



Field Guides Tour Report

Morocco 2014

Sep 8, 2014 to Sep 25, 2014

Jesse Fagan

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Crowned Sandgrouse in the Tadgilt area (Photo by guide Jesse Fagan)

This was a very successful trip with lots of birds (my highest total yet; 207 taxa), amazing scenery (and nice sunsets; I am remembering the Tagdilt area), lots of Tagine (good for some), some cultural aspects (Hassan II mosque, Ait-Benhaddou kasbah, and Yamaa el Fna Square), and our fun, very sharp group.

Birding highlights included Bonelli's Eagle (in the Dades Gorge below eye-level!), Moussier's Redstart (always striking against its rocky environment), Stone Curlew (just crazy to see so many in one place sneaking their way across the coastal scrub!), Pharoah Eagle-Owl ('nuff said), and some of you really liked the pelagic experience, those Little Owls, Houbara Bustard, and the dippers! Lots of great birds, but the Northern Bald Ibis (Waldrapp) took the cake. The experience of hiking way out to the cliffs and finding birds foraging in the coastal sand dunes will not be soon forgotten. It's quite possibly the rarest bird in Europe/N Africa with just 443 individuals (2013) estimated from Morocco; nearly the entire world's population (a remnant population exists in Syria and Turkey; the Syrian population may soon be lost, and the Turkish population is heavily managed). It was an exciting moment for us.

Thanks again to the group and our driver, Oussama, who never let us down or lost the way. I hope to see you all again soon. Great birding for 2015!

--Jesse Fagan (aka Motmot) from Lima, Peru

KEYS FOR THIS LIST

One of the following keys may be shown in brackets for individual species as appropriate: * = heard only, I = introduced, E = endemic, N = nesting, a = austral migrant, b = boreal migrant

BIRDS

Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)

RUDDY SHELDUCK (*Tadorna ferruginea*) – Fairly good numbers (but seemed down from years past) in the Lakes Region and again on some larger wadis on our way to Erg Chebbi. Sharp looking duck.

COMMON SHELDUCK (*Tadorna tadorna*) – A surprise to find one at Lac du Sidi Bourhaba.

GADWALL (*Anas strepera*) – Good numbers in the Lake Region.

MALLARD (*Anas platyrhynchos*) – Lots around Rabat and again in the Lake Region. One of the more common waterfowl found on this tour.

NORTHERN SHOVELER (*Anas clypeata*) – Second in numbers to Mallard; lots around Rabat and again in the Lake Region.

GREEN-WINGED TEAL (EURASIAN) (*Anas crecca crecca*) – Good numbers at Lac du Sidi Bourhaba and smaller numbers in the Lake Region. Some authorities split this from the North American subspecies (*carolinensis*). They look slightly different.

MARbled TEAL (*Marmaronetta angustirostris*) – A nice find for us was one bird (possibly two) at Lac du Sidi Bourhaba. Lake levels here have plummeted over the years and this species used to be more common.

COMMON POCHARD (*Aythya ferina*) – Several in the Lake Region north of Ifrane.

FERRUGINOUS DUCK (*Aythya nyroca*) – Good numbers again in the Lake Region.

WHITE-HEADED DUCK (*Oxyura leucocephala*) – Around 5 individuals were seen at Lac du Sidi Bourhaba north of Rabat. This is a traditional site in Morocco for this species, but water levels are dropping and this species seems to be much more difficult to find.

Phasianidae (Pheasants, Grouse, and Allies)

BARBARY PARTRIDGE (*Alectoris barbara*) – Just a pairs at Lac du Sidi and again in the Zaer region. Almost a North African endemic.

DOUBLE-SPURRED FRANCOLIN (*Francolinus bicalcaratus ayesha*) – A great bird for us. Very local and rare in N Africa and we saw around 4 birds early in the morning along the road; also heard calling. I got lost finding the place, but we made it just in time!

COMMON QUAIL (*Coturnix coturnix*) – Leigh flushed this species near Erg Chebbi while we were looking for nightjars.

Podicipedidae (Grebes)

LITTLE GREBE (*Tachybaptus ruficollis*) – Common near Rabat and the Lake Region.

GREAT CRESTED GREBE (*Podiceps cristatus*) – A nice looking grebe, but also fairly common near Rabat and the Lake Region.

EARED GREBE (*Podiceps nigricollis*) – Just in the Lake Region where fairly common. Also called Black-necked Grebe in the Old World.

Phoenicopteridae (Flamingos)

GREATER FLAMINGO (*Phoenicopterus roseus*) – A few on Lac de Sidi Bourhaba and later in the trip on the Oued Souss (Agadir).

Procellariidae (Shearwaters and Petrels)

CORY'S SHEARWATER (BOREALIS) (*Calonectris diomedea borealis*) – Most of what I identified from my photos were of this taxon.

SOOTY SHEARWATER (*Puffinus griseus*) – Just a single bird, but a super close flyby. Excellent looks.

MANX SHEARWATER (*Puffinus puffinus*) – Around three counted during the pelagic including one sitting on the water in a downpour.

BALEARIC SHEARWATER (*Puffinus mauretanicus*) – A fairly distant flyby, but diagnostic.

Ciconiidae (Storks)

BLACK STORK (*Ciconia nigra*) – A surreal experience to find this in the middle of the desert during our morning on the Tagdilt Track. Several more were seen in flight. Increasingly more common as a migrant over Morocco.

WHITE STORK (*Ciconia ciconia*) – Lots (including obvious nests) throughout the tour.

Sulidae (Boobies and Gannets)

NORTHERN GANNET (*Morus bassanus*) – Good numbers from the beach at Skhirat and a few closer on the pelagic.

Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

GREAT CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax carbo*) – Several we saw were dark chested individuals typical of mainland Europe, however, they do breed to N Africa (along with northern winter visitors).

GREAT CORMORANT (MOROCCAN) (*Phalacrocorax carbo maroccanus*) – This subspecies with the white chests were seen around Agadir. White-chested individuals are typical of sub-Saharan Africa south to the Cape.

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

GRAY HERON (*Ardea cinerea*) – Common in most wetland habitats.

PURPLE HERON (*Ardea purpurea*) – Several (our only ones) at Lac du Sidi.

LITTLE EGRET (*Egretta garzetta*) – Good numbers throughout the tour.

CATTLE EGRET (*Bubulcus ibis*) – Seen nearly every day.

SQUACCO HERON (*Ardeola ralloides*) – One was seen by Andreas though I am not sure anyone else saw it.

BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) – A small flock over the orchard on the road to Tagdilt was a bit odd.

Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

GLOSSY IBIS (*Plegadis falcinellus*) – A few at Lac du Sidi and again at Mansour Eddahbi Reservoir.

WALDRAPP (*Geronticus eremita*) – Bird of the trip! We had to work for it, but it was worth it. We found 30 or so individuals in the coastal dunes around the Souss Massa. There were more it seemed flying over the cliffs. A rare and local species; possibly the rarest bird in Africa.

EURASIAN SPOONBILL (*Platalea leucorodia*) – Several at Lac du Sidi and at the Oued Souss (Agadir).

Pandionidae (Osprey)

OSPREY (*Pandion haliaetus*) – Singles on most days.

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

BLACK-SHOULDERED KITE (*Elanus caeruleus*) – A fairly rare European/N Africa bird. Local. We saw one "kiting" at the Zaer.

EUROPEAN HONEY-BUZZARD (*Pernis apivorus*) – Large movement of migrants through Morocco this year. Our biggest flock was 17 birds southwest of Meknes.

BOOTED EAGLE (*Hieraaetus pennatus*) – Fairly common on this trip throughout various dry habitats. We had a displaying pair in the cork oak forest near the royal golf course (Rabat).

BONELLI'S EAGLE (*Aquila fasciata*) – Fantastic looks (below eye-level) of a soaring and perched adult in the Dades Gorge. We saw another near Ouarzazate.

EURASIAN MARSH-HARRIER (*Circus aeruginosus*) – Good numbers throughout our trip; one of the more common raptors.

EURASIAN SPARROWHAWK (*Accipiter nisus*) – Our first was in the Lake Region, but again on our way to Oukaimeden.

BLACK KITE (*Milvus migrans*) – Seen on at least three different days; migrants around Midelt and Erg Chebbi.

COMMON BUZZARD (*Buteo buteo*) – Just one at Lac du Sidi.

LONG-LEGGED BUZZARD (*Buteo rufinus*) – Good numbers throughout our travels in the drier habitats.

Otididae (Bustards)

HOUBARA BUSTARD (NORTH AFRICAN) (*Chlamydotis undulata undulata*) – Quite a surprise was flushing this rare bustard as we stomped for larks near Zaida. It is unclear the origin of this bird. Clearly there are still wild populations, but they are rare and local. Unfortunately, many individuals have been introduced to protected reserves for hunting (and some may escape). In the end, the experience is what counts!

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

WATER RAIL (*Rallus aquaticus*) – One seen well at Lac du Sidi Bourhaba. Some of you commented it was your best rail look ever!

PURPLE SWAMPHEN (*Porphyrio porphyrio*) – Several at Lac du Sidi.

EURASIAN MOORHEN (*Gallinula chloropus*) – Common in the Lake Region. Note that this has now been split from our North America, Common Gallinule.

RED-KNOBBED COOT (*Fulica cristata*) – Good numbers at Lac du Sidi, but better numbers and looks in the Lake Region. We could easily compare the facial pattern (and knobs) with Eurasian Coot.

EURASIAN COOT (*Fulica atra*) – Also lots in the Lake Region.

Burhinidae (Thick-knees)

EURASIAN THICK-KNEE (*Burhinus oedipnemos*) – This was just a great experience. Finding around 50 birds on our walk back from seeing Northern Bald Ibis. They were sneaking around in the short coastal dune scrub. Lots of young birds mixed in.

Recurvirostridae (Stilts and Avocets)

BLACK-WINGED STILT (*Himantopus himantopus*) – Found in most wetland sites. Fairly common.

PIED AVOCET (*Recurvirostra avocetta*) – Three birds at Lac du Sidi were our only ones.

Haematopodidae (Oystercatchers)

EURASIAN OYSTERCATCHER (*Haematopus ostralegus*) – Good numbers on the beach at Skhirat, but again around Agadir.

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER (*Pluvialis squatarola*) – Also known as Gray Plover in the Old World. Seen along the beach at Skhirat.

NORTHERN LAPWING (*Vanellus vanellus*) – A few people saw this bird along the beach at Skhirat. Not seen by all.

KENTISH PLOVER (KENTISH) (*Charadrius alexandrinus alexandrinus*) – Seen along the beach at Skhirat, but probably the most bizarre sighting was around 50 birds in a tight lock that landed in the Tagdilt desert.

COMMON RINGED PLOVER (*Charadrius hiaticula*) – Prefers more brackish or coastal sites than the next species. Seen well at a number of different places.

LITTLE RINGED PLOVER (*Charadrius dubius*) – Usually found more inland (in freshwater) than the previous species. Also seen in good numbers.

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

COMMON SANDPIPER (*Actitis hypoleucos*) – Seen most days at a variety of different wetland sites.

GREEN SANDPIPER (*Tringa ochropus*) – Usually singles, but seen most days along freshwater edge.

SPOTTED REDSHANK (*Tringa erythropus*) – Skhirat and the Lake Region, but not many and much less common than Common Redshank.

COMMON GREENSHANK (*Tringa nebularia*) – Fairly common on this tour.

MARSH SANDPIPER (*Tringa stagnatilis*) – A great find by Andreas. At least two different birds seen at Mansour Eddahbi Reservoir. Previously very rare in NW Africa, but seems to be becoming more common (possibly due to better observer coverage).

WOOD SANDPIPER (*Tringa glareola*) – Just a few at different sites.

COMMON REDSHANK (*Tringa totanus*) – Seen at most larger wetland sites. The white wing stripes are obvious in flight.

WHIMBREL (EUROPEAN) (*Numenius phaeopus phaeopus*) – We noted the white rump stripe in flight, which separates it from New World birds.

EURASIAN CURLEW (*Numenius arquata*) – Skhirat and again around Agadir.

BLACK-TAILED GODWIT (*Limosa limosa*) – Finally caught up with this species at Ouedd Souss near Agadir.

BAR-TAILED GODWIT (*Limosa lapponica*) – A single bird along the beach at Skhirat, but also mixed with the Black-tailed Godwit near Agadir.

RUDDY TURNSTONE (*Arenaria interpres*) – Seen foraging in the rocks at Skhirat.

RUFF (*Calidris pugnax*) – Four were picked out in the Lake Region.

CURLEW SANDPIPER (*Calidris ferruginea*) – Good, close studies at Mansour Eddahbi Reservoir.

SANDERLING (*Calidris alba*) – Along the beach at Skhirat, and one inland at Mansour Eddahbi Reservoir where less expected.

DUNLIN (*Calidris alpina*) – Singles at Skhirat, Mansour Eddahbi, and at Agadir. All appeared to be juveniles. Also known as Red-backed Sandpiper in the Old World (due to their breeding plumage).

LITTLE STINT (*Calidris minuta*) – Good numbers at Mansour Eddahbi Reservoir, mixed with the Curlews.

Glareolidae (Pratincoles and Coursers)

CREAM-COLORED COURSER (*Cursorius cursor*) – We saw around 11 or so individuals in total on three different days! Incredible to find so many; good eyes group!

Stercorariidae (Skuas and Jaegers)

PARASITIC JAEGER (*Stercorarius parasiticus*) – We saw a distant jaeger at Skhirat and again on the pelagic trip, both were juveniles. I would have guessed this species, however.

Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)

BLACK-HEADED GULL (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*) – Common along the beach at Skhirat and again in Agadir. This is the most common small gull on the tour.

AUDOUIN'S GULL (*Ichthyaeetus audouinii*) – Several were near the port in Agadir. Still one of the world's rarest gulls with a population estimated to be around 10,000 pairs (down to 1,000 in the 1960s). Restricted to just the Mediterranean and western coast of Saharan Africa.

YELLOW-LEGGED GULL (*Larus michahellis*) – Lots along the coast. The common large gull on tour.

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL (INTERMEDIUS) (*Larus fuscus intermedius*) – This is the darker backed (upperparts blackish gray) subspecies. We saw several of this form, but it seems less common than the next taxon. This subspecies breeds in SW Scandinavia, but winter to W Europe and W Africa.

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL (GRAELLSII) (*Larus fuscus graellsii*) – Most of the individuals seemed to be of this form (upperparts slate-gray). These are birds that breed in W Europe and Iceland and winter to W Africa.

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL (*Larus marinus*) – One larger dark-backed gull we looked at on the pelagic trip (as we were leaving port) appeared to be this species. Rare, but increasing in W Africa it seems.

LITTLE TERN (*Sternula albifrons*) – Hundreds in port and just offshore during our pelagic trip out of Agadir.

BLACK TERN (*Chlidonias niger*) – Three juveniles followed the boat back into port.

COMMON TERN (*Sterna hirundo*) – A few on the pelagic trip in non-breeding plumage.

SANDWICH TERN (*Thalasseus sandvicensis*) – Fairly common along the coast.

LESSER CRESTED TERN (*Thalasseus bengalensis*) – Singles along the coast at Skhirat.

Pteroclididae (Sandgrouse)

CROWNED SANDGROUSE (*Pterocles coronatus*) – We had calling birds flyover us while on the Tagdilt Track. Andreas spotted a second flock settle near the road, which allowed for incredible views.

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

ROCK PIGEON (*Columba livia*) – Every day in cities and towns, but also wild birds in the cliffs along the Ziz River. You can finally count this species!

COMMON WOOD-PIGEON (*Columba palumbus*) – Good numbers in wooded areas like Zaer and in the High Atlas.

EUROPEAN TURTLE-DOVE (*Streptopelia turtur*) – Fairly common throughout the tour in various places.

EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE (*Streptopelia decaocto*) – Every day. Common in cities and town. Invaded Europe from SE (native to Middle East) in recent times and then south into Morocco where first recorded in 1971.

LAUGHING DOVE (*Streptopelia senegalensis*) – Singles at Erg Chebbi.

Strigidae (Owls)

PHARAOH EAGLE-OWL (*Bubo ascalaphus*) – Fantastic looks at bird sitting in the high cliffs near Rissani. This was a bird that Oussama had heard about and so a special effort was made to find it...it paid off!

LITTLE OWL (*Athene noctua*) – A pair in the Zaer oak forest where I had found them 3 years before!

Caprimulgidae (Nightjars and Allies)

RED-NECKED NIGHTJAR (*Caprimulgus ruficollis*) – We had a silent bird buzz us in the oak forest near Ifrane.

Apodidae (Swifts)

ALPINE SWIFT (*Apus melba*) – Several of these large swifts were seen in migration.

COMMON SWIFT (*Apus apus*) – The most common Apus seen on the tour. Good numbers on different days.

PALLID SWIFT (*Apus pallidus*) – Not common, but we picked out a few around Rabat within the Common flocks.

LITTLE SWIFT (*Apus affinis*) – A swirling flock was seen near Ouarzazate.

Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

COMMON KINGFISHER (*Alcedo atthis*) – Singles over a few days, but several on rocks along the coast at Skhirat and Agadir seemed unusual.

Meropidae (Bee-eaters)

BLUE-CHEEKED BEE-EATER (*Merops persicus*) – Fairly common in the Erg Chebbi area. Good lucks right from our hotel!

EUROPEAN BEE-EATER (*Merops apiaster*) – This is the common bee-eater seen as tens of thousands are migrating through the region from Europe.

Upupidae (Hoopoes)

EURASIAN HOOPOE (*Upupa epops*) – Always a group favorite. Good numbers were around this year.

Picidae (Woodpeckers)

GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER (ATLAS) (*Dendrocopos major numidus*) – Seen in the Zaer and oak forest around Rabat.

LEVAILLANT'S WOODPECKER (*Picus vaillantii*) – A North African endemic that we saw well in the scope north of Ifrane. Fairly rare and local in Morocco. Fantastic!

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

LESSER KESTREL (*Falco naumanni*) – One was seen in the desert near Boumalne Dades.

EURASIAN KESTREL (*Falco tinnunculus*) – Seen most every day. Common.

ELEONORA'S FALCON (*Falco eleonora*) – This very rare falcon (a young bird) was spotted just as we were leaving Lac du Sidi. Nice work, Kim!

EURASIAN HOBBY (*Falco subbuteo*) – Good numbers around Lac du Sidi and again along the coast in Agadir.

LANNER FALCON (*Falco biarmicus*) – Leigh spotted one on the ground (feeding on a Fat Sand Rat, no doubt) in the desert of Erg Chebbi. Awesome bird to find.

PEREGRINE FALCON (*Falco peregrinus*) – Singles here and there; the most frequently encountered falcon on this tour.

BARBARY FALCON (*Falco pelegrinoides*) – One perched on the telephone poll as we left our desert hotel in Erg Chebbi. Another rare falcon.

Malaconotidae (Bushshrikes and Allies)

BLACK-CROWNED TCHAGRA (*Tchagra senegalus cucullatus*) – Lots in the Zaer (where seen well) and again in the coastal scrub around Souss Massa. Quite vocal.

Laniidae (Shrikes)

SOUTHERN GRAY SHRIKE (SOUTHERN) (*Lanius meridionalis algeriensis*) – This subspecies was seen along the coastal plain. These birds are darker overall with less white above the eye and less white in the wing. Oddly, we may have seen this subspecies around Ouarzazate (which is a good ways inland).

SOUTHERN GRAY SHRIKE (SOUTHERN) (*Lanius meridionalis elegans*) – Seen in the desert areas around Midelt and Erg Chebbi

WOODCHAT SHRIKE (*Lanius senator*) – Mainly juveniles, but seen on several days.

Oriolidae (Old World Orioles)

EURASIAN GOLDEN ORIOLE (*Oriolus oriolus*) – One was in the tall eucalyptus forest in the Lake Region. We had it in the scope; pretty good looks.

Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)

EURASIAN JAY (*Garrulus glandarius*) – First seen (and heard) in the Jabaa oak forest. Not real common on this tour.

EURASIAN MAGPIE (*Pica pica mauretania*) – This particular subspecies is quite striking (from mainland Europe populations) with deep blue around the eye. Fairly common in coastal scrub and forest along the coast.

RED-BILLED CHOUGH (*Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*) – Hundreds around Oukaimeden.

YELLOW-BILLED CHOUGH (*Pyrrhocorax graculus*) – Also known as Alpine Chough, we had around 20 individuals mixed with the Red-billed.

EURASIAN JACKDAW (*Corvus monedula*) – Not big numbers, but seen around Rabat. Increasing?

BROWN-NECKED RAVEN (*Corvus ruficollis*) – Good numbers (where they have increased over the years) in the Erg Chebbi area. In good light you can appreciate the brown neck and chest.

COMMON RAVEN (*Corvus corax*) – Common in High and Middle Atlas.

Alaudidae (Larks)

GREATER HOOPOE-LARK (*Alaemon alaudipes*) – This odd-looking lark was seen well in the Erg Chebbi area where not uncommon.

DUPONT'S LARK (*Chersophilus duponti*) – This rare and local lark was seen well in the desert near Midelt.

BAR-TAILED LARK (*Ammomanes cinctura*) – Seen on our drive around Erg Chebbi.

DESERT LARK (*Ammomanes deserti*) – First seen at the Pharoah Eagle-Owl spot, but again around Tagdilt.

THICK-BILLED LARK (*Ramphocoris clotbey*) – Sandi picked out this massive billed lark in the desert trash around Boumalne Dades. A cool looking lark.

GREATER SHORT-TOED LARK (*Calandrella brachydactyla*) – Good numbers in the Tagdilt desert, but also again along the coast north of Agadir.

LESSER SHORT-TOED LARK (*Calandrella rufescens*) – A big flock was seen in the desert near Zaida.

CRESTED LARK (*Galerida cristata*) – The most common lark seen on the tour; found in a variety of disturbed arid habitats. We spent alot of time looking at these guys.

THEKLA LARK (*Galerida theklae*) – Just a couple in the desert near Zaida were confirmed. Possibly another on the Tagdilt track.

WOOD LARK (*Lullula arborea*) – Very odd seeing a pair foraging in the short grass above treeline at Oukaimaden. It was a bit confusing as we sorted out what they were!

HORNED LARK (*Eremophila alpestris*) – Good numbers at Oukaimeden.

TEMMINCK'S LARK (*Eremophila bilopha*) – Nice looks (and close) in the Tagdilt region. Similar to Horned Lark, but in general shows much more yellow in the face.

Hirundinidae (Swallows)

BANK SWALLOW (*Riparia riparia*) – Fairly common along rivers; usually near water.

EURASIAN CRAG-MARTIN (*Ptyonoprogne rupestris*) – Along the cliffs of the Ziz River and again in the High Atlas around Oukaimeden.

BARN SWALLOW (WHITE-BELLIED) (*Hirundo rustica rustica*) – The European variety was common on tour.

RED-RUMPED SWALLOW (*Cecropis daurica*) – Caught up with just a couple of birds as we climbed towards Oukaimeden.

COMMON HOUSE-MARTIN (*Delichon urbicum*) – Just a couple were seen during our drive in the Lake Region (near Ifrane).

Paridae (Chickadees and Tits)

COAL TIT (*Pariparus ater*) – First in the Jabaa oak forest and again below Oukaimeden.

GREAT TIT (*Parus major*) – Fairly common in forested areas nearer the coast.

AFRICAN BLUE TIT (*Cyanistes teneriffae*) – A lovely looking tit that we saw well in the Zaer and along Lac du Sidi; also again around Agadir.

Sittidae (Nuthatches)

EURASIAN NUTHATCH (*Sitta europaea*) – Just one in the Jabaa forest near Ifrane.

Certhiidae (Treecreepers)

SHORT-TOED TREECREEPER (*Certhia brachydactyla*) – Lots around in the Jabaa Forest.

Cinclidae (Dippers)

WHITE-THROATED DIPPER (*Cinclus cinclus*) – Along the small river below Oukaimeden.

Pycnonotidae (Bulbuls)

COMMON BULBUL (*Pycnonotus barbatus*) – Yep, pretty common.

Regulidae (Kinglets)

FIRECREST (*Regulus ignicapilla*) – Seen well in the Jabaa Forest. Heard again below Oukaimeden.

Cettiidae (Bush-Warblers and Allies)

CETTI'S WARBLER (*Cettia cetti*) – Lots heard in reedy areas along streams. Seen at Lac du Sidi Bourhaba.

Phylloscopidae (Leaf-Warblers)

WILLOW WARBLER (*Phylloscopus trochilus*) – Singles on most days.

IBERIAN CHIFFCHAFF (*Phylloscopus ibericus*) – Seen along the coast at Souss Massa on our walk back from the bald ibis. Greener above and yellower below than (Common) Chiffchaff.

WESTERN BONELLI'S WARBLER (*Phylloscopus bonelli*) – One at the Erg Chebbi oasis foraging in the tamarisk.

Acrocephalidae (Reed-Warblers and Allies)

WESTERN OLIVACEOUS WARBLER (*Iduna opaca*) – Lots in the tamarisk at the Erg Chebbi oasis, again in the garden in the Tagdilt area.

MELODIOUS WARBLER (*Hippolais polyglotta*) – On the coast in the scrub along the Souss Massa.

EURASIAN REED-WARBLER (*Acrocephalus scirpaceus*) – Amazing views of a bill-snapping individual at the Mansour Eddahbi Reservoir.

Locustellidae (Grassbirds and Allies)

COMMON GRASSHOPPER-WARBLER (*Locustella naevia*) – A great find was this migrant/winter visitor skulking in the coastal scrub north of Agadir.

Cisticolidae (Cisticolas and Allies)

ZITTING CISTICOLA (*Cisticola juncidis*) – Nice looks at Lac du Sidi.

Sylviidae (Sylvids)

GARDEN WARBLER (*Sylvia borin*) – Singles here and there.

AFRICAN DESERT WARBLER (*Sylvia deserti*) – A great find for us in the desert scrub near Erg Chebbi. A NW African endemic.

WESTERN ORPHEAN WARBLER (*Sylvia hortensis*) – Two were foraging in the orchard near Boumalne Dades. A good find for us. Their paler eyes were striking against the darker head.

TRISTRAM'S WARBLER (*Sylvia deserticola*) – An awesome bird that is restricted to NW Africa. We had a cooperative adult male approach us for nice looks and photos.

SUBALPINE WARBLER (*Sylvia cantillans*) – Fairly common in the desert areas around Erg Chebbi where it winters.

SARDINIAN WARBLER (*Sylvia melanocephala*) – Common in the coastal scrub and forest around Rabat and Agadir.

SPECTACLED WARBLER (*Sylvia conspicillata*) – Singles around the Tagdilt track and Souss Massa south of Agadir.

Muscicapidae (Old World Flycatchers)

SPOTTED FLYCATCHER (*Muscicapa striata*) – Common in a variety of habitats.

RUFIOUS-TAILED SCRUB-ROBIN (*Cercotrichas galactotes*) – Seen from the vehicle, which was a surprise! Another was found in the coastal scrub north of Agadir.

EUROPEAN ROBIN (*Erithacus rubecula*) – In the Lakes Region and Giant Cedar Forest. Fairly local in Morocco.

EUROPEAN PIED FLYCATCHER (*Ficedula hypoleuca*) – Lots in a variety of different habitats/places.

MOUSSIER'S REDSTART (*Phoenicurus moussieri*) – A striking bird. Lovely. Seen first in the Lake Region and again at Souss Massa on the coast.

COMMON REDSTART (*Phoenicurus phoenicurus*) – First in the Zaer, but again below Oukaïmeden.

BLACK REDSTART (*Phoenicurus ochruros*) – One female/young male below Oukaïmeden. I was surprised not to see more in this area.

BLUE ROCK-THRUSH (*Monticola solitarius*) – Seen at a desert stop before Midelt and again in Oukaïmeden.

WHINCHAT (*Saxicola rubetra*) – Several in the coastal scrub near the Tamri River mouth.

EUROPEAN STONECHAT (*Saxicola rubicola rubicola*) – Along the Souss Massa south of Agadir.

WHITE-TAILED WHEATEAR (*Oenanthe leucopyga*) – Also known as White-crowned Wheatear, this species was fairly common in the arid areas around Erg Chebbi. Often seen perched on top of buildings.

BLACK WHEATEAR (*Oenanthe leucura*) – Good numbers in the desert areas around Erg Chebbi and Boumalne Dades. Likes to be around rocky cliffs.

NORTHERN WHEATEAR (*Oenanthe oenanthe*) – The northern migrants/winter visitors were quite common.

NORTHERN WHEATEAR (BLACK-THROATED) (*Oenanthe oenanthe seebohmii*) – "Seebohm's" Wheatear was seen in the Lake Region and again at Oukaïmeden. This is the resident form.

RED-RUMPED WHEATEAR (*Oenanthe moesta*) – Around Tagdilt Track where pretty common.

BLACK-EARED WHEATEAR (*Oenanthe hispanica*) – Always uncommon, but seen well on the Tagdilt and again at Mansour Eddahbi Reservoir.

DESERT WHEATEAR (*Oenanthe deserti*) – Good numbers in the desert around Midelt and Erg Chebbi.

Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)

EURASIAN BLACKBIRD (*Turdus merula*) – Good numbers in the green areas along rivers and in the coastal plain.

MISTLE THRUSH (*Turdus viscivorus*) – Lake Region.

Sturnidae (Starlings)

SPOTLESS STARLING (*Sturnus unicolor*) – Common along the coastal plain, and nesting on the hotel grounds in Skhirat.

Motacillidae (Wagtails and Pipits)

WESTERN YELLOW WAGTAIL (*Motacilla flava*) – It was fun (sort of) working on the different subspecies here in Morocco. We had several individuals wintering from mainland Europe (nominant race; yellow-throated types).

WESTERN YELLOW WAGTAIL (ASHY-HEADED) (*Motacilla flava iberiae*) – The resident subspecies was seen along the edges of Mansour Eddahbi Reservoir. Most were in a non-breeding plumage, so the striking head pattern was less obvious; however all showed the white throat.

GRAY WAGTAIL (*Motacilla cinerea*) – Along the edges of the lakes north of Ifrane.

WHITE WAGTAIL (MOROCCAN) (*Motacilla alba subpersonata*) – The dark-faced resident subspecies was seen well at Mansour Eddahbi Reservoir and again at the Oued Souss.

Emberizidae (Buntings and New World Sparrows)

CIRL BUNTING (*Emberiza cirulus*) – Nice looks in the Lake Region and again below Oukaïmeden.

ROCK BUNTING (*Emberiza cia*) – Several in the lower areas of the High Atlas below Oukaimeden.

HOUSE BUNTING (*Emberiza sahari*) – Common in the high desert between the High and Anti-Atlas. On the hotel grounds in Boumalne Dades.

Fringillidae (Siskins, Crossbills, and Allies)

COMMON CHAFFINCH (AFRICAN) (*Fringilla coelebs africana*) – This African subspecies was seen in the coastal areas around Rabat and again in the Lake Region. Also, around Oukaimeden.

CRIMSON-WINGED FINCH (*Rhodopechys sanguineus*) – Some years they are around in good numbers. This year we had at least 50 birds around Oukaimeden, which was awesome.

TRUMPETER FINCH (*Bucanetes githagineus zedlitzi*) – Our first were around Erg Chebbi, but again on the Tagdilt Track.

EUROPEAN GREENFINCH (*Chloris chloris*) – Not numerous, but seen in several different places.

EUROPEAN GOLDFINCH (*Carduelis carduelis*) – Again, not real common, but around in most places at various times.

EURASIAN LINNET (*Carduelis cannabina*) – Thousands around Oukaimeden.

EUROPEAN SERIN (*Serinus serinus*) – Lake Region and again in good numbers around Oukaimeden.

Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)

HOUSE SPARROW (*Passer domesticus*) – Every day of the tour.

SPANISH SPARROW (*Passer hispaniolensis*) – Just a couple of people saw this species at Oukaimeden.

DESERT SPARROW (*Passer simplex*) – A male was at the oasis in Erg Chebbi. Northern African endemic.

ROCK PETRONIA (*Petronia petronia*) – Hundreds in the Lake Region and again in Oukaimeden.

MAMMALS

BARBARY APE (*Macaca sylvanus*) – Seen in Ifrane.

CAPE HARE (*Lepus capensis*) – This was the hare seen by some at Mansour Eddahbi Reservoir, I believe.

BARBARY GROUND SQUIRREL (*Atlantoxerus getulus*) – Lots in the rocks around Oukaimeden.

ATLANTIC WHITE-SIDED DOLPHIN (*Lagenorhynchus acutus*) – A playful pod was watched as they bow rode the boat during our pelagic trip.

RED DEER (*Cervus elaphus*) – An introduced species in the Zaer Hunting Grounds.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Other critters:

Spiny-tailed Agama (*Uromastyx acanthinurus*) -- seen in the desert around Boumalne Dades (Tagdilt Track area)

Totals for the tour: 207 bird taxa and 5 mammal taxa