

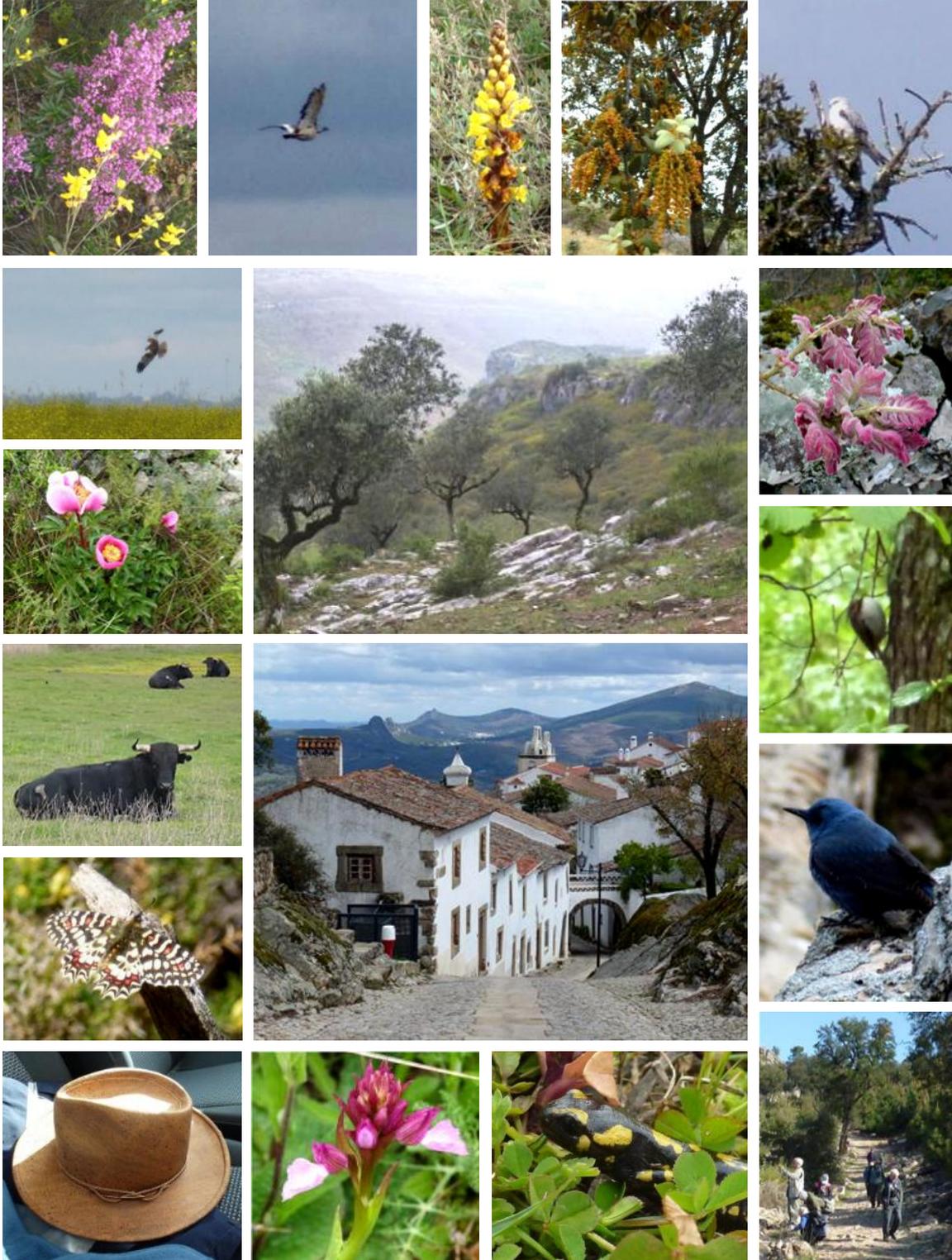
Honeyguide

WILDLIFE HOLIDAYS

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SPRING IN CENTRAL PORTUGAL
15th – 22nd APRIL 2012

Participants

David & Steph Bennett
Russell & Sara Gomm
Kay Jameson

Jenny Loring
Rob & Pam May
John Rumpus & Rosemary Macdonald

Leaders

Domingos Leitão and Rob Macklin

Report and lists by Rob Macklin.

Photos edged blue by John Rumpus and edged green by Rob May.

Lichen photos on page 15 by Russell Gomm.

Cover collage by Jenny Loring: clockwise from top left: Portuguese heather; great bustard; yellow broomrape; cork oak; black-shouldered kite; Portuguese oak; short-toed treecreeper; blue rock thrush; along the Roman track; fire salamander; pink butterfly orchid; Domingos's cork hat; Spanish festoon; black bull; peony; marsh harrier.

Centre: the limestone landscape of Serra de St Antonio;
and the fortified hilltop village of Marvão.

Below – the group.

Our base from 15th–18th April was the Hotel Rural Quinta da Torre, in Alpiarça.

www.hotelruralquintadatorre.com.pt

From 18th–21st April we stayed at the Hotel O Poejo near Marvão.

www.a-opoejo.com



As with all Honeyguide holidays, part of the price of the holiday was put towards a conservation project, in this case SPEA's Wintering Bird Atlas. Domingos Leitão, both Honeyguide leader and SPEA officer, accepted the Honeyguide Wildlife Charitable Trust cheque for €560 (£491). This year's donation brings the total given to SPEA since the first Honeyguide holiday in mainland Portugal in 2005 to £2819. The total for conservation contributions from all Honeyguide holidays up to early June 2012 is £80,039.

DAILY DIARY

April 15th – To Portugal

Our easyJet flight from Gatwick took off on time and a powerful tail wind sped us on our way to Lisbon. After a short delay at baggage collection we met up with Domingos, sorted out the buses and were soon on our way to Alpiarça, on the banks of the Tejo by Santarém. We met up with David & Steph and Russell & Sarah, who had arrived earlier from Liverpool, before enjoying a late supper at the Hotel Rural Quinta da Torre and retiring to bed around midnight.

April 16th – Cabanos Valley & River Tejo at Valada

The morning dawned to the sound of calling collared doves amidst the chattering of serins, greenfinches, goldfinches and house sparrows. A quick look at the farmland surrounding the hotel produced a southern grey shrike, a singing nightingale, 15 cattle egrets and, along the river, 17 glossy ibises and five bee-eaters.

Instead of walking out from the hotel after breakfast we decided to take the buses to the Cabanos Valley to the west of Santarém. Our first introduction to the fauna and flora of central Portugal was accompanied by warm sunshine which brought out several spectacular butterflies including two scarce swallowtails, several glorious swallowtails, colourful Cleopatras and gaudy Spanish festoons, which were swiftly caught by Domingos to be admired in the specimen box before being set free.

The last few months in Portugal had seen very little rain so we were somewhat fearful that any flowers would be few and far between. Luckily for us recent light rain had brought out a host of new plants including several species of orchids. Yellow bee orchids were found in good numbers, although smaller than usual, accompanied by woodcock, man and pyramidal orchids plus several tongue orchids. The typical Portuguese hillside vegetation of maritime and umbrella pines, cork and Portuguese oaks over an understorey of pistachio and cistus was a joy to walk through, taking in the heady scents.



Some of the delights of Day 1:
man orchid, Spanish festoon
and spoonbill.

Further searching of this area revealed patches of very bright shrubby pimpernel, large blue alkanet, blue houndstongue, rosy garlic and an interesting birthwort *Aristolochia pistolochia*. Domingos then guided the group to another favoured area where we found several excellent specimens of the local mirror orchid *Ophrys speculum* ssp. *Iusitanica*. Mediterranean kidney vetch was growing in profusion here alongside the colourful mallow-leaved bindweed and a bright fedia *Fedia cornucopiae*. It was time for lunch, overlooking open fields and woodland where we searched out several excellent fresh specimens of spear-leaved helleborine plus two violet bird's nest orchids which were quite tall but still to open fully.

In the afternoon we drove the relatively short distance to the small town of Valada for a boat cruise on the River Tejo. On the way we passed a large agricultural facility which was adorned with the occupied nests of white storks. On the boat XALABAR we were given a short introduction to the area by the owner Madalena before heading downstream. We manoeuvred close into a small heavily vegetated island which was crammed full of breeding cattle and little egrets, grey herons, delightful

spoonbills and a few more secretive pairs of black-crowned night herons – an amazing spectacle! Several pairs of black kites were taking up territories along the tamarisk-lined river banks while the sand martin colony had just started to get going with 60 birds feeding over the nearby woods and farmland. An exhilarating start to our week in central Portugal.

April 17th – Tejo Estuary & Pontas de Erva

Tuesday dawned bright but rather cloudy as we departed early for the hour long drive to the Tejo Estuary. Our first stop was at Alcochete which provided wonderful views across the estuary with Lisbon in the background. On a rising tide thousands of wading birds were constantly moving across the estuary to find the best feeding areas. Among the thousands of dunlin we were able to find up to 20 avocets, large numbers of grey plovers, three bar-tailed godwits and small parties of whimbrels. A number of other waders began to venture closer to the group and we were treated to very good views of ringed plovers, a single Kentish plover, six turnstones, three little stints, two greenshanks and green sandpipers plus two very unexpected spotted redshanks. This amazing avian spectacle continued as 24 spoonbills hove into view, looking magnificent in the morning light, then 24 glossy ibises flew directly over our heads – unbelievable! Another cry went up from the group as 15 greater flamingos put in an appearance before finally settling down to feed on a series of small pools with ten black-winged stilts and hordes of coots. A nightingale was in constant song in the nearby scrub, several fan-tailed warblers (or zitting cisticolas) were displaying over the dense rushy areas while botanical treats included a fine patch of three-leaved snowflake and purple sand-spurrey. Quite a morning.



Glossy ibises flying across the Tejo estuary; and one of the purple herons at Pontas de Erva.

We then moved north along the eastern side of the estuary following a sandy track and immediately encountered a 30-strong flock of common waxbills (an African species introduced into the Iberian peninsula), their red bills glinting in the sun. At least five quails were calling “wet-my-lips” from the grassy pastures although they were impossible to see in the lush vegetation. Some of the more interesting plants here included the yellow small melilot, small groups of tongue orchids and the pea like *Astragalus hamosus*. The morning was superbly rounded off by excellent views of a great white egret in full view on the far side of the fields.

Leaving the open pastures behind we began to move through open cork woodland *montados* where we quickly turned up our first woodchat shrike sitting out in full view. This particular area soon became very productive as we found two black-shouldered kites perched out in the open on the top of cork oaks, giving us all great views. A pale-phase booted eagle drifted overhead, quickly followed by another, while two kestrels were hunting over a dilapidated farmstead. A brown blob partly hidden by green foliage finally came out into the open and turned out to a resting long-eared owl, an amazing find during daylight hours. In the same area a hoopoe flew over and a southern grey shrike perched up in the same cork oak as another black-shouldered kite. Birds certainly took centre stage here but we still managed to find a patch of early purple orchids and a single giant orchid.

Our final destination of the day was a 15,000 hectare area of farmland at Pontas de Erva, although still part of the Tejo Natural Park. Large numbers of corn buntings were found here and several

thousand migrant swifts were high overhead on their journey into northern Europe. A flock of whimbrels were spotted out in the fields and our first of four purple herons was encountered along the series of wet dykes. One of the purple herons then came right out into the open to feed unconcernedly, giving the group fantastic views. Short-toed larks and skylarks were in full song over the open fields and three Iberian yellow wagtails obligingly perched up on wire fences. This area supports many pairs of breeding marsh harriers and we counted at least 15 birds quartering the open fields. More unexpected was a male Montagu's harrier hunting along a dyke edge followed shortly after by a female bird. To cap an amazing day, Russell spotted an Egyptian mongoose along one of the ditches as we left the area.

April 18th – Natural Park of Serra de Aires e Candeeiros

An early shower then a cool day in prospect as we headed up north-west of Santarém to the Natural Park. Yet another black-shouldered kite was seen from the buses on the way as well as a very smart male black redstart. We soon started exploring the limestone pavement area with Domingos turning over many rocks, encountering such delights as yellow-legged centipede plus both three-toed and Bedriaga's skinks. A lack of winter rain had affected the flowers here but we did manage to find plenty of naked man orchids, several champagne orchids, a few woodcock orchids and a solitary white conical orchid. Hoop petticoat narcissi looked extremely fresh and splendid while the yellow anemones were just coming into flower. Birds were few and far between but we did find a singing male cirl bunting on the telegraph wires, a singing woodlark high in the sky, a southern grey shrike and a small group of linnets. The rain then returned, forcing us back to the buses but not before Domingos had found yet another reptile, this one a southern smooth snake.

With temperatures struggling to get past 9°C and with a brisk northerly wind, we had lunch in the shelter of an abandoned olive grove. Here we found a few small yellow bee orchids plus several new ferns including rustyback fern, wall rue, southern polypody and maidenhair spleenwort. Our next stop was at a high point above a spectacular valley and on the way at least four hoopoes crossed our path. This new area hosted a number of wild peonies, several of which were in spectacular flower and fully open. In some of the more sheltered spots we found sawfly orchid and a solitary sombre bee orchid type *Ophrys dyris* as well as field eryngo and white ramping fumitory.



Sawfly orchid.



Pink butterfly orchid.



Champagne orchid.

Our final stop of the day was to an area of abandoned olive groves on the outskirts of Santarém. It was very dry here but we still turned up several small woodcock orchids and a few patches of small serapias or tongue orchids. Pyramidal orchids were just beginning to open, field gladioli were in full bloom and we found a few classic barbary nut irises fully open. The scent from the typical hillside vegetation of cistus and pistachio filled our senses before Domingos came up with the find of the day, a superb pink butterfly orchid.

The evening was to be our last at the Hotel Rural Quinta da Torre at Alpiarça and we all tucked into another lovely meal before bidding our farewells to Carlota and her team. Even the fierce black dog seemed to have accepted our presence!

April 19th – To Marvão

Early morning rain and cool conditions prevailed as we boarded the buses for our drive to Marvão in the east of Portugal. The hillsides on the way were covered in flowering yellow Spanish broom and white broom but also large swathes of planted eucalyptus trees. We stopped for lunch by the river at Portagem below Marvão and explored the area along the river. A male great spotted woodpecker showed well in one of the poplars while two or possibly three short-toed treecreepers were completely oblivious to our presence. In the surrounding scrub, nightingales and blackcaps were in full song, our first griffon vulture drifted overhead and five ravens soared high over Marvão castle. We then dropped off our cases at the O Poejo hotel in the nearby settlement of Santo Antonio das Areias before reconvening for the afternoon's explorations.

We moved on to Marvão itself to explore the town and castle and were treated to fantastic views of a male blue rock thrush which caught and quickly dispatched a large bumble bee. The views from this fortified town were absolutely amazing in all directions and you could see this would have been a safe refuge in former times.



Male blue rock thrush at Marvão.

After coffee in front of a roaring fire, we explored the old medieval road to Castelo de Vide. Russell was intrigued by the range of lichens found on the Portuguese oaks and sweet chestnuts, likening it to a UK western seaboard oak wood, an unexpected highlight from which we had difficulty in dragging him away!

Russell writes: 'One does not normally associate plants typical of western temperate rainforest with regions supporting small scale Mediterranean-type farming, cork oak and Eucalyptus plantation. But this was what we found among the quartzites and granite boulders forming the summit and sides of the steep Marvão escarpment. Due to its height (2,900 ft) and its position, Marvão is frequently enveloped in thick cloud, bringing coolness and moisture to what would otherwise be a sun-baked ridge. Despite the presence of Lisbon to the west, the air is pure, and this has allowed the development of some large and spectacular lichens. Although these plants are sometimes regarded as a rather 'specialist' interest, we were all impressed with the large specimens (some 10 cm or more across) of *Lasallia pustulata* (rock tripe) and associated species growing on the rocks, and with the huge rosettes of *Lobarion* lichens covering the bases of many of the trees lining the old mediaeval road from Marvão to Castelo de Vide.' Three of Russell's lichen photos are on page 16.

Two rock buntings flew over the scrub below the castle ramparts and a mistle thrush burst into song. Mossy stonecrop was growing through the stone-paved roadway, bright blue narrow-leaved lupins were in flower with field pansy, undulate anchusa and meadow saxifrage, while Domingos turned up yet another reptile, a false smooth snake.

April 20th – Serra de São Mamede Natural Park

A male blue rock thrush was singing from the hotel roof and 40 pairs of house martins were busily repairing their nests as we boarded our buses for the Natural Park. Our first stop was along the valley of the River Sever where two red-rumped swallows appeared to be nesting under a bridge, a female ciril bunting was carrying food, maybe for a hungry brood, a male subalpine warbler sang from thick cover and David found a chaffinch – new bird for the trip! Several nightingales were in full cry from the surrounding scrub and a cuckoo called before flying over us.

We parked the buses and walked along the track where small flocks of Spanish sparrows were moving through the olive groves and two Thekla larks were feeding under the trees. John found a woodchat shrike, with another three spotted soon after, and at least ten bee-eaters were perched up in full view above a few bee hives – rough luck on the bees! A couple of southern grey shrikes appeared in the scrub and an orphean warbler was in full song but defied all our attempts to find it. Russell caught the Domingos habitat and found two field crickets under a rock. On the way back down the valley several azure-winged magpies flew across the river after having been seen briefly in

the riverine scrub. The nightingales were still in full voice and were briefly joined by a singing golden oriole while eight rock sparrows were in the vicinity of an ancient dead tree, an ideal breeding spot for this species. After this we briefly moved up on to higher ground but the rain came although not before Domingos had turned up another large yellow-legged scorpion and Jenny found a nice patch of a new plant, white horehound.



Red-rumped swallow.



Pale-phase booted eagle.

A quick lunch stop on the roadside where nightingales and Cetti's warblers were singing and Steph spotted a booted eagle overhead. We then drove to the Spanish border by Galegos where huge cliffs generally support a griffon vulture colony. The scopes were soon out and we totalled a minimum of 14 birds with several coming and going, and David found a chick with an adult on the cliffs. A hoopoe flew across and a woodlark sang high in the air. We all then trooped across the border into Spain just because it was there! We decided to see if we could access an area on the other side of the cliffs for more raptors and were absolutely delighted to have great views of a pair of Bonelli's eagles drifting right overhead. Another eagle then came into view which was a darker, immature Bonelli's eagle. A great end to the day!

April 21st – Elvas Plains & Caia Dam IBA

After a fairly long drive south we approached the plains and farmland around Vila Fernando and as we did so we immediately spotted our first male great bustard on the crest of a ridge. While we were watching this magnificent bird the only two great spotted cuckoos of the trip flew over calling raucously, a little owl was perched up on a rocky outcrop and two red-rumped swallows were gathering mud from a puddle right by the buses – what a start to the day!

We then took a dirt track across the plains, parking the buses and walking into the interior. This area was extremely productive, starting off with a short-toed eagle hanging in the sky as it scanned the ground for reptiles, followed by excellent views of a male little bustard. Bee-eaters were with us throughout the morning, their distinctive trilling calls resounding in the air. Two short-toed larks were singing high in the air and up to six large calandra larks were very active over the cereal fields. At least five quails were calling from the fields and we were lucky enough to just glimpse one as it flew back into cover. As the morning warmed up raptors were beginning to emerge with at least five griffon vultures drifting overhead, a booted eagle hovering into view and a female marsh harrier quartering the open fields. As we continued our exploration two magnificent male great bustards flew right across the track in front of us giving the whole group fantastic views. We then came across a field of cattle and horses where one of the cows had just apparently given birth. A magnificent, large black vulture was on the ground with another low in the air looking for any feeding opportunities but the cow decided enough was enough and ran at the vulture causing it to take to the air! While this was going on David spotted another raptor and John confirmed it as a red kite, an unusual bird in the spring for this area. Four ravens were also interested in the possibilities here but soon made off. We took the buses as far out as we dared until the track became impassable, turning back at an abandoned farmstead which housed a lesser kestrel colony and where we had great views of up to 30 of these delightful falcons hunting over the surrounding fields. What a morning and time for a coffee in Vila Fernando to recover!

It was time to leave the plains and head off to the Caia Dam IBA for lunch by the river. On the way, the buses screeched to a halt as we saw two short-toed eagles hunting right by the road, followed by a female Montagu's harrier gliding by. Our lunch by the river was accompanied by a cacophony of sound with nightingales, Cetti's warblers and cuckoos in full voice. Three grey herons remained in cover at the far end of the river and two little grebes joined several moorhens out in the deeper water. A pair of black-winged stilts appeared unconcerned at our presence although a pair of little ringed plovers kept their distance. Yet another short-toed eagle drifted overhead and several crag martins appeared to be breeding under the road bridge.

Domingos was very adept at finding reptiles and amphibians and it was not long before he was turning over countless rocks on the drier areas of the river. The group were enthralled as he first turned up three species of frogs, West Iberian painted frog, stripeless tree frog and green frog. This was followed by the spectacular fire salamander and a viperine snake, while Spanish terrapins basked on the rocks in the river. A host of colourful flowers added to the spectacle here especially purple viper's bugloss, yellow lupin, purple sand-spurrey, woolly trefoil and our first sighting of purple gromwell growing alongside undulate anchusa.



Western Iberian painted frog.



Fire salamander.

Our last stop of the day was at the gull-billed tern colony on the shores of the lake. We were not to be disappointed as up to 60 birds were seen here, either flying to and fro or standing on the shore with several black-headed gulls. A few more wading birds were taking advantage of the soft muddy edges of the lake including 13 black-winged stilts, four little ringed plovers, a ringed plover, a greenshank and three common sandpipers. Out on the lake 20 gadwalls were joined by a pair of pintails and a solitary male shoveler amongst many coots. As the afternoon drew to a close, the fifth short-toed eagle of the day drifted slowly overhead and the day was superbly completed by two black vultures and several griffon vultures gliding in from the surrounding hillside.

April 22nd – Castelo de Vide & Lisbon

As our flights were not until the early evening we had time for one more expedition so we decided to walk part of the old stone-paved medieval road from Castelo de Vide. A woodlark was singing high in the sky as we clambered out of the buses, with nightingales, blackcaps and Sardinian warblers singing from the thick scrub of cistus, white broom and Spanish broom. Two Dartford warblers called but proved almost impossible to locate but we had much more luck with a male subalpine warbler which came out into the open, singing in full view. A small raptor then went over, identified as a male sparrowhawk, before Jenny brilliantly found and identified two crested tits, both new species for the week. Large patches of lesser snapdragon were growing here along with yellow linaria and more new plants in bladder vetch and spotted rock-rose. One or two butterflies had ventured out onto the wing, including a Bath white, the only one of the week. A pale-phase booted eagle came extremely close overhead and as we prepared to leave several more griffon vultures took to the skies.

We returned to the hotel for a slap-up lunch before bidding farewell to Ligia and her team at O Poejo, promising to add favourable comments to Trip Advisor. To complete a superb week a short-toed eagle drifted overhead as we boarded the buses for the drive back to Lisbon. We dropped off six of the group at the Castelo Olissipo hotel in the old quarter of Lisbon, after a hairy drive around the old narrow streets, before heading for the airport and flights home to Bristol and Gatwick.

SYSTEMATIC LISTS

BIRDS

Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	2 at Caia Dam IBA
Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	Noted at Tejo river and estuary
Black-crowned Night Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>	At least 6 in colony at Tejo river at Valada
Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>	Common inc. huge colony on Tejo river at Valada
Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	Widespread & relatively common
Great White Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>	Adult at Tejo estuary
Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	Widespread but uncommon
Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>	4 at Pontas de Erva
White Stork	<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>	Widespread & common
Spoonbill	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>	Good nos. at Tejo river at Valada & 24 on estuary
Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>	Peaks of 17 at Alpiarça & 24 on Tejo estuary
Greater Flamingo	<i>Phoenicopterus ruber</i>	15 at Tejo estuary
Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	One at Tejo estuary
Gadwall	<i>Anas strepera</i>	20 at Caia Dam IBA
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	Widespread & common
Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>	Pair at Caia Dam IBA
Shoveler	<i>Anas clypeata</i>	Male at Caia Dam IBA
Black-shouldered Kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>	At least 10 in the week
Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>	Widespread & relatively common
Red Kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>	One at Elvas plains
Griffon Vulture	<i>Gyps fulvus</i>	Peak of 15 at São Mamede NP
Black Vulture	<i>Aegypius monachus</i>	2 on the Elvas plains & 3 at Caia Dam IBA
Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	Widespread & common
Short-toed Eagle	<i>Circaetus gallicus</i>	5 at Elva plains & Caia Dam IBA
Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus euruginosus</i>	Peak of 15 at Pontas de Erva
Montagu's Harrier	<i>Circus pygargus</i>	Pair at Pontas de Erva, one at Castelo de Vide and one on the way to Lisbon.
Booted Eagle	<i>Hieraeteus pennatus</i>	Widespread in small numbers
Bonelli's Eagle	<i>Hieraeteus fasciatus</i>	3 at Galegos cliffs
Lesser Kestrel	<i>Falco naumanni</i>	At least 30 on Elvas plains
Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	Widespread & relatively common
Red-legged Partridge	<i>Alectoris rufa</i>	Peak of 10 at São Mamede NP
Quail	<i>Coturnix coturnix</i>	10 heard at Tejo estuary & 5 heard at Elvas plains, just one seen
Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	Widespread & reasonably common
Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>	Good numbers at Tejo estuary & Caia Dam IBA
Little Bustard	<i>Tetrax tetrax</i>	Male on Elvas plains
Great Bustard	<i>Otis tarda</i>	5 on Elvas plains, all males
Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>	Peaks of 10 at Tejo estuary & 15 at Caia Dam IBA
Pied Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>	20 at Tejo estuary
Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	Several at Tejo estuary & one at Caia Dam IBA
Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>	6 at Caia Dam IBA
Kentish Plover	<i>Charadrius alexandrinus</i>	One at Tejo estuary.
Grey Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>	Common on Tejo estuary
Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>	6 at Tejo estuary
Little Stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>	3 at Tejo estuary
Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>	Common on Tejo estuary
Bar-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>	3 at Tejo estuary
Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>	40 at Tejo estuary
Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>	Several at Tejo estuary

Spotted Redshank	<i>Tringa erythropus</i>	2 at Tejo estuary
Redshank	<i>Tringa tetanus</i>	One at Tejo estuary & Caia Dam IBA
Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>	2 at Tejo estuary & one at Caia IBA
Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>	2 at Tejo estuary
Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	One at Tejo estuary & 3 at Caia Dam IBA
Black-headed Gull	<i>Larus ridibundus</i>	On Tejo estuary & Caia Dam IBA
Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>	Relatively widespread & common
Sandwich Tern	<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>	One at Tejo estuary
Gull-billed Tern	<i>Sterna nilotica</i>	60 at Caia Dam IBA
Rock Dove/Feral Pigeo	<i>Columba livia</i>	Widespread & common
Woodpigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	Fairly common
Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decocto</i>	Common in towns & villages
Great Spotted Cuckoo	<i>Clamator glandarius</i>	2 on Elvas plains
Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>	Fairly common & widespread
Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>	Widespread and common
Little Owl	<i>Athene noctua</i>	2 on Elvas plains
Long-eared Owl	<i>Asio otus</i>	One in montados on east side of Tejo estuary
Tawny Owl	<i>Strix aluco</i>	One heard at hotel in Alpiarça
Bee-eater	<i>Merops apiaster</i>	Peak of 100+ at Elvas plains & Caia Dam IBA
Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>	Peak of 4 in Candeeiros area
Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>	Male by river at Portagem
Short-toed Lark	<i>Calandrella brachydactyla</i>	Peak of 5 at Pontas de Erva
Calandra Lark	<i>Melanocorypha calandra</i>	Peak of 6 at Elvas plains
Crested Lark	<i>Galerida cristata</i>	Widespread & common
Thekla Lark	<i>Galerida theklae</i>	Relatively common in rocky areas
Woodlark	<i>Lullula arborea</i>	Singles at Candeeiros, Galegos & Castelo de Vide
Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	Only noted at Pontas de Erva
Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>	60 at colony on Tejo river
Crag Martin	<i>Ptyonoprogne rupestris</i>	Several at Marvão, São Mamede & Caia Dam IBA
Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	Widespread & common
Red-rumped Swallow	<i>Hirundo daurica</i>	Peak of 4 at Elvas plains
House Martin	<i>Delichon urbica</i>	Widespread & common in towns and villages
White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	Peak of 2 at Valada
Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>	3 at Pontas de Erva
Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	Widespread in hilly areas
Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	Widespread in hilly areas
Nightingale	<i>Luscinia megarhynchos</i>	Peak of 6 at São Mamede
Black Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>	All 4 sightings from the buses
Stonechat	<i>Saxicola torquata</i>	Widespread & fairly common
Blue Rock Thrush	<i>Monticola solitarius</i>	Peak of 3 at Marvão
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	Widespread & common
Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	3 at Marvão
Cetti's Warbler	<i>Cettia cetti</i>	Fairly widespread & common
Fan-tailed Warbler	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>	Widespread & common
Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>	One at Caia Dam IBA
Dartford Warbler	<i>Sylvia undata</i>	3 at Castelo de Vide
Subalpine Warbler	<i>Sylvia cantillans</i>	Males at São Mamede & Castelo de Vide
Sardinian Warbler	<i>Sylvia melanocephala</i>	Widespread & common
Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	Widespread & common
Orphean Warbler	<i>Sylvia hortensis</i>	2 singing at São Mamede NP
Blue Tit	<i>Parus caeruleus</i>	Widespread & common

Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	Widespread & common
Crested Tit	<i>Parus cristatus</i>	2 at Castelo de Vide
Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>	2 at Alpiarça & one at Portagem
Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>	Occasional in woodland areas
Short-toed Trecreeper	<i>Certhia brachydactyla</i>	Peak of 2 at Portagem
Southern Grey Shrike	<i>Lanius meridionalis</i>	Recorded from all areas in ones & twos
Woodchat Shrike	<i>Lanius senator</i>	Peak of 10 at São Mamede NP
Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	Regularly seen in ones & twos
Azure-winged Magpie	<i>Cyanopica cyanus</i>	Peaks of 9 from the bus & 6 at São Mamede
Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	Common on Elvas plains
Jackdaw	<i>Corvus monedula</i>	3 on wires by Caia Dam IBA
Carrion Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>	Widespread & common
Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>	Peak of 5 at Marvão & 6 on Elvas plains
Spotless Starling	<i>Sturnus unicolor</i>	Widespread & common
Golden Oriole	<i>Oriolus oriolus</i>	One at São Mamede & Elvas plains
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	Widespread & very common
Spanish Sparrow	<i>Passer hispaniolensis</i>	Peak of 100+ on Elvas plains
Rock Sparrow	<i>Petronia petronia</i>	11 at São Mamede
Common Waxbill	<i>Estrilda astrild</i>	30 on Tejo estuary
Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	Widespread in woodland areas
Serin	<i>Serinus serinus</i>	Widespread & common
Greenfinch	<i>Carduelis chloris</i>	Widespread & common
Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	Widespread & common
Linnet	<i>Carduelis cannabina</i>	Widespread & fairly common
Hawfinch	<i>C. coccothraustes</i>	One near Marvão
Cirl Bunting	<i>Emberiza cirlus</i>	One at Candeeiros & 2 at São Mamede
Rock Bunting	<i>Emberiza cia</i>	3 at Marvão
Corn Bunting	<i>Miliaria calandra</i>	Widespread & very common
Yellow-crowned Bishop	<i>Euplectes afer</i>	20 at Pontas de Erva

MAMMALS

Badger – presence detected	Beech marten – casting	Rabbit	Mole –
Wild boar – presence detected	Brown rat	Iberian hare	hills only

REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS

Fire salamander <i>Salamandra salamandra</i>	Bedriaga's skink <i>Chalcides bedriagai</i>
West Iberian painted frog <i>Discoglossus galganoi</i>	Three-toed skink <i>Chalcides striatus</i>
Stripeless tree frog <i>Hyla meridionalis</i>	Southern smooth snake <i>Coronella girondica</i>
Green frog <i>Rana perezi</i>	False smooth snake <i>Macroprotodon cucullatus</i>
Spanish terrapin <i>Mauremys leprosa</i>	Viperine snake <i>Natrix maura</i>
Large psammodromus <i>Psammodromus algirus</i>	

BUTTERFLIES

Swallowtail	Orange tip	Cleopatra	Wall brown
Scarce swallowtail	Large white	Red admiral	Small heath
Spanish festoon	Small white	Spanish argus	Speckled wood
	Bath white	Small copper	

OTHER INVERTEBRATES

Egyptian locust	Paper wasp <i>Polistes</i> sp.
Violet carpenter bee	Common yellow scorpion
	7-spot ladybird

PLANTS

PTERIDOPHYTA Ferns & Allies

Adiantaceae	<i>Andiantum capillus-veneris</i>	maidenhair fern
Aspleniaceae	<i>Ceterach officinarum</i>	rustyback fern
Hypolepidaceae	<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>	bracken
Asplenium	<i>Asplenium adiantum-nigrum</i> <i>Asplenium ruta-muraria</i>	black spleenwort wall rue
Polypodiaceae	<i>Polypodium cambricum</i> ssp. <i>australe</i>	southern polypody
Selaginella	<i>Selaginella denticulata</i>	Mediterranean Selaginella

SPERMATOPHYTA Conifers

Araucariaceae	<i>Araucaria heterophylla</i>	Norfolk island pine
Pinaceae Pines	<i>Pinus pinaster</i> <i>Pinus pinea</i>	maritime pine umbrella pine

ANGIOSPERMS

Aizoaceae – Aizoons		Hottentot fig
Allium Garlics & Leeks	<i>Allium roseum</i> <i>Allium triquetrum</i>	rosy garlic three-cornered leek
Anacardiaceae – Pistacios	<i>Pistacia lentiscus</i>	mastic tree or lentisc
Apiaceae Carrots	<i>Foeniculum vulgare</i> <i>Smyrniolum olusatrum</i> <i>Eryngium maritimum</i> <i>Eryngium campestre</i>	fennel alexanders sea holly field eryngo
Apocynaceae Oleanders	<i>Nerium oleander</i> <i>Vinca difformis</i>	oleander periwinkle
Araliaceae – Ivy family	<i>Hedera helix</i>	ivy
Aristolochiaceae – Birthworts	<i>Aristolochia pistolochia</i>	
Asteraceae (was Compositae) Daisies	<i>Bellis annua</i> <i>Bellis sylvestris</i> <i>Calendula arvensis</i> <i>Chrysanthemum coronarium</i> <i>C. coronarium</i> var. <i>discolor</i> <i>Cichorium intybus</i> <i>Galactites tomentosa</i> <i>Taraxacum officinale</i> <i>Senecio vulgaris</i> <i>Sonchus oleraceus</i>	annual daisy southern daisy field marigold crown daisy, entirely yellow crown daisy, yellow & white chicory Mediterranean field thistle dandelion groundsel common sow thistle
Boraginaceae Borage	<i>Anchusa azurea</i> <i>Anchusa undulata</i> <i>Borago officinalis</i> <i>Cynoglossum creticum</i> <i>Echium plantagineum</i> <i>Echium angustigolium</i> <i>Lithodora diffusa</i> <i>Buglossoides arvensis</i> <i>Lithodora fruticosa</i>	large blue alkanet undulate alkanet borage blue hound's tongue purple viper's bugloss narrow-leaved bugloss scrambling gromwell purple gromwell shrubby gromwell
Brassicaceae (Cruciferae) Cabbages	<i>Sinapis arvensis</i> <i>Capsella bursa-pastoris</i> <i>Lunaria annua</i>	charlock shepherd's purse honesty
Cactaceae – Cacti	<i>Opuntia ficus-indica</i>	prickly pear
Caryophyllaceae Pinks	<i>Silene colorata</i> <i>Silene gallica</i> <i>Silene latifolia</i> <i>Silene vulgaris</i> <i>Paronychia capitata</i> <i>Spergularia purpurea</i>	Mediterranean catchfly small-flowered catchfly white campion bladder campion purple sand-spurrey

Centranthus Valerians	<i>Centranthus calcitrapa</i> <i>Fedia cornucopia</i>	Portuguese valerian fedia
Chenopodiaceae – Goosefoots	<i>Beta vulgaris</i> ssp. <i>maritima</i>	sea beet
Cistaceae Rockroses	<i>Cistus crispus</i> <i>Cistus monspeliensis</i> <i>Cistus ladanifer</i> <i>Cistus salvifolius</i> <i>Halimium commutatum</i> <i>Tuberaria guttata</i>	narrow-leaved cistus gum cistus sage-leaved cistus shrubby rock-rose spotted rock-rose
Clinopodium – Calamints	<i>Thymus polytrichus</i>	wild thyme
Convolvulaceae – Bindweeds	<i>Convolvulus althaeoides</i>	mallow-leaved bindweed
Crassulaceae Stonecrops	<i>Sedum album</i> <i>Crassula tillaea</i> <i>Umbilicus rupestris</i>	white stonecrop mossy stonecrop navelwort
Cucurbitaceae – Marrows	<i>Bryonia dioica</i>	climbing white bryony
Dipsacaceae – Teasels	<i>Dipsacus fullonum</i>	wild teasel
Ericaceae Heathers	<i>Erica australis</i> <i>Erica arborea</i> <i>Arbutus unedo</i>	Spanish heath tree heath strawberry tree
Euphorbiaceae Spurges	<i>Euphorbia helioscopia</i> <i>Euphorbia characias</i>	sun spurge Mediterranean spurge
Fabiaceae (was Leguminosae) Peas	<i>Anthyllis vulneraria</i> ssp. <i>praepropera</i> <i>Ceratonia siliqua</i> <i>Cercis siliquastrum</i> <i>Lathyrus setifolius</i> <i>Lupinus angustifolius</i> <i>Lupinus luteus</i> <i>Robinia pseudacacia</i> <i>Astragalus hamosus</i> <i>Medicago polymorpha</i> <i>Medicago arabica</i> <i>Melilotus indicus</i> <i>Trifolium tomentosum</i> <i>Trifolium stellatum</i> <i>Trifolium repens</i> <i>Vicia villosa</i> <i>Hedysarum coronarium</i> <i>Vicia lutea</i> <i>Vicia sativa</i> <i>Anthyllis tetraphylla</i>	Mediterranean kidney vetch carob Judas tree brown vetch narrow-leaved lupin yellow lupin false acacia toothed medick spotted medick small melilot woolly trefoil star clover white clover fodder vetch sanfoin yellow vetch common vetch bladder vetch
Fagacea Oaks	<i>Quercus ilex</i> <i>Quercus coccifera</i> <i>Quercus suber</i> <i>Quercus faginea</i> <i>Castanea sativa</i>	holm oak holly/prickly/kermes oak cork oak Portugese oak sweet chestnut
Genista Greenweeds	<i>Ulex parviflorus</i> <i>Lygos raetum</i> <i>Spartium junceum</i>	small-flowered gorse white broom Spanish broom
Gentianaceae	<i>Centaurium erythraea</i>	common centaury
Geraniaceae Geraniums	<i>Erodium chium</i> <i>Erodium cicutarium</i> <i>Geranium dissectum</i> <i>Geranium molle</i> <i>Geranium purpureum</i> <i>Geranium rotundifolium</i> <i>Geranium robertianum</i>	common storksbill cut-leaved cranesbill dovesfoot cranesbill little robin round-leaved cranesbill herb Robert
Lamiaceae Mints	<i>Ajuga chamaepitys</i> <i>Lamium purpureum</i> <i>Lamium amplexicaule</i>	ground pine red dead-nettle henbit dead-nettle

	<i>Lavandula stoechas</i> <i>Prasium majus</i> <i>Rosmarinus officinalis</i> <i>Salvia verbenaca</i> <i>Marrubium vulgare</i>	French lavender Spanish hedge nettle rosemary wild clary white horehound
Linaceae – Flaxes	<i>Linum bienne</i>	pale flax
Linaria Toadflaxes	<i>Cymbalaria muralis</i> <i>Linaria pedunculata</i>	ivy-leaved toadflax
Malvaceae Mallows	<i>Lavatera olbia</i> <i>Lavatera arborea</i> <i>Malva sylvestris</i> <i>Malva neglecta</i>	tree lavatera tree mallow common mallow dwarf mallow
Oleaceae Olives	<i>Jasminum fruticans</i> <i>Olea europaea</i>	wild jasmine olive
Orobanchaceae Broomrapes	<i>Cistanche phelypaea</i> <i>Orobanche minor</i> <i>Orobanche rapum-genistae</i>	cistanche common broomrape greater broomrape
Oxalidaceae Sorrels	<i>Oxalis pes-caprae</i> <i>Oxalis articulata</i> <i>Rumex acetosa</i> <i>Rumex acetosella</i>	Bermuda buttercup pink oxalis common sorrel sheep's sorrel
Paeoniacea – Peonies	<i>Paeonia humilis</i>	peony
Papaveraceae Poppies	<i>Fumaria agraria</i> <i>Fumaria capreolata</i> <i>Papaver rhoeas</i>	ramping fumitory common poppy
Plantaginaceae Plantains	<i>Plantago coronopus</i> <i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	buck's horn plantain ribwort plantain
Platanaceae – Plane trees	<i>Platanus orientalis</i>	oriental plane
Polygalaceae	<i>Polygala vulgaris</i>	common milkwort
Primulaceae Primulas	<i>Anagallis arvensis</i> <i>Anagallis monelli</i>	scarlet pimpernel shrubby pimpernel
Ranunculaceae Buttercups	<i>Ranunculus sceleratus</i> <i>Helleborus viridis</i> <i>Anemone palmata</i>	celery-leaved buttercup green hellebore yellow anemone
Resedaceae – Mignonettes	<i>Reseda lutea</i>	wild mignonette
Rosaceae Roses	<i>Prunus dulcis</i> <i>Rubus ulmifolius (R. sanctus)</i> <i>Sanguisorba minor ssp. magnolii</i> <i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	almond bramble Mediterranean salad burnet hawthorn
Rubiaceae – Bedstraws	<i>Galium aparine</i>	goosegrass
Saxifragaceae – Saxifrages	<i>Saxifraga granulata</i>	meadow saxifrage
Scrophulariaceae Figworts	<i>Antirrhinum majus ssp. cirrhigerum</i> <i>Misopates orontium</i> <i>Scrophularia sambucifolia</i> <i>Scrophularia auriculata</i>	large snapdragon lesser snapdragon/weasel's snout water figwort
Tamaricaceae – Tamarix	<i>Tamarix africana</i>	tamarisk
Urticaceae – Nettles	<i>Parietaria judaica</i>	pellitory of the wall
Verbascum – Mulleins	<i>Verbascum thapsus</i>	great mullein
Violaceae – Violets	<i>Viola arvensis</i>	field pansy
MONOCOTYLEDONS		
Agavaceae – Agave family	<i>Agave americana</i>	American agave
Amaryllidaceae Daffodils	<i>Leucojum tricophyllum</i> <i>Narcissus bulbocodium</i> <i>Narcissus triandrus</i> <i>Ornithogalum angustifolium</i> <i>Polygonatum sp.</i> <i>Ruscus aculeatus</i>	three-leaved snowflake hoop petticoat narcissus angel's tears narcissus star of Bethlehem Solomon's-seal butcher's broom
Araceae – Arums	<i>Arum italicum</i>	large cuckoo pint

Dioscoreaceae Yams	<i>Tamias communis</i>	black bryony
Iridaceae Irises	<i>Gladiolus italicus</i> <i>Gynandriris sisyrnchium</i> <i>Iris pseudacorus</i> <i>Iris germanica</i>	field gladiolus barbary nut yellow flag tall bearded iris
Liliaceae Lilies	<i>Asphodelus fistulosus</i> <i>Muscari comosum</i> <i>Scilla monophyllos</i> <i>Scilla hispanica</i> <i>Smilax aspera</i>	hollow-leaved asphodel tassel hyacinth one-leaved squill Spanish bluebell rough bindweed
Orchidaceae Orchids	<i>Cephalanthera longifolia</i> <i>Epipactus helleborine</i> <i>Limodorum abortivum</i> <i>Aceras anthropopohorum</i> <i>Ophrys (fusca) dyris</i> <i>Ophrys speculum</i> ssp. <i>lusitanica</i> <i>Ophrys scolopax</i> <i>Ophrys lutea</i> <i>Orchis champagneuxii</i> <i>Orchis tenthredinifera</i> <i>Orchis papilionaceae</i> <i>Orchis conica</i> <i>Orchis italica</i> <i>Orchis mascula</i> ssp. <i>olbiensis</i> <i>Himantoglossum longibracteatum</i> <i>Anacamptis pyramidalis</i> <i>Serapias lingua</i> <i>Serapias parviflora</i>	narrow-leaved (sword-leaved) helleborine broad-leaved helleborine violet bird's nest orchid man orchid a sombre bee-orchid mirror orchid woodcock orchid yellow bee orchid champagne orchid sawfly orchid pink butterfly orchid conical orchid Italian man orchid early purple orchid giant orchid pyramidal orchid tongue orchid small-flowered tongue orchid
Poaceae Grasses	<i>Arundo donax</i> <i>Phragmites australis</i> <i>Typha latifolia</i> <i>Briza maxima</i>	giant reed common reed reedmace quaking grass

LICHENS



- Left** Lassallia pustulata (sometimes called 'Rock tripe').
- Middle** Foliose and crustose lichen species on a quartzite boulder high on the Marvão ridge.
- Right** A prolific growth of 'Lobarian' lichen species on tree bark in the woods alongside the medieval road.