

# Extremadura

## *Raptors and steppe birds in Western Spain*

April 22 - 28, 2024

25 Anniversary!  
itinerary

### **Day 1 / April 22: Madrid airport - Calera y Chozas Plains - Torrejón El Rubio**

Meet and welcome at Madrid airport and transfer to Extremadura. We will do our first birding on route in the Calera y Chozas plains (province of Toledo) looking for Great and Little Bustards with good chances for Black-shouldered Kite and Black-bellied Sandgrouse. This is a promising spot for Great Spotted Cuckoo too, while Sardinian Warbler, Lesser Kestrel and White Stork show well. In some seasonal ponds we might see Black-winged Stilt and some common species of ducks and waders. Dinner and accommodation in Torrejón El Rubio.

### **Day 2 / April 23: Torrejón El Rubio - Monfragüe N.P.**

After a good breakfast in our hotel we will drive straight to the probably the best place for watching raptors in the Western Palearctic. Travellers never forget their first visit to Monfragüe! We will see here Griffon, Eurasian Black (Cinereous) and Egyptian Vultures, Short-toed Eagles and with some luck Eurasian Eagle Owl. Golden, Spanish Imperial and Bonelli's Eagle are all eagle residents with still good numbers in this spot. Along the banks of the rivers Tago and Tiétar we will look for small passerines such as Western Subalpine and Sardinian Warblers, European Serin and Hawfinch. In the cliffs of Monfragüe we should also see Black Stork, Black Redstart, Blue-Rock Thrush, Rock Bunting, Red-rumped Swallow, Crag Martin and maybe the very scarce here, Red-billed Cough. It might be a good time to see the scarce and later migrant White-rumped Swift. Dinner and accommodation in Torrejón El Rubio.

### **Day 3 / April 24: Torrejón El Rubio - Trujillo & Caceres Plains**

This is usually one of the top days of the week providing some of the highlights of this tour. The Trujillo-Caceres plains lie between these two Medieval towns. The community of steppe birds and raptors are amongst the best in the country in spite of having suffered a severe decline in the last decade... We will have here our best chances for some of the specialities of the steppe habitats such as Stone Curlew (Eurasian Thick-knee), Black-bellied and Pin-tailed Sandgrouse, Montagu's Harrier, Great and Little Bustards, Corn Buntings and Calandra Lark. We will have a break for our lunch at the Medieval town of Trujillo where a Lesser Kestrel colony. We have planned a little walk around Palaces and Churches built mostly in times of the conquistadors (XV - XVI centuries!). Amongst all of them Pizarro, who conquered Peru, is the

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town symbol, including a fine bronze statue in the main and nicest square. Almost every single building in the main square of Trujillo has its own particular birdlife... Pallind and Common Swifts, Crag and House Martin, Barn Swallow, Black Redstart, European Serin, White Stork and Western Jackdaw... all breed in this lovely place! Here we will enjoy one of our traditional "raciones" lunches (eagerly anticipated by our regular clients), after which we will explore a different section of the plains looking for other bird species including Great Spotted Cuckoo! Transfer to Torrejón el Rubio for our dinner and accommodation.

### Day 4 / April 25: Torrejón El Rubio - Sierra de San Pedro

Running from North-West to South-East right between the two largest provinces of Spain, extends the Sierra de San Pedro mountain range, in what is probably one of the wildest corners of the Iberian Peninsula. This is a stronghold of one of the most threatened birds in Europe, the Spanish Imperial Eagle, which breeds here. The Eurasian Black (Cinereous) Vulture also breeds in good numbers in these "sierras" with the second largest nesting colony in Spain, just behind the well-known Monfragüe National Park. We will certainly have good chances to find Booted and Short-toed Eagles, while Black and Red Kites will be present during our visit. Bonelli's and Golden Eagles are the other two big eagles present in Sierra de San Pedro, and we will try to spot their silhouettes amongst the numerous Eurasian Griffon Vultures. After a very enjoyable day we will return to our hotel in Torrejón El Rubio.

### Day 5 / April 26: Torrejón El Rubio - Arrocampo Reservoir - Fields around Almaraz

The water supplied by the reservoir of Arrocampo is mainly used to cool down the motors of the nuclear power station of Almaraz. Although apparently not the best place in the world for birding this is however a great place to find some local "rarities" in Extremadura. This is for sure one of the few places in this region where all Squacco and Purple Herons, Little Bittern, Purple (Western) Swamp Hen, Bearded Reedling and Savi's Warblers breed. Besides we have had records of Great Bittern booming from the reedbeds and who knows if we can be lucky to see this elusive bird during our visit. The "dehesas" around Arrocampo are also a good place to see Great Spotted Cuckoo, Spanish Sparrow and beautiful Black-shouldered Kites... perhaps the best location to see this special raptor with crepuscular habits. We might also have some chances for Eagle Owl before returning to our hotel in Torrejón El Rubio.

### Day 6 / April 27: Torrejón El Rubio - Vegas Altas Ricefields

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Today we will visit the rice paddies and dry steppes south of Trujillo. Amongst the most interesting species present here are Great and Little Bustards, Great Spotted Cuckoo, Black-bellied Sandgrouse, Black-shouldered Kite, Gull-billed Tern, Collared Pratincole, Spanish Sparrow and two introduced species, Red Avadavat and Common Waxbill. This is also one of the best sites in Extremadura to find waders, including nesting Kentish Plovers, as well as Little Ringed Plovers, Green and Common Sandpipers, etc... In the early evening we will travel back to Torrejón El Rubio for our last night accommodation in Extremadura.

### Day 7 / April 28: Torrejón El Rubio - Madrid airport

Time for loading up our luggage and heading to the airport of Madrid stopping ahead for our last birding opportunities along the motorway. Birding stops today will depend on what we missed during the week so your guide will decide where to go before arriving to the airport in the early evening.

**This itinerary might change according weather conditions or at discretion of our guide**

**PRICES:**

Per person sharing in twin / doubled-room with private faciiliies: **€ 1,575**

Single Supplement: **€ 325**

*Group size: Min. 4 – Max. 7 travelers plus our guide*

**The price includes:**

- \* Ground transport from Seville airport in modern, fully seat-belted, air condiioned 9-seat vehicle
- \* 6 Nights accomodaion with en suite bathroom (all nights in Extremadura)
- \* All meals inc breakfast, fantasic “tapas-raciones” lunches and evening meals + red wine in a moderate consumption
- \* Services of professional birding guide
- \* Basic travel insurance
- \* Bird checklist
- \* All taxes

**The price doesn't include:**

- \* Air fare (Easyjet, Ryanair & other companies operate daily flights from several UK airports)
- \* Extra drinks and other items of a personal nature

**Number of travelers:**

The minimum number of travellers on each trip is 4 and the usual maximum number is 7 plus the guide or 14 with two guides.

**Travel:**

Because other birding tours normally carry the cost of the airfare and are not necessarily the cheapest, Spainbirds Nature Tours asks the customer to book the flights independently to Madrid, Málaga, Seville, Santander or any other specified airport where the trip starts and ends. This gives you the customer, greater flexibility in terms of choosing the flight and return leg of your journey home (flights and/or other means of transport) specific airport departures, times to suit you, special offers and carrier companies. Spainbirds Nature Tours is a licensed tour operator (CICMA 2517) which is allowed to book flights for our clients, please don't hesitate to letting us know if you prefer that we book your airline tickets for you. The meeting point for customers will be the corresponding local airport depending on the trip selected.

**Ground transport:**

We always use comfortable, modern air conditioned minibus or people carrier. All our vehicles comply with the current EU safely legislation. *Notice please that we don't charge any fee to transport people, and our incomes are applied as a trip organizer and wildlife guide services but never as professional drivers.*

**Accommodation & food:**

Accommodation is carefully chosen by Spainbirds Nature Tours to offer the customer a good quality standard of hotel or fully equipped country inn next to the birding areas. We ensure that all rooms are en suite and price includes usually full board (breakfast, "tapas" lunches and evening meal + red wine & water unless other board conditions are applied). For those who require a single room they will have to pay the corresponding supplement, which will depend on the chosen itinerary shown in the tours section of our web site or current brochure.

**Dates:**

Since the groups are usually small, the journey dates may occasionally be fine tuned to meet the needs of all interested parties but will never be changed if the flights have been already booked.

## Insurance:

It is highly advisable to take out a personal insurance policy before leaving your country. Please let us know the name of your company insurance before travelling. For information of all travellers Spainbirds Nature Tours has its own civil liability insurance through **REALE SEGUROS**, policy number 1331100001899/0, covering damages to third parties to a maximum of 1,800,000 Euros. As travel agency licensed by the Spanish Tourism Board all our clients will be traveling covered by a basic travel insurance, but which might not be enough to cover certain personal or items damages.

In addition to your personal Travel & Medical Insurance, do bring (and carry with you when out and about) your up to date European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) – they only last 5 years! If you still have one of the older forms (E111) then it needs to be changed to this new card.

*Note for UK travelers: You do not have to pay for an EHIC, which can be obtained or renewed free of charge by calling 0300 3301350 or applying on-line at [www.ehic.org.uk](http://www.ehic.org.uk). This is a secure site that diverts to the correct page within the main NHS.UK website. The cards are valid for five years, after which they can be renewed, again, free of charge. Please notice that the new Brexit situation will make to all cards expire after December 31, 2020!!!*

## How to book a tour to Spain:

To book our services you need to make a written confirmation by letter or email or fill our booking form available on our web site, plus paying **€ 500 as deposit** for all the Spain tours. Deposits for our overseas tours are showed in the literature related to every tour.

**The rest shall be paid to Spainbirds Nature Tours by wire transfer or credit card, at the latest 90 days before the journey starts.** The price includes guide services, accommodation, all meals, ground transport and fuel. Customers are entitled to cancel their bookings at any moment, but on the following terms:

If the cancellation is made between booking and 90 days before the start of the trip they will forfeit the deposit or, if preferred, it will be kept for future tours run by Spainbirds Nature Tours with an expiration date of ONE year.

If the cancellation is made between 89 and 61 days before the start of the journey they will

forfeit 50% (where the deposit would be also included) of the total amount paid to Spainbirds Nature Tours.

If the cancellation is made within 60 days of the start of the journey they will forfeit 100% of the total paid.

Any breach of the above instalments or unjustified delays in paying them will automatically lead to cancellation of the booking, the above mentioned rules then being applied. The post-cancellation sum of money to be reimbursed will be sent by wire transfer. All amounts paid must be done by bank transfer to our account on OPENBANK (details will be sent to you once you confirm booking).

If you agree these booking conditions please then fill and send us your [booking form](#)

*\*Every of our overseas tours has its own booking conditions since all international and domestic flights are usually included in the price. If you are interested to fly from your home country and not meeting the group in Spain please let the office know this issue to find the most suitable alternative for both sides. You will be able to find our terms and conditions for the overseas tours in the pdf file linked in the literature of every tour.*

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