

Mallorca

26th April to 3rd May 2009

This trip was intended to be a combined birdwatching and relaxing holiday, although it probably ended up being more about the birds. We stayed at the excellent [Hostal Bahia](#) in Puerto Pollensa, booked through the online company, Travel Republic. We did not hire a car and so relied on public transport and our legs and stayed mostly local. We used trip reports from the internet and the Dave Gosney and Graham Hearl Birdwatching Guides.

Day 1 (26/4) – Puerto Pollensa and the ‘Smelly Stream’



We arrived at our hotel around lunch time and took in our surroundings, including the view from our hotel room and were immediately greeted by **Audouin's Gull** (left) on the beach below. Other birds seen around Puerto Pollensa included **House Sparrow**, **Blackbird** and **Goldfinch**.

A 10 minute walk through Puerto Pollensa to the ‘Smelly Stream’ (as named in the Gosney Guide) produced **Little Egret**, **Mallard**, **Moorhen**, **Wood Pigeon**, **House Martin**, **Yellow Wagtail (*iberiae*)**, **Stonechat**, **Zitting Cisticola** and singing **Cetti's Warbler** and **Nightingale**.

This area, unfortunately, seems to be mostly used by local dog walkers, although, there is a wooden building that seems to be a visitor centre type facility that was not open while we were there. A walk a few minutes down the road from the stream was the Guardia Civil and in the pine-wooded playground in front of it is the area where **Scops Owl** are supposed to be although we never heard them during our stay. This site did, however, produce a pair of **Spotted Flycatchers**.

Day 2 (27/4) – The ‘Smelly Stream’ and Boquer Valley

Today was a relaxing day as we had been up for nearly 20 hours the previous day. We started off with a walk down to the ‘Smelly Stream’ (right) for a more comprehensive look around. As we came to the start of the walk near the new wooden building, a **Little Ringed Plover** flew in to the stream. A **Green Sandpiper** was also feeding on the small pond to the side of the stream. A large puddle on the track alongside the stream had attracted **House Martins** collecting mud along with a couple of **Sand Martins** flying around. As we walked through the scrubby areas there were **Serin**, **Cetti's Warbler** and **Sardinian Warbler** calling and flying around everywhere.



Standing on the bridge that crosses the stream, a pair of **Stonechats** flitted around the short scrub in front and 1 **Yellow Wagtail (*iberiae*)** sang from the top of a small bush.

After a quick lunch break, we headed towards the Postage Stamp Wood area, just a few minutes walk from the Hotel. We started walking through the trees but only had a couple of **Blackbirds** and **Goldfinch**, so we decided to walk around it instead. This proved a little more productive with **Sardinian Warbler** and **Wood Pigeon**. As we walked around the north side of the wood, we crossed the new road and searched the scrub below some new developments. Just as we approached a small mixed copse to the north-west side of the Postage Stamp Wood, near to what looked like a bridge that would usually have water running underneath, we saw a pair of **Common Crossbill** fly into the pine trees. Also seen here were **Serin** and a fly-over **Hoopoe**.

Next stop was a quick look at the first part of the Boquer Valley. As we walked up to the start of the valley (the Avenue of Pines and the start of the Boquer are now intercepted by a large ‘ring-road’ and roundabout) there were several **Sardinian Warblers**, a **Common Whitethroat** and a **Robin**. Once past the Finca, we had 1 **Raven**, **Crag Martin**, **Kestrel**, **Greenfinch** and **Wren**.

Day 3 (28/4) – Boquer Valley



A walk through the full-length of the Boquer Valley was the plan for today, although we didn't quite make as early a start as we had intended to! I would recommend an early start as the valley is VERY popular with walkers later on in the day. As we walked from our hotel, through the Avenue of Pines, a **Spotted Flycatcher** flitted around the trees and a **Collared Dove** flew down on to the path. The area before the entrance gates to the Valley once again contained **Sardinian Warbler** and **Stonechat**. Further up the track, towards the Finca was a singing **Nightingale**.

As we walked on past all the gates, 2 **Ravens** flew past on the opposite side of the Valley. A pair of **Kestrels** occupied a small ledge near to where the path goes between the large boulders and **Yellow-Legged Gulls** flew up and down the Valley. A small walk further on to the small stand of Pines and we had seen **Wren**, **Blackbird** and **Crag Martin**. As we stopped for a scan, we heard a large flock of **Bee-eaters** flying over and a few **Red-legged Partridges** calling from the stoney fields at the bottom of the Valley, although we didn't see either species.

Not much was seen between here and the end of the Valley due to many walkers lurching and chatting along the route. As we reached the end of the Valley, we kept going to the right along the path, as most people were taking the left-hand route towards the beach. We continued until we went over the brow of the hill, pictured right. As we stood for a while before we headed back, a **Marmora's Warbler** popped about 2 metres away from us. It hopped around a the small bush for about 30 seconds with great views and flew off. The walk



back produced no new species. In the evening we walked to find a place to eat, and had an **Osprey** fly over as we were just outside the Celler la Parra Restaurant (which we would highly recommend!).

Day 4 (29/4) – Albufera Marshes.

We had planned for an early start but the earliest bus today left Puerto Pollensa at 9:45am. The journey cost €3.00 each for a return trip and takes around 35-40 minutes and stops right outside the entrance to the Marshes. As we walked through the entrance gates, the first of many **Cetti's Warblers** called from the bushes. **Swallows** and **Swifts** flew overhead and a **Gadwall** swam on the main canal. We also had several **Zitting Cisticolas**. Just before the main track goes across the stone bridge, we looked over the main canal at the nesting **Night Herons**, **Cattle Egrets** and **Little Egrets**. An **Osprey** also flew over the track.



Several **Nightingales** sang around the Centre as we collected our permit (free but required). A useful list of the birds seen in the last 2 weeks is also supplied. The first port of call was the Bishop hides, picking up **Crested Coot**, **Moorhen**, **Common Coot** and **Great Tit** along the Canal beforehand. We went to the Bishop II hide first where we had **Shoveler**, **Mallard**, a single **Black-headed Gull**, **Black-winged Stilt** (left), **Purple Heron**, **Marsh Harrier** and **Common Tern**. Bishop I hide produced **Yellow Wagtail**, **Kentish Plover**, **Ringed Plover**, **Little-ringed Plover**, **Curlew Sandpiper**, **Knot**, **Turnstone**,

Redshank, **Green Sandpiper**, **Wood Sandpiper**, **Little Stint** and **Spotted Redshank** and **Osprey**. As we exited the hide, a **Sacred Ibis** flew over. Whilst having a quick picnic at the Centre we had **Blackbird**, **House Sparrow**, **Greenfinch** and **Goldfinch**.

Next stop was a walk to the Tower Hide. The winds were quite strong, so not much was added to the list from here apart from **Little Grebe** and **Great Crested Grebe** on the Canal in front of us. On the way back to the main track, a **Grey Heron** flew over. A walk around to the pond next to the raised vantage point produced a wonderful singing **Great Reed Warbler** right on top of the reeds, which even sat there long enough to get the telescope on him. Following the path back towards the Centre, we had a quick look from the hide. A **Whiskered Tern** sat on the island in front of us, along with **Red**



Crested Pochard (right) and **Yellow-legged Gulls**. As we walked back to the Centre, a small warbler flitted around a small group of trees, which then started to sing, confirming that it was a **Bonelli's Warbler**.

On our way out of the reserve, we decided to walk along the Ses Punes Track, to the viewing platform and had 2 flyover **Linnets** along the way. As we approached the platform, a nice **Sardinian Warbler** flew around the steps, collecting spider webs. A **Moustached Warbler** sang from a taller clump of reeds in front of us, along with several screeching **Water Rails**. On the pools behind us, was an obliging pair of **Purple Gallinules** with 2 chicks. As we were about to leave, we decided to head back to the Visitor Centre for a quick comfort break. After a tip off from other birders, a quick scan of the field adjacent to the Centre produced **Stone Curlew** and it was a rush back to the main road to catch the last bus back to Puerto Pollensa.

Day 5 (30/4) – Back Road walk to Albufereta

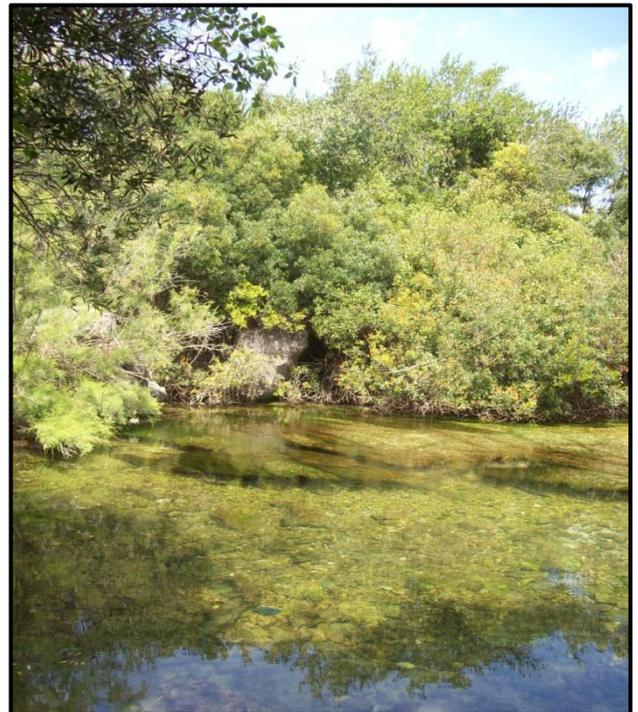


Today, we opted for a bit of a walk. We decided to follow the “Albufereta and the back roads” route from the map in the Graham Hearl book. Just after leaving the main road Roundabout (the large ring road now intersects the Llenaire road and is not shown on the map in the book) we had 2 **Kestrels** flying around the fields. A **Corn Bunting** also sang from the top of a hedge.

After a few hundred metres, we reached some beautiful orchards (left). These contained many **Goldfinch**, **Greenfinch** and **Linnet**. **Nightingales** sang in the distance and a lone **Whinchat** sat on top of one of the trees. A word of warning about this road: some cars drive very fast down this stretch and as there is no path, so caution is required.

Between the bridge and the ‘T-junction’ (marked ② on the map in the Graham Hearl book), we came across a pair of nesting **Woodchat Shrike** in a tree next to the road. A couple of **Tree Sparrows** also flew around these trees. As we approached the ‘Smelly River’ (right), we flushed a **Night Heron** and a **Common Sandpiper**. We also heard some distant **Bee-eaters**.

Not much was seen along the road between here and the marshes apart from lots of **Stonechats** and **Fan-tailed Warblers**, **Swifts**, **Serin** and the odd **Cetti’s Warbler** and **Sardinian Warbler**. None of the viewpoints mentioned in the Gosney guide seem to be accessible anymore and so we had to wait until right near the end of the walk to view the Albufereta marshes. When we did finally get a view, there was a lot of haze, but we did manage to pick out **Little Egrets**, **Cattle Egrets**, **Grey Heron**, **Purple Heron** and a male **Marsh Harrier**. This



was a very long walk and we were very weary by the time we reached Alcudia to catch the bus back.

Day 6 (1/5) – Boquer Valley

We awoke to rain in the morning, which did not clear until after lunch. As most of the day had gone, we decided we would have another look at the Boquer Valley. We did not do the full walk as the threat of rain loomed all afternoon. As we entered the Valley, we were greeted with a beautiful male **Blue Rock Thrush** flying about the two big rocks along the path. Next, we walked to a suitable viewpoint along the Valley. A scan along the tops saw a falcon species, later confirmed as a **Peregrine**, sat on top of one of the rocky outcrops. **Kestrel**, **Serin**, **Sardinian Warbler**, **Stonechat** and **Crag Martins** were also seen whilst here. As we exited the Valley and walked down towards the road, we had **Booted Eagle**, **Osprey** and a single **Eleonora’s Falcon**.

Day 7 (2/5) – Albufera Marshes



We decided to revisit Albufera as we had heard from other birders that more migrants had arrived in the last couple of days. The visit produced much the same as before. We started with the Bishops hides once again. Bishop II hide there was an **Osprey** sat on the exposed mud on the other side of the pool and a **Marsh Harrier** sat on a post beyond that. As we were about to move on, a **Collared Pratincole** took off and flew over towards the Power Station. We moved on to the Bishop I hide next, from which we had much the same as our last visit, with the addition of a lone **Dunlin**. A scan across the reeds towards the Power Station (left) revealed a couple of falcons flying around, one of which turned out to be an **Eleonora's Falcon**, the other a **Kestrel**.

Next port of call was the Ses Puntetes track. This time we walked all the way to the second platform, just beyond the small woodland. Below this platform were some pools, and the first bird we had was a **Purple Gallinule** right out in the open to the right hand side of the pool. A single **Shelduck** sat preening on the far side and 2 very noisy **Kentish Plovers** flew around. As we were scanning across these pools, we once again heard **Bee-eaters** but as was the case with the rest of the week, we failed to see them (definitely the 'bogey bird' of the week!). A quick walk around the grassy area just beyond the platform produced a **Woodchat Shrike** and, although not seen by us, a **Hoopoe**. The walk back along the track, with a quick look from the first platform gave us views of the **Moustached Warbler** and a very fleeting glimpse of a male **Reed Bunting**. After racing back to the Visitor's Centre to report the **Reed Bunting** (as it is a rarity in Mallorca!), we headed back to the main road to catch our bus. The buses had now just started on the summer timetable, and were now running earlier and later services than when we first visited a few days before.

Overall, we had a fantastic week. We will definitely be going back to Puerto Pollensa in the near future. The total number of species seen was 82 species, with 3 species just heard, a full list of which can be found on the next 2 pages. This trip report, I hope, proves that many of Mallorca's wonderful birds can be seen without having to hire a car. As we found out, if you want the best information, ask any birder you see and they are mostly very willing to point you in the right direction. In addition to what we did, we found out that the Cuber Reservoir is accessible on a bus from Puerto Pollensa to Soller. Unfortunately, we only found this out on our last day and therefore did not have time to fit it in.

If you would like to contact me then feel free to email me at rachk116@yahoo.co.uk

Full Bird List

- Little Grebe** *Tachybaptus ruficollis* – several seen at Albufera
Great Crested Grebe *Tachybaptus cristatus* – 2 seen at Albufera
Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo* – several seen around Puerto Pollensa Bay
Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea* – a few seen at Albufera
Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea* – many seen at Albufera and 1 seen at Albufereta
Little Egret *Egretta garzetta* – many seen at several sites
Cattle Egret *Bulbulcus ibis* – many seen at Albufera
Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax* – several seen at Albufera and 1 seen at ‘Smelly River’
Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna* – 1 seen at Albufera
Gadwall *Anas strepera* – several seen at Albufera
Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos* – many seen at Albufera and a few seen at Albufereta
Shoveler *Anas clypeata* – a few seen at Albufera
Red-crested Pochard *Netta rufina* – several seen at Albufera
Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* – a few seen at several sites
Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus* – a few seen at Albufera
Booted Eagle *Aquila pennatus* – 1 seen at Boquer Valley
Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus* – several seen at Boquer Valley and 1 seen on ‘back roads’
Eleonora’s Falcon *Falco eleonora* – 3 seen at Albufera and 1 at Boquer Valley
Peregrine Falcon – *Falco peregrines* – 1 seen at Boquer Valley
Purple Gallinule *Porphyrio porphyrio* – a few seen at Albufera
Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus* – many seen at Albufera
Coot *Fulica arta* – many seen at Albufera
Crested Coot *Fulica cristata* – a few seen at Albufera
Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus* – many seen at Albufera
Stone Curlew *Burhinus oedicnemus* – 1 seen in Horse field near to Visitor Centre at Albufera
Collared Pratincole *Glareola pratincola* – 1 seen from Bishop II hide at Albufera
Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula* – several seen at Albufera
Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius* – several seen at Albufera
Kentish (Snowy) Plover *Charadrius alexandrius* – many seen at Albufera
Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus* – 1 seen from Bishop I hide at Albufera
Redshank *Tringa totanus* – a few seen at Albufera
Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus* – 1 seen from Bishop I hide and 1 seen at ‘Smelly Stream’
Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola* – 4 seen from Bishop I hide at Albufera
Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos* – 1 seen at ‘Smelly River’ on ‘back roads’ walk
Turnstone *Arenaria interpres* – 1 seen from Bishop I hide at Albufera
Knot *Calidris canutus* – 1 seen from Bishop I hide at Albufera
Little Stint – 2 seen from Bishop I hide on 29/4 and 4 seen from Bishop hide II on 2 at Albufera
Dunlin *Calidris alpina* – 1 seen from Bishop I hide at Albufera
Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea* – c.5 seen from Bishop I hide at Albufera
Audouin’s Gull *Larus audouinii* – many seen around coastal areas
Yellow-legged Gull *Larus cachinnans* – many seen at several sites
Black-headed Gull – *Larus ridibundus* – 1 seen from Bishop II hide at Albufera
Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybridus* – 1 seen from the hide next to the CIM hide at Albufera

- Common Tern** *Sterna hirundo* – 2 seen from Bishop II hide at Albufera on
- Wood Pigeon** *Columba livia* – several seen at several sites
- Collared Dove** *Streptopelia decaocta* – 1 seen in the Avenue of Pines in Puerto Pollensa
- Swift** *Apus apus* – many seen at several sites
- Hoopoe** *Upupa epops* – 1 seen flying near ‘Postage Stamp Wood’
- Sand Martin** *Riparia riparia* – several seen at several sites
- Crag Martin** *Ptyonoprogne rupestris* – several seen at several sites
- Swallow** *Hirundo rustica* – many seen at several sites
- House Martin** *Delichon urbica* – several seen at several sites
- Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla flava iberiae* – many seen at several sites
- Wren** *Troglodytes troglodytes* – several seen in the Boquer Valley
- Robin** *Erithacus rubecula* – 1 seen near the Finca by the entrance to the Boquer Valley
- Nightingale** *Luscinia megarhynchos* – many seen and heard at several sites
- Stonechat** *Saxicola torquata* – many seen at several sites
- Whinchat** *Saxicola rubetra* – 1 seen on the ‘back roads’ walk
- Blue Rock Thrush** *Monticola solitaries* – a few seen in the Boquer Valley
- Blackbird** *Turdus merula* – several seen at several sites
- Cetti’s Warbler** *Cettia cetti* – many seen and heard at several sites
- Great Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus arundinaceus* – 1 seen and a few heard at Albufera
- Moustached Warbler** *Acrocephalus melanopogon* – 1 along the Ses Puntes track at Albufera
- Zitting Cisticola** *Cisticola juncidis* – several seen and heard at several sites
- Willow Warbler** *Phylloscopus trichilus* – a few seen at several sites
- Bonelli’s Warbler** *Phylloscopus bonelli* – 1 in trees near to Visitor Centre at Albufera
- Sardinian Warbler** *Sylvia melanocephala* – many seen at several sites
- Common Whitethroat** *Sylvia communis* – 1 seen at the entrance to the Boquer Valley
- Balearic Warbler** *Sylvia balearica* – 1 seen at the end of the Boquer Valley
- Spotted Flycatcher** *Muscicapa striata* – a few seen at several sites
- Great Tit** *Parus major* – a few seen at several sites
- Woodchat Shrike** *Lanius senator* – 1 seen on ‘back road’ walk and 1 seen at Albufera
- Raven** *Corvus corax* – a few seen in the Boquer Valley
- House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus* – many seen at several sites
- Tree Sparrow** *Passer montanus* – a few seen on ‘back road’ walk
- Serín** *Serinus serinus* – many seen and heard at several sites
- Greenfinch** *Carduelis chloris* – a few seen at several sites
- Goldfinch** *Carduelis carduelis* – several seen at several sites
- Linnet** *Carduelis cannabina* – 2 seen at Albufera and a small flock on the ‘back road’ walk
- Common Crossbill** *Loxia curvirostra* – 2 seen in scrub at the back of ‘Postage Stamp Wood’
- Reed Bunting** *Emberiza schoeniclus* – 1 seen at Albufera along Ses Puntes track
- Corn Bunting** *Miliaria calandra* – 1 seen in hedgerow at the Puerto Pollensa end of the ‘back road’ walk

Birds heard but not seen

- Red-legged Partridge** *Alectoris rufa* – a few heard calling in the Boquer Valley
- Water Rail** *Rallus aquaticus* – several heard at Albufera
- Bee-eater** *Merops apiaster* – several heard in Boquer Valley, along the ‘back roads’ walk and Albufera