

# WILDLIFE TRAVEL

10th to 17th October 2018 (1 week)

## ANDALUCÍA

Easy birding: Coto Doñana and Tarifa



NEW  
ITINERARY  
FOR 2018

### A long overdue return to Andalucía during the exciting autumn bird migration season.

October is a fantastic time to visit Andalucía, with our visit timed to catch the **peak of bird migration** as countless birds head south for the winter, particularly the raptors crossing the Straits of Gibraltar: the proximity of Africa, just over 14km at its closest point, makes this area a natural draw for birds crossing the Mediterranean.

We start our visit amongst the stunning limestone vistas of **Sierra de Grazelema Natural Park**, where we hope to find some of the mountain specialists such as Chough, Rock Thrush and Crag Martin.

From here we move to La Janda and Sanlucar de Barrameda where we will visit a number of **wetland sites** in search of waders, gulls, waterfowl and terns. We can hope to see a good range of species and at this time of year, anything can turn up! We will be looking for a number of specialities of this area including the majestic Spanish Imperial Eagle, the cryptic Common Chameleon, and the critically endangered **Northern Bald Ibis**, which has recently been re-introduced to southern Spain.

Our trip also includes the opportunity to go out by boat into the Strait of Gibraltar, where we hope to have an encounter with some of the many species of **whales and dolphins** that can be found in this area of the Mediterranean.

Our visit would not be complete without a visit to **Doñana National Park**, where we will take an excursion by 4x4 to explore this vast wetland looking for birds and large mammals including, if we are lucky, the elusive and endangered **Iberian Lynx**.



**Price**  
£1,725

**Single Room Supplement**  
£240

**Full board**

- Day 1** arrival Málaga
- Day 2** Sierra de Grazelema
- Day 3** La Janda
- Day 4** Strait of Gibraltar
- Day 5** Whale watching and Los Alcornocales
- Day 6** Sanlucar de Barrameda
- Day 7** Doñana National Park
- Day 8** return to UK

**Leaders**  
Mike Russell,  
with Manuel Morales

Bird migration, whale-watching, mammals

Wildlife and culture holidays



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



## ITINERARY

**Please note that the itinerary may be changed to suit the weather or other practicalities or at the discretion of the leaders.**

**Day 1, 10th October** Our flights take us to Malaga, from where we travel west towards Ronda (c. two hours). We will stop along the way to look for birds of the cliffs and mountains including Griffon Vulture, before settling in to our hotel for the evening. o/n Ronda

**Day 2, 11th October** We head to **Sierra de Grazalema Natural Park**, with its stunning, rugged **limestone landscape**, Mediterranean scrub and Cork Oak forests. Here we hope to find species such as Chough, Rock Bunting and Blue Rock Thrush. Following our picnic in the Natural Park we will visit cliffs near the villages of El Bosque and Arcos de la Frontera to look for Bonelli's Eagle and Peregrine. o/n Ronda.

**Day 3, 12th October** Today we will visit **La Janda**, a once extensive wetland that was drained for agriculture in the 1960s but still remains an important rest point for migrating birds. We hope to spot a range of species amongst the rice fields, marshes and ditches, with Little Bustard, Calandra Lark and Stone Curlew all possible, along with both Spanish Imperial and Golden Eagles which arrive here to spend the winter.

Our afternoon will include a visit to look for the critically endangered **Northern Bald Ibis**, which breeds in this area following a reintroduction project begun in 2003. o/n Tarifa.

**Days 4, 13th October** We head south along the coast to the **Strait of Gibraltar Natural Park**. The proximity to Africa here (just over 14km at its closest point) make this a focal point for migrating birds and in good conditions **huge flocks of raptors** and other large birds can be seen **soaring upwards on thermals** before making the crossing over the Strait of Gibraltar. Depending on the weather conditions there are a number of sites where we hope to get good views of species including Black Stork, Short-toed and Booted Eagle and Griffon Vulture, and we stand a good chance of finding a rare Rüppell's Vulture amongst the flocks.

This stretch of coastline can also be a great point for watching migrating seabirds and Cory's Shearwater, Balearic Shearwater and Great Skua could all be spotted passing along the coastline. We will also look for reptiles during the day, including the **Common Chameleon** found at the northern edge of its range in Andalucía. o/n Tarifa.

**Day 5, 14th October** Today we will take a boat trip out into the **Strait of Gibraltar** from Tarifa, where we hope to find some of the **marine life** of the area. The Strait of Gibraltar is home to both resident and migratory **populations of cetaceans**: at this time of year we could encounter Striped Dolphin, Long-finned Pilot Whale, Fin Whale, or maybe even Orca, which enter the Strait in late summer to hunt tuna. Other fascinating marine life we could encounter include flying-fish, the large and unusual Sunfish or Bluefin Tuna.



Following a lunch in a restaurant in Tarifa to enjoy some of the local specialties, we will visit the **Cork Oak forest** at Los Alcornocales - a great area to look for signs of Genets, Egyptian Mongoose and some of the other mammals of the area, as well as amphibians, reptiles, dragonflies and butterflies. o/n Tarifa.

**Day 6, 15th October** Our morning will be spent exploring the marshes and salt pans around **Sanlúcar de Barrameda**. The commercial **salts pans** at Bonanza are home to a wide variety of waders, wildfowl, gulls and terns, and we hope to find species such as Slender-billed Gull, Black-winged Stilt, Curlew Sandpiper, Greater Flamingo, Osprey and Caspian Tern.

We will stop at several local sites to look for species including Marbled Duck, Spectacled Warbler, White-headed Duck and Booted Eagle as we make our way to El Rocío. After checking in to our accommodation there will be time for a walk on the marshes to look (and listen!) for the last of the rutting Red Deer. o/n El Rocío

**Day 7, 16th October** We will have an early start this morning to give us the best chances of finding **Iberian Lynx**. Travelling in 4x4 vehicles, we will spend several hours in restricted areas of **Doñana National Park**, which has the planet's second largest population of this stunning endangered cat.

After lunch we will spend the remainder of the afternoon in Doñana National Park, again, travelling by 4x4 to explore its sand dunes, scrubland and beaches. We should see a wide range of terns, waders and gulls, and with a little luck, perhaps the majestic **Spanish Imperial Eagle**. There are also good chances to spot large herbivores here, with Red Deer, Fallow Deer and Wild Boar all roaming the National Park. o/n El Rocío

**Day 8, 17th October** Our final breakfast and then it is time to head towards Málaga (c. four hours), making roadside stops along the way as time allows before our flight home.

## **Accommodation, meals, transport and weather**

We will be staying at three small hotels during our holiday - Hotel Polo in Ronda, La Codorniz in Tarifa, and Casa Rural Doñana 51 in El Rocío. All rooms are en-suite. We will travel by small coach or minibus.

The holiday is full board, with all the meals provided during the stay a mixture of **local and International dishes**. We will take picnic lunches with us on our excursions with lunch at a local restaurant during our visit to Tarifa. Requests for special diets can be accommodated.

At this time of year the weather is usually sunny and warm (mid 20s°). However, as with everywhere the weather is no longer entirely predictable, and there could well be some cooler weather, or rain (perhaps heavy). There can be strong sun especially on higher slopes and sun protection is needed.



## Leader and Guides

**Mike Russell** is a Director of Wildlife Travel who has led many birdwatching and wildlife holidays for us since 2001 to destinations including Costa Rica, the Galápagos, Poland and the Danube Delta, as well as a previous visit to Coto Doñana and Tarifa in 2009.

Our local guide for this trip is **Manuel Morales** a local ornithologist who has been involved in many local bird conservation projects.

Between them, our leaders will provide you with an introduction to the area during the peak of the exciting autumn bird migration season, and will ensure that you have a relaxing and enjoyable holiday.

## Flights

The group flights will be from London Gatwick airport with Easyjet, as follows:

10th October depart London Gatwick 08.00, arrive Málaga 12.00

17th October depart Málaga 12.35, arrive London Gatwick 14.35

Spain is one hour ahead of the UK.

## Passport and visas

If you hold an EU passport, you do not need a visa to travel to Spain. If you do not have an EU passport, please check with your local consulate.

## Fitness

You should have a good level of fitness to get the most out of the planned activities on this holiday. While the walking is generally easy and we won't be covering any great distances, there will be some hilly, uneven or rocky areas for which good walking boots are essential.



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## 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 11/07/2018**

**INCLUDED:** Return flight from London Gatwick. Local transport for transfers and excursions as specified in the itinerary including boat trip. Seven nights' accommodation, full board basis. Services of guides.

**NOT INCLUDED:** Refreshments. Drinks with evening meals. Entrance fees for optional sightseeing. Gratuities. Travel insurance.

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## WILDLIFE TRAVEL

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Wildlife Travel Ltd. Reg. No 2237697; (for Registered Charity numbers, please contact us)*

**Photos.** Front - Booted Eagle, Iberian Lynx, Striped Dolphin, Northern Bald Ibis. Page 2 - Bonelli's Eagle and Griffon Vulture, Ocellated Lizard, European Bee-eater. Page 3: Black-necked Grebe, Egyptian Mongoose, White-headed Duck. Back - Clouded Yellow, Little Swift, Common Chameleon. *Photos courtesy Manuel Morales.*