

Southern Portugal 13-23 June 2024

Annotated bird list



Erik Kleyheeg

Introduction

In June 2024, we spent a family holiday at Alfamar, Albufeira, in southern Portugal. While aimed at relaxing and spending some quality time with our 1.5 year old daughter (who loved the beach and swimming pool), we did have the opportunity for some day trips to interesting sites in the region and do some birdwatching. Although we had no target species and didn't do any early morning birding, the holiday did produce a decent bird list and excellent observations of some interesting species. Undoubtedly we missed several common and easy to find species, so if they are not on the bird list below, that doesn't necessarily mean they were absent. We simply didn't stumble upon them. This could be particularly the case for passerines, which may have been quiet during daytime. After all, the weather during our entire holiday was excellent for beach visits but less so for birdwatching, i.e. clear sunny skies and temperatures rising into the high twenties almost every day. On some days birding was further hindered by strong winds, discouraging our efforts to get the most out of visits to the Tavira salt pans for example.

This trip report is limited to an annotated bird list of the 96 species we observed, illustrated with some photos of the trip. The species are ordered according to the latest IOC world bird list and for each species the English, Dutch and scientific names are given. Per species, we very briefly describe our impression of its occurrence in southern Portugal and where we observed them.



Key sites in southern Portugal visited and mentioned in this report.

Annotated bird species list (96)

- 1. Common Shelduck** Bergeend *Tadorna tadorna*
Several individuals seen in Ria Formosa (Ludo Trail) and Tavira salt pans.
- 2. Gadwall** Krakeend *Mareca strepera*
One individual seen from the São Lourenço Bird Hide at Ria Formosa.
- 3. Mallard** Wilde Eend *Anas platyrhynchos*
Several individuals seen in Ria Formosa (Ludo Trail).
- 4. Common Pochard** Tafeleend *Aythya ferina*
Several individuals seen from the São Lourenço Bird Hide at Ria Formosa.
- 5. Common Quail** Kwartel *Coturnix coturnix*
Several individuals heard in the Albufeira region and the Castro Verde region.
- 6. Red-necked Nightjar** Moorse Nachtzwaluw *Caprimulgus ruficollis*
Heard almost every night from our apartment in Alfamar, Albufeira. Two unidentified nightjars flying over the road at dusk between Faro and Albufeira were probably also this species.
- 7. Common Swift** Gierzwaluw *Apus apus*
Common throughout.
- 8. Pallid Swift** Vale Gierzwaluw *Apus pallidus*
Frequently observed along the coast, most notably along the cliffs of Sagres and Cabo de São Vicente. Sometimes difficult to distinguish from Common Swift.
- 9. Rock Dove** Rotsduif *Columba livia*
At least four individuals observed on a cliff face at Cabo de São Vicente, relatively far from urban areas and no sign of aberrant coloration.
- 10. Common Wood Pigeon** Houtduif *Columba palumbus*
Widespread and fairly common.
- 11. European Turtle Dove** Zomertortel *Streptopelia turtur*
Much less common than expected. Only one individual seen flying overhead at Alfamar, Albufeira.
- 12. Eurasian Collared Dove** Turkse Tortel *Streptopelia decaocto*
Common throughout.
- 13. Common Moorhen** Waterhoen *Gallinula chloropus*
Several individuals seen from the São Lourenço Bird Hide at Ria Formosa.
- 14. Common Coot** Meerkoet *Fulica atra*
Several individuals seen from the São Lourenço Bird Hide at Ria Formosa.

15. Western Swamphen Purperkoet *Porphyrio porphyrio*
At least two pairs with chicks seen from the São Lourenço Bird Hide at Ria Formosa.

16. Little Grebe Dodaars *Tachybaptus ruficollis*
Several individuals seen from the São Lourenço Bird Hide at Ria Formosa.

17. Great Crested Grebe Fuut *Podiceps cristatus*
Pair with chicks seen at Ria Formosa (Ludo Trail).

18. Greater Flamingo Flamingo *Phoenicopterus roseus*
Flock of ~160 at Ria Formosa (Ludo Trail) and several dozens in Tavira salt pans.

19. Eurasian Oystercatcher Scholekster *Haematopus ostralegus*
One individual in winter plumage seen at Ria Formosa (Ilha Deserta).

20. Black-winged Stilt Steltkluut *Himantopus himantopus*
Common in salt pans and estuaries.

21. Pied Avocet Kluut *Recurvirostra avosetta*
Several breeding pairs including chicks observed in Tavira salt pans.

22. Grey Plover Zilverplevier *Pluvialis squatarola*
One individual observed at Ria Formosa (Ilha Deserta).



Pallid Swift at Sagres, Purple Swamphen at Ria Formosa, Greater Flamingo at Tavira and a flock of waders (Bar-tailed Godwit, Grey Plover, Eurasian Oystercatcher) at Ilha Deserta.

23. Kentish Plover Strandplevier *Anarhynchus alexandrinus*
Two breeding pairs with chicks seen at Ria Formosa (Ludo Trail) and one at Tavira salt pans.

24. Eurasian Whimbrel Regenwulp *Numenius phaeopus*
One individual seen at Ria Formosa (Ludo Trail).

25. Eurasian Curlew Wulp *Numenius arquata*
Four individuals seen at Tavira salt pans.

26. Bar-tailed Godwit Rosse Grutto *Limosa lapponica*
Four individuals seen at Ria Formosa (Ilha Deserta).

27. Black-tailed Godwit Grutto *Limosa limosa*
One individual seen flying over Tavira salt pans.

28. Common Redshank Tureluur *Tringa totanus*
Several small flocks observed at Tavira salt pans.

29. Ruddy Turnstone Steenloper *Arenaria interpres*
Small flock observed at Tavira salt pans.

30. Dunlin Bonte Strandloper *Calidris alpina*
One individual in a Ruddy Turnstone flock observed at Tavira salt pans.



Pied Avocet at Tavira, Kentish Plover chick at Ria Formosa, Little Tern at Ilha do Farol, and Audouin's Gull at Ilha do Farol.

31. Little Tern Dwergstern *Sternula albifrons*
Surprisingly regular along the coast. Several breeding individuals observed at Tavira salt pans, but also regular observations at Ria Formosa (Ludo Trail and Ilha Do Farol).

32. Black-headed Gull Kokmeeuw *Croicocephalus ridibundus*
One adult bird observed at Tavira salt pans.

33. Mediterranean Gull Zwartkopmeeuw *Ichthyaetus melanocephalus*
Two birds flying overhead at Praia de Falésia (Albufeira) and another two at the Tavira salt pans.

34. Audouin's Gull Audouins Meeuw *Ichthyaetus audouinii*
Common along the coast, particularly at Ria Formosa (breeding colony on Ilha Deserta).

35. Yellow-legged Gull Geelpootmeeuw *Larus michahellis*
Common along the coast.

36. Lesser Black-backed Gull Kleine Mantelmeeuw *Larus fuscus*
Several adult birds observed at Ria Formosa (Ilha Deserta) and one at Tavira salt pans.

37. White Stork Ooievaar *Ciconia ciconia*
Common throughout, particularly inland.

38. Northern Gannet Jan-van-gent *Morus bassanus*
Common offshore, easily observed from the mainland.



Yellow-legged Gull at Ilha do Farol, White Stork at Entradas, Northern Gannet at Sagres, and Glossy Ibis at Ria Formosa.

39. Great Cormorant Aalscholver *Phalacrocorax carbo*
One individual observed at Ria Formosa (Ludo Trail).

40. European Shag Kuifaalscholver *Gulosus aristotelis*
Not quite certain due to long distance. Probably one individual flying over sea past Sagres.

41. Glossy Ibis Zwarte Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*
Three groups of several dozens flying overhead at Ria Formosa (Ludo Trail).

42. Eurasian Spoonbill Lepelaar *Platalea leucorodia*
One individual observed at Ria Formosa (Ludo Trail), a small flock at Tavira salt pans and several individuals at the Entradas Reservoir.

43. Little Bittern Woudaap *Ixobrychus minutus*
One individual seen flying from the São Lourenço Bird Hide at Ria Formosa.

44. Little Egret Kleine Zilverreiger *Egretta garzetta*
Regular observations at salt pans and estuaries. Breeding on Ilha Deserta (Ria Formosa).

45. Cattle Egret Koereiger *Bubulcus ibis*
Regularly observed throughout with at least 180 individuals counted at the Entradas Reservoir.



Little Egrets at Ilha Deserta, Cattle Egrets at Entradas, Grey Heron at Entradas, and Griffon Vulture at Entradas.

46. Grey Heron

Blauwe Reiger

Ardea cinerea

Regular observations along the Algarve coast and one seen at the Entradas Reservoir.

47. Black-winged Kite

Grijze Wouw

Elanus caeruleus

One flying individual observed from the car near the Vilamoura Environmental Park.

48. Griffon Vulture

Vale Gier

Gyps fulvus

Two birds observed soaring near the village of Entradas one early afternoon.

49. Booted Eagle

Dwergarend

Hieraaetus pennatus

Several individuals observed in the Castro Verde regio, white morph without exception.

50. Spanish Imperial Eagle

Spaanse Keizerarend

Aquila adalberti

One individual observed flying low near the village of Entradas, while being chased by a White Stork.

51. Western Marsh Harrier

Bruine Kiekendief

Circus aeruginosus

Several individuals observed in the Castro Verde region.

52. Montague's Harrier

Grauwe Kiekendief

Circus pygargus

Several individuals (more than Marsh) observed in the Castro Verde region, including one handsome melanistic individual (black morph).



Booted Eagle white morph at Entradas, Montague's Harrier black morph at Castro Verde, Black Kite at Castro Verde, and European Roller at Castro Verde.

53. Black Kite Zwarte Wouw *Milvus migrans*
Regularly observed throughout, but most frequent inland.

54. Common Buzzard Buizerd *Buteo buteo*
Several individuals observed in the Castro Verde region.

55. Little Owl Steenuil *Athena noctua*
Several individuals observed at dusk or dawn in the Albufeira region, and one in the middle of the day at the Vale do Gonçálinho Center for Environmental Education.

56. Eurasian Hoopoe Hop *Upupa epops*
Observed almost daily in the Albufeira region.

57. European Roller Scharrelaar *Coracias garrulus*
Several individuals observed in the Castro Verde region, often near artificial nest boxes.

58. European Bee-eater Bijeneter *Merops apiaster*
Regularly observed throughout, often from the car when birds were flying over the road.

59. Lesser Kestrel Kleine Torenavalk *Falco naumanni*
Common in the Castro Verde region, particularly at the Vale do Gonçálinho Center for Environmental Education.



European Bee-eater at Castro Verde, Lesser Kestrel at Castro Verde, Peregrine Falcon at Alfamar, and juvenile Woodchat Shrike at Castro Verde.

- 60. Common Kestrel** Torenvalk *Falco tinnunculus*
Observed regularly, particularly in the coastal areas, where also breeding on coastal cliffs.
- 61. Peregrine Falcon** Slechtvalk *Falco peregrinus*
One individual observed flying over Alfamar (Albufeira).
- 62. Golden Oriole** Wielewaal *Oriolus oriolus*
At least one individual heard near Navarro in the Castro Verde region.
- 63. Iberian Grey Shrike** Iberische Klapekster *Lanius meridionalis*
Several individuals observed in the Castro Verde region.
- 64. Woodchat Shrike** Roodkopklauwier *Lanius senator*
One adult female and one juvenile observed in the Castro Verde region
- 65. Eurasian Jay** Gaai *Garrulus glandarius*
Several observations of at least one bird at Alfamar, Albufeira.
- 66. Iberian Magpie** Blauwe Ekster *Cyanopica cooki*
Common throughout.
- 67. Eurasian Magpie** Ekster *Pica pica*
Several observations at Ria Formosa and in the Castro Verde region. Much less abundant than Iberian Magpie.
- 68. Western Jackdaw** Kauw *Coloeus monedula*
One flock observed at the Vale do Gonçalves Center for Environmental Education.
- 69. Carrion Crow** Zwarte Kraai *Corvus corone*
Several individuals observed in the Castro Verde region.
- 70. Northern Raven** Raaf *Corvus corax*
Several individuals observed in the Castro Verde region.
- 71. Crested Tit** Kuifmees *Lophophanes cristatus*
One individual heard calling from a pine tree at Alfamar, Albufeira.
- 72. Great Tit** Koolmees *Parus major*
A few birds observed at Ermida de Nossa Senhora de Aracelis.
- 73. Crested Lark** Kuifleeuwerik *Galerida cristata*
Common throughout. Note that we did not pay attention to possible Thekla's Larks.
- 74. Eurasian Crag Martin** Rotszwaluw *Ptyonoprogne rupestris*
Several individuals observed in the Castro Verde region.
- 75. Barn Swallow** Boerenzwaluw *Hirundo rustica*
Common throughout.

76. Western House Martin Huiszwaluw *Delichon urbicum*
Common throughout with beautiful colonies in inland villages.

77. Red-rumped Swallow Roodstuitzwaluw *Cecropsis daurica*
Common throughout.

78. Cetti's Warbler Cetti's Zanger *Cettia cetti*
One individual heard calling near the São Lourenço Bird Hide at Ria Formosa.

79. Zitting Cisticola Graszanger *Cisticola juncidis*
Frequently observed in coastal estuaries and in the Castro Verde region.

80. Sardinian Warbler Kleine Zwartkop *Curruca melanocephala*
Common throughout. More often heard than seen.

81. Short-toed Treecreeper Boomkruiper *Certhia brachydactyla*
Several individuals heard and seen at Alfamar, Albureira.

82. Spotless Starling Zwarte Spreeuw *Sturnus unicolor*
Common throughout.

83. Common Blackbird Merel *Turdus merula*
Common throughout.



Iberian Magpie at Alfamar, Eurasian Crag Martin at Castro Verde, Red-rumped Swallow at Castro Verde, and Zitting Cisticola at Ria Formosa.

- 84. Black Redstart** Zwarte Roodstaart *Phoenicurus ochruros*
Several individuals observed at Cabo de São Vicente.
- 85. European Stonechat** Roodborsttapuit *Saxicola rubicola*
Frequently observed in the Castro Verde region.
- 86. Spanish Sparrow** Spaanse Mus *Passer hispaniolensis*
At least one male observed in the Castro Verde region.
- 87. House Sparrow** Huismus *Passer domesticus*
Common throughout.
- 88. Black-headed Weaver** Zwartkopwever *Ploceus melanocephalus*
Introduced species. Fairly large colony observed in the reeds near the São Lourenço Bird Hide at Ria Formosa.
- 89. Common Waxbill** Sint-Helenafazantje *Estrilda astrild*
Introduced species. Observed daily at our apartment in Alfamar, Albufeira.
- 90. Western Yellow Wagtail** Gele Kwikstaart *Motacilla flava*
Frequently observed in coastal areas, also breeding on Ilha Deserta. Subspecies *M. f. iberiae*.



Spotless Starling at Alfamar, Common Waxbill at Alfamar, Spanish Sparrow male at Castro Verde, and European Serin at Alfamar.

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| 91. White Wagtail | Witte Kwikstaart | <i>Motacilla alba</i> |
| Observed frequently throughout. | | |
| 92. European Greenfinch | Groenling | <i>Chloris chloris</i> |
| Common throughout. | | |
| 93. Common Linnet | Kneu | <i>Linaria cannabina</i> |
| Common throughout. | | |
| 94. European Goldfinch | Putter | <i>Carduelis carduelis</i> |
| Common throughout. | | |
| 95. European Serin | Europese Kanarie | <i>Serinus serinus</i> |
| Common throughout. | | |
| 96. Corn Bunting | Grauwe Gors | <i>Emberiza calandra</i> |
| A flock of three birds observed along the road in the Castro Verde region. | | |



Birdwatching in the Castro Verde region.