

A BRIEF INTERLUDE IN VIENNA – APRIL 2001

Steve & Julie Holliday

19 APRIL

Arrived early pm, and after picking up some local gen from Graham Tebb we decided to have a brief look around Rathaus Park in the centre of Vienna for Waxwings. A fairly accurate count produced 200 birds showing extremely well, though their calls were difficult to hear above the sound of rush-hour traffic. Typical suburban birds such as Collared Dove, Great Tit were also found along with 2 Hooded Crows.

20 APRIL

Mid-pm and a good walk around Schonbrunn Palace woods. Tremendous numbers of Great Spotted Woodpeckers came close and at least 2 different Middle Spotted Woodpeckers were seen very well. Both, Finches and Tits, were almost prepared to take food out of your hands, being very approachable, similarly so too were the “black” Red Squirrels. Several Green Woodpeckers and Nuthatches were also heard, and 2 Hawfinches flew overhead as we were leaving.

21 APRIL

A casual obs outside the National Art Museum saw a Common Swift flying around.

22 APRIL

An eagerly awaited day out with Graham Tebb and Peter Hirsch arrives and at 0700hrs we are en route to the Neuseedlsee area (1 hour drive south east of Vienna). Rather than simply looking for a large day total, Steve was particularly keen to see Moustached Warbler and Syrian Woodpecker and both Graham and Peter kindly assisted in this quest. Along the way we note many Great White Egrets, several Marsh Harriers and Common Buzzards, a Hobby perched on a roadside post and 2 Turtle Doves. A roadside stop in the Illmitz area produces Nightingale, Lesser Whitethroat and Serin (0830).

Heading into the Seewinkel area and Greylag Geese were in evidence, many with family parties on roadsides. Around Illmitz Marina some hard searching, due to a strong wind, results in brief views of Moustached Warbler (at least 2 singing), a reeling Savi's Warbler, breeding Little Ringed Plovers and more Great White Egrets and Marsh Harriers. Common Terns passed through in small numbers and a female *yarrellii* Wagtail provided views down to 10m, the general “dirty” overall colouration and black rump looking obvious amongst several clean looking *alba* Wagtails in the area. On leaving the marina, 2 pairs of Red-crested Pochards were found and an area of open water (Zicklacke) held 14 Mute Swans, 2 Shoveler, a Ruff, and an adult *fuscus* Lesser Black-backed Gull. 20+ first-winter Rooks were seen in roadside fields en route to Apetlon (1030).

White Storks were noted carrying nest material at Apetlon. A drive round nearby villages finally produced a pair of Syrian Woodpeckers, which gave great views at Taden (1100). The village also provided Black Redstarts, Serins and a flyby Hobby.

The wind was seriously strong as we approached Lange Lacke WWF nature reserve. Waders seen here included 3 Black-tailed Godwits, 8+ Ruff, Redshank, Little Ringed Plover and nearby, a White Stork stood in a field, 2 superb *flava* Wagtails gave good views and a Black Redstart was seen in a farmyard. The wind seriously hampered viewing which should have produced many other interesting waders. A drive round the Darscho area finally produced 3 Avocets, more Ruff (most in breeding plumage), Curlew and Black-tailed Godwits, Teal, Garganey, Gadwall, Shoveler and the ever present pairing of Great White Egret and Marsh Harrier (1200).

Following an excellent lunch at Illmitz, we toured the same area (1415). A visit to see some unusually hairy Pigs also produced 100+ Tree and House Sparrows in the compound, with 15 Collared Doves and 15+ Ruff feeding on the rough earth. To the north of Muenchhof a male Montagu's Harrier put in an appearance but even more stunning was a juvenile Imperial Eagle (1520), initially noticed stood in a bare

arable field. The bird was watched for at least 15 minutes as it quartered the fields “worrying” Roe Deer and Pheasant. Several Kestrels were in the area, as were singing Corn Buntings. We put in a good hour searching for Saker’s near Nickledorf but without success, although many more Common Buzzards and Kestrels were found. The strong wind turned to rain and we headed back to Vienna (1600) arriving back at the Hotel some 45 minutes later.

This was an excellent day out, hosted by 2 resident experts, without whom we couldn’t have seen so much. Special thanks to Peter and Graham.

CLASSIFIED TRIP LIST

Great Crested Grebe	Sand Martin
Great White Egret	Swallow
Grey Heron	House Martin
White Stork	White Wagtail <i>alba & yarrellii</i>
Mute Swan	Blue-headed Wagtail <i>flava</i>
Greylag Goose	Waxwing
Mallard	Robin
Gadwall	Nightingale
Shoveler	Black Redstart
Teal	Song Thrush
Garganey	Blackbird
Red-crested Pochard	Blackcap
Imperial Eagle	Lesser Whitethroat
Marsh Harrier	Whitethroat
Montagu’s Harrier	Sedge Warbler
Common Buzzard	Moustached Warbler
Kestrel	Savi’s Warbler
Hobby	Willow Warbler
Grey Partridge	Chiffchaff
Pheasant	Great Tit
Coot	Blue Tit
Avocet	Nuthatch
Little Ringed Plover	Magpie
Lapwing	Rook
Redshank	Crow – both Carrion and Hooded
Black-tailed Godwit	Starling
Curlew	House Sparrow
Ruff	Tree Sparrow
Black-headed Gull	Chaffinch
Yellow-legged Gull	Linnet
Common Gull	Goldfinch
Lesser Black-backed Gull <i>fuscus</i>	Greenfinch
Common Tern	Serin
Feral Pigeon	Hawfinch
Wood Pigeon	Reed Bunting
Collared Dove	Corn Bunting
Turtle Dove	
Common Swift	Total 79 species
Green Woodpecker	
Great Spotted Woodpecker	
Syrian Woodpecker	
Middle Spotted Woodpecker	
Sky Lark	