiaceae Mint family	
<i>Acinos alpinus</i>	Alpine Basil-thyme
<i>Acinos arvensis</i>	Basil-thyme
<i>Ajuga laxmannii</i>	Laxmann's Bugle
<i>Ajuga pyramidalis</i>	Pyramidal Bugle
<i>Lamium amplexicaule</i>	Henbit Dead-nettle
<i>Lamium garganicum</i>	Large Red Dead-nettle
<i>Lamium maculatum</i>	Spotted Dead-nettle
<i>Marrubium frivaldszkyanum</i>	
<i>Mentha aquatica</i>	Water Mint
<i>Mentha spicata</i>	Spear Mint
<i>Micromeria dalmatica</i>	
<i>Nepeta nuda</i>	Hairless Catmint
<i>Prunella laciniata</i>	Cut-leaved Self-heal
<i>Prunella vulgaris</i>	Self-heal
<i>Salvia argentea</i>	Silver Sage
<i>Salvia sclarea</i>	Clary
<i>Salvia verticillata</i>	Whorled Clary
<i>Scutellaria altissima</i>	Tall Skullcap
<i>Sideritis scardica</i>	Mountain Tea
<i>Sideritis montana</i>	Ironwort
<i>Stachys alpina</i>	Alpine Woundwort
<i>Stachys germanica</i>	Limestone Woundwort
<i>Stachys officinalis</i>	Betony
<i>Stachys recta</i>	Yellow Woundwort
<i>Teucrium chamaedrys</i>	Wall Germander
Thymus sp.	Thyme
Liliaceae Lily family	
<i>Anthericum liliago</i>	St Bernard's Lily
<i>Colchicum autumnale</i>	Meadow Saffron
<i>Lilium martagon</i>	Martagon Lily
<i>Lilium rhodopaeum</i>	Rhodope Lily
<i>Muscaris comosum</i>	Tassel Hyacinth
<i>Ornithogalum montanum</i>	Mountain Star-of-Bethlehem
<i>Polygonatum multiflorum</i>	Solomon's-seal
<i>Polygonatum odoratum</i>	Angular Solomon's-seal
<i>Veratrum lobelianum</i>	False-helleborine
Linaceae Flax family	
<i>Linum capitatum</i>	Yellow Flax
<i>Linum catharticum</i>	Purguing Flax
<i>Linum tenuifolium</i>	
Lythraceae Purple-loosestrife family	
<i>Lythrum salicaria</i>	Purple-loosestrife
Monotropaceae Bird's-nests	
<i>Monotropa hypopitys</i>	Yellow Bird's-nest
Moraceae Fig family	
<i>Ficus carica</i>	Wild Fig
Oleaceae Olive family	
<i>Fraxinus ornus</i>	Manna Ash
Onagraceae Willowherb family	
<i>Chamerion angustifolium</i>	Rose-bay Willowherb
<i>Epilobium montanum</i>	Broad-leaved Willowherb

Orchidaceae	Orchid family
<i>Anacamptis pyramidalis</i>	Pyramidal Orchid
<i>Cephalanthera damasonium</i>	White Helleborine
<i>Cephalanthera rubra</i>	Red Helleborine
<i>Coeloglossum viride</i>	Frog Orchid
<i>Coralorrhiza trifida</i>	Coral-root Orchid
<i>Dactylorhiza baumanniana</i>	Baumann's Marsh-orchid
<i>Dactylorhiza cordigera</i>	Heart-flowered Marsh-orchid
<i>Dactylorhiza saccifera</i>	Sac-flowered Orchid
<i>Epipactis helleborine</i>	Broad-leaved Helleborine
<i>Epipactis microphylla</i>	Small-leaved Helleborine
<i>Gymnadenia conopsea</i>	Fragrant Orchid
<i>Listera ovata</i>	Common Twayblade
<i>Neotinea ustulata</i>	Burnt Orchid
<i>Neottia nidus-avis</i>	Bird's-nest Orchid
<i>Ophrys insectifera</i>	Fly Orchid
<i>Orchis coriophora</i>	Bug Orchid
<i>Orchis elegans</i>	Elegant Orchid
<i>Orchis pinetorum</i>	Pinewood Orchid
<i>Platanthera chlorantha</i>	Greater Butterfly-orchid
Orobanchaceae	Broomrape family
<i>Orobanche alba</i>	Thyme Broomrape
Papaveraceae	Poppy family
<i>Chelidonium majus</i>	Greater Celandine
<i>Papaver rhoeas</i>	Common Poppy
Plantaginaceae	Plantian family
<i>Plantago media</i>	Hoary Plantain
<i>Plantago subulata</i>	Awl-leaved Plantain
Plumbaginaceae	Sea-lavender family
<i>Armeria rumelica</i>	
Poaceae	Grass family
<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>	False Oat-grass
<i>Briza media</i>	Quaking-grass
<i>Chrysopogon gryllus</i>	
<i>Cynosurus cristatus</i>	Crested Dog's-tail
<i>Hordeelymus europaeus</i>	Wood Barley
<i>Melica uniflora</i>	Wood Melick
<i>Milium effusum</i>	Wood Millet
<i>Stipa pennata</i>	Angels'-hair
Polygalaceae	Milkwort family
<i>Polygala major</i>	Large Milkwort
<i>Polygala vulgaris</i>	Common Milkwort
Polygonaceae	Dock family
<i>Polygonum bistorta</i>	Bistort
Primulaceae	Primrose family
<i>Lysimachia punctata</i>	Dotted Loosestrife
<i>Primula elatior</i>	Oxlip
<i>Primula vulgaris</i>	Primrose
Pyrolaceae	Wintergreen family
<i>Orthilia secunda</i>	Toothed Wintergreen
<i>Pyrola chlorantha</i>	Yellow Wintergreen
Ranunculaceae	Buttercup family
<i>Aquilegia vulgaris</i>	Columbine
<i>Hepatica nobilis</i>	Hepatica
<i>Ranunculus serbicus</i>	
<i>Thalictrum aquilegifolium</i>	Greater Meadow-rue
<i>Thalictrum minus</i>	Lesser Meadow-rue
Rhamnaceae	Buckthorn family
<i>Frangula alnus</i>	Alder-buckthorn

Rosaceae	Rose family
<i>Agrimonia eupatoria</i>	Agrimony
<i>Filipendula ulmaria</i>	Meadowsweet
<i>Filipendula vulgaris</i>	Dropwort
<i>Fragaria vesca</i>	Wild Strawberry
<i>Geum coccineum</i>	
<i>Potentilla argentea</i>	Hoary Cinquefoil
<i>Potentilla borisi-regis</i>	King Boris's Cinquefoil
<i>Potentilla erecta</i>	T tormentil
<i>Potentilla recta</i>	Sulphur Cinquefoil
<i>Rosa gallica</i>	
<i>Rubus canescens</i>	Hoary Bramble
<i>Rubus idaeus</i>	Raspberry
<i>Sanguisorba minor</i>	Salad Burnet
<i>Sorbus aria</i>	Whitebeam
<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>	Rowan
<i>Sorbus torminalis</i>	Wild Service-tree
<i>Spiraea salicifolia</i>	Bridewort
Rubiaceae	Bedstraw family
<i>Cruciata laevisipes</i>	Crosswort
<i>Galium verum</i>	Lady's Bedstraw
Salicaceae	Willow family
<i>Populus tremula</i>	Aspen
<i>Salix alba</i>	White Willow
<i>Salix purpurea</i>	Purple Willow
Saxifragaceae	Saxifrage family
<i>Saxifraga rotundifolia</i>	Round-leaved Saxifrage
<i>Saxifraga sempervivum</i>	Evergreen Saxifrage
<i>Saxifraga strobryni</i>	
Scrophulariaceae	Figwort family
<i>Digitalis lanata</i>	Grecian Foxglove
<i>Digitalis viridiflora</i>	Green Foxglove
<i>Euphrasia sp.</i>	Eyebright
<i>Linaria arvensis</i>	Common Toadflax
<i>Linaria genistifolia</i>	Balkan Toadflax
<i>Melampyrum sylvaticum</i>	Wood Cow-wheat
<i>Rhinanthus minor</i>	Yellow-rattle
<i>Rhinanthus wagneri</i>	
<i>Scrophularia aestivalis</i>	
<i>Scrophularia scopolii</i>	Italian Figwort
<i>Verbascum longifolium</i>	
<i>Verbascum speciosum</i>	
<i>Veronica austriaca</i>	
<i>Veronica austriaca</i> ssp. <i>jacquinii</i>	
<i>Veronica urticifolia</i>	Nettle-leaved Speedwell
Solanaceae	Nightshade Family
<i>Hyoscyamus niger</i>	Henbane
Thymelaeaceae	Daphne family
<i>Daphne oleoides</i>	
Tiliaceae	Lime family
<i>Tilia cordata</i>	Small-leaved Lime
Urticaceae	Nettle family
<i>Parietaria officinalis</i>	Large Pellitory-of-the-wall
<i>Urtica dioica</i>	Stinging Nettle
Valerianaceae	Valerian family
<i>Valeriana montana</i>	Dwarf Valerian
<i>Valeriana officinalis</i>	Common Valerian
Violaceae	Violet family
<i>Viola tricolor</i>	Wild Pansy