

Honeyguide

WILDLIFE HOLIDAYS

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ROMANIA

THE DANUBE DELTA AND THE CARPATHIANS

30 MAY – 10 JUNE 2009

Holiday participants

Karin and Brennan Auger
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Ken Leggett
Rob and Pam May
John Minihane
Colin Taylor
Jay Turner
Richard and Margaret Woodham

Leaders from the Ibis team: Daniel Petrescu (Dobrogea, Danube Delta and the Carpathians)
and Mihai Petrescu (Dobrogea)

www.ibis-tours.ro

Honeyguide leader from the UK: Chris Gibson
Report and photographs (all taken during the holiday) by Chris Gibson



As with all Honeyguide holidays, part of the price of this holiday was put towards a local conservation project. Our contribution of £35 per person went to Falco Cherrug ('the saker'), a young naturalists' group which is providing the delta's conservationists for the future. The group is run by the Romanian Ornithological Society's representative in the delta, Eugen Petrescu, whose son Daniel was our holiday leader from Ibis this year. The conservation contribution was supplemented by gift aid through the Honeyguide Wildlife Charitable Trust, resulting in a donation of £500.

As at September 2009, the overall total for conservation contributions through Honeyguide since 1991 was £60,821.

ROMANIA: THE DANUBE DELTA AND THE CARPATHIANS

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Saturday 30 May: the way there...

All the group safely gathered in, it was an early start from Heathrow Terminal 5 under clear skies, adorned with gaudy roving parties of ring-necked parakeets. Our departure route gave superb views of London and the Thames and Medway estuaries. We landed through cloud just before lunchtime, one of the smoothest landings I have ever experienced – that's BA for you! We duly met up with Daniel Petrescu, our host from Ibis, and after a short wait Karin and Brennan arriving from Munich.

The long drive east from Budapest to Tulcea took us through a vast open cultivated landscape, devoid of hedges, with strip fields decorated in an array of colours according to crop, with additional bright spots of bee-eaters, rollers (*right*) and shrikes perched on the telegraph wires. Other birds were more familiar – house sparrows, rooks and collared doves everywhere – but with a sprinkling of more exotic fare, including crested lark, steppe buzzard and little egrets. On the journey, we had our first experience of the phenomenon that is Daniel: polymath, polyglot, wordsmith in numerous languages, joker and as soon became apparent, outstanding naturalist.



As our journey progressed the landscape changed gradually. Oil fields and their associated paraphernalia sprang up, and a good proportion of the fields and roadsides were painted in the purple hues of arable 'weeds', notably larkspur and *Salvia nemorosa*. After a short coffee stop, the sun started to peep out, illuminating the increasingly frequent lesser grey and red-backed shrikes, white storks (many on their nests), lapwings and great white egrets as we descended into the flood plain of the Danube. Then, crossing the vast river itself, our first (but by no means last) couple of pygmy cormorants.

This crossing brought us into the region of Dobrogea, and at last some topographical relief. A short stop close to a reservoir set amid steppe grassland gave us a chance to stretch our legs; despite the blustery wind, we spotted good numbers of waterbirds, including common terns, black-winged stilts and six ruddy shelducks, plus a brood of ducklings. A pair of hoopoes, clearly feeding young, made extended flights across our field of view, and the song of a golden oriole drifted from the scrubby hillside, along with the sweet, heady scent of *Elaeagnus*.

The final leg of the journey produced fleeting views of grey-headed woodpecker and red-footed falcon, until we eventually arrived at Tulcea, just after our first views of the delta and the distant Black Sea coast, around 6pm. A warm welcome at the Ibis mini-hotel with a glass of local firewater, and it was time to unpack, before tucking in to the first of many delightful meals. A short stroll after dinner through the bustling town left a lasting impression that Tulcea is full of jackdaws and free-range dogs.

Sunday 31 May: Dobrogea (Parches, Somova Forest, Macin Mountains at Greci)

After heavy overnight rain, a sunny start produced black redstarts and a lesser whitethroat singing from the rooftops around the hotel. First breakfast, and then off, westwards, to a hill at Parches overlooking the inner delta and across to Ukraine. It was a magnificent expanse of wetland, with whiskered terns, great cormorants, squacco herons and egrets on every patch of water, but most remarkable was the amphibian cacophony drifting up from the pools below. From this vantage point, a couple of rollers made repeated fly-pasts, a pair of lesser grey shrikes hunted around an isolated tree, and our first European sousliks appeared – ground squirrels with an endearing meerkat-like habit of standing on their hind legs to scan for danger (*right*).



Moving on, we arrived at a small *Elaeagnus*-filled valley. Immediately large raptors appeared, first a long-legged buzzard, then a pale phase booted eagle, next a honey buzzard, and finally a white-tailed eagle. Known as a site for barred warbler, the scrub eventually revealed its treasures, albeit briefly, coaxed into view by Daniel's iPod, while in the shelter of the bushes, meadow brown and green-underside blue butterflies flitted around, as local farmers passed by on horse and cart, a familiar anachronistic sight in these parts.

The next stop was in the Somova Forest, an area of forest steppe, not unlike British wood-pasture, though with the trees generally not pollarded. The leaves of silver lime glittered in the sunlight, while oak trees included the local *Quercus pedunculiflora*, some with the mistletoe *Loranthus europeaus* in their upper branches, and two species of wild pear (*Pyrus cordata* and *P. bulgarica*) were found growing side by side. A white stork stalked around feeding on the abundant large ground invertebrates, hoopoes were everywhere and a family party of sombre tits gave excellent views. A Levant sparrowhawk flew past, showing well its distinctive dark wing tips and falcon-like appearance. And a stack of a hundred or so white pelicans catching a thermal overhead reminded us how close we were to the delta.

Eyes down, and the butterflies included silver-washed fritillary, Bath white and brown argus. But Brennan came up with the real prize, the large, almost stick-insect-like *Saga pedo*, one of the biggest bush-crickets in Europe (*photo in wildlife lists*).

An ortolan bunting sang from the treetops, hobby and honey buzzard flew over; several northern wheatears flitted on the rocks, and a great spotted woodpecker was feeding on the tree trunks.

After a couple of short stops for bread and cherries, we then headed to the Macin mountains. Near Greci we went off-piste, taking a track through the steppe grassland, along the foot of the wooded hills (*below left*), disturbing Isabelline wheatears and sousliks as we progressed. By now it was very hot, so a small grove of oriental hornbeams provided an ideal shady location for a lovely picnic lunch. A pair of woodchat shrikes was also making use of the trees, and several Balkan wall lizards showed well as they foraged for picnic scraps around us. A goshawk drifted along the hillside, and a booted eagle was seen to drop like a stone from the sky, carrying off an unfortunate souslik for its efforts. Over a distant hillside a lesser spotted eagle circled around, but much closer the swarms of day-flying moths *Oxicesta chamoenices* were being avidly fed upon by large flocks of starlings. Close examination of the flocks revealed half a dozen or so rose-coloureds, a sporadic breeder in these parts.



After lunch, a walk along the foot of the hills produced numerous examples of the spotted chafer *Oxythrea funesta*, each occupying the centre of a flower. A Syrian woodpecker was spotted along with several glimpsed golden orioles, and yet more Isabelline wheatears kept us entertained, whether standing sentinel among the sousliks, song-flighting overhead (*above right*), or perching uncharacteristically in the branches of the trees.

Once more on the bus, we drove slowly back through the steppes, and came across several stone-curlews feeding unconcernedly close to the track, before taking the back road back to Tulcea, stopping only to watch a short-toed eagle searching for its reptilian prey over the slopes clad in an alien invasion of tree-of-heaven.

Monday 1 June: Dobrogea (Deniz Tepe, Babadag Forest, Histria, Vadu)

It was another lovely sunny start as we welcomed Mihai Petrescu, our additional guide for the next couple of days, to the bus. Mihai is an exceptionally knowledgeable botanist, based at Tulcea Museum, but much more – as we headed out of town he gave a fascinating account of Tulcea and its environs, including the 15 different ethnic groups which have settled here and impart such a spectrum of cultural colour to the area.

First stop was Deniz Tepe, an isolated whaleback hill of limestone, covered in steppe grassland, but set amidst a swathe of intensive arable cultivation. But not so intensive that the local biodiversity had been eliminated: the field margins were a riot of colour, from red poppies to purple larkspur, along with the pyramidal flowering spikes of pale viper's-bugloss and yellow star-thistle, just coming into bloom. There were Spanish sparrows on the pylons and wires; skylark, short-toed lark, calandra larks and tawny pipits in the fields; red-backed shrikes and black-headed wagtails (including some of the disputed *superciliaris* race) along the track. Over the hill, four short-toed eagles were hunting, hanging in the breeze, with a fifth bird over the plains, and a territorial pair of long-legged buzzards.

Moving on, we reached Babadag Forest, a vast area of primary woodland, of which we could unfortunately only scratch the surface. The botanists were in their element, immersed in its outstanding plant diversity, including numerous Romanian Red List species – as Mihai pointed out, 'the local sheep don't eat from the Red List'! Among the trees we found *Acer tartaricum* and *Quercus pedunculiflora*, while the understory was dominated by the attractive bushy growth of smoke-bush. But it was the clearings and tracksides which were so remarkable in their richness, attractive plants including *Allium rotundum*, *Iris variegata* and *I. suaveolens*, *Onobrychis gracilis*, *Centaurea orientalis*, *Onosma arenaria* and a range of yarrows in white, cream and yellow. Even the grasses were beautiful, especially the feather-grasses, including the silky-flowered *Stipa ucrainica*. The yellow flower-head of an unusual member of the rue family *Haplophyllum suaveolens* was home to a beautifully camouflaged yellow crab spider, its colour merging seamlessly with the flower as it waited for pollinators to become prey. Under dense shade around the clearings, there were several orchids, including violet bird's-nest, red helleborine and greater butterfly.

And everywhere there were butterflies and other insects, although especially abundant nectaring on the thistle flowers. Most impressive were the large fritillaries (silver-washed and cardinal), together with a couple of hummingbird hawk-moths, and many metallic green rose chafers. Then nestling in the undergrowth, Daniel chanced upon a basking nose-horned viper (*photo in wildlife lists*). It had every reason to be confiding, being one of the most venomous snakes in Europe. All that was missing were birds, seemingly restricted to (largely hidden) ortolan bunting, nightingale and golden oriole, with a lesser spotted eagle overhead.

Moving down the coast towards Histria, we passed a large lagoon absolutely teeming with white pelicans, which shortly decided to undertake a dramatic fly-past at low level. A couple of Dalmatian pelicans flew over, showing well their pale underwings (*right*), along with several spoonbills and a little bittern which was flushed from a small reed-bed; but most remarkable was the sheer abundance of sand martins, in the sky all around us, probably numbering in the hundreds of thousands. We parked by a reedbed, disturbing several black-headed wagtails, and wandered into the reeds. Reed buntings and bearded tits were reminiscent of home, but a paddyfield warbler most certainly wasn't: coaxed into view by Daniel's iPod, it eventually sat on top of a reed for all to see. The salt-flats surrounding us contained a range of (semi) familiar plants – glassworts, sea purslane, saltmarsh-grass (albeit subtly different species from those back home) – and a dice snake was encountered dashing for shade, which it eventually found in the form of our shadows, where it proceeded to curl up and go to sleep (*photo in wildlife lists*).





After lunch, we made a short stop outside the archaeological site at Histria. A couple of pine trees produced a pair of long-eared owls, while close investigation revealed two well-grown young, watching us watching them (*one pictured left*). And to continue the theme of spectacular insects, a giant peacock moth was found and passed around in all its glory (*below*).



Heading ever seaward, just outside Vadu, we simply had to stop to photograph an amazing arable field, a sheet of purple larkspur, and then paused again to peer over the lagoons associated with the nearby (abortive) industrial plant which sought to extract heavy metals from the local sands. Notwithstanding the surroundings, these pools held avocets and both little ringed and Kentish plovers, while further on the even more surprising environment of old cyanide settling lagoons were home to breeding common terns and collared pratincoles, along with ferruginous ducks, redshank and a fly-over bittern.

Finally we got to the dunes, and for some at least a dip in the (not very) Black Sea from what is reputed to be the longest beach in Europe. About 100km in length, we were almost the only occupants, despite the glorious sunshine! The plants on the dunes were again a complex mix of the familiar (like sea holly and sand catchfly) and the unfamiliar, such as *Silene borysthena* (a supercharged Spanish catchfly), *Tamarix ramosissima*, and sheets of *Orchis laxiflora* ssp. *elegans* in the dune slacks.

A very full day, and there were many who slept through much of the hour's drive home!

Tuesday 2 June: Dobrogea (Bestepe Hills, Lake Saraturi, Plopu, Enisala)

Under cloudy skies, producing a little rain, today we headed east from Tulcea. Several short stops produced birds breeding in holes on the sandy cliffs – at the first, four little owls, and then two bee-eater colonies, where the antics of these flying jewels lit up a dull day, alongside rollers, tree sparrows and starlings.

Then to the foot of Nufaru, one of the five peaks of the Bestepe Hills, a landmark which remained with us for much of the next few days on the delta. The wind was strong and blustery as we climbed to the peak, so birds were few and far between: a hobby sped past, and a steppe buzzard carrying a dead souslik was mobbed by a kestrel. Likewise, there were few insects on the wing, although we did add spotted fritillary to our list. But the steppe plants were again superb, brought to life by Mihai's enthusiasm, however tempered by his concern that many of the best botanical areas around here are under threat from wind-farm developments. Green may be good, but not when it destroys protected habitats and puts at risk the ever-present flocks of pelicans and other large waterbirds.

Among the plants, particular mention must be made of the swathes of *Digitalis lanata*, a pale foxglove which was in full flower, a few examples of the local endemic *Dianthus nardiformis*, and the beautiful pink-flowered *Convolvulus lineatus*, among an array of yarrows, spurge and cinquefoils. And from the summit, despite the wind, a wonderful deltaic panorama, a taste of what was to come over the next few days to be spent exploring the pristine wetlands.

A short drive brought us to the shores of Lake Saraturi, a shallow saline lake surrounded by low salt-marsh vegetation. Black-winged stilts were flying around calling, protecting their chicks, and great reed warblers

shouted loudly from the reed fringes. The island was covered in breeding black-headed, Mediterranean and Caspian gulls, while black-necked and great crested grebes tried to protect their young chicks from the ever-present threat of becoming an easy meal.



Our lunch spot was truly remarkable. We are all used to poplar plantations being largely devoid of birds, but this one at Plopu was something else. The woodland contained a large rookery, among which were several tens of pairs of red-footed falcons, which flew around catching dragonflies as we ate. An icterine warbler was in full song, containing elements of mimicry, including a very convincing golden oriole. But more than these, the ground flora was a revelation, swathes of large blue alkanet which extended out into the surrounding fields where they mixed artistically with red poppies and yellow *Linaria genistifolia*, producing an Impressionist landscape when mingled together by the intense heat haze (*above*). Add to that the abundance of insects – large fritillaries, including queen-of-Spain, and many dragonflies, such as lesser emperor, four-spotted chaser and black-tailed skimmer – and it was a fairyland of sheer magic.

Our appetites, both physical and aesthetic, duly sated, we then headed out to our final stop for the day, by the ruined castle at Enisala. Here again, the panorama was wonderful, overlooking vast reedbeds to the distant coast: it was easy to see the strategic location of the castle in former times. While most chose to sit and enjoy the view, a few of us explored the slopes, finding several family groups of northern wheatears, alongside a few new plants, including *Euphorbia myrsinites*, *Campanula romanica* and *Paronychia cephalotus*. As we returned to Tulcea, the clouds returned and thunder was rumbling over the city as we prepared for dinner.

After our final dinner at the mini-hotel, we were pleased to welcome Eugen, Daniel's father, with a group of young people from the conservation group Falco Cherrug he has established, and who were to be the beneficiaries of our Honeyguide holiday donations. They expressed their thanks for our support by distributing flowers to us all, a lovely gesture, and we can do no more than wish them well as custodians for the future of Romania's wonderful wildlife.

Wednesday 3 June: Danube Delta

After overnight thunderstorms, glorious sunshine accompanied our walk down to the port after breakfast to join our new home, a floating hotel which would be towed into the heart of the delta, with a launch to allow us to explore the smaller channels and backwaters. As soon as we were under way, common terns were watched fishing in the channel, and as Tulcea faded into the distance, so the birds multiplied. Whiskered terns, cormorants (both great and pygmy) and an array of herons hinted at the riches to come.

Leaving the main channel at Mila 36 (measured from the Black Sea, this gives a good idea of just how vast the delta is), we entered a side channel, flanked by dense gallery woodland, a mix of poplars, willows and other water-loving trees, many festooned with hops, grape vines and other climbers, which forms the natural climax vegetation alongside the upper stretches of the delta. There were kingfishers and cuckoos everywhere; redstarts singing from the trees, and thrush nightingales, ever secretive, in the dense undergrowth, serenading us with their familiar yet subtly different songs. Olivaceous and icterine warblers added to the soundscape, and

(attracted by Daniel's remarkable impersonations) black and grey-headed woodpeckers came to investigate this apparent intruder to their territories. A white-tailed eagle briefly darkened the sky as it flapped slowly just over the tree tops.

At every turn there were more waterbirds – grey, purple, night and squacco herons; little and great white egrets; a few spoonbills and glossy ibises, and as we entered a series of reedy pools and channels, pygmy cormorants, red-necked grebes, pochard, garganey and ferruginous ducks, along with a few pelicans of both species. Flying over, out on the water, or feeding on the margins – it was difficult to know where to look next, but all we had to do was sit there and soak it all in. A grass snake was seen swimming in the water, as indeed, bizarrely, were a couple of cattle, and an array of dragonflies and damselflies included banded demoiselles, lesser emperor, and blue-tailed and red-eyed damsels.



Clockwise from top left: night heron, squacco heron, red-necked grebe, spoonbill.

After a fine lunch, we then spent a couple of hours relaxing on the upper deck of the hotel boat, just watching, waiting and revelling in the magic of the delta. From this higher vantage point we got a different perspective, looking over the reedbeds and the birds within. But then it was back on the launch, to potter down the channels, where the highlight had to be Daniel frog fishing, playing coloured bottle-tops on the water surface to attract (very successfully) masses of amorous, if none-too-selective, marsh frogs. As the sun got lower, the colours intensified, putting the lesser-grey shrikes and rollers, seemingly spaced every hundred metres along the banks, in an even more flattering light than usual.

The sun set as we dined on the hotel boat, and afterwards – for those prepared to do battle with the legions of mosquitoes – the amphibian chorus (constituting marsh frogs, tree frogs and fire-bellied toads) was almost deafening. Not that it prevented anyone from sleeping after another full and fascinating day!

Thursday 4 June: Danube Delta, including Letea Forest

By dawn, the frog chorus had subsided, as had the mosquitoes, only to be replaced with a swelling crescendo of reedbed bird song – from the reeling of Savi's and the croaking of great reed warblers, to pinging bearded tits, booming bitterns and cuckooing cuckoos. Night herons were streaming overhead in all directions, and (although only Colin and I were up to see it) a Caspian tern put in a magnificent series of close range flypasts, showing its sheer bulk, almost the size of the numerous Caspian gulls. However, talk at breakfast centred on shower traumas, a bizarre arrangement where water squirts 'out of every orifice into every orifice'!

Into the launch, we again penetrated the quieter realms. Purple herons seemed to be everywhere, along with many flighty ferruginous ducks, and around the water-lily patches new broods of red-necked, great crested and black-necked grebes. Lodging us in a reedbed, Daniel pointed out the remarkable hanging nest of a penduline tit, and after a little wait, one of the occupants duly arrived, apparently starting to take it apart.

Daniel also took the opportunity to demonstrate the hover habitat, the reedbed being on a floating mat of vegetation only a metre or so thick. Chunks regularly break off and float to a new location, quite a challenge for navigation in the delta. Here we spotted our first tree frog, sitting on a reed leaf. As we drifted further on, evidence of human use started to appear in the form of small vegetable gardens hewn out of the reeds, and we eventually reached the isolated village of Letea. This is an old Ukrainian village, where Daniel was brought up, created by refugees from the Crimean War on a large sand bar island in the heart of the delta, remarkably one of the driest parts of the country and accessible only by boat,

The village itself was fascinating, with reed thatch and fencing, and construction methods reflecting its propensity for flooding. After a short walk, a welcome chance to stretch our legs after our confinement on vessels, we boarded a truck and were taken into the vast primeval Letea Forest, dense broad-leaved woodland encompassing a series of open, sandy plains, very reminiscent of the Breckland of East Anglia. After paying homage to a famous old oak pollard, 'Old Otto', we climbed to the peak of one of the dunes. Being so dry, there was little in flower apart from a striking pink *Dianthus bessarabicus*, with festoons of the beautiful, waxy-flowered vine *Periploca graeca* on the trees and bushes.

Back on the launch, we returned to the floating hotel for lunch, picking up scarlet darter and a fly-over bittern on the way. Then another late afternoon potter down the channels, accompanied by the usual array of waterbirds; we glided into an enclosed lake where the bird life was audible long before we could see it – hundreds of white pelicans roosting and feeding in glorious evening light (*below*), before returning to the mother ship for dinner, sunset and a serenade from the creatures of the night.



Friday 5 June: Danube Delta, and return to Tulcea

Our last day on the delta again dawned bright and sunny, illuminating a posse of pelicans feeding in concert just down the channel, and a few fleeting views of little bitterns flying over the reeds. But weather-wise, that proved to be the best of the day, as patchy cloud drifted in, even threatening a little rain. Our explorations by launch took us across Lake Furtuna, swarming with whiskered and black terns, and several family groups of black-necked grebes. An otter showed briefly, causing consternation among the pochard chicks, and rounding a corner of a tree-lined channel, we came upon a very obliging black woodpecker on a large willow stump. As we progressed, a muskrat was seen feeding on the bank, a Freyer's purple emperor was basking on overhanging branches, and most excitingly, a wild cat hunting among the tangle of vegetation, creating chaos among the local magpies.

After lunch, we remained on the hotel as it was towed back upstream. Watching the watery wonderland drift past, we soaked up last views of the herons, ibises, spoonbills and black-tailed godwits feeding as we passed, a distant (but adult) white-tailed eagle, a dead wild boar floating downstream, chevrons of pelicans flying to distant feeding grounds, and a final flourish of four black storks overhead.

Dinner was taken back at our mooring in Tulcea, and afterwards we were treated to an evening of traditional music and bubbly, a fitting send off from the magic of the delta. As this was the last night for some of the group, we rounded off in the traditional way with reflection on the trip and everyone's best bits, one a bird highlight and one non-birdy:

Ken – hoopoes; today's otter

Colin – bee-eaters; the overwhelming sense of space and volume of wildlife on the delta

Pam – squacco herons and wild cat

Robert – rollers, and sousliks, especially the one in the talons of a bootie

Brennan – red-footed falcon colony at Plopu; nose-horned viper

Karin – white pelicans; Plopu alkanet forest wonderland (and the frog chorus)

John – the waitresses!; wild cat

Tony – stone-curlews, and tree frog

Kate – the ubiquitous squaccos, and the swimming cows

Margaret – pelicans and ponies

Richard – squacco herons (again), and the sheer extent of the wetlands, like the Broads used to be and should be, only bigger

Jay – red-footed falcons over their azure haze; finding a place where the imagination matches reality, yet still promises more

Chris – the plethora of pelicans, and Babadag Forest (wish we could have stayed longer!)

Danny – rollers (what else!), and the group

Left to right, Caspian tern, pygmy cormorant, whiskered tern.



Saturday 6 June : transfers

Breakfast afloat, then into the vehicles, according to destination. Part of the group was sadly heading to the airport and home, while the rest of us were bound for Transylvania and the distant Carpathians. So it was farewells all round, although we did in fact bump into each other again at the coffee stop.

For those continuing, almost the whole day was spent on the road. Crossing agricultural plains and oil-fields; counting the rollers and shrikes. A brief stop by a pool gave us a young brood of black-winged stilts, while lunch in a poplar wood produced golden oriole and a swallowtail butterfly. But eventually the mountains came into sight, and before long we arrived at Zarnesti, checked out the local storks' nest and checked into the Pension Elena. The village has a lovely situation on the very edge of the mountainous Piatra Craiului National Park; pity about the 'communist blocks' which do rather jar our aesthetic sensibilities. Nevertheless, we were happy to be there, looking forward to experience the abundant promise of the area, and very soon well fed and ready for an early night!

Sunday 7 June : Zarnesti Gorge and Strimba Valley

Being Sunday, we made a prompt start in an attempt to beat the sausagisers to the countryside. Sausagisers are an endemic Romanian subspecies of *Homo sapiens*, that on sunny rest days migrates from towns into the countryside. They pick a spot in the forest to make a fire, especially where not permitted to do so, cook and eat sausages, usually in a semi-naked state. They then return to their lairs, leaving abundant spoor, much of it plastic.

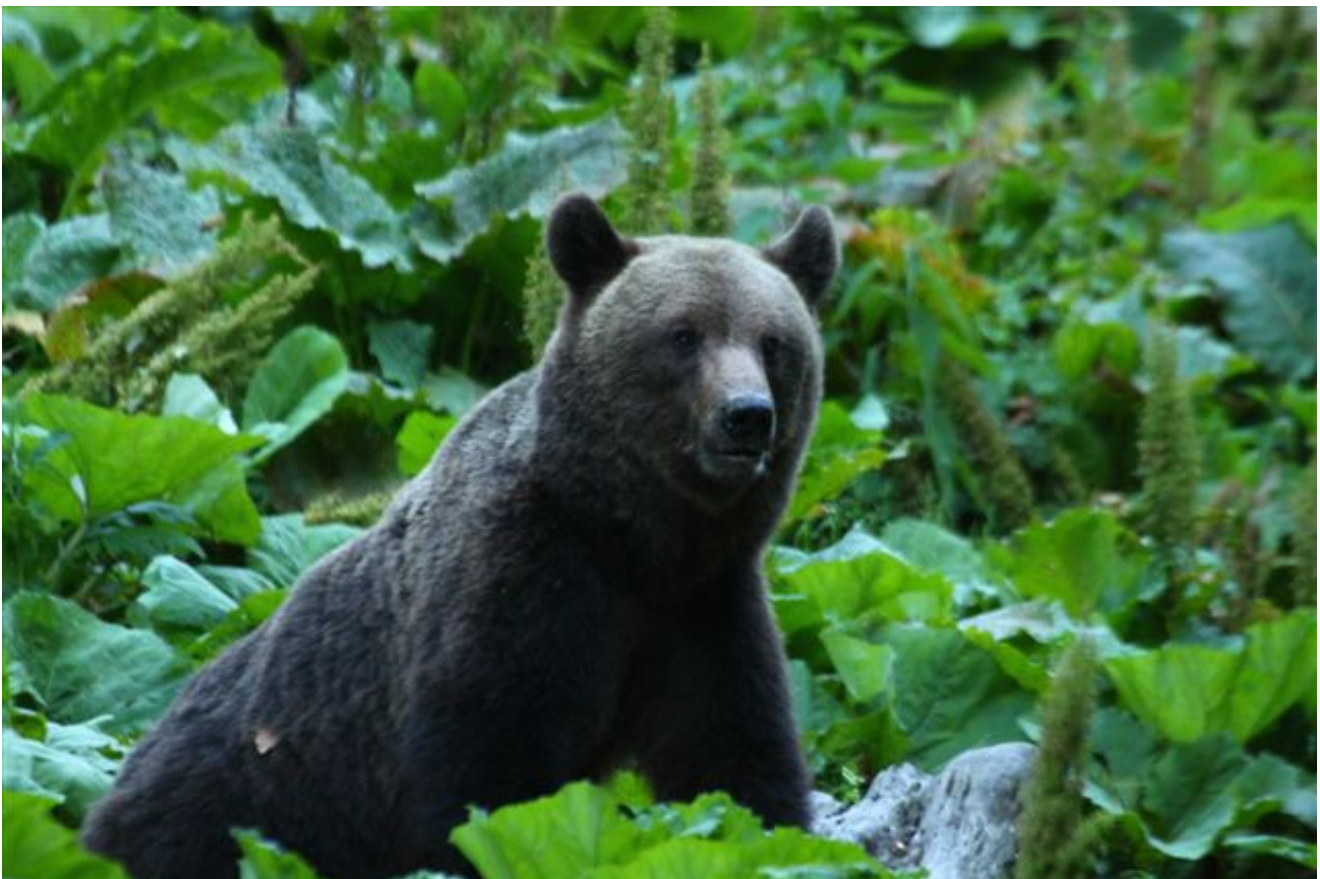
Heading straight for the mountains, we soon arrived at the mouth of the rocky, wooded Zarnesti Gorge and carried on on foot. Shallow pools by the track were full of amphibian life, frogpoles and toadpoles, and adult

yellow-bellied toads and alpine newts, and butterflies were active in the strong sunlight – orange tip, red admiral, common blue, painted lady and green-veined white all telling us we were firmly in the central European habitat zone. And everywhere there were flowers. The small meadows were especially rich, with yellow rattle, hoary plantain and fragrant orchid among a host of others.

The woods were rather quiet bird-wise, apart from coal and great tits, and a tree pipit singing on territory on the forest edge. Heading further up the gorge, a party of alpine swifts circled overhead, along with a peregrine, and among the many dramatic flowers there were dusky crane's-bill, alpine rose, alpine bells and alpine clematis, a delightful accompaniment to our picnic lunch.

Back to the hotel for a couple of hours' relaxation, we then headed north to Strimba Valley, about thirty minutes drive away. The broad lower reaches of the valley with scattered bushes and trees held yellowhammer, cuckoo, honey buzzard and a lesser spotted eagle, and Daniel produced a Colorado beetle from a potato field, well known to all of us, albeit something that few of us had seen before. The grassy pastures supported a wide range of flowers, including betony, carthusian pink and *Aster amellus*, while the beautiful purple-bracted cow-wheat *Melampyrum nemorosum* was abundant in the shaded woodland margins.

By now, evening was approaching, and it was time to meet up with our forest guide. He led us deep into the heart of the forest, where we disembarked and trooped quietly into the hide as he went around the clearing in front of us hiding caches of sweets and other treats. Before long, the first brown bear appeared, a young female, scouring the clearing for food, and over the next hour a procession of at least 12 individuals followed, searching, scrapping and generally going about their business in the gathering gloom. Incredible views of amazing animals, each with its own personality, they represented a good proportion of the 34 or so animals which form this particular population within a forest area of some 6500ha. It was almost dark as we reluctantly left the hide and returned to the vehicles, but not so dark that those of us at the back of the line couldn't see the large bear heading towards the clearing. It was certainly aware of us as well, and when it stopped and sniffed the air in our direction just 40m away, several hearts missed a beat!



Dinner was very late, but nobody minded – our amazing encounter had made us forget our own 'bear necessities'...

Monday 8 June: Strimba Valley and Poiana Brasov

After breakfast, we headed back again to Strimba Valley, to explore its obvious potential, by now hopefully desausagised. As we got out of the van, a hawfinch flew over, and a great grey shrike was spotted on a distant bush, before treating us to a much closer flight view. At least seven hoopoes were watched flying and feeding along the track, while a couple of lesser spotted eagles graced the skies. The flower-rich meadows swarmed with butterflies and other insects, including black-veined moth and *Penthophora morio*, and an old female golden oriole (almost as bright as a classic male) paused uncharacteristically out in the open on the edge of a tree-line.

Progressing up the track, we flushed a group of half a dozen woodlarks, had brief views of both middle spotted and white-backed woodpeckers, fieldfares feeding young, and a lovely male collared flycatcher. A roe deer browsed in the open in a small field, and a very dark brown red squirrel performed in the trees. A further series of meadows then revealed swarms of orchids – fragrant, bog, broad-leaved marsh, common spotted and lesser butterfly – with false helleborines just coming into flower, all being visited by marsh fritillary butterflies. Lunch was taken in one of these clearings, sparkling pink with sticky catchfly, and stands of *Cirsium rivulare* again attracting nectaring butterflies, including a couple of clouded apollo among the numerous silver-washed fritillaries.

After lunch, we decided it was time to head high, so we drove to Poiana Brasov, a ski resort with a cable car, which we rode up to the top. Being so high, it was rather cooler, and the bird life somewhat restricted, with chaffinch, tree pipit and goldcrest in the pines, and black redstarts around the buildings. A very fresh small tortoiseshell was basking in the hotspots, and the plants included swathes of oxlips and snowbells,

Returning toward Zarnesti, we diverted briefly to try and find a lesser spotted eagle which appeared to drop on some food, before visiting a neighbouring village to pay homage to the nesting white storks on the town hall.

Tuesday 9 June: Dambovicioara Gorge and Rasnov Gorge

A pre-breakfast potter through the local meadows was well attended, the main object being to try and relocate the splendid pair of scarlet rosefinches I had seen the previous morning. All to no avail, but a couple of singing olivaceous warblers, whitethroat and red-backed shrike, bathed in glowing early morning light, provided some compensation, as indeed did the swathes of botanical colour, red clover, yellow rattle, white eyebright and blue chicory among a host of others.

At breakfast, Tony discovered a tick, which was duly removed. This raised the obvious concerns about Lyme Disease, although we were assured it was not known in Romania. Not so: on our return to the UK, Tony developed the characteristic rash. Indeed, I also contracted a dose, even though I was not even aware of having been bitten; but both of us were successfully treated.

Another day, another two gorges. First we headed west, past the tourist honeypot of Bran Castle, into Wallachia and the narrow gorge of Dambovicioara. No sooner had we arrived and set off to walk than the main object of our visit appeared, a wallcreeper (*right*) which flew down the gorge and started feeding on the rock faces just a few metres from us. An amazing view, supplemented by flight views of at least two birds as we continued up the gorge road. Looking up for the distinctive butterfly-like flight, we also watched as a goshawk flapped slowly across the gorge, and several alpine swifts scythed through the sky above. Both grey wagtail and dipper were feeding in the river, seemingly oblivious to the sausagisers' flotsam of plastic bottles.



Botanically, the gorge was not remarkable, although some large clumps of fringed pink were lovely to see, their flowers of the palest pink deeply cut petals (*below middle, with (left) Soldanella montana and (right) Melampyrum nemorosum*).

Today's lunch stop was on a sunny, thyme-covered hillside, the scent wafting around in waves. Overlooking the high mountains, we could see the distant upper slopes glowing pink, presumably alpenrose in flower. And then it was off to our final site, Rasnov Gorge, the steep rocky sides of which had *Campanula carpatica* among a range of other cliff plants. But the hoped for crag martins were nowhere to be seen.

Finally, after an early dinner, most of us headed once more into the national park to another bear feeding station, close to Zarnesti. More distant viewing than a couple of nights ago, it was much wilder, and less of an adventure playground. But sadly no bears appeared this time, nor any of the wolves which also use this site. We had to be satisfied with a very smart fox, with an enormously bushy tail, and the wonderful sense of isolation all around us as thunder echoed down the valley, and the afterglow of day lit up the barren rocky mountainsides like snow.



Wednesday 10 June: Homeward bound

A more leisurely start, we were soon packed and aboard the van, heading out of the mountains towards Budapest. By lunchtime we were there, giving an opportunity for a lingering picnic and ice-cream in one of the large parks around a lake on the edge of the city. House and tree sparrows, yellow-legged gulls, and a family of redstarts provided the entertainment, but all too soon we were back at the airport and heading for home.

But not before a last round of favourites from the group, for this part of the holiday. No surprisingly, Pam, Rob, Tony and Margaret plumped for the bears. For Kate it was the yellow-bellied toad, Richard the wallcreepers, and John the waitress (again!). I settled for my scarlet rosefinches, admittedly a private pleasure, but one which given my news from home of a burglary, nobody minded. And Daniel had two – the weather, and his lessons in virology from Tony and Kate. No doubt that has been put to good use with other groups this summer – a little knowledge goes a long way in the hands of a consummate communicator!



LISTS

Key to locations:

Do – Dobrogea (days 2, 3 and 4)

DD – Danube Delta (days 5, 6 and 7)

C – Carpathians (days 9, 10 and 11)

J – Journeys (days 1, 8 and 12)

BIRDS

Little grebe	DD	Little stint	Do
Great crested grebe	Do DD J	Black-tailed godwit	DD
Red-necked grebe	DD	Redshank	Do
Black-necked grebe	Do DD	Green sandpiper	DD
Cormorant	Do DD J	Mediterranean gull	Do
Pygmy cormorant	DD J	Black-headed gull	Do DD J
White pelican	Do DD J	Yellow-legged gull	Do DD J
Dalmatian pelican	Do DD	Caspian gull	Do DD
Bittern	Do DD	Caspian tern	DD
Little bittern	Do DD	Sandwich tern	Do
Night heron	Do DD	Common tern	Do DD J
Squacco heron	Do DD	Whiskered tern	Do DD
Little egret	Do DD J	Black tern	DD
Great white egret	Do DD J	White-winged black tern	DD
Grey heron	Do DD	Feral pigeon	Do DD C J
Purple heron	Do DD	Stock dove	DD
White stork	Do DD C J	Woodpigeon	DD C J
Black stork	DD	Collared dove	Do DD C J
Glossy ibis	Do DD	Turtle dove	Do DD
Spoonbill	Do DD	Cuckoo	Do DD C J
Mute swan	Do DD J	Little owl	Do DD
Greylag goose	DD	Tawny owl	DD
Ruddy shelduck	J	Long-eared owl	Do
Shelduck	Do DD	Swift	Do C J
Gadwall	Do DD	Alpine swift	C
Teal	DD	Kingfisher	DD
Mallard	Do DD J	Bee-eater	Do DD J
Garganey	Do DD	Roller	Do DD J
Red-crested pochard	Do DD	Hoopoe	Do DD C J
Pochard	Do DD	Grey-headed woodpecker	DD C J
Ferruginous duck	Do DD	Black woodpecker	DD
Honey buzzard	Do DD C J	Great spotted woodpecker	Do DD C
White-tailed eagle	Do DD	Syrian woodpecker	Do DD
Short-toed eagle	Do	Middle spotted woodpecker	C
Marsh harrier	Do DD J	White-backed woodpecker	C
Goshawk	Do C	Lesser spotted woodpecker	DD
Levant sparrowhawk	Do	Calandra lark	Do
Common buzzard	C	Short-toed lark	Do
'Steppe' buzzard	Do DD	Crested lark	Do J
Long-legged buzzard	Do	Woodlark	Do DD C
Lesser spotted eagle	Do C	Skylark	Do J
Booted eagle	Do	Sand martin	Do J
Kestrel	Do DD C J	Swallow	Do DD C J
Red-footed falcon	Do DD J	House martin	Do DD C J
Hobby	Do DD C	Tawny pipit	Do
Saker	C	Tree pipit	C
Peregrine	C	Blue-headed wagtail	Do
Pheasant	Do DD	Black-headed wagtail	Do
Water rail	Do DD	'superciliaris' wagtail	Do
Moorhen	Do DD J	Grey wagtail	C J
Coot	Do DD J	White wagtail	Do DD C J
Black-winged stilt	Do DD J	Dipper	C
Avocet	Do	Wren	C
Stone-curlew	Do	Dunnock	C
Collared pratincole	Do	Robin	Do C
Little ringed plover	Do	Thrush nightingale	DD
Kentish plover	Do	Nightingale	Do
Lapwing	Do DD J	Black redstart	Do DD C J

Redstart	DD J	Wallcreeper	C
Stonechat	Do	Treecreeper	DD
Isabelline wheatear	Do	Penduline tit	DD
Northern wheatear	Do C	Golden oriole	Do DD C J
Ring ouzel	C	Red-backed shrike	Do DD C J
Blackbird	Do DD C	Lesser grey shrike	Do DD J
Fieldfare	C	Great grey shrike	C
Song thrush	C	Woodchat shrike	Do
Mistle thrush	C	Jay	C
Savi's warbler	DD	Magpie	Do DD C J
Sedge warbler	DD	Jackdaw	Do DD C J
Paddyfield warbler	Do	Rook	Do DD J
Reed warbler	Do DD	Hooded crow	Do DD C J
Great reed warbler	Do DD J	Raven	C
Olivaceous warbler	Do C	Starling	Do DD C J
Icterine warbler	Do DD	Rose-coloured starling	Do
Barred warbler	Do	House sparrow	Do DD C J
Lesser whitethroat	Do DD J	Spanish sparrow	Do J
Whitethroat	Do C	Tree sparrow	Do DD C J
Garden warbler	DD C	Chaffinch	Do DD C J
Blackcap	Do DD C	Serin	C
Chiffchaff	DD C	Greenfinch	Do DD C
Goldcrest	C	Goldfinch	Do DD C
Collared flycatcher	C	Scarlet rosefinch	C
Bearded tit	Do DD	Linnet	Do C
Long-tailed tit	DD	Bullfinch	C
Marsh tit	C	Hawfinch	C
Sombre tit	Do	Yellowhammer	C
Crested tit	C	Rock bunting	Do
Coal tit	C	Ortolan bunting	Do DD
Blue tit	DD C	Reed bunting	DD
Great tit	Do DD C	Corn bunting	Do DD C J

MAMMALS

Roe deer	C	European souslik	Do
Wild boar	DD (dead)	Eastern hedgehog	Do (dead)
" "	C (rootings)	Red fox	C
Hare	Do	Otter	DD
Muskrat	DD	Wild cat	DD
Red squirrel	C	Brown bear	C

REPTILES

Green lizard	Do
Balkan wall lizard	Do
Snake-eyed skink	Do
Nose-horned viper (<i>right</i>)	Do
Grass snake	DD
Dice snake (<i>below</i>)	Do
European pond terrapin	Do



AMPHIBIANS

Marsh frog	Do DD	Yellow-bellied toad	C
Agile frog	C	Common toad	C
Tree frog	DD	Alpine newt	C
Fire-bellied toad	DD		

BUTTERFLIES

Swallowtail	J	Wall	C
Clouded apollo	C	Grayling	Do
Red admiral	Do C	Mountain ringlet	C
Small tortoiseshell	C	Common brassy ringlet	C
Painted lady	Do C J	Small heath	Do C
Hungarian glider	C	Speckled wood	C
Freyer's purple emperor	DD	Common blue	Do C
Silver-washed fritillary	Do C	Green-underside blue	Do
Cardinal	Do	Silver-studded blue	Do
Queen-of-Spain fritillary	Do	Brown argus	Do
Niobe fritillary	Do	Large white	Do
Pearl-bordered fritillary	Do	Small white	Do
Violet fritillary	C	Green-veined white	C
Spotted fritillary	Do	Bath white	Do C
Heath fritillary	C	Orange tip	C
Marsh fritillary	C	Large skipper	Do
Meadow brown	Do	Chequered skipper	C

MOTHS

<i>Penthophora morio</i>	C	Hummingbird hawk-moth	Do
Giant peacock	Do	Clouded buff	C
Speckled yellow	Do	<i>Oxicesta chamoenices</i>	Do
Black-veined moth	C	Silver Y	C
<i>Rhodostropha calabra</i>	Do		

ODONATA

Emperor	<i>Anax imperator</i>	Do DD	Four-spotted chaser	<i>Libellula quadrimaculata</i>	Do
Lesser emperor	<i>Anax parthenope</i>	Do DD	Scarlet darter	<i>Crocothemis erythraea</i>	D
Brown hawk	<i>Aeshna grandis</i>	Do	Common darter	<i>Sympetrum striolatum</i>	Do
Southern migrant hawk	<i>Aeshna affinis</i>	Do	Beautiful demoiselle	<i>Calopteryx virgo</i>	C
Black-tailed skimmer	<i>Orthetrum cancellatum</i>	Do	Banded demoiselle	<i>Calopteryx splendens</i>	DD
Keeled skimmer	<i>Orthetrum coerulescens</i>	C	Red-eyed damselfly	<i>Platycnemis pennipes</i>	DD
Broad-bodied chaser	<i>Libellula depressa</i>	DD	Blue-tailed damselfly	<i>Ischnura elegans</i>	DD

OTHER INSECTS

<i>Cercopis vulnerata</i>	a red-and-black froghopper	C
<i>Metrioptera roeselii</i>	Roesel's bush-cricket	C
<i>Saga pedo</i> (right)	a large bush-cricket	Do
<i>Gryllus campestris</i>	field cricket	Do C J
<i>Oxythyrea funesta</i>	a speckled flower chafer	Do
<i>Phyllopertha horticola</i>	garden chafer	C
<i>Melolontha melolontha</i>	cockchafer	C
<i>Cetonia aurata</i>	rose chafer	Do
<i>Leptinotarsa decemlineata</i>	Colorado beetle	C
<i>Vespa crabro</i>	hornet	DD
<i>Scolia</i> sp.		Do
<i>Xylocopa violacea</i>	carpenter-bee	Do



OTHER INVERTEBRATES

<i>Misumena vatia</i>	yellow crab-spider	Do	<i>Ixodes ricinus</i>	deer tick	C
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FUNGI

<i>Laetiporus sulphureus</i>	chicken-of-the-woods	DD C
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FERNS

<i>Matteucia struthiopteris</i>	ostrich fern	C
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FLOWERING PLANTS

Romania is a challenge and a wonderland for the botanist. Many plants will be familiar to those who have travelled in western Europe and the Mediterranean but in addition there are many species from the steppes or of Asiatic origin. Introduced plants add to the identification challenge. Alas, no one field guide covers the area.

ACERACEAE		
<i>Acer campestre</i>	field maple	Do
<i>Acer platanoides</i>	Norway maple	Do
<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>	sycamore	C
<i>Acer tataricum</i>	Tartar maple	Do
ALISMATACEAE		
<i>Alisma plantago-aquatica</i>	water plantain	DD
<i>Sagittaria sagittifolia</i>	arrowhead	DD
ANACARDIACEAE		
<i>Cotinus coggygria</i>	smoke bush	Do
APIACEAE		
<i>Berula erecta</i>	lesser water parsnip	DD
<i>Bifora radians</i>		Do
<i>Chaerophyllum hirsutum</i>	chervil	C
<i>Cicuta virosa</i>	cowbane	DD
<i>Conium maculatum</i>	hemlock	Do
<i>Conopodium majus</i>	pignut	C
<i>Eryngium campestre</i>	field eryngo	Do
<i>Eryngium maritimum</i>	sea-holly	Do
<i>Ferulago confusa</i>		Do
<i>Laser trilobum</i>		Do
<i>Orlaya grandiflora</i>		Do
<i>Pimpinella major</i>	greater burnet-saxifrage	C
<i>Sanicula europaea</i>	sanicle	C
APOCYNACEAE		
<i>Vinca herbacea</i>	periwinkle	Do
ASCLEPIADACEAE		
<i>Periploca graeca</i>		DD
<i>Vincetoxicum hirsutaria</i>	swallow-wort	Do
ASTERACEAE		
<i>Achillea coarctata</i>		Do
<i>Achillea clypeolata</i>		Do
<i>Achillea depressa</i>		Do
<i>Achillea nobilis</i> ssp. <i>neilreichii</i>		Do
<i>Achillea ochroleuca</i>		Do
<i>Achillea pannonica</i>		Do
<i>Achillea setacea</i>		Do
<i>Anthemis austriaca</i>		Do
<i>Anthemis tinctoria</i>	yellow chamomile	Do
<i>Artemisia absinthium</i>	wormwood	Do
<i>Artemisia austriaca</i>		Do
<i>Artemisia loebellii</i>		Do
<i>Artemisia santonica</i>		Do
<i>Artemisia tchernieviana</i>		Do
<i>Artemisia vulgaris</i>	mugwort	Do
<i>Aster amellus</i>		C
<i>Carduus nutans</i>	musk thistle	Do
<i>Carthamus lanatus</i>		Do
<i>Centaurea arenaria</i>		Do
<i>Centaurea cyanus</i>	cornflower	Do
<i>Centaurea orientalis</i>		Do
<i>Centaurea phrygia</i>	wig knapweed	C
<i>Centaurea solstitialis</i>	yellow star-thistle	Do
<i>Cichorium intybus</i>	chicory	C
<i>Cirsium rivulare</i>		C
<i>Cirsium waldsteinii</i>		C
<i>Crepis sancta</i>		Do

<i>Crupina vulgaris</i>		Do
<i>Doronicum columnae</i>	leopard's-bane	C
<i>Filago pyramidata</i>	broad-leaved cudweed	Do
<i>Hieracium aurantiacum</i>	fox-and-cubs	C
<i>Jurinea mollis</i>		Do
<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>	ox-eye daisy	C
<i>Onopordum acanthium</i>	cotton thistle	Do
<i>Onopordum tauricum</i>		Do
<i>Scolymus hispanicus</i>	Spanish oysterplant	Do
<i>Scorzonera hispanica</i>		Do
<i>Senecio paludosus</i>		DD
<i>Senecio vulgaris</i>		Do
<i>Tanacetum corymbosum</i>		Do
<i>Tragopogon dubius</i>		Do
<i>Xanthium strumarium</i>	rough cocklebur	Do
<i>Xeranthemum annuum</i>		Do
BALSAMINACEAE		
<i>Impatiens noli-tangere</i>	touch-me-not balsam	C
BORAGINACEAE		
<i>Anchusa azurea</i>	large blue alkanet	Do
<i>Argusia sibirica</i>	Siberian sea rosemary	Do
<i>Asperugo procumbens</i>	madwort	Do
<i>Echium italicum</i>	pale bugloss	Do
<i>Echium vulgare</i>	viper's bugloss	Do
<i>Lappula squarrosa</i>	bur forget-me-not	Do
<i>Myosotis alpestris</i>		C
<i>Myosotis arvensis</i>	field forget-me-not	Do
<i>Myosotis scorpioides</i>	water forget-me-not	DD
<i>Myosotis sylvatica</i>	wood forget-me-not	C
<i>Onosma arenaria</i>		Do
<i>Onosma visionii</i>		DD
<i>Pulmonaria rubra</i>	red lungwort	C
<i>Symphytum officinale</i>	comfrey	DD C
BRASSICACEAE		
<i>Alyssum hirsutum</i>		Do
<i>Berteroa incana</i>	hoary alison	Do
<i>Cardamine bulbifera</i>	coralroot bittercress	C
<i>Cardamine impatiens</i>	narrow-leaved bittercress	C
<i>Cardaria draba</i>	hoary cress	Do
<i>Crambe maritima</i>	sea kale	Do
<i>Erysimum diffusum</i>		Do
<i>Erysimum hieraciifolium</i>		C
<i>Erysimum virgatum</i>		C
<i>Lunaria rediviva</i>	perennial honesty	C
<i>Rorippa amphibia</i>	great yellowcress	DD
BUTOMACEAE		
<i>Butomis umbellatus</i>	flowering-rush	DD
CAMPANULACEAE		
<i>Asyneuma anthericoides</i>		Do
<i>Campanula alpina</i>		C
<i>Campanula carpatica</i>		C
<i>Campanula patula</i>		C
<i>Campanula persicifolia</i>		DD
<i>Campanula romanica</i>		Do
<i>Campanula sibirica</i>		Do
CANNABACEAE		
<i>Cannabis sativa</i>	hemp	Do
<i>Humulus lupulus</i>	hop	DD
CAPRIFOLIACEAE		
<i>Sambucus ebulus</i>	dwarf elder	C
<i>Sambucus nigra</i>	elder	C
<i>Viburnum lantana</i>	wayfaring tree	Do

CARYOPHYLLACEAE		
<i>Dianthus bessarabicus</i>		DD
<i>Dianthus capitatus</i>		Do
<i>Dianthus carthusianorum</i>		C
<i>Dianthus nardiformis</i>		Do
<i>Dianthus plumarius</i>		C
<i>Gypsophila glomerata</i>		Do
<i>Herniaria incana</i>		Do
<i>Kohlrauschia prolifera</i>		Do
<i>Lychnis flos-cuculi</i>	ragged-robin	C
<i>Lychnis viscaria</i>	sticky catchfly	C
<i>Minuartia glomerata</i>		Do
<i>Paronychia cephalotes</i>		Do
<i>Silene borysthena</i>		Do
<i>Silene conica</i>	sand catchfly	Do
<i>Silene nutans</i>	Nottingham catchfly	C
<i>Spergularia media</i>	greater sea-spurrey	Do
<i>Stellaria nemorum</i>	wood stitchwort	C
CHENOPODIACEAE		
<i>Bassia hirsuta</i>	hairy seablite	Do
<i>Halocnemum strobilaceum</i>		Do
<i>Halimione verrucifera</i>		Do
<i>Salicornia europea</i>	glasswort	Do
<i>Salicornia prostrata</i>		Do
<i>Salicornia ramosissima</i>		Do
<i>Suaeda maritima</i>	annual seablite	Do
CISTACEAE		
<i>Helianthemum nummularium</i>	common rock-rose	C
CONVOLVULACEAE		
<i>Calystegia sepium</i>	hedge bindweed	DD
<i>Convolvulus arvensis</i>	field bindweed	Do
<i>Convolvulus cantabricus</i>	pink bindweed	Do
<i>Convolvulus lineatus</i>		Do
CORYLACEAE		
<i>Corylus avellana</i>	hazel	Do C
<i>Carpinus betulus</i>	hornbeam	Do
<i>Carpinus orientalis</i>	eastern hornbeam	Do
CRASSULACEAE		
<i>Sedum hillebrandtii</i>		Do
CYPERACEAE		
<i>Bolboschoenus maritimus</i>	sea club-rush	Do
<i>Holoschoenus vulgaris</i>	round-headed club-rush	Do
<i>Schoenoplectus tabernaemontani</i>	grey club-rush	Do
<i>Schoenoplectus lacustris</i>	common club-rush	Do
DIPSACACEAE		
<i>Knautia dipsacifolia</i>		C
ELEAGNACEAE		
<i>Eleagnus angustifolia</i>	oleaster	Do
EPHEDRACEAE		
<i>Ephedra fragilis</i>	joint-pine	DD
ERICACEAE		
<i>Vaccinium myrtillus</i>	bilberry	C
EUPHORBIACEAE		
<i>Euphorbia amygdaloides</i>	wood spurge	C
<i>Euphorbia cadrlateri</i>		Do
<i>Euphorbia chamaecyparissas</i>	cypress spurge	C
<i>Euphorbia dobrogensis</i>		Do
<i>Euphorbia glareosa</i>		Do
<i>Euphorbia myrsinites</i> ssp. <i>litarderei</i>		Do
<i>Euphorbia palustris</i>	marsh spurge	DD
<i>Euphorbia seguieriana</i>		Do

FABACEAE		
<i>Amorpha fruticosa</i>	false indigo	DD
<i>Anthyllis vulneraria</i>	kidney vetch	C
<i>Astragalus monspessulanus</i>	Montpelier milk-vetch	Do
<i>Astragalus onobrychis</i> ssp. <i>linearifolius</i>		Do
<i>Astragalus ponticus</i>		Do
<i>Astragalus varius</i>		Do
<i>Astragalus vesicarius</i> ssp. <i>pseudogalucus</i>		Do
<i>Chamaecytisus hirsutus</i>		C
<i>Coronilla scorpioides</i>	scorpion vetch	Do
<i>Coronilla varia</i>	crown vetch	Do
<i>Genista sagittale</i>	winged greenweed	C
<i>Genista tinctoria</i>	dyer's greenweed	C
<i>Lathyrus pratensis</i>	meadow vetchling	C
<i>Lathyrus tuberosus</i>		Do
<i>Medicago lupulina</i>	black medick	C
<i>Medicago minima</i>	bur medick	Do
<i>Onobrychis gracilis</i>		Do
<i>Onobrychis viciifolia</i>	sainfoin	C
<i>Ononis columnae</i>		Do
<i>Robinia pseudacacia</i>	false acacia	Do
<i>Trifolium alpestre</i>		C
<i>Trifolium arvense</i>	hare's-foot clover	Do
<i>Trifolium campestre</i>	hop trefoil	Do
<i>Trifolium montanum</i>	mountain clover	C
<i>Trifolium pratense</i>	red clover	C
<i>Trifolium repens</i>	white clover	C
<i>Vicia cracca</i>	tufted vetch	C
<i>Vicia tenuifolia</i>		Do
FAGACEAE		
<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>	beech	C
<i>Quercus pedunculiflora</i>		Do
<i>Quercus polycarpa</i>		Do
<i>Quercus pubescens</i>	downy oak	Do
<i>Quercus robur</i>	pedunculate oak	Do C
GENTIANACEAE		
<i>Gentiana lutea</i>		C
GERANIACEAE		
<i>Erodium cicutarium</i>	common stork's-bill	Do
<i>Geranium phaeum</i>	dusky crane's-bill	C
<i>Geranium robertianum</i>	herb-robert	C
<i>Geranium sanguineum</i>	bloody crane's-bill	Do
GLOBULARIACEAE		
<i>Globularia punctata</i>		Do
HALAGORACEAE		
<i>Myriophyllum spicatum</i>	spiked water-milfoil	DD
HYDROCHARITACEAE		
<i>Stratiotes aloides</i>	water soldier	DD
HYPERICACEAE		
<i>Hypericum perforatum</i>	perforate St. John's-wort	Do
IRIDACEAE		
<i>Iris sibirica</i>		C
<i>Iris sintenisii</i>		Do
<i>Iris suaveolens</i>		Do
<i>Iris variegata</i>		Do
<i>Merendera sobolifera</i>		Do
JUNCACEAE		
<i>Juncus gerardi</i>	saltmarsh rush	Do
<i>Juncus maritimus</i>	sea rush	Do
<i>Luzula sylvatica</i>	great wood-rush	C

LAMIACEAE		
<i>Acinos alpinus</i>	alpine basil-thyme	C
<i>Acinos arvensis</i>	basil-thyme	Do
<i>Ajuga chamaepitys</i>	ground-pine	Do
<i>Ajuga laxmannii</i>		Do
<i>Ajuga pyramidalis</i>	pyramidal bugle	C
<i>Ajuga reptans</i>	bugle	C
<i>Lamiaeum galaeobdolon</i>	yellow archangel	C
<i>Lamium garganicum</i>		C
<i>Lamium maculatum</i>	spotted dead-nettle	C
<i>Lycopus europaeus</i>	gipsywort	DD
<i>Marrubium peregrinum</i>		Do
<i>Mentha aquatica</i>	water mint	DD
<i>Phlomis tuberosa</i>		Do
<i>Prunella vulgaris</i>	self-heal	C
<i>Salvia austriaca</i>		Do
<i>Salvia aethiopis</i>		Do
<i>Salvia nemorosa</i> ssp. <i>tesquicola</i>	wild sage	Do
<i>Salvia nutans</i>		Do
<i>Salvia pratensis</i>	meadow clary	C
<i>Salvia verticillata</i>	whorled clary	C
<i>Sideritis montana</i>		Do
<i>Stachys officinalis</i>	betony	C
<i>Stachys palustris</i>	marsh woundwort	Do DD
<i>Stachys recta</i>	yellow woundwort	Do
<i>Teucrium chamaedrys</i>	wall germander	Do
<i>Teucrium polium</i>		Do
<i>Thymus pannonicus</i>		Do
<i>Thymus zygoides</i>		Do
LILIACEAE		
<i>Allium rotundum</i>		Do
<i>Allium saxatile</i>		Do
<i>Muscari tenuiflorum</i>		Do
<i>Ornithogalum umbellatum</i>	star-of-Bethlehem	C
<i>Veratrum album</i>	false helleborine	C
LINACEAE		
<i>Linum austriacum</i>		Do C
<i>Linum hirsutum</i>		Do
<i>Linum tenuifolius</i>		Do
LORANTHACEAE		
<i>Loranthus europaeus</i>		Do
LYTHRACEAE		
<i>Lythrum salicaria</i>	purple loosestrife	DD
MALVACEAE		
<i>Althaea officinalis</i>	marsh mallow	Do
<i>Malva pusilla</i>	small mallow	Do
<i>Malva sylvestris</i>	common mallow	Do
MENYANTHACEAE		
<i>Nymphoides peltata</i>	fringed water-lily	DD
NYMPHAEACEAE		
<i>Nuphar lutea</i>	yellow water-lily	DD
<i>Nymphaea alba</i>	white water-lily	DD
OLEACEAE		
<i>Fraxinus angustifolia</i>		DD
<i>Fraxinus ornus</i>	manna ash	Do
<i>Ligustrum vulgare</i>	wild privet	DD
ORCHIDACEAE		
<i>Anacamptis pyramidalis</i>	pyramidal orchid	Do
<i>Cephalanthera rubra</i>	red helleborine	Do
<i>Dactylorhiza fuchsii</i>	common spotted orchid	C
<i>Dactylorhiza majalis</i>	broad-leaved marsh orchid	C
<i>Gymnadenia conopsea</i>	fragrant orchid	C

<i>Limodorum abortivum</i>	violet bird's-nest orchid	Do
<i>Neottia nidus-avis</i>	bird's-nest orchid	Do
<i>Orchis laxiflora</i> ssp. <i>elegans</i>	loose-flowered orchid	Do
<i>Orchis mascula</i>	early purple orchid	C
<i>Orchis palustris</i>	bog orchid	C
<i>Orchis purpurea</i>	lady orchid	Do
<i>Platanthera bifolia</i>	lesser butterfly orchid	C
<i>Platanthera chlorantha</i>	greater butterfly orchid	Do
OROBANCHACEAE		
<i>Orobanche arenaria</i>	sand broomrape	Do
<i>Orobanche ramosa</i>	branched broomrape	Do
OXALIDACEAE		
<i>Oxalis acetosella</i>	wood-sorrel	C
PAPAVERACEAE		
<i>Chelidonium majus</i>	greater celandine	C
<i>Papaver hybridum</i>	rough poppy	Do
<i>Papaver rhoeus</i>	common poppy	Do
PLANTAGINACEAE		
<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	ribwort plantain	Do
<i>Plantago media</i>	hoary plantain	Do C
PLUMBAGINACEAE		
<i>Limonium danubiale</i>		Do
POACEAE		
<i>Agropyron brandzae</i>		Do
<i>Agropyron cristatum</i>		Do
<i>Briza media</i>	quaking-grass	C
<i>Bromus squarrosus</i>		Do
<i>Bromus tectorum</i>	drooping brome	Do
<i>Chrysopogon gryllus</i>		Do
<i>Festuca valesiaca</i>		Do
<i>Glyceria maxima</i>	reed sweet-grass	DD
<i>Leymus racemosus</i> ssp. <i>sabulosus</i>		Do
<i>Koeleria brevis</i>		Do
<i>Melica ciliata</i>	hairy melick	Do
<i>Phragmites australis</i> ssp. <i>altissim</i>	common reed	Do DD
<i>Poa bulbosa</i>	bulbous meadow-grass	Do
<i>Puccinellia limosa</i>	saltmarsh grass	Do
<i>Secale sylvestre</i>		Do
<i>Stipa lessingiana</i>		Do
<i>Stipa pulcherrium</i>		Do
<i>Stipa ucrainica</i>		Do
POLYGALACEAE		
<i>Polygala alpestris</i>		C
<i>Polygala comosa</i>		C
<i>Polygala major</i>		Do
<i>Polygala vulgaris</i>	common milkwort	Do
POLYGONACEAE		
<i>Polygonum amphibium</i>	amphibious bistort	DD
<i>Polygonum bistorta</i>	bistort	C
<i>Polygonum viviparum</i>	alpine bistort	C
<i>Rumex acetosella</i>	sheep's sorrel	Do
<i>Rumex alpinus</i>	monk's rhubarb	C
POTAMOGETONACEAE		
<i>Potamogetum crispus</i>	curled pondweed	DD
<i>Potamogetum pectinatus</i>	fennel-leaved pondweed	DD
<i>Potamogetum perfoliatus</i>	perfoliate pondweed	DD
PRIMULACEAE		
<i>Anagallis arvensis</i>	scarlet pimpernel	Do
<i>Cortusa matthiola</i>	alpine bells	C
<i>Primula elatior</i>	oxlip	C
<i>Soldanella montana</i>		C

RANUNCULACEAE		
<i>Aconitum variegatum</i>		C
<i>Aquilegia vulgaris</i>	columbine	C
<i>Clematis alpina</i>		C
<i>Clematis vitalba</i>	traveller's joy	DD
<i>Consolida orientalis</i>	eastern larkspur	Do
<i>Consolida regalis</i>	forking larkspur	Do
<i>Trollius europaeus</i>	globeflower	C
RHAMNACEAE		
<i>Paliuris spina-christi</i>	Christ's thorn	Do
ROSACEAE		
<i>Dryas octopetala</i>	mountain avens	C
<i>Filipendula vulgaris</i>	dropwort	Do
<i>Fragaria vesca</i>	wild strawberry	C
<i>Fragaria viridis</i>		Do
<i>Geum rivale</i>	water avens	C
<i>Potentilla argentea</i>	hoary cinquefoil	Do
<i>Potentilla bornmuelleri</i>		Do
<i>Potentilla recta</i>	sulphur cinquefoil	Do
<i>Potentilla reptans</i>	creeping cinquefoil	Do
<i>Prunus mahaleb</i>	St Lucie's cherry	Do
<i>Prunus spinosa</i> ssp. <i>dasphylla</i>	blackthorn	Do
<i>Pyrus bulgarica</i>		Do
<i>Pyrus pyraster</i>	wild pear	Do
<i>Rosa canina</i>	dog rose	C
<i>Rosa caryophyllacea</i>		Do
<i>Rosa pendulina</i>	alpine rose	C
<i>Rubus idaeus</i>	raspberry	C
<i>Rubus saxatilis</i>	stone Bramble	C
<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>	rowan	C
<i>Spiraea chamaedryifolia</i>		C
RUBIACEAE		
<i>Cruciata laevipes</i>	crosswort	C
<i>Galium dasypodum</i>		Do
<i>Galium humifusum</i>		Do
<i>Galium odoratum</i>	woodruff	C
<i>Galium palustre</i>	marsh bedstraw	DD
<i>Galium pedemontanum</i>		Do
RUTACEAE		
<i>Haplophyllum suaveolens</i>		Do
SALICACEAE		
<i>Populus alba</i>	white poplar	DD
<i>Populus nigra</i>	black poplar	DD
<i>Salix alba</i>	white willow	Do DD
<i>Salix cinerea</i>	grey willow	DD
<i>Salix purpurea</i>	purple willow	DD
<i>Salix rosmarinifolia</i>		DD
SAXIFRAGACEAE		
<i>Saxifraga umbrosa</i>		C
SCROPHULARIACEAE		
<i>Digitalis grandiflora</i>		C
<i>Digitalis lanata</i>		Do
<i>Linaria genistifolia</i>		Do
<i>Melampyrum cristatum</i>	crested cow-wheat	Do
<i>Melampyrum nemorosum</i>		C
<i>Pedicularis comosa</i>		C
<i>Pedicularis verticillata</i>		C
<i>Rhinanthus angustifolius</i>	greater yellow-rattle	C
<i>Rhinanthus minor</i>	yellow-rattle	C
<i>Scrophularia heterophylla</i>		C
<i>Verbascum banaticum</i>		Do
<i>Verbascum phoeniceum</i>	purple mullein	Do
<i>Veronica austriaca</i>		Do

SIMAROUBACEAE		
<i>Ailanthus altissima</i>	tree-of-heaven	Do
SOLANACEAE		
<i>Lycium barbarum</i>		Do
<i>Solanum dulcamara</i>	bittersweet	DD
SPARGANIACEAE		
<i>Sparganium erectum</i>	branched bur-reed	DD
TAMARICACEAE		
<i>Tamarix ramosissima</i>		Do DD
TILIACEAE		
<i>Tilia platyphyllos</i>	large-leaved lime	Do
<i>Tilia tomentosa</i>	silver lime	Do
TRAPACEAE		
<i>Trapa natans</i>	water-chestnut	DD
TYPHACEAE		
<i>Typha angustifolia</i>	lesser reedmace	DD
<i>Typha latifolia</i>	reedmace	DD
ULMACEAE		
<i>Ulmus minor</i>	small-leaved elm	Do
URTICACEAE		
<i>Urtica galaeopsifolia</i>	stingless nettle	C
VALERIANACEAE		
<i>Valeriana montana</i>		C
<i>Valeriana officinalis</i>	common valerian	C
VIOLACEAE		
<i>Viola biflora</i>		C
<i>Viola tricolor</i>	heartsease	C
VITACEAE		
<i>Vitis sylvestris</i>		DD



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