

WILDLIFE TRAVEL

all our profits are donated to nature conservation



3rd to 15th March 2027 (13 days)

SOUTHERN MOROCCO

easy birding and natural history: coast, desert and mountains

A birding exploration of the varied habitats of southern Morocco.

March is a very pleasant time to visit Morocco, with good weather, large numbers of migrating birds heading northwards to Europe and plenty of plants in flower, both on the coast and in the mountains.

We will start our tour on the Atlantic Coast, seeking out local specialties, including House Bunting, Moussier's Redstart, Black-crowned Tchagra and, with luck, the Endangered Northern Bald Ibis. We will visit the Souss- Massa National Park where, as well as a variety of birds, we will also look for several species of antelope that have been reintroduced here, including Addax, Dorcas Gazelle and the graceful Scimitar-horned Oryx.

Heading inland we will pass through the Argan forest of the Sous Valley to the arid rocky steppe of the Tagdilt Track, home to various larks and wheatears, Cream-coloured Courser and Fat Sand Rat.

We will explore rock gorges in search of Pharaoh Eagle Owl, Maghreb Wheatear and the endearing Gundi, before reaching the stony desert of the Tafilalt and the magnificent sand dunes of Erg Chebbi, home to some true desert specialties including Desert Sparrow, African Desert Warbler, Fulvous Babbler and Egyptian Nightjar.

Finally, we will head up to the High Atlas, near the snow line, where we will look for Levaillant's Woodpecker, Seeborn's Wheatear, African Crimson-winged Finches and Atlas Horned Lark.

Along the way, we will pass through some spectacular landscapes, stay in comfortable local hotels, and enjoy some wonderful food and hospitality.

PRICE £3,185
single room supplement £300

Full Board

TOUR LEADER Mike Symes

PAYMENT

deposit £450
instalment £650
due on confirmation of holiday
balance due 2nd December 2026

ITINERARY AT A GLANCE

Day 1 flight to Agadir
Day 2-4 Atlantic Coast
Day 5 Ouarzazate
Day 6/7 Boumalne des Dades
Day 8-10 Merzouga
Day 11 Anti Atlas
Day 12 High Atlas
Day 13 Oukaimeden
return to UK

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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 Wednesday 3rd March. Flight to Agadir and transfer to Atlas Kasbah (c. 30 minutes).

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. o/n Atlas Kasbah.

Day 2 Thursday 4th March. This morning we head to the Atlantic coast, travelling up to Cap Rhir and Oued Tamri, where we hope to see the Endangered Northern Bald Ibis. Audouin's Gulls sometimes gather in large numbers on the coastal lagoon here, while this site offers us our best chance of finding Moroccan Wagtail, the local subspecies of 'our' Pied Wagtail.

We will also explore coastal scrub, hoping to find Spectacled Warbler, Southern Grey Shrike and Black Wheatear along with endemic geckos and interesting plants. o/n Atlas Kasbah.

Day 3 Friday 5th March. We head to the famous Souss-Massa National Park and learn about the important conservation work going on here; 'rewilding' of a variety of Saharan antelopes including Dorcas Gazelle, Scimitar-horned Oryx and Addax, and the Red-necked Ostrich, all of which have become extinct across much of their range. The arid fields are home to elegant Cream-coloured Courser, Barbary Partridge and nesting Stone Curlew.

On the way back to the hotel, we will visit the river mouth at Oued Souss where flamingos gather alongside various waders, gulls and terns. o/n Atlas Kasbah.

Day 4 Saturday 6th March. We start today with a visit to Oued Massa where we will walk alongside the river listening out for the fluting song of Black-crowned Tchagra as we check the scrub for warblers. Waders may be joined by Glossy Ibis and Osprey by the water's edge. From here we strike inland, travelling through the famous Argan forests of the Souss valley, towards Oulad Berhil, where we spend the night. o/n Oulad Berhil.

Day 5 Sunday 7th March. We continue our journey inland, through increasingly arid, rocky landscapes as we head towards Ouarzazate. Along the way we will start to see White-crowned and Desert Wheatears along the roadside, and keep our eyes open for Cream-coloured Courser, Barbary Falcon and Long-legged Buzzard. o/n Ouarzazat.

Day 6 Monday 8th March. Our morning will start with a visit to nearby Ouarzazate Reservoir. Various migrants rest here on their journey northwards, and could include a variety of waders and wildfowl, warblers and wagtails. From here we travel eastwards to Boumalne des Dades, where we will explore the famous Tagdilt Track, an area famous for its desert steppe birds: we hope to find a variety of larks including Thick-billed, Hoopoe, Desert and Temminck's Larks, Red-rumped Wheatear should put in an appearance, and Pin-tailed Sandgrouse might be seen flying past. o/n Boumalne Dades.



Day 7 Tuesday 9th March. After the travelling day yesterday, we will spend the day locally, travelling up the Dades Gorge, where birds might include Tristram's Warbler, African Blue Tit, Golden Eagle and Rock Bunting. We may return to the Tagdildt Track, depending on our success yesterday, or relax during the afternoon. o/n Boumalne Dades.

Day 8 Wednesday 10th March. This morning we set off eastwards. Along the way we will check suitable sites for Pharaoh Eagle Owl, Maghreb Wheatear and Saharan Scrub Warbler before finally arriving in the desert proper of the Tafilalt, at Merzouga, where we will have views over the Erg Chebbi sand dunes from our hotel. o/n Merzouga.

Days 9/10 Thursday 11th/Friday 12th March. We spend two days exploring the Tafilalt, taking a four-wheel drive 'safari' one day in search of some of the special birds of the desert, including Egyptian Nightjar, Spotted and Crowned Sandgrouse, Desert Sparrow, and African Desert Warbler. We will explore the oasis gardens in search of migrant birds and may also visit traditional Gnawa musicians during our time here. o/n Merzouga.

Day 11 Saturday 13th March. A travel day: we head back to Ouarzazate, driving through the stunning arid scenery of the Anti-Atlas mountains, with a couple of stops along the way, keeping our eyes peeled for Bonelli's Eagle, Lanner and Rock Martin. o/n Ouarzazate.

Day 12 Sunday 14th March. Up until now we have been south of the High Atlas: today we cross the mountains, via the Tizi n'Tichka pass at an altitude of 2,260 metres. From these heady heights we drop back down into the plains near Marrakech, before climbing again up into the mountains. There should be time to explore the area around our hotel where we will look for Levillant's Woodpecker and Crossbill. o/n Oukaïmeden.

Day 13 Monday 15th March. This morning we head up to the ski resort of Oukaïmeden, in search of the stars of the mountains; African Crimson-winged Finches feed around the base of the ski lifts, Atlas Horned Lark and Seebohm's Wheatear sing on the rocky slopes, and both Alpine and Red-billed Chough feed around the town. After lunch, we head to Marrakech for our flights home.

TOUR LEADERS

Mike Symes is a professional ecologist and experienced Wildlife Travel leader, who has led five previous holidays to Morocco.

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

Our driver and local guide is Mohammed Belfakir, who has helped us with all our recent trips to Morocco, over the last 15 years. Our leaders will ensure you enjoy all aspects of the wildlife we encounter.

ACCOMMODATION, MEALS AND TRANSPORT

Our hotels and guesthouses will have en-suite accommodation: dinner and breakfast will be taken in the hotels, with lunches a mixture of picnics and 'sit down' meals in local restaurants. We will travel by minibus. Our excursions in Sous Massa National Park and into the desert beyond Merzouga will be by comfortable four-wheel drive vehicles.



FLIGHTS

The group flights will be from London Gatwick with easyJet, flying out to Agadir and returning from Marrakech.

3rd March depart London Gatwick 09.25, arrive Agadir 13.20
15th March depart Marrakech 19.20, arrive London Gatwick 22.55

It may also be possible to fly from Edinburgh and Manchester. Contact us for details and any extra costs.

WEATHER

At this time of year, the weather is usually sunny and warm in the lowlands. It will be warmer as we head inland, but hopefully not too hot. If we do get hotter weather, we will adapt the itinerary as much as possible. It will be cooler in the evenings and overnight, and can sometimes be chilly on the coast. There is a small chance of rain, although unlikely. At Oukaïmeden, up in the High Atlas, it is likely to be considerably cooler, and we may even have snow: it will likely be cold over night

HEALTH AND FITNESS

This is not a strenuous holiday: the main considerations are likely to be the heat and the long driving distances. There will be some walking, including on sand dunes/sandy beaches, and on rocky/uneven tracks, sometimes gently uphill. We will adapt our walking to the weather but will no doubt be walking in the sun on some days, albeit not for long.

Travellers should arrange an appointment with their health professional at least four to 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

PASSPORT AND ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

If you hold a British passport, you do not need a visa to travel to Morocco. Your passport should be valid for at least 3 months on your date of entry to Morocco.

For up-to-date information, check www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/morocco where you can also sign up for email alerts for your destination.

PRICE

£3,185 per person, £300 single room supplement, full board

INCLUDED: Return flights from London Gatwick (as above). Local transport as specified in itinerary. Twelve night's accommodation, all meals from dinner day 1 to lunch day 13. Services of leaders.

NOT INCLUDED: Drinks with evening meal and refreshments. Gratuities. Travel insurance.

PAYMENTS

Deposit amounts are shown on page 1 of the holiday information pack. **Payments should be made by bank transfer to Sunvil**, using the details given on the booking form, or by posting a cheque made payable to Sunvil Holidays, to the address given on the booking form. Please **DO NOT post any payments to our Cambourne address**.



BOOKING YOUR HOLIDAY

If you have any queries about your holiday or need to talk to someone about your booking, please contact us here at Wildlife Travel. We can make sure that you are given the correct the information and get your questions answered more quickly. We would ask that you **please DO NOT contact Sunvil direct**, to avoid confusion.

COMPLETING THE BOOKING FORM

We do sometimes have more than one set of dates for the same destination, so please make sure you fill in the 'destination' and 'dates' for the holiday you wish to book on.

Please also make sure you complete the section concerning health and fitness: write 'none' if this is the case, but please don't leave that section blank.

If possible, **please fill in the booking form electronically**, by typing directly into the pdf form, save your changes, and then **email the form back to us at wildlifetravel@wildlifebcn.org**. Alternatively, you can post a paper copy to Sunvil Holidays, using the address given on the booking form. Please **DO NOT post bookings to our Cambourne address**.

SUNVIL HOLIDAYS

This holiday is booked through our tour operator, Sunvil Holidays, CAA-ATOL Licence 808, a member of ABTA (V6218), IATA and AITO. All payments are made to them, and your money and booking are protected accordingly.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Please ensure you have read all the information given in the holiday leaflet and booking pack, paying particular attention to the entry requirements, health and fitness information, and details of what is and isn't included in the holiday price.

In order to ensure that this holiday suits you, it is imperative that you read the information on health and fitness in the holiday leaflet, and in the 'general information' section of the booking pack, and **let us know of any issues that may affect your participation in the holiday PRIOR TO BOOKING**.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

Travel insurance is compulsory for our trips outside the UK. You should ensure that any pre-existing medical conditions are covered. We recommend having insurance in place as soon as your booking is confirmed, in the event of your cancellation.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

Your booking should be acknowledged with a week, usually sooner. **If you have not heard back from us within a week of sending your booking form, please let us know:** emails and post both go astray, and we wouldn't want you to lose your place on a trip.

You will receive a welcome letter from us, which will tell you if the holiday has already reached minimum numbers or not. Please **DO NOT arrange any additional travel or accommodation that you may need** until the holiday has been confirmed as going ahead.

When the holiday reaches the minimum numbers to be confirmed, we will send you a confirmation letter, including a confirmation invoice from Sunvil, with details of payments due, flights or trains included in your booking, and an ATOL certificate where appropriate.



thank you for travelling with us

www.wildlife-travel.co.uk

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