

# BIRDING TRIP REPORT

## Corsica

4<sup>th</sup> May to 8<sup>th</sup> May 2003

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### Itinerary

A short focussed trip on the endemics and other specialities of Corsica with a brief stay in Nice either end of the stay.

#### 4<sup>th</sup> May:

Flight from East Midlands Airport to Nice with BMI Baby arriving at 10.30am. Boarded the *Mega-express*, a high speed super ferry, and departed Nice at 17.30. Unfortunately, viewing proved difficult due to the speed of the ferry, though we found seawatching on both the outward and return journeys rather unproductive and failed to see Levantine Shearwater. Arrived in Bastia at 22.30 where we spent the night.

#### 5<sup>th</sup> May:

Morning spent birding from the roadside in the Gorges de l'Asco which extends westwards from Ponte Leccia. At Haut Asco, Corsican Nuthatch and Corsican Citril Finch were found relatively easily in the pines at the rear of the ski lodges north of the car park and a Lammergeier and numerous Alpine Choughs were seen over the high mountain ridges visible from the car park. Afternoon and early evening spent covering various sites along the N193 from Ponte Leccia to Pont du Vecchio. Marmora's Warbler proved quite elusive, but one was eventually seen well in dense maquis at Venaco. Night in Ponte Leccia.

#### 6<sup>th</sup> May:

Morning at sites around Ponte Leccia and Ponte Nuovo, with afternoon on coast at Etang de Biguglia. Night in Bastia.

#### 7<sup>th</sup> May:

Return ferry crossing aboard *Mega-express* departing Bastia at 08.15 and arriving in Nice at 13.30. Rest of day duding in Nice.

#### 8<sup>th</sup> May:

Return flight from Nice to East Midlands Airport.

### DAILY LOG

Details of key sites visited and species recorded. Note that several commonly recorded species such as Wood Pigeon, Collared Dove, Barn Swallow, are not included in this summary.

#### 4<sup>th</sup> May:

Nice Airport

Crag Martin (3).

Nice Harbour

Common Sandpiper (2), Yellow-legged Gull, Common Gull, Pallid Swift.

## Nice-Bastia Ferry

Arctic Tern (c58).

### **5<sup>th</sup> May:**

#### Bastia

Buzzard (1), Pallid Swift, Hooded Crow (1).

#### Gorges de l'Asco

Red Kite (5), Sparrowhawk (1), Alpine Swift (6), Common Swift, Bee-eater (3), Crag Martin, Grey Wagtail (2), Blue Rock Thrush (2), Jay (3), Raven (3), Spotless Starling (3), Serin (1), Cirl Bunting (1).

#### Haut Asco

Lammergeier (1 ad), Red Kite (1), Montagu's Harrier (1f), Buzzard (2), Golden Eagle (1 ad), Kestrel (1), Alpine Swift (4), Spotted Flycatcher (1), Coal Tit (3), Corsican Nuthatch (2, inc 1 colour-ringed male), Alpine Chough (30+), Hooded Crow (1), Raven (2), Corsican Citril Finch (4).

#### Ponte Leccia

Golden Eagle (1), Sand Martin (1), House Martin, Grey Wagtail (1), Golden Oriole (1), 'Italian' Sparrow (4+), Serin (1).

#### Ponte Leccia to Corte

Buzzard (1), Turtle Dove (1), Great Spotted Woodpecker (1), Jay (1), Raven (8+), Greenfinch, Goldfinch (2).

#### Pont du Vecchio

Red Kite (1), Buzzard (1), Great Spotted Woodpecker (1), Robin (1), Marmora's Warbler (1 heard), Firecrest (2), Spotted Flycatcher (3), Long-tailed Tit (3), Coal Tit (1), Jay (1), Chaffinch (1), Common Crossbill (2), Cirl Bunting (1).

#### D143 near Venaco

Red Kite (2), Dipper (1), Marmora's Warbler (1), Subalpine Warbler (1m), Long-tailed Tit (1), Jay (2), Corsican Citril Finch (2), Cirl Bunting (2m).

### **6<sup>th</sup> May:**

#### Ponte Leccia

Red Kite (2), Bee-eater (6), Woodlark (2), Tawny Pipit (2), Whinchat (2), Mistle Thrush (1), Blue Tit (4), Great Tit (3), Spotless Starling (8), 'Italian Sparrow', Chaffinch (1), Serin (1), Corsican Citril Finch (7), Greenfinch (2), Linnet (1), Cirl Bunting (1m).

#### Ponte Nuovo

Red Kite (1), Sparrowhawk (1), Buzzard (2), Cuckoo (1 heard), Wren (1), Robin, Nightingale (2), Spectacled Warbler (1m), Sardinian Warbler (1), Blackcap, Firecrest (1), Spotted Flycatcher (3), 'Italian Sparrow'.

#### Etang de Bigugila

Little Grebe (1), Great Crested Grebe, Squacco Heron (2), Little Egret (9), Grey Heron (1), Honey Buzzard (3), Marsh Harrier (12), Buzzard (1), Lesser Kestrel (6), Red-footed Falcon (7 : 1 ad m; 2, 1<sup>st</sup>-s m; 4f), Hobby (2), Coot, Black-headed Gull (13), Audouin's Gull (6 ad), Yellow-legged Gull, Bee-eater (3), Sand Martin (10+), Yellow Wagtail (4), Nightingale (2), Stonechat (1m), Cetti's Warbler (3), Fan-tailed Warbler (1), Reed Warbler (1), Serin (2), Corn Bunting (2),

#### Bastia

Common Sandpiper (2), Scops Owl (1), Pallid Swift, Tree Sparrow (3).

**7<sup>th</sup> May:**

Bastia

Yellow-legged Gull, Pallid Swift.

Bastia to Nice Ferry

Cory's Shearwater (1), Black Tern (14 ad), Yellow Wagtail (1f).

Nice Port Area

Mediterranean Gull (4, 1<sup>st</sup>-s), Pallid Swift.

Nice Airport

Common Tern (2), Crag Martin (2), Magpie.

**8<sup>th</sup> May:**

Nice Airport

Crag Martin (4), White Wagtail (1), Magpie.