BIRDING IN TURKEY – A Western Palearctic Extravaganza! June 2025

Written and Photographs by Jack Bucknall



Between 6th-13th June 2025, Dan McGibbon, Michael Murphy and I visited Southern Turkey in the hope of seeing some of the exciting birds and other wildlife on offer in the region. More than a year in the making, and with lots of targets in mind, a plan was hatched. We flew direct from London Stansted with SunExpress into Cukurova Airport, just south-west of Adana. Car hire was booked with Cizgi Rent a Car, and all went very smoothly. Accommodation was all booked in advance and is discussed in more detail in the day-by-day account.

For a group of birders with a keen interest in Western Palearctic birding like us, this trip had it all. From the high-altitude specialists in the Aladaglar Mountains, to the species much-sought after in the region, right on the edge of their range, around Birecik, the week was fast-paced, and incredibly exciting, with lots of lifers to go around! A brief itinerary is below:

6 th June	Arrived at Cukurova Airport late-afternoon, then birded the area north of Tarsus.
7 th June	Headed north – birding at Alpu, Celallar and Emli Valley.
8 th June	Demirkazik Tepe AM, then drove east to Durnalik in the evening.
9 th June	Durnalik/Isikli loop AM, then Hancağiz Barajı, Kumla and Birecik in the afternoon/evening.
10 th June	Birecik AM, then east to Sanliurfa, before heading north to Mount Nemrut in the evening.
11 th June	Mount Nemrut AM, then south to Gaziantep for the night.
12 th June	Headed west, birded Tuzla Gölü in the afternoon, stayed in Adana.
13 th June	Flew back to London Stansted early morning.

<u>Day-By-Day Account</u> (any lifers for any member of the group are highlighted in red).

Day 1 - 6th June

We touched down at Çukurova International Airport at 16:45, and after a smooth transition through security, we soon collected our hire car from Cizgi and were on our way. The plan was to head west towards Tarsus to check in to our hotel, before doing some birding in the local area in the last couple of hours of light.

Leaving the terminal, it became obvious that a handful of species were abundantly common – these were Common Swift, Rock Dove, Collared Dove, Laughing Dove, Hooded Crow, Crested Lark, Barn Swallow, House Martin, Common Starling, Common Blackbird, Northern Wheatear, House Sparrow, Common Chaffinch, European Goldfinch, Common Linnet and European Greenfinch. In the interest of keeping this report as concise as possible, the aforementioned species won't be mentioned again, as it is safe to assume they were found very regularly at almost every site visited!

As the hire car we picked up was on an 'empty-to-empty' policy, we almost immediately stopped for fuel. Getting out the car, my attention was drawn to a call that I recognised from a trip to Cyprus a couple of years back – the distinctive cry of a male **Black Francolin**. It was buried deep in a wheat field however, so no chance of any views on this occasion. We were soon on our way to the hotel, and a few more new birds started to appear – a fly-over **Pygmy Cormorant** was a new bird for me and Dan, as were two **White-spectacled Bulbul** on the roadside wires. A few other incidental sightings in transit were **Eurasian Sparrowhawk**, two **Spanish Sparrow**, a fly-over **Black-crowned Night Heron** and an **Alpine Swift**. Our accommodation for night was the Osmanli Marco Pasha Hotel (36.918165, 34.896438) in Tarsus, where we soon arrived. Keen to get out into the countryside to the north, we checked in, dropped the bags and headed straight out. A party of **Pallid Swift** fed overhead.

With the light fading fast, we picked an area on the map with interesting-looking habitat and headed north aiming for a town called Korucak. We added a few more species to the trip list on the way including Eastern Black-eared Wheatear, White Stork and Woodchat Shrike. We arrived at an area of open woodland (37.150429, 34.708724) and decided to bird here for the last hour of light. The area was productive and gave up some nice species including two Western Rock Nuthatch and a single Sombre Tit, both of which were lifers for us all. Other birds of interest here were six Alpine Swift, two Eurasian Jay of the anatoliae subspecies and an Eastern Bonelli's Warbler. As dusk closed in, we heard our only Tawny Owl of the trip, before heading back to Tarsus for the night.







Crested Lark

Day 2 - 7th June

We made an early start and headed north, with our final destination being the famous Safak Pension at the foot of the Aladaglar Mountains, our base for the evening and starting point of our guided trip into the hills the following morning. As this was a bit of a drive, we formulated a plan to take in a few sites on the way north and targeted a few key species. We picked up a few incidental trip ticks on our way north out of Tarsus in **Red-rumped Swallow**, **Eurasian Hobby**, **White Wagtail**, **Little Egret** and a pair of **Reed Warbler** in a roadside reedbed.

The first site on our list was Alpu, a small town just off the O-21 surrounded by pine forest – an ideal stop-off point to break up the journey, and hopefully a fruitful site to try for Krüper's Nuthatch and White-backed Woodpecker. Arriving just after dawn, we parked the car up (37.460086, 34.873642) and walked west following the track into the forest – we quickly added Lesser Whitethroat and Coal Tit to the trip list, both of which were abundantly common here, along with several more anatoliae type Eurasian Jay. Walking on, we added a few more bits of quality in Common Raven and Steppe Buzzard, as well as a pair of Mistle Thrush and a group of three Common Crossbill which were our only sightings of these two species on the trip. Wandering further into the woodland, we finally got eyes on a Woodpecker which initially flew straight past us, then promptly landed nearby – it was quickly identified as a Syrian Woodpecker which whilst not being our primary target, it was a lifer for Dan so still most welcome. Drawing a blank on the main targets, we started to head back to our starting point with a plan to try another area nearby. As we retraced our steps, we finally heard the distinctive call of a Krüper's Nuthatch beside the path – this turned out to be a pair, which proceeded to show very well! After we'd enjoyed watching the birds for a short while, we headed back to the car and decided to give it one last go for White-backed Woodpecker by exploring the forest tracks as best we could. We gave it another hour or so in the woodland, but no more Woodpeckers were seen – we did see two more Krüper's Nuthatch as well as some quality trip ticks in Eurasian Hoopoe, Spotted Flycatcher, Blue Rock Thrush, Rock Bunting and European Serin.





Krüper's Nuthatch

Eurasian Jay

We decided to settle for what we had already seen, and head off north knowing that we still had several sites that we wanted to visit. The next site on our list was a town called Celallar, an expanse of arable farmland west of Demirkazik that is a key area for larks and pipits, among other species we were keen to see, so we headed off north towards our destination. Looking at the map, we picked out a road that looked potentially interesting to break up the journey just south of Çamardı. Turning off the road (37.782496, 35.012049), we slowly drove north, making regular stops to see what we could pick up. Familiar species such as **Eurasian Hoopoe**, **Isabelline Wheatear** and **Corn Bunting** were picked

up as we drove along, but our attention was soon drawn to a song that none of us had heard before. Stopping the car and getting out to investigate, we were all delighted to be met with the sight of a stunning male **Black-headed Bunting** singing right beside the road. This was a species that we expected to see on the trip, but it was a new bird for us and one we had been looking forward to seeing, and it didn't disappoint! We watched the bird at close range for 10 minutes before moving further up the road. We soon came across a bridge over a river (37.810609, 35.030430) with lots of vegetation either side, so we stopped to check it out. This proved to be another fruitful stop, as the bushes were busy with passerines including **Eastern Olivaceous Warbler**, **Cetti's Warbler** and a very showy family party of five **Common Nightingale**. Walking onto the bridge, we added **White-throated Dipper** and **Green Sandpiper** to the trip list, before Michael called a flock of 11 **Rosy Starling** that zipped straight past us and out of sight.



Black-headed Bunting

Continuing north, we arrived in the town of Çamardı and headed west past Celallar onto the plains (37.809690, 34.931981). Driving slowly through the farmland, we were immediately picking up lots of new species for the trip. Over the next mile or so, we encountered species such as **Chukar**, **Redbacked Shrike** and **Masked Shrike** at the roadside, as well as **Short-toed Eagle**, **Booted Eagle**, **Black Kite** and **Black Stork** overhead. Continuing west, we reached an area with ploughed fields on either side of the road (37.808746, 34.923825) – we paused here and scanned. It was clear that there were lots of birds in the area, and we quickly picked up multiples of **Greater Short-toed Lark**, **Corn Bunting**, **Rock Sparrow**, **Isabelline Wheatear** and **Eastern Black-eared Wheatear** as well as a **Tawny Pipit** and a smashing male **Shore Lark**. There were pipits and larks scattered all over here, and after a short while, Michael got his eye on our number one target for the site – **Bimaculated Lark**,

which dropped in right beside the car! It was soon joined by a second bird, and over the course of the next half an hour, we managed to see four in total along this short stretch of road.





Bimaculated Lark

Isabelline Wheatear

We continued west along the road, which soon turned into grassland habitat rather than farmland, and the mix of species changed too. **Corn Bunting** was particularly numerous here, and we started to see and hear **Ortolan Bunting** in numbers which was most welcome. With vegetation on both sides, we parked the car up and slowly wandered around the roadside, checking the bushes as we went. The whole area was very productive indeed, and we racked up several species of interest. A pair of **Syrian Woodpecker** gave us some good views here, and we had our first sightings of both **Common Kestrel** and **European Bee-eater**.

The bushes held a good number of passerines too, including **Blue Rock Thrush** and four singing male **Eastern Olivaceous Warbler**, but more significantly, our first sightings of **White-throated Robin** (2), **Rufous-tailed Scrub-Robin** (3) and **Eastern Orphean Warbler** (2). All three birds were lifers for me, so it was difficult to know where to look first! A pair of **European Stonechat** were seen too, which was our only record of this species on the trip. After half an hour, the afternoon heat got the better of us, and we retreated back to the car. We turned around and headed slowly back east towards Celallar, again enjoying the vast numbers of larks and wheatears present in the fields. The excitement wasn't over however, and just as we headed into the village, our attention was drawn to a large warbler that flew right in front of the car and promptly landed on a roadside bush – **Upcher's Warbler!** We expected to see this species in the east around Durnalik later in the week, but to see one unexpectedly here took the pressure off. The birding here was excellent, and I would definitely recommend paying this road a visit to any birders visiting the Demirkazik area.

Once we felt that we had seen everything we were going to see, we headed off to Safak Pension (37.837648, 35.047653) to check in and meet our host. We arrived after an hour or so, and were greeted by Hasan Safak, who not only hosts the guests here, but offers a service to take guests into the mountains to look for all the specialist species. I was a little apprehensive about the stay having heard mixed reviews about the accommodation, but it was absolutely fine – the three of us were each offered individual rooms, as well as dinner on the evening, plus a big breakfast after the trip into the hills. We dropped our bags off and sat on the balcony overlooking the mountains with complimentary coffee. With the scopes, we picked up three **Long-legged Buzzard** and a single **Golden Eagle** circling above the mountains, all whilst listening to a singing **Common Nightingale** in the garden – amazing!



Stunning views from Safak Pension looking towards the Aladaglar Mountains

We finished our coffee and spoke with Hasan who told us to meet back at the table for 7:30pm for dinner. With this in mind, we headed off to check out a local site called Emli Valley. The site itself was very busy, and we ended up parking at a campsite (37.767706, 35.094741) and walking in – we had to pay €10 to enter. The area was very birdy, and the temperature was manageable compared to the intense midday heat nearer the coast. A Sombre Tit greeted us immediately after getting out the car, as well as several Alpine Swift and Crag Martin circling around the cliffs. We headed east along the path, which soon gained height through the vegetation into the valley. As we got higher, we encountered six Red-billed Chough, a Western Rock Nuthatch showed well just off the path, and we got a lovely view of a Short-toed Eagle overhead. The bushes were busy here too with several Lesser Whitethroat, Black Redstart, Tree Sparrow, European Serin and Eurasian Siskin amongst the regulars. We birded here for another hour or so, and it was largely more of the same, although a calling Krüper's Nuthatch added some quality to the checklist. We soon headed back to the accommodation, and enjoyed a traditional Turkish dinner in the company of our host, before heading off to bed knowing that we had a very early start...







Short-toed Eagle

Day 3 - 8th June

The big day had arrived, and with the 3:30am alarm dragging us all out of bed, we met at the dining table for coffee and some shortbread, before the three of us got into Hasan's jeep at 4am and headed off into the darkness. Hasan commented that if there were any more than three of us, we would have been travelling up the mountain in a trailer dragged by his tractor – I wasn't sure whether to be relieved or disappointed! However, the jeep was just as much an experience as the tractor sounded, as the three of us squeezed in to a tiny space and headed off the main road up a bumpy track into the hills. The excitement was building as we gained height, even more so when a **European Nightjar** flushed off the road in front of the vehicle, and a **Eurasian Scops Owl** was heard calling in the darkness – a good omen...



Daybreak at Demirkazik Tepe

After about an hour of travelling, we came to a stop and got out the jeep around here (37.850068, 35.123311), setting up our scopes and letting Hasan take the reins. The curlew-like calls of our number one target bird were the first to break the silence and just after first light, Hasan picked one up in the scope – the unmistakeable shape of a Caspian Snowcock high up on the ridge was quickly seen by all, really couldn't have been easier! Hasan is remarkably good at picking out these birds, even in half-light, and over the course of the next hour or so as the light improved, we saw at least three Caspian Snowcock through the scope, getting some lovely views. However, although the number one species was secured without any difficulty, we still had plenty of other targets to look for, and 'supporting casts' don't come much better than here! Just before dawn, plenty of birds were now singing from the cliff face, and out of sight below us. A male **Blue Rock Thrush** was singing almost constantly, as was an Ortolan Bunting and two Twite flew over calling. Overhead, both Red-billed and Alpine Chough wheeled around, calling loudly. As the sun came up, we began to pick out birds in amongst the rocks in front of us such as Water Pipit, a family party of Black Redstart and a smashing male Common Rock Thrush. Scanning again in front of us, I excitedly called out to Dan and Michael that I had one of our top targets in my bins - Radde's Accentor! It soon became apparent that this was an adult collecting food to feed a fledged youngster that was nearby, and we watched on at close range. As we did so, a distinctive trill call caught our attention, which was soon followed by a pair of Red-fronted Serin dropping in right in front of us – fantastic stuff!



Smiles all round at Demirkazik Tepe having just seen Caspian Snowcock!

Over the course of the next couple of hours, we explored the immediate area on foot. Considering how high up we were, it was very birdy and always something to keep us entertained – we estimated there were at least seven **Radde's Accentor** in the area, including three singing males actively chasing each other at point blank range which was fantastic. Other goodies here were six **White-winged Snowfinch** up on the cliffs, and a single **Crimson-winged Finch** that flew past us and out of sight. A single **Shore Lark** and a pair of **Ring Ouzel** were enjoyable too. After an hour of us exploring the area, Michael hurried me over and told me he had just seen an **Alpine Accentor** – I was hopeful of seeing this species as it was a lifer for me, and it was looking unlikely as time went on, so I was very grateful for the find when it reappeared! It had been a remarkable few hours, and once we decided we had seen everything we were going to see, we regrouped, and Hasan began the drive back down the mountain.





Radde's Accentor fest! Fledgling (left) and adult (right)

Now fully light, the drive down looked a lot different than it did on the way up! A pair of **Chukar** at the roadside were the first birds of interest on the way down, soon followed by a male **Red-backed Shrike**

right beside the jeep. We stopped about halfway down to explore the plains and again had some lovely views of **Red-fronted Serin** and **Ortolan Bunting**, as well as two fly-by **Crimson-winged Finch**, two calling male **Common Cuckoo** and a **Ring Ouzel**. The area was excellent for Wheatears, and we found the much sought-after **Finsch's Wheatear**, of which we saw at least five including an adult feeding a fledged youngster. We walked around the area for 15 minutes or so, before we made our way back to the Pension for a traditional Turkish breakfast.



Northern Wheatear



White-winged Snowfinch



Finsch's Wheatear



Red-fronted Serin

Following some great hospitality from Hasan and his team, we said our goodbyes, and headed back south towards Adana, with the knowledge that we had a driving-heavy day ahead. We took the same route back as we had taken to drive north, and after about an hour, we reached Adana and began the drive east. A few incidental sightings on this leg were a party of four **Eurasian Green Woodpecker** and singing males of **Common Whitethroat**, **Common Chiffchaff** and **Grey Wagtail**.

We broke up the journey with a stop just off the main road near a town called Kuzucak, which looked to have some interesting habitat from the map. We parked up next to a bridge over a river (37.064368, 35.999797) and birded this area for a short while. A reedbed here held both **Great Reed Warbler** and **Common Reed Warbler**, as well as four **Delicate Prinia** which was a target of ours. Lots of other regular lowland species were seen, the most interesting of which were three **Eastern Olivaceous Warbler**, five **White-spectacled Bulbul** and two **Rufous-tailed Scrub-Robin**. We had picked up from eBird that the area was good for White-throated Kingfisher and Olive-tree Warbler, but despite some searching, we failed to find either. The intense heat of the afternoon sun was particularly powerful at this point, so we thought it best to move on and continue east with still a couple of hours to go to our

hotel in Gaziantep. It was a fairly uneventful drive, but we did see two **Little Swift** fly over the road, and singles of both **Steppe Buzzard** and **Long-legged Buzzard**.

We soon arrived at the Ibis Hotel in Gaziantep, and after dropping our bags off, we braved the heat again and headed 15 minutes west to the well-known birding area known as the Durnalik/Isikli loop. As soon as we turned off the main road (37.172666, 37.191933), it became obvious why this area is visited so often! Over the first half a mile of driving towards Durnalik, on the overhead wires were two Woodchat Shrike and three Masked Shrike, as well as a minimum of four White-throated Robin, three Upcher's Warbler and singles of Eastern Orphean Warbler and Sombre Tit. Even though it was still hot, the birding was still very busy and over the course of the next two hours, we drove slowly from here along to Isikli enjoying a huge variation and density of birds. A really productive area was a small quarry (37.149403, 37.177948), where we had our first pair of Eastern Rock Nuthatch performing brilliantly, often alongside a single Western Rock Nuthatch which made for a perfect opportunity to compare the two species. Eastern is a real beast compared to Western, being noticeably larger with a broader black eyestripe, thicker bill and deeper reddish underparts.



Eastern Rock Nuthatch



Western Rock Nuthatch



The view from the highest point at Isikli, looking south towards Syria

Day 4 – 9th June

Encouraged by the success of the previous morning, we arrived at the Durnalik turn-off for dawn, headed along the road and parked our car in a lay-by (37.162754, 37.186683). From here, we walked west and started birding the gardens and orchards. Just like the previous morning, the place was alive with birds, and we didn't know where to look at times! Eastern Orphean Warbler was the first to show, along with several Lesser Whitethroat, Ortolan Bunting and Eastern Olivaceous Warbler. Our only European Turtle Dove of the trip was heard singing here, and a male Sardinian Warbler was also our only sighting of the trip. As we carried on, we came across a puddle on the track, which was attracting lots of passerines coming to drink, so we set ourselves up here and waited. Over the next 20 minutes or so, we had new lifers for us all visit the puddle – two Desert Finch and four Pale Rockfinch amongst the regular species. We carried on birding the nearby gardens, and the star bird for sure was White-throated Robin with at least eight birds, including some smashing males. A party of five Cretzschmar's Bunting were our only sighting of the trip here too, as were a pair of Long-tailed Tit. We gave it another hour or so here, before we carried on further south along the road to Isikli.





Upcher's Warbler

Desert Finch

We called in at the small quarry where we had success yesterday, and again saw a single Eastern Rock Nuthatch, as well as a further three Desert Finch. We continued through Isikli onto a road starting at 37.141916, 37.203654, which headed south into more open country and higher elevation. We started picking up more typical species here like Steppe Buzzard and three Short-toed Eagle, which showed well over the road. The roadside scrub was productive too, and over the next half hour,

we saw no less than eight **Upcher's Warbler** and four **Eastern** Olivaceous Warbler. The usual wheatears and buntings were abundant along this track too, and the star birds were a party of six Pale Rockfinch. A really productive morning in a smashing birding location – if visiting the area, this loop is a must!

The midday heat was taking it's toll by this point, and we decided to opt for a different tactic - birding from the air-conditioned car! We knew we wanted to be in Birecik after dark to try for the famous Pallid Scops Owl, so we began the journey east, stopping at our first destination of Hancağiz Barajı, a reservoir just SW of Birecik, accessing it from the south side (36.948222, 37.837422). A word of warning - you need a decent vehicle to navigate the track here, and it was largely 'off-road' driving around the edge of the reservoir.



With this being our first major wetland site of the trip, we very quickly started picking up new birds, and waders such as **Black-winged Stilt** (15), **Spur-winged Lapwing** (7) and **Green Sandpiper** (2) were the first to show. Scanning over the lake, it was quickly obvious that there were lots of marsh terns present – the most numerous of which was **Whiskered Tern** (30+) but we also saw four **Black Tern** and two **White-winged Tern**. The grass around the edges produced some lovely close views of **Eurasian Hoopoe** and a smashing male **Black-headed Wagtail** (*feldegg* subspecies). Waterbirds were thin on the ground however, with only **Mallard**, **Eurasian Coot** and **Little Grebe** seen.





Eurasian Hoopoe

Black-headed Wagtail



Hancağiz Barajı

We then retraced our steps, and drove to the end of the track at 36.947856, 37.838516. This area was very different habitat, with thick reedbeds on either side. Here, we were greeted by at least six **Black Francolin** calling nearby, a few of which showed nicely. Four **Delicate Prinia** were very vocal as always, and we recorded singles of **Common** and **Great Reed Warbler**. All four regular European hirundines were seen in mixed groups too, along with multiple **Glossy Ibis** and **Western Cattle Egret**.

However, the highlight here was a large mixed flock of passerines in the reeds next to the road, in which there were 12 **Dead Sea Sparrow**, as well as **Spanish Sparrow**, **Desert Finch** and **Tawny Pipit**.





Black-winged Stilt

Spur-winged Lapwing



Whiskered Terns with a single Black Tern

The next stop on our list was Kumla Marsh, our first look at the mighty Euphrates River, south of Birecik. As we drove along the entrance road, Dan got his eye on a pair of Little Owl (lilith subspecies) which we had hoped to connect with somewhere on the trip but was by no means guaranteed. This turned out to be our only sighting of the week. We arrived at the parking area (36.960109, 37.998407) and set up the scopes. Waterbirds were quickly evident here, and we got trip ticks in Red-crested Pochard, Ferruginous Duck, Great Crested Grebe and Common Moorhen. Some of the typical European wetland species were also present in good numbers such as **Squacco Heron** and **Purple** Heron, and we had our first good looks at Pygmy Cormorant with 17 birds seen here. Shortly afterwards, our main target bird was located by Dan - Grey-headed Swamphen. He ended up picking out four of these monsters walking around the edges of the reeds – a much sought-after species in the Western Palearctic, only being found in the far SE of the region (Turkey, Kuwait etc). This was very quickly followed by an even more sought-after species in Iraq Babbler – Michael picked out two Babblers feeding at the top of the reedbed, this was a bird we had expected to connect with at Birecik, but to see them here was substantial pressure taken off! This was one of our most significant sightings, as on a Western Palearctic scale, this species has only recently been found along the Euphrates River, having colonised from Iraq, making it by far the most accessible place to see Iraq

Babbler in the region. Other notable sightings here included **Dead Sea Sparrow**, **Delicate Prinia** and **Great Reed Warbler**.





Iraq Babbler

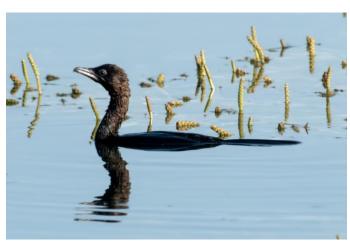
Little Owl

We headed into Birecik for the final part of the day, the first stop being the Kiyi Restaurant (37.032768, 37.974027), an ideal location for some dinner before trying for the Pallid Scops Owl. We were greeted in the car park by a smashing **Rufous-tailed Scrub-Robin** which gave lovely views in the evening sun. The views were stunning from the restaurant, and we were seated right on the front overlooking the Euphrates River. As dusk started to set in, there was a constant stream of **Little Egret**, **Cattle Egret**, **Black-crowned Night Heron** and **Squacco Heron** flying upriver, presumably to roost at the gravel pits to the north, as well as several **Pygmy Cormorant** feeding in the river. We had read in several places that this was a good spot to find Pied Kingfisher, but we didn't get any here. The food was excellent though, and I would highly recommend a stop here on a visit to Birecik.

After dark, we headed to the famous Birecik Tea Garden (37.019878, 37.974684). We parked the car, walked in from the east side, took no more than ten steps, and a Pallid Scops Owl came off the ground, and landed on a pylon 10 feet away – incredible! I had visions of these birds being difficult to connect with if they weren't calling, but that couldn't have been further from the reality, and it was one of the easiest ticks of the week. The bird was totally unfazed by our presence and continued to drop onto the ground in search of food, whilst we observed at close range. We enjoyed the experience for a while before making our way back to Gaziantep for the evening. A word of warning for birders visiting the area, we found the driving to be testing at the best of times in Turkey, but this was especially relevant in Birecik!



Rufous-tailed Scrub-Robin



Pygmy Cormorant

Day 5 - 10th June

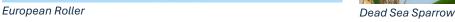
We left the Ibis Hotel in Gaziantep pre-dawn and headed back east for a morning's birding at Birecik Gravel Pits (37.042237, 37.974188). On arrival, we were greeted by a large expanse of reedbed, with the entrance road providing a good vantage point to see over the marsh. It was very birdy, and we quickly started picking up some quality – a close **Purple Heron** was first to show here, followed by a **Little Bittern** flying across the wetland. A star bird at this site, and of international importance, is the colony of Northern Bald Ibis that is 'looked after' just east of here in the protection area. On this particular morning, a flock of 100+ were feeding on the grasslands surrounding the marsh, which was quite a sight. We again caught up with Grey-headed Swamphen from here, and a Western Marsh Harrier was quartering over the reeds. We drove on further along the track, and ended up right next to the wetland, which provided us some great views of several Delicate Prinia, as well as three Iraq Babbler and a flock of sparrows including several **Dead Sea Sparrow**.



Delicate Prinia

The track carried on and we ended up in some farmland, which played host to a European Roller on the overhead wires, and three Ménétries's Warbler in the bushes. Small flocks of Black-bellied Sandgrouse were seen here too, flying west from dawn and disappearing onto the plains – we saw 28 birds in total. After we had parked the car and wandered the wetland areas for a further hour seeing more of the same, we headed back to the vantage point at the start of the track. From here, I saw an unmistakable bird fly across the water and land on an overhanging bush – Pied Kingfisher! A very welcome new bird for me, and one I was getting rather nervous that we hadn't yet seen – as it turned out, over the next half an hour, we saw a further three from here.





Soon after, we left the gravel pits and headed back east over the river into Birecik, with a couple more targets in mind before heading north to Nemrut. We soon arrived at our first location, the Bald Ibis Protection Area, which we had only seen from a distance from the gravel pits. Although we did again seen lots of Northern Bald Ibis, the big draw for us here was the 100+ strong colony of Little Swift on the cliff face above the road (37.037818, 37.981621).

Carrying on north, we began to look for a particularly tough species to catch up. Stopping at some orchards (37.063405, 37.974543), we located a large group of **House Sparrows** feeding, and after some extensive searching, we finally located our target – two **Yellow-throated Sparrow** feeding on the ground in amongst the orchards. This is a species that has a very particular habitat, and the orchards north of Birecik seem to be one of the only reliable places in Turkey for this Western Palearctic gem.



Yellow-throated Sparrow

Following this successful stop, we began the slog towards Mount Nemrut for our final leg of the trip. We had a couple of sites in mind on the way to break up the journey, and hopefully adding some more key species to the trip list. The first of these sites was Kizilkuyu National Park Wildlife Area, just west of Sanliurfa, an area of sandy plains that plays host to three big species for Western Palearctic listers – Red-wattled Lapwing, Turkestan Short-toed Lark and See-see Partridge. Being an hour from Birecik, we took a bit more of a scenic route, and headed NE to a small town called Yeniakpinar, which apparently often hosts Namaqua Dove and Turkestan Short-toed Lark. We spent half an hour here however and saw very little. That was until shortly after we started driving east out of the town towards Sanliurfa, when Dan excitedly called a pair of See-see Partridge running away from the road – a very unexpected bonus, and a big target species in the bag!

An hour later, we reached the turn-off (37.135306, 38.706115), and began driving south, entering Kizilkuyu NR. As expected, the landscape was incredibly barren, and incredibly hot. The car temperature showed 52°C, which without the air-con in the car, would have been unbearable! We drove on towards the town of Kizilkuyu, where we had been told was the best spot for our three target birds. We stopped here (37.036964, 38.736720), and worryingly, the riverbed was completely dry. We did however pick up a big target here in **Turkestan Short-toed Lark** which showed well and turned out to be our only sighting of the trip. We drove south for a further mile and eventually found water in the stream. A pair of **Black-winged Stilt** were in the stream here, close but no cigar. My hope was running low, and it looked like the writing was on the wall... however. About another half a mile south, it happened – **Red-wattled Lapwing** in the stream! I couldn't believe it and had started to fear we were going to dip – there turned out to be a pair here, and persistence had paid off, happy faces all round!



Red-wattled Lapwing



A bit hot!!

I had read a few reports online before we made the trip with reference to how close this site is to the Syrian border, although that is true and we were very close to the official UK government 'exclusion zone', we never felt any threat at all – in fact, the locals were very welcoming and even offered us bottles of water to counteract the heat! We made our way back north towards Sanliurfa, again fairly quiet, but we did see Isabelline and Eastern Black-eared Wheatear, Spanish Sparrow and two Desert Finch. We never saw any more See-see Partridge, making Dan's pair earlier even better!

We resumed our drive towards Mount Nemrut, but we did have one more very special location to call in at to break up the journey. We had picked up from eBird that there were some good areas for Bluecheeked Bee-eater on route, and we picked up the pins from the map, and headed to check them out. The first village on the list was called Hüyüklü, and after around 45 minutes driving, we arrived at the pin (37.435063, 38.712018). We had success immediately – no less than 15 **Blue-cheeked Bee-eater** and five **European Bee-eater** were on the overhead wires, calling to each other and flying around feeding. Blue-cheeked was a lifer for me, so I was in awe of the whole event – stunning birds!







Blue-cheeked Bee-eater

Whilst in the area, we also had a second site just east of here in a village called Estağfirullah. To get between the sites, Google Maps took us across some hairy farmland tracks that were only just passable in our car, but the habitat was interesting as we went through a series of orchards and also some wheat fields. On the 10-minute drive, we got good views of a single **Yellow-throated Sparrow** and heard a **Common Quail** singing from across the farmland. We arrived at the Bee-eater colony (37.456674, 38.768842), but it was a bit disappointing this time round. We still saw five **Blue-cheeked** and two **European Bee-eater**, but they didn't appear to be still visiting the colony, so we presumed the colony had either failed, or we were too late in the season.

We carried on north, and a couple of hours later, we reached the stunning location of the Karadut Pension (37.930870, 38.782341) where we would spend the night. Just a 15-minute drive up to Mount Nemrut, it was an ideal base for us. The views over the valley were fantastic from here, and we were greeted by a singing Eastern Olivaceous Warbler in the car park. We dropped our bags off and had a slow drive up to the visitor centre just below the top car park (37.970446, 38.728461). Over the course of the next hour, the birding was fantastic along the road. We added several new species to our trip list including Lesser Kestrel, Peregrine Falcon, Woodlark and even two Western Jackdaw! However, it was the buntings that stole the show, and our main target was acquired with ease – at least three male Cinereous Bunting were singing from the hillside, as well as multiples of Black-headed Bunting, Rock Bunting and Ortolan Bunting. We soon arrived at the centre and were told that the road to the summit was now closed for the evening, and we would have to return in the morning, but were welcome to wander around the hillside in front of the centre. The views of the mountains were stunning from here, and it was pretty birdy too. A colony of Rock Sparrow were breeding in the walls of the centre, and we encountered a single Tawny Pipit plus several Shore Lark. Both Alpine and Red-billed Chough circled overhead as the sun started to drop, and we headed back for dinner.



Rock Sparrow



Shore Lark



Me watching a Tawny Pipit at Mount Nemrut visitor centre!

Day 6 - 11th June

Keen to make it to Mount Nemrut early, and beat any potential crowds, we again rose early and went back up the road. We reached the visitor centre quickly and this time, we bought tickets and headed up to the top car park (37.976361, 38.737459). We made our way up the path towards the famous statues at the summit and found ourselves surrounded by wheatears and buntings. We again managed to see **Cinereous Bunting** here, as well as **Eastern Black-eared Wheatear**, and a male **Finsch's Wheatear**. As we neared the top, we got our eyes on our number one target at this site – a female **Kurdish Wheatear**. Reaching the summit, we were unexpectedly greeted by some very tame family parties of **White-winged Snowfinch**, around 10 in total which were very entertaining to photograph.









White-winged Snowfinches

Whilst sitting admiring the Snowfinches, we came across a further three **Kurdish Wheatear**, and it soon became obvious that there was a pair holding territory around the statues. The male would frequently sing from the top of the statues, before dropping back down and feeding right in front of us. Being the only people there at this time, we ended up getting some smashing views. There was also a couple of **Eastern Rock Nuthatch** up here, and **Alpine Chough** was again seen easily. We left the birds in peace about half an hour later and slowly walked back down towards the car. **Cinereous Bunting** was again seen in small numbers, and **Eastern Black-eared Wheatear** was very common. We had at least five **Rufous-tailed Scrub-Robin** in the area too, and **Rock Sparrow** was numerous. A slow drive back down off the mountain followed, before we had our breakfast and checked out the Karadut Pension. A word of warning if you are planning on staying here, I booked it through booking.com and used my credit card to guarantee the booking however, when it came to checking out, the owner informed us that it was cash only as the card machine was out of order. Not having

enough cash on us, the owner drove us to a nearby shop to make payment there – all a bit weird! Anyway, satisfied with our haul from the highlands, we began the slog back south towards Gaziantep at around 11am.





Kurdish Wheatear (male)

Kurdish Wheatear (female)



Statues at the summit of Mount Nemrut

Retracing our tracks, we started by heading east, reaching Nissibi Bridge (37.897610, 38.967390) about 30 mins later. We had noticed on eBird that this was a birding hotspot, and often held large numbers of gulls in the winter/spring. Just on the off-chance, we stopped in a lay-by here, and set up the scopes. This proved to be worthwhile, as on the shoreline we found 30+ Slender-billed Gull, and our most hoped-for here, a single adult Armenian Gull – lifer! Other than 10 Little Egret, there was little else here, so we moved on. We eventually reached Gaziantep late-afternoon, and it's fair to say we were all exhausted from the early mornings, the heat and the driving. We decided to have a more leisurely afternoon, so before we went out for dinner, I took the opportunity to spend some time watching a mixed flock of swifts feeding low over the Ibis Hotel. Amongst hundreds of Common Swift, there was around 30 Alpine Swift which were brilliantly challening to photograph!



Alpine Swift

Day 7 - 12th June

Our last full day of the trip, before an early flight from Adana the following morning, meaning we had some more driving to do. We had a leisurely start, and made our way back west, with the plan to do some general birding at Tuzla Gölü, a large wetland area on the coast just south of Adana. We had one more target species in mind in White-throated Kingfisher, and this site was apparently very good for them. We reached the area around 1pm and spent the next couple of hours exploring – a surprise Black-winged Kite was seen just north of Tuzla Gölü as we drove in, which felt like a good omen. We soon arrived on site (36.684604, 35.081339) and were taken aback by the scale of the wetland. The site is huge, and it's difficult to get close views of most of it from the car, but we did manage to see plenty of birds beside the road here. The most obvious and common bird here was Greater Flamingo, and we estimated there must have been at least 200 in view, in amongst the squad of waders. As is typical across the Western Palearctic, the most numerous waders were Black-winged Stilt and Pied Avocet, as well as smaller numbers of Kentish Plover and Spur-winged Lapwing. Other trip ticks here were 40+ Little Tern and 12 Common Tern, and we got some great views of Slender-billed Gull, with 100+ present. In the scrubby areas, we got brilliant views of Black Francolin and Rufous-tailed Scrub-Robin, as well as two Delicate Prinia. However, despite extensive checking of the overhead wires and overhanging bushes, there were no Kingfishers to be seen!





Black Francolin Slender-billed Gull



Greater Flamingo

Not accepting defeat, we decided to try and find a way of skirting the north shore of the wetland, so headed back to the road and drove slowly west. We stopped a few times along the way but couldn't really get close enough to pick out anything in detail. It was starting to look unlikely, but we decided to give it one last roll of the dice for the Kingfisher and drove towards the Seyhan River through the town of Tabaklar. We got a good view of the river from the road here and drove slowly north-east scanning the overhanging branches. We reached a spot where the river was flowing close to the road (36.754810, 35.024244) and unbelievably, it happened... an unmistakable flash of electric blue powered across the river, and the collective shout of "KINGFISHER!" went up in the car! The bird landed on an overhanging branch on the far bank, and upon getting the bins on it, we were getting great views of our final target bird – White-throated Kingfisher conquered! It felt like a major result to finally get this species after a lot of effort, and with our final target in the bag, we made our way to Adana to check back into the Osmanli Marco Pasha Hotel for our last night. We concluded the week with a well-earned meal of traditional Turkish kebab, a fitting end to a productive and entertaining trip.

We were up and out early the following morning for our 06:15 flight back to Stansted, so sadly the expedition was at an end. It had been a remarkable week of birding – over the course of the trip, we recorded 170 species across a wide range of habitats and enjoyed some stunning scenery to boot. The density and diversity of birdlife were consistently impressive, with 35 species recorded as personal lifers. The conditions for birding were generally brilliant too, with only the extreme heat making things difficult at times, but a suitably air-conditioned car was a lifesaver. Finally, big thanks are of course due to Dan and Michael for their valuable company and contributions in the field, making the week all the more enjoyable.



Emli Valley in the Aladaglar Mountains - one of the many stunning scenes we enjoyed throughout the week

Classified List

Mallard Anas platyrhynchos	One seen at Hancağiz Barajı, and two at Kumla.
Red-crested Pochard Netta rufina	Seen in good numbers at Kumla and Birecik Gravel Pits.
Ferruginous Duck Aythya nyroca	Two seen at Kumla.
Black Francolin Francolinus francolinus	Fairly common in the lowlands, especially around water.
Caspian Snowcock Tetraogallus caspius	A minimum of three birds were seen at Demirkazik Tepe.
See-see Partridge Ammoperdix griseogularis	A very lucky encounter with a pair seen near Yeniakpinar.
Common Quail Coturnix coturnix	One heard singing near Hüyüklü.
Chukar Alectoris chukar	Not common, but small numbers seen in the highlands.
European Nightjar Caprimulgus europaeus	One flushed from the road at Demirkazik Tepe.
Alpine Swift Tachymarptis melba	Fairly common in the highlands, as well as Gaziantep.
Common Swift Apus apus	Abundant.
Pallid Swift Apus pallidus	Flocks seen in Tarsus and around Durnalik/Isikli.
Little Swift Apus affinis	100+ seen at the Birecik colony, plus a few incidentals.
Common Cuckoo Cuculus canorus	Two at Demirkazik Tepe.
Black-bellied Sandgrouse Pterocles orientalis	Several flocks were seen flying west at Birecik Gravel Pits.
Rock Dove Columba livia	Abundant.
Common Woodpigeon Columba palumbus	Surprisingly rare - only a handful seen around Birecik.
European Turtle Dove Streptopelia turtur	Single heard singing at Durnalik.
Eurasian Collared Dove Streptopelia decaocto	Abundant.
Laughing Dove Spilopelia senegalensis	Common in the lowlands.
Common Moorhen Gallinula chloropus	Common at wetland sites.
Eurasian Coot Fulica atra	Common at wetland sites.
Grey-headed Swamphen Porphyrio poliocephalus	Four seen at Kumla, and two seen at Birecik Gravel Pits.
Little Grebe Tachybaptus ruficollis	Common at all wetland sites.
Great Crested Grebe Podiceps cristatus	Five at Kumla.
Greater Flamingo Phoenicopterus roseus	Common at Tuzla Gölü with 250+ seen.
Black-winged Stilt Himantopus himantopus	Commonest wader – recorded at most wetland sites.
Pied Avocet Recurvirostra avosetta	30+ at Tuzla Gölü.
Spur-winged Lapwing Vanellus spinosus	Recorded in small numbers around most wetland sites.
Red-wattled Lapwing Vanellus indicus	Two seen on the river just south of Kizilkuyu.
Kentish Plover Anarhynchus alexandrinus	Common at Tuzla Gölü.
Green Sandpiper Tringa ochropus	A handful of singles seen on rivers throughout the trip.
Little Tern Sternula albifrons	Common at Tuzla Gölü.
Whiskered Tern Chlidonias hybrida	30+ at Hancağiz Barajı, and one at Birecik Gravel Pits.
Black Tern Chlidonias niger	Four at Hancağiz Barajı.
White-winged Tern Chlidonias leucopterus	Two at Hancağiz Barajı.
Common Tern Sterna hirundo	12 birds seen at Tuzla Gölü.
Slender-billed Gull Chroicocephalus genei	30+ from Nissibi Bridge, and common at Tuzla Gölü.
Black-headed Gull Chroicocephalus ridibundus	Two on the Euphrates at Birecik, and one at Nissibi Bridge.
Armenian Gull Larus armenicus	One on Euphrates River from Nissibi Bridge.
Black Stork Ciconia nigra	A few singles seen in the highlands but uncommon.
White Stork Ciconia ciconia	Small numbers seen, often nesting on roadside pylons.

Pygmy Cormorant Microcarbo pygmaeus	Common around Birecik, also singles seen around Adana.
Northern Bald Ibis Geronticus eremita	100+ seen around Bald Ibis Protection Area near Birecik.
Glossy Ibis Plegadis falcinellus	Common at all wetland sites.
Little Bittern Botaurus minutus	One seen at Birecik Gravel Pits.
Black-crowned Night Heron Nycticorax nycticorax	Commonly seen at wetland areas along the Euphrates.
Little Egret Egretta garzetta	Common at all wetland sites.
Squacco Heron Ardeola ralloides	Commonly seen at wetland areas along the Euphrates.
Western Cattle Egret Ardea ibis	Common and widespread in the lowlands.
Purple Heron Ardea purpurea	1-2 at Kumla Marsh, Birecik Gravel Pits and Tuzla Gölü.
Black-winged Kite Elanus caeruleus	One seen near Tuzla Gölü.
Short-toed Eagle Circaetus gallicus	Singles at Celallar and Emli Valley, and three at Isikli.
Booted Eagle Hieraaetus pennatus	Two birds seen near Adana.
Golden Eagle Aquila chrysaetos	One seen over the mountains from Safak Pansiyon.
Eurasian Sparrowhawk Accipiter nisus	Only seen in Tarsus on two occasions.
Western Marsh Harrier Circus aeruginosus	Easily seen at most wetland sites.
Black Kite Milvus migrans	One seen at Celallar.
Common (Steppe) Buzzard Buteo buteo	Seen daily in small numbers.
Long-legged Buzzard Buteo rufinus	Three from Safak Pansiyon, plus a single at Nemrut Dagi.
Little Owl Athene noctua	Two of the lilith subspecies at Kumla.
Pallid Scops Owl Otus brucei	One seen incredibly well after dark in Birecik Tea Garden.
Eurasian Scops Owl Otus scops	One heard calling at Demirkazik Tepe.
Tawny Owl Strix aluco	One heard calling from woodland at Korucak.
Eurasian Hoopoe Upupa epops	Small numbers seen daily.
European Roller Coracias garrulus	Small numbers seen most days in the lowlands.
White-throated Kingfisher Halcyon smyrnensis	A single bird seen along the river at Tabaklar.
Pied Kingfisher Ceryle rudis	Four birds seen at Birecik Gravel Pits.
Blue-cheeked Bee-eater Merops persicus	Five seen at Estağfirullah, and 15+ birds at Hüyüklü.
European Bee-eater Merops apiaster	Seen daily in small numbers.
Syrian Woodpecker Dendrocopos syriacus	Single birds encountered on most days in various habitats.
European Green Woodpecker Picus viridis	Four seen in roadside trees near Celallar.
Lesser Kestrel Falco naumanni	Six seen at Nemrut Dagi.
Common Kestrel Falco tinnunculus	Seen in small numbers daily.
Eurasian Hobby Falco subbuteo	One seen flying over the road just north of Tarsus.
Peregrine Falcon Falco peregrinus	One seen near Nemrut Dagi.
Masked Shrike Lanius nubicus	Six seen at Durnalik, plus a few singles whilst driving.
Woodchat Shrike Lanius senator	Common and widespread.
Red-backed Shrike Lanius collurio	Small numbers seen on most days.
Eurasian Jay Garrulus glandarius	Singles of the anatoliae race at several woodland sites.
Eurasian Magpie Pica pica	Not common, a handful of singles seen over the week.
Red-billed Chough Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax	Frequently seen at most sites in the mountains.
Alpine Chough Pyrrhocorax graculus	Easily seen at both Demirkazik Tepe and Nemrut Dagi.
Western Jackdaw Coloeus monedula	Two seen at Nemrut Dagi.
Hooded Crow Corvus cornix	Abundant.
	1

Common Raven Corvus corax	Small numbers seen daily in the mountains.
Coal Tit Periparus ater	Common in woodland areas, especially at Alpu.
Sombre Tit Poecile lugubris	Three at Durnalik, plus singles at Emli Valley and Tarsus.
Great Tit Parus major	Small numbers seen at various sites.
Woodlark Lullula arborea	Single seen at Nemrut Dagi.
Crested Lark Galerida cristata	Abundant.
Shore Lark Eremophila alpestris	Seen easily in the highlands, especially at Nemrut Dagi.
Greater Short-toed Lark Calandrella brachydactyla	10+ at Celallar.
Bimaculated Lark Melanocorypha bimaculata	Four birds seen at the traditional site of Celallar.
Turkestan Short-toed Lark Alaudala heinei	Only one bird seen, along the river south of Kizilkuyu.
White-spectacled Bulbul Pycnonotus xanthopygos	Common and widespread in the lowlands.
Sand Martin Riparia riparia	Common around water bodies near Birecik.
Eurasian Crag Martin Ptyonoprogne rupestris	Seen frequently around cliff faces in the highlands.
Barn Swallow Hirundo rustica	Abundant.
Western House Martin Delichon urbicum	Abundant.
European Red-rumped Swallow Cecropis rufula	Commonly seen in the highlands.
Cetti's Warbler Cettia cetti	Single males heard on four occasions.
Long-tailed Tit Aegithalos caudatus	Two seen at Durnalik.
Eastern Bonelli's Warbler Phylloscopus orientalis	Only a few singles seen around Alpu.
Common Chiffchaff Phylloscopus collybita	A single male was heard singing near Celallar.
Great Reed Warbler Acrocephalus arundinaceus	Regularly recorded at wetland sites throughout the week.
Common Reed Warbler Acrocephalus scirpaceus	Common at wetland sites.
Eastern Olivaceous Warbler Iduna pallida	Common and widespread.
Upcher's Warbler Hippolais languida	Common at Durnalik/Isikli, plus a single seen at Celallar.
Delicate Prinia Prinia lepida	Common around water bodies.
Lesser Whitethroat Curruca curruca	Common and widespread.
Eastern Orphean Warbler Curruca crassirostris	Two seen at Celallar, and three at Durnalik.
Ménétries's Warbler Curruca mystacea	Three around Birecik Gravel Pits.
Sardinian Warbler Curruca melanocephala	One seen at Durnalik.
Common Whitethroat Curruca communis	Three singing males heard at various locations.
Iraq Babbler Argya altirostris	Two seen at Kumla, and three seen at Birecik Gravel Pits.
Krüper's Nuthatch Sitta krueperi	Four seen at Alpu, and one in Emli Valley.
Western Rock Nuthatch Sitta neumayer	Seen regularly in the west, also a single seen at Durnalik.
Eastern Rock Nuthatch Sitta tephronota	At least four birds at Durnalik and three at Nemrut Dagi.
Rosy Starling Pastor roseus	A single flock of 11 birds were seen briefly near Celallar.
Common Starling Sturnus vulgaris	Abundant.
Mistle Thrush Turdus viscivorus	A pair seen at Alpu.
Common Blackbird Turdus merula	Abundant.
Ring Ouzel Turdus torquatus	Three at Demirkazik Tepe.
Rufous-tailed Scrub Robin Cercotrichas galactotes	Seen daily in small numbers.
Spotted Flycatcher Muscicapa striata	Two seen at Alpu, and two at Durnalik.
White-throated Robin Irania gutturalis	Two seen at Celallar, and a high count of eight at Durnalik.
Common Nightingale Luscinia megarhynchos	Five seen near Celallar, and one singing at Safak Pansiyon.
<u> </u>	

Black Redstart Phoenicurus ochruros	Two in Emli Valley, and numerous at Demirkazik Tepe.
Common Rock Thrush Monticola saxatilis	A single male at Demirkazik Tepe.
Blue Rock Thrush Monticola solitarius	Five birds seen in total at various highland sites.
European Stonechat Saxicola rubicola	Two at Celallar.
Northern Wheatear Oenanthe oenanthe	Abundant.
Isabelline Wheatear Oenanthe isabellina	Fairly common in the highlands.
Eastern Black-eared Wheatear Oenanthe melanoleuca	Fairly common in the highlands.
Finsch's Wheatear Oenanthe finschii	Five at Demirkazik Tepe, plus a single at Nemrut Dagi.
Kurdish Wheatear Oenanthe xanthoprymna	A minimum of four at Nemrut Dagi.
White-throated Dipper Cinclus cinclus	One seen on stream near Celallar.
Pale Rockfinch Carpospiza brachydactyla	Four seen at Durnalik, and six at Isikli.
Rock Sparrow Petronia petronia	Seen daily in small numbers and common at Nemrut Dagi.
White-winged Snowfinch Montifringilla nivalis	Numerous at both Demirkazik Tepe and Nemrut Dagi.
Yellow-throated Sparrow Gymnoris xanthocollis	Two in orchards north of Birecik, and one near Hüyüklü.
Eurasian Tree Sparrow Passer montanus	A handful of singles seen over the course of the trip.
Spanish Sparrow Passer hispaniolensis	Widespread and seen daily, but in small numbers.
House Sparrow Passer domesticus	Abundant.
Dead Sea Sparrow Passer moabiticus	Numerous at both Hancağiz Barajı and Birecik Gravel Pits.
Alpine Accentor Prunella collaris	One at Demirkazik Tepe.
Radde's Accentor Prunella ocularis	A minimum of seven birds at Demirkazik Tepe.
Western Yellow Wagtail Motacilla flava feldegg	Two at Hancağiz Barajı and two at Tuzla Gölü.
Grey Wagtail Motacilla cinerea	Singing male seen on stream near Celallar.
White Wagtail Motacilla alba	Seen daily in small numbers.
Tawny Pipit Anthus campestris	Singles seen at Nemrut Dagi, Celallar and Hancağiz Barajı.
Water Pipit Anthus spinoletta	One at Demirkazik Tepe.
Common Chaffinch Fringilla coelebs	Abundant.
Crimson-winged Finch Rhodopechys sanguineus	Three at Demirkazik Tepe.
European Greenfinch Chloris chloris	Abundant.
Desert Finch Rhodospiza obsoleta	1-4 seen at several sites between Durnalik and Birecik.
Twite Linaria flavirostris	Two at Demirkazik Tepe.
Common Linnet Linaria cannabina	Abundant.
Common Crossbill Loxia curvirostra	A group of three were seen flying over calling at Alpu.
European Goldfinch Carduelis carduelis	Abundant.
Red-fronted Serin Serinus pusillus	Approximately 20 birds seen around Demirkazik Tepe.
European Serin Serinus serinus	Seen and heard regularly in woodland areas.
Eurasian Siskin Spinus spinus	Two at Emli Valley.
Corn Bunting Emberiza calandra	Common around farmland, especially in the highlands.
Rock Bunting Emberiza cia	Regular in the highlands, and common at Demirkazik Tepe.
Cinereous Bunting Emberiza cineracea	Six recorded at Nemrut Dagi.
Ortolan Bunting Emberiza hortulana	Small numbers seen daily – high count of six at Celallar.
Cretzschmar's Bunting Emberiza caesia	Five seen around the Durnalik/Isikli loop.
Black-headed Bunting Emberiza melanocephala	Fairly common and widespread at altitude.