



Honeyguide

WILDLIFE HOLIDAYS

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Morocco
14 – 21 March 2023

Marie Watt
Val Pearce
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Participants
Tim & Phylida Wright
Philip & Jackie Jenkins
Judy Stolz
Jo Simons and Gill Cartwright

Ann Greenizan
Will Warham
Julie Durdin

Leaders
Richard Hobbs, Sally Ward and Chris Durdin.
Report by Chris Durdin, flower list by Richard Hobbs.



Informal group photos. In the field (JS); hats can be borrowed from Atlas Kasbah.

Photos, all taken on the holiday, by Ann Greenizan, Judy Stolz, Tim Wright (see initials);
other photos by Chris Durdin.

Cover, top: Moussier's redstart (TW) and *Cladanthus arabicus*. Bottom: Atlas Kasbah.

We stayed at Atlas Kasbah Ecolodge <http://atlaskasbah.com/en/>.

Below, sheep come past Atlas Kasbah's outside wall.



This holiday, as for every Honeyguide holiday, also puts something into conservation in our host country by way of a contribution to the wildlife that we enjoyed. The conservation contribution of £40 per person was supplemented by Gift Aid and we were able to give £760 to GREPOM/BirdLife Morocco – Groupe de Recherche pour la Protection des Oiseaux au Maroc. This is towards the cost of wardens to safeguard nesting bald ibises.

Dr Khadija Bourass, Directrice executive of GREPOM/BirdLife Maroc, says: "I would like to thank you for your interest in our cause and your continued support of our association." As at the end of March 2023, the total for all conservation contributions through Honeyguide since 1991 was £146,377.

DAILY DIARY

Tuesday 14 March – Agadir and Atlas Kasbah

The easyJet flight to Agadir passed routinely and we stepped out of the plane into Moroccan warmth, noting a spotless starling as we entered the terminal. Passport checks were OK if a little slow, no Covid track-and-trace form was needed despite the gov.uk advice, and bags collected. We were met by a driver with an Atlas Kasbah sign, and we were soon on the way for the half hour drive to Atlas Kasbah Hotel, looking impressive on a hilltop as we approached. Basil tea and an excellent lunch of salad and soup soon followed. Four red-rumped swallows flew around outside as we ate. We had time to settle in and unpack.

For the afternoon, Richard led us through the rich gardens of Atlas Kasbah and out into the adjacent countryside, leaving behind the tame house bunting around the buildings. In the garden we found at least three Sahara marsh frogs by the stepped water filtration system. Bulbuls were calling and we found them in a tree.



Sahara marsh frog (AG); toadflax *Linaria maroccana*; *Volutaria maroccana* with a clouded yellow (TW).

Outside the Atlas Kasbah compound, it was good to see plenty of flowers – dry winters are getting all too frequent. Yellow *Cladanthus arabicus* and lilac-coloured *Volutaria maroccana* were two showy flowers by the roadside. We continued to find lots of flowers – you couldn't miss them – some of the prettiest of which were Moroccan toadflax *Linaria maroccana*, brown bells *Dipcadi* and Barbary nut irises. The singing Thekla lark eventually showed quite well and we heard a chirp bunting.

There were butterflies everywhere, generally moving too fast to see well, though Cleopatra, Moroccan orange-tip, painted lady and Bath white were all identified on the wing. A small brown butterfly settled and allowed a photograph, leading to an early write-in onto the checklists: Moroccan hairstreak. A darkling beetle was admired, as was a red-winged grasshopper each time it flew.



Moroccan hairstreak; a field of hollow-leaved asphodel.

A hoopoe flew through the argan trees on the return part of the circuit, and we passed a field covered in hollow-leaved asphodel.

The Gatwick contingent had already been joined by Judy, who arrived earlier from her part of France. During the evening the group became complete after Philip and Jackie arrived from Geneva and Will completed his epic journey from Ireland.

Wednesday 15 March – local walks

It was distinctly chilly and a little misty before breakfast, which started at 8am, but that didn't last. We set off, at a very gentle pace, at 9:30. We paused by the Sahara marsh frogs, partly for yesterday's late arrivals to see them, and also as a tree pipit was perching in an argan tree, a brilliant view of a resting migrant. A chiffchaff appeared briefly as did African chaffinches in Atlas Kasbah's garden, plus the 'usual' suspects' of common bulbuls and house bunting. We admired the complex web of a cage spider.

We went down the road to a new location for the women's cooperative shop and recapped on many of the wild flowers from yesterday. *Fagonia cretica* was now numerous, in flower, whereas yesterday afternoon their flowers were closed. We found a few *Catanche arenaria* by the roadside. A woodchat shrike appeared all too briefly on a wire. A man led several of the group into his garden, where he showed some his vegetables, including rocket and tomatoes, and explained about how argan fruits are used – with the kernel used for oils, cosmetics, face creams etc.



Catanche arenaria; *Fagonia cretica*; oleander seed-bugs (photographed on 17 March).

We walked back past Atlas Kasbah's entrance and towards the village, looping left along the side of a very large wadi. There were good views of Thekla lark, Moroccan orange-tip and Cleopatra butterflies, plus a choice of a scramble or telescope view for tassel hyacinth. The advance party found a very obliging Barbary ground squirrel on a rock, which stayed put for the tailenders who had been watching a Moussier's redstart. Later we saw several ground squirrels scampering around a more distant sandy bank. The sound of bee-eaters prompted us to look up and we found half a dozen against another unusual sighting – a cloud.

We continued a loop that brought us through the village which, Richard remarked, was looking cleaner and in better condition than on previous visits. Twice we found Spanish festoon butterflies. On oleander we stopped to look at oleander seed-bugs. Jo and Gill were alert to a black wheatear in the heart of the village. Here and along the road we exchanged waves and 'bonjours' with many children and adults before heading back to base for lunch. That lunch was another delicious salad with sage tea afterwards.



Barbary ground squirrel, subalpine warbler (TW).

Most of us took another walk this afternoon, along the same track as yesterday and going a little bit farther. We had very good views of a woodchat shrike, though that took a little patience as it moved from perch to perch. Ground-pine was a nice find, to add to yesterday's many flowers. At the far point that we reached, there was a group of helmeted guineafowls in one direction – no longer a wild bird in Morocco – and a cluster of small birds moving in and around a dead argan tree, though often dropping to feed on the ground. These included subalpine warblers, chiffchaffs, a blackcap and at least three tree pipits. Then we found a boldly marked Spanish sparrow perching on a treetop.

Back at Atlas Kasbah, Richard ran a tutorial on a selection of the wild flowers we'd seen. That was followed by Hélène introducing and Hassan demonstrating in their 'tea ceremony', as we sat, shoes off, in the salon. It's all about the bubbles – the tea is poured from a height, with some skill – in terms of flavour, though the ceremony, always done by a man, is a big part of tea-making and drinking. Curiously, it's only been an important part of Moroccan life since tea drinking was encouraged by our Queen Victoria to the then king of Morocco. They also told us a little of the Berber language and culture, which until recently were suppressed in favour of Arabic though now are accepted and encouraged.

At the end of dinner, as dusk fell, I heard a distant red-necked nightjar, and the occupants of two rooms said they'd heard the same sound last night. It fell silent as soon as people went outside. Jupiter was equally uncooperative, fading away behind a low bank of cloud, though Venus was bright in the night sky.

Thursday 16 March – Bald Ibises and Cap Rhir

A small flock of bee-eaters could be seen and heard from the terrace for a lucky few as we went into breakfast on another misty morning. After breakfast, from the swimming pool terrace, most of us had a great view of a perched male cirl bunting.

We had two buses to take our large group today – plus the enormous cool box full of picnics. First stop was at a very large supermarket, mostly to get Moroccan cash from ATMs and to buy wine, for which Atlas Kasbah doesn't have a licence but is happy to keep for guests.



The group at Cap Rhir; cactus-like *Euphorbia officinarum*.

It was quite a long drive around the edge of Agadir, past the port and north up the coast. The habitat almost everywhere was patchy, low coastal scrub dominated by spiny euphorbias, and we stopped to explore some of this by the lighthouse at Cap Rhir. Escorted by several local children, some requesting pens, Richard took us through the many unusual flowers here. These included a Duke-of Argyle's tea plant, a tiny *Convolvulus pentaploides*, *Warionia saharae* with large yellow flowers in which two flower chafers buried themselves, an allium, a prostrate echium, a sea-lavender and a large-flowered storksbill *Erodium jahandiezianum*. There was a chill in the breeze, though some shelter by a building by the shore. From here, scanning the sea, there was a steady procession of gannets moving past and a few auks, probably guillemots, on the sea. Despite the wind we found a butterfly that settled, so allowing us to be sure that it was a greenish black-tip. As we neared the lighthouse, suddenly several small birds appeared on a spiny bush. One was a migrant common redstart, another a subalpine warbler and the third a house sparrow.



Erodium jahandiezianum on the rocks at Cap Rhir.

After driving through Tamri and its many shops selling huge hands of bananas, we pulled off the road where the sign showed that this bit of the coast is part of the Souss-Massa National Park, and where bald ibises might be seen. However, the immediate priority was first to use some cover for a call of nature, then settle down to eat picnics. While we ate a smart black-eared wheatear appeared, perching in the open so enabling excellent telescope views for everyone.

A feature of this place today that struck Richard, Sally and me was how many people were here, considering it is the breeding site for one of the rarest birds in the Western Palearctic. There were various vehicles, an obvious parking area, and a scattering of people with surfing gear or just chilling. A warden from GREPOM appeared and ensured that we kept away from the nesting cliffs of the bald ibises, and we went up the hill to join four guys from Botswana who were also here hoping to see this iconic species. A thermal of about 50 white storks eased slowly north. We waited and, within a fairly short period of time, three or four bald ibises flew past us, heading off to feed no doubt, displaying an elegance in flight contrasting with their less than good looks on the ground, if we'd seen them there. A great grey shrike showed well on the return walk up the hill. As Philip and I approached the group, we found an approachable spiny-footed lizard by a sand dune.



Part of the thermal of white storks over Tamri (TW).

On the return journey south, we stopped for a while in the busy seaside town of Taghazoute. Some paddled, others went for tea and/or ice cream. Those at the Panorama bar overlooked a rocky coast where a whimbrel was feeding with obvious success among the mussels.

Back at base, several group members took part in a short demonstration about calligraphy. Unsurprisingly, several bottles of wine bought earlier were uncorked and sampled either before or with tonight's dinner of eel and vegetables cooked in tajines.

Friday 17 March – Askoti Gorge

A very short drive took us to the start of this morning's walk into Askoti Gorge, accompanied by local guide Ahmed. Ahmed spoke only Berber and a little French, but that was enough for the arrangement to work. We started with an excellent view of Moussier's redstart, hoopoes on a tree quite a way up the slope and our first large bird of prey: a marsh harrier on passage. By the path was a fine mullein with large flowers, *Verbascum maroccana*. Richard introduced us to two species of sumach: *Rhus pentaphylla* and *Rhus trifoliata*, an attractively scented thyme *Thymus maroccana* and lots of toothed lavender. Oleander had big concentrations of the oleander seed bugs we'd seen the day before yesterday. Some of us had very brief views of a flying Barbary partridge, though mostly we just heard them.

The heart of the gorge had the type of rocks that really should have a blue rock thrush, and so it proved, though a distant view through the telescope. Kestrels were up there, too. We'd seen African chaffinches and fly-past greenfinches and to those we could now add the sound and fleeting glimpses of serins. An odd-looking butterfly settled on a dock, and it took a while to get all-round agreement that it was a Spanish festoon with an exceptionally dark yellow background coloration. Caper plants were growing from rock cracks and a stone water channel had large, greyish tadpoles and scores of small leeches.



Askoti Gorge; from the other side of the gorge's narrow point, looking for frogs.



Spanish festoon on *Rumex vesicarius*; *Androcymbium gramineum*; *Verbascum maroccana*.

We had time to go on a little farther, which took a little care alongside a drainage channel, leading to a large, concreted water body. Here we were entertained by calling and scuffling Sahara marsh frogs. Before then,

and coming from the same area, we'd heard what could pass as a quiet pneumatic drill and may well have been African green toad. It had seemed quite a long walk into the heart of the gorge yet, in the way of these things, not nearly as far on the way back, during which we saw the white blooms of *Androcymbium gramineum*, a low-growing Colchicum-type of flower. We drove a short distance to a shady spot for lunch.

The group split for the afternoon, with some coming back to base and others taking a long walk, guided by Ahmed, back to Atlas Kasbah. Flowers were mainly of arable fields, including uncountable Moroccan toadflaxes and hollow-leaved asphodels. By now Thekla larks and house buntings didn't need any comment, though happily some other birds did. One was the best kestrel on show so far. Another was a cooperative tawny pipit on the ground among some rocks and low vegetation. Ann found a great grey shrike – just a glimpse for me as it flew off. Perhaps best of all, back in the village below Atlas Kasbah, two little owls flew up and perched in full view, the nearer on a tree and the farther away bird on a wall of concrete blocks.

Many of the group gathered in and around the swimming pool. Once the pool was clear of us large mammals, we were entertained by swallows dipping into the water. Bee-eaters buzzed around while Richard was going through plant sightings on the terrace in the early evening sunshine.



Tawny pipit; little owl; great grey shrike (TW).

Saturday 18 March – Souss-Massa National Park

We had our usual leisurely breakfast and 9:30 departure before a surprisingly long drive, on account of road issues that our drivers had to avoid, before we arrived at Oued Massa, the river Massa in the Souss-Massa National Park. We parked in the shade and our morning consisted of a walk along the road that runs parallel to and overlooks the river. Almost immediately there was a little egret and a spoonbill, both feeding actively. We spent some time looking at a group of waders: black-winged stilts, two black-tailed godwits and several ruffs, the ruffs all in winter plumage. A greenshank joined them. The scrub had Sardinian warblers, we could hear bursts of Cetti's warbler from near the river and we found our first stonechat. There were chiffchaffs in several places and our first common sandpiper.



Spoonbill (AG); ice-plant *Mesembryanthemum crystallinum*; a confiding zitting cisticola (AG).

On the first roadside there were fine specimens of the ice-plant *Mesembryanthemum crystallinum*, tall yellow umbellifers that were *Ferula tingitana* and a flowering thorn-apple. We'd been getting used to a gentle purple haze on inland fields being Moroccan flax; here it was the lovely stock *Malcomia littorea*.

A little farther along there were two black-eared wheatears on drier ground. Then, by some alfalfa crops, a fan-tailed warbler (*Zitting cisticola*) that twice perched on a fence very close to us. Moussier's redstarts, male and female, fed in the nearby field. A dark dove perched on a water pipe: our first laughing dove. Sadly, it didn't linger.

Richard had been searching among the shrubby sea-blite scrub for a peculiar parasitic plant, not helped by some of the vegetation having been cleared away to widen the road. Happily, there they were on the other side of the road, as we went back up the gentle hill towards the bus: desert thumbs *Cynomorium coccineum* (various other names are used, including the misleading Maltese fungus), with attendant flies, which pollinate it. The group then became a bit more spread out: those with me heard a quail calling from crops across the river, and a plain tiger (African monarch) butterfly dashed past.



Oued Massa; desert thumbs.

We had our picnics near the parked buses, during which a flock of about 25 bee-eaters came over. Here some of us were close enough to patrolling dragonflies to see they were blue emperors, and Lucy later showed us a photo she'd taken this morning of a red-veined darter.

We then headed towards the northern edge of the National Park – though that meant quite a drive – to reach the Souss estuary. Just before we arrived, there was a large flock of white storks in the sky, and they were again in the air later as we were leaving. We immediately found a tight group of avocets, the first of many wintering waders that would soon be heading towards northern Europe. Just one flamingo was here today, and this one had an injured wing, so presumably had been left behind from a bigger group. But at least it fed actively, so we could see it properly: so often their heads are tucked in. A family party of mallards, curlew, shelducks, redshanks and another greenshank were added to the tally. Oystercatchers flew to and fro on several occasions. Some grey plovers flew into the far water's edge and through the scope it was apparent that there were ringed plovers with them, then a single knot, too. By now we were level with the big flocks of gulls and terns, which would take to the air when disturbed – not by us – and then you could hear the raucous calls of the many Sandwich terns. The flock included our first black-headed gulls, itself a 'write-in' on the checklist, though I couldn't find any rarer gull species.

A helpfully tame Magreb magpie landed by some of us, and the blue patch behind its eye was obvious. While walking back to the buses we added two birds to our list: our first woodpigeon flew over, and a lark in this rather bare area was our first crested lark. Then it was a short journey home.

Some of us heard the red-necked nightjar again at dusk, though we failed again to see the International Space Station.



Greater flamingo, an injured bird; Magreb magpie (TW).

Sunday 19 March – Agadir souk and Paradise Valley

Unbeknown to any of us, including the man that prepared breakfast, there was a clock change this morning. Some smart phones realised, and we learned it was to do with Ramadan. So most of us had breakfast nearer 7am than 8am and there was time to potter around Atlas Kasbah before a slightly earlier start than usual, at 9:15. Hassan had advised that morning would be a quiet time to visit the souk at Agadir. We were dropped off at gate 6 (there are many gates) and had an enjoyable three-quarters of an hour perusing, photographing and buying various things, from figs to slippers to body cream.



In Agadir's souk.

It was an hour or so's drive to Paradise Valley, starting at a café where we had drinks and took it in turns to use the single loo. Paradise Valley is, essentially, a long valley with a road following the river, which had a reasonable amount of water in it this year. At our first stop we found terrapins and some saw a Bibron's agama. A lesser emperor was on patrol – meaning we had now seen all three emperor dragonflies. Common tiger blue butterfly was a first for the week and we also found a fritillary, later identified as knapweed fritillary. A carpenter bee with a yellow back buzzed some group members, later named as *Xylocopa pubescens*.



Paradise valley; St John's-wort *Hypericum aegypticum*.

Then, at last, a large bird of prey: a superb adult Bonelli's eagle. At the same time, about four red-rumped swallows joined the eagle in the sky. A range of interesting plants included an ebony *Ebenus pinnata* – the same genus as Cretan ebony – and a shrubby St John's-wort *Hypericum aegypticum*.

The valley was busy with families and others out for Sunday afternoon, though we were able to drive on a short way to find a roadside stop with some shade. We then walked another stretch of the valley during the afternoon. Red-veined darter and many desert bluets on some pondweed were two interesting species of odonata along the walk.

Hélène ran a well-attended session on Moroccan beauty treatments before dinner.

Monday 20 March – local walk

A few of us had already shared the news about a very cooperative little owl just outside the grounds of Atlas Kasbah, and now was the chance for all of us to see it. Actually, we started inside – it could be seen from the

roof terrace, and I had the telescope set up by the water purification ponds. Kenza from reception at Atlas Kasbah came to see it and the joy on her face was quite something. Outside the gate we were even closer to where the owl was perching on tumbledown building material – and the local great grey shrike perched on a near fence.

Just down the road, we were invited to see inside the small factory that is the hub of operations for the women's cooperative, mostly concentrating on argan products though other products were on sale, including spices, cous-cous and honey. We donned factory white coats. Elements are high-tech though the core of the work is women crushing argan kernels by hand. Remarkably, 500 women are involved with this across six local villages. Presumably it could be mechanised – though that at a stroke would take away the work and companionship within the project.

We walked to the village of Elmaasa, a short walk through more dry, open argan forest. In the village we found a pair of black wheatears, and many of the other local birds were around, including house bunting, spotless starling and Moussier's redstart. A large white henbane was in flower. We completed a circuit and returned to Atlas Kasbah for lunch.

It was then a free afternoon, spent by the pool, reading, going for a walk and that kind of activity. At 5pm, many in the group gathered in reception for a Moroccan cookery course. Two hours later, we were all seated to enjoy the fruits of their labours, namely pastry parcels as starters, chicken tajine and a tasty filo pastry dessert with a custard and crushed nut topping.

Tuesday 21 March – Agadir and home

We were ready in good time to leave shortly after nine o'clock – except Jackie and Philip, who had a later flight to Geneva – and the half-hour journey to the airport was straightforward. Bag drop proved very slow, though we had allowed plenty of time and it was a smooth return flight to Gatwick.

Holiday highlights, as nominated by group members

Tim	Bonelli's eagle; little owl and Kenza's enjoyment at seeing it.
Phylida	walk in Askoti Gorge; calligraphy; infusions (herbal teas) at Atlas Kasbah.
Philip	50 soaring storks.
Jackie	migrating storks, donkey in village.
Judy	bald ibis
Lucy	frogs in the gorge and their sounds; breakfasts at Atlas Kasbah.
Val	our hosts at Atlas Kasbah.
Jenny	Ahmed, the confident & quiet guide; balancing on the path to the frog pool in the gorge; lavender.
Marie	Richard, Sally & Chris; the relaxing calmness of Atlas Kasbah.
Gill	Bonelli's eagle; Moussier's redstart; abundance of flora on roadsides.
Jo	bald ibis; <i>Echium tuberculatum</i> ; black wheatear.
Ann	many invertebrates; hotel, staff and company.
Will	little owl; ground squirrels; spoonbill.
Julie	food and the company; little owls.
Chris	exceptional views of fan-tailed warbler; purple haze of toadflax on local fields and stock by the coast; identifying three species of emperor dragonfly in flight.
Sally	staying at Atlas Kasbah; black-eared wheatear.
Richard	view of Bonelli's eagle; purple sheets of Moroccan toadflax; desert thumbs.



Bonelli's eagle, a holiday highlight for some group members (TW).

WILDLIFE LISTS

BIRDS

For interest, these were the 'write-ins' on this year's list, not recorded in either 2016 or 2019: shelduck, quail, black-headed gull, tawny pipit, common redstart and Spanish sparrow.

Gannet	A steady movement at sea near Cap Rhir, 16/3
Cormorant	Seen on two days, though none fitted the <i>moroccanus</i> subspecies
Grey heron	1 at Oued Massa and 4 at Oued Souss, 18/3
Cattle egret	Seen with goats from the bus, 16/3
Little egret	1 at Oued Massa, 18/3
White stork	c.50 migrants in a thermal at Tamri, 16/3, and 100+ at Oued Souss, 18/3
Northern bald ibis	About 5 in flight near the nesting cliffs at Tamri, 16/1
Spoonbill	1 at Oued Massa, 18/3
Greater flamingo	1 at Oued Souss, 18/3, an injured bird
Shelduck	2 at Oued Souss, 18/3
Mallard	Family party, Oued Souss
Bonelli's eagle	Adult, Paradise Valley, 19/3
Kestrel	Seen on 4 days
Barbary partridge	Glimpses of birds in flight on 2 days, and heard
Quail	Heard at Oued Massa, 18/3
<i>Helmeted guineafowl</i>	<i>Used to occur in Morocco, now only domestic. Group near Atlas Kasbah.</i>
Moorhen	2 at Oued Massa
Coot	2 at Oued Massa
Oystercatcher	c.20 at Oued Souss
Black-winged stilt	Oued Massa and Oued Souss
Avocet	A tight flock at Oued Souss
Grey plover	Oued Souss
Ringed plover	Oued Souss
Ruff	About 7 at Oued Massa
Black-tailed godwit	2, Oued Massa
Whimbrel	1 Cap Rhir; on rocks at Taghazoute, 16/3
Curlew	Oued Souss
Redshank	Oued Souss
Greenshank	Oued Massa and Oued Souss
Common sandpiper	Oued Souss
Knot	1 with the grey & ringed plovers at Oued Souss
Black-headed gull	Lots at Oued Souss
Lesser black-backed gull	Seen 2 days, always coastal
Yellow-legged gull	Seen 3 days, coastal and inland
Sandwich tern	100+ at Oued Souss
Feral pigeon	Seen most days
Woodpigeon	Twice seen on the Souss/Massa NP day
Collared dove	Daily at Atlas Kasbah
Laughing dove	1, Oued Massa. Absent from the Atlas Kasbah area this year.
Red-necked nightjar	Heard most evenings at Atlas Kasbah; a glimpse as 1 flew past.
Little owl	Seen on the last 4 days near Atlas Kasbah
Common swift	Most days, especially over Atlas Kasbah.
Bee-eater	Groups over and settling near Atlas Kasbah every day, and other areas.
Hoopoe	Heard or seen most days, including near Atlas Kasbah
Crested lark	Oued Souss, 18/3, and Elmaasa village, 20/3
Thekla lark	Daily at and around Atlas Kasbah
Sand martin	Oued Massa
Barn swallow	Daily at Atlas Kasbah
Red-rumped swallow	4 Atlas Kasbah, 14/3; 4, Paradise valley, 19/3
White wagtail	Seen on 3 days.
Tree pipit	At Atlas Kasbah on 15/3 and 20/3.
Tawny pipit	1, 17/3, on the walk back to base from Askoti Gorge.
Common bulbul	Common, daily at Atlas Kasbah
Common redstart	Passage bird at Cap Rhir, 16/3
Moussier's redstart	Seen on 4 days, mostly in or close to villages.
Black-eared wheatear	Male at Tamri, 16/3; 2 at Oued Massa
Black wheatear	Seen on 3 days, in villages and Askoti Gorge
Blue rock thrush	Askoti Gorge, 17/3
Blackbird	Daily at Atlas Kasbah
Zitting cisticola	Brilliant view at Oued Massa
Subalpine warbler	On 4 days, often mixed with migrants
Sardinian warbler	Daily, especially near Atlas Kasbah

Blackcap	Recorded on 3 days
Chiffchaff	Recorded on 5 days, often at Atlas Kasbah
Great tit	Almost daily at Atlas Kasbah
Great grey shrike	Seen on 4 days, especially close to Atlas Kasbah
Woodchat shrike	Seen on 3 days, especially close to Atlas Kasbah
Magreb magpie	Seen almost daily
Spotless starling	Almost daily, often in towns as we drove
House sparrow	Daily at Atlas Kasbah
Spanish sparrow	A well-marked male near livestock on a local walk, 15/3
African chaffinch	Now recognised as a species. 5 days, especially at Atlas Kasbah and surrounding farmland
Serin	Heard or seen 4 days, e.g. Paradise Valley
Greenfinch	3 days at Atlas Kasbah
Linnet	Heard on 18/3
Cirl bunting	Almost daily at Atlas Kasbah and surrounding farmland
House bunting	Daily at, on and inside Atlas Kasbah; in all villages and Agadir souk

MAMMAL, REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS

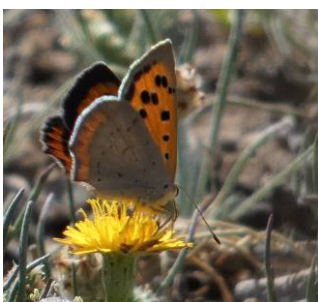
Barbary ground squirrel	African green toad, heard (we think)	Spiny-footed lizard
Sahara marsh frog	Sahara pond terrapin	Bibron's agama



Sahara pond terrapin (TW). Spiny-footed lizard, also known as fringe-toed or fringe-fingered lizard. On distribution and current taxonomy probably *Acanthodactylus erythrurus*, the same species as in the Iberian Peninsula.

BUTTERFLIES

Spanish festoon	Clouded yellow	Common tiger blue
Large white	Cleopatra	Knapweed fritillary
Small white	Moroccan hairstreak	Plain tiger (African monarch)
Bath white	Small copper	Red admiral
Greenish black-tip	Lang's short-tailed blue	Painted lady
Moroccan orange-tip	African babul blue	



Small copper (AG); Moroccan orange-tip (TW); greenish black-tip (TW); African babul blue *Azanus jesuous* on its larval host plant *Acacia gummifera* (AG) – an addition to the list after checking photos.

OTHER INVERTEBRATES

Striped hawk-moth <i>Hyles livornica</i>	Oleander seed-bug <i>Caenocoris nerii</i>
Common plume-moth <i>Emmelina monodactyla</i>	Spotted flower-beetle <i>Oxythrea funesta</i>
Pale shoulder moth <i>Acontia lucida</i>	Spanish fly <i>Lytta vesicatoria</i> (shiny green beetle)
Desert bluet <i>Enallagma deserti</i>	Seven-spot ladybird <i>Coccinella septempunctatum</i>
Blue emperor dragonfly <i>Anax imperator</i>	Darkling beetle <i>Pimelia chrysomeloides</i>
Lesser emperor dragonfly <i>Anax parthenope</i>	Bee-fly sp.
Vagrant emperor dragonfly <i>Anax ephippiger</i>	Carpenter bee (with yellow back) <i>Xylocopa pubescens</i>
Red-veined darter <i>Sympetrum fonscolombii</i>	Mining bee sp

Red-winged grasshopper <i>Oedipoda</i> sp.	Honey bee
Egyptian locust <i>Anacridium aegyptiacum</i>	Pond skater sp
A red-and-black seed bug <i>Spilostethus pandurus</i>	Cage-web spider <i>Cyrtophora citricola</i>



Desert bluet *Enallagma deserti* (AG), based on distribution in Dijkstra & Lewington. In the field, this species is almost identical to common blue damselfly; some consider desert bluet to be a subspecies of this widespread species.
Darkling beetle *Pimelia chrysomeloides*.



Egyptian locust (TW); the stripes on the eyes are a good ID feature.
Blue emperor (TW) in flight; the downward bend on the abdomen is distinctive.

PLANTS

AROUND HOTEL & GARDENS	
Ephedraceae	
<i>Ephedra altissima</i>	A joint-pine
Araucariaceae	
<i>Araucaria heterophylla</i>	The Norfolk Island pine
Casuarinaceae	
<i>Casuarina equisetiforme</i>	An Australian conifer
Amaryllidaceae	
<i>Pancratium foetidum</i>	A sand-daffodil, leaves only
Poaceae	
<i>Lamarckia aurea</i>	Golden dog's-tail grass
Asparagaceae	
<i>Asphodelus fistulosus</i>	A small white asphodel
Iridaceae	
<i>Moraea sisyrinchium</i>	Barbary nut
Plumbaginaceae	
<i>Limonium sinuatum</i>	Statice, a sea-lavender
Caryophyllaceae	
<i>Spergularia media</i>	Greater sea-spurrey
Fabaceae	
<i>Ononis viscosa</i>	A sticky yellow restharrow
<i>Acacia tortilis</i>	A native acacia
<i>Acacia longifolia</i>	Long-leaved wattle
<i>Albizia</i> sp.	Albizia
<i>Melilotis albus</i>	White melilot
Rhamnaceae	
<i>Zizyphus lotus</i>	Zizyphus
Zygophyllaceae	

<i>Fagonia cretica</i>	Fagonia
Resedaceae	
<i>Reseda luteola</i>	Weld
<i>R. alba</i>	White mignonette
<i>R. lutea</i>	Mignonette
Brassicaceae	
<i>Eruca sativa</i>	Wild rocket
Punicaceae	
<i>Punica granatum</i>	Pomegranate
Oleaceae	
<i>Olea europaea</i>	Olive
Malvaceae	
<i>Hibiscus rosa-sinensis</i>	A red hibiscus
Sapotaceae	
<i>Argania spinosa</i>	Argan tree
Apocynaceae	
<i>Periploca angustifolia</i>	A twin-fruited silkweed
Boraginaceae	
<i>Echium creticum</i>	A soft red bugloss
<i>Heliotropium europaeum</i>	A cherry-pie
Solanaceae	
<i>Nicotiana glauca</i>	Tree tobacco
<i>Withania frutescens</i>	Shrubby nightshade
Plantaginaceae	
<i>Myoporum laetum</i>	Myoporum or Ngaio
Convolvulaceae	
<i>Convolvulus althaeoides</i>	A pretty pink bindweed
<i>Ipomoea batatas</i>	Sweet potato
Bignoniaceae	
<i>Jacaranda mimosifolia</i>	Jacaranda

Lamiaceae	
<i>Lavendula dentata</i>	A lavender
Asteraceae	
<i>Cladanthus arabis</i>	A fine leaved golden daisy
<i>Volutaria maroccana</i>	A knapweed relative
<i>Calendula maroccana</i>	A local pot marigold
<i>Pallenis spinosa</i>	Pale yellow daisy with spiny bracts
<i>Pallenis maritima</i>	A yellow daisy bush
<i>Reichardia tingitana</i>	A chocolate centred orange daisy
<i>Phagnalon bicolor</i>	A phagnalon
Aiozaceae	
<i>Carpobrotus achinaciformis</i>	Hottentot fig
<i>Aizoon hispanica</i>	Cream aizoon
Papaveraceae	
<i>Papaver rhoeas</i>	Common poppy
Primulaceae	
<i>Anagallis arvensis</i>	Blue pimpernel
Around Tighanimine el Baz	
Asparagaceae	
<i>Asparagus acutifolius</i>	A spiny asparagus
Typhaceae	
<i>Typha domingensis</i>	A reedmace (bulrush)
Juncaceae	
<i>Juncus acutus</i>	Sharp rush
Poaceae	
<i>Arundo donax</i>	The largest grass in the world
Aristolochiaceae	
<i>Aristolochia baetica</i>	A birthwort
Polygonaceae	
<i>Rumex bucephalorus</i>	Horses head dock
Rumex sagitifolia	A sorrel
<i>Emex spinosa</i>	A spiny dock
<i>Rumex vesicarius</i>	Bladder dock
Malvaceae	
<i>Malva neglecta</i>	Small mallow
Plantaginaceae	
<i>Plantago afrum</i>	Branched plantain
<i>P. lagopus</i>	Woolly plantain
Cucurbitaceae	
<i>Bryonia dioica</i>	bryony
Lamiaceae	
<i>Vitex agnus-castus</i>	The chaste tree
Geraniaceae	
<i>Erodium cicutarium</i>	Common stork's bill
Euphorbiaceae	
<i>Acylypha wilksiana</i>	A bronze-leaved ornamental
Fabaceae	
<i>Ceratonia siliqua</i>	Carob
Rhamnaceae	
<i>Ramnus lycioides</i>	A small-leaved buckthorn
Resedaceae	
<i>Reseda alba</i>	White mignonette
Apocynaceae	
<i>Nerium oleander</i>	Oleander
Boraginaceae	
<i>Echium tuberculatum</i>	A red bugloss
Lamiaceae	
<i>Lavendula multifida</i>	A lavender
Convolvulaceae	
<i>Cuscuta approximata</i>	A dodder, parasitic on

	<i>Launaea</i>
Asteraceae	
<i>Volutaria maroccana</i>	A knapweed relative
<i>Catananche arenaria</i>	A white Cupid's-dart
<i>Launaea arborescens</i>	A yellow wire-netting bush
<i>Xanthium spinosum</i>	Spiny cocklebur
<i>Verbesina encelloides</i>	a large yellow daisy
Papaveraceae	
<i>Fumaria capreolata</i>	Ramping fumitory
CAP RHIR AND TAMRI	
Frankeniaceae	
<i>Frankenia thymifolia</i>	A large-flowered sea-heath
<i>Frankenia laevis</i>	Sea-heath
Aiozaceae	
<i>Mesembryanthemum crystallinum</i>	Crystalline Livingstone daisy
<i>M. nodiflorum</i>	a Livingstone daisy
<i>Aizoon hispanica</i>	Yellow aizoon
<i>A.canariensis</i>	Canary aizoon
Plumbaginaceae	
<i>Limonium sinuatum</i>	Statice
<i>L. mucrinatum</i>	a sea lavender
Caryophyllaceae	
<i>Paronychia argentea</i>	Silver bracts
Cistaceae	
<i>Helianthemum halmifolium</i>	a rock rose
Convolvulaceae	
<i>Convolvulus pentaploides</i>	a small blue bindweed
Geraniaceae	
<i>Erodium jahandiezianum</i>	Large flowered storksbill
Euphorbiaceae	
<i>Euphorbia officinarum</i>	A spiny spurge
<i>Euphorbia regis-jubae</i>	A shrubby, much-branched spurge
Fabaceae	
<i>Lotus cytoides</i>	A bird's foot trefoil
<i>Retama raetum</i>	a white broom relative
Brassicaceae	
<i>Malcomia littorea</i>	A stock relative
Solanaceae	
<i>Lycium intricatum</i>	A Duke of Argyll's tea plant
Orobanchaceae	
<i>Cistanche phelypaea</i>	A large yellow broomrape relative
Apiaceae	
<i>Thapsia garganica</i>	A yellow carrot relative
Asteraceae	
<i>Anacyclus radiata</i>	A succulent-leaved yellow chamomile
<i>Kleinia anteuphorbia</i>	A very succulent daisy
<i>Reichardia tingitana</i>	A dark-centred dandelion relative
<i>Calendula maroccana</i>	A small pot marigold
<i>Waironia saharae</i>	A succulent shrub
<i>Artemisia sp.</i>	A wormwood (tea)
SOUSS- MASSA NATIONAL PARK	
Poaceae	
<i>Phragmites australis</i>	Common reed
Anacardiaceae	
<i>Pistacia atlanticus</i>	A pistachio nut relative
Urticaceae	
<i>Forsskaolea tenacissima</i>	A nettle relative
Amaranthaceae	
<i>Beta macrocarpum.</i>	A beet

<i>Suaeda iffriensis</i>	A sea-blite
<i>Salsola oppositifolia</i>	A saltwort
<i>Arthrocnemum macrostachyum</i>	A perennial samphire/glasswort
Aizoaceae	
<i>Aizoon canariense</i>	Aizoon
<i>Mesembryanthemum crystallinum</i>	A wet and fleshy white-flowered Livingstone-daisy
<i>Mesembryanthemum nodiflorum</i>	A small pale yellow Livingstone-daisy
<i>Carpobrotus achanaciformis</i>	Hottentot fig
Zygophyllaceae	
<i>Fagonia cretica</i>	a fagonia
<i>F. harpago</i>	a fagonia
Frankeniaceae	
<i>Frankenia laevis</i>	Sea-heath
<i>Frankenia boissieri</i>	A sea-heath
Tamaricaceae	
<i>Tamarix</i> sp.	A tamarisk
Balanphoraceae	
<i>Cynomorium coccineum</i>	Desert thumb or red dog-turd – a phallic parasite
Nitrariaceae	
<i>Nitraria retusa</i>	A white-flowered shrub
Geraniaceae	
<i>Erodium hesperium</i>	A stork's bill
Plantaginaceae	
<i>Kickxia sagittata</i>	A fluellin
Rutaceae	
<i>Haplophyllum broussonetianum</i>	a rue relative
Solanaceae	
<i>Solanum linnaeum</i>	a prickly nightshade
<i>Datura stramonium</i>	Thorn apple
Lamiaceae	
<i>Lavandula multifida</i>	A lavender
Resedaceae	
<i>Sesamoides purpurascens</i>	A mignonette relative
Asteraceae	
<i>Pallenis spinosa</i>	A spiny pale yellow daisy
<i>Ismelia versicolor</i>	A yellow daisy bush
<i>Asteriscus</i> sp.	A yellow daisy bush
<i>Centaurea sphaerocephala</i>	A pink knapweed
<i>Anacyclus radiatus</i>	a white/pink daisy
<i>Glebionis coronatus</i>	Yellow daisy bush
Colchicaceae	
<i>Androcymbium gramineum</i>	An androcymbium (in fruit)
Asparagaceae	
<i>Dipcadi serotina</i>	Brown bluebell
Amaryllidaceae	
<i>Allium subhirsutum</i>	a creamy garlic
ASKOTI GORGE	
Asparagaceae	
<i>Asphodelus fistulosus</i>	Hollow-leaved asphodel
<i>Asphodelus aestivum</i>	A large white asphodel
Smilacaceae	
<i>Smilax aspera</i>	Smilax
Anacardiaceae	
<i>Searsia albidia</i>	A sumach
<i>S. pentaphylla</i>	A sumach, with edible fruits
<i>Pistacia atlanticus</i>	A pistachio nut relative
<i>P. terebinthus</i>	Terebinth bush

Caparaceae	
<i>Caparis spinosa</i>	Caper
Arecaceae	
<i>Phoenix dactylifera</i>	Date palm
Caryophyllaceae	
<i>Herniaria hirsuta</i>	A rupturewort
<i>H. glabra</i>	Smooth rupturewort
Fabaceae	
<i>Acacia gummiifera</i>	Moroccan acacia
<i>Coronilla viminalis</i>	Pink/white crown vetch
<i>Scorpiurus muricatus</i>	A scorpion vetch
<i>Medicago trunculata</i>	A medick
<i>M. murex</i>	A medick
<i>Hespero laburnum platycarpum</i>	Large yellow broom relative
Plumbaginaceae	
<i>Limonium sinuatum</i>	Sea lavender
Tamarisaceae	
<i>Tamarix africana</i>	A tamarisk
Caryophyllaceae	
<i>Spergularia pentrandia</i>	A spurrey
Cactaceae	
<i>Opuntia maxima</i>	Prickly pear
Papaveraceae	
<i>Glaucium corniculatum</i>	Orange horned poppy
Lamiaceae	
<i>Thymus maroccana</i>	A long-flowered thyme
<i>Lavandula marocca</i>	Moroccan lavender
<i>L. dentata</i>	A lavender
Geraniaceae	
<i>Erodium moschatum</i>	A storksbill
<i>E. botrys</i>	A storksbill
<i>E. crassifolium</i>	A storksbill
<i>E. sicutarium</i>	Common storksbill
<i>E. chium</i>	Musk storksbill
Boraginaceae	
<i>Echium horridum</i>	A red bugloss
<i>E. tuberculatum</i>	A bristly bugloss
<i>E. plantagineum</i>	Purple bugloss
Scrophulariaceae	
<i>Verbascum</i> sp.	A mullein
<i>Verbascum sinuatum</i>	A wavy-edged mullein
<i>Scrophularia syriaca</i>	A figwort
<i>S. canina</i>	A figwort
Plantaginaceae	
<i>Plantago afra</i>	A branched plantain
<i>Kickxia sagittata</i>	A fluellen
<i>K. heterophylla</i>	A fluellen
Oleaceae	
<i>Olea europaea</i>	Olive
Moraceae	
<i>Ficus carica</i>	Fig
Apocynaceae	
<i>Nerium oleander</i>	Wild oleander
Resedaceae	
<i>Reseda alba</i>	White mignonette
<i>R. lutea</i>	mignonette
<i>R. phyteuma</i>	a mignonette
Rhamnaceae	
<i>Rhamnus alaternus</i>	Small leaved buckthorn
Poaceae	
<i>Arundo donax</i>	the largest grass in the world
Araliaceae	
<i>Hedera algeriensis</i>	An ivy
Cucurbitaceae	
<i>Bryonia dioica</i>	White bryony

Colchicaceae	
<i>Androcymbium gramineum</i>	An autumn 'crocus' relative
ELMAASA VILLAGE	
Agavaceae	
<i>Agave sisalana</i>	Sisal
Aizoaceae	
<i>Aizoon canariense</i>	Aizoon
<i>Mesembryanthemum crystallinum</i>	A white Livingstone-daisy
Cactaceae	
<i>Opuntia ficus-indica</i>	A large-fruited prickly pear
<i>Opuntia maxima</i>	A purple-fruited prickly pear
Solanaceae	
<i>Solanum nigrum</i>	Black nightshade
<i>Hyoscyamus albus</i>	Henbane
Boraginaceae	
<i>Heliotropium crispum</i>	A cherry-pie
<i>Echium horridum</i>	A red bugloss
<i>E. tuberculatum</i>	A bristly bugloss
<i>E. petiolata</i>	A blue bugloss
Lamiaceae	
<i>Ajuga chamaeptytis</i>	Ground pine
<i>Marrubium vulgare</i>	White-horehound
Asteraceae	
<i>Euphorbia officinarum</i>	A spiny spurge
<i>Ricinus communis</i>	Caster-oil plant
Fabaceae	
<i>Coronilla emerus</i>	A shrubby scorpion-vetch
<i>Coronilla segurioides</i>	A scorpion-vetch
<i>Lotus creticus</i>	A bird's foot trefoil
<i>Medicago murex</i>	A medick
<i>Lathyrus clymenum</i>	A two-tone pea
<i>Ceratonia siliqua</i>	Carob
<i>Ebenus pinnata</i>	
Boraginaceae	
<i>Trichodesma calcarata</i>	Pale blue and white with swept back petals
Plantaginaceae	
<i>Veronica anagallis-aquatica</i>	Blue water-speedwell
Orobanchaceae	
<i>Phelipanche ruteriana</i>	a purple broomrape-relative
Cistaceae	
<i>Helianthemum ellipticum</i>	a shrubby rock rose
Verbenaceae	
<i>Vitex agnus-castus</i>	The chaste tree
Asteraceae	
<i>Pulicaria mauritanica</i>	A fleabane
<i>Chrysanthemum coronarium</i>	Crown daisy
<i>Volutaria cuprinoides</i>	a dainty knapweed-relative
<i>Rhodanthemum pseudocatanche</i>	a white/pink daisy
Typhaceae	
<i>Typha domingensis</i>	A reedmace
Juncaceae	
<i>Juncus acutus</i>	Sharp rush
Zygophyllaceae	
<i>Fagonia arabica</i>	A fagonia

<i>Anvillea garcinii</i>	A yellow daisy bush
<i>Cladanthus arabicus</i>	Orange daisy, feathery leaves
<i>Bidens aurantiaca</i>	A bur marigold
<i>Volutaria maroccana</i>	A knapweed relative
PARADISE VALLEY	
Cupressaceae	
<i>Tetracinus declinata</i>	A juniper relative
Smilacaceae	
<i>Smilax aspera</i>	Smilax
Arecaceae	
<i>Phoenix dactylifera</i>	Date palm
Polygonaceae	
<i>Rumex induratus</i>	Buckler dock
Papaveraceae	
<i>Papaver rhoeas</i>	common poppy
Plumbaginaceae	
<i>Limonium lobatum</i>	A sea-lavender
Hypericaceae	
<i>Hypericum aegypticum</i>	A shrubby St. John's wort
Primulaceae	
<i>Anagallis arvensis</i>	Blue pimpernel
Euphorbiaceae	
<i>Euphorbia helioscopia</i>	Sun spurge



Common bulbul (TW).