Canary Islands – Gran Canaria & Fuerteventura

16/05/25 – 19/05/25

Introduction

I'd visited Tenerife back in 2001, very much not a birding holiday but I had taken a car out for a couple of days and managed to get all of the island's endemics. Since then, I'd not had much of a chance to get back to the Canaries so when an opportunity for a few days birding appeared, I decided to use it to catch up with the remaining Canary Island endemics missing from my list (plus African Houbara). After a bit of searching, I realised I should be able to combine Gran Canaria and Fuerteventura, the two islands I needed to visit, with a ferry trip in the middle to give a chance of some seabirds I still needed (namely White-faced Storm Petrel, Band-rumped Storm Petrel and Barolo Shearwater). Most of the landbirds seemed pretty straightforward so a Friday-Monday visit, whilst rushed, should be enough.

This proved to be the case, with all the endemic species (and endemic subspecies on GC and Fuerteventura) proving relatively easy to see, whilst I also got lucky with the seabirds with two of my three wanted species seen from the ferry.

Logistics

Flights

I flew with BA from Gatwick to Gran Canaria, landing in GC at about 11am. On the way home I flew with EasyJet from Fuerteventura back to Gatwick, departing at 12:30pm.

Car Hire

I had read in another trip report somewhere that you can't take hire cars on the inter-island ferries – I never put this to the test nor doublechecked it with the hire car companies but obviously I didn't want to take the risk of getting caught out not being able to board the ferry. I therefore hired a car from the airport at Gran Canaria for pick up on arrival, with a drop off at the ferry terminal at Las Palmas. For this reason I chose Hertz as they were one of the few companies that had an office by the ferry terminal. On Google Maps it looked like the foot passenger terminal for the ferry should be right next door, in reality it turned out that the ferry I took went from the Nelson Mandela Terminal which was actually a good ten minutes drive! Thankfully there is a taxi rank opposite the Hertz office so I was able to grab a cab quickly and get to the terminal in just enough time.

On Fuerteventura, I had been unable to find a car hire office at Puerto del Rosario, where the ferry arrived, that was open in the evening (the ferry arrived at 6:00pm). Subsequently I had to get a cab in Puerto del Rosario and take the short ride to the airport (about 10 minutes) and from there I was able to collect my car (from Sixt) relatively simply. Worth noting some of the car hire offices had huge queues (Goldcar being one) but none whatsoever at Sixt.

Ferry

If you are going to take a ferry between the islands with the potential to see some seabirds, it is essential from what I could research to take a slow ferry. The fast journeys are all on catamarans where you are unable to go out on deck. I got chatting to a group of birders on Fuerteventura who had taken the fast ferry from Las Palmas to Morro Jable (taking 2 hours) and they had managed just one sighting of a Bulwer's Petrel on their journey.

I booked the slow ferry from Las Palmas on Gran Canaria to Puerto del Rosario on Fuerteventura, departing at midday and arriving at 6pm, with the company Naviera Armas Trasmediterranea, on the ferry Fortuny. It's a big ferry with good options for viewing from two levels of deck at the back or one

level on either side. I spent most of my time at the back with occasional forays to the sides. The café is helpfully situated at the back by the decks too.

I booked the ferry through the Ferryhopper website for 65 euros.

Hotels

On Gran Canaria I stayed at the Hotel Rural Fonde de la Tea in the mountain town of Tejeda, a comfortable and pleasant little hotel that was well situated near the Blue Chaffinch sites, booked directly through their website.

On Fuerteventura I stayed at the much more 'resorty' Apartamentos Dunas Club, booked through Expedia. I chose this hotel due to its location in Correlejo, with the idea I could do an evening seawatch from the rocks right opposite. In hindsight, given I had such success from the ferry with my seabird targets, I would've much preferred to find a nice, more traditional place in La Oliva.

Target Species

African Houbara

I was really keen to catch up with Houbara – it was a big gap in my list. Given most birders succeed around the Tindaya area this was where I tried first and sure enough I was able to get cracking views of three birds along the main tarmacked track, whereby staying in the car and using it as a hide the birds weren't perturbed by my presence. Given my success within an hour at Tindaya I didn't try any other sites for this species.

Red-billed Tropicbird

When I started planning this trip I hadn't appreciated that there are now a couple of breeding colonies on Fuerteventura (and Lanzarote maybe). These are obviously kept quiet to protect the birds. I was able to observe at least four birds heading up and down the north west coast and was lucky to obtain some really good views.

White-faced Storm Petrel

Breeds on a couple of islets north of Lanzarote and is observed occasionally from ferries, particularly those from Lanzarote or Fuerteventura to Tenerife or Gran Canaria, and particularly in the later summer months. However there are a few records on eBird from May from the GC-Fuerteventura crossing so I had some hope of connecting with this species. After a lot of scanning I picked one out doing it's distinctive pattering and bouncing feeding technique – it was a joy to watch for 30 seconds or so until I lost sight of it.

Band-rumped Storm Petrel

A (very?) rare breeder on the Canaries. This was probably the seabird I was least likely to encounter and so it proved, with no sightings from the ferry. There are very few eBird records from ferries.

Barolo Shearwater

A very rare and declining breeder on the Canaries, and observed sporadically from ferries in summer months and early Autumn around the islands, particularly between Tenerife and La Gomera and between the central and eastern islands. A May visit was a bit earlier than ideal but looking at records there was definitely a possibility of catching up with this species, and in fact I actually observed three individuals from the ferry, two in close succession about half way between GC and Fuerteventura and the last one about 75% of the way to Fuerteventura.

Canary Islands Stonechat

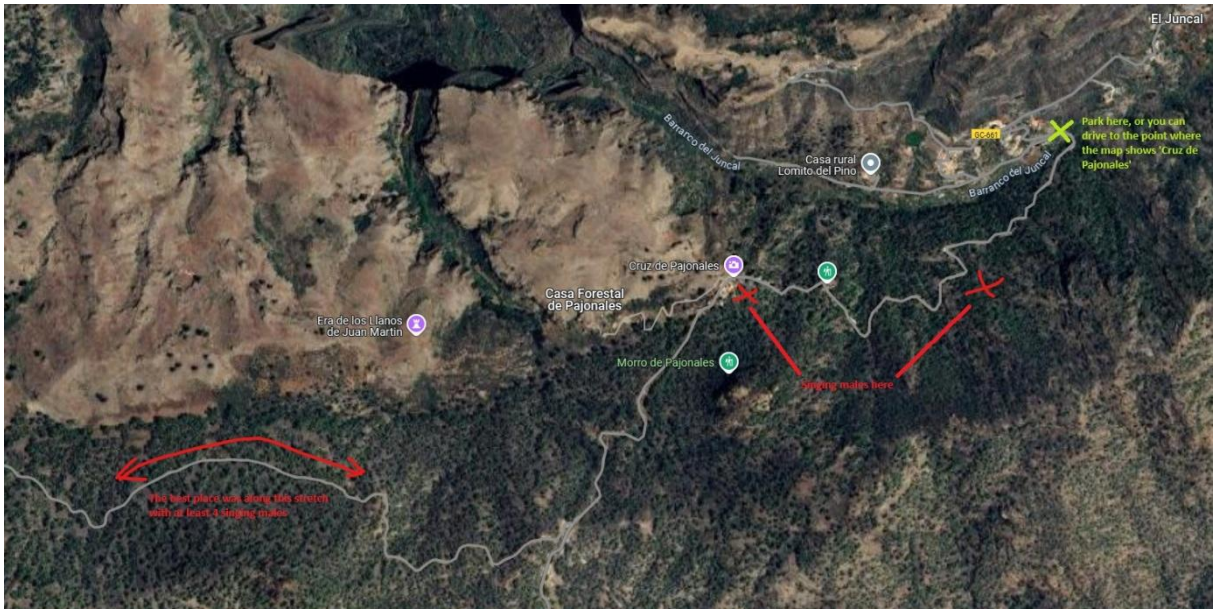
Endemic to Fuerteventura, and present in the barrancos on the island. I tried the famous Barranco de Rio Cabras just north of the airport on my first evening and quickly and easily had three birds. Note I

didn't bump into any others; they are supposed to be easy to see at Puertito de Los Molinos, particularly around the rubbish bins, but there were none present on my brief visit there.

Gran Canaria Blue Chaffinch

The main reason for visiting Gran Canaria, GC Blue Chaffinch was split from the Tenerife birds based on the findings of a 2015 paper. It's certainly a much more tricky species to see than Tenerife Blue Chaffinch and much rarer, known only from two areas in the mountainous centre of GC. Most trip reports (and eBird records) show birders seem to focus on the La Cumbre population, centred around the picnic site at Llanos de la Pez and the camping area just south of there at Bailico. The other population is west of this area in the Inagua National Park, specifically around the Casa Forestal de Pajones, best accessed from the village of El Juncal.

I don't really know why people seem to focus on the La Cumbre birds; they seem much harder to see (with a lower population density), plus many of the birds there are from reintroductions and are flagged, so providence must be questionable. The birds at Inagua occur at a higher density and are accessed via a very picturesque track. On my visit the males were in song which certainly made tracking them down much easier, other trip reports from winter time seem to have a much harder time of it as they are otherwise pretty quiet and unobtrusive, rarely coming to the ground to feed. The best area on my visit (and this ties in with other reports) is shown on the map below, but I also had encounters before I got to this area.



Other targets

As a secondary set of targets, I was keen to see the subspecies endemic to the Canaries (that I hadn't seen on Tenerife), Gran Canaria and Fuerteventura (or the eastern islands at least). This included Stone-Curlew (with GC having a subspecies endemic to the western and central islands and Fuerteventura one to the eastern islands), Egyptian Vulture, Western Barn Owl (ssp endemic to the eastern islands – birds on Gran Canaria westwards are of the nominate race), Long-eared Owl, Great Spotted Woodpecker (ssp endemic to GC), Kestrel (ssp endemic to eastern islands), Great Grey Shrike, African Blue Tit (ssp endemic to GC and ssp endemic to the eastern islands), Mediterranean Short-toed Lark, Robin (ssp endemic to GC), Canary Islands Chaffinch (ssp endemic to GC), Trumpeter Finch and Linnet (with GC having a subspecies endemic to the western and central islands and Fuerteventura one to the eastern islands).

Timetable

16th May

Inagua (El Juncal): c13:45 – 18:10
Llanos de la Pez: 18:25-19:00

17th May

Los Tilos de Moya: 07:00 – 08:00
Los Charcones: 08:30 – 09:10
Charcas de San Lorenzo: 09:30 – 10:25
Ferry: 12:00 – 18:00
Barranco de Rio Cabras: 19:10 – 20:15

18th May

Tindaya: 06:55 – 10:30
Los Molinos: 12:15 – 13:30
Landfill site: 14:00 - 14:35
Upper reaches of Barranco de Rio Cabras: 14:45 – 15:40
Sea watch from opposite Apartamentos Dunas Club: 17:15 – 18:30
Betancuria: 19:25 – 20:10
Las Penitas: 20:30 – 22:45

19th May

North of Caleta de Fuste: 08:40 – 09:00
Salinas del Carmen: 09:10 – 09:25
Caleta golf courses: 09:30 – 10:00

Daily Diary

Friday 16th May

I landed at Las Palmas airport, Gran Canaria at about 11am, and with no luggage to collect swiftly headed through the airport to the car hire collection desk. A short while later I was in the car and driving towards the island's interior, heading directly to El Juncal via a supermarket stop for water and snacks.

Heading up the steep roads, it took about an hour for the habitat to change to Canarian Pine forests; I headed straight past the more popular Llanos de la Pez picnic site in La Cumbre and carried on for about another 20 minutes, arriving in the tiny village of El Juncal, bordering the Casa Forestal de Pajonales, part of the larger Inagua area. From here, a wide track leads up slope into the prime Gran Canaria Blue Chaffinch habitat. Some people drive up the track to the house (c1.8km from the start) and this definitely gets you into the prime areas more quickly, however having been travelling since the early hours of the morning I was keen to stretch my legs, so parked at the bottom by the gully and started the walk up.

Canary Island Chiffchaffs, Bertholot's Pipits and Atlantic Canaries sang along the gully and a pair of Sardinian Warblers were noted in the scrubby areas. Great Spotted Woodpeckers (Gran Canaria endemic local race) were heard almost immediately and seen at several points, whilst African Blue Tits (also a Gran Canaria endemic local race) were common.

The first GC Blue Chaffinch was heard singing about 1km from the car, but was too far upslope for any chance of views. A second bird was heard, also upslope, near the building about 1.8km from the start of the track. This one gave flight views as it flew from an obscured singing perch downslope and out of sight. A pair of Common Kestrels were loitering around the rocky peaks and harassing a pair of Common Buzzard.

From previous trip reports and eBird, the prime area was still a little further on, walking for another 1km from the building and then taking the right hand fork for circa another 1km.

It was along this area that I had at least 4 singing birds, the first of which eventually gave good views in the pines along the track. The fact they were in good voice was certainly helpful in locating them; reports from others have highlighted how difficult the birds are to track down and see outside of the breeding season (when they are mostly silent). They were certainly unobtrusive and difficult to find in the pines, but would often sing from the same spot for a few minutes so once located could be watched at leisure.

After enjoying the birds for an hour or so I slowly headed back down, having a small group of Linnets fly over, whilst flocks of Plain Swift were common all along the track here, feeding very low down amongst the tree tops.

With a couple of hours of daylight left, I decided to head to the picnic site at Llanos de la Pez, mainly to see if any Canary Islands Chaffinches were about. I only spent about 45 minutes here, but no sign of any chaffinches of either species, with the highlights being a pair of Red-legged Partridge, several Blackbirds and some very confiding Ravens.

From here I retired to the Hotel Rural Fonde de la Tea in Tejeda, about 20 minutes from the picnic site.

Saturday 17th May

My main aim of this morning was to catch up with the other endemic subspecies on Gran Canaria – namely the local form of Canary Islands Chaffinch (ssp *bakeri*) and Robin (ssp *marionae*). I was also interested to see Laurel Pigeon, a bird I last saw in 2001 at Erjos on Tenerife. Even though the birds on Gran Canaria are part of a reintroduction scheme, this didn't dampen my enthusiasm for reacquainting myself with this species. The last patch of remaining Laurel forest on Gran Canaria is at Los Tilos de Moya, about a 45 minute drive from Tejeda towards the north side of the island, and as well as the pigeons there were regular reports on eBird for both Canary Islands Chaffinch and Robin.

The drive down to Los Tilos de Moya was relatively uneventful, although several pairs of Red-legged Partridge, Blackbirds and Atlantic Canaries were flushed off the road enroute. I arrived to heavy grey skies at 7am; unfortunately the light didn't get any better in the hour I was present. Laurel Pigeons were calling as soon as I got out the car and I quickly found a perched bird in the scope, about half the way up the slope. Walking up and down the road produced a few more flyovers. Blackcaps were relatively common here and in good voice, and several Robins were singing, with one bird perching out nicely and showing the key features that differentiate the Canary Islands birds from the mainland. Two Canary Islands Chaffinches could also be heard (with the song noticeably different to the mainland birds) and after a little manoeuvring I was able to get good views of one in the understory, whilst a female also hopped about in the branches behind the singing male.

Job done at Los Tilos de Moya, I headed to an area on the north coast called Los Charcones, where a Semipalmated Plover has been in residence for a number of months. However timing was not on my side, and with the tide high, the only wader present along that stretch of coast was one Ruddy Turnstone.

Cutting my losses, I headed to an area inland and to the east shown on eBird as Charcas de San Lorenzo, which is a series of large pools and adjacent farmland and scrub. The majority of the pools are bone dry but one still held a good amount of water and was partially surrounded by reeds, and another had a few muddy puddles (and a Little Ringed Plover). The main highlight here was 15 Stone-Curlews sat or standing around on the edge of one of the arable fields. The area had a reasonable number of birds though with maybe 20 of the introduced Common Waxbill buzzing around in small flocks between the scrub and the reeds, two Turtle Doves, several Ruddy Shelduck and Black-winged Stilts and a few Moorhen, whilst three Cattle Egrets were present on the hillside. A Great Grey Shrike hunted from wires and bushes and was a bird I hadn't particularly expected to see until I got to Fuerteventura.

Leaving the site I drove into Las Palmas de Gran Canaria to drop the car off before hopping onto the slow ferry to Puerto del Rosario, Fuerteventura. I thought I should be able to walk from the Hertz drop off to the ferry terminal but as it turned out my ferry departed from the 'Nelson Mandela Terminal', right in the far NE of the port and a good ten minutes drive away. Thankfully I had left myself just enough time and a taxi rank was opposite the hire car drop off so I jumped in a cab to the terminal where a minibus took all the foot passengers to the ferry.

Whilst waiting for the ferry to depart a pair of Common Terns were noted around the harbour, then after what felt like a while we started to make our way towards Fuerteventura, although in reality we were bang on time leaving at midday.

I had specifically picked the slow, 6 hour ferry from Gran Canaria to Fuerteventura as opposed to the fast, 2 hour catamarans that run to Morro Jable on Fuerteventura, as some research (and past experience in other countries) indicated that the slow ferries provide the only real chance of searching for seabirds, and indeed the only opportunity to get out on deck. The ferry Fortuny, run by Naviera Armas Trasmediterranea, had good viewing areas at the rear and to the sides of the ship. Incidentally, I ran into some birders on Fuerteventura the next day who had taken the fast boat at a similar time to my journey and had been frustrated at their inability to see very much at all. There was a reasonably high wind meaning the ocean was pretty choppy, which obviously made it harder to pick birds up and numbers may therefore have been higher than I was able to observe.

Cory's Shearwaters appeared in small numbers almost immediately and it only took about 10 minutes from departure for the first Bulwer's Petrel to appear. They were to be seen at regular intervals in the open ocean between the two islands; once we had rounded the southern side of Fuerteventura and were tracking along the coast Bulwer's became far less frequent with only two birds seen in the last couple of hours of the journey.

Two Barolo Shearwater's were seen, one after the other, from the back of the ferry at about the midpoint between the two islands, and then, at about 75% of the way between the islands, the highlight, a White-faced Storm Petrel pattering about on the surface off the starboard side of the boat. It wasn't the closest of views but I was delighted to see this beautiful petrel. It was soon followed by a third Barolo, which like the petrel appeared along the starboard side before I lost it when it ditched on the surface. The only other sightings of note were a couple of Pallid Swifts and a Barn Swallow all heading towards Fuerteventura.

We docked pretty much on time at 6pm and I headed off the boat, found a taxi rank quite close by and jumped in a cab to the airport (annoyingly there were no car hire options open at the port for the time I arrived). Car pick up with Sixt was relatively quick and on exiting the airport an African Collared Dove was calling from just south of the parking lot area.

As Canary Islands Stonechat was my primary target on the island, despite the day getting on I headed straight to the Barranco de Rio Cabras just a few minutes drive north of the airport. As access from the main coastal road is now very difficult, I drove inland north of the barranco and took the dirt track (good condition) from the FV-20 that runs to the landfill site. Parking here, it is about a 5 minute walk down into the barranco. Laughing Doves were quite common here and it didn't take long to find a lovely male CI Stonechat, which showed down to a few metres. Further exploration revealed a female and another male, whilst a pool further up the barranco held 6 Black-winged Stilts and an LRP. With another successful day completed, I headed north to my accommodation at Corralejo.

Sunday 18th May

My main targets today were Houbara and Red-billed Tropicbird, with secondary targets any subspecies endemic to the eastern Canary Islands, plus a chance to reacquaint myself with some of the desert species I hadn't seen in a while.

With that in mind I headed to the plains to the west of the village of Tindaya – known as Llanos de Tindaya. A series of well-maintained tracks crisscross the plains here and are one of the best areas for Houbara and the other desert species. I actually just spent my time on the main track which runs

from the village to the coast and encountered most of the desert species here. Arriving just before dawn, Great Grey Shrikes were seen around the area of fig trees described in Gosney's most recent book (site 3) but no Houbara's were present (the trees didn't appear to be fruiting though). Further along, a couple of Ruddy Shelducks were noted on the horizon, presumably near a patch of water. Three Black-bellied Sandgrouse flew past calling and Mediterranean Short-toed Larks were relatively common along the track.

Just over 3km from the end of Tindaya village, a low wall runs roughly north to south either side of the track. Just before here, in a larger area of low bushes, I had my first Houbara, which I initially picked up distantly further along the road and then was able to drive closer to it for better views. It wasn't too bothered with my presence as I remained in the car and wandered slowly away. I had two further individuals between here and the end of the track, both providing similarly good views. Two more groups of sandgrouse were seen and heard in flight and a couple of Spectacled Warblers fed in the sparse vegetation near the end of the tarmacked track.

On the return journey village I stopped for a scan (about 2km from the end of the village) and first located a nice male Black-bellied Sandgrouse on the deck, albeit in the haze, and then an even more distant Cream-colored Courser. With the desert species all pretty much accounted for, and coffee and breakfast at one of the cafes in Tindaya, I turned my attention to the coast. From a vantage point on the cliffs on the NW side of the island I quickly picked up several Red-billed Tropicbirds out at sea, heading both north and south. I was able to position myself at a point where they passed a bit closer to the coastline and obtained brilliant views of this superb bird. There were at least 4-5 present but as birds were moving up and down the numbers could well have been greater. A pair of Peregrines (*pelegrinoides* – 'Barbary Falcon') patrolled the cliffs here as well. Note the coastal path is shut from February to September to protect rare breeders such as Egyptian Vulture.

With my main targets in the bag, I thought I would head to the Embalse de Los Molinos for a bit of variety. I scanned a few goat pens around the hamlet for any signs of activity; in the empty pen, adjacent to the turning from the main road onto the dirt track to the reservoir, a pair of Coursers were present, not too distant from the track. Even better, they had a chick with them and it was great to watch the family dynamics as they fed in the arid landscape.

The reservoir itself was unfortunately almost completely dry, with a couple of muddy pools with one LRP and two Ruddy Shelduck present. A couple of Trumpeter Finches were my first of the day. A quick drive down to the coast at Puertito de Los Molinos proved more hassle than it was worth with the busy car park making it difficult to park and turnaround, and lots of tourists feeding the domesticated Muscovy Ducks that are present here.

I then headed to the landfill site near the Barranco de Rio Cabras where several Egyptian Vultures were noted distantly, as well as a pair of Kestrels. I tried for the eastern islands race of African Blue Tit by accessing the upper reaches of the barranco from the urban area labelled as Llanos Pelados on Google Maps, but despite walking up and a little way back down the barranco for over an hour (albeit in the heat of the day) I drew a blank. I did encounter a few more Trumpeter Finches, a couple of Sardinian and a Spectacled Warbler, a pair of showy Great Grey Shrikes, another pair of Ruddy Shelduck and four LRPs. Laughing Doves were not uncommon along here and I also bumped into the only Hoopoe of my trip.

After this I headed back to my hotel at Correlejo for a quick clean up and late afternoon sea watch from the rocks out towards the Isla de Lobos, which is reported to have breeding colonies of some of the rarer seabirds. I spent an hour or so seawatching but found the lack of height frustrating, and whilst the ubiquitous Cory's put on a nice show, I decided to head back south for the last hour of daylight, especially given I had done so well from the ferry.

I headed to the town of Betancuria, purportedly the best place on the island for African Blue Tit, and arrived with about an hour of light left. Sure enough, a few African Blue Tits were in the bushes around the car park on the south side of the town, as were a handful of Atlantic Canaries (rare on Fuerteventura). Five Linnets flew over and a short walk along the hillside south of the town produced one each of Sardinian and Spectacled Warblers.

With dusk falling I drove to the nearby Barranco de Las Penitas, accessed via Vega de Rio Palmas. This is a site for the local subspecies of Barn Owl. After about two hours of scanning with the thermal imager up and down the barranco, I finally heard a Barn Owl call at about 10:30 and shortly afterwards picked it up first in the thermal and then the torch over the trees in the barranco. Stone-curlews were heard calling from towards the top of the barranco by the village. Happy to have secured views of this difficult subspecies within only one night, I headed back north to Correlejo. The drive back had two high points, a North African Hedgehog wandering along the road in the hills north of Betancuria, and then, north of La Oliva, I saw an owl fly across the road by the well lit car park of the Restaurante Mahoh. Pulling into the car park I put the torch on a couple of the palms and found a Long-eared Owl perched there! Awesome. The only shame was that it flew before I could get the camera on it. A long but very successful day.

Monday 19th May

I only had a few hours to play with this morning before I needed to catch my flight home. With all my target species in the bag, I thought I would try the saltpans at Salinas del Carmen, south of Caleta de Fuste. These were almost birdless however, with not one wader in sight. A flock of c15 House Martins seemed to move through north.

My last hour was spent having a look around the golf courses just to the north; the Salinas de Antigua had five Kentish and one Common Ringed Plover on the muddy fringes of one of the water hazards, with good numbers of Ruddy Shelducks and Black-winged Stilts. Not much else though, so with that I headed to the airport to end a very productive few days.

Species List

Ruddy Shelduck (*Tadorna ferruginea*)

- 8 at Charcas de San Lorenzo on Gran Canaria – 17/05
- 2 distantly from the main track at Llanos de Tindaya and several more in flight, 2 at the mostly dry Embalse de los Molinos and 2 in the upper reaches of the Barranco de Rio Cabras, Fuerteventura – 18/05
- 11 on the Las Salinas golf course, Caleta de Fuste, Fuerteventura – 19/05

(Introduced) **Muscovy Duck** (*Cairina moschata*)

- Approx. 20 hanging around the car park at Puertito de los Molinos – 18/05

(Introduced) **Red-legged Partridge** (*Alectoris rufa*)

- Pair at Llanos de la Pez picnic site, Gran Canaria – 16/05
- Several flushed off the road at various points early morning driving from Tejeda to Los Tilos de Moya, Gran Canaria – 17/05

Plain Swift (*Apus unicolor*)

- Commonly observed in large flocks on Gran Canaria – 16/05 & 17/05

Pallid Swift (*Apus pallidus*) (ssp *brehmorum*)

- 2 at sea heading towards Fuerteventura from the ferry and several around the Barranco de Rio Cabras, Fuerteventura – 17/05
- Encountered around Fuerteventura in small flocks, e.g. c10 at the sea end of the track at Llanos de Tindaya – 18/05

African Houbara (*Chlamydotis undulata*) (ssp *fuertaventurae* – endemic to Fuerteventura and Lanzarote)

- 3 seen from the main track at Llanos de Tindaya, Fuerteventura, the first at 28°36'50.2"N 14°00'55.8"W and the remaining two between there and the sea – 18/05

Black-bellied Sandgrouse (*Pterocles orientalis*)

- Small flocks/pairs seen on 3 occasions in flight along the main track at Llanos de Tindaya, Fuerteventura, with a single bird located on the ground along the same track – 18/05

Feral Pigeon (*Columba livia*)

- All over both islands

Laurel Pigeon (*Columba junoniae*) (endemic to the Canary Islands)

- 4 seen and 3-4 more heard cooing from the re-introduced population in the valley of remaining Laurel forest at Los Tilos de Moya, Gran Canaria – 17/05

European Turtle Dove (*Streptopelia turtur*)

- 2 at Charcas de San Lorenzo, Gran Canaria – 17/05

Eurasian Collared Dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*)

- Common on both islands

(Introduced) **African Collared Dove** (*Streptopelia roseogrisea*)

- 1 definitely identified (quite possibly more, but I didn't bother scrutinising the Collared Doves) just south of the airport on Fuerteventura – 17/05

Laughing Dove (Spilopelia senegalensis) (Canary Island birds are presumably of the race *phoenicophila*)

- Frequently seen on Fuerteventura, particularly along the length of the Barranco de Rio Cabras – 17/05 & 18/05

Common Moorhen (*Galinula chloropus*)

- 3 at Charcas de San Lorenzo, Gran Canaria – 17/05

Eurasian Stone-curlew (*Burhinus oedicnemus*) (birds on Gran Canaria of the race *distinctus*, endemic to the central and western Canaries; birds on Fuerteventura of the race *insularum*, endemic to the eastern Canaries)

- 15 on the edge of a cultivated field at Charcas de San Lorenzo, Gran Canaria – 17/05
- Heard only on Fuerteventura, around the Barranco de las Penitas – 18/05

Black-winged Stilt (*Himantopus himantopus*)

- 8 at Charcas de San Lorenzo, Gran Canaria – 17/05
- 6 in pools along the Barranco de Rio Cabras, Fuerteventura – 17/05
- 5 in the water hazards on Las Salinas golf club, Fuerteventura – 19/05

Common Ringed Plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*)

- 1 on the water hazards on Las Salinas golf club, Fuerteventura – 19/05

Little Ringed Plover (*Charadrius dubius*)

- 1 at Charcas de San Lorenzo, Gran Canaria – 17/05
- 1 at the Barranco de Rio Cabras, Fuerteventura – 17/05
- 4 along the upper reaches of the Barranco de Rio Cabras, Fuerteventura – 18/05

Kentish Plover (*Anarhynchus alexandrinus*)

- 5 on the water hazards on Las Salinas golf club, Fuerteventura – 19/05

Ruddy Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*)

- 1 on the rocks at Los Charcones, Gran Canaria – 17/05

Cream-coloured Courser (*Cursorius cursor*)

- 1 distantly in the haze from the main track at Llanos de Tindaya, and a pair with a chick on the track from the main road to the Embalse de los Molinos, Fuerteventura – 18/05

Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*)

- 2 pairs in the harbour at Las Palmas, Gran Canaria – 17/05

Yellow-legged Gull (*Larus michahellis*) (ssp *atlantis* – the form present on Macaronesia)

- Common along most coastlines on both islands

Red-billed Tropicbird (*Phaethon aethereus*) (ssp *mesonauta*)

- 4-5 showed very well patrolling up and down the coast on the NW of Fuerteventura – 18/05

White-faced Storm Petrel (*Pelagodroma marina*) (presumably of the ssp *hypoleuca*)

- 1 pattering on the surface from the ferry from Las Palmas, Gran Canaria, to Puerto del Rosario, Fuerteventura – 17/05

Cory's Shearwater (*Calonectris borealis*)

- Off almost all coastal areas as soon as you scan, both islands

Barolo Shearwater (*Puffinus baroli*)

- 3 from the ferry (one sighting of 2 birds, then a singleton) from Las Palmas, Gran Canaria, to Puerto del Rosario, Fuerteventura – 17/05

Bulwer's Petrel (*Bulweria bulwerii*)

- 21 from the ferry from Las Palmas, Gran Canaria, to Puerto del Rosario, Fuerteventura – 17/05

Little Egret (*Egretta garzetta*)

- 1 on the rocky coast at Los Charcones, Gran Canaria – 17/05

Western Cattle Egret (*Ardea ibis*)

- 3 at Charcas de San Lorenzo, Gran Canaria – 17/05

Egyptian Vulture (*Neophron percnopterus*) (ssp *majorensis* – endemic to the Canaries)

- 4 near the landfill site by the Barranco de Rio Cabras, with several others seen during the day enroute around Fuerteventura – 18/05

Common Buzzard (*Buteo buteo*) (ssp *insularum* – endemic to the Canaries)

- 3-4 in the Inagua area, Gran Canaria – 16/05
- 2 at Los Tilos de Moya, Gran Canaria – 17/05
- Seen regularly around Fuerteventura on all three days

Western Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*) (ssp *gracilirostris* 'Slender-billed Barn Owl' – endemic to Fuerteventura and Lanzarote)

- 1 heard distantly and then spotlighted in flight in the Barranco de Las Penitas, Fuerteventura – 18/05

Long-eared Owl (*Asio otus*) (ssp *canariensis* – endemic to the Canaries, although not present on Lanzarote)

- 1 on the journey back late at night flying between palms in the lit restaurant/car park area at Restaurante Mahoh between La Oliva and Villaverde, Fuerteventura – 18/05

Eurasian Hoopoe (*Upupa epops*)

- 1 by houses in the upper reaches of the Barranco de Rio Cabras, Fuerteventura – 18/05

Great Spotted Woodpecker (*Dendrocopos major*) (ssp *thanneri* – endemic to Gran Canaria)

- Common at Inagua with 6-7 heard and a handful seen, and 2-3 at the picnic area at Llanos de la Pez, Gran Canaria – 16/05

Common Kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*) (birds on Gran Canaria are of the ssp *canariensis*, endemic to Madeira and the western and central Canaries; birds on Fuerteventura are of the ssp *dacotiae*, endemic to the eastern Canaries)

- 2 along the track at Inagua, Gran Canaria – 16/05
- 2 near the landfill site near the Barranco de Rio Cabras, Fuerteventura – 18/05

Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*) (ssp *pelegrinoides* 'Barbary Falcon')

- 1 near the rocky outcrop at Inagua, Gran Canaria – 16/05

- A pair along the coast in the NW of Fuerteventura – 18/05

Great Grey Shrike (*Lanius excubitor*) (ssp *koenigi* – endemic to the central and eastern Canaries)

- 1 at Charcas de San Lorenzo, Gran Canaria – 17/05
- Common on Fuerteventura, with individuals seen at multiple sites on all three days

Northern Raven (*Corvus corax*) (ssp *canariensis* – endemic to the Canaries)

- Common around Inagua and Llanos de la Pez, Gran Canaria – 16/05
- Common on Fuerteventura and seen across all three days

African Blue Tit (*Cyanistes teneriffae*) (birds on Gran Canaria of the endemic ssp *hedwigae* and on Fuerteventura of the ssp *degener*, endemic to Fuerteventura and Lanzarote)

- One of the most common birds in the pine forest at Inagua and Llanos de la Pez, Gran Canaria – 16/05
- Several at Los Tilos de Moya, Gran Canaria – 17/05
- On Fuerteventura only seen around Betancuria, where it appeared locally common around the car park in the south of the town – 18/05

Mediterranean Short-toed Lark (*Alaudala rufescens*) (nominate ssp *rufescens* – endemic to the Canaries)

- Common along the track at Llanos de Tindaya, Fuerteventura – 18/05

Barn Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*)

- 1 from the ferry heading towards Fuerteventura – 17/05

Western House Martin (*Delichon urbicum*)

- 15 along the coast north of Caleta de Fuste, Fuerteventura, presumably migrating – 19/05

Canary Islands Chiffchaff (*Phylloscopus canariensis*) (endemic to the central and western Canaries)

- Common at most sites visited on Gran Canaria – 16/05 & 17/05

Eurasian Blackcap (*Sylvia atricapilla*) (ssp *heineken* – present on the Iberian peninsular, NW Africa, Madeira and the Canaries)

- Several singing at Los Tilos de Moya, Gran Canaria – 17/05

Sardinian Warbler (*Curruca melanocephala*) (ssp *leucogastra* – endemic to the Canaries)

- Pair around El Juncal, Gran Canaria – 16/05
- Pair in the upper reaches of the Barranco de Rio Cabras, and another on the south side of Betancuria, Fuerteventura – 18/05

Spectacled Warbler (*Curruca conspicillata*) (ssp *orbitalis* – endemic to the Macaronesian islands)

- 2 along the track at Llanos de Tindaya, 1 in the upper reaches of the Barranco de Rio Cabras and 1 around Betancuria, Fuerteventura – 18/05

Common Blackbird (*Turdus merula*) (ssp *cabrerae* – endemic to Madeira and the western and central Canaries)

- Common at the picnic site at Llanos de la Pez, Gran Canaria – 16/05
- Several enroute to, and at, Los Tilos de Moya, Gran Canaria – 17/05

European Robin (*Erithacus rubecula*) (ssp *marionae* – endemic to Gran Canaria)

- Several at Los Tilos de Moya, Gran Canaria – 17/05

Canary Islands Stonechat (*Saxicola dacotiae*) (endemic to Fuerteventura)

- 3 showed very well along the Barranco de Rio Cabras, accessed from near the landfill site. Interestingly, I didn't encounter this species at Los Molinos were it is supposed to be easy to see.

Spanish Sparrow (*Passer hispaniolensis*)

- Common across both islands

(Introduced) **Common Waxbill** (*Estrilda astrild*)

- 15-20 of this introduced species at Charcas de San Lorenzo, Gran Canaria, mainly frequenting the reedy areas around the pools – 17/05

Berthelot's Pipit (*Anthus berthelotii*) (endemic to Madeira and the Canaries)

- Common across both islands

Canary Islands Chaffinch (*Fringilla canariensis*) (endemic to the Canaries following the 5 way split of Common Chaffinch in 2023. Endemic ssp *bakeri* on Gran Canaria)

- 2 singing males and a female at Los Tilos de Moya, Gran Canaria – 17/05

Gran Canaria Blue Chaffinch (*Fringilla polatzeki*) (endemic to Gran Canaria, following the split from Tenerife Blue Chaffinch in 2016)

- 6-7 singing birds at Inagua, Gran Canaria. I heard the first upslope from the track only c1km along the track from El Juncal (but too far up the slope to see) and the second singing upslope by the house (1.8km from the track start); the main bulk of the birds were found by taking the right hand fork of the track (approx. 1km from the house) and following this for another 1km, with birds then singing up and downslope of the track.

Trumpeter Finch (*Bucanetes githagineus*) (ssp *amantum* – endemic to the central and eastern Canaries)

- Only 5 seen, a pair along the track by the Embalse de los Molinos, and another 3 near Tesjuate, near the upper reaches of the Barranco de Rio Cabras, Fuerteventura – 18/05

Common Linnet (*Linaria cannabina*) (birds on Gran Canaria of the ssp *meadewaldoi*, endemic to the western and central Canaries, and birds on Fuerteventura of the ssp *harterti*, endemic to the eastern Canaries)

- 3 birds in flight near El Juncal, Gran Canaria – 16/05
- 5 birds in flight over Betancuria, Fuerteventura – 17/05

European Goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*)

- 7 at Charcas de San Lorenzo, Gran Canaria – 17/05

Atlantic Canary (*Serinus canaria*) (endemic to the Azores, Madeira and Canaries)

- Common across Gran Canaria – 16/05 & 17/05
- 3 birds around the car park on the south side of Betancuria, Fuerteventura – 18/05

African Blue Tit (hedwigae)

Gran Canaria Blue Chaffinch

Berthelot’s Pipit

Canary Islands Chiffchaff

Laurel Pigeon

Canary Islands Chaffinch (bakeri)

Eurasian Stone Curlew (distinctus)

Bulwer’s Petrel

Barolo Shearwater

Spanish Sparrow

Canary Islands Stonechat

African Houbara

Mediterranean Short-toed Lark

Great Grey Shrike

Cream-coloured Courser (and chick)

Red-billed Tropicbird