

Mallorca

27th April - 4th May 2013

This was not a planned joint trip as we had independently booked a 'week in the spring sunshine' with family in Mallorca but somehow ended up on the same flights and on the same dates. Needless to say, some joint birding hours were spent around the various sites! Why are partners so dis-believing in pure co-incidences? Why are these co-incidences so costly in terms of meals and drinks?

Anyway, for the first three days the weather was fairly grim with some very heavy and persistent rain and a cool north-easterly airflow (think Northumberland in early October). Many small migrants were obviously held up, particularly hirundines and other species such as Pied Flycatchers. As the weather improved and the sun shone, birds began to move on but others like Bee-eaters started to go through. We did not move very far from the areas and birding sites around Puerto Pollensa and did not visit the south of the island at all. Despite the extensive developments that have taken place since we both first visited many years ago, Mallorca is still an excellent destination to see some fabulous birds. Even the masses of kamikaze cyclists present in the spring can be ignored to some extent!

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna* - This species has recently colonised the S'Albufera with several breeding pairs. 2 noted at the Sa Roca/Reserve centre hides on 28th April and up to 10 at the Depuradora including two broods of six and eight.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos* - Common and widespread with good numbers at S'Albufera.

Gadwall *Anas strepera* - 6 noted at Sa Roca/Reserve centre hides on 28th, several at the Albuferata on 29th and a count of 12 at the Depuradora on 3rd May

Shoveler *Anas clypeata* - Four were at the Depuradora on 28th when a single drake was at the S'Albufera and also 3rd May.

Marbled Duck *Marmaronetta angustirostris* - A rare though increasing summer visitor and migrant to Mallorca observed only at S'Albufera. 2 noted at Sa Roca/Reserve centre hides on 28th and 3rd May when a single bird was at the Depuradora.

Teal *Anas crecca* - A late party of 5 birds noted at S'Albufera on 28th April and 3rd May.

Garganey *Anas querquedula* - Single drakes were at the Depuradora and Cillobar 1 Hide, S'Albufera on 3rd May.

Pochard *Aythya ferina* - 10+ observed at Depuradora.

Red-Crested Pochard *Netta rufina* - Widespread throughout the S'Albufera Natural Park, smaller numbers noted at the Albufereta, an introduced breeder

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa* - Singles observed at Casa Veyas on 30th April and Son Bosc 'quarry' near the Depuradora on 3rd May.

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis* - A scarce winter and migrant visitor to the island. A single in splendid summer plumage was watched well at the Depuradora on 28th April and 3rd May.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis* - Although this species occurs throughout the S'Albufera area, it is most easily observed at the Depuradora with at least two present on 3rd May

Cory's Shearwater *Calonectris diomedea* - About six were close inshore with gulls below the Mirador above Albercutx on 30th April.

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*- Three were at La Gola, Pto. Pollensa and two at S'Albufera on 28th April.

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis desmarestii* - Small numbers noted in Pollensa Bay throughout the week.

Little Bittern *Ixobrychus minutus* - A male flew across the Grand Canal, S'Albufera twice on 3rd May.

Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax* - Sightings noted as much reduced in 2012, and this year only two singles seen, adults at the Albufereta on 29th April and at Torrent de Saint Jordi resting on a farmstead roof on 1st May.

Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis* - Common & widespread

Squacco Heron *Ardeola ralloides* - About four were at the Albufereta on 30th April.



Squacco Heron

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta* - Common and noted daily

Great White Egret *Casmerodius albus* - Two records of this scarce but increasing visitor, two observed at the S'Albufera 28th April with a single here on 3rd May

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea* - A single was La Gola, Pto. Pollensa and three at S'Albufera 28th April.

Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea* - One-three noted S'Albufera, the Albufereta and C'an Cuarassa.

Griffon Vulture *Gyps fulvus* - A recent addition to the islands breeding avifauna; in 2008 up to 100 Griffons arrived on Mallorca from the Iberian peninsula and in 2012 this species nested on the island for the first time in history. Now classed as a scarce resident at least 5 birds were watched at Cuber Reservoir on 2nd May.

Black Vulture *Aegypius monachus* - A visit to the Tramuntana range on 2nd May produced about 8 individuals, 3 at Cuber Reservoir and a party of 5 at Lluch Monastery.



Black Vulture

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* - Two were over Pollensa Bay 27th April and a single on 28th. One moved North over the Boquer Valley on the evening of 29th and another was at S'Albufera on 3rd May

Booted Eagle *Aquila pennata* - Both dark & light morphs noted daily, with 6 over the Boquer Valley late afternoon on 1st May and one-two seen in several mountain sites between Casas Veyas and Cuber Reservoir



Booted Eagle

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus* - Noted daily with birds at S'Albufera, the Albuferata, C'an Cuarassa and Pollenca with evidence of passage when 4 through the Boquer Valley between showers on 28th April.

Montagu's Harrier *Circus pygargus* - Four sightings of this scarce migrant. A ring-tail was over fields just south of the Albufereta on 28th April, a male showed well at the base of the Boquer Valley on evening of 29th and still present early am on 30th & another male at Torrent de Saint Jordi 30th April and 1st May

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus* - Singles at La Gola 28th April, Boquer Valley on 29th, 2 at Can Cuarassa/Albufereta on 1st/ 2nd May and Tramuntana Range on 2nd

Eleonora's Falcon *Falco eleonora* - A bit early for any good numbers; a single over the Boquer Valley 28th April and another at Casas Veyas on 30th.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus* - Heard at Depuradora & S'Albufera

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus* - Widespread in suitable habitat

Coot *Fulica atra* - Small numbers observed Depuradora, S'Albufera, and Albufereta

Red-knobbed Coot *Fulica cristata* - A pair were on the Grand Canal, S'Albufera and a neck-collared bird nearby.



Red-knobbed Coot

Purple Swamphen *Porphyrio porphyrio* - Several seen S'Albufera including a brood of two on 28th April

Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta* - Still a scarcity on Mallorca, 2 birds were seen from the Sa Roca Hides on 28th April

Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus* - Lots at S'Albufera and the Albufereta including a number of nesting birds



Black-winged Stilt

Stone Curlew *Burhinus oedicnemus* - As 2012 a pair vocal at night and seen several times at base of Boquer Valley. Pairs were also present near the Depuradora and the Albufereta. Also one visited one of the pools at S'Albufera on 28th April.

Collared Pratincole *Glareola pratincola* - A single arrived over the S'Albufera with a party of Swifts in late afternoon on 28th April before heading off north.

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius* - Appeared common at S'Albufera and also pairs noted Albufereta and the Depuradora. One also noted at C'an Cuarassa.

Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus* - As above a widespread bird, e.g a count of 20 + on one pool at S'Albufera, with display noted on several dates.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina* - One was at La Gola, Pto. Pollensa on 28th April.

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea* - 10+ in various plumages from Sa Roca/Reserve Centre Hides on 28th April with 3+ same area on 3rd May. Five were at the Albuferata on 29th.

Temminck's Stint *Calidris temminckii* - One was noted at the S'Albufera on 28th April.

Little Stint *Calidris minuta* - Not noted between 6th-13th May in 2012; 3 observed at the S'Albufera on 28th April with 4 at Depuradora on 3rd May.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola* - A party of 30 birds dropped out of the sky to join 8 already present on a S'Albufera pool on 28th April. Three were at the Albufereta on 29th, a single heard calling after dark over Pto. Pollensa on 1st May, two at C'an Cuarassa on 2nd and 3 were at the Depuradora on 3rd.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos* - 5+ were at S'Albufera and the Depuradora on 28th April, La Gola Pto. Pollensa on 29th, six at Torrente de Saint Jordi on 30th and at least 15+ at the Depuradora on 3rd May.

Redshank *Tringa totanus* - Two were at the Albuferata on 29th April and another two at Cillobar 1 Hide, S'Albufera on 3rd May.

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus* - 2 birds acquiring full summer dress at S'Albufera on 28th April and 3rd May when a single at the Depuradora.

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia* - One was at la Gola, Pto. Pollensa on 28th April when two at Sa Roca/Reserve Centre Hides, S'Albufera and five at the Albufereta on 29th with three still there next day.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica* - A scarce migrant, a single was at Cibollar 1 hide, S'Albufera on 3rd May.

Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago* - A single was at S'Albufera on 28th April.

Yellow-legged Gull *Larus michahellis* - Common. 25+ regularly converged on fields at base of Boquer Valley each evening.

Audouin's Gull *Larus audouinii* - Easily seen on seafront at Pto. Pollensa. Most noted were adults however a handful of strongly patterned first summer birds also present.



Audouin's Gull

Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis* - One was in Pollensa Bay on 29th April.

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo* - A recent colonist and now breeding at the S'Albufera, though it remains scarce. A single was noted briefly on 28th April and a pair on 3rd May.

Black Tern *Chlidonias niger* - Nine were in a mixed feeding party of marsh terns at the Depuradora on the afternoon of 28th April.

White-winged Black Tern *Chlidonias leucopterus* - One was with other marsh terns at the Depuradora on the afternoon of 28th April.

Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybrida* - Seven were in a mixed feeding party of marsh terns at the Depuradora on the afternoon of 28th April.

Feral Rock Dove *Columba livia domestica* - Common and widely observed.

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus* - Widespread in most areas visited.

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto* - A common resident, noted daily.

Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur* - A single on 29th April was near the Boquer Valley. Three were at the Torrente de Saint Jordi on 30th.

Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus* - A singleton was at the Boquer Valley early morning on 29th April.

Scops Owl *Otus scops* - One was heard calling near the Habitat Apartments, Pto. Pollensa at 03:00 hrs on 4th May.

Common Swift *Apus apus* - Large to moderate numbers noted daily early in the trip and at least 200 were over Palma City on 30th April viewed from the height of Bellver Castle.

Alpine Swift *Apus melba* - Three were at Casas Veyas on 30th April and one at the Boquer Valley entrance on 1st May.

Hoopoe *Upupa epops* - Noted in small numbers at several sites visited, including two birds at Bellver Castle, Palma City on 30th April

Bee-eater *Merops apiaster* - First noted 1st May when migrating groups heard flying over C'an Cuarassa including a low flying flock of 15. Six were noted in the traditional Son Bosc area due east of the Depuradora on 3rd May.

Roller *Coracias garrulus* - Reports suggest 2013 was a good spring for this rare migrant. A single showed well at C'an Cuarassa on morning of 1st May.



Roller

Wryneck *Jynx torquilla* - Two heard calling at the Boquer Valley on several dates with a single seen well on 30th April. Singles also heard at Torrente de Saint Jordi on 30th April and 2nd May, Cuber Reservoir and Lluch Monastery on 2nd May and Depuradora on 3rd May.

Thekla Lark *Galerida theklae* - This is the default *Galerida* on Mallorca; singles singing near the Torrente de Saint Jordi 30th April & 1st May and the Depuradora on 3rd.

Short-toed Lark *Calandrella brachydactyla* - At least 4 including singing birds near the Depuradora on 3rd May.

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia* - Small numbers were among many hundreds of 'held-up' hirundines at the Boquer Valley on 29th April, 15 flew north through the Boquer Valley on 29th April, smaller numbers noted at S'Albufera and Depuradora

Crag Martin *Ptyonoprogne rupestris* - Maximum 7 Boquer Valley on 1st May, feeding at low level over fields

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica* - 250 + flew north over Puerto Pollenca between showers on 28th April, with 150 + over Boquer Valley the next day, smaller numbers noted throughout week at most locations

House Martin *Delichon urbicum* - At least 200 'held-up' with other hirundines over the Boquer Valley on morning of 29th April

Tawny Pipit *Anthus campestris* - Only noted at Cuber Reservoir with a single on 3rd May.

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis* - 2 at the Boquer Valley on 29th April, with a single the next day.



'Yellow' Wagtail

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava iberiae* (Spanish Wagtail) - Several were flushed near the Depuradora on 28th April. Small numbers also noted at S'Albufera and the Albufereta and two at C'an Cuarassa.

Nightingale *Luscinia megarhynchos* - Regularly seen including the Boquer Valley on 29th April. Three sang in the vicinity of Bellver Castle at Palma on 30th April. Noted in several other widespread localities including at least six singing around the reserve centre at S'Albufera.

Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus* - Singles S'Albufera on 28th April, with at least 5 in Boquer Valley on 29th, and a single here on 1st May. One also at Casas Veyas on 30th.

Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe* - Single males S'Albufera 28th April and Boquer Valley 30th April

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra* - Well recorded this year, 3+ noted at Boquer on most dates visited, 2 Albufera on 28th April, and 6 C'an Cuarassa on 1st May

Stonechat *Saxicola torquatus* - Recorded daily in fair numbers. There appears to be a wide variation in plumage of some males, a few being very blackish with reduced orange-red on the upper breast and extensive white rump patches! Presumably the race involved in breeding birds is *S. t. rubicola*.



Stonechat

Blackbird *Turdus merula* - Common and widespread.

Blue Rock Thrush *Monticola solitarius*- A male was singing in the Boquer Valley 27th April and another was at the Mirador, above Albercutx on 30th.

Whitethroat *Sylvia communis* - Boquer Valley: - 2 on 27th April, 5 on 29th April, 4 on 30th April, a single Albufereta on 1st May and 2 Depuradora on 3rd May

Sardinian Warbler *Sylvia melanocephala* - Widespread including 2 birds noted near Palma centre on 30th April

Moustached Warbler *Acrocephalus melanopogon* - One heard at S'Albufera on 28th April and two seen and heard at there on 3rd May.

Fan-tailed Warbler *Cisticola juncidis* - Commonly recorded

Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti* - Common. A pair was watched for 15 mins out in open at S'Albufera on 28th April, calling loudly and flickering wings in a pre-copulation display. Seen and heard in widespread localities.

Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus* - A single heard singing at Albufera on 3rd May

Great Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus arundinaceus* - 3 singing Albufera on 3rd May

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus* - Good numbers at coastal sites this year compared to 2012, with an obvious 'fall' on 29th April when at least 30 were at the base of the Boquer Valley early morning

Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix* - As above well recorded in 2013. Boquer Valley - 4 on 27th April, 5 on 29th April, 2 on 30th April. At least 8 at Albufera on 28th April, 4+ at Torrent San Jordi on 1st May and 2 at C'an Cuarassa on 1st May.

Firecrest *Regulus ignicapilla* - Heard singing at Casas Veyas on 30th April.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes* - A single singing in Boquer Valley 29th April

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata* - Smaller numbers than 2012 explained by earlier dates, Boquer Valley - single on 28th April, 3 on 29th April, 2 on 1st May, also noted at Albufera, and Lluch monastery and two in a central Palma Park.



Spotted Flycatcher

Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca* - 4 in Postage Stamp Wood/Boquer Valley area on 27th April, at least 7 on 29th April, and 2 on 1st May. Three-six noted at five other localities.

Collared Flycatcher *Ficedula albicollis* - A Balearic rarity. A splendid male spent two days along the Torrent de Saint Jordi, at the northern edge of the Albuferata marsh.



Collared Flycatcher

Great Tit *Parus major* - A handful of birds noted throughout week

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus balearica* - Not distinguishable from its mainland counterpart in the field but a resident endemic nonetheless, singles observed at Torrent de Parais & Lluch Monastery in the mountains on 2nd May.

Woodchat Shrike *Lanius senator* - Singles were at the Depuradora on 28th April and the Albuferata on 28th & 29th and another at C'an Cuarassa on 1st/2nd May. This later bird appeared to be of the nominate race.

Raven *Corvus corax* - Groups of 12 and eight over Casas Veyas on 30th April, a pair regular in Boquer Valley and 5+ noted in Tramuntana range on 2nd May

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris* - Chiefly a winter visitor. At least 7 birds noted at C'an Cuarassa on 1st/2nd May. These were looked at carefully as Spotless Starling remains an island rarity.

Golden Oriole *Oriolus oriolus* - Four were at the Depuradora on 28th April when a single male seen and heard at S'Albufera. A female type was present on 3rd May.



Woodchat Shrike

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus* - Common

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus* - Single observed near the Depuradora on 3rd May.

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs* - odd birds noted at most sites including Boquer Valley on 27th April which may have been a migrant

Linnet *Carduelis cannabina* - Small groups widespread

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis* - Proved a common and widespread bird on Mallorca

Greenfinch *Chloris chloris* - As above

Serin *Serinus serinus* - Observed daily with 4 at Torrent San Jordi on 1st May

Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra balearica* - Two flew over calling at Port Alcudia on 28th April and several were at Casas Veyas on 30th.

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus witherbyi* - A single male was at the S'Albufera on 28th April looked very black above and possibly belonged to the thick-billed race which is a rare breeder here sharing a restricted range including a few parts of mainland Spain and South-east France. A female was at the Albuferata on 30th.

Cirl Bunting *Emberiza cirlus* - Three were singing at Casas Veyas on 30th April. A pair regular in the Boquer Valley and one heard singing at Cuber Reservoir.

Corn Bunting *Miliaria calandra* - Noted daily.



Osprey with fish dinner!

CHRIS KNOX & MIKE HODGSON