20 October - 1 November 2022

Participants: Ed. O'Hara / Comghal McQuillan











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Once again I spent 12 days in Seville with my wife, and we were joined by fellow birder Comghal McQuillan who was coming out for six days, four of which we would spend birding with local guides. The beginning and end of the visit I would spend birding the area at the back of my hotel.

Thursday 20 October: Arrival

We flew from Dublin to Seville with Ryanair and got a taxi to our Hotel, TRH La Motilla in Dos Hermanas, 15km south east of Seville. We arrived late at 21:30 and after check-in, we went for a meal at a local restaurant in driving rain!

Friday 21 October: Dos Hermanas 18C Wind and Rain

For most of the day the weather was <u>atrocious</u>, wind and heavy rain and it wasn't to the early afternoon that the weather improved dramatically, indeed the sun made a welcome appearance and so I went for a walk to an old cortijo at the back of the hotel. At last my trip list was up and running, birds noted were <u>Spotless Starlings</u>, <u>Waxbills</u>, <u>Stonechats</u>, <u>White Storks</u> <u>Red Kites</u>, <u>Common Buzzards</u>, <u>Common Kestrels</u>, <u>Northern Wheatears</u>, <u>Crested Larks</u>, <u>Black Stork</u>, <u>Grey Heron</u>, <u>Little Egrets</u> <u>Cattle Egrets</u>, <u>Collared Doves</u>, <u>Wood Pigeons</u>, <u>Blackbirds</u>, <u>3 Red-rumped Swallows</u>, <u>Blackcaps</u>, <u>Chiffchaffs</u>, <u>Great Tits</u>, <u>House Sparrows</u>, <u>Spanish Sparrows</u>, <u>Goldfinchs</u>, <u>Greenfinches</u>, <u>Serins</u> and <u>Sardinian Warblers</u>

Only the Waxbills and Crested Larks were year ticks for me but still a decent haul of birds for my trip list.

Saturday 22 October: Dos Hermanas / 28C Sunshine

What a difference a day makes, yesterday was wind and rain followed by some sunshine and today glorious sunshine for most of the day. The other major difference was the arrival of the hunters around the cortijo, in the morning hunters on foot and horseback hunting hares, luckily I didn't see one hare being chased. In the early afternoon were the shooters and their dogs looking for Red-legged Partridges of which I saw at least one being shot. Despite the visitors I did manage to see 2 Black Kites, Hoopoe, Meadow Pipits, White Wagtails, Robin Black Redstart, out of season Garden Warbler, Pied Flycatcher, Corn Bunting, Linnet, and Raven.

Bird of the day however was most unexpected a 1st winter **Red-Throated Pipit** was spotted along the relief culvert at the back of the cortijo. Unfortunately the light was poor and the constant shooting made it difficult to photograph, being also wary of the hunters either side of the channel.



Northern Wheatear [Greenland race]





[1st winter] Red-throated Pipit

Sunday 23 October : Dos Hermanas / 27C Overcast cloud with some spells of sunshine

Weather-wise it was a reasonable day and after a late breakfast I went on my usual walk down to the cortijo, once again the hunters were out in force and it amazed me the amount of birdlife present despite the constant hunting. I did manage to add a few more to my trip list, Jackdaws, Griffon Vultures, Booted Eagle, Sparrowhawk, Spotted Flycatcher and of course many of the birds I had seen during the past few days.

Spent the afternoon with my wife at the pool awaiting the arrival of my birding pal Comghal McQuillan.

As I said earlier this holiday had three distinct elements:

- [1] Birding on my own at the beginning and end of the visit
- [2] Birding with an old friend Luismi Garrido of ABH: 24 / 25 October





Booted Eagle

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Participants: Ed. O'Hara / Comghal McQuillan





Monday 24 October: Brazo del Este / 26C Sunshine most of the day:

Luismi Garrido of ABH picked us up at 08:00 at our hotel and we headed off to a natural park called the **Brazo del Este** on the eastern arm of the Quadalquivir river. When Donana National Park is dry and it was this year, the birds flock to the Brazo, pardon the pun, for it had water.



The <u>Brazo del Este Natural Park</u> is 17 kilometres south of <u>Seville</u>, where the main channel of the Guadalquivir forks off. After 39 kilometres of consecutive meanders, or vueltas, as the locals call them, it joins back up with the first channel, almost 16 kilometres further down.

The natural park is the result of modifications that man has been making to gain cropland from the Guadalquivir, one of the oldest branches of the river that runs through the marshes. Despite a large amount of human intervention, which started at the beginning of the last century, it has become an exceptionally important wetland for birds.

With completely flat land, the channel is accompanied by rich water vegetation and a multitude of birds. It is well worth visiting, especially in summer, when this nature area becomes a vital shelter for species that "flee" from Doñana because there is not enough water. The Brazo del Este is a bird watching tourism paradise. Strategically located between Doñana, the marshes, and La Dehesa de Abajo Lagoon, you can see a multitude of anatidae, birds of prey and migratory summer and winter birds, which is why it was declared a Special Bird Protection Area.

The wetland have resulted in a vegetation mainly made up of marsh, with reed mace and giant reeds. There are few trees, with some isolated specimens of ash and white poplar in the last stretch of the channel. Red eucalyptus is abundant, primarily along paths and

On the way to the Brazo we stopped off at a local park in the village of Villafranca to look for Long-eared Owls but we missed them although we did hear Tawny Owl but failed to see them also. We did however see a **Green Woodpecker**.

As we entered the Brazo , our first stop was a walk along one of the many channels in the area. Birds of note were two **Black-winged Kite**, **Bluethroat** *cyanecula*, **Wryneck**, **Hen Harrier**, **Peregrine Falcon**, **Green sandpiper**, **Common Kingfisher**,

Wryneck, Hen Harrier, Peregrine Falcon, Green sandpiper, Common Kingfisher, Cetti's Warbler, Lesser Kestrel and Raven.

We then proceeded to a pond area with a remarkable 15 **Green Sandpiper** in one flock, the largest I have ever seen together. In addition were the usual suspects **Black-winged Stilts, Marsh Harrier, Booted Eagle, Yellow-legged Gulls, Black-headed Gulls, Lesser Black-backed Gulls, Red Kites and Glossy Ibis.**

By now it was 13:30 and we stopped for a 'field lunch', some very delicious food made by Luismi and after an hour we proceeded along another of the many channels in the park. Here we got great views of **Caspian Terns** flying up and down the channel. One bird Comghal photgraphed had a transmitter on its back, see picture below right. Our next stop was a working area with tractors churning up the soil and the birds were there in thousands of several species



A mixed flock of Flamingnes and Glossy lbis

We stared in amazement at the sheer number of birds in the rice fields. As it was approaching 17:30 we decided to call it a day and head back to the hotel with some fantastic memories of day 1 in the Brazo.



Peregrine Falcon



Caspian Tern [with Transmitter]

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Tuesday 25 October: Brazo del Este / 28C Sunshine and clouds

We returned to **Brazo del Este** for the second day as there was so much birdlife there, anything could turn up.

We tried a different area of the park today, looking for a lifer for Comghal namely the Yellow-crowned Weaver. Once more we saw all the usual suspects fairly quickly in the wetland areas:-

Glossy Ibis, Spoonbill, White Stork, Black Stork, Black-headed Gull, Yellow-legged Gull, Audouin's Gull, Cormorants, Flamingos, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Dunlin, Ringed Plover, Kentish Plover, Green Sandpiper, Common Sandpiper, Redshank, Marsh Harrier, Black-shouldered Kite, Red Kite, Booted Eagle, Avocets, Northern Wheatear, Greenshank and Caspian Tern

We stopped at one roadside pool which proved very productive, getting a lifer for Comghal and two year ticks for me, Yellow-crowned Weaver and Black-headed Weaver and 2 Yellow Wagtail, the only ones we saw. The pool also yielded several Ruff, Dunlin, Black-tailed Godwit, Teal Shoveler, Marbled Duck, Purple Swamphen, Mallard, Greylag Geese, Red-crested Pochard, Lapwing, Little Ringed Plover.

Overhead were always thousands of birds on the move probably going to where the latest harvesting / planting of the rice was taking place.

After another excellent ' field lunch ' provided by Luismi we drove towards the Guadilquivir river to look for waders but unfortunately this was a poor year so far for them due to the drought in the area and several good spots for them had a few or none at all. Approaching the river we spotted a flock of some 30 **Stone Curlews**, unusual for us to see so many at once and as we were looking at them we noticed an **Dsprey** sitting on a post.

We then proceeded to Villafranca to see if we could find the Laughing Doves that were reported outside the village a few days earlier but after almost an hour's search we gave up and headed back to the hotel. We had had a great two days birding with Luismi of ABH and would like to thank him for his guiding and of course his lunches. So as I said earlier that was part II of the trip complete and tomorrow we would start phase III with Vicent Esteller Turlo of Donana Wings.



Waders at one of the numerous pools in the park



Black-headed Weaver



Yellow-crowned Weaver



Stone Curley

20 October - 1 November 2022

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Wednesday 26 October : Southern Donana- Chipiona - Chicalana / 25C Sunshine and clouds

We met Vicent Esteller Turlo of Donana Wings at 08:00 and headed south to our first stop which is part of Donana NP on the east side of the river Guadalquivir. It was here we got our first target for the day Lesser Short-toed Lark and after a 30 minute search we eventually found a small flock.

An hour later after an unscheduled detour we found our next target in a small pond near the Quadilquivir river, **White-headed Ducks**, 2 males and several females too far away to get any decent photographs. The same could be said of the distant **Slender-billed Gulls** and **Osprey** flying along the river.

Moving on to the fish market at Chipiona for our next target Little Swift and it was not too difficult at least 30 birds in the air flying with Crag Martins. Also present were Common Turnstone, Baltic Gulls, Lesser Blacked Gulls and Dunlin.

It was time for lunch and then on to our next target, over an hours drive away at Chiclana de la Frontera. It did not take long to find several **Bald lbis** in one of the many golf facilities in the area. One of the rarest birds in the world, so it is always good to see them. The birds are relatively tame, being used to people on the golf courses.



Bald Ibis on golf course at Chiclana

As it was getting on a bit , we decided to head back to Dos Hermanas. We would be making two stops on the way both near the village of Villafrancia, the first at the last known sighting of four Laughing Doves in the area. We tried for thirty minutes up and down stone tracks but eventually gave up. Vicent thought we would have a better chance of seeing our last target for the day Long-eared Dwls that frequented a local recreational area on the edge of the village.

As Vicent knew the roost area down to a few trees at the edge of the car park, we quickly found five birds roosting in two trees and were seemingly oblivious to all the traffic and noise around them.

An end to a great days birding with all our target species seen. Now Comghal and I were looking forward to tomorrow to go to an area we had never been to before, southern Extremadura.



Slender-billed Gull



Little Swift



juv Bald Ibis



Long-eared Owl

20 October - 1 November 2022

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Thursday 27 October: Southern Extremadura - Sierra Morena / 24C Sunny

Last day using guides, an early start was required as we had a long drive in front of us, thus pick-up at hotel was 07:00. Even at this hour driving through Seville took guite a while especially at the river crossing. At 08:14 we stopped at an old cottage in the Sierra del Norte as we saw a flock of passerines near the building. The first target of the day was spotted Azure-winged Magpie, a flock of eight. The large passerine flock flew off as we approached but Vicent noticed some birds on a hill in the distance, a small flock of **Great Bustards**, another target. Further along the track we found a much closer flock of nine birds but they were very wary and you never got close even sitting in the car. One Hen Harrier was also seen but distant as well, several Kestrels were also seen and then another year tick for us Iberian Grey Shrike. Feeling a bit peckish we stopped for breakfast in Llerena, a small town in southern Badajoz . We then headed north towards the Rio Matachel, the scenery along the way was stunning so unlike home in Ireland. Vicent knew a good spot for raptors and what a spot it turned out to be, not one but four raptors seen from the view point. However before that we managed two year ticks whilst leaving the car, Rock Sparrow and Dartford Warbler. From the view point we could see in the distance Black and Griffon Vultures circling and some smaller raptors too far away to identify. It wasn't long before we saw the birds much closer, the first to appear was a Golden Eagle flying extremely close for a raptor that normally keeps it's distance from humans. Followed by two juvenile **Spanish Imperial Eagles**, one of which was being attacked by two Bonelli's Eagles, incredible in such a short space of time. Our final raptor at view point was a single Short-toed Eagle very high up in the air flying south. Four eagles in two hours birdwatching!!! After a guick ' field lunch ' we drove along several tracks looking for Little Bustard and Pin-tailed Sandgrouse but failed to see either. We did see though two flocks of Black-bellied Sandgrouse. Overhead were hundreds of Griffon Vultures with a few Black Vultures, Booted Eagles, Northern Wheatear, Common Buzzards as well.

We eventually came across our final target for the day **Calandra Lark**, a large flock of 200+ birds was spotted on a distant hill but try as we did we could never get closer than 200 metres to the birds.



juv **Spanish Imperial Eagle**

Final bird of the day was a **Nuthatch**, a year tick for both of us and so Comghal and I would like to thank Vicent once again for a brilliant two days guiding, almost all our target list was achieved plus some we weren't expecting.



Great Bustards



Dartford Warbler



Bonelli's and Spanish Imperial Eagles



Black-bellied Sandgrouse

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Friday 28-Monday 31 October: Dos Hermanas / 20-25C Some sunshine with lots of heavy showers.

The last four days were similar to the first few days of the holidays. The hunters were out in force again, this time joined by falconers with Peregrines, so most birds were keeping a low profile and the weather turned bad again so I basically quit birding and stayed with my wife around the shelter of the pool canopy.



Sardinian Warbler

Eagle, Imperial Spanish Aquila adalberti

Kite, Black-shouldered Elanus caerlus

Eagle, Short-toed Circaetus gallicus

Harrier, Marsh Circus aeruginosus

Kite, Black Milvus migrans

Bird List : Aut	umn 2022	Andal	usia		
English Name	Latin Name	Date	Area	Notes	
Flamingo , Greater	Phoenicopterus rubei	24-Oct	Brazo del Este	1000's in park	and the same
Goose, Greylag	Anser anser	24-Oct	Brazo del Este	20 + birds	The state of the state of
Duck, Gadwall	Anas strepera	24-Oct	Brazo del Este	Common	in the
Duck, Mallard	Anas platyrchynchos	24-Oct	Brazo del Este	Common	
Duck, Marbled	Marmaronetta aug.	24-Oct	Brazo del Este	13 birds seen	rr r
Duck, White-headed	Oxyura leucocephala	26-Oct	Donana South	3 birds seen	() () () () () ()
Pochard, Red-crested	Aythya ferina	24-Oct	Brazo del Este	1 bird seen	2016
Shoveler	Anas clypeata	24-Oct	Brazo del Este	Common	
Teal	Anas crecca	24-Oct	Brazo del Este	Common	
Partridge, Red-Leg.	Alectoris rufa	Daily	Anywhere	Common in suitable habit	tat
Grebe, Great Crest.	Crested Podiceps	24-Oct	Brazo del Este	3 birds seen	
Grebe, Little	Tachybaptus ruficollis	24-Oct	Brazo del Este	Common	
Cormorant, Sinens.	Phal. Carbo sinensis	24-Oct	Brazo del Este	Common	60,260
Egret, Cattle	Bubulcus ibis	Daily	Dos Hermanas	Also large numbers in Bl	JE STATE OF THE ST
Egret, Great White	Ardea alba	24-Oct	Brazo del Este	8 birds seen	
Egret, Little	Egretta garzetta	24-Oct	Brazo del Este	Common	-
	Ardea cinerea	24-Oct	Brazo del Este	Common	
Stork, Black	Ciconia nigra	24-Oct	Brazo del Este	12 birds noted	
•	Ciconia ciconia	24-Oct	Brazo del Este	Common	
	Plegadis falcinellus	26-Oct	Chiclana	7 birds seen on golf course	
•	Plegadis falcinellus	24-Oct	Brazo del Este	1000's in park	
Spoonbill, Eurasian		24-Oct	Brazo del Este	100s in park	
	Aegypius monachus	Daily	Anywhere	On sunny days 3-5 birds patrolling the sky	
Vulture, Griffon	**	Daily	Anywhere	On sunny days 100's patrolling the sky	
	Pandion haliaetus	25-Oct	Brazo del Este	1 bird seen	
	Buteo buteo	Daily	Anywhere	20+ birds seen	
Eagle, Bonelli's		27-Oct	Rio Matachel	2 birds seen	
Eagle, Booted		Daily	Anywhere	10+ birds seen	
Eagle, Golden	Aquila chry. Homeryi	27-Oct	Rio Matachel	2 birds seen	

27-Oct

27-Oct

Daily

22-Oct

24-Oct

Rio Matachel

Rio Matachel

Dos hermanas

Brazo del Este

Anywhere

3 birds seen

30+ birds seen

2 birds seen

2 birds flying over

1 bird seen







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Bird List: Autumn 2022 Andalusia

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English Name	Latin Name	Date	Area	Notes
Falcon, Peregrine	: Falco peregrinus	24-Oct	Brazo del Este	1 bird seen
Kestrel, Common	Falco tinnunculus	Daily	Anywhere	30+ birds seen
Kestrel, Lesser	· Falco naumanni	24-Oct	Brazo del Este	2 birds seen
Merlin	Falco tinnunculus	27-Oct	Llerena	1 bird seen
Sparrowhawk,	Accipter nisus	22-Oct	Dos Hermanas	2 birds seen
Coot, Eurasian	Fulica atra	24-Oct	Brazo del Este	100's in park
Gallinule, Purple	Porphyrio porphyrio	24-Oct	Brazo del Este	6 birds seen
Moorhen, Common	Gallinula chloropus	24-Oct	Brazo del Este	100's in park
Avocet	t Rec. avosetta	24-Oct	Brazo del Este	100's in park
Stilt, Black-winged	Himantopus him.	24-Oct	Brazo del Este	100's in park
Lapwing	Vanellus vanellus	24-Oct	Brazo del Este	100's in park
Plover, Ringed Little	: Charadrius dubius	24-Oct	Brazo del Este	5 birds seen
Plover, Ringed	Char.hiaticula	25-Oct	Brazo del Este	2 birds noted
Plover, Kentish	Char. alexandrinus	25-Oct	Brazo del Este	1 bird noted
Turnstone	! Arenaria interpres	26-Oct	Chipiona	1 bird at harbour
Dunlin	Calidris alpina	26-Oct	Chipiona	2 on harbour wall
Sandpiper, Common	Actitus hypoleucos	25-Oct	Brazo del Este	15 + birds seen
Sandpiper, Green	Tringa ochropus	24-Oct	Brazo del Este	2 birds seen
Sandpiper, Wood	Tringa glareola	25-Oct	Brazo del Este	1 birds seen
Greenshank	Tringa nebularia	25-Oct	Brazo del Este	1 bird seen
Redshank	Tringa totanus	24-Oct	Brazo del Este	20+ seen
Snipe, Common	Gallinago gallinago	24-Oct	Brazo del Este	2 birds seen
	Philomachus pugnax	25-Oct	Brazo del Este	12 birds seen
•	Larus audouinii	26-Oct	Chipiona	2 on Harbour wall
Gull, Black-headed		24-Oct	Brazo del Este	1000's in park
Gull, Lesser BB		24-Oct	Brazo del Este	1000's in park
	Chroicocephalus gene	26-Oct	R. Quadilquivir	6+ birds seen
Gull, Yellow-legged		24-Oct	Brazo del Este	100's in park
•	Hydroprogne caspia	25-Oct	R. Quadilquivir	12 + birds seen
	Streptopelia decaocto	Daily	Anywhere	50+ birds seen
_	Columba palumbus	Daily	Anywhere	100+ birds seen
Owl, Long-eared		26-Oct	Villafranco	5 birds seen
Hoopoe, Eurasian		Daily	Anywhere	6 birds seen
Kingfisher, Common		24-Oct	Brazo del Este	3 birds seen
Woodpecker, Great Sp.	. Dendrocopus major	24-Oct	Villafranca	1 bird seen









24-Oct Villafranca 1 bird seen Woodpecker, Green Picus viridus 1 bird seen flying over channel 25-Oct Brazo del Este Wryneck Jynx torquilla 27-Oct 200+ birds Lark, Calandra Melanocorypha cal. Llerena Lark, Crested Galerida cristata in suitable habitat Daily Anywhere in suitable habitat Skylark Alauda arvensis Anywhere Daily Martin, Crag Ptyonoprogne rup. 30+ birds 26-Oct Chipiona Swallow, Barn Hirundo rustica 21-Oct Dos Hermanas 4 birds at cortijo 21-Oct Swallow, Red-rumped Cecropis daurica Dos Hermanas 2 birds at hotel in driving rain

Pipit, Meadow Anthus pratensis Daily Anywhere in suitable habitat
Pipit, Red-throated Anthus cervinus 22-Oct Dos Hermanas 11st winter bird

20 October - 1 November 2022

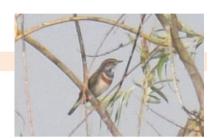
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Bird List : Autumn 2022 Andalusia

DII U LISC. AUC	ullill ZUZZ .	Allual	HOIL	
English Name	Latin Name	Date	Area	Notes
Wagtail, Grey	Motacilla cinerea	27-Oct	Matachel	1 bird
Wagtail, White	Motacilla alba	Daily	Anywhere	in suitable habitat
Wagtail, Yellow	Motacilla flava	25-Oct	Brazo del Este	2 birds near roadside pool
Robin	Erithacus rubecula	Daily	Anywhere	in suitable habitat
Redstart, Black	Phoenicurus ochruru:	Daily	Anywhere	in suitable habitat
Bluethroat	Luscinia cyanecula	24-Oct	Brazo del Este	1 bird distant .
Wheatear, Northern	Denanthe cenanthe	Daily	Anywhere	in suitable habitat
Stonechat, European		Daily	Anywhere	in suitable habitat
Blackbird	Turdus merula	Daily	Anywhere	in suitable habitat
_	Turdus philomelos	27-Oct	Sierra Morena	2 birds
Thrush, Mistle	Turdus viscivorus	27-Oct	Sierra Morena	12 birds
Blackcap	Sylvia atricapilla	Daily	Anywhere	in suitable habitat
Warbler, Cetti's	Cettia cetti	24-Oct	Brazo del Este	2 seen
	Phylloscopus collybitt	Daily	Anywhere	in suitable habitat
Warbler, Garden		22-Oct	Dos Hermanas	1 birds seen
Warbler, Melodious	Hippolais polyglotta	28-Oct	Dos Hermanas	1 birds seen near old cortijo
Cisticola, Zitting	•	Daily	Anywhere	in suitable habitat
Tit, Blue	Parus caeruleus	Daily	Anywhere	in suitable habitat
Tit, Great	Parus major	Daily	Anywhere	in suitable habitat
Tit, Long-tailed	Aegithalos caudatus	27-Oct	Sierra Morena	5 birds
Shrike, Iberian Grey	Lanius meriondalis	27-Oct	Llerena	2 birds
	Pica pica	27-Oct	Sierra Morena	2 birds
Magpie, Azure-winged	Cyanopica cyanus	27-Oct	Sierra Morena	9 birds
	Corvus monedula	Daily	Dos Hermanas	At old cortijo
	Corvus corax	Daily	Anywhere	Flying over
Starling, Common	_	26-Oct	Donana South	A flock of 15 Birds
Starling, Spotless		Daily	Anywhere	in suitable habitat
	Passer domesticus	Daily	Anywhere	in suitable habitat
• •	Passer hispaniolensis	Daily	Anywhere	in suitable habitat
	Fringilla coelebs	27-Oct	Sierra Morena	2 birds
	Carduelis chloris	Daily	Anywhere	in suitable habitat
	Serinus serinus	Daily	Anywhere	in suitable habitat
	Carduelis cannabina	Daily	Anywhere	in suitable habitat
	Carduelis carduelis	Daily	Anywhere	in suitable habitat
	Carduelis chloris	Daily	Anywhere	in suitable habitat
Weaver, Yelcrowned	•	25-Oct	Brazo del Este	30+ birds
	Carduelis cannabina	Daily	Anywhere	in suitable habitat
Weaver, Black-headed	Ploceus melanocepha	25-Oct	Brazo del Este	50+ birds
П	Facilities and a selection of the	D_dL.	A	the analysis labelle to be a labelle to the control of the control









All in all a brilliant tour with 26 year ticks for me and an additional Lifer for Comghal. I would like to thank the guides once more for making the trip worthwhile.

Daily

Anywhere

Bunting, Corn Emberiza calandra



in suitable habitat

Ed.O'Hara Lurgan N.Ireland 08-Nov-22

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