

Holiday Highlights
Bulgaria
23-31 May 2015

Guides: Duncan Macdonald and Attila Steiner

Guests: Gordon Stuttard, Annie and David Erdman, Sheila Rodgers, Jane Moore, Andrea and David Strickland, Belinda and Steve Batt

Day 1 We all meet up sleepily at Terminal 5, Heathrow in good time early in the morning and check in. We have some time to wait through in departures so we all agree to meet up at the gate. It is always nice to fly with BA as they provide you with food and drink as part of the service. It is an easy flight and smooth landing into Sofia. There are a plethora of Magpies as we taxi in. Our luggage is collected bit by bit until we are all ready for our adventure. Through in arrivals the smiling face of Attila is a very welcome sight. Introductions made we head to the bus and meet the other Attila, our driver, before heading off into Bulgaria.

We head Northeast on the motorway collecting our first Common Kestrel and Common Starlings. We pass along the western edge of the Central Balkan Range where we find our first House Martins, Red-rumped Swallows and Common Swifts as we pass through the superb wooded, hilly landscape. There is a Common Buzzard above a hill and Steve spots our first White Stork.

We make a stop to investigate a nice piece of meadow. The track we turn off onto has a car ahead who doesn't really want us there but with force of numbers they give up and head off. The grassland is incredibly herb rich with trees and bushes below steep hillsides. There are butterflies on the wing and Steve quickly calls Green Hairstreak. There are fritillaries and blues. Attila hears Barred Warbler and wanders down the track to get closer. As we walk down the track, with a dog at our heels, we find Heath and Eastern Knapweed Fritillary on flowers. We listen for the Barred Warbler when Attila points us to a raptor that turns out to be a very close Honey Buzzard. Wow, we get great views of this stunning, long-winged raptor. The Barred Warbler is singing again and we get fleeting glimpses of it as it song flights and lands on various bushes. Eventually it perches up on a tree, in clear view alongside a pair of Red-backed Shrikes! We get fantastic views of both species. There are a further two Honey Buzzards up behind us, one of which is incredibly pale. We investigate a couple of orchids growing amongst the grass that turn out to be Bug Orchid and Loose-flowered Orchid.

We stop further on down the road at a service station with cafe at the back for a comfort break and to see if we can get some sort of lunch. We wander down to the cafe where they are most unhelpful. We have to walk over a bridge to get to the cafe so we investigate the river when we wander back. Marsh Frogs are calling and we get to see some of them out on rocks. Whilst people wander off Steve and Gordon get a Grey Wagtail and a Kingfisher fly through under the bridge. The Grey Wagtail perches up and sings nicely for us. We purchase some bread things that are heated and have cheese in them. The other bread thing contains a green jelly surprise! Nice. There is a very high Grey Heron as we eat and a Tree Sparrow puts in a brief appearance.

A Red-backed Shrike is sitting on a telephone wire close and a Chaffinch is singing from the other side of the river.

Bulgaria rid itself of its communist past after 1991 but there are still reminders of its links to the old Soviet Union in the form of impressive, austere concrete sculptures; the towns of Sevlievo and Gabrovo both having fine examples. The industrial buildings are all derelict providing excellent nest sites for House Martins and Swallows that we see swarming around these buildings.

We arrive in the very pretty town of Tryavna, in the foothills of the Central Balkan Range and find our hotel. We are spread to the four winds a bit but all have comfortable rooms. Meeting up for dinner we find to our delight, that we are dining outside. It is pleasantly warm. The food just keeps on coming, course after course whilst we are serenaded (in Eurovision style) by a singer who actually has a fine voice, but she stops at requests!

Day 2

Those of us that get up early for a pre-breakfast promenade are rewarded with a beautiful, warm morning. Our hotel is located in the old heart of the town with a bridge over the river. Just the other side of the bridge is a charming town square.

A Grey Wagtail sings from the top of a riverbank tree and a Black Redstart is singing from an aerial on top of a roof. On our various rambles we add Jay, Hooded Crow and Pallid Swift to the list along with innumerable House Martins, Swallows and Common Swifts. Some of us watch a White Stork fly low over the rooftops with a beak full of nest material making it look quite comical.

After breakfast and loading the van with our luggage we head off continuing our journey east through the centre of Bulgaria. We all comment on how much forest there is. It covers the landscape as far as the eye can see in places.

There is a roadside stall selling cherries so we stop and Attila buys 2kg to enjoy a little further down the road. Here we are in a wide, forested gorge and we stretch our legs and have a scan around. There is Song Thrush, Blackbird, Golden Oriole and Corn Bunting singing. The cherries are delicious as Common Buzzards soar and glide along the ridge top. Steve and Sheila find a blue butterfly on the gravel where we are parked and photos are taken for comparing with the book. It is decided that we are looking at Reverdin's Blue due to the amount of orange on the underside of both wings.

At Fisek we stop for a scan of the lake and find Mallard, Lapwing, Moorhen, Cormorant and a White Stork. Just a few hundred metres down the road we find a roadside, lakeside cafe and decide to have lunch here. It is now really quite warm and we all agree, cold beers are ordered! There is a Common Whitethroat song fighting from a nearby bush and Small Heath Butterflies zipping around the newly cut grass. A Painted Lady powers past. The numbers of Barn Swallows and House Martins is staggering but Attila manages to point us to two Sand Martins that wing past close. An Ortolan Bunting is singing from the other side of the busy road and gives us the run around without producing decent views. Belinda then comes up trumps with a soaring male Montagu's Harrier above us. We have a decent lunch of Zander and chips before scanning the lake one last time and getting Great Crested Grebe.

At a junction where a new extension of the motorway is being built David E. points out some Bee-eaters that are sitting on fencing but unfortunately we cannot pull over.

We stop near Kavarna in some fabulous steppe-like habitat near some wind turbines with the heat quite intense. As soon as we get out of the van the sound of larks is incredible. There are mainly Calandra Larks singing but they are joined by Skylark and the occasional snatch of Short-toed Lark. We scope our first Woodchat Shrike on top of a bush before walking out through the habitat rich in thyme, yarrow, convolvulus, Star of Bethlehem and Broomrape, amongst others. A male Red-footed Falcon is hovering as are a couple of Common Kestrels. Attila finds another falcon higher up but heading our way. It is long winged and tailed and very powerful, it is an Eleonora's Falcon! We even manage scope views.

Attila then directs us to a Stone Curlew that is out in the open and we get superb views of this strange looking bird before realising that it is one of three! We watch these birds along with Lesser Grey Shrikes on top of bushes and a Hoopoe that wings its way through. Another male Red-footed Falcon flies over when we hear Black-headed Bunting singing and Attila locates it on a tree by the road. What a beauty it is, canary yellow with a jet black head. A Hobby comes over us quite low showing the streaked underparts when an Isebelline Wheatear is located on a low mound. This is about as far west as this bird gets in Europe. Long legged and upright it is quite a large wheatear if not the most colourful. There are Silver Studded Blue and Safflower Skipper to add to our butterfly list.

We head ever closer to the Romanian border on the Black Sea coast and we stop at a small lake, just inland at Sablenska Tuzla. There are Bee-eaters around us as we get out and we can hear the industrial notes of Great Reed Warbler, the scratching of Common Whitethroat and the reeling of Savi's Warbler. From a very rickety platform we can view out over the reeds to open water although it is quite misty. There are Ferruginous Ducks close as well as Coot and Moorhen. We don't feel particularly safe on the platform so we relocate down a track to an area where we can scan the water. Steve and David S. are ahead and tell us there is a very close Great Reed Warbler and boy are they right! Up on some tall reeds bold as brass singing its heart out. There are Common Terns coming in and out of the mist along with a couple of drake Garganey, a drake Pochard and Attila finds a drake Wigeon which is a good find. Steve locates a close Squacco Heron down in the reeds and a Common Cuckoo gives us close flight views. But time is pressing.

We finish our journey at Durankulak at the Branta Birding Lodge where we are greeted by the delightful Tatanya who shows us to our rooms. We all admire the Pallas's Gull and Marbled Stomatopoda at the top of the stairs. We are joined by her husband and co-owner and host Pavel who runs Branta Tours and he gives us some very useful information about various species as well as about the lodge. The location is fabulous with views straight onto the Durankulak (lake of the deep ear). Refreshed we set about polishing off the divine dinner that Tatanya has prepared, lamb with potatoes, salad, cheese and bread, delicious. Pavel is a professional musician and the two of them serenade us from the piano as we finish our desert. A fitting end to a magnificent day.

Day 3

Some of us are up earlier than others and Steve takes a wander down towards the lake. In the garden Lesser Whitethroat are singing from either end of the garden along with a single Common Whitethroat. Turtle Doves are on wires and Great Cormorants fill the air space over the lake. Three Caspian Gulls fly over the hotel as Pavel joins us in the garden just as breakfast begins. He tells us that for the past three years a pair of White-tailed Sea Eagles have nested close by when he finds one flying right over the lake carrying prey! It quickly disappears behind some trees but then we pick up another (?) flying the other way. This one lands on the ground and through the scope we can see the massive yellow bill of this 'barn door'.

After breakfast we head around the edge of Durankulak to the coast just at the edge of the lake. There are extensive reed beds here and it also gives us the chance to scan out over the Black Sea. There is a cafe and visitor facility here with some very stinky bins. A short walk leads us to the shore and a bit of scanning brings us Great Crested Grebe and Black-necked Grebe. There are Cormorants everywhere but none of the Pygmy type. Along the shore there is a collection of gulls, mainly Yellow-legged but with three Caspian Gulls. There is also a Grey Plover on the edge of the gulls and some sort of carcass on the beach.

We turn our attention to the reed beds where another group has started to scan. By a low wall we get extensive views over the reeds and a bit of open water. There are Great Reed Warblers absolutely everywhere and all sitting right out in the open. Their industrial calls being the soundtrack to our day. We get very close views of Spanish Sparrows just yards away and a small puddle below us is attracting Barn and Red-rumped Swallows as well as House Martins down to collect mud for nest building. There are two Whiskered Terns flying over the open water showing their dark bellies beautifully. Attila spots a Little Bittern flying over the reeds when a flock of Squacco Herons flies back the other way having been disturbed by a female Marsh Harrier.

We walk along a track at the edge of the reeds, following the coast. We find Scarlet Darter on the way along with a female Yellow Wagtail of the black-headed form. Our target here is Paddyfield Warbler, right on the western fringe of its range. We try a bit of lure and we get a response, although very distant, it is immediately. We walk a little further and catch up with the other group, who are German and have had no luck with the warblers. They depart on our arrival and we use another bit of playback and bingo we hear two birds straight away. Suddenly one is working its way up a reed stem and into the open singing as it goes. What a view, what a song. Over the next hour or so we get astonishing views of maybe three separate males singing and chasing each other through the reeds. It is hard to fathom just how rare this bird is in Europe as we get such good views. Above us a flock of Whiskered Tern flies over and there are regular appearances of Grey and Purple Herons, Squacco Heron whilst Great Reed Warblers and Reed Warblers fill our ears. Steve suddenly spots a group of birds flying fast towards us and they are starlings, but as they get closer we see they are quite big and rosey! A flock of ten Rose-coloured Starlings fly right over our heads heading for the cafe but we watch as they decide to keep going and are quickly out of sight.

Some of us have decided that they need to get limbs working again and so start heading

back along the track. A scan back down the beach reveals three Grey Plover now and that the carcass maybe a sea turtle. There is a gorgeous Little Ringed Plover close to us on the sand.

We have lunch here and David S. and Steve find a swarm of some huge hornet-type insects around the base of a dead stump, all buzzing inches from the ground. (Later investigation shows that they are Mammoth Wasps). Before leaving some of us get another three Little Bitterns whilst Cuckoos seem to be everywhere.

Heading back towards Shabla we pass numerous Lesser Grey Shrikes and a couple of Turtle Doves on overhead wires and a Golden Oriole is also seen. The poppies and Eastern Larkspur along the roadside are stunning. We stop at a meadow behind some roadside trees. The colours and scent of the place is beyond description. Attila says that this can be a good spot for Roller and within seconds he has found one on a wire. This remarkably blue bird is admired by all and we watch it hunt. There is a close Black-headed Bunting singing and so is a Tawny Pipit, from the same tree!

We pick up on three falcons chasing each other around the sky and we manage to scope them. They are long winged and tailed and masters at flying with a distinct power. One is darker than the others. They are Eleonora's Falcons and we are treated to quite a display. Jane manages to follow them in the scope as they perform.

Back at Shabla Lake we see the same species as we did yesterday so we decide not to hang around but to try a place we had heard about from Pavel at Branta Lodge this morning. He told us that a pair of Finsch's Wheatears are breeding along a bit of the coast not far away, so we head there to have a look. Tyulenovo is the place and it is an affluent little hamlet on the coast. We park up and head around the large houses to get to where Pavel said they were. There are Yellow-legged Gulls down on some rocks in the sea along with a Mediterranean Gull and a Shag. Three Caspian Terns fly over but we get mainly tail-end views of these impressive terns. There are serious numbers of Yelkouan Shearwaters on the move out at sea and huge numbers fishing, diving shallowly into the water. We watch through the scopes and some even see the fins of porpoise. We look up from this spectacle and find the male Finsch's Wheatear right in front of us on top of a post! Wow what a view! We see clearly the whitish cap like a Pied Wheatear but that the white extends right down his back. We watch as he comes closer into a nearby garden where he starts probing around a heap of grass trimmings, he is a spectacular bird. We eventually lose him around the corner so we follow. We reposition ourselves amongst a group of landscape artists and quickly find Pied Wheatear for comparison. There is also a male Northern Wheatear here that chases the Pied. Three species of wheatear. Some Sandwich Terns fly by as does an Adult Mediterranean Gull, but the wheatears steal the show.

We drive south to a bit of coastal steppe-like habitat with a line of stone pyramids across it. We wonder what they are for but even Pavel doesn't know. The soundscape here is utterly breathtaking. With Calandra Larks everywhere and the occasional Skylark but the air is just humming with their song. We hear the mechanical tones of an Olive Tree Warbler crank up but cannot tempt it out. Golden Orioles zip about giving us tantalising views. Gordon finds us a fine Tawny Pipit perched alongside a Corn Bunting. Attila

finds us a Green Lizard as we try to tempt the Olive Tree Warbler out again, but still with no success. As we drive back down the sandy track we get stunning views of four Grey Partridge that are far too concerned with pairing than they are with the potential of being run over!

We continue south towards Kaliakra where we make a brief stop on a rocky promontory where we have heard that a pair of Saker Falcons have been breeding. There is a telecommunications area at the end of the road with men working on it. A pair of Woodchat Shrikes adorn the gate posts, but we decide that it is not the best place for us so we turn around and take a small road down into the sandstone gorge beneath us. There is a small bay here under the promontory and Common and Alpine swifts are wheeling around. A common Kestrel makes a brief appearance. We are going to spend the evening here until it gets dark as we hope for Eagle Owl. We walk along the road at the foot of the gorge and are aware of the constant barrage of Great Reed Warbler song. Cuckoos are also singing loudly. We get some good views of both male and female Pied Wheatear flitting from one side of the valley to the other.

As the road bends towards a little cottage Attila hears an Icterine Warbler so we try and lure it out but again this bird is not interested so we have to make do with song only. We slowly wind our way back to a place where we have extensive views of the crags opposite us. Here we set up and wait. We find a very close Cuckoo and scope it and hear the strange "bubbling" call of a female Cuckoo. A Lesser Whitethroat is singing and a Cetti's Warbler bursts into life before exiting, stage left, from a small tree in front of us. We wait some more. Attila returns to the van to get a more powerful speaker and we try to lure an Eagle Owl to call back. A Nightjar starts to churr and a Night Heron fly's over us but the owl is not for playing.

We return to Branta Lodge late for a dinner of sumptuous chicken that Tatanya has been marinating for the past 2 days. What a day, what a meal but our thoughts are with Mark, so we raise a glass in his honour, cheers!

Day 4

Sheila, Steve and David S. all walk down towards the lake before breakfast. There are both common and Lesser Whitethroats singing and Annie is delighted at finding a stonking male Red-footed Falcon on a wire opposite the lodge. He is a cracker. Belinda watches as he takes his morning exercises and stretches. A male Linnet sits up on the top of a laurel bush and we find distant Hobby and Turtle Dove sharing the same dead tree. A White-tailed Eagle flies languidly over the lake scattering Cormorants like chaff in the wind.

Having said our fond farewells to Pavel and Tatanya and settled our bills, we return to the reeds and area of coast where we found Paddyfield Warbler earlier. There are Grey Plover on the beach along with Yellow-legged Gulls and the carcass is now more exposed. We don't hang around as there is not much doing and relocate to a track leading down through some woodland, on the other side of Durankulak. The trees give us some welcome, dappled shade and we find our first Cardinal butterflies. They are stunning. Attila finds a Norfolk Hawker and it obliges by perching on a tree. A female Blue Chaser is perched nearby also. It opens up into glorious poppy and daisy-strewn meadow where the scent of *eliagnus* is heavy in the air. We find Heath Fritillary and

Small Heath butterflies and scope a beautiful Turtle Dove that has been purring whilst we have been enjoying the sounds and smells.

Pavel, as a parting present, gave us information about a Syrian Woodpecker nest close by, so we go looking for it. We walk into a lovely bit of deciduous woodland near Kamen Brjag, looking for the stick that Pavel has placed to show us where the nest is. The forest is alive with the song of Nightingale and Golden Oriole. Spotted Flycatchers are in here and we get glimpses of Hawfinch. We cannot locate the nest hole but suddenly Attila and Duncan hear a strange song. It sounds like a *Phyloscopus* warbler but not one we are familiar with. We decide on Greenish Warbler and Attila tries some song. We get an immediate response! Wow, this is a very good bird to find here in Bulgaria, especially singing. Attila phones Pavel to ask about the nest tree and tells him about the warbler. Pavel informs us that it is so rare it may be a first record for the country!! Attila and Duncan manage to get some brief but clinching views of the Greenish Warbler before it moves deeper into cover.

We find the woodpecker hole and it has got to be only 50cm from the ground. We wait and watch and then move further away in case we are too close. There are fleeting glimpses every now and again, so we move further back still. Eventually we manage to get some fairly good views of this lovely pied woodpecker with pink under tail feathers.

Lunch is had on the same piece of steppe where we found Stone Curlew on Day 2. Calandra Larks and Skylark are singing, a roller hunts from a wire and both Common and Alpine Swifts give us a demonstration of what flying is really about. We stop briefly at a bridge over the River Kamchya where there are countless House Martin nests attached to it. Attila finds us a stunning male Banded Demoiselle on some vegetation in the river. He then flushes a Little Bittern that flies off down stream. There are Purple-shot Coppers on the wing as we find more demoiselles, both male and female.

Further south we stop, at a bit of mature oak forest near Goritza. This is a very busy road and we all launch ourselves across it to get to a path head. As soon as we get across the road, however, we come across a family of Nuthatch in the trees above us, with fledged youngsters begging for food. Down the track we listen for woodland birds and quickly pick up on Yellowhammer with its distinct, up-inflected, dialect! Seriously. Avoiding a tethered horse we go deeper into the forest. We hear Short-toed Treecreeper but cannot find one and we also hear Middle Spotted Woodpecker, but again we only get fleeting views. There is a clap of thunder that gets us turning around to walk back to the van. There is rain now but the sound of Semi-collared Flycatcher calling from within the grounds of the cafe stops us in our tracks. Scanning from the locked gates we eventually get scope-filling views of this stunning little flycatcher that is another species at its western limit here.

We arrive in the village of Sarafovo, just north of the city of Bourgas and find the hotel Mirana where George and his wife Angelina welcome us. The busyness of the town is a million miles away from what we have experienced thus far but the welcome is warm and the food is great.

Day 5 We start our day at the salt pans by Bourgas at Atanasovsko. This is a nature reserve on

the outskirts of the city. The light is not in our favour (in our eyes) but we have a good scan about. There are platforms out in the water with nesting Common Terns on them, with a few Avocets in amongst them. There is an Eastern Olivaceous Warbler chuntering it's monotonous song from the bushes behind us. There are lots of Mallard and some Little Egrets when Attila finds us a "banjo bill" or Spoonbill as it should be known. There are a couple of Oystercatchers to add to the list as well as a black-headed Yellow Wagtail, but the sun is behind him so he is not showing well. A microlight comes winging in close to the ground and we watch as it sprays the canal and surrounding reed beds. No wonder there are no birds here with all that insecticide around.

We move on to a viewable area of Bourgas Lake. There is an industrial backdrop to our view but there are plenty of birds here. We see a White Pelican winging in and on the water there are plenty of Dalmatian Pelicans along with a few White Pelicans so we can really have a look at the plumage differences and size difference. They really are the most dinosaur-like birds. There are hundreds of Great Crested Grebes, a few Common Pochard and plenty of very noisy, very close Marsh Frogs. We have fun watching their throat patches expand when they call. There are a couple of distant Black Terns as a flock of Squacco Herons erupt from the reeds nearby and as we watch them, two Bearded Tits fly through our field of view!

At Mandra Lake, a huge reservoir, we pull up and wander down to the shore in quite intense heat. Black-veined Whites are on the wing and we see both White-tailed and Black-tailed Skimmers near the water. A Night Heron is standing quite close but we soon realise that there are scores of Night Herons around the edge and we even watch some fly down to the water to catch fish.

The group separate and all start looking at different things. We find a perched White-tailed Eagle on the far side that brings us all together and we watch as it takes to the air and starts to soar above a field of farm labourers, if only they looked up! The flight views are great of this mighty bird, if a little distant. Attila quickly follows this with a dark Booted Eagle that is soaring almost directly above us.

There is a Marsh Warbler singing from a bush right by where we are standing but no amount of encouragement tempts it out for a look and it remains "heard only". David and Andrea have found a large green lizard in the base of a tree and it is exactly that, a Green Lizard; although the face and throat are a vivid blue. We manage to get it out in the open and notice that it has lost a chunk of its tail. We decide to walk up onto the road to check the other side of the lake when there is a jump of alarm from Gordon and a shout of, "snake!" We all look at where he is pointing when a large, dark snake glides through the undergrowth heading towards the shore. We all get great views of what is an Aesculapian Snake.

Over the other side of the road, passing another very obliging couple of Green Lizards, we have a look at the bit of lake on this opposite side. Instantly Attila gets us to quieten down and he points at a bit of very close vegetation where a Night Heron is lurking. It is so close we can see the red eye without binoculars. What beautiful birds they are with their quills out of the back of their heads. But Attila is on fire and announces that there is a snake swimming across the lake. We all look at where he is pointing to find a large

Grass Snake on the surface. We watch this superb animal for so long we all enjoy prolonged scope views, remarkable. Eventually it disappears from view. The only other species of note are the Cormorants sitting in a pylon, a very distant Lesser-spotted Eagle and a brief view of the White-tailed Eagle again, so we decide to return to our original position to eat our volumous lunch.

Whilst noshing the Marsh Warbler is still singing and there are some dragonflies to contend with. They are Black-tailed Skimmers. Steve finds a White-tailed Eagle again but this one is coming in fast towards the lake from our left. We watch in awe as it powers over the lake, goes into a glide that takes it so low over the water it looks like its belly feathers are getting wet and bang, talons down and a fish is caught. Wow! The immensity of the bird and the ease with which it performed the kill are staggering, what a magic moment.

Jane makes some excited noises behind us and we turn to see a very large Aesculapian Snake cross the path by her feet, larger than the first one and we view it long enough to get photos.

Out over the water there are still night herons flitting around and catching fish and we find another large Grass Snake swimming towards the shore. Again it is in the water so long we all get scope views. There are frogs everywhere (hence the snakes) and we get Lesser Spotted Fritillary to add to the butterfly list.

We relocate to the eastern end of Lake Mandra. There is a fabulously close White Stork nest with young in it. David and Steve decide to head off to get closer for photos and get invited onto a first floor balcony, by some workmen, in order to get better pictures! They return and confirm there are five youngsters in the nest.

On the sand by a little pool Attila spots three Pond Terrapins and decides to see if they are laying eggs. A Pair of red-backed Shrikes are showing well and a Black-headed Bunting is singing. The reptiles are not laying eggs but Attila finds us a Gull-billed Tern and Annie spots a Little Bittern flying into some reeds across the track. She gets good views of it on the ground but it soon skulks off into the reeds. A Marsh Harrier is up and Cuckoos are going bonkers, chasing and calling and we hear lots of bubbling from females. Another raptor appears above us at a neck-breaking angle. This one is a Honey Buzzard but it is quite uncomfortable to watch it, no matter how good the views are. As we leave we get fabulous views of a singing Woodchat Shrike that allows the photographers to get very close. As we drive off five Gull-billed Terns fly over the bus.

At the saltpans of Pomoria a chap is laying out black, plastic pipe. It looks like irrigation pipe, hopefully not to be used whilst we are there! There are seriously dark clouds in the background as we scan around. The posts in the water have terns sitting on them, mainly Sandwich Terns but a few Commons and a couple of infiltrating Cormorants. There are a couple of Curlew Sandpipers on the little island ahead of us and a Little Tern flies in and lands by the sandpipers and starts to bathe.

On the pool behind us there are Avocets with chicks that are seriously aaah! Black-winged Stilts are there also. David E. finds a Little Ringed Plover and Attila finds a

Crested Lark on a post behind us. Sheila spots a plover flying in and Gordon identifies it as a Kentish Plover.

We finish our day in and around Slanchev Brjag where Attila tries to find views over some pools where there should be more, but development has done for a lot of it. He finds a distant view over a pool where there are distant Pygmy Cormorants in the gloaming. We head back to the hotel and are treated to a sumptuous local stew in individual pots. Beautiful.

Day 6 A Little Owl was calling during the night and before breakfast a couple of Eleanora's Falcons fly over the hotel.

We pack up the bus with luggage and say our goodbyes to our generous hosts and head off towards the Rhodope Mountains for the rest of our holiday.

We start our day back at the pans at Atanasovsko where there are still no waders other than a close Oystercatcher. There are birds though with Common Terns, Spoonbills, Little Egrets and a nice, close Olivaceous Warbler to keep us going. There is a large group of Dalmatian Pelicans and a Penduline Tit calls from the trees behind us. There are Little Gulls out on one of the bunds and Gadwall on the water. We also find a single Black Tern, much closer than yesterday.

Onward we travel heading towards the mountains on roads of varying quality! About 6km from Elhovo we stop for a fabulously close Black Kite where there are also huge flocks of Common Swifts hawking over the expansive fields.

We move onto an area of woodland and scrubby hillside near the River Tundzha where we are stopping to look for one of the highlights of Bulgaria. A quick scan of the hillside brings us four Woodchat Shrikes, Bee-eaters, a perched Jay, Spotted Fritillary and a Cirl Bunting flies over. We move over the road and take a track down to the river. There are butterflies everywhere whilst a Whitethroat sings and shows briefly. A Freyer's Purple Emperor lands on Duncan's arm and then shows itself well on vegetation, what a butterfly!

A little further down Attila spots a Penduline Tit nest and we get great views of these fantastic birds with their bandit masks to-ing and fro-ing from the gourd-shaped nest. Suddenly a Masked Shrike appears behind the nest but before we can all get on it the bird flies and doesn't show again. We walk down to the river and almost instantly Attila finds the target - the mighty Odalisque, Europe's largest damselfly. A female is on show and it is truly stunning. Before long we have counted at least four of these superb insects and what a colour they are a sort of pastel blue all over. But they are not the only insect interest here. All along the riverside vegetation and in almost all of the undergrowth are flitting countless Banded Demoiselles in their hundreds. It is one of the best experiences this guide has ever had! These are an electric blue and everywhere we look we can see them. Attila spots a Semi-collared Flycatcher in a tree on the other side of the river, but it is not for coming closer. It takes us to look at a Common Pincertail for the flycatcher to come closer, very close. A Common Snaketail lands on a tree just newly emerged and we bag Eastern Festoon, Comma, Map,

Sloe Hairstreak and Latticed Brown on our way back up to the bus. What a place, we are all buzzing from the relentlessness of it all.

We drive into the Sakar Hills for lunch at a spot that gives us glorious views out over the rolling, forested hills with scrubby bushes below us. There are Common Buzzards up soaring as we tuck in and both Red-backed Shrike and Black-headed Buntings very close and both singing. It is cloudier but the heat is still intense. We hear Olive Tree Warbler and with some perseverance we get good scope views of two of these large warblers. We add Jay and Hoopoe to our lunch list and what appears to be a Geranium Argus before heading back on the road.

As we are driving along Attila gets the driver to stop and reverse as he has spotted a Little Owl on the roof of a barn. Impressive spotting. We get great views of this fabulous owl with Dennis Healy eyebrows. Just outside Planinovo we stop in baking heat at a good spot for Eastern Orphean Warbler. We dip on this but get another two Olive Tree Warblers, right by the bus and an impressive pair of Short-toed Eagles.

Planinovo is a sleepy little village in the hills that, like so many, is full of abandoned houses and crumbling infrastructure but beautiful with it. Attila stops the bus as he has seen a black and white woodpecker fly up from the side of the road. It looked like it had a white back! We all get out and spot a hole in a tree in a small orchard, but nothing moves or calls whilst we look. We do attract the attention of a group of local women walking up the road. They are intrigued at what we are doing and it is only Gordon's superb arm signals that get them to understand, the rest of us are helpless with laughter, thanks Gordon!

We stop between Lefka and Pastrogor, within an Eastern Imperial Eagle territory. The valley rolls away from us as we scan over the countryside. There are two Red-rumped Swallows collecting mud from a puddle and David E. finds a Nightingale out in the open, singing from a dead branch! Outrageous, we all know they don't do that! We get superb views. A couple of Common Buzzards are up when Attila, rather excitedly says that he thinks he has found an eagle! We all look where he is directing us and through the scopes, in a dead tree is sitting an adult Eastern Imperial Eagle. The straw-coloured nape, black throat and chest are all clear and we all agree that this is some bird! We all get long views as it just sits there, master of all it surveys. Belinda even gets to see it have a scratch (and it didn't fly off). We leave it as we found it.

At Jerusilemovo we stop at another bit of superb habitat looking down into a rocky gorge with stunning vistas all around. As we get out of the bus we quickly realise that the soundscape is equally as impressive. There are Cirl Bunting, Olive Tree warbler, Nightingale, Barred Warbler, Turtle Dove and Woodlark all making up the orchestra and it stops us in our tracks. The Woodlark is song-fighting above us. Some lucky ones get both Golden Oriole and Cirl Bunting in the scopes before our eyes start to complain and so we head around the corner (so to speak) to our next accommodation in the stunning little village of Gorno Pole.

We are staying at the Wild Farm here where the farm is famous for being almost completely self sufficient as well as being organic and providing very good

accommodation in the main complex. There are too many of us in the group for us all to stay here though so Jane and Sheila are in a house and Gordon and Duncan in another two about ten minutes away from the main farm. Jane and Sheila have an allotment in their accommodation so gardening will be on their agenda! Gordon and Duncan are told that it is not unusual to hear Jackal or wolves from where we are staying! We are finally getting some rain which makes walking home after dinner interesting but we are tired from a long day so I am sure sleep won't be far away.

Day 7

It has rained quite heavily overnight and the sky is still quite leaden as those of us away in our houses walk up to the farm for breakfast. Hopefully the day will improve as we have done so well up to now. Breakfast is fabulous with everything from the cheeses to the ham, the honey and the butter all produced on site. Betti, our host is back from an award ceremony in Sophia for the quality of her place and she is lovely and bubbly and speaks very good English! Some of the group have seen Egyptian Vulture before breakfast.

We are going to start our day at a vulture feeding station and we need to get to a village to meet our guide. We have an impromptu stop on the way as there is a small group of Red-footed Falcons on the roadside wires. We get out and marvel at how beautiful these falcons are. There is an adult pair as well as a second calendar year male. We see vultures beginning to spiral in the distance. The American couple who are also staying at the farm are joining us for the vultures also.

In the village of Ptocharka we meet our guide, Marin, who works for the Bulgarian Society for the Protection of Birds (BSPB). He has the enviable position of monitoring the vultures in the area especially nesting Egyptian Vulture and also feeding the vultures with carcasses. We drive up a rough track out of the village, through scrubby woodland getting higher all the time. We then carry on,, on foot up a steep rocky path that is non-existent in places but it is worth it for the view at the top. There is a large rock face ahead of us and the valley drops away from us where on the far side is the feeding station. We can see the bits of carcass that have been left. There are Griffon Vultures all over the rock and a couple of Egyptian Vultures are down on the feeding area. Two Long-legged Vultures wing past and we get good scope views of both Roe Deer and Fallow Deer.

While we are waiting and scanning a mammal is spotted approaching the carcass area. We get our scopes on it and are delighted to find that it is a Golden Jackal! This little predator is tricky to find and so this is a great find. It doesn't hang around though and quickly runs over the ridge. Marin tells us that they are seen commonly here and it is not unusual to see wolf! That gets us concentrating on looking!

Steve answers a call of nature and on his return shares some pictures he has taken of a remarkable yellow and spotted caterpillar as well as a rather large cricket. So a number of us follow him for a look. The caterpillars are in good number but nothing in comparison to the grey crickets. Once we see one they are everywhere. The caterpillar is Spurge Hawkmoth. The weather is steadily improving and the vultures are beginning to take off and soar but generally away from us. There are up to four Egyptian Vultures and we are treated to lots of chasing before we walk back to the bus for some

lunch having already said goodbye to Marin and our American friends.

It is considerably warmer now and we can hear Eastern Orphean Warbler down hill from the bus. Essex Skippers and Silver-studded Blues are on the wing. We try for the warbler but with no luck. Just as we are packing up to move on Attila draws our attention to another vulture that is pretty much overhead. It is a Black Vulture! Fantastic. These birds are in small numbers in the Rhodopes but in Greece not Bulgaria as breeders. So this bird has travelled a bit to get to this source of food. Thank you!

As we drive on we find an Egyptian Vulture on a pylon by the road so we stop for a look. It however is equally as interested in us and makes its way closer and closer allowing us just staggering views of this stunning bird, what a privilege.

From Potocharka we head down to the river Krumovitza, one of the jewels of the area. The landscape of mountain ridges, cliffs and river is breath taking. We set up shop along a raised terrace above the river giving expansive views that have the cameras clicking away. There are ant highways through the short sward. Annie spots a Little Ringed Plover on the ground near us and Jane spots a very low Long-legged Buzzard, wow! It carry's on out of view but Steve quickly tells us that it is on a branch so we re-train the scopes and enjoy great views. The Little Ringed Plover is constantly flitting between the ground where we are and the river, maybe it has a nest? There are at least three pairs of Red-backed Shrikes around us and a huge centipede under a rock.

A Hobby makes an appearance over the river and starts hawking insects. There are Golden Orioles singing and we get ridiculously close to a singing male Black-headed Bunting. A Long-legged Buzzard makes an appearance above us carrying a snake and we watch it soar and then glide across the valley to land on the edge of a nest. We get scope views of the nest with an adult and a chick. The chick gulps down the snake and starts to waddle around the ledge. There are Bee-eaters and a Roller on the wires around us. We have fun watching dung beetles rolling dung and an ant carrying a grasshopper that is twice its size.

We stop again at the rock face below our village of Gorno Pole. Here we look for a Rock Nuthatch nest that Attila knows about and it doesn't take long for him to find it. It doesn't take long for a bird to show up at the nest. There are Crag Martins flying around and a smell of death in the air! The nest is like a gourd of mud and we get great views of this large nuthatch.

Attila hears a Chukar calling. He tries some playback and we see it over the other side of the valley sitting right on top of a rock! What a fantastic bird it is. Over the next fifteen minutes we get great views of it as it goes from rock to rock and eventually suns itself on top of a large rock.

There is a Green Woodpecker going backwards and forwards in the valley beneath us when another Chukar appears a little further away on another rock and we manage to scope a Cirl Bunting, what a cracker. A Sub-alpine Warbler cranks into life nearby and Attila tries some playback. Wow, it pops straight up into some dead twigs, singing it's heart out and showing beautifully. What a fitting way to finish our day. But it isn't

finished, for we are treated to the most amazing pie for dinner. An entire pumpkin baked and stuffed with lamb and other stunning goodies, what a day.

DAY 8 This morning is much brighter and warmer as the travelers head for the farm for breakfast. There had been Scops Owl singing last night and possibly jackals howling. Breakfast is the delicious affair it was yesterday, fortifying and moreish.

We drive down to the rock face below the village for another look first thing. The Rock Nuthatch nest is still busy as the Griffon Vultures begin to rise. It feels like it is going to be a hot day. A Sub-alpine Warbler is singing as is a Red-backed Shrike (so nice to hear these shrikes singing, they do it so softly.) The Chukar is still on his rock and when he calls we can see his breath whilst a Peregrine screams from the crags above us. There is another raptor up with the Griffon Vultures that turns out to be a Honey Buzzard and we get great views as it crosses the valley. Attila hears Sombre Tit and we chase it from tree to tree but are only rewarded with brief views. Another species with a toe-hold this far west. We also hear Middle Spotted Woodpecker calling from its nest hole.

Belinda spots two Black Storks low across the opposite ridge and we get great views of these fabulous birds. They are joined by another Honey Buzzard while Cirl Bunting, Golden Oriole and Nightingale sing from the valley beneath us. Sheila then finds an amazing insect flitting around at the side of the road, like a cross between a butterfly and a dragonfly but with long pendant hindwings (we shall return to this insect later).

We stop again, a little further down the road with the river still below us, the crags above us but with views over to the old mining town of Madhrovo. As we get out we become aware of a Cirl Bunting singing very close. A flock of Alpine Swifts are tearing around the crags with Crag Martins. Attila finds us a Blue Rock Thrush that we can scope before we finally locate the Ortolan Bunting that we have been hearing since we got out of the bus. It is difficult to see at first because it is against the sun but it relocates and we get fantastic views of this superbly handsome bunting. The Griffons are coming and going from their nest ledges when Belinda the stork spotter, spots another Black Stork coming in towards the cliff calling as it lowers its legs and obviously lands on a nest ledge, unfortunately out of sight for us. Gordon has a dodgy looking bite on his arm so we decide to fuss over him for a bit, but hopefully it works! Some good butterflies are spotted here also including: Southern White Admiral, Marbled Fritillary, Ilex Hairstreak, Green Hairstreak and Little Tiger Blue. David and Andrea find a Common Clubtail. What a great stop.

As we are driving along towards our next destination we screech to a halt as Attila has spotted a Tortoise at the side of the road. Out we pour and take a look at this stonking animal. It is a Herman's Tortoise and it is stunning, there is just something about them.

We stop in some scrubby habitat on a long decent towards a distant reservoir with forested hills to our right. There are two Olive Tree Warblers right next to us that David E. gets great views of as does Gordon who has walked up to a covered viewing area. Boy is it hot! There is Common Whitethroat song-flighting and we get great views of a Woodlark on overhead wires. A Latticed Brown is very approachable resting on a branch.

There is a large raptor above the forest ridge but by the time we get the scopes onto it, it is disappearing - dam - the one that got away. However we do find four Black Kites and an Escher's Blue to complete our list for this stop, not bad.

We head into the town of Madhrovo and stop for ice cream at a little cafe and welcome they are too. We then drop down a rough track to the River Arda, below the town that then winds its way along the river bank. This is stunning with the mountains and crags looming above us. There are Red-backed Shrikes on bushes every 100m or so. We find a group of Grey Herons with a Black Stork standing in the river.

We find some shade along the track to stop and have lunch with Nightingales singing, yet another obliging Cirl Bunting and three Black Storks above the opposite ridge! What a country. There are also five Ravens making their way along the ridge line when a single bird appears lower down, carrying prey and lands on a small crag and begins to tear up its lunch. Through the scope we can make out the feathers of a Black-eared Wheatear, oh dear. And in a series of gulps it is gone! Oops, we hope that isn't the only one we are likely to see.

Suddenly we are onto a small raptor that is making its way upstream, against the opposite hillside. A looks like an Accipiter and we finally manage to get it into the scopes and yes, it is a female Levant's Sparrowhawk. She starts to soar and we can clearly make out her shape with pointed wings and darker wingtips. Fantastic stuff. We keep watching until even in the scopes she is just a dot.

Jane finds us a Black Kite following the river; nice and close that obligingly lands in a tree and starts to preen. The views we get are superb, every feather of this superbly adaptable raptor. But what is this insect? It is another of the strange pendant winged things that we saw earlier on only this one wants to be looked at. It flits from flower to flower allowing us to get so close the cameras don't work! It has beautiful wings and is quite simply gorgeous and unlike anything any of us have seen before. Steve says that he thinks his species of the trip is right here and none of us disagree! (Attila looks it up during the evening and discovers that it is a Spoonwing or Threadwing Antlion).

We take a walk in the now searing heat along the track beside the River Arda passing various butterflies, all in good numbers - Marbled Fritillaries, Lesser-spotted Fritillary, Small White, Meadow Brown, Holly Blue, Brown Argus and Eastern Festoon. We are keeping an ear and eye out for Masked Shrike. The group becomes separated between the two guides with those at the back finding Balkan Stream Frog and Olive Skipper whilst those in front stop in the shade where there is a Barred Warbler that performs well and perched Peregrine high on a rock on the opposite side of the river. Once we have all regathered we drop down to the river where Gordon and Duncan waste no time in getting their socks and shoes off and cooling their tootsies in the water. We spend some time here just taking in the view and peacefulness of the place. Steve follows a Freyer's Purple Emperor along the track but it does not want to be photographed. An Egyptian Vulture cruises in opposite us and is instantly set upon by the Peregrine. It is relentless in it's harrying to the point we can hear the vulture sobbing! One nil to the Peregrine.

Walking slowly back along the baking track we all find Balkan Stream Frogs but are quite exhausted, hot and bothered by the time we reach the van and are glad for the water in the back of the vehicle.

We retrace our steps back up the track and stop in some shady, oak woodland. Only some of us want to walk along the road as the heat has tired some of us out. Those that do find a smart Green Lizard and a Southern Comma. In a likely bit of habitat we try a bit of playback for Bonelli's Warbler and get an instant reply. Frustratingly though the bird does not want to come down out of the canopy and we only get flitting views.

We stop one last time at a place where Golden Eagle might be had. Sheila finds a soaring raptor that is a young Imperial Eagle but with no sky-marks to direct people to it is hard to get and a superb bit of spotting by Sheila. Through the scopes we can see the colouration and everyone enjoys it. Golden Eagle will just have to wait for the next time! We drive back to the Wild Farm, dropping Jane and Sheila off first to complete their gardening duties.

We meet up before dinner to go through our final checklist of the holiday and to remember all the places we have been to and amazing experiences we have had by doing the traditional voting.

Species of the Trip: This was very varied; Ortolan Bunting, Red-backed Shrike, Little Bittern, Finsch's Wheatear, Imperial Eagle, Rock Nuthatch, Egyptian Vulture, Squacco Heron, Bee-eater, Black-headed Bunting and Spoonwing all getting votes with both guides going for Greenish Warbler.

Place of the Trip: There was a clear winner with Shabla Lake with other votes for Mandra, the River Arda, the Odalisque river, Lake Durankulak and the crags below Gorno Pole.

Magic Moments: Counting the vote of one of the guides the winner here was the Threadwing Antlion otherwise a tie with White-tailed Eagle catching a fish. Other votes of Stone Curlews, Red-footed Falcons, Black Stork, the snakes at Mandra, Paddyfield Warblers and Banded Demoiselles.

What we all agree on is just how astonishing this holiday has been and how it was made spectacular by Attila and the competent driving of his namesake. With Scops Owl beginning to call we have a wonderful final dinner of Salad and Mousaka.

DAY 9 We vacate our rooms and houses and have a fabulous breakfast. Jane decides that she wants to stay so she locks herself in the facilities and refuses to come out! Betti has to execute some spectacular yoga to get through the tiny window to encourage her out. We say our final farewells to the Wild Farm and head off towards Sophia.

Along the motorway we come across road signs directing us to Istanbul and we realise just how on the edge of Europe we are here. We pass enormous fields being ploughed by horse and others being hand-weeded by teams of people. This is what makes

Bulgaria such a special destination.

At the airport we say a fond farewell to Attila, what a guide, and thank the other Attila for his careful driving and finally say goodbye to Bulgaria.

SPECIES LIST

BIRDS

Black-necked Grebe	Levant Sparrowhawk
Little Grebe	Common Kestrel
Great Crested Grebe	Red-footed Falcon
White Pelican	Eurasian Hobby
Dalmatian Pelican	Eleanora's Falcon
Graet Cormorant	Peregrine Falcon
Shag	Chukar
Pygmy Cormorant	Common Quail (H)
Little Bittern	Pheasant
Black-crowned Night Heron	Water Rail (H)
Squacco Heron	Common Moorhen
Little Egret	Common Coot
Great White Egret	Eurasian Oystercatcher
Grey Heron	Avocet
Purple Heron	Black-winged Stilt
White Stork	Stone Curlew
Black Stork	Northern Lapwing
Eurasian Spoonbill	Grey Plover
Mute Swan	Little Ringed Plover
Common Shelduck	Kentish Plover
Mallard	Curlew Sandpiper
Gadwall	Ruff
Eurasian Wigeon	Mediterranean Gull
Garganey	Yellow-legged Gull
Ferruginous Duck	Caspian Gull
Common Pochard	Caspian Tern
Black Vulture	Little Tern
Griffon Vulture	Black Tern
Egyptian Vulture	Whiskered Tern
Honey Buzzard	Gull-billed Tern
Black Kite	Sandwich Tern
Eastern Imperial Eagle	Common Tern
Lesser Spotted Eagle	Yelkouan Shearwater
Booted Eagle	Feral Pigeon
Short-toed Eagle	Wood Pigeon
White-tailed Eagle	Collared Dove
Marsh Harrier	Turtle Dove
Montagu's Harrier	Common Cuckoo
Long-legged Buzzard	Scops Owl
Common Buzzard	Little Owl
Tawny Owl (H)	Reed Warbler
Nightjar (H)	Marsh Warbler
Common Swift	Paddyfield Warbler
Pallid Swift	Cetti's Warbler

Alpine Swift
Hoopoe
Kingfisher
European Bee-eater
European Roller
Black Woodpecker (H)
Great Spotted Woodpecker
Middle Spotted Woodpecker
Syrian Woodpecker
White-backed Woodpecker
Green Woodpecker
Calandra Lark
Skylark
Woodlark
Crested Lark
Crag Martin
Barn Swallow
Red-rumped Swallow
House Martin
Sand Martin
Tawny Pipit
Grey Wagtail
White Wagtail
Yellow Wagtail
Robin
Nightingale
Black Redstart
Common Redstart
Northern Wheatear
Black-eared Wheatear
Pied Wheatear
Finsch's Wheatear
Isabelline Wheatear
Stonechat
Blue Rock Thrush
Song Thrush
Mistle Thrush
Blackbird
Savi's Warbler (H)
Great Reed Warbler
Greenfinch
Eurasian Linnet
Hawfinch
Reed Bunting
Corn Bunting
Little Gull

Icterine Warbler (H)
Olive Tree Warbler
Eastern Olivaceous Warbler
Barred Warbler
Eastern Orphean Warbler (H)
Blackcap
Common Whitethroat
Lesser Whitethroat
Eastern Bonelli's Warbler
Common Chiffchaff
Greenish Warbler
Semi-collared Flycatcher
Spotted Flycatcher
Bearded Tit
Long-tailed Tit
Penduline Tit
Blue Tit
Sombre Tit
Great Tit
Nuthatch
Western Rock Nuthatch
Short-toed Treecreeper
Red-backed Shrike
Woodchat Shrike
Lesser Grey Shrike
Masked Shrike
Jay
Magpie
Common Raven
Hooded Crow
Rook
Jackdaw
Common Starling
Rose-coloured Starling
Golden Oriole
House Sparrow
Spanish Sparrow
Tree Sparrow
Chaffinch
Goldfinch

MAMMALS

Souslik
Golden Jackal
Fallow Deer
Roe Deer
Badger
Common Porpoise

REPTILES & AMPHIBIANS

European Pond Terrapin
Herman's Tortoise
Green Lizard
Grass Snake
Aesculapian Snake
Fire-bellied Toad
Marsh Frog
Balkan Stream Frog

LEPIDOPTERA

Speckled Wood
Scarce Swallowtail
Large White
Purple-shot Copper
Green Hairstreak
Silver-studded Blue
Eastern Knapweed Fritillary
Heath Fritillary
Lulworth Skipper
Small Heath
Safflower Skipper
Reverdin's Blue
Painted Lady
Clouded Yellow
Large Copper
Ruddy Darter
Turkish Goldenring
Common Clubtail
Common Snaketail
Small Pincertail
Brown Argus
Cardinal
Meadow Brown
Spotted Fritillary
Black-veined White

Nettle Tree Butterfly
Latticed Brown
Essex Skipper
Freyer's Purple Emperor
Eastern Festoon
Map
Comma
Southern Comma
Sloe Hairstreak
Small Copper
Eastern Bath White
Grizzled Skipper
Ilex Hairstreak
Holly Blue
Escher's Blue
Little Tiger Blue
Marbled Fritillary
Lesser-spotted Fritillary
Silver-washed Fritillary
Southern Small White
Southern White Admiral
Common Blue

DRAGONFLIES & DAMSELFLIES

Common Bluetail
Azure Damselfly
Common Featherleg
Small Red Eye
Odalisque
Banded Demoiselle
Blue Chaser
White-tailed Skimmer
Black-tailed Skimmer
Norfolk Hawker
Emperor
Lesser Emperor
Scarlet Darter

Knapweed Fritillary

OTHER INSECTS

Threadwing Antlion (Spoonwing)

Rose Chafer

Spurge Hawkmoth Caterpillar

Mammoth Wasp