

## Rhodes May 1st - 8th 2005

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I spent a week on Rhodes with my family. The trip was primarily a holiday, of which most of the time was spent in the town of Rhodos. All in all I had observations of 49 species, including 13 lifers.

Most observations in the town of Rhodos were made on these four spots: 1) Monte Smith, area between akropolis and the town (I always entered from Laskou street), 2) The Beach near my hotel Kipriotis (South along Akti Kanari and Eparhiaki odos Rhodou), 3) The big park east of the general hospital (surrounded by Odos Alex. Diakou and Venizielou Elefth) and 4) The beach each of the aquarium. A few coordinates taken with my GPS (Map datum WGS84): Hotel kipriotis (N3626'53.0" E28 12'55.9"), The Big park (N3626'53.7" E28 13'06.9"), NW corner of Mt. Smith (N3626'47.6" E28 12'49.0").

Almost every morning I went birding for an hour before 6 am (sun rises 06:10 this time of year), while the family was sleeping. First time I visited the beach in the early morning I saw a greenshank and 2 squacco herons. After that the beach was always deserted and I began visiting Mt. Smith instead. I never visited spot nr 4 early in the morning, although it might have been good. It certainly was good for observing migrating raptors and one should have taken the scope along, although it might have been a bit embarrassing among all sun-bathers ;-). I also went with my children to the Big park, which has at least three playgrounds to keep them happy while concentrated on birds.

The weather was sunny and warm (at least for someone from Finland) 20+°C, but with a rather strong wind blowing from the west. The only exception was May 7th when it was cloudy and a bit chilly and a very strong wind was blowing from the east.

Before the trip I read the reports by Jos Rutten, Georges & Mireille Olivos and Nick Moss. You can find them on the web. I recommend them. I also found the (Dutch) check list compiled by Jos Rutten very useful.

List of birds seen:

1. **Cory's Shearwater**, *Calonectris diomedea*  
Most mornings a few observed from the beach near the hotel.
2. **Squacco Heron**, *Ardeola ralloides*  
2 birds on the beach near the hotel in the morning (May 3rd).
3. **Little Egret**, *Egretta garzetta*  
2 birds flew past the beach near the hotel in the morning (May 3rd).

**(Egretta sp.)**

Seen on several occasions flying past the city or from the bus to Lindos.

4. **Grey Heron**, *Ardea cinerea*  
1 bird flew over the beach near the aquarium (May 5th).
5. **Honey Buzzard**, *Pernis apivorus*  
1 bird migrating NW, observed on the beach near the aquarium (May 4th).
6. **Short-toed Eagle**, *Circaetus gallicus*  
1 bird seen over the old town or Rhodos (May 1st). Exposed itself nicely. Even the big head was well seen.
7. **Dark form Booted / Subad Bonelli's Eagle**, *Hieraeetus pennatus/fasciatus*  
1 bird migrating NW, observed on the beach near the aquarium (May 4th). Another very similar looking bird circling the old town (May 5th).
8. **Marsh Harrier**, *Circus aeruginosus*  
1 juv female bird over the beach near the hotel in the morning (May 4th). It was joined by another (unidentified raptor/probably same species). 1 ad male bird migrating NW, observed on the beach near the aquarium (May 5th).  
  
(**Harrier sp.**, *Circus macrourus/pygargus/cyaneus*)  
1 female bird seen very briefly in the strong wind over the Big Park (May 7th). Not a marsh harrier.  
  
(**Buzzard sp. / Buzzard-sized raptor**)  
A few sightings from bus to Lindos and in Lindos itself. Probably long-legged.  
  
(**Sparrowhawk sp.**, *Accipiter nisus/brevipes*)  
1 hunting bird seen a split second attacking small birds and disappearing behind the trees outside the gate Ampuaz to the old town. Looked brown-backed and had barring on the tail.
9. **Peregrine Falcon**, *Falco peregrinus*  
1 juv. bird migrating NW, observed on the beach near the aquarium (May 5th).
10. **Eleonora's Falcon**, *Falco eleonora*  
2 hunting/circling over the cliffs of Mt. Smith (May 4th) on lacked 1-2 tail feathers and a few from the wings. 1 single bird, same place (May 5th).
11. **Kestrel**, *Falco tinnunculus*  
Several sightings. Close to airport, in Lindos Akropolis, Mt. Smith.
12. **Red-footed Falcon**, *Falco vespertinus*  
Abundant. Migration peaked while we were there. Flocks of 20 or more (mix adult males, females and immatures) on several occasions. Single birds flying over the city were seen daily. Migrating birds headed NW.
13. **Greenshank**, *Tringa nebularia*  
1 bird on the beach near the hotel in the morning (May 3rd).  
  
(**Wader sp.**, *Tringa sp.*)  
1 bird migrating NW on Mt. Smith (May 5th).

14. **Pratincole**, *Glareola pratincola*  
2 birds beautifully near the aquarium on a very windy and cloudy day (May 7th).  
No sun bathers that day.
15. **Yellow-legged Gull**, *Larus cachinnans*  
Common all along coast.
16. **Whiskered Tern**, *Chlidonias hybridus*  
3 birds flew over the beach near the aquarium, almost touching the sun shades (May 5th).
17. **White-winged Black Tern**, *Chlidonias leucopterus*  
Several sightings of 1-4 birds close the beach near the hotel & aquarium.
18. **Rock Dove**, *Columba livia*  
Common all over.
19. **Turtle Dove**, *Streptopelia turtur*  
3 birds on Mt. Smith (May 5th).
20. **Collared Dove**, *Streptopelia decaocto*  
Common all over.
21. **Ring-necked Parakeet**, *Psittacula krameri*  
A few birds near the moslem cemetery and in parks outside old town, almost daily.
22. **Swift**, *Apus apus*  
Common in the town in particular.
23. **Pallid Swift**, *Apus pallidus*  
2 birds near Mt Smith (May 1st). Only certain sighting.
24. **Alpine Swift**, *Apus melba*  
A few birds in Lindos akropolis (May 6th), seen and heard very well.
25. **Bee-Eater**, *Merops apiaster*  
No sightings until May 4th when 2 birds flew over the beach near the aquarium.  
On the windy day of 7th a flock of ~40 birds circled the town and Mt. Smith the whole afternoon and morning of 8th. The ride back to the airport produced some 100-200 bee-eaters from the bus window.
26. **Crested Lark**, *Galerida cristata*  
Only (!) 2 birds on Mt. Smith (May 7th).
27. **Crag Martin**, *Ptyonoprogne rupestris*  
Common in the town of Rhodos, especially the old town.
28. **House Martin**, *Delichon urbica*  
Several daily.

29. **Red-rumped Swallow**, *Hirundo daurica*  
Only 1 bird on Mt. Smith (May 1st). Also the only time i visited that spot in broad daylight.
30. **Swallow**, *Hirundo rustica*  
Common everywhere.
31. **Tree Pipit**, *Anthus trivialis*  
1 bird in the Big park. (May 3rd and May 7th).
32. **White Wagtail**, *Motacilla alba*  
1 bird in the moat of old town near gate Karetou (May 5th).
33. **Yellow Wagtail (Black-headed)**, *Motacilla flava feldegg*  
6 birds on Mt. Smith (May 1st). Also on later occasions 1-2 birds on the same and other spots (harbour).
34. **Robin**, *Eritacus rubecula*  
2 birds in the Big park (May 4th).
35. **Whinchat**, *Saxicola rubetra*  
3-4 birds on Mt. Smith (May 5th).
36. **Wheatear**, *Oenanthe oenanthe*  
1 femalenear the aqaurium on the very windy and cloudy day of May 7th.
37. **Blackbird**, *Turdus merula*  
Song heard on Mt. Smith (May 5th). 1 bird seen from bus on way to Lindos.
38. **Cetti's warbler**, *Cettia cetti*  
Song heard at the foot to Mt. Smith (May 7th). Wasn't there on previous occasions.
39. **Olivaceous Warbler**, *Hippolais pallida*  
Common especially in the Big park. Evereyday several singing birds. Sounds like a melodical reed warbler.
40. **Sardinian Warbler**, *Sylvia melanocephala*  
Very common especially in the Big park. Evereyday several singing birds.
41. **Spotted Flycatcher**, *Muscicapa striata*  
1-2 birds in the Big park (May 4th and later).
42. **Semi-collared Flycatcher**, *Ficedula semitorquata*  
1 beautiful male seen at close encounters in the Big park (May 3rd). Extra bar on the wing and narrowing collar stump well seen.
- (**Flycatcher sp.**, *Ficedula hypoleuca/semitroquata/albicollis*)  
2 young males/females seen in the Big park (May 5th).
43. **Blue Tit**, *Parus caeruleus*  
Common especially in the Big park. Evereyday 1-2 birds. One nest found in another park.

44. **Woodchat Shrike**, *Lanius senator*  
3 birds on Mt. Smith (May 5th). 1 bird near the aquarium on the very windy and cloudy day of May 7th.
45. **Hooded Crow**, *Corvus corone cornix*  
Common all over.
46. **Raven**, *Corvus corax*  
1 bird in Lindos flying along the rocky cliffs.
47. **House Sparrow**, *Passer domesticus*  
Common all over.
48. **Chaffinch**, *Fringilla coelebs*  
Common especially in the Big park. Everyday 1-2 birds.
- (**Goldfinch**, *Carduelis carduelis*)  
Impossible to tick in the town of Rhodes. Cage birds are kept on balconies. Song is heard all over Rhodes.
49. **Greenfinch**, *Carduelis chloris*  
Common especially in the Big park. Everyday 3-4 birds.

#### Other sightings

**Agama settilio lizard**. 1 on the walls of old town and 1 lived on Laskou street in a wall. Looks mean, but is probably quite harmless. I didn't find an English name for it.

**Balkan Wall Lizard**, *Podarcis tauricus*, common on warm & sunny places.

**3-4 Bats** on Laskou street. Rather small, not well seen. Early evenings and early mornings.