

# Extremadura & Gredos

## *Eagles and bluethroats!*

**May 10 - 16, 2021**

Itinerary

### **Day 1 / May 10: Madrid airport - Calera y Chozas plains - Torrejon El Rubio (Extremadura)**

Meet and welcome at Madrid airport before transferring to Extremadura. We will first visit the plains of Calera y Chozas where we should see Great and Little Bustards and Black-shouldered Kite. After further birding en route we will travel to Torrejón El Rubio where we will stay the following 4 nights.

### **Day 2 / May 11: Torrejon El Rubio - Monfragüe N.P.**

Monfragüe will undoubtedly offer us some of the highlights of the trip. An impressive community of raptors breed within its almost 18,000 hectares. Although Griffon Vultures are the commonest bird of prey in the park with around 600 pairs breeding in 2010, we will also have good chances for watching Eurasian Black Vulture, Short-toed, Booted, Bonelli's and Spanish Imperial Eagle, both Black and Red Kite, and the odd Egyptian Vulture. Sylvia warblers are also well present in the woods and shrubby slopes of Monfragüe with six: Western Orphean, Subalpine, Blackcap, Dartford, Sardinian and Spectacled Warblers. On the cliffs we will try our luck at finding Blue Rock Thrush, Rock Bunting, Red-rumped Swallow, Crag Martin, the very wary Black Stork and the impressive Eurasian Eagle Owl. Excellent chances also exist for finding the rare White-rumped Swift. Dinner and overnight at Torrejón El Rubio.

### **Day 3 / May 12: Torrejon El Rubio - Trujillo & Caceres Plains**

We will travel after breakfast to the plains lying between the town of Trujillo and Cáceres. This is a huge flat area with several woods and river cliffs suitable for a large community of steppe birds and raptors. This will be the best day to see some of the specialties of these types of habitats such as Stone Curlew, Black-bellied and Pin-tailed Sandgrouse, Montagu's Harrier, Great and Little Bustards, Lesser Kestrel, Calandra and Greater Short-toed Larks, European Roller, Eurasian Bee-eater and Black-eared Wheatear. In the afternoon we will visit the medieval town of Trujillo, its main square and castle and perhaps the bull-ring, with time to also enjoy one of the largest colonies of Lesser Kestrels in Spain. This small falcon breeds under the roof tiles and holes in ruined buildings of some small towns, villages and farms.

### **Day 4 / May 13: Torrejón El Rubio - Arrocampo reservoir - Belen Plains**

After breakfast we will head towards the well known Embalse de Arrocampo, a big reservoir water of which is used to cool the core of the nearby nuclear power station of Almaraz. In consequence, the water temperature is 4°C warmer on average than the rest of wetlands of the region meaning that some interesting species, especially summer visitors, are found only here. This is the case of the Little Bittern, Squacco Heron, Purple Heron or Eurasian Spoonbill. In the reservoir Savi's Warbler, Purple Swamphen, Gull-billed Tern, Great White Egret, Water Rail and Cetti's Warbler are also present, plus a recently discovered tiny population of Bearded Reedling. The surrounding "dehesas" of the reservoir will provide us with chances to see Spanish Sparrow,

Great Spotted Cuckoo, Azure-winged Magpie and Black-shouldered Kite. In the afternoon we will explore the Belén plains, next to Trujillo town.

**Day 5 / May 14: Torrejón El Rubio - Jerte Valley - Sierra de Gredos**

This is mostly a journey day, but with several stops on the way to Gredos. We will continue our trip driving northwards leaving the town of Plasencia to our left hand side as we follow up the river Jerte, where we will make a stop to see White-breasted Dipper, Western Bonelli's Warbler and Grey Wagtail amongst others. The last stop before travelling to our hotel in Gredos will be at the Puerto de Castilla mountain pass where we will have chances to see our first Ortolan Buntings, Whitethroats and maybe Firecrest and European Honey Buzzards. Dinner and accommodation at Navarredonda de Gredos.

**Day 6 / May 15: Sierra de Gredos**

Breakfast at Hostal Alanzor and drive to the Plataforma de Gredos, a journey of about 30 minutes, where we will walk uphill to reach the breeding grounds of Bluethroats, our main target here. In the walk up we should see Ortolan Bunting, Water Pipit, Northern Wheatear, Red-billed Chough, Skylark, Rock Bunting and Dunnock with very good chances for Rufous-tailed Rock Thrush and see the Gredos form of the Iberian Ibex, a different subspecies than in the rest of the mountains of Southern Spain.

Down in the valley we will try for the Iberian race of Pied-Flycatcher, plus Common Crossbill, Firecrest, Goldcrest, Crested Tit, Coal Tit, Red Kite, Black Redstart, Green Woodpecker (the sharpei race) and before going back to our hotel we will visit a couple of traditional sites for Citril Finch. Back to our hotel for a meal and accommodation.

**Day 7 / May 16: Sierra de Gredos - Madrid**

After our breakfast we travel to a nearby location where we will have chances to see again Bluethroat, Rufous-tailed Rock Thrush, Common Whitethroat, European Honey Buzzard and Ortolan Bunting. Back to Madrid in time to catch flights.

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

**PRICES:**

Per person sharing in twin / doubled-room with private facilities: **€ 1.495**

Single Supplement: **€ 250**

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

**The price includes:**

- \* Ground transport from Madrid airport in modern, fully seat-belted, air conditioned 9-seat vehicle
- \* 6 Nights accommodation with en suite bathroom (4 nights in Hospedería de Monfragüe + 2 nights at Hostal Almanzor)
- \* All meals inc breakfast, fantastic “tapas-rationes” lunches and evening meals + red wine in a moderate consumption
- \* Services of professional birding guide
- \* Basic travel insurance
- \* Bird checklist (revised edition 2016)
- \* 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 safety 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, picnic lunch 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 Turism 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 **€ 450 as deposit** for all the Spain tours. Deposits for our overseas expeditions 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 60 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:

1. If the cancellation is made between booking and 60 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**.
2. If the cancellation is made between 59 and 31 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*.
3. If the cancellation is made within 30 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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