

FAMILY TRIP TO GIBRALTAR & COTO DONANA – MARCH 2012

Steve Holliday plus Julie & Jenny

22 March Gibraltar PM onwards, very warm & easterly levanter

Checked in to the Rock Hotel around noon and gained an immediate upgrade to the Penthouse suite for no obvious reason; a very nice start! Casual obs on the Rock produced single Hoopoes in Alameda Gardens and the top Cable Car station, whilst other species seen included Kestrel sp (prob Lesser), Yellow-legged Gulls, Collared Doves, Wren, Sardinian Warblers, Blackcaps and Blue Tits.



VIEW FROM THE TOP OF THE ROCK, LOOKING NORTH ALONG THE COSTA DEL SOL...



VIEW LOOKING NORTH WEST FROM THE TOP OF THE ROCK...

23 March Full day trip to Coto Donana with Clive & Stewart Finlayson; special arrangements made by Clive to go into the Palacio and surrounding area. Temp touched 30 deg C. A brief visit was made to the marshes at El Rocio on the return journey. A superb day out...



THE PALACIO, COTO DONANA – QUARTERS FOR MANY FAMOUS BIRDWATCHERS & KINGS...



WHITE STORK CARRYING NEST MATERIAL...

Birds seen included: White Stork & Grey Heron colony, Squacco Heron, Greater Flamingo large numbers both sites, Cattle Egret numerous, Glossy Ibis 20+ nr Palacio, Spoonbill 6+ El Rocio, Night Heron 1 ad, Shoveler 200+, Mallard, Teal, Marsh Harrier many, Black Kite numerous, Red Kite 10+, Griffon Vulture seen en route, Montagu's Harrier several en route, Booted Eagles, Common Buzzard 1 nr Palacio, Sparrowhawk 1, Kestrel f., Spanish Imperial Eagle adult nr Palacio, Water Rail heard nr Palacio, Black-tailed Godwit numerous both sites, Redshank numerous both sites, Black-winged Stilt

several, Avocet numerous El Rocio, Black-headed Gulls and Yellow-legged Gulls, Hoopoe nr Palacio, Blackbird & Song Thrush, Thekla Lark several nr Palacio.



TYPICAL SCRUB HABITAT IN THE COTO – SPANISH IMPERIAL EAGLE SEEN FROM HERE...

Migrants nr the Palacio included Nightingale 2 sg, Tree Pipit, Swallow, Redstart 4+, Blackcap 4+, Chiffchaff 6+ plus Cetti's Warbler 2 sg. Also close by were Blue & Great Tits, House Sparrows, Spotless Starlings, Serins displaying, Goldfinch, Chaffinch and Corn Buntings singing.



JENNY & JULIE, CLIVE & STEWART...

Mammals seen included wild Horses, Red Deer 20+, Fallow Deer 20+, Wild Boar 5 and Mongoose 2. A Small Copper was nr the Palacio.



EL ROCIO...



FLAMINGOS AT EL ROCIO MARSHES...

24 March Gibraltar Brief look in Alameda Gardens produced Hoopoe, Chiffchaff 2 and Blackcap, with a male Redstart at the nearby Piccadilly restaurant.

25 March Gibraltar Continuing easterly & levanter

AM: A good look round Europa Point and the foreshore produced the following:

Cricket pitch: Audouin's Gull 9 (7 ads, 2 2nd year), Yellow-legged Gull 120 and Lesser Black-backed Gull 1 adult

At sea: Cory's Shearwater 1, Shag 1 adult, Black-headed Gulls 15, Mediterranean Gull 2 2nd winters, Sandwich Tern plus a Peregrine flying past

Foreshore: Meadow Pipit 1, Nightingale 1, Black Redstart 1 f., Blue Rock Thrush 1 f., Subalpine Warbler 1 m.



EUROPA FORESHORE....

PM: A look at North Front Cemetery produced Peregrine overhead, a brief Pipit sp, Black Redstart 1 f., Redstart 1 m., and Willow Warbler 3

Off Catalan Bay were Gannet 1 ad., Bonxie 1 and nearby were Blue Rock Thrush 1 m. and Wren.

The evening at the Marina produced Pallid Swift 10+.

26 March Gibraltar Continuing easterly & levanter but still very warm

AM: Another visit to the Europa Point area produced the following:

Cricket pitch: Audouin's Gull 11 (including a White colour-ringed bird) and Yellow-legged Gull 120

At sea: Gannet E-1 1st yr, Shag E-1 adult, Audouin's Gull light E passage with 8 counted, Black-headed Gull 5, Mediterranean Gull 2 both 2nd w. in the area. Plus, 3 Dolphins breaching...



EUROPA POINT LIGHTHOUSE...

Foreshore: Hoopoe 1, Blackbird, Black Redstart 1 f., Redstart 1 m., Sardinian Warbler 1 pr, Chiffchaff 2,

Passage: Swallow N-6, House Martin N-3, Sand Martin N-1, Serin N-1 plus a Spanish Wagtail came in off the sea and landed on the mound.

The evening at the Marina produced Pallid Swift 40+.



UBIQUITOUS YELLOW-LEGGED GULL...