

WILDLIFE TRAVEL

19th – 26th April 2018 (1 week)



MALLORCA

Spring in the western Mediterranean

"Excellent guides"
"walking in
beautiful
surroundings"

Mallorca 2016

From the peaceful bay of Cala Sant Vincenç on the north coast, we will explore the spectacular limestone mountains of the Serra de Tramuntana, visit internationally important wetlands and enjoy walks near Mallorca's beautiful north-east coast.

Known as a popular holiday destination, Mallorca has some **stunning scenery** including many miles of 'wild', unspoilt coastline, extensive areas of woodland and Mediterranean 'maquis' shrublands and a dramatic mountain range that provides a background to the olive groves and small farms that cover most of the central plains. A scattering of internationally important wetlands and offshore islands add to the richness of an island that has a high biodiversity and a good number of endemic species.

We will explore a variety of habitats to enjoy the birds, other wildlife, plants and landscapes and also learn something of the island's fascinating culture, described as a mix of 'west and east' due to its strategic position in the Mediterranean. Particular species that we will look for include **black (cinereous) vulture and Balearic warbler**, and the rare and beautiful 'Mallorcan marsh orchid', *Orchis palustris* ssp *robusta*, a plant once thought to be endemic to the island and still only found in localised populations. We should see a good number of other animals including Hermann's tortoise, Algerian hedgehog, geckos, frogs, and many butterflies and dragonflies.

Bird migration will be underway whilst species that breed on the island will be in full breeding plumage. This is an ideal holiday for those who want an **introduction to Mediterranean wildlife**, or for those who wish to see the **species for which Mallorca is famous**. It is also a rare opportunity to explore the less well known parts of the island, **well off the beaten track**.



Price

£1595

Single Room Supplement

£95

Full board

- Day 1** flight to Palma
- Day 2** Albufera, Ternelles
- Day 3** Mortix, Lluc, Cuber
- Day 4** S'Albufera, La Gola
- Day 5** Formentor, Son Real
- Day 6** Arta Peninsula
- Day 7** Son Real, Son Bosc
- Day 8** return to UK

Leaders

Charlie Rugeroni
and local guides

birds, spring flowers,
other wildlife, culture,
conservation

Wildlife and culture holidays



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Our profits are donated to the **Wildlife Trusts**



ITINERARY

The itinerary may be changed in response to local conditions or at the discretion of the leaders.

Day 1 Flight to Palma, transfer to our hotel. Brief introduction to the holiday after dinner.

Day 2 We visit **Albufereta** wetland near Port de Pollença to see a good range of birds including several waders, such as black-winged stilts, herons and egrets, as well as terns and possibly osprey, and some interesting marsh and coastal plants. Any sunshine will bring out the butterflies and dragonflies of this important, recently-protected area. After a picnic lunch in the historic town of **Pollença**, we will then head for the **Ternelles Valley** in the Serra de Tramuntana for a walk to look for black vulture, which has the largest wingspan of any vulture in Europe, and other birds such as griffon vulture, booted eagle, peregrine, blue rock thrush, and Balearic and Sardinian warblers. Plants typical of the Serra will be seen on the walk, including endemics such as the 'hedgehogs' of the milk-vetch *Astragalus balearicus*, and the germander *Teucrium subspinosum*. This is a little visited, private area for which we will have an access permit.

Day 3 We head further into the Serra passing through dramatic limestone formations. Our morning walk will be in one of the most beautiful and remote parts of the island, the **Mortix Valley** where we will look for the rare Bonelli's eagle. Plants include the dwarf palm *Chamaerops humilis*, Balearic St John's-wort, *Hypericum balearicum*, and orchids such as tongue orchid, *Serapis lingua*, and mirror orchid, *Ophrys speculum*. There will be an opportunity to visit the 'bodegas' **Vinas Mortitx**, taste some of their delightful, locally produced wines and enjoy a light lunch. We continue with a visit to the grounds of **Lluc Monastery**, with time to enjoy this historic site and then move further west to **Cuber Reservoir**, for a walk to the dam, another good area for black vulture.

Day 4 We explore **S'Albufera Natural Park**, a famous wetland on the Bay of Alcudia, with its many lagoons, marshes, reedbeds, grasslands and woodlands, each home to a great variety of plants and animals. Highlights include greater flamingo, purple and night herons, little bittern, western swamphen (purple gallinule), the rare moustached warbler (one of the largest populations in the world) as well as several species of tern, egret, duck and wader. Plants include the '**Mallorcan marsh orchid**', as well as many other species of orchid (depending on the season), rose garlic and wild gladioli. There are several good hides and viewing areas, reached by pleasant walks along the ancient canals. There may be an optional early morning start for those who wish, before the whole group meet for a look around the visitor centre where Charlie and our local guide will be able to provide some 'behind the scenes' background to the work at the Park as both have been involved in projects here. After lunch, we transfer to La Gola Centre, an urban nature reserve in the centre of Port de Pollença, with a tidal lagoon, for a different range of plants and birds.

Day 5 Today our morning will be spent on the spectacular **Formentor Peninsula** which forms the north east point of the island. We will gradually drive towards the Formentor lighthouse at the far end, with stops along the way for birding, endemic plants and coastal landscape.



Dramatic cliffs can be seen from the viewpoints and we will look here for Eleanor's falcon and peregrine, whilst sheltered valleys are ideal for finding crossbill and woodchat shrike. Amongst the rocks grow several endemic plants including the rare peony, *Paeonia cambessedesii* among other notable species. After a typical Mallorcan lunch in Port de Pollença, we have a 'free' afternoon with options including a relaxing walk along the waterside, coffee and cakes at a Mallorcan 'patisserie' or walk in nearby pinewood.



Day 6 Travelling further south, we head for the **Arta Peninsula**.

A walk towards **Cala de Mesquida** should be particularly good for more endemic plants, including another chance to see the peony. From the foothills of the Muntanyes d'Arta, there are superb views of Alcudia Bay and, depending on time we will visit sites in the **Parc Naturel de la Peninsula Llevant**. Possible sightings include booted eagle, Egyptian vulture, Balearic warbler, red kite and blue rock thrush.

Day 7 Today we visit **Son Real**, on the southern side of Alcudia Bay. This is a good area to find Hermann's tortoise as well as orchids. We walk to the coast and marvel at a Phoenician necropolis with spring flowers around the ruins. There is an excellent information centre outside of which we shall take our picnic. We then stop at **Son Bosc**, a pinewood area south of S'Albufera with many species of orchid including serapias.

Day 8 Transfer back to Palma airport for our flight home.

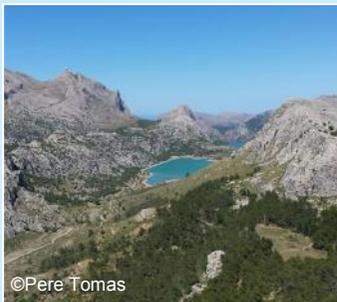
Accommodation, meals and transport

We stay at a pleasant, family-run hotel in the small, quiet bay of Cala Sant Vincenç on the rocky north-east coast. Hostal Oriola has 23 rooms, all en-suite and each with a balcony. The hotel has views over the bay, with the unspoilt beach being only a short walk away, and is well located for our excursions to the nearby mountains, coastal wetlands and the old town of Pollença. We will have picnic lunches on most days, with one lunch taken in a typical Mallorcan restaurant. Evening meals will mostly be at the hotel, with possibly one or two at a nearby restaurant.

Health, fitness, passports and visas

On most days we will be walking for much of the morning or afternoon, albeit slowly, and sometimes gently up and downhill. Most walks are on paths but in places we may walk on rougher ground (walking boots - can be lightweight - needed). None of the walking is strenuous. All excursions are optional; you can enjoy time around the hotel if you prefer.

Photos front: mirror orchid, greater flamingo, S'Albufereta, Mallorcan marsh orchid. Below: Hermann's tortoise, avocet & black-winged stilt, Cala Sant Vincenç; this page: Tongue orchid, griffon vulture, roosting egrets, Cuber reservoir, Balearic St John's wort.; back: S'Albufera Grand Canal, Hostal Oriola, Audouin's gull, purple heron, scarce swallowtail.



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Leaders

Charlie Rugeroni is a landscape and garden designer who has previously worked for English Nature, Butterfly Conservation and Marinelife. Charlie has led several of our holidays including Costa Rica, Morocco, Portugal, France and Romania, as well as Mallorca in 2016. He has also spent several weeks as a volunteer on biodiversity at S'Albufera NP. Our local guide is **Pere Tomas** from **Mallorca Natural Tours**. Pere has worked in international conservation, specialising in the habitats of the Mediterranean. He knows the island extremely well. Between them, our leaders will help you explore the island's habitats to ensure that you get the most from your holiday.

Weather

At this time of year the weather is usually sunny but not too hot. There may be some cooler weather and some rain.

Flights

Group flights are with Easyjet from Gatwick as follows:

19th April depart Gatwick 09.05, arrive Palma 12.40
26th April depart Palma 19.50, arrive Gatwick 21.20

Transfers will also be arranged for the following flight from Leeds Bradford, with Ryanair

19th April depart Leeds Bradford 09.30, arrive Palma 13.10
26th April depart Palma 13.45, arrive Leeds Bradford 15.35

Mallorca is 1 hour ahead of the UK.

Direct flights from other airports are possible, including **Bristol, Manchester, Stansted and East Midlands**: there may be an additional cost for individual airport transfers, depending on the flight times. Please speak to us about options.



TO BOOK

Contact us to check availability and reserve a place. Complete the Booking Form and send to Sunvil Holidays (CAA-ATOL Licence 808, ABTA V6218), our tour operator, with your deposit. All details about booking are given in the Booking Pack.

DEPOSIT £500 PER PERSON, BALANCE DUE BY 18/1/2018
SEE GENERAL INFORMATION LEAFLET ON HOW TO BOOK

INCLUDED: Return flight Gatwick to Mallorca. Local transport as specified in itinerary. 7 nights accommodation full board (mostly picnic lunches). Services of leaders.

NOT INCLUDED: Refreshments. Entrances for optional sightseeing (e.g. the bodega, visitor centres if charged). Gratuities. Insurance.

WILDLIFE TRAVEL

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*Photos: Wildlife Travel except: Mallorcan marsh orchid-Pere Vicens; Albufereta, Hypericum balearicum,
Cuber reservoir-Pere Tomas; purple heron-John Caddick; Cala San Vincenc, swimming pool-Hostal Oriola*