

ANDUJAR LYNX



"I have visited the Sierra de Andujar over 50 times, so know how frustratingly elusive Iberian Lynx can be. To compensate, the Jandula River creates an almost spiritual calm, as you sit quietly on the granite rocks, listening to the birdsong and searching for Otter." Julian Sykes

Dates Thu 1 - Mon 5 Feb 2018

Price £1,195

Deposit £230 Single Supp £50

Leader Julian Sykes

Flights EasyJet, scheduled, Speedy Boarding and extra legroom included
Outbound: Morning, Gatwick-Malaga
Inbound: Afternoon, Malaga-Gatwick

Weather Probably a mixture of sun and showers (5°-20°C), warmer in lowland areas but can be cool in the mountains

Walking There will be some short walks up to 2km on level paths, slightly rockier in the mountains

Meals All included from lunch on Day 1 to lunch on Day 5

Insects Biting insects are not usually a problem

Accom Twin and single rooms all ensuite

Group 7

Day 1 Fly to Malaga and transfer to our base on the edge of the Natural Park, stopping enroute at Laguna Dulce
4 nights at La Caracola Hotel Rural

Days 2-4 Birdwatching and wildlife exploration in Sierra de Andujar

Day 5 Transfer to Malaga for our flight to the UK, with time at the Guadalorce Estuary

Just some of what we hope to see:

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|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Iberian Lynx | White-headed Duck |
| Otter | Black Vulture |
| Wild Boar | Spanish Imperial Eagle |
| Mouflon | Golden Eagle |
| Spanish Ibex | Goshawk |
| Greater Mouse-eared Bat | Iberian Magpie |

Julian Sykes: Iberian Lynx, Black Vulture

Andujar holds Spain's most thriving population of Lynx, the world's most endangered cat and yet is one of its best kept secrets.

- Perfectly placed accommodation in the Natural Park
- Spanish Imperial Eagle, Golden Eagle, Black Vulture
- Visit local wetlands for wildfowl and Greater Flamingos
- Azure-winged Magpie, Hawfinch, Hoopoe
- Bats, Otters, Wild Boar, Red and Fallow Deer
- Some of Spain's last areas of Mediterranean Forest
- Fine Spanish cuisine at the end of each day

After our morning flight to Malaga, we drive north to the Laguna Dulce where we shall spend a little time looking at wildfowl, which could include White-headed Duck and Red Crested Pochard. Greater Flamingos feed in the shallow waters, and occasionally Purple Swampheens can be found moving through the extensive reedbeds. We shall enjoy lunch overlooking open fields and hope to see Merlin, Hen Harrier and Calandra Lark, later driving on to our charming hotel in the heart of the Sierra de Andujar Natural Park, where our rooms overlook deciduous woodland, with a small bird hide on site. Birds around the hotel include Azure-winged Magpie, Firecrest and Short-toed Treecreeper. Once we've settled in, we might make our first visit to one of the viewing areas in the hope of finding an Iberian Lynx.

2-4 Three full days will be spent in the Sierra de Andujar, a contrasting region with some of the best representations of Mediterranean Forest still surviving in Europe. It forms part of the Sierra Morena Mountains and has a landscape of hills and mountains formed from granite, quartz and slate, which is bordered by the Jandula and Yeguas rivers. This Natural Park is home to the elusive and highly endangered Iberian Lynx, of which only 400 or so remain in the wild. We shall spend early mornings and late afternoons searching for this secretive animal from strategic points around the sierra. The rest of the time will be spent walking and driving

within the Reserve, along with time to relax in the afternoon at our hotel before our evening vigils. This Natural Park is also home to the magnificent Spanish Imperial Eagle and many other sought-after raptors, including Golden Eagle, Black Vulture and Goshawk. The tranquil rivers, separated by a series of reservoirs, with dramatic dam walls, attract Rock Bunting, Rock Sparrow, Crag Martin and Blue Rock Thrush, with the possibility of Otters fishing the river below. We shall also hope to see Azure-winged Magpies, Short-toed Treecreepers, Firecrests, Nuthatches and Crested Tits.

5 On our final day, we have an optional early start to look for Lynx. After breakfast we'll make our way back to Malaga Airport, visiting the nearby Mediterranean coastline. Here we hope to find Western Yellow-legged and Mediterranean Gulls, Gannets and possibly Common Scoter offshore, with Booted Eagle and Marsh Harrier over the nearby Nature Reserve.

