

# Romania's Danube Delta and Carpathian Mountains

Naturetrek Tour Report

14 - 23 May 2016



Great White Pelican



Golden Jackal



Poppies & Larkspur



European Brown Bear

Report compiled by Rob Murray  
Images courtesy of Rob Murray and Angus McGready



Naturetrek

Mingledown Barn

Wolf's Lane

Chawton

Alton

Hampshire

GU34 3HJ

UK

T: +44 (0)1962 733051

E: [info@naturetrek.co.uk](mailto:info@naturetrek.co.uk)

W: [www.naturetrek.co.uk](http://www.naturetrek.co.uk)

Tour participants: Rob Murray (leader), Laurentiu Petrencu and Cristian Sandu (local guides) and Dimitri Plus (driver) together with 14 Naturetrek clients

## Summary

From high mountain scenery to shell-strewn beaches of the Black Sea; from Dracula's Castle to quiet monasteries hidden in forests; from formidable Brown Bears to endearing Sousliks, this trip immersed us in the wildlife and culture of Romania via a mosaic of distinctive and diverse habitats. We enjoyed an impressive list of eagles, seeing Lesser Spotted, White-tailed, Short-toed Snake, Booted, Golden and Eastern Imperial Eagles. It was the immense numbers of individuals of many species of aquatic birds that impressed so much in the Danube Delta. The sky was never clear of birds with thousands of pelicans, herons, cormorants and terns continually passing over. Yellow and White Lilies adorned the lakes giving a colourful backdrop as we drifted past Red-necked, Black-necked and Great Crested Grebes feeding and displaying. Brackish water reed beds to the south held Paddyfield Warblers. Granite hills produced interesting insects, raptors and especially welcome sightings of Pied Wheatears and a Rock Thrush. The Steppe zones supported good populations of Greater Short-toed Larks, Isabelline Wheatears and Lesser Grey Shrikes. Thick beech woodland was where we found Red-breasted Flycatchers, Hawfinches and the most memorable European Honey Buzzards displaying overhead.

## Day 1

Saturday 14th May

Rose-ringed (Ring-necked) Parakeets flying over Heathrow were an exotic start to the trip. Our plane suffered a water supply failure which delayed departure, but once in the air we made up the lost time. On arrival in Romania we were met by our local guide, Laurentiu and our driver, Dimitri. Soon we were heading northwards towards the distant mountains. A 20-minute break at a service station not only provided us with an en route snack but also introduced us to chirping Field Crickets. They are very sensitive to movements, shadows and vibrations making it exceedingly difficult to approach one without it shooting backwards into its deep burrow. A flock of 12 White Storks and a Common Buzzard were the pick of sightings from the bus. The approach road to our hotel snaked up through forest and fields revealing the exciting potential for interesting early morning birding. We arrived at our hotel at 8.30pm and were soon tucking into typical Romanian fare in a decorous dining hall. After a briefing about tomorrow's plans, we were keen to get some sleep.

## Day 2

Sunday 15th May

To be awoken at 6am by the short, insistent 'ditty' of a Common Redstart proclaiming his territory from the roof top was a delight. The dawn chorus featured Garden Warbler, Tree Pipit, Black Redstart and Eurasian Tree Sparrow, interjected by the mewing of Common Buzzards. After a breakfast featuring a wide range of choices, we bundled into the bus and headed off to Coltii Chilieii. This footpath winds up towards a monastery but we sauntered along pausing very frequently to look at orchids, fungi and a host of birds. We had outstanding views of a male Common Firecrest and the white-headed race of Long-tailed Tit. Two Spotted Nutcrackers obligingly perched at the top most tip of pine trees affording us excellent opportunities to enjoy their attractive plumage. Green-winged Orchid was common here and interesting flowers such as Coral Root were also found. Three European Honey Buzzards migrating along the scenically impressive ridges were overtaking the resident soaring Common Buzzards as they passed above us. Inevitably a scrubby clearing held a pair of Red-backed Shrikes and Tree Pipits entertained us with their incessant parachuting displays. A Black Woodpecker was heard but it failed

to reveal itself. There is no truth in the suggestion that those at the rear of the group miss all the best birds. The stragglers today were fortunate indeed as they picked up a passing Golden Eagle which the majority of us missed.

We returned to the hotel for lunch after a very pleasant walk. A little siesta was much appreciated before we set off for the Strombei Valley. Here we wandered up the track marvelling at the flower rich meadows. Suddenly, in a matter of seconds we were enjoying a Lesser Spotted Eagle whose flight path was crossed by a Short-toed Snake Eagle and by a Common Buzzard grasping a bootlace of a snake in its talons.

After picking up the ranger we headed upwards towards the bear hide which lies at the edge of a clearing in the forest. We had only just settled down onto our seats when a Red Fox stepped gingerly into the arena. It scavenged some offal but then retreated to a safer distance as the first of the European Brown Bears descended the slopes and entered the clearing. Soon there were five bears feeding in view at one time and we thoroughly enjoyed observing their antics and interactions. Gradually they dispersed and the deep forest enveloped their dark shapes and activity fell to zero in the clearing. After a while three more bears trundled in bringing the total seen this evening to eight different individuals. After two hours of sustained observation we were ushered out of the hide and back to the awaiting bus. Four Roe Deer were noted as we drove back down the valley then darkness fell and we returned to base feeling elated by our success today.

## Day 3

Monday 16th May

The pre-breakfast walk was curtailed by wind and heavy showers, but despite these adverse conditions Eurasian Golden Orioles, Black Woodpecker and Eurasian Nuthatch were heard calling from the depth of the towering beech woods adjacent to the hotel.

We set off in pouring rain to the Zarnesti Gorge where we struggled to secure good views of the resident White-throated Dippers. Three were glimpsed. There is a plus side to rain in the Carpathians. It brings Fire Salamanders out into the open. We encountered two of these strikingly attractive black and yellow amphibians as they flexed their elongated torsos with an exaggerated side to side sway to cross the pathway. The rain and low cloud prevented us from seeing any other wildlife but some attractive flowers and the splendour of the limestone gorge itself made the soaking worthwhile.

After lunch we headed for the celebrated Bran Castle which is steeped in history, albeit mostly fanciful. Only two of the group opted to explore the interior of the castle. The rest were keener to find some English tea and a glass or two of local wine. The rain was relentless so we returned to the hotel at 3pm hoping it would stop so that a later exploration of the beech woods could take place. It wasn't to be!

After dinner the hotel proprietor escorted us down into his wine cellar where he gave us a fascinating talk and demonstration of how to judge a good wine and how to aerate it to alter its properties. The free samples were well received!

## Day 4

Tuesday 17th May

We began the long drive to Tulcea at 8.30am but before we left the mist enshrouded mountain scenery behind, we stopped at a woodland trail close to Castle Peles. Here we saw Red-breasted Flycatchers singing and dancing

through the beech canopy. In the grounds of the architecturally attractive castle there was a good selection of birds. A male Red-backed Shrike, Black Redstarts, White-throated Dippers and a Common Cuckoo were the pick of the bunch. The next interlude was at a garage beside an oil well where Crested Larks were scrounging crumbs from picnic tables.

For the following few hours we wound our way across a vast, flat plain taking a break at a service station in Slobozia. After this the birding hotted up! There were European Rollers, European Bee-eaters and Eurasian Hoopoes to enjoy, and the sharp-eyed scanners picked up Calandra Larks and a Black Kite. As we crossed a bridge over the River Danube a fisherman dangled a large Asp fish at us but we declined the purchase.

A roadside stop beside an immense lake called Hasarlac introduced us some of the immense variety and numbers of birds awaiting us as we penetrated the delta. Croaking Great Reed Warblers intrigued us until a male Red-footed Falcon sailed over and then all eyes were directed skywards. Whiskered Terns dipped gracefully at the mirror calm surface below which Pygmy and Great Cormorants dived for fish. Bee-eaters, rollers and orioles drew our attention away from the waterside for a while, but then Garganey, Common Pochard and Eurasian Spoonbill refocused our efforts over the lake. Colourful mobile bee hive trucks had gathered here so that the bees could exploit the blossom of Oleaster trees, then False Acacia and finally Silver Lime. As the season progresses the vehicles are driven northwards where these trees flower later.

Shortly after 6pm we arrived at Tulcea and the banks of the Danube. We joined our floating hotel and after a welcome drink of cherry schnapps, we settled into our cabins awaiting dinner and cast off.

## Day 5

Wednesday 18th May

The day began cool and bright. Although a thunderstorm developed in the afternoon, we were sailing at the time so it did not interrupt our programme. The first area of exploration of the immense network of waterways in the delta is known as mile 36 channel. Many species were in full song. Thrush Nightingales burst into song as we passed by but not one revealed its location. It was a similar story with Icterine Warblers, but Collared Flycatchers did permit us to see and appreciate their stunning black and white plumage.

It proved to be a good day for large raptors. About 11 White-tailed Eagles, a Lesser Spotted Eagle, an Eastern Imperial Eagle and a Booted Eagle sailed over. Falcons were equally entertaining with several Eurasian Hobbies, Common Kestrels and Red-footed Falcon being observed.

As we turned off the main channel to cruise down a narrower, reed fringed waterway we encountered vast numbers of aquatic birds. Scores of Great White Pelicans, Glossy Ibises, Pygmy and Great Cormorants, Great and Little Egrets, Grey, Purple and Squacco Herons, and Black-crowned Night Herons were continually passing over or springing up from the river margins as we passed. We were delighted to see two rare Dalmatian Pelicans at close range. Whiskered and Common Terns were abundant, especially in the sheltered lagoon area where Yellow Waterlilies and Water Chestnut abounded. This was also the habitat favoured by the exceptionally attractive Red-necked Grebes who readily consorted with Great Crested Grebes without interaction.

It came as a surprise to many of us that the delta was such a spectacular place for woodpeckers. We were thrilled to secure superb views of two Black Woodpeckers and utterly amazed to watch a Lesser Spotted Woodpecker fly

from a tree and settle on a reed stem in the middle of a reed bed. European Green, Great Spotted, Grey-headed and Middle Spotted Woodpeckers were all seen or at least heard clearly during the day.

Wildfowl were represented by a range of ducks including Garganey and Ferruginous Ducks which are rarely seen at home. Other wildlife also caught our attention. Two Grass Snakes were found swimming at a considerable distance from the bank. A couple of European Pond Terrapins basked in the weak sunshine. Perhaps the most outstanding sighting though was that of Golden Jackals trotting close to the water's edge. One paraded along the opposite bank whilst we were dining.

A cacophony of myriads of assorted frogs accompanied by the drone of Fire-bellied Toads was the backdrop to slumber after a richly rewarding day on the delta.

## Day 6

Thursday 19th May

The sunrise was as warm and welcoming as the fiery sunset had been last night. Birds began to disperse from their roosts and the sky was crisis-crossed with squadrons of Great White Pelicans, Pygmy Cormorants and assorted herons. Savi's, Great Reed, Sedge and Eurasian Reed Warblers attempted to make themselves heard above the incessant croaking of Marsh Frogs. A Eurasian Bittern boomed and Eurasian Penduline Tits called mournfully to each other from willows adjacent to our moored hotel. Suddenly a male Golden Jackal trotted into view and the sun gleamed onto its rusty brown pelage highlighting its outline. It was only a few metres from us but chose to continue its inspection of the river bank unperturbed. The way in which it scent marked a tree showed it to be an errant male. There was so much activity that the breakfast hour was upon us before we knew it.

The flotel held station and we took an excursion in the smaller boat to a series of disused fish ponds which have been converted into a bird reserve. A dense pack of Great White Pelicans huddled together roosting but gradually dispersed while we scanned through the other species. Black-necked Grebes in full summer plumage are always a joy to watch, but three pairs were a special treat. Being accompanied by Red-necked, Great Crested and Little Grebes added to the pleasure. A Eurasian Bittern chose to perform a tour of the pools at just the right moment for all of us to see it. This was an excellent place to birdwatch and all of the supporting cast were present. Balancing on the support ramp to re-board the boat was no challenge and soon we were all safely back on board, ready for another adventure.

As we approached some derelict and abandoned domestic and industrial buildings we were sceptical of its ornithological potential. Dipping Sand Martins, perched European Bee-eaters and a watchful Little Owl soon brought us round. We investigated some shallow pools in a sandy area which were attractive to waders. Black-tailed Godwits, Pied Avocets, Black-winged Stilts, Ruff and Wood Sandpiper were soon on the list. Walking round in such beautiful weather kept our spirits high and we began to notice butterflies and dragonflies in the thin mantle of flowers. A Squacco Heron had seized a sizeable Green Lizard whose struggles for freedom met with renewed determination from the heron to gulp it down. Some bee-eaters were nesting in holes excavated in a low embankment at the waterside and their low level flights enabled the sun to catch and display their magnificent colours. After sauntering around this new habitat it was back to the mother ship for lunch.

Next we sailed northwards behind the tug to reach yet another bird-rich area. The evening boat ride involved drifting down a tree lined channel listening to assorted bird calls. We entered a large, shallow lake choked with Water Chestnut and Hornwort. Whiskered Terns bickered over potential nest sites; the most sought after being where Water Soldier was emerging and other weeds draped around it to form a matt of vegetation. At least two Musk Rats swam across the channel. One was close enough to observe swimming underwater and dragging a mouthful of reeds with it to the far bank.

Returning to base by 7pm gave us time to relax and wait for the sunset. Just as we were gathering for dinner five Black Terns flew through causing a scramble up the steps to view them from the top deck as these were the first ones to be seen on the trip.

## Day 7

Friday 20th May

Dawn brought a warmer glow today and it was pleasant on deck watching the movements of birds from roost to feeding grounds. A White-tailed Eagle was also observing the convoys of passing birds from its lofty perch. Great White Pelicans streamed past followed by Glossy Ibises, Great Egrets and a smattering of Purple Herons and Black-crowned Night Herons. A couple of Black Terns inspected the boat before winging off down river. Savi's Warblers were reeling from all directions but were impossible to pin down.

It was soon time for another excellent breakfast and then off we went again to explore the wilderness. We cruised through a wide variety of habitats ranging from the broad main channel to willow-lined, weed choked narrow channels and water-lily smothered lakes. The exceptionally clear water revealed a substrate festooned with shells and dense shoals of fish. Birds were again constantly passing over. All of the usual iconic species were seen in abundance but a Levant Sparrowhawk, a female Red-footed Falcon and Dalmatian Pelican spiced things up a bit. Musk Rats swam close to the launch and European Pond Terrapins basked in the sunshine. Frog genetics is complex. There are Pond, Marsh and Edible Frogs here but distinguishing them is difficult. Using a net and a red bottle top as a lure, we captured a couple to measure their leg lengths. Being intermediate in length suggested they may be Edible Frogs. Science aside, it was a fun activity! The frogs were handled gently and returned to the water safely. European Rollers were conspicuous this morning; one actually performed its tumbling aerial display after which it is named.

By 12.30pm we had returned to the mother ship for lunch. The afternoon and early evening passed by serenely as we chugged along the channels making our way back to Tulcea. Birding from the top deck gave an appreciation of the vastness of this special habitat. A Little Bittern chose the right time to fly over its territory and most of us saw it. A Grass Snake or two wriggled across the water. Emperor and Lesser Emperor Dragonflies and Beautiful Demoiselle damselflies danced along the margins. The remainder of the journey was spent relaxing in the sunshine as there was very little bird activity.

We docked back at Tulcea at 6.15pm. Some opted for a stroll around the town before dinner. We spent the night on board.

## Day 8

Saturday 21st May

We left the floating hotel at 8.30am and boarded the bus to begin a full day of birding. Steppe countryside was our first habitat today. The Deniz Tepe Hill rises above the plain and has rocky outcrops scattered over the short grassland. Souseliks were peering at us like miniature meercats and also keeping a wary eye skywards in case of an aerial attack from a raptor. A dark phase Booted Eagle inspected the slopes and then a Short-toed Snake Eagle hovered above us.

Typical open country birds were Tawny Pipit, Isabelline Wheatear, Northern Wheatear, Corn Bunting and Greater Short-toed Lark. Lesser Grey Shrikes also found this a suitable habitat as they peered down for insects. A comfort stop at a petrol station inevitably produced Crested Lark but the chief interest was a strange looking leucistic Western Jackdaw. A Lesser Spotted Eagle caused some frustration as it selected a flight path directly above the bus and could only be seen by those in window seats on the right.

The Grindul Lupilor lagoons were a completely contrasting habitat of marshes and reed beds of vast extent. Paddyfield Warblers were very easy to locate as they were singing and showing well towards the top of the static reed stems. Likewise a Couple of Savi's Warblers reeled in full view but at a distance. Wagtails of the Flava group proved to be more challenging. We definitely identified Black-headed Wagtails and a single Romanian Yellow Wagtail, but many other individuals appeared intermediate or unlike any of the field guide illustrations. However, we were content to enjoy their intense colouring and didn't get too concerned about trying to name them all. Suddenly, pandemonium broke out amongst the wagtails. They screamed after a hawk-like form that had clearly alarmed them. It was a harmless, moth-eating European Nightjar which sailed away none the worse for the assault it had sustained. A lone Dalmatian Pelican was a welcome discovery as only five had been seen to date. The Great White Pelican was far more numerous and a fly past was underway for us to enjoy. This superb locality supports a good population of European Bee-eaters, who were making sorties above the quarries. As Eurasian Hobby, Red-footed Falcon and Common Kestrel shared the same airspace, it afforded an ideal opportunity for a comparison of their flight modes and jizz. A Eurasian Bittern made a leisurely tour of the reed bed as we returned to the bus.

A picnic lunch was taken at a picturesque roadside shrine with freshly mown grass and an adjacent wood of False Acacia. A colony of Spanish Sparrows had built nests of untidy bundles of grasses which festooned the trees. As we were packing up to leave, a Short-toed Snake Eagle sailed overhead.

It was a 40 minute ride to Vadu on the Black Sea. An extensive marsh with pools rolled out before us. Curlew Sandpiper and Little Stint were much appreciated, but the highlight was an assembly of 62 Collared Pratincoles either performing displays, on the ground, or streaking through the skies. Hundreds of Common Terns were nesting on an islet in one of the lagoons. Souseliks abound in this area. A Spur-thighed Tortoise was discovered in the dunes and clumps of Loose-flowered Orchids adorned the diminishing pools. On the beach amongst the shell rubble we noticed a Kentish Plover and some Little Terns.

## Day 9

Sunday 22nd May

There still remained two contrasting habitats to explore today. The first was close to the Celic Dere monastery and consisted of low wooded hills with old orchards and clear views of the sky for raptor watching. Hawfinches

and Red-backed Shrikes were common here and very conspicuous. Several Hawfinches perched on the ground in close proximity giving wonderful views of this dumpy finch with its manic expression. A pair of Spotted Flycatchers took exception to a male Syrian Woodpecker and attempted to buffet it out of their territory. As Eurasian Golden Orioles called from the concealment of the tree tops, another canopy dweller deigned to show itself. A very vocal male Icterine Warbler sang in more open sections of the canopy so that everyone secured good views of it. There was general agreement that the most memorable sighting was of a male European Honey Buzzard displaying overhead. It raised its barred wings and shuddered and shook as it clapped them together over its head. It was captivating behaviour. As its aerial antics drew our attention skywards it became clear that other raptors were also airborne. A pale phase Booted Eagle, Lesser Spotted Eagle and a Long-legged Buzzard crossed the air space to which our attention had been drawn.

At 11am more day-trippers were arriving. They were referred to as sausage people by Cristian as that seemed to be all that they barbecued. That was our cue to leave and make for the granite outcrops of the Macin mountains. We had become used to finding uncommon birds during our visits to facilities at petrol stations. The one at Macin was no exception. A Little Owl was perched on a low level roof and seemed to be basking in the sunshine.

Our picnic spot at the foot of the mountains was well chosen as it provided shade, a wall to sit on and great views of Woodlark and European Turtle Dove. The trail into the hills wound along a rivulet and was a little muddy in places. Flowering shrubs had attracted a number of Cardinal butterflies which closely resembled the more familiar Silver-washed Fritillary but have crimson markings on the underwing. Queen of Spain Fritillaries were common here too. Singing male Ortolan Buntings were a joy to experience, but the highlights were a Pied Wheatear and a fine male Common Rock Thrush. This was an excellent location for seeing raptors. Long-legged Buzzard, Lesser Spotted Eagle and Booted Eagle hung in the updrafts, whereas scores of Great White Pelicans drifted between thermals high above the hills.

It had been a day rich in wildlife encounters under a blue, sun-soaked sky and made a most enjoyable final day in the field.

## Day 10

Monday 23rd May

Opportunities for birding today were restricted to what could be seen from the bus as we journeyed back to Bucharest on yet another bright, sunny day. The usual fare of bee-eaters, rollers, storks and assorted oddments were noted, but a Grey Partridge and a Eurasian Sparrowhawk were new for the trip.

Going into Bucharest proved to be a mistake as the traffic was snarled up and at best we moved at snail's pace. Apart from the Parliament buildings we didn't see much of the city. Everything went smoothly at the airport and we were soon airborne after a trip with many highlights and memories and some excellent wildlife encounters. We landed back in the UK where another Naturetrek adventure came to an end.

Our local guides, Laurentiu and Cristian, and our driver, Dimitri were outstanding in every respect and they made the holiday the great success that it was. Many thanks to them and also to the boat and hotel staff who served us so well. Each meal saw a cleverly designed origami bird, animal or flower presented on our plates which were quite beautiful, intricate and appropriate to our experiences of the day.



## Species Lists

Birds (✓=recorded but not counted; H = heard only)

	Common name	Scientific name	May											
			14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23		
1	Grey Partridge	<i>Perdix perdix</i>												1
2	Common Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>				1	6	1		✓	✓			
3	Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
4	Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
5	Common Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>						4		✓				
6	Gadwall	<i>Anas strepera</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓				
7	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	2			2	✓	✓	✓	✓				
8	Garganey	<i>Anas querquedula</i>				1	3							
9	Red-crested Pochard	<i>Netta rufina</i>						13						
10	Common Pochard	<i>Aythya ferina</i>				1	2	10	✓					
11	Ferruginous Duck	<i>Aythya nyroca</i>				1	10	✓	✓	2				
12	Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>					1							
13	Goldeneye	<i>Bucephalus clangula</i>					1							
14	Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>						2	1					
15	Red-necked Grebe	<i>Podiceps grisegena</i>					7	2	17					
16	Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>				✓	20	✓	✓					
17	Black-necked Grebe	<i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>						4						
18	Black Stork	<i>Ciconia nigra</i>					1							
19	White Stork	<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>	12	1	1	10	25	5	9	20	16	8		
20	Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>					✓	✓	✓	3				
21	Eurasian Spoonbill	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>				1	8	6		12				
22	Eurasian Bittern	<i>Botaurus stellaris</i>					H	1		1				
23	Little Bittern	<i>Ixobrychus minutus</i>				1	H		1					
24	Black-crowned Night Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>				1	✓	✓	✓	1			1	
25	Squacco Heron	<i>Ardeola ralloides</i>					✓	✓	✓	6				
26	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>		1		1	✓	✓	✓					
27	Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>				1	5	12	10	2			1	
28	Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>				3	20	✓	✓	✓	1	2		

	Common name	Scientific name	May									
			14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
29	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>				4	✓	✓	✓	✓		3
30	Great White Pelican	<i>Pelecanus onocrotalus</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
31	Dalmatian Pelican	<i>Pelecanus crispus</i>					2	1	2	1		
32	Pygmy Cormorant	<i>Microcarbo pygmeus</i>				10	✓	✓	✓			
33	Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>				12	✓	✓	✓	✓		
34	European Honey Buzzard	<i>Pernis apivorus</i>		3			3				3	
35	Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>				1						
36	White-tailed Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i>					11	5	3			
37	Golden Eagle	<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>	1									
38	Short-toed Snake Eagle	<i>Circaetus gallicus</i>		1						3		
39	Western Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>				2	7	12	8	✓		
40	Montagu's Harrier	<i>Circus pygargus</i>				1						
41	Levant Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter brevipes</i>							1			
42	Eurasian Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>										1
43	Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	2	6		2						
44	Long-legged Buzzard	<i>Buteo rufinus</i>									5	
45	Lesser Spotted Eagle	<i>Aquila pomarina</i>		1			1			1	2	
46	Eastern Imperial Eagle	<i>Aquila heliaca</i>					1					
47	Booted Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus pennatus</i>					1			1	3	
48	Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	1	4	1	9	10	8	2	10	3	2
49	Red-footed Falcon	<i>Falco vespertinus</i>				1	1		1	6		
50	Eurasian Hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>					10	14	3	4	3	
51	Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>					4	2	5			
52	Eurasian Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>				✓	✓	✓	✓			
53	Eurasian Stone-Curlew	<i>Burhinus oedicephalus</i>								H		
54	Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>					5	6		9		
55	Pied Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>						15		6		
56	Northern Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>				4	6	11	2	6		1
57	Kentish Plover	<i>Charadrius alexandrinus</i>								2		
58	Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa</i>						20				
59	Common Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>								4		
60	Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>						1				

	Common name	Scientific name	May										
			14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	
61	Little Stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>									2		
62	Curlew Sandpiper	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>									8		
63	Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>									8		
64	Ruff	<i>Philomachus pugnax</i>							1		15		
65	Collared Pratincole	<i>Glareola pratincola</i>									62		
66	Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	20			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
67	Yellow-legged Gull	<i>Larus michahellis</i>				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
68	Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>	1			3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
69	Little Tern	<i>Sternula albifrons</i>									2		
70	Whiskered Tern	<i>Chlidonias hybrida</i>				✓	✓	✓	✓				1
71	Black Tern	<i>Chlidonias niger</i>							4	4			
72	Rock Dove / Feral Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
73	Stock Dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>					3			4			
74	Common Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	✓	✓		2	7	2				1	
75	European Turtle Dove	<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>										6	
76	Eurasian Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
77	Common Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>		1	H	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	2	1
78	Little Owl	<i>Athene noctua</i>							1			1	1
79	European Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>									1		
80	Common Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>	2	2		2	12	✓					✓
81	European Roller	<i>Coracias garrulus</i>				6	✓	16	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
82	Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>					12						
83	European Bee-Eater	<i>Merops apiaster</i>				8	6	25		✓	✓	✓	✓
84	Eurasian Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>				4	2	3	3	✓	H		1
85	Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dryobates minor</i>		1				2		H			
86	Middle Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos medius</i>						H					
87	Syrian Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos syriacus</i>										1	
88	Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>		1			2	2	2			1	
89	Black Woodpecker	<i>Dryocopus martius</i>		H			2						
90	European Green Woodpecker	<i>Picus viridis</i>		H	1	1	1			1		H	
91	Grey-headed Woodpecker	<i>Picus canus</i>					H	H	H				
92	Red-backed Shrike	<i>Lanius collurio</i>		8		1	1	1	2	2	2	10	

	Common name	Scientific name	May										
			14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	
93	Lesser Grey Shrike	<i>Lanius minor</i>							2		7	4	1
94	Eurasian Golden Oriole	<i>Oriolus oriolus</i>		1		2	4			5		5	
95	Eurasian Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>		5	1	1						1	
96	Eurasian Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	4	10	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
97	Spotted Nutcracker	<i>Nucifraga caryocatactes</i>		3		1							
98	Western Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
99	Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	✓	✓		✓	✓				✓		✓
100	Hooded Crow	<i>Corvus cornix</i>	8	✓	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
101	Northern Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>		4		4	2						
102	Marsh Tit	<i>Poecile palustris</i>		3									
103	Coal Tit	<i>Parus ater</i>		2		H							
104	Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>		4	1	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	
105	Eurasian Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>		2			2	✓	✓			✓	
106	Eurasian Penduline Tit	<i>Remiz pendulinus</i>					4	1	H				
107	Bearded Reedling	<i>Panurus biarmicus</i>						5	1				
108	Calandra Lark	<i>Melanocorypha calandra</i>				5							
109	Greater Short-toed Lark	<i>Calandrella brachydactyla</i>									5		
110	Crested Lark	<i>Galerida cristata</i>				5					8		
111	Woodlark	<i>Lullula arborea</i>										3	
112	Eurasian Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>									1		
113	Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>							✓			✓	
114	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	2	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
115	Common House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>				✓	✓				✓	✓	✓
116	Red-rumped Swallow	<i>Cecropis daurica</i>										1	
117	Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>		2			H	H	1				
118	Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>		2									
119	Common Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>		6		1	H	H	H				
120	Wood Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus sibilatrix</i>				H							
121	Great Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus arundinaceus</i>				3	4	10	7	6			
122	Sedge Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>					1	1	2				
123	Paddyfield Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus agricola</i>									5		
124	Eurasian Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>					1	2	2	6			

	Common name	Scientific name	May									
			14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
125	Icterine Warbler	<i>Hippolais icterina</i>					H				3	
126	Savi's Warbler	<i>Locustella luscinioides</i>					H		H	2		
127	Eurasian Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>		H	H	H	2	H	H			
128	Garden Warbler	<i>Sylvia borin</i>		H			H	H	H			
129	Lesser Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia curruca</i>		H			H	H	H			
130	Common Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>										H
131	Common Firecrest	<i>Regulus ignicapilla</i>		1		H						
132	Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>		H								
133	Eurasian Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>		H	H	H						
134	Eurasian Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>		H		1						
135	Common Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
136	Common Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	2	6	1	6	2	3				
137	Fieldfare	<i>Turdus pilaris</i>		7		1						
138	Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	2	2	1	H					4	
139	Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	2	2	1	1					1	
140	European Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>		1	1	2						
141	Thrush Nightingale	<i>Luscinia luscinia</i>					H		H		H	
142	Common Nightingale	<i>Luscinia megarhynchos</i>				H						
143	Black Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>		3	1	3						
144	Common Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>		5		1	3	H	2			
145	Isabeline Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe isabellina</i>								3		
146	Northern Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>				2	2	2		✓	6	
147	Pied Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe pleschanka</i>					1				1	
148	Common Rock Thrush	<i>Monticola saxatilis</i>									1	
149	Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>									2	
150	Collared Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula albicollis</i>				1	2		H			
151	Red-breasted Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula parva</i>				1						
152	White-throated Dipper	<i>Cinclus cinclus</i>			3	2						
153	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
154	Spanish Sparrow	<i>Passer hispaniolensis</i>								✓	10	
155	Eurasian Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>		2		3	1	2	9		10	
156	Black-headed Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava feldegg</i>					1	2	2	12		

	Common name	Scientific name	May										
			14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	
	Romanian Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava dombrowskii</i>									1		
157	Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>		6	8	1							
158	White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>		✓		2	✓	✓	6	6	2		
159	Tawny Pipit	<i>Anthus campestris</i>								5			
160	Tree Pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>		12									
161	Common Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	2	4		6	4		H		4		
162	European Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>		1		4					4		
163	European Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>		2		4	2				4		
164	Common Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>		H									
165	Red Crossbill	<i>Loxia curvirostra</i>			H								
166	Hawfinch	<i>Coccothraustes coccothraustes</i>									15		
167	Corn Bunting	<i>Emberiza calandra</i>				8			2	✓	✓		
168	Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>		6									
169	Ortolan Bunting	<i>Emberiza hortulana</i>									3		
170	Common Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>					1		1	1			

## Mammals

1	Roe Deer	<i>Capreolus capreolus</i>		4									
2	European Brown Bear	<i>Ursus arctos</i>		8									
3	Red Fox	<i>Vulpes vulpes</i>		1		1							
4	European Hare	<i>Lepus europaeus</i>								1			
5	Musk Rat	<i>Ondatra zibethicus</i>						4	2				
6	European Souslik	<i>Spermophilus citellus</i>								15			
7	Golden Jackal	<i>Canis aureus</i>					3	1					
8	Wild Boar	<i>Sus scrofa</i>					12						

## Amphibians

1	Marsh/Pond/Edible Frog	<i>Pelophylax sp</i>					3	✓	✓	✓	2		
2	Fire bellied Toad	<i>Bombina bombina</i>					H	H		H			
3	Fire Salamander	<i>Salamandra salamandra</i>		2									

	Common name	Scientific name	May									
			14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Reptiles												
1	Grass Snake	<i>Natrix natrix persa</i>					2	1	2	1		
2	Green Lizard	<i>Lacerta viridis</i>						1				
3	Spur-thighed Tortise	<i>Testudo graeca</i>								1		
4	European Pond Terrapin	<i>Emys orbicularis</i>					2	1	3			
5	Sand lizard	<i>Lacerta agilis</i>									1	
6	Steppe Runner	<i>Eremias arguta</i>								1		

## Butterflies

Small White, *Pieris rapae*  
 Large White, *Pieris brassicae*  
 Painted Lady, *Vanessa virginiensis*  
 Clouded Yellow, *Colias crocea*  
 Mazarine Blue, *Polyommatus semiargus*

Orange Tip, *Anthocharis cardamines*  
 Small Heath, *Coenonympha pamphilus*  
 Brimstone, *Gonepteryx rhamni*  
 Queen of Spain Fritillary, *Issoria lathonia*  
 Green-underside Blue, *Glaucopsyche alexia*

Common Blue, *Polyommatus icarus*  
 Red Admiral, *Vanessa atalanta*  
 Large Copper, *Lycaena dispar*  
 Cardinal, *Argynnis pandora*

## Dragonflies and Damselflies

Beautiful Demoiselle, *Calopteryx virgo*  
 Emerald Damselfly, *Lestes sponsa*  
 White-tailed Skimmer, *Orthetrum albistylum*  
 Red-eyed Damselfly, *Erythromma najas*

Ruddy Darter, *Sympetrum sanguinea*  
 Dark Spreadwing, *Lestes macrostigma*  
 Emperor Dragonfly, *Anax imperator*

Lesser Emperor, *Anax parthenope*  
 Blue-tailed Damselfly, *Ischnura elegans*  
 Variable Damselfly, *Coenagrion pulchellum*

## Others

Bush cricket, *Bradyporus dasypus*

Field Cricket, *Gryllus campestris*

## Receive our e-newsletter

Join the Naturetrek e-mailing list and be the first to hear about new tours, additional departures and new dates, tour reports and special offers. Visit [www.naturetrek.co.uk](http://www.naturetrek.co.uk) to sign up.

## Naturetrek Facebook

We are delighted to launch the Naturetrek Facebook page so that participants of Naturetrek tours can remain in touch after the holiday and share photos, comments and future travel plans.

Setting up a personal profile at [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com) is quick, free and easy. The [Naturetrek Facebook page](#) is now live; do please pay us a visit!