

WILDLIFE TRAVEL



Holidays 2024



all our profits are donated to the Wildlife Trusts

Dear Wildlife Traveller,

This time last year, we weren't sure exactly how 2023 was going to pan out. To be honest, we weren't feeling all that optimistic, as the 'challenges' of the last few years were very much still a part of life.

Any pessimism we may have had turns out to have been misplaced: 2023 was a very welcome return to 'normal', during which it has been wonderful to return to some of our favourite destinations, from France to Chile, to travel again with so many familiar faces, and to be able to get back to doing what we do best: sharing some amazing wildlife with you, our travellers.

We look forward to sharing more travels with you in the year ahead.

Philip Laurie Chris

The year ahead

In the following pages, we hope you will find a trip to appeal, in our plans for the year ahead: from **ever-popular 'old favourites'**, such as Cyprus, the Vercors and the Danube Delta, to new itineraries, which this year includes holidays to the Dordogne and the Kalahari; botanically focused visits will take us to Cyprus, the Burren and Western Australia; easy birding holidays include Lesvos, Bulgaria and Costa Rica; our UK breaks will take us to the Derbyshire Dales and the Dorset coast; and we are looking forward to visiting some real **'trip of a lifetime'** destinations: the endemic wildlife of the Galapagos, Snow Leopards in the Mongolian Altai mountains, and the undisturbed wilderness of the Okavango Delta all feature in our coming plans.

We will be finalising holiday prices on a rolling basis, as we publish full details of each trip. For up to date information, and to provisionally reserve your place, please check our website, send us an email or give us a call.

Peace of mind

For more than 30 years now, our holidays have been operated by our friends at **Sunvil Holidays**.

Sunvil is a bonded tour operator (CAA-ATOL Licence 808) and member of AITO, giving you financial security and peace of mind. They are also members of ABTA (ABTA V6218), which means you have the benefit of ABTA's assistance and code of conduct. Sunvil are recognised as a Which? Recommended Provider, meaning you can rest assured that you are in safe hands when travelling with us.

Looking back over 2023

2023 got up and running in January, when our group spent a wintery, bird-filled few days in **Devon** and Somerset.

In March, 28 happy Wildlife Travellers explored southern **Morocco** on three back-to-back trips, while we also returned to **Cyprus**, where we found 25 different orchids and were visited each night by Europe's largest bat, the Egyptian Fruit-bat, coming to feed in the hotel gardens.

The spring continued with fully-booked trips to **Lesvos** and the **Danube Delta**, the **Cevennes** and the **Vercors** and our long-awaited return to the **Burren**, where Michelin-starred food was on the menu, as well as all the spring flowers.

Closer to home, we visited **Norfolk**, **Sussex** and **Derbyshire**, before setting off for our first long-haul holidays since our group returned from Costa Rica in March 2020: and what spectacular holidays they were. By the end of our first morning in **Mongolia**, eight lucky Wildlife Travellers had seen not one but two Wolves and a wonderful Pallas's Cat peeking out from his rocky den... and just a week later, up in the Altai Mountains, the sight of a trio of two-month old Snow Leopard cubs had half of us in tears...

Meanwhile, on the other side of the world, our visit to **South Africa** came after a cold, wet winter in the Cape region, a big change from the previous drought years, resulting in a memorable flowering of the colourful endemic flora. As one of our travellers put it, "Monet would not have painted in a pastel pallet had he seen these scenes."

As always, we want to say a big 'thank you' to our travellers for the pleasure of your company over the past year. For more on any of our past travels, you can find trip reports and photo galleries on our website.



Vercors 2023



Cyprus 2023



Cyprus 2023



Cevennes 2023



Mongolia 2023



Lesvos 2023



Vercors 2023

Where to next?

Our holiday programme for 2024 will take us from the spring flowers of Cyprus to the bird-filled wetlands of Lake Kerkini, from the heaths of Dorset to the deserts of Morocco and the enchanting islands of the Galapagos. Where group size allows, a second Wildlife Travel leader will join those trips without a local guide. Ask us for full details, or check our website.

NORFOLK: winter wildfowl and natural history

7th-11th December 2023. Leader: Jono Leadley

This winter itinerary is designed to take in the county's spectacular bird roosts, with swirling flocks of winter geese and crows, gatherings of harriers and cranes. We will also spend time looking for some of the area's special mammals, including visiting a Grey Seal breeding colony.

"accommodation very good... the seals a highlight" 2021

CYPRUS: Christmas in the eastern Mediterranean

20th-27th December 2023. Leader: Laurie Jackson

Our base is a friendly, family-run hotel set on a quiet beach in the west of the island, from where we will explore the surrounding hillsides, fields and forests in search of winter bulbs, the earliest of the island's many orchids and the birds and other wildlife of the area: a relaxing festive escape.

JUST TWO ROOMS LEFT

DEVON: winter birding in the West Country

8th-12th January 2024. Leader: Mike Symes

We will be staying in a restored 13th century mill, from where we head out to visit some of the West Country's key sites for wintering birds. We will cruise on the Exe Estuary, watch Cirl Buntings in Devon's hedgerows and enjoy the spectacular Starling murmurations and wildfowl on the Somerset Levels.

"cruise superb... Mike is an excellent leader" 2023

TENERIFE: spring flowers, wildlife and walking

22nd-29th February 2024. Leader: Philip Precey

A welcome escape from the British winter, we will explore the varied habitats of the island, from the arid coastal scrub to the evergreen laurel forests and the high montane zone of Mount Teide. As well as the interesting flora, we will find endemic birds and take a whale-watching boat trip.

NEW ITINERARY: our first trip to the Canary Islands since 2007

MOROCCO: natural history, mountains and coast

2nd-9th March 2024. Leader: Laurie Jackson

Our regular spring visit to Morocco will take us from the Atlantic coast to the rugged Anti-Atlas mountains, the foothills of the High Atlas and the argan forests of the Sous Valley, in search of spring flowers, endemic reptiles and abundant birdlife. Based near Agadir at the Atlas Kasbah.

"a truly wonderful hotel, felt like home immediately" 2020



Grey Seal, Norfolk



Paphos headland, Cyprus



Cirl Bunting, Devon



Canary Islands Bellflower, Tenerife



Anti-Atlas mountains, Morocco

SOUTHERN MOROCCO: easy birding tour

9th-21st March 2024. Leader: Laurie Jackson

On this tour of the country, we will look for the rare Northern Bald Ibis on the Atlantic coast, larks, sandgrouse and Cream-coloured Courser in the rocky deserts, visit the sand dunes of Erg Chebbi, and end at the snow line in the High Atlas, with African Crimson-winged Finch and Alpine Chough.

"excellent itinerary... better than could have imagined" 2023

CYPRUS: spring flowers on Aphrodite's island

20th-27th March 2024. Leader: Sarah Lambert

Our traditional spring visit to the Akamas Peninsula in west Cyprus, timed to coincide with the best of the island's spring flowers, including plentiful orchids, with hillsides bright with cyclamen and anemone. Along the way we will explore the island's long history, and enjoy some great local food.

"orchid-oholic's glory at every step, leaders excellent" 2023

MALLORCA: natural history in the Balearics

12th-19th April 2024. Leader: Laurie Jackson

Well-known as a popular holiday destination, Mallorca has some stunning scenery, with stretches of unspoilt coastline and a dramatic mountain range, along with internationally important wetlands. Our spring holiday will explore these habitats, in search of spring flowers and birds.

"great flowers, spectacular scenery" 2018

BULGARIA: spring on the Black Sea coast

23rd-30th April 2024. Leader: Laurie Jackson

This trip will take in some of the highlights of the Bulgarian Black Sea coast, an area amazingly rich in wildlife. We travel from the flower-rich steppes of the north, carpeted with peonies and irises, to the oak-clad mountains of the south, via bird-filled wetlands at the peak of migration season.

"I had not expected to see so much or laugh so much" 2015

LESVOS: spring wildlife and easy birding

1st-8th May 2024. Leader: Philip Precey

The third largest Greek island, Lesvos is the perfect location for an introduction to the spring wildlife of the eastern Mediterranean. From our friendly base in the coastal village of Skala Kalloni, we will explore coastal wetlands, dry hillsides, shady chestnut forests and olive groves.

"fantastic flowers, unspoilt countryside, easy walking" 2023

LESVOS: spring migration in the Aegean

8th-15th May 2024. Leader: Mike Russell

The island is justifiably famous for its birdlife and we have timed our second visit to catch the very best of the northwards spring migration, along with spending some time looking for the local specialities Cinereous Bunting, Krüper's Nuthatch and Masked Shrike as they set up their territories.

"hotel in excellent location, food very good" 2023

Cream-coloured Courser, Morocco



Ophrys umbilicata, Cyprus



Formentor peninsula, Mallorca



Paeonia tenuifolia, Bulgaria



Peacock Anemone, Lesvos



Masked Shrike, Lesvos

GALAPAGOS: cruising in Darwin's footsteps

13th-26th May 2024. Leader: Philip Precey

We return to the 'enchanted islands', with our itinerary taking us to the eastern islands of the archipelago, notably Espanola, home to almost all the world's nesting Waved Albatrosses and Genovesa, with its tree-nesting Red-footed Boobies and friendly fur seals. A real wildlife trip of a lifetime.

"exceeded my (high!) expectations... the ideal leader" 2023

LA BRENNE: wonderful wetland wildlife, by train

13th-20th May 2024. Leader: Laurie Jackson

Often called the Land of a Thousand Lakes, La Brenne is located just south of the Loire Valley: a mosaic of fish ponds, lakes, reedbeds, flower-rich meadows, heaths and broad-leaved forest set in a traditional farmland landscape, makes for a uniquely diverse flora and fauna.

NEW ITINERARY FOR 2024

THE DANUBE DELTA: Europe's greatest wetland

16th-24th May 2024. Leader: Mike Symes

The Danube Delta is a sanctuary for huge numbers of birds, from pelicans and herons to warblers and woodpeckers, rollers and bee-eaters. Our home for a week is a floating hotel, giving us perfect access to the numerous side-channels, oxbow lakes and extensive reedbeds.

"brilliant!... delicious food... beautiful, tranquil delta" 2023

DORDOGNE: spring natural history by train

20th-28th May 2024. Leader: Laurie Jackson

After travelling by train to Bordeaux, we will spend a week exploring the limestone causses, woodlands and lush river valleys of south-west France. Our days will be spent enjoying butterflies, dragonflies and orchids, while our evenings will no doubt feature some great food and local wines.

NEW ITINERARY FOR 2024

THE BURREN: wild flowers and ancient sites

25th May-1st June 2024. Leader: Charlie Rugeroni

We return to the dramatic limestone scenery and unbeatable hospitality of this corner of western Ireland. We will enjoy an abundance of wonderful wild flowers, visit soaring sea cliffs with their seabird colonies, encounter mysterious ancient monuments and enjoy great food!

"memorable in every way... a wealth of plants" 2023

THE CEVENNES & GRANDS CAUSSES by train

27th May-3rd June 2024. Leader: Kieron Huston

A relaxed week of wild flowers and country walks in the rolling limestone plateaux of the Grands Causses and the rugged granite landscapes of the Cevennes, where orchids and butterflies abound. Along the way, we will enjoy a boat trip along the River Tarn, where vultures soar overhead.

"beautiful, interesting landscapes... active but relaxed" 2023

Waved Albatross, Galapagos



Scarce Swallowtail, France



Night Heron, Danube Delta



Dordogne



The Burren



Spotted Fritillary, Cevennes

ESTONIA: spring wildlife and orchids of the Baltic

28th May-4th June 2024. Leader: Laurie Jackson

Late spring is a busy time on the Baltic: waders and wildfowl will all be heading north, while newly-arrived summer visitors like Citrine Wagtail and Common Rosefinch will be setting up their territories. The meadows will be bursting into flower, hopefully including spectacular displays of Lady's Slipper.

"a success... enjoyed the abundance of wildlife" 2019



Citrine Wagtail, Estonia

VIENNA & WHITE CARPATHIANS: wildlife by train

2nd-10th June 2024. Leader: tbc

We will take the train to Vienna, where we start our holiday with the endearing wild hamsters and sousliks of the city's green spaces. From here, we travel north into the White Carpathians, low mountains with butterfly-filled forests and flower-rich meadows shared between Czechia and Slovakia.

"as good as we'd hoped... Martin did an excellent job" 2018



White Carpathians

VERCORS: natural history of the pre-Alps, by train

3rd-10th June 2024. Leader: Dr Phil Saunders

There are many beautiful, spectacular and species-rich places in France: with its combination of limestone mountains, easy accessible sub-alpine flowers, a fine array of butterflies and the area's remarkable unspoilt character, Vercors surely ranks amongst the best.

"beautiful scenery, excellent food... couldn't be better" 2022



Lady's Slipper, Vercors

TRANSYLVANIA: meadows, mountains and bears

3rd-10th June 2024. Leader: tbc

A week spent amongst some of the last remaining traditionally managed hay meadows and wood pastures in Europe, visiting the Saxon villages of Viscri and Crit, the limestone gorge and valleys of Piatra Craiului National Park and the high alpine meadows of the Carpathians.

"a beautiful place to stay... Crit was fabulous" 2019



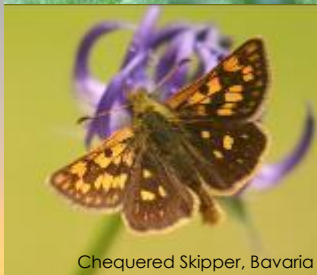
Brown Bear, Transylvania

BAVARIAN ALPS: wildlife and walking, by train

13th-20th June 2024. Leader: Philip Precey

We take the train from London to the scenic alpine town of Mittenwald. From here, we will take advantage of the local trains and cable cars to give us direct access to the mountains, exploring the woods, alpine meadows and valley fens in search of the flowers, butterflies and birds of the area.

OUR FIRST RETURN TO BAVARIA SINCE 2011



Chequered Skipper, Bavaria

SIERRA NEVADA: high mountains of southern Spain

23rd-30th June 2024. Leader: Charlie Rugeroni

We will spend a week exploring the second highest mountains in western Europe, after the Alps: the Sierra Nevada is home to a remarkable diversity of endemic flora, more than 450 species found here and nowhere else, as well as the semi-desert habitats at Cabo de Gata.

NEW ITINERARY FOR 2024



Sierra Nevada

DORSET: summer wildlife of coast and heath

23rd-27th June 2024. Leader: Dr Phil Saunders

Based on the idyllic Isle of Purbeck, this relaxed midsummer visit will see us searching for some of the rare wildlife for which this corner of Dorset is famous: Lulworth Skippers and Adonis Blues around Portland, cliff-nesting auks at Durlston Head and exciting invertebrates on the Purbeck heaths.

"thoroughly enjoyed the holiday... hotel was excellent" 2021

DERBYSHIRE: wild flowers and walking

24th-28th June 2024. Leader: Philip Precey

A relaxing break, based in the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site on the southern fringe of the Peak District National Park, from where we spend our days walking through interesting limestone landscapes in search of the wild flowers, butterflies and industrial heritage of the area.

"excellent... informative yet friendly and informal" 2023

LAKE KERKINI & MACEDONIA: spring natural history

27th June-4th July 2024. Leader: tbc

We return again for a week in this little-known and unspoiled corner of the Balkans, exploring the warm hillsides and sheep-grazed steppe, rich in butterflies, reptiles and wild flowers, and the wetlands of Lake Kerkini and its surroundings, with breeding birds including pelicans, herons and spoonbill.

"well worth visiting... both leaders were excellent" 2019

SUSSEX: high summer in southern England

1st-5th July 2024. Leader: Michael Blencowe

From our base at the foot of the South Downs, this holiday takes us in search of summer wildlife, from the rolling chalk downland and the shingle beaches to the heaths of Ashdown Forest. We also visit Knepp Wildland with its Purple Emperors and the famous colony of White Storks.

"leaders first rate... Michael so knowledgeable" 2023

YORKSHIRE: relaxed summer wildlife

July 2024 (dates tbc). Leader: tbc

A short break on the Yorkshire coast, where we will take cliff-top walks, admire the colonies of nesting sea birds and take a whale watching trip out in search of Minke Whale and dolphins. We will also have some time to explore the town of Whitby, with its imposing abbey.

NEW ITINERARY FOR 2024

MONGOLIA: Snow Leopards and wildlife

14th-30th August 2024. Leader tbc

After our successful inaugural holiday in 2023, we are looking forward to returning to this little-known but wildlife-rich country. The undoubted highlight of this trip is the chance to see Snow Leopard in the foothills of the Altai mountains, with plenty of other exciting mammals and birds along the way.

"a phenomenal holiday... such special memories" 2023



Cream-spot Tiger, Dorset



Meadow Crane's-bill, Derbyshire



Lake Kerkini



Purple Emperor, Sussex
Whitby coastline, Yorkshire



Snow Leopard cubs, Mongolia

WESTERN AUSTRALIA: endemic wild flowers & more 2nd-21st September 2024. Leader: Laurie Jackson

With a staggering 4,000+ species, of which around 80% are endemic, the south west corner of Western Australia is a botanical wonderland. As well as the many Banksias and Hakeas, myrtles, sundews and orchids, we will also seek out the many special mammals and endemic birds of the region

"ten out of ten... mind blowing! A brilliant trip" 2014

BULGARIA: easy birding on the Black Sea coast

10th-17th September 2024. Leader: tbc

A relaxed week of birding and wildlife watching, focusing on the southbound migrants of the 'Via Pontica' flyway along the Black Sea coast, with raptors overhead, waders thronging the coastal wetlands, sea birds passing offshore and bushes alive with warblers, flycatchers and chats.

"memorable birdwatching and good company " 2015

HUNGARY: easy autumn birding

18th-25th October 2024. Leader: Mike Russell

Our return to the great plains of the Hortobágy in Hungary, catching the south-bound migration of thousands of cranes and geese, alongside resident Great Bustard, exciting raptors and re-wilded Przewalski's Horses. We will also search the forests of the Bukk mountains for woodpeckers and owls.

"absolutely brilliant, one of the best trips I've been on " 2016

SOUTH AFRICA: Kalahari and Kimberley

Autumn/Winter 2024 (dates tbc). Leader: tbc

In the semi-arid north of South Africa, we will look for some of the area's rare, charismatic mammals. Around Kimberley we hope to find Meerkats, Black-footed Cat and Aardvark, before visiting the spectacular Kgalagadi National Park, in search of the big cat trio of Cheetah, Leopard and Lion.

NEW ITINERARY FOR 2024

COSTA RICA: easy birding and natural history

November/December 2024. Leader: Mike Symes

Costa Rica is a natural history paradise, from the dry forests of the western, Pacific coast to the tropical forests of the eastern, Caribbean slope, via the cloud forests of the central ridge. We are returning to this beautiful, colourful, biodiverse and friendly country, and its wonderful wildlife.

"superb wildlife, itinerary faultless, Mike was excellent " 2020

CYPRUS: autumn bulbs and ancient sites

20th-27th November 2024. Leader: tbc

We return to Cyprus for a relaxed week, exploring the quiet Cypriot countryside in search of autumn bulbs and other interesting plants, along with the resident birds and other wildlife of the island, while enjoying the autumn sunshine. As always, our base is a friendly, family-run hotel on the beach.

"beautifully sited hotel, food very enjoyable" 2023

Banksia coccinea, Western Australia



White Pelican, Bulgaria



Great Bustard, Hungary



Aardvark, South Africa



Snowcap, Costa Rica



Crocus veneris, Cyprus

SOUTHERN ECUADOR: wildlife and easy birding

Winter 2024/25 (dates tbc). Leader: tbc

In previous years we have spent time in the cloud forest of the Choco region, explored the high Andes and visited the wonderful rainforest lodges of the Amazon basin. This new itinerary takes us south, to the dry forests of the Tumbesian region and the rich Tapichalaca and Podocarpus reserves.

NEW ITINERARY FOR 2024

MOROCCO: natural history at Christmas

December 2024 (dates tbc). Leader: Laurie Jackson

We return to Morocco to immerse ourselves in the friendly local culture. We will enjoy Scimitar-horned Oryx in the Sous Massa National Park, look for flamingos and Ospreys on the coast and discover endemic lizards and interesting wild flowers, while escaping the festive season back home.

"Laurie was superb... such depth of knowledge" 2019

BOTSWANA: Chobe and the Okavango Delta

Spring 2025. dates and leader tbc

Our trip starts at the mind-blowing Victoria Falls in Zambia, before crossing over into Botswana, for a spectacular 'safari' exploration of some of southern Africa's finest wildlife habitats. Our itinerary ends in the depths of the Okavango Delta: a dream destination for any wildlife enthusiast.

"absolutely brilliant... our best wildlife trip ever!" 2019

SRI LANKA: endemic wildlife and easy birding

Winter/Spring 2025. dates and leader tbc

An introduction to the wildlife of Sri Lanka, visiting a range of habitats from species-rich rainforests to dry grasslands and lush wetlands. We will look for the island's endemic birds and diversity of mammals, including Asian Elephants, endemic monkeys and Blue Whales on a whale-watching boat trip.

"exceeded expectations... fabulous food" 2018

GABON: birds and mammals of West Africa

Summer 2025 (dates tbc). Leader: Philip Precey

We are excited to be making plans for our first venture into West Africa, with our friends at Birding Africa. As well as some exciting rainforest birding, we expect to find some fantastic mammal sightings, including the opportunity to track a troop of Mandrill, one of Africa's most exciting primates.

NEW ITINERARY FOR 2025

ANTARCTICA, SOUTH GEORGIA & THE FALKLANDS

January/February 2025. Leader: Philip Precey

This expedition cruise travels up from Tierra del Fuego to the Falkland Islands, across to remote South Georgia and then down to the Antarctic peninsula. Along the way we expect to see at least six species of penguin, as well as albatrosses and elephant seals, whales and dolphins, and plenty more.

NEW ITINERARY FOR 2024, START/FINISH IN USHUAIA



Jacotoco Antpitta, Ecuador



Moussier's Redstart, Morocco



Leopard, Botswana



Purple-rumped Sunbird, Sri Lanka



Mandrill



Chinstrap Penguin, Antarctica

Travel with us and support nature conservation

Wildlife Travel was set up with the express aim of raising money for nature conservation: for the last 36 years our profits have been donated to the Wildlife Trusts. Wherever possible, we also work with local conservation organisations in the areas we visit, to support their work. We balance carbon emissions from all flights included in your booking through the World Land Trust's Carbon Balancing programme, which protects tropical areas with high biodiversity.

What to expect

Our leaders and local guides are amongst the best in the business. All our leaders and many of our local guides have professional backgrounds in nature conservation, with a wealth of natural history knowledge between them, from birds and butterflies to botany and geology. Of course, they don't just provide wildlife expertise, they also ensure that you have an enjoyable, rewarding and safe time.

A typical Wildlife Travel group would be made up of around six to twelve like-minded travellers, travelling together with one or two Wildlife Travel leaders, often with a local guide. We use good, comfortable accommodation, enjoy great local food and take things at a relaxed pace: it is a holiday, after all!

One of the most rewarding things over the years has been the friendships developed when sharing our travels, between leaders, Wildlife Travellers and local guides. We are very grateful to, and proud of, the many 'repeat travellers' who travel with us and recommend us to their friends.

Size matters

There are definitely bigger companies out there... but that doesn't necessarily equate with better. We are a small business, meaning you will always know who it is at the end of the phone or replying to your emails. It also means that we get to know you, our travellers, and can make sure that any trip is right for you. It's important to us that you get the most out of your travels, and come home having had a wonderful trip.

Booking your holiday

If you would like more information about any of our holidays, or if you have any queries about any aspect of travelling with us, please get in touch. We are more than happy to talk through the details of each trip, and can send you the full trip information, together with a booking pack, containing all you need to know to book your trip.

We look forward to travelling with you!





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TRUST™

thank you for travelling with us

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Photo credits: all Philip Precey/Wildlife Travel except: Sarah Lambert (p3 Cyprus group photo, p4 Paphos Headland); Mike Symes (p4 Cirl Bunting, p6 Night Heron, p8 Lake Kerkini, p9 Snowcap); James Lowen (p5 Masked Shrike, p12 Norfolk group photo); Laurie Jackson (p6 Dordogne, p8 Purple Emperor); Charlie Rugeroni (p6 The Burren); Peeter Vissakt (p7 Citrine Wagtail); Juan Carlos Poveda (p7 Sierra Nevada); Ecotours Wildlife Holidays (p9, Great Bustard); Neblina Forest (p10, Jocotoco Antpitta); Chris Kirby-Lambert (p10, Purple-rumped Sunbird); flickr.com/ekilby (p10, Mandrill); Michael Blencowe (p12 Sussex group photo).