

WILDLIFE TRAVEL

24th February to 3rd March 2027 (1 week)

MOROCCO

easy birding and natural history

"fascinating trip...
very interesting part of
Morocco"

"the Atlas Kasbah is one of
the best places we have
stayed anywhere in the world"

Morocco 2018

An introduction to the bird life and natural history of southern Morocco.

Southern Morocco is a region of great contrasts. The High Atlas and Anti Atlas mountains butt up against the Atlantic coast, with the arid influence of the nearby Saharan desert: these diverse habitats make Morocco a top destination for wildlife watching.

The birdlife of North Africa is very interesting and during our week we can expect to enjoy many of the local Maghreb specialties, including House Bunting, Moussier's Redstart, African Chaffinch, Common Bulbul, African Blue Tit and Maghreb Magpie. Using local knowledge, we will seek out Fulvous Babbler, Black-crowned Tchagra, Tristram's Warbler, Cream-coloured Courser, Moroccan (White) Wagtail and, of course, the endangered **Northern Bald Ibis**, perhaps the most emblematic of the area's birds.

March is peak migration time in southern Morocco, with the coastal wetlands attracting north-bound waders, terns and gulls, while various warblers and others pass through the scrub along the coast.

We will visit the Souss-Massa National Park where, as well as birds, we will also look for the large mammals that have been re-introduced here, including Addax, Dorcas Gazelle and the graceful Scimitar-horned Oryx.

Based at a wonderful eco-lodge in the dry hills outside Agadir, this holiday is intended to give an introduction to the birds and other wildlife of this corner of southern Morocco, at a relaxed pace. This trip is ideal for anyone wanting a taste of Morocco and its birdlife without the long travel days of a touring itinerary, with expert leaders, a high standard of accommodation and comfortable travel.



Price
£2,250

Single Room Supplement
£220

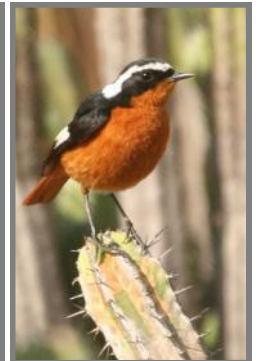
Full board

Day 1 flight to Agadir
Day 2 Tighanimine El Baz
Day 3 Cap Rhir, Oued Tamri
Day 4 Anti Atlas
Day 5 Oued Souss/Oued Massa
Day 6 western High Atlas
Day 7 Souss Massa Nat'l Park
Day 8 return to UK

Leaders
Philip Precey and
second leader tbc

Group size
min 4, max 14

wild flowers,
natural history,
culture



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 Our flight takes us to Agadir, from where we transfer to our hotel in the hills to the south east of the city (c.40 minutes).

Day 2 Today we explore the lanes and hillsides around the hotel. The Argan tree, *Sideroxylon spinosum* is a remnant of a once tropical flora, and a key tree in the local economy: the oval fruits sustain the local community and there is an increasing commercial activity selling the sweet, rich oil. Following the winter rains, colourful annual flowers are a feature of the field edges, attracting the first spring butterflies: Moroccan Orange-tip, Greenish Black-tip and Moroccan Hairstreak should all be on the wing.

The garden will give us our first introduction to the local birdlife: North African specialities including Common Bulbul, House Bunting, Maghreb Magpie, African Chaffinch and the iconic Moussier's Redstart are all common local residents, while Barbary Partridge, Fulvous Babbler, Southern Grey Shrike, Black-crowned Tchagra, Black Wheatear and Red-necked Nightjar all breed on the hillsides around the hotel in small numbers.

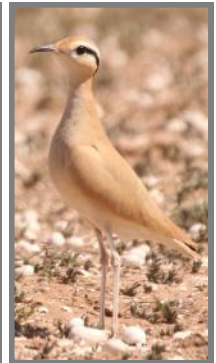
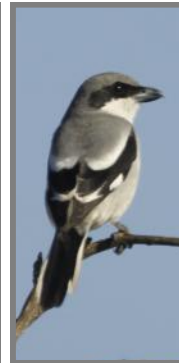
Day 3 The Atlantic coast south to the Sahara is well known for its unique communities of succulent scrub, including several species restricted to this area or shared with the nearby Canary Islands. We will visit **Cap Rhir**, the rocky coasts north of Agadir to explore this habitat, and visit the nearby river mouth of Oued Tamri, where large numbers of gulls gather on the beach, including good numbers of Audouin's Gulls, and the distinctive local subspecies of White Wagtail can usually be found. The clifftop 'steppe' in this area is the favoured feeding habitat for the endangered **Northern Bald Ibis**: the global population is only around 900 birds, with one of the main breeding sites nearby.

Day 4 This morning we head south to the **Anti Atlas**, a low range of very old mountains, which form much of the landscape in the south east of the country. We will travel to Ait Baha and beyond, to visit an ancient 'agadir', a fascinating fortified grain store typical of the Berber villages in the area. Barbary Ground Squirrel, Black Wheatear and the large Bibron's Agama may appear along the roadside, while Bonelli's Eagles soar overhead.

Day 5 We start today at the river-mouth at **Oued Souss**, where Greater Flamingos gather on the estuary, while (tide permitting) various waders, gulls and terns gather on the exposed shore and Osprey, heading north from West Africa to their breeding grounds in northern Europe, stop off to fish.

Further south, we will visit **Oued Massa**, where we will listen for the fluting song of Black-crowned Tchagra along the river banks.

Day 6 Today we head for the slopes of the **High Atlas**, making a scenic circuit via the lush Paradise Valley and the Cascades du Immouzer. On hillsides covered in Dwarf Fan Palm, we will look for Tristram's Warbler, a speciality of these mountains.



Day 7 We head south to the famous **Souss-Massa National Park**. We will learn about the important conservation work going on here, especially the reintroduction of a variety of **Saharan 'megafauna'** to the reserve: antelopes including Dorcas Gazelle, Scimitar-horned Oryx and Addax, and the North African Ostrich, all of which have become almost extinct across much of their range due to overhunting. We visit the area where these animals have been reintroduced, enjoying close encounters along the way. The arid fields are home to elegant Cream-coloured Courser, Barbary Partridge and nesting Stone Curlew.



Day 8 Today we will re-visit some of the local lanes to see how the spring has progressed. After a final lunch out on the terrace, we will have a lazy afternoon enjoying the relaxing grounds and pool, before we transfer to Agadir and our flights to UK.

Leaders and guide

Our leader for this holiday will be **Philip Precey**, an expert birder and all-round naturalist and Director of Wildlife Travel, who has led more than 100 previous holidays, including 12 previous visits to Morocco.



Depending on final group size, Philip will be joined by a second Wildlife Travel leader.



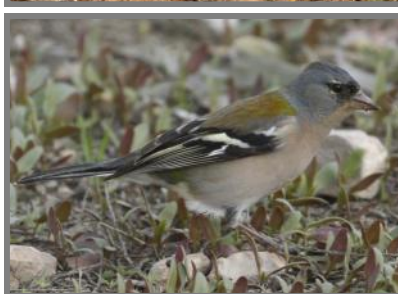
Between them, our leaders will ensure you get the most out of your time in Morocco. We will be accompanied by Mohammed Belfakir, our local **Moroccan guide**, together with the assistance of Hassan and Helene, the owners of the Atlas Kasbah.

Accommodation, meals and transport

We will stay for the whole week at the wonderful, award-winning **Atlas Kasbah**, set in lush grounds amongst the Argan trees in the Arganeraie Biosphere Reserve.



Opened in 2009, the Kasbah was built using traditional techniques and local craftsmen, with a view to promoting ecotourism in Morocco and sharing the local Berber heritage. The rooms are spacious, the local culture reflected in the furnishings, with lovely views from the roof terrace and patio. The hotel is the first accommodation in North Africa to be granted the prestigious **World Responsible Tourism Award** (Gold winner, 2015) as a recognition of its ecotourism practices.



All meals are included, from dinner on Day 1 to a picnic dinner on Day 8. Evening meals will be at the hotel and we will take picnic lunches on most days.

We will travel by minibus for our excursions. Our visit to Souss-Massa will be in high clearance 4WD vehicles.

Flights

Group flights are with Easyjet from London Gatwick to Agadir.

24th February depart London Gatwick 13.55, arrive Agadir 17.45
3rd March depart Agadir 18.40, arrive London Gatwick 22.30

It is also possible to fly from Manchester, Edinburgh and Bristol. Contact us for details and any extra costs.

Entry Requirements: Passports and Visas

Please note that travel rules may be changed at any time. For up to date information, please check www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/morocco. Holders of non-UK passports should check with the relevant embassy.

If you hold a British passport, you do not need a visa to travel to Morocco. Your passport should be valid for at least three months on your date of entry to Morocco.

Health and fitness

This is not a strenuous holiday but on some days we will be walking for much of the day, sometimes gently uphill. All excursions are optional. The hotel rooms are on the first or second floor, reached by stairs.

Travellers should arrange an appointment with their health professional at least six weeks before travel to assess health risks. Vaccines against Hepatitis A, Tetanus and Typhoid are recommended for most travellers. Up-to-date information on travel health can be found at travelhealthpro.org.uk

Weather

In March, the weather is usually sunny but not too hot. If we do get hotter weather we will adapt the itinerary as much as possible. There may be some cooler weather and some rain.

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 £350 PER PERSON, SECOND INSTALMENT ON
CONFIRMATION OF HOLIDAY £500 (to cover committed costs)
BALANCE DUE BY 25/11/2026**

INCLUDED: Return flight from London (Gatwick) to Agadir as above. Local transport as specified in itinerary. 7 nights accommodation, all meals from dinner day 1 to picnic dinner day 8. Services of leaders. **NOT INCLUDED:** Drinks with evening meal and refreshments. Gratuities. Travel insurance. Covid tests and associated costs.

WILDLIFE TRAVEL

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Wildlife Travel Ltd is registered in England & Wales, no. 2237697. c/o Azets, Westpoint, Lynch Wood PE2 6FZ*

Photos (all taken on previous Wildlife Travel holidays to Morocco): front (clockwise from top): Black-crowned Tchagra, Moussier's Redstart, Dorcas Gazelle, *Moraea sisyrinchium*, Northern Bald Ibis
Page 2 (from left): Fulvous Babbler, *Cistanche phelypaea*, Southern Grey Shrike, *Euphorbia officinarum*, Cream-coloured Courser. **Page 3** (from top): Tristram's Warbler, House Bunting, Moroccan Wagtail, Scimitar-horned Oryx, African Chaffinch.

Trip reports from our previous Morocco holidays can be found on our website.