

## **Morocco (Winter) Guide**

Based on the experiences from three trips:

15.-23.3.1987, 29.11.-13.12.1989 and 7.-21.11.1990

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### **Route 1989**

- 29.11 Oued Sous, Oued Massa
- 30.11 Cap Rhir, Taroudant, Aoulouz
- 01.12 Ouarzazate, Barrage El Mansour Eddahbi, Tagdilt track
- 02.12 Tagdilt track, Gorges du Todra
- 03.12 South-west of Rissani, Erg Chebbi
- 04.12 Jorf, Barrage Hassan Addakhil, Tizi-n-Talrhemt
- 05.12 Zeida, Col du Zad, Aquelmane de Sidi Ali, Mischliffen, Dayet Aaoua, Dayet Afourgah
- 06.12 Merja Zerga
- 07.12 Asilah, Larache, Merja Zerga
- 08.12 Merja Zerga, Oued Sebou, Lac de Sidi Bourhaba, Rabat
- 09.12 Sidi Bettache, Oulidia
- 10.12 Cap Beddouza, Oukaimeden
- 11.12 Tizi-n-Test road, Taroudant
- 12.12 Oued Massa, 15 km north of Goulimine
- 13.12 Oued Sous

### **Route 1990**

- 07.11 Agadir harbour, Oued Sous
- 08.11 Oued Massa
- 09.11 Goulimine
- 10.11 Cap Rhir, Tamri, Agadir harbour, Oued Sous
- 11.11 Igoudar, Tazenakht
- 12.11 Ouarzazate, Barrage El Mansour Eddahbi, Tagdilt track
- 13.11 Tagdilt track, Jorf
- 14.11 Erg Chebbi, Errashidia
- 15.11 Zeida, Col du Zad, Aquelmane de Sidi Ali, Mischliffen, Dayet Ifrah and Dayet Aaoua.
- 16.11 Merja Zerga
- 17.11 El Jadida, Oulidia, Cap Beddouza, Essaouira
- 18.11 Igoudar, Massa
- 19.11 Goulimine - Tan-tan
- 20.11 Oued Massa, Oued Sous
- 21.11 Agadir harbour, Bird Park

## **General**

On our second trip we went for the species we had not yet seen. And we got them except for Tawny Eagle and Dark Chanting Goshawk for which we had no sites. In 1990 we wanted to spend more time at the sites, concentrate on photographing and get Tawny Eagle. We now also had a site for Dark Chanting Goshawk, but would the birds be there at this time of the year? No, it seemed.

December 1989 was pretty good with 195 species. In 1990 we did better with 208. Well, we didn't look for some species, notably Double-spurred Francolin, Crimson-winged Finch, Purple Gallinule and Great Bustard, so we had more time to see ordinary species.

In 1989 we drove altogether 4410 km, in 1990 4311 km. Not a big difference, but 1990 sure felt more relaxed.

## **Flight Tickets**

In 1989 we paid FIM 2100 (\$ 315), in 1990 FIM 2650. We used the hotel included in the package the nights we stayed in Agadir.

## **Accommodation**

Hotels are cheap in Morocco. Our cheapest was 40 Dh (for a room) and our most expensive was 212 Dh. Mostly the price was about 70 Dh. The cheaper hotels may not have toilet or shower on the room, shower not even in the corridor. Water is mostly cold, a few hotels provided warm water, mostly by arrangement. Some charged extra for it. The hotels are seldom heated so the rooms are often very cold.

Most hotels had european toilets. Toilet paper seemed to be a novelty though, only the better places provided it, the same goes for towels. Only the really good hotels provide more than one. In some towns there are only rather bad hotels, in others only expensive ones, so it is sometimes difficult to find a satisfactory one. We relied heavily on the Rough Guide for choosing hotels. See the site guide section for more information on the hotels at the sites. Some hotels have nightguards for the cars, they mostly ask 10 Dh/car and night.

## **Food**

There are two standard meals that the Moroccons eat, tajine and couscous. Tajine is a mishmash on carrot, tomato, potato, etc and mostly a little meat. Quite good, but takes ages to prepare. Be prepared to wait for over an hour. Couscous consists of millet and mutton, chicken or other meat. If eating on a local cafe, don't count on anything else being on the menu. At local restaurants they had beefsteak or brochettes too. Eatable. The better hotels and restaurants serve European food too and are still cheap (compared to Finnish prices). Only the better places serve alcohol. A meal at a local restaurant would cost about 70 Dh for two. The most expensive meal we had was tournedos with beer at a luxury restaurant, that cost 260 Dh. At one hotel we had their menu of 55 Dh/person + tax which included soup, sallad, seafood, main meal and dessert. Most better hotels seem to offer menus (50 - 90 Dh) incl. entree, main meal and dessert.

It is often possible to order breakfast quite early (even before 6 am). Normally this consists of bread, butter, jam and tea/coffee. Ask for omelette or other, they may serve it. Don't expect the breakfast to be served on time, count on it being 15-30 minutes late. Drink only bottled water, a bottle of one and a half litre costs a few dirhams (4,5 - 6 in shops, up to 13 in restaurants). Most local restaurants have Coke or Seven-up or something like it.

Be careful with sallads, sauces and such. In 1989 we suffered no stomach trouble while in Morocco, but on our first morning back in Finland it started for me. In 1990 two in the group had problems. Take some pills against it with you.

As we usually had a meal in the evening, we ate bread and fruit during the day. There are two sorts of bread, a baton and a round bread. Both are quite good. They cost 1-1,5 Dh. Fruit is cheap, mandarins 3 - 4 Dh/kg, bananas a little more expensive at 10 - 20 Dh/kg. Soft drinks 1 - 4 Dh.

## **Weather**

November - December is the rainy season. Be prepared for rain. Bring at least a light raincoat. If you intend to visit Merja Zerga bring wellingtons (these were useful at Oued Sous too). Most locals at Merja Zerga also use wellingtons. The area mostly consists of wet and muddy meadows.

In 1989 it had been raining for 3 days in the desert area a week earlier for the first time in 8 years. So there were puddles everywhere. We also had some rain when we went into the desert. At Merja Zerga it rains a lot, we were lucky to escape with just a few drops, but other crews have had days of rain. Many rivers also held water, though usually they are dry. It was never too deep to cross with a car, however. When it rains some bridges also come down, so you may have to change your route.

In 1990 it hadn't rained for some time and it was very dry everywhere. Even Merja Zerga was drier than usual. We never walked down to the meadows, so we managed without wellingtons. It rained a lot in the Agadir area just before Christmas 1990, water everywhere, tracks very muddy.

In 1989 it also was rather cold, outside I mostly had long underwear and my winterjacket. Gloves and headwear were used on the shore a few times.

The mountains are of course cold, nearer 0°C. I used shorts on the first afternoon in Agadir, after that sandals, shorts and T-shirts were completely forgotten. We had little sun, but we didn't have much rain either, or rather, it rained during the evenings and nights.

In 1990 it was sunny all the time. And pretty warm. We had fog on four mornings though, 2 at Massa, at Merja Zerga and at Oualidia. I really don't understand why most birders visit Morocco in December or January, when there sometimes is snow and it is much colder.

It seemed to me as though the time for dawn changed with the period, but dusk was always just after 6 pm (in Agadir).

## **Car hire**

In Agadir the cheap car hire firms are said to be at the south end of Hassan II and the expensive ones at the north end of Mohammed V (Hertz, Budget and Europcar; Avis is one block east from Europcar). A few of the cheaper ones had their offices here as well. I don't know if the difference is all that big. There are lots of firms about, but not very many different makes of car. If you arrive around midday, most firms will be closed during the siesta, but if you look hard enough it should be possible to find one open too. Europcar was open 8.30-12.00 and 14.30-19.00.

Renault 4 is the standard, at a price of about 2000 Dh/week (incl. everything except petrol). Renault 5 and Fiat Uno for 2500 Dh/week and then a step up to the next size (Fiat Regata, Renault 12) for 3500-4000 Dh/week. These were D-class though, not C-class.

All prices are for a week unlimited mileage excl. tax and CDW. Tax is 19%. Coll. damage is the sum you may have to pay in case of damage if you do not take CDW. Age is the minimum age of the driver. The classing of the cars may differ somewhat. Europcar had Fiat Regata as a D-class, Hertz had it as E-class. But in general as below:

- A-class: Renault 4
- B-class: Fiat Uno 45, Citroen AX, Renault 5 (Avis)
- C-class: Peugeot 205, Renault 5
- D-class: Renault 12, Renault 9, Peugeot 309, Fiat Regata 70

Other crews have paid:

- Tikki-car Renault 4: 1650 Dh/6 days, almost new car, no problems
- Afric cars Renault 9: 3300 Dh/one week

Try haggling about the price, we managed to get the Regata in 1989 for 6000 for two weeks. The prices are printed so they may not be so willing to drop it. In 1989 we got our car from 'Jaz Car'. We had some problems in getting compensated for the repairs, but we got the money just before we had to leave for the airport. Some friends who ended up with the same firm and the same car a few months later had more problems. They finally got their money at the airport (that was the security money). So I can't say I recommend the firm. Jaz car would have accepted any 'id-card' with photograph as security. Your visanumber should do well, but in case you don't have anything else, you'll probably be asked for about 2000-3000 Dh (in any currency).

In 1990 we used Europcar and had more problems with the car than the year before, just bad luck?

Check the spare tyre (take it out of the car and check that it really is a good tyre, not one which will brake soon) and the changing gear.

Petrol in 1989 was 6.06 - 6.18 Dh for Super, 6.99 - 7.11 Dh in 1990. Cheapest in the north, most expensive in the south. Maybe the price will go down once the Iraq crisis is over. Service stations were easy to find. Water for washing the car was more difficult though. We've seen vipers for windscreen washing only a few times.

We had to repair one tyre in 1989, 4 in 1990 which cost 20 Dh/tyre. In 1989 we also had to repair the distributor which cost 470 Dh (which we got back from the car hire firm). In 1990

we had the exhaustpipe repaired for 210 Dh, which we also got back. Hiring the car from your own country may or may not be cheaper. However, several crews have on arrival found out that nobody has ever heard of them at the rental firm.

If you don't want to rent a car it is always possible to hire a taxi. If you stay in Agadir and make daytrips it won't cost you more than renting a car. The driver will see to everything, including talking to the police and carrying your gear. A Finnish birder used the following taxidriver in 1990 and was very pleased with him. A Finnish crew used the same driver in 1991 and paid him 500 Dh/day (8am - 6pm) (\$ 36). They drove about 100-200 km daily. The name and adress of their driver was:

- Bounzid Belkalem, Bloc 4 N 63, cit/'e Prince Hevitier, Agadir, Maroc.

You can write to him beforehand and tell him to meet you at the hotel. Another taxi-driver intercepted one letter to this driver and came to the rendez-vous himself. But I think he was satisfactory too. The advantage of a known driver is that he will know the sites and the importance of stopping at once if asked. Bounzid did not speak any English.

Minibusses and Land Rovers are possibly only rented with a driver, perhaps not a bad deal as the driver can take care of all sorts of things.

## **Traffic**

The roads are good (african standard), the main roads are as home, but minor roads are paved only in the middle, the width of one car. On these roads you have to give way to the right. Sometimes there are lots of holes in the asphalt. If somebody is coming straight at you from the other direction, give way. They often blink the headlights to either get you out of the way or to get you to move on while they're waiting.

Don't expect anyone to follow any traffic rules. Always be prepared for anything. Driving during the dark hours is especially hazardous as there are lots of horse- and donkeycarts on the roads and these have just small lights, if any at all. We even saw two trucks in pitch darkness without any headlights at all. Beware of cars with the left headlight broken. There are also lots of people and cyclists on the roads, these are also without any lights. Beware of kids. Mostly these mind the traffic very well, but there are exceptions. We almost ran down a 3-year old running straight in front of us from behind a parked lorry.

In 1989, on the way from Erfoud to Midelt we saw two accidents which just had happened, further north we saw two other, which had happened a few hours earlier. When there's been an accident the locals put out a ring of stones (stone size about 10 cm diameter) on the road to mark the accident area. In the dark it is easy to run over these stones. The accident cars might be just off the road, but the stones will be on it. They don't use triangles much. The speedlimit is often 100 km/h outside towns. It may be 80 km/h or something else. In towns it's often 40 km/h.

## **Roads**

- Agadir - Ait Melloul: Very slow with lots of traffic. If possible use roundabout road from Ait Melloul to north Agadir.

- Ait Melloul - Taroudant: Also slow. It may be better to use the northern road (which starts from the Marrakesh road. We tried this road about half way from Taroudant, it is tarmac and much calmer than the main road.
- Taroudant - Taliouine: Rather straight good road. Note that there is a new shortcut from Ait Aizza to south of Aoulouz, good tarmac road.
- Taliouine - Ouarzazate: Partly mountaneous, partly good and straight.
- Ouarzazate - Tijnejdad: Good and straight, but narrow. The part between El Kelaa and Boumalne is urban all the way and quite slow.
- Tijnejdad - Erfoud: Likewise.
- Erfoud - Errashidia: Pretty good.
- Errashidia - Azrou: Mountaneous and thus rather slow, but road quite good quality.
- Azrou - Souk El Arba du Rharb: Good roads, but more traffic. Fes and Meknes slow to drive through.
- Merja Zerga - Kenitra: Good, but narrow.
- Kenitra - Rabat: Lots of traffic, slow road despite three lanes. Rabat very slow to drive through.
- Rabat - Casablanca: Motorway 120 km/h. Good, continues to the west side of Casablanca.
- Casablanca - El Jadida: Not too bad, they were repairing it. We almost got stuck on the sandy parts.
- El Jadida - Safi: Quite alright.
- Safi - Essaouira: Good in the beginning, the road gets a little mountaneous well before Essaouira.
- Essaouira - Agadir: Mountaneous, took 3 hours to drive in darkness.
- Ait Melloul - Tiznit: Good fast road, except for some traffic near Ait Melloul.
- Tiznit - Bou Izakarn: Mountains, but only slow going up and down. The middle is pretty good.
- Bou Izakarn - Tan-tan: Good, fast road.

## **Finance**

Creditcards are accepted at better hotels and car hire firms. Note however that some car hire firms may charge 6% for use of a creditcard. Jaz car did. Europcar charged nothing. They also gave the same exchange rates as the bank, without any charge for paying with foreign notes. The banks charge 3% for lifting money on a creditcard. Also note that all banks do not take credit cards, find one with 'exterieur' in the name. Banks who take credit cards have notices on the door. Banks are open Mon-Fri 8.30-11.30 am and 3-4.30 pm. Current rate of exchange was \$ 1 = ~13 Dhs.

## **Shopping**

When starting to bargain, seem totally disintrested, tell them you don't want it. When they've gotten down to 20% of their original offer you can start to think about bying, but try to get them down to at least 10%.

## **Locals**

These are very tiresome. If somebody offers to help you, he almost certainly wants something in return (money, other things, a favour). They follow you around, they crowd the car as soon

as you stop anywhere, selling things and offering guidance. If you do give something to somebody, there'll be 50 others who wants something too. Just say no and leave. If you need help and ask someone who hasn't offered to help you, then he will probably just help you and leave without asking for anything in return. They are very nice when approached in this way. But beware of people that approach you.

## **Thieves**

I think that these are a problem at Oued Sous, not necessarily anywhere else. At Oued Sous lots of birders have been robbed. Don't leave anything visible inside the car. The guards at the gate sometimes offer to guard the car, I don't know if this is a good idea or not. We mostly cleaned out the car for the night (at least the inside), we left less important stuff in the boot. We didn't have any trouble.

A Finnish birder almost got into trouble near Goulimine in February 1990. A local promised to show him a very good area and took him about 50 km towards the southeast. At this point the birder was getting a little anxious and asked the local which birds were present in the area. When the local pointed to a drake King Eider in the field guide, the birder knew he'd been fooled and threw the local out of the car. He then turned around and after a while met two motorcyklists with big clubs, soon after that a car came along with four big men inside. None of these looked very pleased at his departure. So it probably pays to be very careful.

## **Police**

There were police everywhere. And roadblocks. They were asking for passports, papers of the car, driving licence, and where we came from. In 1989 we got stopped about once a day, in 1990 we got stopped only a few times and they asked for our passports only once. But it is better to keep your papers with you at all times and easily available. The police often spoke French very fast as they threw questions at us. I felt that no knowledge of French wouldn't have been a very good idea. They asked about our professions, where we were going, where we came from, etc. If you don't speak French very well check up your profession beforehand, you'll need it for the hotelforms anyway. We were fined once for speeding (in a town were limit was 40 km/h). The fine was 25 Dh. We once saw a radar.

## **Language**

The official language is Arabic and a lot of people speak only that. Those that do speak another language speak French. Some speak it very well, others don't. A few speak a little English or German.

## **Literature**

For identification we had:

- Harrison: Seabirds. A Photographic Guide.
- Jonsson: Birds of the Mediterranean and the Alps
- Bruun, Singer, Delin & Svensson: The Birds of Britain and Europe
- Hollom, Porter, Christensen: The Birds of the Middle East and North Africa
- Gensbol: The Birds of Prey of Europe
- Grant: Gulls, A Guide to Identification

- Halltenorth, Diller: A Field Guide to the Mammals of Africa

For the sites we had several reports:

- Morocco 20.3.-10.4.1987 by S.M.Andrews. Very good.
- Morocco Trip 3.-17.5.1987 by D.Mountain. Also very good.
- South-west Morocco 25.3.-1.4.1988 by J.Geeson. Good maps for a few sites, new.
- Southern Morocco 27.3.-3.4.1986 by B.Andersson.
- Morocco 10.-24.4.1986 by O.Storkersen. Good, includes notes on some sites missing in other reports.
- Morocco 30.11.-14.12.1987 by D.de Moes.
- Marocko 12.-26.4.1984 by T.Axelsen. In Norwegian, includes interesting itinerary.
- Marocko November 1988 by SOF-res. In Swedish, interesting itinerary, no maps.
- Morocco 5.-19.4. by R Webb.
- South-west Morocco 22.-29.11.1985 by G.Wright. Includes interesting numbers of waders counted on the coast.
- Morocco 29.1.-12.2.1988 by N.Lethaby. Includes some update notes and comments on two sites south of Agadir.
- Marocko 4.-11.1.1987 by Skånes Ornitologiska Förening.
- Fåglar i Marocko under 8 Dagar 9.-16.12.1984 by C-G.Cederlund. In Swedish.
- Birdwatching in Morocco 23.11.-7.12.1989 by Mikael Käll.
- Morocco 13.1.-20.1.1989 by G.J.Speight. Includes checklist and some site information.
- Morocco 28.12.-6.1.1989 by Teus J.C.Luijendijk.
- Morocco Tour 1990 (1.-15.2.) by Mårten Ajne. Site guide with copied maps.
- Ornithological Report of a trip to Morocco 24.12.1989-7.1.1990 by Jan van der Laan.
- A Birdwatcher's Guide to Morocco by Patrick and Fedora Bergier is now available, but it wasn't during our 1989 trip. The guide seems rather good, with nice maps, but it only includes 15 chapters on sites (each chapter describes an area, thus some include more than one site), none of them south of Massa. Some of the descriptions lack the detail needed for a few difficult species. The hotel information also seems to be at least in part inaccurate (only better hotels included). In 1990, when we had the guide with us, it did help, but on no account would it have been enough on its own.

For other tourist information we used:

- The Rough Guide to Morocco by Mark Ellingham and Shaun McVeigh. This book was great! Lots of info about hotels almost every town we visited, even the small ones. There is also info about roads, their quality and usefulness. Also quite good info about current situation, history, tourist sites, etc. I do recommend this book very much, but I suppose you could manage without it. Some of the more expensive hotels (\*\* star and more) are not mentioned though.

## Maps

We had two, Hildebrand's Travel Map 1:900 000 1988/89 with city maps of major cities and Hallwags 1:1000 000 which we bought before our first trip in 1987. The Hildebrand map was good, we had no problems with it, except that it now looks rather worn. The Hallwag map



was more durable but not quite so good. The Michelin map and Lascalles map should be very good, much better than those we had.

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## Site Guide

The maps were all sketched on location (not yet in this web version!), but I might of course have made mistakes anyway. The sites are arranged in the order we visited them (or drove past) with Agadir excursions last. Many sites are pinpointed by the km stones. These do not always show the distance to the next town, every other stone usually shows the distance to some town further away. When these stones are mentioned in the site descriptions, I have used the exact text on the pole, so instead of writing 25 km east of Taroudant, it could be 95 km east of Agadir.

Sometimes I also mention the distance from the closest town. Also note that the distance on the pole does not necessarily correspond to the distance on the roadmap, at least not on the one we used. They were repainting the poles all over the country, so I think they'll be like that for some time. \* after the site name means that there is a map of the site.

I've included summering and migrant species in the site descriptions, so check the field guide to determine whether they are possible at the time of your visit. I've included species from previous reports and records I've heard of as well as our own.

### Taroudant

55 km east of Agadir Steppe Eagle has been recorded. 6 km west of Taroudant the road crossed Oued Sous, this is a reputedly good site for Red-necked Nightjar, but of course not in the winter. There is a track just north of the wadi to the west. This is also good for Fulvous Babbler, Black-shouldered Kite, Thick-knee, Subalpine Warbler, Melodious Warbler and (White-rumped Swift). There are several tracks south from the Taroudant area. Fulvous Babbler should be rather easy to find along these. Look for them in the higher bushes. Steppe Eagle has been recorded 10 and 16 km east of Taroudant. 16 km east of Taroudant also Egyptian Vulture and Fulvous Babbler have been seen. One way to find the Babbler is to kick the bushes. On 8th November 1990 at 10 am Jim Pattinson had a Dark Chanting Goshawk about 20 km east of Taroudant.

### Igoudar \*

This is the site for Dark Chanting Goshawk. Other species possible include Lanner, Barbary Falcon, Tawny Eagle, Black-shouldered Kite, Sparrow Hawk, Great Spotted Cuckoo and Black-headed Bush Shrike.

Berrchill is situated about 130 km from Agadir on the road to Aoulouz. Just west of Berrchil a tarmac road leads to Igoudar (5 km), this road starts about 10 km south of the P32 crossing. See also Birding World vol.3 number 11 for more info. There are two hills from where the

watching is quite good. The first hill is quite close to Igoudar, the second (and higher) 3 km east of Igoudar. The whole area between Berrchill and Aoulouz has suitable woods, but Goshawks have been seen at least from these two hills. Kids are a nuisance here though. And it got rather warm as there wasn't any wind on either of the two days we visited the site. The villagers seem to be of the opinion that the Goshawks disappear (disperse?) for the winter and return in spring. This probably means about February when they start displaying. We didn't see any. A British crew had 5 adults and 1 juvenile in February 1990 at the second hill. A Finnish crew had one bird 27.2.1990 near Igoudar and Harri Muukkonen had one bird near the first hill on 20.1.1990. Several Finnish crews and a least a Dutch one tried during December 1990 - January, 20th 1991 without success. Ian Delgado visited the site on 28th and 29th of April 1991 10am-1pm and 9.30-10.30 without seeing any.

Accommodation: Taroudant is one possibility. There are several hotels, one at least is outside the walls. (It's easy getting lost inside the walls). There is a \*\*\*\* hotel (The Ibn Toumert) in Taliouine, which may not be quite open in winter, but it should still be possible to stay there. The hotel is situated south of the road and east of the town. Follow the signs. It is rather expensive and there is no hot water, also no electricity in the evening.

### Aoulouz \*

This is an old breeding site for Bald Ibis. When we visited this site, however, they were building a barrage, so I don't know if there is much hope for the future. There has only been one or two pairs breeding there anyway, lately. The site should also be good for breeding Lanner and Long-legged Buzzard. Other species recorded include Peregrine, Barbary Falcon, Booted Eagle, Short-toed Eagle, Bonelli's Eagle, Scops Owl, Scrub Warbler, Cetti's Warbler, Trumpeter Finch.

In 1990 we did not stop here.

### Tazenakht \*

The road between Aoulouz and Tazenakht crosses some mountains and is therefore rather slow at times. The good area is situated to the west of Tazenakht, south of the road. Species include Short-toed Eagle, Booted Eagle, Tristram's Warbler, Mourning Wheatear, Rock Sparrow, Thick-billed Lark, Temminck's Lark, Trumpeter Finch. Numbers are smaller than at Tagdilt track though. We did not visit this site in 1989, since we drove past in the dark. In 1990 we drove past again, because we preferred to spend the time searching for Mourning Wheatears.

There is also a minor road to the east which we visited in 1990. Species include Booted and Short-toed Eagles, Mourning Wheatear and Trumpeter Finch. The best part of this road is at the beginning. 4 km east of Tazenakht, just after crossing the wadi, turning to the south and leaving the village, look for Mourning Wheatear at the foot of the high hill. Continue further on for raptors.

For more information on Tazenakht see Mountain & Rees 1987.

### Tizi-n-Tichka

If you go from Ouarzazate towards Marrakesh you pass Tizi-n-Tichka. This is the second place where it is possible to find Crimson-winged Finch. It is probably more difficult than at Oukaimeden though. The road is also good for Lanner, Golden Eagle, Booted Eagle, Red-necked Nightjar, Shorelark, Trumpeter Finch. I have not myself driven this way. There is a breeding site for White-rumped Swift somewhere on this road. See Mountain & Rees 1987, Webb 1985 for more information.

Accommodation: Ouarzazate. There are 4 hotels recommended in the Rough Guide, the Royal and the Es Salam opposite each other on Av. Mohammed V (the main road) nearer the east side of the town, the Atlas on Rue du March/e and 1 km from the centre towards Tazenakht (on the main road) the Gazelle (2\*B). There is also a campsite. In 1989 we stayed at the Royal where they charged 72 Dhs for the room incl. shower but without toilet. Only cold water. A room without shower was cheaper. There was no roof over the centre around which the rooms were situated, so it was rather cold. In 1990 we stayed at La Gazelle 119 Dh/room for two, 162 Dh//room for three, warm shower on the room + toilet. Three different menus for 40, 61 and 75 Dh. Had a Barn Owl in the yard (incl. good parking and 10 Dh for the nightguard).

#### Barrage El Mansour Eddahbi \*

The barrage itself is rather barren, as most barrages tend to be (although migration could be good, see Bergier & Bergier), but the area north of the barrage is more interesting . We had no previous information about the site, but in 1989 we stopped as we saw a large flock of Trumpeter Finches. We had 4 Mourning Wheatears here, 2 slightly further on. Black-bellied and Spotted Sandgrouse flew over, an Osprey flew over the lake. Desert Lark was also seen a little further on, as well as Little Owl. There is an interesting looking green valley but we did not find any suitable road through it. In 1990 we started at the same area where we had 4 male and a female Mourning Wheatear, a Black-bellied Sandgrouse, etc. The Mourning Wheatears seem to occur rather commonly from Tazenakht to Boumalne. I don't know if the spot 11 km east of Ouarzazate is better than any other, we had altogether 9 males and 4 females in 1990, part of these were seen from the car on telegraph lines.

The barrage can be viewed from the south as well, but for this site (visible on a roadmap) a pass is needed from the police in Ouarzazate (according to Storkersen 1986). The Birdwatcher's Guide shows a old road directly from the city to the western end of the barrage (we watched out for this road in 1990 but did not see it) and recommends a visit to the east. I don't know which track would be best in the east, but the tarmac road to the restaurant on the cliff goes to the barrage with views both ways.

#### El Kelaa

20 and 22 km west of El Kelaa are old sites for Houbara, Mourning Wheatear and Melodious Warbler. We stopped for a few minutes but saw nothing. At El Kelaa Mourning Wheatear, Hoopoe Lark, Bar-tailed Desert Lark and Trumpeter Finch have been recorded. I don't know exactly where. Old notes (Webb 1985) says at pole 1421, but it seemed to me as if the poles had been renumbered, we couldn't find any numbers like that.

#### Gorges du Dades

This is a minor road northwards from Boumalne, we did not visit it. It is described in the Birdwatcher's Guide, but doesn't seem to include any very important species, although it could be nice if you want an exciting ride. See the Birdwatcher's Guide.

### Tagdilt Track \*

This is one of the best sites. It is a large area to the south of the main road, about 15 km deep and several km wide. The area seems to continue westwards and eastwards. Outside the breeding season, the best way to cover this is by staying in the car and driving around on the tracks and between them. There is small, low scrub, no problem for the car. Several wadis criss-cross the area, sometimes one can drive through these, sometimes not. Photography is possible from the car, also I don't think it is possible to get close to the Houbaras on foot. With a car you can get nice views, without it don't count on getting nearer than several hundred metres if you find them at all. We had lots of Long-legged Buzzards on the pylons as well as two Lanners.

In the morning (1990) we found out, that 11 km south of the main road (near the hills) there were some green ditches with water pools (near some houses and huts). We saw 14 Crowned Sandgrouse come in to drink, also lots of Black-bellied and Pin-tailed, even though we got there a little late. Other species seen here include: Spotted Sandgrouse, Eagle Owl (seen by a Swedish crew in a wadi near the hills in 1989), Cream-Coloured Courser, Thick-billed Lark (easy in autumn, but more difficult in spring?), Temminck's Lark (easy in autumn), Desert Lark, Bar-tailed Desert Lark, Hoopoe Lark, Lesser Short-toed Lark, Red-rumped Wheatear (common), Mourning Wheatear, Brown-necked Raven (I haven't seen any there, only lots of Ravens), Trumpeter Finch. The Ravens are supposed to be at a rubbish-dump which we couldn't locate at all, no longer used? At least three pairs of Mourning Wheatear have been seen during the last year. Lesser Short-toed Larks were seen in huge flocks, at certain spots, very shy. Other species over the whole area. This area is worth both an afternoon and a morning. Somebody wrote in the birdlog about two oases to the east of the track. The first one about 7 km east and 18 km south of the main road (if I remember correctly).

Accommodation: The Augberge Soleil Bleu north of the Track offers personal service and nice rooms incl. shower and toilet, with hot water on request. Price 70 Dhs for a room. They also serve dinner and breakfast (which together cost 120 Dhs for two). There is a birdlog in the sitting room which had a lot of information from January -88 onwards. There are 3 other hotels on the same minor road, hotel Vallee des Oiseaux (60 Dh/room incl. warm water, shower and toilet in the corridor), four star Madayed (302 Dh/room for two), Es Salam (40 Dh/room for two, 50 Dh/room for three incl. warm shower and toilet in the corridor. Also 40 Dh for dinner, 18 Dh for breakfast (incl. omelett)). Both the Es Salam and the Soleil Bleu were quite cold (in 1989 they had a meter which showed 12 C), but so is the Vallee des Oiseaux I've been told. Even the Madayed was cold, at least in the winter 1989-90. They have air-conditioning though. There was a bar at the Madayed and we also bought some wine there.

### Gorges du Todra

The road from Tinerhir goes through the town on the hill (slow driving) and down again to the gorge. As you leave the town (11 km from the crossing in Tinerhir) the river is surrounded by trees and the road by scrub, good for migrant passerines, Tristram's Warbler and Dartford Warbler. Further on just before the river crosses the road, there are two cafes.

Drive across the river, a few hundred metres later the road turns into a donkeypath (14.5 km from the main crossing). Here there are two restaurant hotel cafes, Yasmina and Les Roches.

The gorge is fabulous. Walk further along and there is a 'valley', from where the trail continues northwards. Beware of locals wanting to guide you and of the 'berber' flower growing there. It has a very strong smell and if you touch it the smell will stick to you. Species reported include: Bonelli's Eagle (there should be a nest on the cliffside), Lanner, Scops Owl, Alpine Swift, Crag Martin, Pale Crag Martin, Desert Lark, Grey Wagtail, Melodius Warbler, Cetti's Warbler, Tristram's Warbler, Subalpine Warbler, Dartford Warbler, Blue Rock Thrush, Trumpeter Finch. This site is probably better during migration. At least it was rather empty when we visited it.

Accommodation: There are three camping areas 9 km from the crossing. For hotelrestaurants, see above.

### Jorf

The area between Jorf and 10 km to the west is supposed to be possible for Long-legged Buzzard, Lanner, Houbara, Spotted Sandgrouse, Eagle Owl, Hoopoe Lark, Bar-tailed Desert Lark, Desert, Spectacled, Subalpine, Tristram's and Scrub Warbler, Rock Thrush, Fulvous Babbler, Blue-Cheeked Bee-Eater and Trumpeter Finch.

In 1989 we couldn't find the site at all, in 1990 we spent the last two daylight hours of the day exploring the 6 km wide area between the hills which starts 15 km east of Touroug or 7 km west of Jorf. We walked in the wadi and around the scrub looking for Scrub Warblers. No luck with those, but lots of Hoopoe and Bar-tailed Desert Larks. In the wadi beside an old broken stonewall (an old bridge?) there was a water hole. 50 Trumpeter Finch were present sitting on the wall. At about 17.15 a flock of 20 Spotted Sandgrouse flew over. Mountain & co also had Spotted Sandgrouse here.

For site descriptions see Andrews 1987, Mountain & Rees 1987, Whitehouse 1988.

### Erfoud - Merzouga - Rissani \*\*

Species mentioned here are Arabian and Houbara Bustard, Eagle Owl, Desert Sparrow, Desert and Tristram's Warbler, Fulvous Babbler, Hoopoe Lark, Bar-tailed Desert Lark, Flamingos. See also Birding World vol. 1 number 3.

There is scrub near the village between the cafes and Merzouga and also at Merzouga. In the summer the area is good for Blue-cheeked Bee-Eaters. Erg Chebbi (Little Dunes) is an area of high reddish sanddunes, the largest in Morocco. The first 16 km from Erfoud the road is paved, after that there is a roadblock. Drive to the left and the track goes to Merzouga. Keep the pylons in sight and you will not get lost. Mostly they are rather close, sometimes about 200 m away. Keep to the largest track all the time. When you come to the Augberge, follow the track through the yard and keep the pylons on your right. Just before the Augberge at Derkaoua there is a wadi with a stone bridge, a site for Desert Sparrow, Fulvous Babbler and Tristram's Warbler. We also had Spotted Sandgrouse there.

It is 17 km along the track to the crossing for Cafe des Etoiles. All the cafes are signed and the tracks to the cafes are about 2.5 - 3 km. Driving fast it took us half an hour from Erfoud to

Erg Chebbi. Note that the sand in the desert reflects a lot of light. When there's just desert around it tends to be too light on a photo. At least with my camera (Canon T-90) I should have used at least one or two stops less light than the automatic meter gave me. There is a birdlog at Cafe Sud. Ask for it. At Cafe Sud they also serve cold soft drinks, omelettes (17 Dh), breakfast (12 Dh), Tajine (35 Dh), couscous (40 Dh).

### Merzouga Lake

The lake exists when it's rained enough lately. In winter 1989-90 it rained a lot and the lake was quite big. When we were there in 1990 it had shrunk to about 50 m across. Lots of dead fish and frogs on the dry exbottom of the lake. When the lake is large there are Flamingos, wildfowl, waders. 4 Egyptian Plovers were present in January-March 1990. Thick-billed Lark, Lesser Short-toed Lark and Desert Warbler are other species recorded in the neighbourhood. We had 2 Desert Warblers, 3 Tristram's Warblers, 3 Desert Wheatears, 3 Bar-tailed Desert Larks, 4 Hoopoe Larks as well as a Golden Eagle. 4 Ruddy Shelducks were the only birds present at the lake.

To get there take the track which leaves Merzouga just north of the Post office (first house on the west side of the track coming into Merzouga from the north. There is a green sign in Arabic on the house.) This track eventually reaches Rissani, but it is probably not possible to drive there without a 4-wheel drive. About 5 km after the post office there is a track to the south. This track leads to a small area (200 m x 1000 m) of scrub (1 - 1.5 m high). Look here for Desert and Tristram's Warblers, Hoopoe Larks and Desert Wheatear. The last remains of the lake were about 1.5 km east of this scrub. Check the 'canal' that runs from Merzouga in the Rissani direction.

### Guides

You do not really need a guide unless you intend to drive on bad desert tracks. Finding Merzouga without one is easy. We drove to the cafes in complete darkness and we had no problems. If you want a guide for Desert Sparrow, Bustards or the lakes, you'll find them at the cafes at Erg Chebbi. Hamiji Ali speaks some English and French and at least he seems to know the birds. He says that he has guided lots of birders. Some at least have given him good reviews. He asks 300 Dhs for a day. You'll find Hamiji at Dunes d'Or.

In 1990 we met another Ali, Ali Ouhaddou. He was younger than Hamiji and without a beard. He too told us he'd guided lots of birders. From the beginning of 1990 he'd kept a notebook where the birders he had guided had written their comments and observations. They all recommended Ali and claimed he was a very good driver. Some birders had given him a copy of 'The Birds of the Middle East and North Africa' so he's likely to know pretty much what he sees. Look for Ouhaddou at Cafe Sud.

There seem to be several Alis around so be sure to get the one you want. They may all be pretty much the same of course. The third guide I've heard about, Barra, lives in Merzouga, but there's been lots of bad criticism against him, accusing him of just thinking of money. Which they all do of course. They may also claim that they can show you Arabian Bustard and then when none appears, start saying that they meant Houbara or something like that. Ouhaddou told me honestly that there weren't any about anymore.

Hamiji Ali wasn't quite honest with us when he told us of the Desert Sparrow site. Despite that he must have known that the track was under water, he told us the walk would be 800 m, when it was really about 3 km. But otherwise he was quite ok.

### Arabian Bustard

Forget Arabian Bustard here. The locals might tell you that you'll see them near Mfis, but don't count on it. I don't think any has been seen there for some time. The Swedes went there in November 1989 without seeing any. Mfis could be alright for Houbara though.

If you really want to try for Arabian Bustard you need a Landrover, a guide and then travel at least 100 km to the south-west of Rissani. Search the desert between Zagora and Rissani. A pair was seen 120 south-west of Rissani in January 1989 (the guide was Barra). The name of the place is Dayet Maider. Birding World vol 2 number 1 there is a record of three in early January 1989 at Merzouga.

There probably aren't any Arabian Bustards left anymore, but if you still want to try, you should plan to search for several days. Note that travelling in the desert is slow, it took us one and a half hour to go 20 km (with an ordinary car though). The Swedish crew hired a landrover and a guide for a day which cost 1300 Dhs. It would have cost 1500 Dhs if they had found Arabian Bustard. They did see 12 Houbaras. They drove 2 hours out from the main road to the south-west. A Dutch crew searched Dayet Maider in December 1989 without finding any Arabian Bustards. Ouhaddou Ali told me he'd seen them in 1987 and 1988 but not since then. We were told that the military guides help the Saudis to hunt Bustards (with military equipment, no wonder they find them), but what chance does that give an ordinary birder?

The Saudis shot 120 Houbara and 6 Arabian Bustards in December 1988 (see Birding World vol 2 number 1), in January 1990 they only got 14 Houbaras. Does this mean the Saudis aren't hunting here so actively anymore? If it does it is because there are so few Bustards left it's not worth the trouble. If they are still trying, then at least it means there aren't many left.

### Desert Sparrow

One or two is usually present in the morning or evening at the cafes. A Finnish birder had at least 12 at cafe Yasmina in December 1990. Check the sparrow flocks at the camel feeders. Also check Derkaoua on the way to Erg Chebbi. If you dip on these sites then there is an oasis on the back side of Erg Chebbi where a flock is always (Hamiji Ali says) present. We saw 30 - 40 birds there. I suppose it is quite possible to go there on your own, but if you don't want to risk getting lost or not finding the oasis, ask Hamiji to guide you. He wanted 25 Dhs, which really isn't much. He also carried our telescope all the way. Walking up and down the sanddunes is hard work, use walking boots. (I had only ordinary shoes and my left leg had still not recovered a month later.) Don't bring any unnecessary gear, but it is possible to photograph both the sparrows and the fabulous view. Take something along to keep the camera in, a lot of sand will fly around if it blows. If you don't wish to walk it is possible to hire camels for the ride. I asked for the price for two hours at Cafe Yasmina, that would have been 400 Dh.

### Desert Warbler

This species seems to be difficult as a lot of crews have dipped. I do think that once you're looking in the right places (i.e. the desert) it shouldn't be too difficult to find. It's been recorded by others on the road to Merzouga as well as south of Merzouga Lake, at Mfis and at Dayet Maider. I've included a map of a site we visited in 1989 which the Swedes had found the previous day on their Bustard trip. We had four Desert Warblers here as well as Tristram's and Dartford Warblers, Desert Wheatear, Fulvous Babbler and Moussier's Redstart. Don't go here on your own though, be sure to take two cars. Not a nice area to be alone in, with a broken down car. The track was just driveable with our Fiat Regata and the Swedes' Renault 4. Not for the unexperienced driver though. It took us 90 minutes to drive there from the main road (20 km). Take enough water. In 1990 we had two Desert Warblers in some nice scrub west of the Merzouga Lake, see Merzouga Lake section.

### Accommodation

It is possible to stay at the cafes (10 Dhs/person), but everybody sleeps in the same room, on a 'sofa' that goes all round the room along the walls. You need a sleeping bag. At cafe Les etoiles they served tajine (35 Dhs) which was quite good, but nothing else.

In the Merzouga village you can stay at Augberge des Amis, but it doesn't offer much.

There are several hotels in Erfoud. I recommend La Gazelle at the main crossing (see map). 70 Dhs for a room for two with shower and toilet, 105 Dh/room for three. Hot water and toilet paper on request (in 1990 only hot water for 6 minutes though). Dinner for 40 Dh (Tajine, couscous and a local dish on the menu).

On the other side of the main road is hotel Restaurant Sable d'Or. Looked rather cheap, but I didn't ask. The expensive Es Salam is at the western end of the town, \*\*\* Tafilalte as you go north (191 Dh/room for one, 186 Dh/room for two, 250 Dh/room for three, breakfast 23 Dh, menu 83 Dh).

### Meski

A green valley south of Errashidia. Try for Barbary Partridge, Fulvous Babbler, Desert Lark.

### Errashidia

Check areas north of P32 immediately to the west of main road junction west of Errashidia for Scrub Warbler and Fulvous Babbler (Lethaby & Murdoch 1988). The old dump site seems to have disappeared. In 1990 we checked the site, rather a lot of people. The scrub seemed pretty nice, perhaps a little low. Had a Peregrine//Barbary Falcon. Note that the short-cut road round Errashidia seems to be unaccessible even though it looks ok on the map. The road turned rather bad and then there was a locked gate.

### Barrage Hassan el Addakhil

This is easily reached by taking the road signed to the barrage. It was rather empty, however, with just a few Great Crested Grebes.

### Gorges du Ziz



Species recorded here include Ruddy Shelduck, Lanner, Crag Martin.

### Tunnel du Legionnaire

Good on migration.

### Tizi-n-Talrhemt

This a site for Tristram's Warbler. Other species: Desert Lark, Lammergeier, we had Ring Ouzel. Try 3 km south, 1 km north of the col.

### Zeida \*

3 km south of Zeida is the traditional site for Dupont's Lark. The area seems similar for kilometers and some crews have had them more to the south. Both sides of road are ok. The larks sing very early in the morning while it is still very dark, maybe just a little shade lighter to east. On 15.11. they started to sing at 6.03, 5.12 at 6.20. One is supposed to locate them by song and then scan ahead. When we were there in 1989 they stopped singing before there was light enough to see any birds. So no chance of locating them by song. We didn't see any despite searching for several hours. In 1990 they stopped singing at 6.25. It was just light enough to see shapes. We tried hard to see the bird singing close to us, but couldn't find it. Walked the area when there was light enough, but nothing. We then drove around and almost immediately a bird was flushed by one of the cars. We should have stayed inside, as the bird then first managed to hide from us and then when we located it, it was running hard towards the sun. We ran too, trying to get round it. It ran about as fast as I did. Then it stopped and flew a short bit after which it ran off and disappeared. It seemed to me the car is absolutely the best choice (outside the breeding season). But if a bird is flushed, don't leave the car, our bird was walking quite calmly before we left the cars. You'll need some luck to find one though.

The Swedish crew described a site a little further to the south where they had seen several. Look for a football field and a hill without trees on the north of the field on the east side of the road. Other species: Black Wheatear, Shore Lark, Short-toed Lark, Black-bellied Sandgrouse, Red-rumped Wheatear, Little Grebe, Trumpeter Finch.

Accommodation: There are a few hotels in Midelt, nothing in Zeida. According to the Rough Guide, the best two are Roi de Biere and Occidentale. We stayed at the Roi de Biere and it cost 80 Dhs with shower, 50 without. No hot water, no toilet on rooms. In 1990 we stayed at Le Ayacha (222 Dh/room for two, 293 Dh/room for 3, menus for 83-95 Dh). Restaurant closes at 21.00. The hotel is well signed (situated on a side road which goes west from the main road quite soon after entering the town from the south). This is a town where everybody sells stones, so if you are interested, you'll be able to get them cheap. The receptionist at the Roi de Biere was also a stonemonger.

### Col du Zad - Lac Aquelmane de Sidi Ali \*

From the Col northwards there are some alpine meadows. The best are just before the Lac, with Ruddy Shelduck, Shorelark, Rock Sparrow, Alpine Chough, Seeborn's Wheatear. The Lac harbours ducks. There is a road to the Lac which follows the north shore.

### Mischliffen - Ifrane area \*

This is the area of the cedar woods and several small lakes. The woods harbour Firecrest, Short-toed Treecreeper, Nuthatch, tits, Great Spotted Woodpecker and especially Levaillant's Green Woodpecker. Coming from the south and around Mischliffen there are great big beautiful trees, near Dayet Aauoa there are small planted boring cedars. Levaillant's Woodpecker should be possible anywhere in the woods, but easy at Dayet Aauoa. We had one in the big deciduous trees by the lake in 1989, none in 1990 but then we only spent about an hour there.

Dayet Aauoa is the best of the lakes with Crested and Common Coots, Herons, Egrets and ducks. Dayet Ifrah is more to the south-east, some say it's dry, others that it's good. In 1989 we did not go there, in 1990 it was pretty big with rather a lot of wildfowl and coots, but they were too far away to be identified from the 'main' road and we did not want to spend time on driving closer although it would have been possible. Dayet Afourgah is off P20 about 25 km south of Sefrou. It is also supposed to be good, but in 1989 we only saw some Coots. Dayet Hachlaf is mentioned as being good in the Birdwatcher's Guide, in 1990 it was dried out. We followed the route recommended in the Guide, but I wouldn't really recommend it. It started out quite well, the first two km were tarmac. The track to Dayet Hachlaf was not very good, but not too bad, a bit time consuming though. We had planned to turn left at Dayet Hachlaf but that track seemed so unused and small that we drove to the right instead. This track was not very good either, parts of it were better, though. At Dayet Ifrah the track turned into good tarmac road which lasted to the main road. We did not drive the track to Dayet Afourgah. The general area is also possible for Seebohm's Wheatear, Long-legged Buzzard, Melodious, Olivaceous and Bonelli's Warblers, Shorelark and Black Kite.

### Merja Zerga \*\*

This is undoubtedly the most birdrich site in Morocco, but most of the birds are difficult to see as the ducks are one huge flock in the middle of the lake and the waders are difficult to get close to. The area is also large, about 10 km across. It would take days to count all the birds if it wasn't impossible. Most birders go here to twitch Slender-billed Curlew and Marsh Owl. 1 - 3 Slender-billed Curlews usually winter and there are plenty of Marsh Owls. Little Bustard, Richard's Pipit, Marsh Sandpiper, Crane, Calandra Lark, Whiskered Tern are other possible species.

Seawatching is possible from Molay Busselham. The ducks are best viewed from high up at Molay Busselham, or from the east shore. There is a camping area where the Marsh Owls often roost daytime. It costs 15 Dhs to enter the campingground, however, and the owls could just as well be outside the fence. When they sit in the trees, they are rather difficult to see, as they favour the very dense deciduous trees. And they sit up on top of them. There is another good Marsh Owl site 6 km east of Molay Busselham where they fly at dusk and dawn, see map.

North and East of the lake there are large meadows with lots of cattle, horses and locals herding them. These meadows are very wet and muddy (at least in November - December) so wellingtons are necessary. It also rains often, a raincoat would be prudent. The Slender-billeds can be found on the meadows or the fields, as well as other waders, Quails, Little Bustards, pipits, wagtails. The Curlews are mostly present on the fields north of the trees on the east side. They usually arrive in the morning between 8 and 9, stay till 10 or 11 and fly

out to roost on the mudflats. Then they return in the afternoon (about 14.30 - 17). In December 1990 a Finnish birder saw two S-b Curlews flying east along the river in the morning. He thinks they probably flew to a field 21 km east of Molay Busselham (pole 21) where he'd seen a flock of Curlews the previous day. The third S-b was present at the usual site.

South of the lake there is a track that goes north. This track was a great place for Marsh Owl in 1989, but in 1990 it was very dry and without owls. There are waders at the fields and in the small pond. From the end of the track it is possible to view the waders in the lake. In 1989 the shoreline was pretty close, but in the dry year of 1990 the shore had crept so far away that only the largest birds could be identified. This area is a reserve, I'm not sure about whether it is allowed to leave the track (see the Birdwatcher's Guide).

West of the lake there are sanddunes, the shore is good for waders. Here there is also a small lake which should be good for Crested Coot, but we only saw a few Little Grebes there.

The locals are rather bothersome at Merja Zerga. They all want to guard the car and the equipment or guide you. Especially the younger boys tend to follow you around, so close that it easy to trample them. They did not interfere with our birding though, as they did not walk ahead of us. Mostly they walked behind (1 - 5 m). They seem to regard birders as circus animals, there to be stared at.

If you do pick a guard, take a good look at him, there will be 20 boys wanting money on your return, all saying they have guarded the car. A few dirhams should be quite enough. Their foreign language capability is limited to 'ana guardien' (I guard), 1 Dh, 1 stylo. They'll probably also ask to watch through your binoculars and telescope. In this respect the eastern shore was much worse, the northern shore was quieter. I don't know if it is necessary to have anyone guarding the car, but at least the kids stayed behind at first. There would always be others seeing and following us later, but at least one could walk alone for a while.

You can also hire a boat to take you out on the lake. We were offered to tour the whole lake for a 100 Dhs, we did not try to bargain as we did not want to go. The boatowner said that you can get quite close to the birds this way. It is however, not acceptable disturb the birds, as the area is a reserve. Hopefully hunting will be totally prohibited in the future.

There is a birdlog at Cafe Milano. Just wear binoculars and they'll probably bring it to you, if they don't then ask for it. They also gave us a map of the area (a copy of which is included in this report). We ate fish there which was quite good.

The track northwards from Molay Busselham towards Larache may not be drivable all the way. At least we couldn't find the other end which we tried when we came from Larache direction. Somewhere on this track there is a small pond where the Swedes had a Crested Coot and a Lesser Kestrel.

Accommodation: There is a hotel, 3\*A Le Lagon, in Molay Busselham, which costs 150 with breakfast (we got it for 130 without). The room was quite nice with shower, towel and toilet and a terrace towards the lake, but no hot water. There was a nightguard for the car, we gave him 10 Dhs. It is also possible to stay in one of the cafes (there are several). In Souk el Arba du Rharb, 30 km from Molay Busselham, there are 4 hotels, one of which has showers on the room, but not hot water. That one was full in 1989, in 1990 we stayed there. Hotel du Gharb

109 Dh/room for two. Main meal for 35 Dh. The lobby of this hotel looked rather nice, but the rooms (especially the bathroom) were rather rundown. Another had a shower and toilet in the corridor, but the rooms were on the second floor and no hot water was available. 90 Dhs. In 1989 we finally stayed at a really rundown place which cost 50 Dhs. The room was more like a prison cell, the bed was short, no shower, the toilet was local and in the yard. They said the bedclothes had been changed the same day, but otherwise the room was rather dirty. We were able to drive the car almost up to the door though. They guarded it during the night which cost 10 Dhs. I wouldn't go back there.

#### Asilah \*

This site is mostly for Great Bustard, but Cranes are common there too. The original notes said to drive through the J A Jones Construction area, but since February 1989 a pass is needed to get by the gate. This can be obtained in Tanger from the office, but I don't know if they give passes to birders.

It is, however, possible to take a minor road which goes to the back of the area. The Bustards are rather far away, but visible. Go up the hill and try to locate the Bustards from there. Due to high grass they are difficult to find from ground level. 7 km to the north along the minor road there was a good wet area, where we saw cranes, ducks and waders. There are also Flamingos, gulls and waders at Pont Mohammed.

Accommodation: We stayed at Hotel Sahara which was nice looking and clean, but the rooms were very small, hardly room to walk between the beds. Shower and toilet in the corridor (hot water 5 Dhs/person) 62 Dhs. The Rough Guide didn't mention Sahara, but Marhaba, 1\*B Asilah, Oasis (which seemed to be closed) and two others near the beach.

#### Larache \*

This is the site for Purple Gallinule, Little Bustard and Moustached Warbler. We also saw Red-Crested Pochards, other ducks, Crested Coots, Squacco Heron. There are long marshes on both sides of the road, we saw most of the Purples near the beginning on the south side of the road. We didn't see any Moustached's but they are supposed to be at the beginning too. The Little Bustard site is before the marsh, we only took a quick look, so we didn't see anything. Other species recorded: Stone Curlew, Whiskered Tern.

At a small service station near the south end of the town they had the only windowcleaners we saw on the entire trip in 1989.

#### Lac De Sidi Bourhaba \*

I feel that this site has been grossly overestimated by previous crews. There were a lot of ducks, but nothing else, and the numbers couldn't begin to compare with those at Merja Zerga. The place is rather dull with thick wood all the way down to the lake and bad views round most part of the lake. The birds are a lot closer than at Merja Zerga, though, in fact it is easy to identify them all. North of the causeway there is a small marsh which was empty. We did the lake in 2 hours and didn't stay to wait for the Marsh Owls which are supposed to appear at dusk. Along Oued Sebou there were some gulls and waders and our only Whimbrel. Seawatching has produced British Storm Petrel.

### Foret de Sidi Bettache (Sidi Yahia) \*

The forest is situated about halfway between Sidi Yahia and Sidi Bettache. Access is restricted as this is the King's hunting ground. We were told that it was forbidden to be there, but they could hardly forbid anyone to stand on the road, could they? There's been a fence put up recently which makes it impossible to go much east of the road. Previous crews have obviously been able to explore the dirtroads to the east, but this is no longer possible. To the west there is one road just before the stream (which some locals also objected to us driving along, we were supposed to walk only) and then the famous little round 'car-park' just before the end of the area. The forest is good for forest species, including Black-shouldered Kite, Black-headed Bush Shrike and, especially, Double-spurred Francolin. Be there early in the morning for the Francolins when they sing and sit in treetops. If you can't find any sitting ones, just drive the road back and forth. The chance of a Francolin crossing the road at the right moment is rather good. There should also be lots of Barbary Partridges crossing the road, but we didn't see any. We didn't see any Bush Shrikes either, but we heard two Francolins and saw one crossing the road and then stopping to eat sand. We watched it for several minutes until another car came along and scared it off. Other species possible include Black Kite, Red Kite, Short-toed Eagle, Booted Eagle, Quail. Wadi Yquem is on the coast near Temara-Plage, it should be good for gulls and terns, see the Birdwatcher's Guide.

Accommodation: Difficult. There are no hotels in Sidi Yahia. Stay in Rabat or do as we did, drive along the coastroad and check the hotels. These are expensive beach hotels, but there could be a cheaper one somewhere. We checked two at Temara Plage, La Felouque which cost 342 Dh/room and Casino which didn't have any rooms. At Skhirat Plage we found a hotel for 150 Dh/room without breakfast (normally 180 incl. breakfast). Shower, hot water and toilet on the room. There are a lot of roads in the area, all aren't on the map, there is not room enough. The motorway has been continued to Rabat, this was not shown on our map, despite it's being new. Follow the signs, and you should be allright.

### El Jadida - Oualidia \*

The Birdwatcher's Guide mentions that there are hundreds of wintering Mediterranean Gulls wintering in the village of Sidi Bouzid. We drove through the village, but didn't see any. I suppose they must be at a pond or such? We checked the shore, just some flocks of the ordinary sort. Cap Blanc is probably a good seawatching point. The cliffs are very high, the view must be fabulous. We didn't see it as there was thick fog when we drove past. The only problem are birds flying too close as I estimate that the cliffside is probably about 50 m high. We also had a quick look at the Jorf Lasfar harbour where they took our passports for the duration of the stay. There weren't any birds about, but it was still very foggy. Cap Blanc is probably much better for seawatching than the point of the harbour though. The saltpans start 30 km south of El Jadida (about 47 km north of Oualidia) and continue almost non-stop to Oualidia. The best part in 1989 was 31 - 24 km north of Oualidia (Jemma El Ghanem). In 1990 the best part was 37.5 km north of Oualidia. Try to find a dirtroad to the saltpans whenever you see birds from the road. Mostly they are visible. At about 25 km there was a lot of birds (1989) but we couldn't find a suitable road. 16 - 8 km north of Oualidia there are no saltpans. After that they are further away from the road. Take the dirtroad at 8 km and follow it as long as it is drivable. From the main road that is the last possibility to reach the saltpans. At Oualidia the river comes in and there were Flamingos and waders there too, but they were far down.

Accommodation: We had some trouble in finding a suitable hotel in El Jadida. \*\* Marah was too expensive at 358 + tax/room for two. The only other hotel we managed to find was Hotel de la Plage (opposite the Hotel de la Ville) which had warm shower and toilet in the corridor (54 Dh/room for two, 75 Dh/room for three). Quite adequate. There are several hotels in Oualidia, the Rough Guide mentions Augberge de la Lagune 2\*A which looked expensive and Hippo-Campo 150 Dh//room incl. shower. We stayed at a new place, Motel Restaurant Araignee for 90 Dh/room incl. shower and toilet. They said there would be hot water but we couldn't find any. They offered seafood and menus starting at 45 Dhs which included soup, salad, seafood, main meal, dessert. Good value. There was a lot of water (10cm) on the streets, we were told this was always the case.

### Cap Beddouza \*

This is a very good head for seawatching. On the map it looks like the best together with Cap Rhir. I haven't read many reports from there, but a Swedish group were there for 45 minutes in November 1988 in the middle of the day and had 6 Grey Phalaropes, Great, Arctic and Pomarina Skua and Manx/Balearic Shearwater. In 1989 we were there for two hours in the morning and had a Madeiran Petrel, a Balearic/Little Shearwater, 10 Great Skuas, 1 Skua sp., and about 100 Gannets. In 1990 we were there 14.45 - 15.10 and had 9 Razorbills going south, 1 Great Skua and 15 Audouin's Gulls. The watching point is not quite high enough, but not at sea level either.

### Sebka Zima \*

Sebka Zima is about halfway between Cap Beddouza (Safi) and Marrakesh. There is a lake which is probably often dry and some salt pans. The salt pans are supposed to be good for wintering waders. We saw Flamingos, Shelducks, Dunlins, Sanderlings, Black-tailed Godwits, etc. Worth checking if you drive past.

### Oukaïmeden \*

This is a mountain village with a ski-center. Entrance fee 7 Dhs/car. It is situated 70 km south-east from Marrakesh. To get there you drive through the valley Ourika which should be good for birds too (Cuckoo, Dipper, Grey Wagtail, Barbary Partridge, Hawfinch and White-rumped Swift's been recorded).

Oukaïmeden itself is at 3200 m above sea level. The road up could be closed because of snow, check sign on leaving Marrakesh. On the way up check the scrub and trees for Levillant's Woodpecker, Tristram's and Spectacled Warbler and look upwards for Lammergeier, Booted Eagle and Lanner. At the bridge of the dam, look for Dipper and Grey Wagtail. In Oukaïmeden itself look for Crimson-winged Finch, Alpine Accentor, Blue Rock Thrush, Moussier's Redstart, Rock Thrush, Rock Sparrow, Shore Lark, Chough and Alpine Chough. The best area for C-w Finch is at the skilifts. We had 10 at the second one. Check the other road also, for fabulous views of the valley and for birds.

Accommodation: According to the Rough Guide there should be several hotels. Chez Ju-Ju is the most known (120 Dh/person including dinner and breakfast).

### Chichaoua

If, on leaving Marrakesh, you decided to take the fastest route to Agadir or go via Essaouira, then you will pass Chichaoua. 7 km west of Chichaoua Long-legged Buzzard, Calandra Lark, wheatears have been recorded.

### Tizi-n-Test road

Another way of going towards Agadir is by the Tizi-n-Test road which is very slow, but beautiful going. It took us about 6 hours from Asni to the other side of the mountains (where S501 meets P32). We stopped frequently though. Note that this road could be closed because of snow. Check signs on leaving Marrakesh and Tahanaoute. Tizi-n-Test itself is at 2100 m above sea level. This road is probably not very good for birds, but of course it is possible to record Golden Eagle, Barbary Partridge, Chough, Tristram's Warbler, Firecrest, Rock Bunting. Between Asni and Ouirgane the road goes through a woody valley where there were rather a lot of birds, but difficult to see because of the vegetation, mostly European species though.

Accommodation: There is one hotel in Asni where we stayed, 3\*A Grand Hotel du Toubkal which is very nice looking (old style) with shower, toilet and hot water for 212 Dhs. When we arrived at 8.30 pm the restaurant had closed. They had a sign on the door for Visa, but could not accept it as the person who wrote visapapers was not available. There is also a youth-hostel in Asni (15 Dhs/person) which according to the Rough guide should be quite good. In the next village, Ouirgane, there are two hotels: 4\*A Residence la Roseiraie which is expensive and Au Sanglier qui Fume which is run by a French woman (100 Dhs, shower, toilet, but no heating nor hot water). When we got here at 8 pm, the French woman had gone to bed (she was leaving for Casablanca the next day) and the gate was closed. We tried to get in, but it wasn't possible as nobody else could do the paperwork. At Idni there was a hotel Alpina, but it closed down in 1985 when the owner died. The sign is still there though. There should be a cafe at which it is possibly to stay, if you're prepared to sleep on a mat on the floor.

### Essaouira \*

Eleonora Falcons breed at Isle de Mogador. It is possible to see them from the mainland. See Mountain & Rees 1987, Storkersen 1986, Webb 1985, Andrews 1987. The place is also good for gulls. The harbour is easily reached by driving along the shore from the main crossing (which is south of the city). Drive as far as you can. The viewing is a little difficult as one has to mount some stairs up on the wall which is a little narrow for the telescope. The Birdwatcher's Guide mentions that the mouth of Ksob Wadi could be good. It was too dark by the time we reached it for us to check it out.

### Tamri \*

This is the best site for Bald Ibis and one of the best for Black-headed Bush Shrike. There is a large estuary with egrets, gulls and terns. Check the cliff and hillsides for Ibis. A colony has been seen north of the estuary and about 800-1000 m south of the estuary Ibises have been seen on the cliffs both below and above the road. See Lethaby & Murdoch 1988.

### Cap Rhir \*

Good for seawatching. Bald Ibis also possible (usually on the fields 1-3 km north of the lighthouse). Species include: Tawny Pipit, Moussier's Redstart. In 1990 there were about 10 Cory's and 15 Balearic Shearwaters present.

#### Beaches between Cap Rhir and Agadir

There are two good beaches, the northernmost 30 km north of Agadir (Amesnaz), the other one at Tarhazoute. These beaches are good for gulls, including Audouin's Gull.

#### Agadir, Kasbah

This is a site worth checking if you don't have time to go far away from Agadir. The Kasbah is the old town, which was destroyed in the earthquake in 1960. The ruins are still there. It is possible to find skeletons on the hill, but apart from the tourist attraction there is also some scrub and species include House Bunting, Black Wheatear, Subalpine Warbler, Spectacled Warbler. Crimson-winged Finch has been recorded by a Finnish crew.

#### Agadir, fish-harbour \*

This is a good place to seawatch. Drive in through the main gates. Note that you will be asked to show your passport. Drive forward and then follow the pier as it curves to the north-west. Watch from the point. Also check the gulls in the harbour. The south part of the harbour is open to the public and was a good place as the locals keep some boxes in the water with 'seafood' in them. The terns and gulls sit on these boxes. Gulls included Slender-billed, Little and Mediterranean, terns included Lesser Crested (3), Common, Sandwich and Black. We also had a Pomarine Skua here. If you plan on entering the restricted area, do not take any exposed film with you. Do not photograph the harbour, neither inside or from the outside. Between the Valley of Birds and the known car-rental firms there is a small park on the west side of Mohammed V. A Finnish crew had 2 Black-headed Bush Shrikes there in January 1991.

#### Oued Sous \*

This is one of the best sites on the coast. It is situated 7 km south of Agadir and is accessible either by walking along the beach from the hotels, or by car (hire or taxi). Follow the sign to the Embouchure Oued Sous and Pyramid Hotel. Note that photographing the Palace is forbidden. There is usually a palace guard around. They sometimes offer to guard the car. Don't leave anything visible inside the car or you are almost sure to be robbed. It is possible to walk to the south side if the water is low, but beware of coming high tide. It comes in quickly. I have myself walked barefoot in the estuary and did not trample on anything nasty, but it would perhaps be better to wear plastic sandals. With shoes it is difficult to avoid getting muddy if you want to bird the place thoroughly. Wellingtons are best if you have a pair with you. Part of the area can be seen without going out in the estuary.

The south side is said to be dangerous for tourists. Seawatching is possible from the beach, the highest point is on the south side of the river. It is easiest to cross the river near the beach. The birds vary with the tide. At high tide they are more upriver, at low tide near the beach. The gulls are mostly near the beach. There is also scrub (Quail, Cetti's Warbler, Sardinian Warbler). High tide is much better as the birds are gathered in a small area, either at the 'first



bend' or at the sea end of the narrow bit depending on how high the water is. At low tide there are so much spread out that you'll need to walk a lot to check the birds properly.

If it is very dry (as it was in 1990) it may be possible to drive along the shore of the estuary almost to the shore of the Ocean. Species include: Flamingo, Spoonbill, Little Egret, Tringa and Calidris waders, Godwits, Curlew, Terns (Lesser Crested and Royal possible), Gulls (Audouin's, possibly Slender-billed), Kingfisher and Great Spotted Cuckoo. The site is good for vagrant waders, gulls and terns. Long-billed Dowitcher has been recorded at least twice (1988?, 1990), Bonaparte's Gull in 1990.

### Tifnite

Situated between Agadir and Massa. This is an old site for Bald Ibis, but it probably does not breed here any longer. There are also some waders on the beach, and the plain above is possible for Lesser Short-toed Lark, Cream-coloured Courser, Black-bellied Sandgrouse. Cory's Shearwater has also been recorded. This is a site especially for those birding only near Agadir.

### Oued Massa \*\*

One of the main sites on a Morocco trip. Check the plain north of Massa for Lanner, Cream-coloured Cursor, Black-bellied Sandgrouse.

The river near Tassila is good for rails, Cattle Egret, Brown-throated Sand Martin, waders and ducks. The river from Massa towards the sea is filled with Coots, but Little Grebe, Marbled Ducks, Pochard, Tufted Duck, Teal, Shoveler are also common. Red-Crested Pochard and Ferruginous Duck are also possible. Between the track and the river there are some ponds with rails, egrets, herons, waders and ducks. These ponds could be dry however. The last 3 km of the river were not accessible by car (1987 - May 1990) as the track was closed off as a bird sanctuary. The track has now been reopened because the villagers found it very impracticable to walk or take another route. There were signs prohibiting leaving the track, but I'm not sure whether these signs are still there. Glossy Ibis sometimes winter, Bald Ibis is possible, Slender-billed Curlew has been recorded. There is one record of Crested Coot in the previous reports, but they are normally not seen this far south. Other species: Bonelli's Eagle, Spotted Sandgrouse, Crane, Red-rumped Swallow, Lesser Crested Tern, Black-headed Bush Shrike (between Sidi Binzaren and the cafe) and Great Spotted Cuckoo.

At the beach there are gulls, terns and waders and there is a cafe (Sidi R'bat) which is a good seawatching point (from the terrace). Cory's, Balearic Shearwater are regular, Bulwer's Petrel is possible.

The best seawatching is probably a little north of the cafe where there is a nice stopping point. It is possible to stay overnight at the cafe, but it costs 70 Dh for a room which is like a cell, with only beds and blankets. Cold shower and toilet can be found in the yard. They serve meals after noon and breakfast (incl. omelett and beer) before noon. I asked the guard to start a birdlog at the cafe, but even though he said he would, I'm not so sure if he did. There is an alternative route to Sidi R'bat from Massa which goes round the hill on the north side.

There is also a track from Sidi R'bat which goes north (to Tifnite I think). This track is only suitable for 4-wheel drives though. (I talked to a tourist who was in a group which had come that way with jeeps. He said the sand was quite deep at times.)

### Barrage Youssef-Tachfine \*

If you still have time left after visiting Massa you can try the road to the barrage Ben Youssef on the other side of the main road. Species recorded here includes Bonelli's Eagle, Black-bellied Sandgrouse, Desert Wheatear, Bar-tailed Desert Lark, Thick-billed Lark, Lesser Short-toed Lark, Thick-knee. There is a watering canal before reaching the barrage.

After passing the damm the track continues all the way to Tiznit. The track gets worse after the damm though. About 100 m after the damm a Finnish crew had Barbary Partridge, Black-headed Bush Shrike, Dartford Warbler and Tristram's Warbler. Continuing towards Tiznit are several crossings and no signs so you will have to ask the way if you want to reach the town. Between the damm and Tiznit the Finnish crew had Cream-coloured Cursors and Stone Curlews.

### Tiznit

On the plains about 10 km north of Tiznit the Swedes have seen Thick-billed Lark, Desert Wheatear, Long-legged Buzzard, Trumpeter Finch, Lesser Short-toed Lark, Hoopoe Lark, Calandra Lark and Barbary Falcon. We had a flock of 7 Cream-coloured Cursors and some Desert Wheatears. A Finnish crew explored the road east from Tiznit towards Tafroute and had a Tawny Eagle about 2km east of Tiznit in January 1991 (as well as Spectacled Warbler and Desert Wheatear).

### Tagilalte

Drive along P30 east from Bou-Izakarn. After about 36 km there is a village around a very green oasis. A few hundred metres after crossing the river there is a road to the right signed 'center'. Drive through the village. Between this village and the next there is about one km of dry fields. A Finnish crew had 25 Bar-tailed Desert Larks here as well as White-crowned Black Wheatears and Desert Wheatears. 60 km east of Bou-Izakarn there is a sign to the north 'Tagilalte'. 1 km before (west of this sign) there is a hill. Check the area round the hill for Thick-billed Larks, Spanish Sparrows, Spectacled Warblers, Desert Wheatears, both Desert Larks, Trumpeter Finch and Tawny Pipit. (see Lethaby & Murdoch 1988). Between 35 and 60 km east of Bou-Izakarn is good for Desert Wheatear, White-crowned Black Wheatear, Tristram's Warbler, Bar-tailed Desert Lark and Black-bellied Sandgrouse.

### Goulimine \*

The area is probably the easiest place to see Scrub Warbler and Tawny Eagle in Morocco. Finnish and Dutch crews have been rather lucky with these species in the past few years. About 15 - 10 km north-west of Goulimine there are some wadis. Check the area for Fulvous Babbler, Spectacled Warbler, Tristram's Warbler, Cream-coloured Cursor, Red-rumped and Desert Wheatear, Bonelli's Eagle and Long-legged Buzzard. The road towards Azrir has produced Thick-billed Lark, Temminck's Lark, Red-rumped Wheatear. It may be possible to drive in//along the wadi Sayad from the Azrir road to the Tan-tan road. At least one Finn has done this, but I didn't like the look of the track, the sand seemed to deep.

Leaving Goulimine towards Tan-tan the first area to check is just after wadi Sayad on the west side of the road. Take the track and drive about 1.6 km west (in January 1991 it wasn't possible to drive more than 500 m along the track). When the track ends, just drive on if the ground looks hard enough. There is quite nice scrub here with Spectacled Warbler, Scrub Warbler and Tristram's Warbler. There are also several electricity lines, check the pylons for raptors. Tawny Eagle has been recorded in this area several times.

The next good scrubby spot is 15 km south of Goulimine. It is smaller and lower than the previous one, but might be worth a visit for Spectacled and Tristram's Warbler.

Continue towards Tan-tan and check the pylons. The big line follows the road on the right hand side pretty well. At 28 km south of Goulimine there started to be more raptors on the pylons. We also had 2 Thick-billed Larks here. Red-rumped Wheatear and Desert Wheatear were common, Desert nearer Goulimine, Red-rumped a bit further to the south.

On our second day south we found the Tawny Eagle on a pylon at 29.5 km south of G. On our first day it flew between 33 and 35 km south of G, passing over the road several times giving good opportunities for photography. We drove towards Tan-tan until it got dark. The pylon line was still near the road where we turned around, 100 km south of G. At 50 km south of G there is a cafe, 55 km south of G a service station.

If you wish to photograph the raptors on the pylons the area 29 - 50 km south is the best as the ground is mostly hard enough to be driven over and without too much scrub. There are some plowed fields though, which have to be avoided. More south the ground was mostly too uneven to be driven over with an ordinary car. Most of the Bonelli's Eagles were nearer Tan-tan. The locals are a pain here too, just as you've got close to a raptor on a pylon they come along and ask for cigarettes and the bird flies off.

Driving from Goulimine south a 100 km on 19.11. we counted:

- Tawny Eagle 1
- Golden Eagle 3
- Bonelli's Eagle 9
- Long-legged Buzzard 23
- Kestrel 15
- Lanner 47
- Barbary Falcon 1
- Little Owl 1
- Short-eared Owl 1
- Lesser Short-toed Lark 70
- Thick-billed Lark 2
- Bar-tailed Desert Lark 3
- Desert Wheatear 19//4
- Red-rumped Wheatear 13//5

There is probably a checkpoint before Tan-tan where you may be asked to fill in a questionnaire and show your passport. It should be possible to continue about 1000 km further south, but I don't know if it is worth it. It is not yet possible to drive into Mauretania, but it may be so in about two years. If you go to Tan-tan check the shore for waders.

Accommodation: There is one good hotel in Goulimine, \*\* Es Salam. 92 Dh/room for one, 112 Dh/room for two + 6 Dh/person tax. 40 Dh for an extra bed, 61 Dh for dinner, 15 Dh for breakfast. 25% discount if you stay more than one night. Warm shower and toilet on the rooms. We also checked another hotel the L'ere Nouvelle, 45 Dh/person. No shower, but otherwise ok. They told us they didn't have showers because there wasn't enough water in Goulimine anyway.

### Tan-Tan

Between Tan-Tan and Tarfaya there are five wadis. At the first there is a damm where Sandgrouse come in to drink. A Finnish birder had 15 Spotted and 50 Crowned there in December 1990. At the second wadi he had Caspian Terns, a Royal Tern and Sandwich Terns. At the 5th wadi he counted about 1500 Flamingos, unfortunately these were about 5 km away and the only track wasn't driveable without a 4-wheel drive. At all the wadis expect to find waders and Ruddy Shelducks. Thick-billed Lark and Hoopoe Lark are rather common too. Note that there are several time-consuming roadblocks on this road, the northernmost 70 km north of Tarfaya.

Accommodation: The best hotel at Tan-Tan is the Dakar, near the bus-station. The charge 80 Dh/room with warm water, shower and toilet on the room. The hotel is well posted.

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## **Itinerary 1989**

### Wednesday, 29th November

146.3 km Agadir - Massa

Our flight landed on schedule at 10.30 am. After we had collected the luggage, been taken to the hotel (Farah) by bus and received our hotelroom, it was already 12.50 and the siesta had begun. We first checked the car hire firm the travel agency had a deal with, but it was very expensive. Another firm near the hotel also felt rather expensive. We were looking for a car with four doors and a lockable boot, we discovered that in Agadir only big cars had those. We decided to walk south on Hassan II as this was supposed to be the cheap area. Most of the firms were closed, but then we found one open (Jaz Car) and after an hours negotiating we had a Fiat Regata for 6000 Dhs. It had only been driven 9000 km, which was an unexpected bonus. When we finally had completed the transaction it was already 2.30 pm and we were running out of time.

We drove to the hotel and collected our birding gear and then straight on to Oued Sous. It was high tide so most of the birds were high up in the river and we only spent 45 minutes quickly checking them. There was one Ruddy Shelduck (a lifer for me), some Spoonbills, Flamingos, Avocets, Black-winged Stilts and other waders. Rather small numbers though. We then hurried on to Oued Massa, where we arrived at 16.10. We drove along the river as far as the village where the road is blocked and checked the wildfowl. One Black-necked

Grebe, 30 Marbled Ducks, an Osprey some Tufted Ducks, Pochards, 20 Gadwall and other ducks. We estimated about 10.000 Coot. As it was getting dark, we quickly drove round the hill to the cafe on the beach. We walked the track back wards for a few hundred meters, but then it was too dark to continue. As we drove back towards Massa we had 4 Stone Curlews flying by in the village near the beach.

The night was spent at our hotel in Agadir.

#### Thursday, 30th November

504.9 km Agadir - Ouarzazate

We got up early (5.45) because we wanted to be at Cap Rhir at first light. When we arrived at 7 am, there was not quite enough light yet, but soon we were able to spot the first Gannets. Unfortunately there was hardly any wind blowing, so during the two hours we spent there, we didn't have a single Petrel, Storm-Petrel or Shearwater. We had about 100 Gannets, 2 Great Skuas, 1 Shag, 50 Corn Buntings and 8 Moussier's Redstarts. We didn't really have any time to spare, but we drove north and had a ten-minute look at Tamri, without seeing any Ibises or Black-headed Bush Shrikes though. We had 80 Auodouin's Gulls, but otherwise the estuary was rather empty.

Just before Agadir we had an adult Berber Falcon on a highpower pylon. It had caught a bird which it was consuming and we were able to watch it for some time. Near Inezgane 2 White Storks soared far away. We continued towards Taroudant, stopping every now and then for a quick look upwards, but nothing was around. 6 km west of Taroudant where Oued Sous crosses the river we had a Berber Falcon soaring far away. 17 km east of Taroudant we had a Bonelli's Eagle.

We drove to the village at Aoulouz, but immediately got a crowd of 20 boys round the car, some of which started to lick the windows. We didn't feel quite comfortable about leaving the car and as there were some big machines working in the valley, it didn't look as there would be many birds about, so we left. I don't know if there has been any Ibis breeding recently, but I'm suprised if they stay despite the construction work going on.

Between Taouiline and Tazenakht it got dark, so we couldn't check the Tazenakht area. We decided not to linger in Tazenakht but to press on, so we drove to Ouarzazate where we stayed the night at hotel Royal.

#### Friday, 1st December

183.1 km Ouarzazate - Boumalne

We started driving eastwards at dawn. 11 km east of Ouarzazate we saw a Trumpeter Finch flock and stopped to check it. A White-crowned Wheatear appeared on a pylon, some Black-bellied Sandgrouse flew over and then we saw the first Mourning Wheatear, a male far away. As we tried to get nearer, we spotted two other males and a female. Unfortunately only one male allowed closer approach, the others would move off as we neared and the closest we got to the female was about 100 m. First we heard calls and a little later a single Spotted Sandgrouse flew over. A Grey Heron also flew past (not exactly suited to the habitat), but the barrage was only 1 km away and we could see an Osprey flying over it.

A little further on, on a hill we found our first Desert Larks and a female Mourning Wheatear which disappeared almost at once when a lorry drove past. Another 500 m on was a green wadi, planted with palms and bushes. We drove along the west side where there was a track and found a Little Owl near its nesthole. We also had a female plumaged Hen Harrier.

A few km later we found a track to the shore of the barrage and had a Great Crested Grebe and a Long-legged Buzzard there. 9 km west of Skoura we saw one Long-legged Buzzard, 2 Bonelli's Eagles and a male Mourning Wheatear. (pole 267 km west of Errashidia) Along the road we had 2 Long-legged Buzzards, White-crowned Wheatear, Black Redstart, Kestrels. 250 km west of Errashidia we had 2 Long-legged Buzzards and a Lanner. We also stopped 20 km west of El Kelaa, but had nothing special.

Arriving at Tagdilt Track at 2 pm we failed to locate the rubbish dump. Discontinued, moved? We started driving around west of the track only 1 - 2 km south of the main road. We found Thick-billed and Temminck's Lark at once, both lifers, they were all around. Some Sandgrouse flew over and landed, Pin-tailed. Black-bellied also appeared. Stopping and scanning around Tapani finally located 3 Houbaras, about 500 m away. Tapani has dipped on this species several times, so he was pleased. We approached very carefully with the car and got great views. The bustards kept foraging and didn't seem to mind us very much. A male even made a small display. We got took some photos and left them. At a sand 'quarry' we found a pair of Red-rumped Wheatears, but by now it was a little too dark for good photos. We noticed that many of the pylons had a raptor on top and drove 12 km along the pylon line as it got dark, counting 13 Long-legged Buzzards, a Lanner and a Kestrel. When it was too dark to see any colours we saw an owl which was clearly smaller than a Long-legged Buzzard flying near it. Probably Tawny, maybe Short-eared Owl.

We spent the evening reading the birdlog at Augberge Soleil Bleu which was very informative, although only a Dutch crew had visited Tagdilt track in the autumn, a week before us. We were served tajine and tea.

### Saturday, 2nd December

334.6 km Boumalne - Erfoud

In the morning we ate breakfast (tea, bread and jam) at the hotel and the owner told us the temperature inside was 12°C. It was just getting light when we left for Tagdilt Track at 7.10. Despite the early hour, the Long-legged Buzzards had already left the pylons, but we found two Lanners on the ground, which allowed us to photograph, the male being the braver, letting us down to about 10 m. The morning was spent on the east side of the track where we found a large flock of larks, mostly Lesser Short-toed (about 500), but also Thick-billed, Temminck's, and Skylark.

We took the track almost to Tagdilt village, about 12 km from the mainroad we had 3 Bar-tailed Desert Larks and more Temminck's. Here we also had 50 Black-bellied Sandgrouse flying north. There was some water in the river to the village, but we didn't go down there. This forenoon altogether 6 pairs of Red-rumped Wheatear were counted, 10 Long-legged Buzzards, 30 Trumpeter Finches, 150 Thick-billed Larks and 30 Temminck's.

At midday we drove eastwards. On several stops between Boumalne and Tinerhir we recorded 4 Long-legged Buzzards, 3 Red-rumped Wheatear pairs, 2 White-crowned

Wheatears, a Black Redstart, a Desert Lark, 3 Trumpeter Finches of which one had been hit by a passing car and lay on the road. We picked it up and it didn't seem to be injured, but did not want to fly. I put it under a bush. Just past the village at Tinerhir towards Gorges du Todra, we had a lifer, 2 Dartford Warblers as well as 4 Black Wheatears, 2 Cetti's Warblers, 3 Blackcaps, 2 Black Redstarts and a House Bunting.

Further up, at the Gorge, we had a Desert Lark, 3 Grey Wagtails, 2 Black Redstarts, 5 Black Wheatears and a Blue Rock Thrush. We did not go very far, just 500 m past the last cafe, Yasmina. A local chap started to guide us, and despite that we clearly showed that we weren't interested he wanted money when we started to leave. On principle I didn't pay. As I visited the toilet there was a Grey Wagtail that was fighting against its image in the mirror. I swore as I had left the camera a few meters away, and was not able to reach it.

Going back, at the bridge near the crossing to the main road we had 10 Crag Martins surrounded by a group of boys who seemed to be enjoying themselves immensely watching our efforts to see the Martins.

We took the short-cut from Tijneidad straight to Erfoud. The road was ok, a bridge or two had fallen, but it was easy to get by. In one of the villages a local stopped us and claimed the road was broken and he would come and show us another road. We didn't want him and told him we would come back for him if we ran into trouble, but he jumped into the car, before we had time to lock the doors, and we took along as it was easier than chucking him out, which we should have done. He took us through Jorf along small side streets which was quite interesting and then wanted to be paid. We paid to get rid of him, even though we knew he'd probably fooled us. When we visited Jorf later we found no problems with the road, so we were right. I don't mind the money, it wasn't anything for us, and we did have an interesting conversation on the way, but I don't like the idea that he thought he had us fooled.

When we got to Jorf it was too late to bird, so we drove on to the cafe Les Etoiles at Erg Chebbi. There we met a Swedish crew of eight who had just spent the day searching for Arabian Bustard. They had found Desert Warblers though, and part of them wanted to go back the next day to get a better look. Since going with just one car into the desert wasn't a good idea, they asked us along. We had tajine at the cafe and then drove to Erfoud and spent the night at La Gazelle.

### Sunday, 3rd December

212.0 km Erfoud - southwest - Merzouga

The next morning we started at 6.30. We drove from Rissani towards Meccissi some 20 km and then along a bad track another 20 km. Every now and there would be a difficult spot with a lot of sand or a wadi which needed to be crossed. Neither of the cars got stuck anywhere. When we got to the area where the Swedes had seen the Desert Warblers the previous day, we left the cars and walked in a chain across the plain (not in Spain, but in rain). It actually rained, enough for the Swedes to put on their raincoats, and enough to make it dark, but not disturbing otherwise. After about 300 m a Desert Warbler flew up in front of me and I soon got the others alerted and we were able to get good views of the bird. With a scope three other Desert Warblers were seen. There was also a Tristram's Warbler, a Desert Wheatear, a Pied Wagtail and 9 Trumpeter Finches. We hadn't been there long when far away a lone man

came walking towards us. He said hello and then stood quietly and watched us. When we left he walked back in the same direction he had come from.

Going back we had 6 Desert Larks, a Moussier's Redstart, a Dartford Warbler, 2 Tristram's Warblers, 4 Fulvous Babblers and 5 Trumpeter Finches in a valley with habitat like that in Israel. As we were watching the Dartford Warbler the wind was getting harder and we could see that a sandstorm was rising. We decided to quit the area and get back to the main road.

Back at the main road between the crossing with the dirt track and Rissani we had 35 Brown-necked Ravens. By now it was about 1 pm but we decided to try for Desert Sparrow the same day. When we got to Erg Chebbi, we checked the three cafes twice, but couldn't find any Desert Sparrows. We did see the resident Hoopoe Lark though.

At Dunes d'Or we met Hamiji Ali who offered to take us to an oasis where he promised we'd see about 30 Desert Sparrows. He told us it would be only 800m to walk and that he wanted only 25 Dhs for it. As we couldn't find any Desert Sparrows at the cafes and couldn't be sure they'd be there that evening we took his offer. We parked the car at Cafe Yasmina and started walking. Ali carried Tapani's telescope (an Optolyth with a Manfrotto tripod) and didn't seem to tire at all. It wasn't very practical to walk in the sand with ordinary shoes, they filled up with sand and became heavy, and then it was difficult to walk along the side of a dune. When we'd walked 1 km we asked Ali where the place was and he said a bit further on. When we'd walked 2 km we asked again, and then he told us it was more than 800 m because the track was under water so we had not been able to drive to the usual place. He'd guided a Spanish couple with a Landrover, and they'd actually driven across the dunes the first 800m. It sounded incredible.

When we reached the top of the highest dune the scenery was magnificent. Finally, after about 45 minutes of walking, we reached a dune from where we could look down into the oasis. We spotted a male Desert Sparrow sitting in the only big palm tree there. When we had slid down to ground level, we saw about 30 - 40 Desert Sparrows, some on the ground in high grass, some resting on the edge of the dune, some in the big palm tree and some in a smaller palm tree. We spent an hour there watching and photographing, but the light was very bad because it was cloudy and the result was not very good.

We just got back to the car before it became pitch dark, it had begun to blow and some sand was flying around. We had tajine at Dunes d'Or and Ali asked me to write a note in English saying that he (Ali) knew where to find Houbaras and Desert Sparrows and was cheap. After the meal we drove back to Erfoud and again slept at La Gazelle.

### Monday, 4th December

#### 322.1 km Erfoud - Midelt

At dawn we started out for Jorf, but failed to locate any good scrubby area. We did check the surroundings of a hill about 10 km west of Jorf which is mentioned in some reports, but we didn't find anything interesting. We did see some scrub to the north on the other side of the palm tree plantations, but we couldn't find any track which looked like going there. The south of the road was the same with palm tree plantations and the only tracks we saw were too muddy to take. Driving towards Errashidia we stopped a few times, also at Meski. But it was raining rather hard, so we continued. Meski looked like a nice valley though, but time



consuming. We saw two traffic accidents here, one in which a small boy was still lying on the road, with a crowd around him. Nobody seemed to do anything, but I suppose they were waiting for an ambulance.

I'd forgotten about the site west of Errashidia (I just remembered the old rubbish dump didn't exist anymore), so we decided to take the short-cut visible on the map. However after a few km the road turned very bad and then suddenly there was a locked gate in front of us. We turned back and noticed that we were not the only car to take that road and turn back. A km from the crossing with the mainroad the car suddenly stopped and wouldn't start again. Pushing didn't help any. So we lifted the bonnet and had a look at the engine. We couldn't see anything amiss though, but we're no specialists on new type engines. We stopped the first car that came along and they agreed to take me into town to a garage. At the garage they told me to wait a while and then we drove back to the car, where the service man found out that there was no spark, so he opened the distributor and the cause was clear immediately. A metal plate had bent, thus causing all the wires to burn through. The car was towed to the garage and the service man told us to go to a restaurant while he fixed the distributor. He thought it would take 3 - 4 hours, but when we came back 90 minutes later, he was just putting the distributor back. The car worked very nicely and we paid the bill of 470 Dhs.

Even though we got the car fixed so quickly ( what luck that it happened near a major town and not in the desert), we'd lost of few hours and wouldn't be able to check all the sites south of Midelt. We drove up to the Barrage Hassan Addakhil and had a quick look. 3 Great Crested Grebes.

Along the road we had one large Falcon but it disappeared before we got it identified. We drove past the other sites, but stopped and walked upwards 1 km north of Tizi-n-Talhremt. It was already 10 past 5 pm, so the birds had quietened down, but we saw a Ring Ouzel. In Midelt we stopped to buy some fruit. When the boy told me that what I wanted would cost 50 Dhs, I knew he was trying to fool me, so I told him it was too expensive. He then said 45, but I wouldn't accept that either. I asked a couple who was standing beside me if they could tell me if I was being cheated and a heated discussion followed between the boy and the couple after which the couple told me that the boy was a big cheat and recommended me to try other shops in a house on the other side of the street, which I did.

As I went there, I noticed a smaller boy following me. When I started buying at a fruitstand, he started to tell the people who stood around about the scene at the previous stand. I couldn't understand much (I don't know more than a few words of Arabic), but I could understand the words for fruit and kg as they are the same in all languages. I felt they were laughing at me, even though they didn't laugh aloud and I didn't like it at all, so I quickly ran around a bit, trying to get rid of the boy, but he managed to get back to the stand after a while. One man at the stand (who had been translating between me and the shopkeeper) asked me why I was running and when I told him, he said boys were always following people around and not to mind it. I didn't tell him that what I minded was the storytelling, but I felt better anyway. Another man asked me if I needed a guide for the next day, but when I told him I didn't and asked him where the Roi de Biere was, he just told me that and left.

When we parked at the hotel, we were at once surrounded by 5 boys who wanted to sell us some stones. Midelt has a lot of nice stones. We weren't intrested in stones, however, we had too heavy luggage anyway. There was one fossil they first wanted 100 Dhs for, but the price went down as we took our luggage to the hotel. I said I'd buy for 10 Dhs. They said they'd

accept a film (Kodachrome 64) instead. I said 'Are you crazy, those are worth much more'. Anyway they came down to 15 Dhs in the end, but by then we had moved all our luggage and went into the hotel.

We then found out that the reception man was a stonemaker too, with international contacts, he told us that the fossil was worth about 10 - 15 Dhs, but it was bad because there was only one half, a fossil should always be complete with both halves of the stone. We had tea and a local dish at a cafe.

### Tuesday, 5th December

439.8 km Midelt - Ksar-Es-Souk

We started early, at 5.45 and were at Zeida in pitch darkness at 6.15. We decided to check that we had the right site, so we drove all the way to Zeida and back 3 km. Then we checked the east side of the road where we arrived 6.25. As soon as we got out of the car we heard a singing Dupont's Lark, and then another one. It was still almost pitch dark, a slight lightening was visible to the east. Next we checked the west side of the main road, where we also heard a Dupont's Lark and saw a flock of Shore Larks which we just could identify in the headlights.

But then we couldn't find any more Larks and when we went back to the east side the two we had heard were not singing anymore. It was still not very light at about 6.50 and we'd already lost them. We couldn't locate any singing anywhere anymore and despite driving and walking around until 10.30 we didn't see any Dupont's Larks.

We found a dead Marsh Harrier under the big electricity line, 60 Lesser Short-toed Larks, 3 Red-rumped Wheatear pairs, 15 Black Wheatears, 50 Linnets and 5 Little Grebes at the quarry. We were interested to note that the Lesser Short-toed Larks sometimes had a call which resembled that of Yellow Wagtail very closely.

Since there were only two of us searching there didn't seem to be much use going on, so we left. A little further north we had our first Rock Bunting (15), a lifer for both of us. A Spanish Sparrow was also seen. Driving into the cedar forest we had Short-toed Treecreeper, a lifer for me and some tits. At Lac de Aqualmane de Sidi Ali we checked the meadows and the lake and found 42 Ruddy Shelducks, 8 Alpine Choughs, 11 Choughs, 9 Rock Buntings, and some ducks in the lake. Further on we had another 30 Rock Buntings. We drove via Mischliffen, but saw no Woodpeckers, only a Nuthatch. At Ifrane we found a pond in the town where we saw our first Crested Coots, tame or wild, we couldn't decide. Just north of Ifrane was another pond with more Crested's and ducks. Another 15 Rock Buntings were recorded.

At Dayet Aaoua we first checked the pond and found one Crested Coot (lifer), ducks, etc. A woodpecker was heard and we quickly went after it but it turned out to be a Great Spotted. We started to check the wood and found another 4 Great Spotted in the next hour. It was getting dark and we were getting worried. Then a familiar call was heard and the Levillant's Woodpecker was found in the deciduous trees at the pond. We followed it for a while as it moved further on along the lake. A female. The only Firecrest of the trip was also seen here. As it was not quite dark yet, we decided to check Dayet Afourgah, but that was a waste of

time, only some Coots. It had been raining for a while and we were glad to leave and head for Merja Zerga. 15 km south of Sefrou we had 2 Little Owls. We had dinner on the way north.

As we had heard that accomodation at Molay Busselham wasn't cheap, we decided to try Ksar-Es-Souk, but there turned out to be just 4 hotels, of which the best was full. We ended up in a really scruffy place with the bed so bad that Tapani was lying in a big valley. But we got through the night.

### Wednesday, 6th December

256.8 km Merja Zerga

At dawn we drove to the lake. On the way we had a Little Owl. Near the tower we had 3 Marsh Owls flying and sitting on the ground. As it was still rather dark and raining we went to the shore to check the mudflats. Some terns and gulls. The rain stopped around 8 and we started to search the north-east corner of Merja Zerga. 6 Little Bustards and 2 Quails flew up before us. We saw several groups of Curlews, but without any smaller ones among them. Then two small boys started to follow us, but did not disturb our search.

By 11.10 we were leaving the area, to try our luck south of the river. Then a flock of Curlews flew past us and in this flock we saw a Slender-billed. The flock landed north of the lake (see map) and rested there for a while. The Slender-billed was sleeping most of the time, even though the other Curlews were alert. We watched the bird, first from 500 m, and then from about 300 m from where we were able to confirm the plumage features. About 10 minutes later something disturbed the flock (shots?) and they flew of westwards. Soon the Curlews changed direction and flew north and east, but the Slender-billed continued west, then south. It flew around the north part of the lake. We were watching it all the time through our telescopes. As it came to the east side of the lake, about 1 km south of where we stood, it suddenly started zig-zagging and seconds later we heard shots. Soon afterwards as the bird came nearer, we noticed that the right leg was dangling, obviously broken high up. The leg had definitely not been dangling earlier. We had heard shots several times during our search and I had seen three hunters far away which looked like being locals.

The bird landed about 200 m to the west of the spot where it had rested earlier and stood there alert for a few minutes. As the bird was about 600 m away and there was grass in the way, we were not able to see the leg. The bird did not walk at all however. One of the hunters (wearing a T-shirt) then neared the bird (carrying a dead duck, probably a female Shoveler) at which the S-b flew eastwards, passing us quite close. The leg was still dangling, but we couldn't see any other injuries and the flight was normal. It landed about 1 km to the east in a grassy area and we did not try to relocate it, fearing that it would fly over the lake again if disturbed. Considering the large numbers of locals in the area I am afraid the bird was probably not left in peace for long, however. We reported the incident to Hassan Kachiche (the guard) the next day, he'd been away for three days, so he did not know anything about the hunters.

We then went to the south part, driving along the track northwards. About halfway in the marshy area we had about 10 Marsh Owls sitting openly on the ground. At the end of the track we tried to identify as many shorebirds and ducks as possible, but this was not easy since they were rather far away. We were again troubled by a local who claimed he was a guide and would show us. We didn't want a guide and told him so, but he didn't understand

any French. He left his friend to guard the car, this friend was sleeping when we got back. Of course he wanted to be paid, he also wanted our licence number (I got the idea that he needed it to prove he'd been guiding us), anyway he was a bore.

The little pond was devoid of Coots, only a few Little Grebes swam around. The last hour of daylight was spent at the east shore, where we just had time to check the shore south of the trees, but we did not have time to check the north side of the trees. To be near the Great Bustards in the morning we drove north and spent the night in Asilah.

#### Thursday, 7th December

255.7 km Asilah - Merja Zerga

In the morning we drove straight to the construction site where we found out that access was no longer free. We tried to ask the guard if he could recommend another road to the site, but he couldn't help us. After checking the map we decided to try to reach the minor road between Tanger and Asilah. We first tried to drive north and look for a connection to this road, but we couldn't find any. Coming south again on the minor road, we found a rather big pond (rain water?) with Cranes, shorebirds and ducks. Nothing special was noted, but the site seemed interesting.

We tried to drive round to the back of it, but the locals told us the road was too bad. On the way south another small pond was seen with 130 Pintails. As the road descended a hill we stopped to scan the area behind the construction site and managed to locate 5 Great Bustards. These were far away, however. Continuing south one Great Bustard flew over the road, but we didn't see where it went. We took the track towards the site as far as the gate and saw 13 Great Bustards flying near the hill and landing.

At Larache we had some Whiskered Terns, lots of ducks (incl. 20 Red-Crested Pochards), 150 Crested Coots, some shorebirds, an albino Starling, a Little Gull, a first-winter Bonelli's Eagle. Others had reported that the Purple Gallinules would be all over, but we couldn't see any. At last however, already driving back we found the first, and after that more, but only about 15 altogether. 2 Squacco Herons were also noted, but no Moustached Warblers.

Because we had had such trouble getting to the Bustard site it was too late to drive all the way to Sidi Bourhaba which we had planned to do. So we spent the afternoon at Merja Zerga checking the west side of the lake. We got close enough to some waders, but didn't find anything new. There was also lots of villagers around so we got a little crowded. We had dinner at cafe Milano where we met Hassan to whom we talked about the Curlew incident. He told us he had a dead owl at his house which was in bad condition and which he had not had time to identify. He said his place was also good for Barn Owl, so we went there after dinner. We couldn't find any living owls, but identified the dead one as a Short-eared Owl. The night was spent at hotel Lagon \*\*\* in Molay Busselham.

#### Friday, 8th December

191.6 km Merja Zerga - Rabat

We spent the morning seawatching. One Sooty Shearwater flew past which was a lifer for us both, and 4 Cory's were also seen. About 10 Stercorarius Skuas were too far away to be

identified. 9.30 - 11.40 we searched the east side of the lake, but didn't find any Slender-billed Curlews. We did see rather a lot of Curlew Sandpipers and the first Bar-tailed Godwits. In the end we were followed by about 25 boys who walked so close I was beginning to get claustrophobia. They wanted to carry our gear which we didn't let them, but we did let them have a look through the bins and the scopes. That was before the whole gang appeared though. One of the first kids to follow us stared at me as though he was trying to find out what I had in my brain, really unnerving. A Marsh Sandpiper was recorded here as well as a Whiskered Tern. At midday we left and drove south.

From Kenitra we took the road along Oued Sebou to Mehdiya. We had a Whimbrel, some gulls, Sanderlings, Grey Plovers, Oystercatchers and Cormorants.

At Mehdiya we tried to seawatch but there was a lot of sand blowing about so that came to nothing.

We drove round Lac de Sidi Bourhaba (13.40 - 15.20) which seemed rather barren. There was some wildfowl (Wigeon 10, Gadwall 30, Teal 470, Mallard 40, Pintail 20, Shoveler 1000, Marbled Duck 55, Pochard 20), 20 Crested Coot, 3 Coot, a Black-shouldered Kite but no owls. We did leave long before dusk though, as there seemed to be nothing further to look for.

At Plage des Nations we took the road to the shore, where we seawatched for a while without seeing anything.

The rest of the day was spent in Rabat where we tried to photograph some gulls, but unfortunately the sun stayed behind a cloud. We also tried to locate a bank, but discovered that they had all closed at 16.30. We wanted to be near Sidi Yahia in the morning, so we drove towards Temara, trying to discover a cheap hotel. After some searching and asking we found one on the coast road at Skhirat where the price was acceptable.

### Saturday, 9th December

327.9 km Sidi Yahia - Oulidia

In the morning we drove towards Foret de Sidi Bettache. We even got checked before dawn by a police patrol. We spent some time trying to make sure we were on the correct road, so we finally reached the site at 6.50. We first went to the big car park at the house and were told to leave as it was not allowed to look for birds in the area. We left the car park and drove along the paved road, forth and back. We heard Francolin 'song' from several places, but couldn't see any. The small 'car-park' only produced Francolin song and two Black-shouldered Kites. Finally as we were afraid we were going to dip, a Francolin obligely walked across the road and stopped to eat stones. We watched it for several minutes until a car drove past. The Francolin first froze, but after the car had gone past, it walked into the wood. The bird had a slight limp.

We drove about 1 km along the track north of the river to the west, but didn't see anything of note. We were told that driving along the road was not allowed. As we left the area we found a flock of 30 Magpies and 50 Corn Buntings.

We continued west and 3 km further on we had 2 Barbary Partridges flying over the road. A little further on we estimated a flock of 1000 Chaffinches and 100 Greenfinches.

We took the motorway to Casablanca which was a mistake as they were repairing it and the limit most of the time was 40 kph. Just before El Jadida we drove to the shore and had 60 Common Scoters, 10 Cormorants on a shipwreck, 10 Grey Plovers, 20 Sanderlings, 2 Turnstones and an unidentified Skua.

48 km north of Oualidia we saw the first saltpans and investigated. Small numbers of waders.

The next check was made 43 km north of Oualidia which wasn't much better. 40 km north of Oualidia were some good ponds: 13 Cormorants, 7 Spoonbills, 30 Avocets, a Knot (the only one of our trip), 250 Dunlins, 20 Little Stints, 28 Black-tailed Godwits, 13 Mediterranean Gulls (2 first-winters), 5 Audoin's Gulls, 2 Whiskered Terns. At the nearby Sidi Moussa Lagoon we had 20 Oystercatchers, 170 GoldenPlovers, 250 unidentified Calidris, 1 Bar-tailed Godwit, 20 Limosa, 510 Curlews (among which we couldn't find any small-looking), a Greenshank, 25 Turnstones, a Mediterranean Gull and 2 Little Terns (the only ones of the trip).

A few km further south (43 km S of El Jadida) we found another good area with some wildfowl and waders.

31 km north of Oualidia was one of the best spots. 750 Shovelers, 70 Black-winged Stilts, 50 Avocets, 7 Grey Phalaropes, 1 unidentified Skua, 2 first-winter Little Gulls, 1 Whiskered Tern, 20 White-winged Terns, 2 Blue-throats. We checked the north end of this site, as well as the south end, but a lot of birds were in the middle where we couldn't find any road to the saltpans.

24 km north of Oualidia (near Jemma Ouled Ghanem) we saw 100 Flamingos and 21 Grey Phalaropes.

16 km north of Oualidia we had 20 Black-winged Stilts, 5 Avocets, 5 Sanderlings, 2 Grey Phalaropes.

Just north of Oualidia we checked the big lagoon where we had 23 Spoonbills, 30 Flamingos and 800 unidentified waders.

As we drove into Oualidia it was dark. After checking the motels, we decided to stay at Hotel Araignee which seemed nice.

### Sunday, 10th December

450 km Oualidia - Asni

Our first stop was at Cap Beddouza which we reached at 7.40 due to a slight misfortune. (We forgot two items at the motel and had to drive back for them.) Fortunately it was just getting light enough to seawatch with some wind blowing. 10 flocks of Common Scoter, 16 Shelducks, 100+20 Shovelers and one Red-breasted Merganser flew south. 1 Pomarine//Parasitic Skua was seen as well as 10 Great Skuas. 9 Razorbills were seen

swimming or flying. The only Northern Wheatear of the trip was recorded. 2 Audoin's Gulls flew past.

From time to time we had caught glimpses of a very small black bird flying very fast low over the waves. The bird was never in view for long, and we had great difficulties in explaining its whereabouts to each other. The flight was active and reminded us of a Swift, suddenly it would change direction, mostly we lost it at that point. Then both of us at different times saw it 'standing' over the waves for about a second. Finally our persistence was rewarded and the bird flew across our vision at closer range. We were able to see the very white rump, just slightly paler (brownish) greater coverts, all dark underside. We couldn't make out if the feet were protruding behind the tail or not. The characters didn't fit anything other than Madeiran Petrel.

We took the straight minor road towards Marrakesh which was a mistake because it was market day in one of the small villages and the road went straight through the market. First they didn't want to let us through at all, but when they saw we were foreigners they let us pass.

We locked the door and kept the windows up to avoid trouble in the crowd. At Sebka Zima we stopped to look at the salt pans. The lake itself was all dry, but the ponds held some Shelducks, Flamingos and waders.

27 km east of Chemaia (57 km west of Marrakesh) we had 20 Calandra Larks, there were probably much more of them in the fields. 48 km west of Marrakesh we had another 3.

22 km west of Marrakesh we had a Little Owl which we photographed.

Just before Marrakesh, at Oued Tensift, we had 85 White Storks, a Black-winged Kite, a Long-legged Buzzard, our first Little Swifts of the trip and 15 Crag Martins.

On the way up to Oukaimeden from the Ourika Valley we had 2 Mistle Thrushes.

We arrived in Oukaimeden at 15.30. At the bridge we counted 60 Choughs, 5 Dippers and a Grey Wagtail. In the new village we found a flock of 60 Rock Sparrows. At the first skilift there were 20 Shore Larks, and then at the second we had 10 Crimson-winged Finches just where they were supposed to be. We spent some time trying to photograph them, but it was difficult as somebody would always come along and scare them away. We had a quick look at the view from the viewpoint, unfortunately the fog was rather in the way.

Since we had seen what we came to see, we decided to leave right away (at 17.10). It got dark while we drove down in the valley and we decided to try to find a hotel in Ouirgane. As we drove past Asni we checked the situation there and had some trouble getting rid of a local who wanted us to write a letter for him in English. The hotel in Ouirgane was no longer open when we arrived there, so we drove back to Asni and slept at the Grand Hotel du Toubkal. Since the hotel was no longer serving dinner (at 20.30) we ate at a local cafe, where a lot of people sat watching television.

Monday, 11th December

281.6 km Asni - Agadir

At dawn we left the hotel (had to wake up the receptionist). In the garden we had a Song Thrush, a new species for the trip. The drive through the valley towards Tizi-n-Test was nice, but the birds all hid in the bushes. Most seemed to be European stuff though.

At Ouirgane we had a look at the famous garden (which didn't hold any special birds) and took up a lifter, an Englishman who had been waiting for the bus for three hours, but the bus had not arrived. He turned out to know Nik Borrow, even though he wasn't interested in birds himself. The weather was beautiful and so were the mountains, but we only saw 3 Golden Eagles, a Cirl Bunting, 5 Rock Buntings, a Little Egret and 15 Rock Sparrows.

As we crossed Tizi-n-Test we drove straight into the clouds, which lasted almost all the way down. When we got out of the clouds we stopped and promptly found a Tristram's Warbler. 5 women with heavy loads of 'grass' came walking up the road and they wanted money, but they wouldn't let us photograph them to get it. They were pleased to eat some of our peanuts though.

When we came down to the Taroudant road the same police officer that had been there a week earlier was on duty and he at once asked us why there were now three of us. Very suspicious, but he accepted the explanation.

It was already past 3 pm as we arrived in Taroudant where we dropped off Andrew, so we spent the rest of the daylight hours just south of Taroudant where we didn't see anything, except some Fulvous Babblers. The night was spent at our own hotel in Agadir.

#### Tuesday, 12th December

422.4 km Agadir - Goulimine - Agadir

We were at Massa at dawn where there was a thick fog. We checked the river while waiting for the fog to clear, which it didn't until noon. As we were pressed for time we only walked part of the track towards the shore. While we were talking to the guard (in German) we saw a Peregrine and as we were watching it a Tawny Owl flew up from a tree and was in view for a few seconds as it flew to another tree. Our first good view of a Tawny Owl ever, despite a lot of trying.

Near Tassila we found a small pond packed with waders and ducks. Above a young Bonelli's Eagle soared, unfortunately too far away to photograph.

Driving south we didn't see anything special. 15 km north of Goulimine we checked the wadis and some raptors on the pylons, a Tristram's Warbler, 4 Spectacled Warblers, 10 Fulvous Babblers, a Desert Wheatear, a pair of Red-rumped Wheatears. Then it was dark, and again we had not gotten south of Goulimine which had been our intention.

We were supposed to meet the man from the carhire company at 8 pm, so since it was already past 6 pm, we made a hasty journey back to Agadir.

#### Wednesday, 13th December

21.4 km Agadir - Oued Sous



At dawn we were at Oued Sous. Since our bus was to leave the hotel at 9, we only had from 7.00 - 8.30 to do the estuary in. We managed to check it quickly, but failed to locate anything special. A Quail flew up in front of us, about 100 Flamingos were present and some waders, but not in any large numbers. 12 Audouin's Gulls were counted.

We gave the car back to the owner, who charged us for the carwash. The plane was 1 hour late because of severe winds, but we almost got the whole hour back as we had the wind in our back.

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## **Itinerary 1990**

### Wednesday, 7th November

34.9 km Agadir, Oued Sous

The flight left Finland at 7.50. This time Tapani and I were not alone. With us were Reijo Vikman, Heikki Assinen and Hanna Järvinen who were not going to cram into our car, but rent a car on their own. Arrived at Agadir airport on time at 10.30. Three of us took a taxi to Europcar, while the two others went with the tourbus and took care of our luggage and got us our hotelrooms. After some haggling we got 20% and a little more off the price on two 'good' cars, a Renault 9 and a Fiat Regata. The logs of both showed between 20.000 and 30.000 but they sure had suffered some from stones or such. Tapani and I got the Regata as Reijo wanted to try Renault (which he had not driven before). The Regata was the better choice however, with automatic windows and easier to use. Both cars were to have problems later though.

Drove to the hotel and changed clothes and carried our gear to the cars.

Went to the harbour where almost the first bird we saw was a Lesser Crested Tern, a WP-tick for Tapani and me, a lifer for the others. A local shap who collected birdrings swam out, dived under and managed to catch a Sandwich Tern, which he deprived of its ring and let it fly off. We wrote down the info on the ring and took some photos of the bird. He spoke quite good French, too well for me actually and it seemed collecting rings and sending in the information was his new hobby.

Drove to Oued Sous where we spent two hours at the first bend. Nothing special. As the water started to rise we drove towards the shore as we wanted to see the rest of the place before it got dark. As it turned out this was a big mistake. Were at the 'ditch' till it got dark. Had supper at Le Panier in Agadir.

### Thursday, 8th November

255.7 km Agadir - Goulimine

Left the hotel at 6.10 and drove towards Massa. Got there at 7. There should have been daylight already, but since it was very foggy, there was nothing much to be seen. We were just able to see the river below us. While waiting for it to clear a minibusload of birders drove by, led by Brian Bland. They stopped and we talked for a while (not much else to do). They'd also arrived the day before, and they'd seen a Long-billed Dowitcher at the first bend at Oued Sous the previous evening. They must have arrived there just after we left. There certainly wasn't any Dowitcher there when we were, we checked all the flocks several times. But we should have stayed and waited for the rising water, the bird probably flew in because of that. Brian had watched the bird up to 6pm and then they left, a few minutes before we returned from the estuary, thus we just missed the seeing them. Well that's life. I don't think anyone else ever saw the bird, we didn't, despite looking for it.

At about 9.30 it started to clear a little. Brian & co had gone beforehand, and when we reached the village of Sidi Benzarem they were waiting for us and Brian showed us a Black-headed Bush Shrike. Very nice indeed.

As we thought the track to Sidi R'bat was closed off we decided to drive around the other way and walk back. That way we'd hear what Brian & co had seen. We started out with a little seawatching and breakfast at the cafe. A Lesser Crested Tern flew by, but nothing much else seemed to be moving. Just as we were about to leave a lone Bald Ibis flew by quite close and continued south. It was soon followed by 12 other Bald Ibis flying the same way.

We started to walk in the direction of Sidi Benzarem and met the group soon after the former 'gate'. They hadn't seen the Ibises, so these presumably really flew south by the coast.

We changed our mind about walking the track and Tapani and Reijo went to get the cars. Found a Ferruginous Duck in the river which we showed to Brian and two Englishmen. Could not find the Red-Crested Pochard the Englishmen had seen though.

Drove to Tassila and tried to find some nice tracks for Crakes. It was too dry, however. Saw an immature Bonelli's Eagle but nothing much else.

Drove towards Goulimine. Stopped 10 km north of Tiznit where a flock of 7 Cream-coloured Coursers flew by. Didn't have time to see much more, except a Rock Bunting and some Barbary Partridges in the mountains.

Had some trouble in finding a hotel in Goulimine (because we happened to look past the sign), but a local showed us the way. First to L'ere Nouvelle, and then when we wanted a hotel with shower he took us to Es Salam.

Ordered dinner. A shop-owner on the opposite side of the road asked us to write a postcard for him to a Finnish friend and then we got some tea afterwards. After this his father wanted to show us some things and then of course he wanted us to buy something. We wouldn't have bought anything (as we usually don't want anything and we hadn't even had time to check prices), but since I wanted something for my mother's birthday (and I knew there wouldn't be time to look for something) I bought a bracelet. They weren't very pleased with Tapani as he didn't want anything, but they forgave him. They dressed him up in a Berber turban which he looked very nice in, but it was too expensive at 100 Dh.

Ate tajine with mandarins as dessert.

Friday, 9th November

356.8 km Goulimine - 50 km S - Agadir

Had breakfast (which was about 15 minutes late) and left at 7 am. Drove towards Tan-tan. At Oued Sayad we passed the wade and as we saw some raptors on the pylons to the west, we took a track which went in the right direction. The track ended but it was quite possible to drive over the hard ground. Stopped when the raptors had all disappeared without us having had a chance at identifying them. Found ourselves in some nice scrub where we soon located a few Spectacled Warblers, 3 Scrub Warblers and a Tristram's Warbler. Having seen enough we decided to try the other side of the road.

We had been told by a Finnish birder that it was possible to drive along (or north of) wadi Sayad (the English name is Oued Sayad, but the Arabic name is wadi Sayad, which is, after all much more appropriate since it was very dry) to the Azrir road. We drove for a while along a nice track, but after some fields it ended. So we decided to try the Azrir road instead.

Bought some fruit while passing the town. Drove towards Azrir as far as wadi Sayad. Found a Thick-billed Lark and some Red-rumped Wheatears just north of the wadi (at the crossing). There was a track going down along the bottom of the wadi towards the Tan-tan road, but it seemed much too sandy for ordinary cars. It may have been different the previous winter. Drove back to Goulimine and stopped to buy petrol at a service station on the other side of the town. It was also a café so we ordered omelette for five and sat down to wait. After a while a saucepan with one omelette appeared and some bread. No plates, no forks, knives or spoons to eat with. One bottle of water (which we had not ordered) and one glass. We all sat for a while and stared at each other in surprise. Reijo, Heikki and Hanna thought it was too much and declined the omelette. So I brought a spoon from the car and shared the omelette with Tapani by putting it in the bread (as pita). Very nice actually.

Continued towards Tan-tan. It was nearly 2 pm and quieting down. It was blowing quite hard though, so hard that watching with a telescope was difficult. So when Hanna shouted 'raptor' and two eagles appeared soaring (33 km s.o.G.) we sat down on the road behind the cars to get some shelter. We discovered that one of the birds was distinctly smaller than the other and after a while we were able to confirm it as Tawny Eagle. The most important bird of the trip for Tapani and me. The eagle came closer and closer and slowly (it was flying against the wind) it started passing the road. We quickly drove a km to get under it, threw ourselves out of the car and started shooting. I'd forgotten my sunglasses on and couldn't understand why the picture was so dark. But I hoped the autofocus could deal with situation (which it didn't).

We probably got about half a roll before the eagle flew past. It kept flying towards the wind (west) for ages, then, just as it was almost out of view it turned round and headed back for us. This time it flew much faster with the wind in its back and we did not have time for many shots. But it turned round once again and flew against the wind past the road. One roll of slides. Nice.

We now had to move on even though the bird was still in view. We had also seen 2 Lanners and the other eagle was confirmed as a Golden. Past the hills (40 km) we had several Lanners, a Golden and a Bonelli's Eagle. Got some photos of a Lanner flying past.

A few km further on we stopped and watched several raptors soaring high above the mountain. Bonelli's, Black Kite, 13 Buteos. Drove a bit further, but had to turn around at 50 km as it got dark (18.05). Drove back to Agadir where we arrived at 21.05.

Had supper at a restaurant.

### Saturday, 10th November

143.5 km Agadir - Tamri - Agadir

Started at 6.30 towards Cap Rhir. Checked the gull flocks on the way, 75 Audouin's and a Mediterranean.

Seawatched at Cap Rhir 7.40 - 10.20. There was a slight wind from the south-west. About 10 Cory's and 10 Yelkouan Shearwaters were flying about. A few flocks of Common Scoter flew south. Two Lanners flew around. Had 2 Pomarine Skuas, 1 identified Great Skua and 4 Stercorarius sp. of which 1-2 were pale and thus likely to have been Arctic. A Lesser Crested Tern was seen three times, we judged it to be the same bird going forth and back. Left when the seabirds started to disappear.

Were at the Tamri estuary 10.30 - 13.40. 4 Bald Ibis were feeding in the estuary, three of these flew south after a while (they went behind the cliff so we could not see if they landed). 3 Spoonbills and 5 Flamingos were also present. An Osprey sat on a dead tree and 1-2 Lanners flew over.

There was a flock of 200 Lesser Black-backed Gulls and 50 Audouin's Gulls on the beach. We also saw a smaller Gull among them which turned out to be a Common Gull. As we got nearer we also noticed that several of the Audouin's were colour-ringed. We managed to read 8 rings. A Lesser Crested Tern flew past while we were watching the Gulls.

Drove back towards Agadir. Had 3 Shags on a cliff on the way and a Pomarine and a Great Skua chasing gulls at the same site. Spent an hour in Agadir harbour (15-16). Only one Lesser Crested present. Also a Black and a White-winged Tern.

16.15-18.05 at Oued Sous. Looked especially for the Long-billed Dowitcher but it refused to appear. It was low tide, worse luck, so the birds were very scattered about. Counted 850 Flamingos, 14 Spoonbills, 7 Ruddy Shelducks, 3 Shelducks. Saw nothing new. Drove along the estuary almost to the shore where it got dark. Night spent in Agadir.

### Sunday, 11th November

402.8 km Agadir - Ouarzazate

Left at dawn (6.40) and drove towards Taroudant. 180 Cattle Egret of which most at the dump. Disgusting stench. 3 Cirl Buntings and a Black-shouldered Kite 20 km east of Taroudant. We wanted to have a proper go at Dark Chanting Goshawk so we'd planned to stay most of the day in the Igoudar - Berrchill area. We first drove around, getting acquainted with the place. Had a amiable Barbary Falcon on a pylon which allowed us some nice shots from behind. 7 Little Swift were flying around a house. A very pale female Black-eared Wheatear flew nervously around and gave us no chances to take photos.

After driving around we went up on the hill just west of Igoudar and watched for about two hours but did not come up with anything except a Sparrowhawk, 3 Lanners and a Barbary Falcon. It was rather warm and a lot of village kids swarmed about. They laughed when we tried to photograph them and moved away. I'm not sure whether they were afraid to be photographed or if they were just shy. We got tired of the whole thing in the end and left the hill at 1.30 pm. We wanted to try the track visible on our map which we hoped would go along the woods and lead to Aoulouz. We may have taken the wrong turn somewhere, but the track was getting rather bad and we could see cars going fast on the south side of Oued Sous so we took a track which went that way. Unfortunately this took us away from the woods altogether. When we had passed Oued Sous we suddenly found ourselves on a good tarmac road, which wasn't on our map. It was 23 km to the Aoulouz - Taliouine road. We later found out that this road is a short-cut from Taroudant to Taliouine which starts just east of Taroudant near Ait Yazza.

Drove on, stopping a few times to check interesting looking birds. Before Tazenakht we'd had 3 Long-legged Buzzards, 3 Desert Larks, 1 Thick-billed Lark, a female Desert Wheatear, 6 Black Wheatears, 2 Rock Sparrows and 20 Corn Buntings.

Tried to locate the site in the Mountain 1987 report, but couldn't get their map to fit. The track quite near Tazenakht was seen though. We did not waste time on this area, we were more interested in checking the road east from Tazenakht, especially for Mourning Wheatear. Arrived at the 'site' (4 km east of Taroudant), just before sun-down. Had time to see 2 Desert Larks and 2 male Mourning Wheatears before it got dark. The village kids were again a nuisance. Fortunately the Mourning Wheatears were out of site from the village.

Drove to Ouarzazate, had 4 Little Owls passing in the headlights on the way. Took rooms at the La Gazelle. While removing our gear from the cars a Barn Owl flew over. Nice but brief views in the headlights. Ate well (Entrecote) and went to bed.

### Monday, 12th November

149.5 km Ouarzazate - Boumalne

Started at dawn (6.25). Saw a male Mourning Wheatear on the way to our first stopping point, 11 km east of Ouarzazate. There we searched the area thoroughly and came up with 40 Desert Larks, 4 male and a female Mourning Wheatear, 5 Black-and-White Wheatears, 2 Spectacled Warblers, 30 Trumpeter Finches.

Next stop was at the Restaurant from where we scanned the barrage in both directions. Few birds. 23 km east of Ouarzazate we had 2 female Mourning Wheatears and 2 males 57 km east of O.

Arrived in Boumalne just before 2 pm. As we started after taking some photos of the scenery, we discovered that the left front tyre had gone flat. Changed the tyre which wouldn't have been difficult except that we were on a hill, and just as we'd got the punctured tyre off, the car tipped. Fortunately the others were able to hold it up while I slipped the jack under the car and got it up again.

Drove to the service station near Tagdilt track and I went with Reijo to check the birdlog at Augberge du Soleil Bleu while the service-men repaired the tyre. Nothing new in the birdlog,

there are few birders in Morocco in October it seems. When the tyre was repaired we put it back under, since the spare looked so 'rotten' that we felt it couldn't last long. Spent the rest of the day (14.35-17.55) driving around. First it seemed very empty, but as it got cooler the birds appeared. 6 Long-legged Buzzards, 2 Lanners (sitting on pylons or the ground), 60 Thick-billed Larks, 6 Lesser Short-toed Larks, 12 Temminck's Larks, 8 pairs of Red-rumped Wheatear and 6 Trumpeter Finches.

While driving rather far west of the main track, the other car stopped and blinked their warning lights. We looked around and Tapani found it, a lone Houbara, slowly walking west. We then discovered that the other car had only found some Temminck's Larks. Well, we drove a little closer to the Houbara, but it was very shy and then suddenly as we were about 300 m away it flew off. It landed maybe a km away, but we decided to leave it alone, as we had had some views of it already.

As we were about to return to the main track some Sandgrouse flew in and landed. About 50 Pin-tailed and 60 Black-bellied. The boys wanted to have some drinks at the bar in hotel Madayed, so we decided to stay at Es Salam which was closer and really cheap and seemed quite as good as the Soleil Bleu. While the boys had their drinks I drove over to the Soleil Bleu and checked the birdlog properly. Some interesting information from the previous winter.

Ate tajine at the hotel.

### Tuesday, 13th November

232.9 km Boumalne - Erfoud

We had ordered breakfast at 6.15, but it wasn't ready till 6.35. They had just woken up when I went into the dining-room at 6.15. Ate a nice omelette and left for the track a bit late (7.05). Drove south as we wanted to see the Sandgrouse come in. We were late though, they started to come in about 7.45 when we were still rather far away. When we reached the place they seemed to favour, we discovered that there were some pools near some green ditches. Had time to see some Black-bellied and Pin-tailed Sandgrouse fly over. Then a flock of Crowned Sandgrouse flew in and landed pretty far from the pools. They took half an hour to walk up to the pool and left just as we were checking a Hoopoe Lark behind us.

While driving south Tapani and I suddenly felt a bump, though we hadn't seen anything on the ground, and when we stopped we discovered that our exhaustpipe had come off at a very inconvenient spot. We put it in the trunk, but of course we had some trouble in getting close to the larks after that with all the noise. Photographed some Hoopoes anyway, they were pretty tame, and even managed a few shots of some Thick-billed Larks. They do seem very wary, but the Lesser Short-toed Larks were again quite impossible.

Counted 230 Thick-billed, 10 Hoopoe, 10 Bar-tailed Desert, 1 Short-toed, 20 Lesser Short-toed, 90 Calandrella, 15 Temminck's Larks, as well as 100 Black-bellied, 23 Pin-tailed and 80 sp. Sandgrouse. 4 Lanners and 17 Long-legged Buzzards were mostly sitting on the ground.

Deciding that we needed to push on if we wanted to get the exhaustpipe repaired and reach Erfoud the same evening, Tapani and I drove backtowards the main road. When we were already rather close, Tapani suddenly spotted a flock of soaring big birds. We were hardly

able to believe our eyes when we discovered that they were Griffon Vultures. And there were actually three flocks, of altogether 96 birds. The flocks had seemingly come from the mountains, they were heading south, soaring and then gliding and the soaring again. While Tapani drove to fetch the others I lay down on the ground and let the camera motor go as the flocks passed right over the spot where I lay. Most of the Griffons seemed to young, but there was at least one older. There was a Chough among the Vultures. Got the exhaustpipe repaired in an hour and left Boumalne at 12.45. Saw a Golden Eagle from the service-station.

On the way east we tried to photograph some Long-legged Buzzards and Lanners on the pylons. I photoed a L-l Buzzard as it flew by the car while Tapani drove about 60-80 km/h. Saw a female Mourning Wheatear just before Tinerhir and got nice views of a lone Pin-tailed Sangrouse on the ground. Reach the site west of Jorf so late (15.45) that we judged it better to spend the rest of the day there, rather than to try to reach Merzouga. Found a waterhole in the wadi with 50 Trumpeter Finches around it. Walked around trying to find Scrub Warblers but only saw a flock of 20 Spotted Sandgrouse as well as some Hoopoe and Bar-tailed Desert Larks.

First checked the hotel Tafilalte, but as the rooms were so far away, we decided to go to the Gazelle anyway. Did some shopping while they prepared the dinner and had couscous which was quite strong.

### Wednesday, 14th November

336.9 km Merzouga - Midelt

Started at 6.20. Drove towards Merzouga. First stop at Derkaoua where we first tried to photograph a Black-and-White Wheatear while it was still rather dark. Then it suddenly flew up and sat on the door to our car. After a few seconds it walked down the door and flew into the car. I ran up and closed the door and there it was, nicely caught. Soon after 2 birds flew by which looked like Desert Sparrows. They landed and we managed to identify a female before they flew off. Despite looking for them we didn't see them again. We had a flock of 9 Fulvous Babblers, 21 Spotted Sandgrouse flew over, 4 Hoopoe Larks and 2 Bar-tailed Desert Larks were around and a Brown-necked Raven flew past.

After having spent one and a half hour at Derkaoua we continued towards the cafes. Started at the northernmost one, cafe Yasmina. There we had a lone Desert Sparrow female which allowed us some photographs. Cafe Les Etoiles was empty, but another two Desert Sparrow females were present at cafe Sud in the House Sparrow flock by the camels. Had a soft drink and wrote some in the birdlog. 3 Brown-necked Ravens were present between cafe Sud and cafe Dunes d'Or.

Drove to Merzouga Lake which we couldn't locate at first. Found an excellent area of scrub near the lake where we soon had 2 Desert Warblers, 3 Tristram's Warblers, 6 Hoopoe Larks, 3 Bar-tailed Desert Larks and 4 Desert Wheatears. A Golden Eagle soared above the village.

Finally found the lake which had shrunk to about 50 m across. Nothing in it except 4 Ruddy Shelducks. Drove back to Erfoud without stopping much. Visited a bank where the clerk had never seen Finnish notes before, but he accepted them anyway. Drove on to Errashidia where we spent the last half hour of daylight at the site about 1 km west of the big crossing. Lots of

people, not many birds. A Peregrine/Barbary Falcon flew over quite close, but against the sun.

Reached Midelt at 19.30 and stayed at hotel Ayachi. Bought some fruit and had dinner at the hotel.

#### Thursday, 15th November

385.0 km Midelt - Souk El Arba du Rharb

Started towards Zeida at 5.30. Reached the site just before six and listen a few times on the main road just before the actual site. Got to the east side (at the big electricity line) at 6. The first Dupont's Lark started singing at 6.03 and the second soon after. We waited and hoped that it would continue singing long enough. It was actually already possible to see something, but we just couldn't spot the bird, even though it seemed to be singing only about 20 m away. Then it was quiet for a while and lastly sang once at 6.25. We tried to find it by walking in a line, but only flushed 2 Black-bellied Sandgrouse.

We decided to try the area where the other Lark had been singing. While driving there a Dupont's Lark was flushed by Reijo's car. We managed to get a few glimpses of the bird before it disappeared behind some grasstufts. We left the car and as the bird was flushed it started running. We ran beside it and got some nice views of a bird running like a mouse and in flight.

Decided to leave immediately as we had a lot to do elsewhere. Stopped a few times in the Cedar wood south of Col du Zad, but saw only some Nuthatches, Jays and tits + 6 Rock Buntings.

Spent some time (9.25-10.50) at Lac Aquelmane de Sidi Ali. 400 Ruddy Shelducks, one Lanner following and almost catching a Chough, 10 Snipes and 3 Redwings. Some wildfowl in the lake itself.

North of Fom Kheneq (at Meknes 103) we had a flock of 10 Alpine Choughs, 200 Ravens and 50 Rock Sparrows.

Decided to drive towards Dayet Aaoua via Mischliffen and Dayet Hachlaf. 5 Mistle Thrushes, 2 Firecrests, 3 Nuthatches, 5 Long-legged Buzzards, 2 Short-toed Treecreepers. When we reached Dayet Hachlaf we discovered that it was all dry and that the track to Dayet Aaoua seemed too bad to be tried. So we changed our plan and drove to Dayet Ifrah. Rather a lot of wildfowl and coots, but we didn't want to spend time on driving closer and identifying them. After Dayet Ifrah the road was tarmac and we reached Dayet Aaoua pretty quickly. Stayed there for an hour, but no Levillant's Woodpecker, except for a possible which answered Tapani once very far away. 6 Crested Coots were easily located in the pond.

Drove towards El Hajeb. The road between Ifrane and El Hajeb didn't seem to fit the map, has it been changed? Very nice green area around Ifrane, is it natural? Had 10 Calandra Larks as the fields start north of Ifrane. Looked for the Lesser Kestrel colony in El Hajeb, but there were too many walls.



Arrived in Souk el Arba du Rharb at 19.30 and got rooms at the hotel du Rharb where we also had dinner.

### Friday, 16th November

433.3 km Merja Zerga - El Jadida

Left at 5.50 and arrived at Merja Zerga at 6.30. Thick fog. Went to cafe Milano, had breakfast and read the birdlog. When it started to clear a little, we drove towards the east side, checking the meadows as we drove past. Went up on the small hills near the trees from where we had excellent views over the meadows. It had now cleared up pretty well and soon Tapani spotted a Slender-billed Curlew flying in to land in a Curlew flock. After a short search we found two more S-b:s. We watched them and searched for other birds for maybe half an hour, they the Curlew flock suddenly flew towards us and landed quite close, maybe 200 m in front of us. We watched them for another half hour and left.

Drove to the southern track which was much drier than in 1989, so no Marsh Owls. Even the wildfowl and the waders were too far away as the water level was much lower. We were asked if we wished to make a boattrip which we didn't.

The others went to twitch Marsh Owl outside the camping area and saw three. Tapani and I checked a few waders, noted that it was still too foggy to seawatch and ordered dinner at cafe Milano. When we were going to leave we noticed that the right front tyre was empty again so we changed it (while the Moroccons watched with interest) and got it repaired at the service station. Went with Tapani inside the camping area and saw 5 Marsh Owls, not easy to find though.

Decided to leave the area as we wanted to get to El Jadida before it was too late. Found a dead Barn Owl on the road which was in good condition. We had planned to visit Sidi Bourhaba, but when we got there it was too dark. Reijo also had some problems with the car (no idle running every now and then). The windscreen washer did not work either, so he washed his front window by asking us to wash ours and then he drove so close that the water reached his window.

Lots of traffic, very slow going through Rabat. Got lost at some point but got through pretty nicely anyway, though possibly not the fastest route. Near Casablanca Reijo signalled trouble and we stopped. His left rear tyre was almost empty, so we decided to change it which took some time as none of us knew the French system, very unpractical.

Got to El Jadida at 22.30 and lost another hour while looking for a decent yet not too expensive hotel. Decided not to eat anything as we'd had dinner at Merja Zerga.

### Saturday, 17th November

476.9 km El Jadida - Agadir

Thick fog in the morning. Left at 6.30 and took the coast road (which we reached after some trouble at Sidi Bunzuit). Couldn't find any suitable spot to see Mediterranean Gulls which should winter here (see Birdwatcher's Guide). Checked Cap Blanc, but since it was still very foggy we didn't stay long. Spent 15 minutes at the port of Jorf Lasfar, it seemed rather dull.

Drove slowly towards Sidi Moussa. Reijo stopped at a garage to get his tyre repaired, Tapani and I took the first track to the ponds. It was clearing a little, visibility about 50 m. Just before 9 am it started to clear a little faster. 3 Night Herons flew past, a large flock of Audouin's was present (350), also 8 Mediterranean Gulls, two White-winged Terns and a Whiskered. 60 Spotted Redshanks, 40 Avocet, 2 Curlew Sandpipers, lots of other waders.

The middle part of the pond area was too dry and rather empty. Not that we could find a proper road there this year either.

8 km before Oualidia we spent some time photographing at the ponds and saw a Glossy Ibis land. Some counts from the whole area: Flamingo 15, Wigeon 5, Pintail 80, Showeler 220, Pochard 2, Stilt 160, Avocet 210, Golden Plover 100, Knot 25, Sanderling 60, Little Stint 50, Temminck's Stint 1, Dunlin 100, Black-tailed Godwit 50, Redshank 100, Greenshank 2, Turnstone 35, Ruff 20, Curlew 55 + 100 Curlew//Godwit.

Drove to Cap Beddouza. Stopped about 2 km before to photograph a Kestrel and noticed a gull flock on the beach. Tapani promptly found an adult Glaucous Gull in the flock. Climbed down to get closer views and a few photos. Small flocks of Razorbill going south.

Seawatched at Cap Beddouza 14.45 - 15.10. Still some Razorbills going south. A Great Skua flew south as well. Otherwise empty.

Drove to Essaouira where we wanted to get a look at the Eleonora island. We just succeeded in getting there before the sun went down. Lots of gulls, no falcons (Do they sometimes winter in the area?). On the way to Agadir a stone which flew up from under another car cut off Reijo's side mirror and then hit the door with a big bang. No sign of the mirror, lucky it did not hit the window.

Reached Agadir at 21.00, had supper at a French restaurant which mostly seemed to be visited by Frenchmen.

### Sunday, 18th November

500.2 km Agadir - Igoudar - Goulimine

Started at dawn and drove to Igoudar. Spent most of the time on the highest hill surrounded by 40 kids, an oldtimer and a few young men. Most of them wanted to have a look through the scope, but the biggest boy kept the other ones away. Lots of Black-shouldered Kites (maybe 6-10) sitting in the treetops and flying briefly. No Dark Chanting Goshawks. The locals said they disappear for the winter and return when the birds start to sing. Got fed up with the place and left at 14.20.

Drove to Oued Massa where we stayed till it was dark. A Black-necked Grebe was the only new species. 43 Marbled Ducks. A Water Rail called briefly. Tapani had a Squacco Heron which disappeared in the darkness before I could see it. A falcon like bird (long tail and wings) flew up below us, looked mostly like a Nightjar, but it went into the dark shadow before we got our bins on it.

Drove to Goulimine and stayed at hotel Salam again. While we were waiting for the tajine a local offered us a local dish, very strong and funny tasting but not too bad. Partly camel I think.

### Monday, 19th November

434.2 km Goulimine - Tan-tan - Agadir

Left at 7 am, drove towards Tan-tan. Spent some time at Oued Sayad looking at warblers. 2 male Tristram's, 3 Scrub and 3 Spectacled. Went back into town to change money. When we returned to the car the front tyre was again empty. Changed and repaired it. Drove towards Tan-tan counting raptors on the way. The raptors started to appear after 25 km. Photographed a few of them incl. Lanners and the Tawny Eagle. Couldn't get close to any Bonelli's Eagles, partly because of locals, partly because they seemed shy and partly because there were some fields in the way.

The Tawny was found on a pylon 29.5 km south of G. As we approached, a team of motorcycling locals drove by just under the bird and scared it off. It soared a bit and landed on another pylon. Tried approaching again, and just as we were starting to photograph a local appeared wanting money and the bird flew off again. Well, we got some photos in flight anyway.

After 50 km we did not photograph as we were getting short of time and we wanted to go as far as the pylons stayed with the road. We'd been told this would be to about 60 km south of G, but when it got dark at 100 km the pylons were still with us. Had a Short-eared Owl which was attacked by 2 Lanners and a Kestrel at 71 km. Turned around and headed back to Agadir.

Just before Bou Izakarn the front tyre went flat again. Changed it in 3 minutes in the dark (practice makes perfect). No repair possible in Bou Izakarn. Didn't like it but had to press on. The spare was so bad we were afraid it'd give anytime, so we wanted the other one repaired as soon as possible. Found a garage in the mountains and had some grilled meat at a 'grill' while the tyre was repaired. Petrol was low too, but the service man had gone off somewhere and didn't seem to be returning. 10 km before Tiznit the motor suddenly stopped and we swore. However, when Tapani tried it started again nicely. Reached Tiznit and got some petrol. The stupid Fiat obviously is empty when the light gets red, even though the meter pointed at 1//4.

Arrived in Agadir at 22.30 and went to bed.

### Tuesday, 20th November

161.7 km Oued Massa, Oued Sous

Left for Oued Massa at 6.05 which was too late, but it was again very foggy so it didn't matter. Endured the fog till 9.30 when it lifted at the beginning of track. It seemed though, that it was less foggy nearer the shore, funny. Drove to the cafe and had breakfast. Checked the wildfowl as we drove back, it had been too foggy in the morning. Now there were 111 Marbled Ducks. Also saw the Black-necked Grebe and Ferruginous Duck. After a long search we also found the Red-crested Pochard we'd heard about, there were two actually, half hidden in the reeds. There were lots of Crag Martins around, but we couldn't find any swifts.

After checking photographs later, it seemed some of the Crag Martins had a very pale throat. They still had the vent and lower belly dark though. 3 + 8 Cranes flew around, 4 Water Rail were heard, otherwise we had about the same species and numbers as on the first trip.

Drove to Oued Sous. To our surprise the water was rising and the birds were nicely gathering in flocks. We checked the Flamingos and read a lot of rings, we also tried to check the waders. Then suddenly the water started to flow out again and the birds dispersed. Left at 17.50.

Dinner in Agadir.

Wednesday, 21st November

5.6 km Agadir harbour

Spent the last morning in the harbour where we had a new species for the trip, Little Gull. Left the harbour at 8.25 as we were supposed to give the rooms up at 8.45. Got packed and went down to breakfast where we heard that the plane was three hours late. Unfortunately Europcar wouldn't let us keep the cars after 9 (which was the time we had agreed upon), so we went walking to the Bird Valley. Practiced identification of some African species there (incl. *Ardeotis kori*), but the Bonelli's Eagle that was present in 1987 had disappeared.

Left for the airport at 11.40 and arrived in Finland at 22.30. Took the bus back home where it was -16°C. We were dressed in summer clothes more or less, and both taxis were engaged elsewhere. Fortunately we were able to call one taxi from the next village which arrived about 15 minutes later and we were really pleased to see that it was a minibuss so we got all our gear in it.

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### **List of Species 1989:**

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Altogether about 100 birds recorded. Max 30 at Oued Massa 29 Nov.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

All records: 1 at Barrage El Mansour Eddahbi 1 Dec. 3 at Barrage Hassan Addakhil 4 Dec. 3 at Lac de Aquelmane de Sidi Ali and 20 At Dayet Aaoua 5 Dec. 3 at Sidi Bourhaba 8 Dec, 1 at Oued Massa 12 Dec.

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

Presumably the same bird, first-winter, at Oued Massa 29 Nov and 12 Dec.

Cory's Shearwater *Calonectris diomedea*

4 single birds at Molay Bouselham 8 Dec. Most flying north.

Sooty Shearwater *Puffinus griseus*  
One bird at Molay Bousselham 8 Dec flying north.

(Little) Shearwater *Puffinus (assimilis)*  
1 at Cap Beddouza 10 Dec. The bird flew north rather far away. Fast fluttering active flight interchanged with glide. Grey above, white under. Looked about twice as large as the Madeiran Petrel which flew near it. As we have no previous experience of Little Shearwater we could not put a name to the bird.

Madeiran Petrel *Oceanodroma castro*  
1 at Cap Beddouza 10 Dec. The bird was in view several times during a half hour. Mostly very far away seen flying in both north and south directions, twice for 1-2 seconds rather close when it was possibly footpattering and once not very far when it flew from the north to the south in front of us. The bird flew actively very fast, reminding us of a Swift. The white rump was clearly visible and extensive. We could not make out if the legs were projecting. There were no white underwing band and a just visible slightly paler area at the greater coverts on the upperside.

Gannet *Sula bassana*  
Recorded daily near the shore and further out. Numbers varied with the wind. 150 at Molay Bousselham 8 Dec, 100 at Cap Rhir 30 Nov and at Cap Beddouza 10 Dec. Elsewhere in smaller numbers.

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*  
In small numbers evenly along the coast. Largest concentrations 16 at Oued Sebou, Kenitra 8 Dec and 14 at Sidi Moussa Lagoon 9 Dec.

Squacco Heron *Ardeola Ralloides*  
Only records: 2 at Larache 7 Dec and 5 at Oued Massa at dawn 12 Dec.

Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*  
Recorded on most days in varying numbers. Largest concentrations: 500 at Merja Zerga 6 Dec and 2000 at Ouesta Colorado 7 Dec.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*  
Largest concentrations: 30 at Merja Zerga 6 Dec, 30 at Larache 7 Dec. Elsewhere 10 birds.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*  
Typical species at wetlands, numbers varying though. 50 at Oued Sous 29 Nov, but only 10 13 Dec. 50 at Merja Zerga 6 Dec, elsewhere in smaller numbers (<20).

White Stork *Ciconia ciconia*  
Recorded on seven days, mostly 1-10 birds/site. Largest concentrations 50 at Merja Zerga 6 Dec and 85 at Marrakesh 10 Dec.

Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*  
All records: 11 at Oued Sous 29 Nov, 7 at Sidi Moussa Lagoon 9 Dec, 23 4 km north of Oualidia 9 Dec and 7 at Oued Sous 13 Dec.

Greater Flamingo *Phoenicopterus ruber*

Recorded on seven days in varying numbers. Largest concentrations: 400 seen at Merja Zerga 6 Dec and 340 at Pont Muhammed 7 Dec. 200 at other sites. Several of the Flamingoes were colourringed, we managed to read two of these.

Greylag *Anser anser*

220 at Merja Zerga 6 Dec. The species was recorded at the same site on the 7th and the 8th as well. One bird had a blue neck ring.

Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea*

1 at Oued Sous 29 Nov, 42 at Lac de Aquelmane Sidi Ali with surroundings 5 Dec.

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

All records: 1000 at Merja Zerga 6th and 8th Dec, 21 at Pont Muhammed 7 Dec, 2 43 km south of El Jadida 9 Dec. 16 flying north at Cap Beddouza and 160 at Sebka Zima 10 Dec.

Wigeon *Anas penelope*

Mostly  $\leq 10$  birds/site, many thousands, however, at Merja Zerga, maybe about 60% of the about 50.000 Anas-ducks present.

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

All records: 30 at Oued Massa 29 Dec, 9 at Lac de Aquelmane de Sidi Ali 5 Dec, 250 at Larache 7 Dec, 30 at Sidi Bourhaba 8 Dec and 18 at Oued Massa 12 Dec.

Teal *Anas crecca*

Small numbers at several wetlands. 100 at Ouesta Colorada 7 Dec and 470 at Sidi Bourhaba 8 Dec.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Largest concentrations: 200 at Lac Aquelmane de Sidi Ali and 150 at Dayet Aaoua 5 Dec.

Pintail *Anas acuta*

Largest concentrations: 130 15 km north of Asilah 7 Dec and 40 at Lac de Aquelmane de Sidi Ali 5 Dec. Elsewhere 70.

Garganey *Anas querquedula*

Single record: 1 at Merja Zerga 8 Dec in the large Anas-duck flock.

Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

Largest concentrations: 1000 at Sidi Bourhaba 8 Dec, 750 31 km north of Oualidia 9 Dec, 100 + 16 flying south at Cap Beddouza 10 Dec. Elsewhere  $\leq 100$ .

Marbled Duck *Marmaronetta angustirostris*

All records: 30 at Oued Massa 29 Dec, 55 at Sidi Bourhaba 8 Dec and 70 at Oued Massa 12 Dec.

Red-crested Pochard *Netta rufina*

20 at Larache 7 Dec and a female at Oued Massa 12 Dec.

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

All records: 2 at Oued Sous and 300 at Oued Massa 29 Nov. 20 at Ifrane 5 Dec (tame or wild?), 20 at Sidi Bourhaba 8 Dec, 50 at Oued Massa 12 Dec.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

100 at Oued Massa 29 Nov, 10 at Ifrane 5 Dec (tame or wild?), 3 at Merja Zerga 6 Dec, 120 sp. at Larache 7 Dec and 30 at Oued Massa 12 Dec.

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

60 north of El Jadida 9 Dec. 79 flying south at Cap Beddouza 10 Dec in small flocks (1-27 birds).

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

Single record: A female flying south at Cap Beddouza 10 Dec.

Black-shouldered Kite *Elanus caeruleus*

All records: 1 at Asilah and 1 16 km north of Asilah 7 Dec. 1 at Sidi Bourhaba 8 Dec. 3 at Foret de Sidi Bettache 9 Dec and 1 at Oued Tensift (Marrakesh) 10 Dec.

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

Altogether 43 birds seen. One dead found under the electricity line at Zeida 5 Dec. 10 at Merja Zerga 6 Dec and 8 at Larache 7 Dec. The most common bird of prey after Kestrel.

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

Recorded three times: A female plumaged at Barrage Mansour Elldahbi 1 Dec, a male flying south 39 km south of Azrou 5 Dec and a female at Tassila 12 Dec.

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Eight birds recorded on six days.

Long-legged Buzzard *Buteo rufinus*

31 birds seen, of which 13 at Tagdilt Track 1 Dec, when they came to rest on the pylons in the evening. The others were seen singly in dry habitat. The third most common raptor.

Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos*

Only records: juv/subad 10 km north of Tizi-n-Test 11 Dec and 2 adult 3 km north of Tizi-n-Test.

Bonelli's Eagle *Hieraetus fasciatus*

All records: 1 17 km east of Taroudant 30 Nov, 2 9 km west of Skoura 1 Dec, 1 first-winter at Larache 7 Dec and 1 first-winter at Tassila 12 Dec.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*

All records: 1 at Oued Massa 29 Nov, 1 11 km east of Ouarzazate 1 Dec, 1 at Merja Zerga 6 Dec, 2 at Larache 7 Dec, 1 at Merja Zerga 8 Dec and 1 at Oued Sous 13 Dec.

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Altogether 128 individuals, divided as follows: 29 Nov 4, 30 Nov 22, 1 Dec 9, 2 Dec 14, 3-4 Dec 6, 5 Dec 6, 6 Dec 10 at Merja Zerga, 7 Dec 13, 8 Dec 5, 9 Dec 4, 10 Dec 12, 11 Dec 4, 12 Dec 17, 13 Dec 2.

Lanner *Falco biarmicus*

Three birds recorded: 1 250 km west of Errashidia 1 Dec and 2 at Tagdilt Track 2 Dec (1 present at Tagdilt Track 1 Dec).

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

Even though this species will probably be lumped with Barbary Falcon, they are here mentioned separately. 1 adult at soaring about 15 minutes at Oued Massa 12 Dec.

Barbary Falcon *Falco pelegrinoides*

One adult in the Agadir harbour sitting on a high electricity pylon eating a songbird 30 Nov. Near Taroudant an adult was seen the same day, but as it was rather far away we were not 100% it was not a Peregrine. 4 Dec a large falcon was seen north of Errashidia.

Barbary Partridge *Alectoris barbara*

One record: 2 flying across the road between Sidi Bettache and Casablanca 9 Dec.

Double-spurred Francolin *Francolinus bicalcaratus*

1 bird (limping on one leg), crossed the road and stopped to eat some stones at the other side near the tower. 2+ songs were heard, all 9 Dec at Foret de Sidi Bettache.

Quail *Coturnix coturnix*

Two records: 2 at Merja Zerga 6 Dec and 1 at Oued Sous 13 Dec.

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

Largest concentration: 50 at Oued Massa 29 Nov, elsewhere  $\leq$  25 birds.

Purple Gallinule *Porphyrio porphyrio*

15 at Larache 7 Dec.

Coot *Fulica atra*

Estimated 10.000 at Oued Massa 29 Nov, elsewhere much lower numbers. 400 at Larache 7 Dec, elsewhere  $\leq$  75 birds.

Crested Coot *Fulica cristata*

All records: 10 at Ifrane (tame or wild?) and 1 at Dayet Aaoua 5 Dec. 150 at Larache 7 Dec and 20 at Sidi Bourhaba 8 Dec.

Crane *Grus grus*

All records: 60 at Ouesta Colorada, 30 at Pont Mohammed and 16 16 km south of Asilah 7 Dec.

Little Bustard *Tetrax tetrax*

Single record: 6 at Merja Zerga 6 Dec.

Houbara Bustard *Chlamypotis undulata*

3 at Tagdilt Track 1 Dec.

Great Bustard *Otis tarda*

17 at Pont Mohammed 7 Dec, of these 13 were together, one was single, one pair.



Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

Largest concentrations: 45 at Merja Zerga 6 Dec, 30 at Oued Sous 13 Dec and 25 at Oued Sebou (Kenitra) 8 Dec. Elsewhere  $\leq 5$  birds/site.

Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*

Largest number at Larache, 100, 7 Dec. Other records: 70 31km north of Oualidia in saltponds, 90 at Sebka Zima 10 Dec and 50 at Merja Zerga 6 Dec. Elsewhere  $\leq 30$  birds/site.

Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

Most common at Merja Zerga where 6 Dec estimated 1000 birds. Elsewhere  $\leq 60$ .

Stone-curlew *Burhinus oedicephalus*

Recorded twice: 4 at dusk 29 Nov at Oued Massa and 32 at Merja Zerga 6 Nov.

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

Single record: 1 at Oued Sous 29 Nov.

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

As the following species recorded on many beaches, saltponds and wetlands, although numbers not very high. Largest concentrations: 30 31 km north of Oualidia 9 Dec, 20 at Oued Sous 13 Dec and 10 at Tarhazoute 30 Nov. See Dunlin.

Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus*

Largest counted numbers: 40 at Sebka Zima 10 Dec, 15 at Tarhazoute 30 Nov and 15 at Oued Sous 13 Dec. See also Ringed Plover and Dunlin.

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

All records: 40 at Merja Zerga 6 Dec, 500 at Oued Massa 7 Dec, 2 at Merja Zerga 8 Dec and 170 at Sidi Moussa Lagoon 9 Dec.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

Largest number at Merja Zerga where 3000 estimated 6 Dec on the meadows and the shore. Elsewhere at wetlands and beaches  $\leq 20$ .

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

All records: 300 at Merja Zerga 6 Dec, 300 at Larache 7 Dec, 200 at Merja Zerga 8 Dec and 1 at Tassila 12 Dec.

Knot *Calidris canutus*

Only record: 1 at Sidi Moussa Lagoon 9 Dec (40 km north of Oualidia).

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

Small numbers evenly along the shore. Largest numbers: 71 at Kenitra 8 Dec and 30 at Oued Sous 13 Dec. Elsewhere  $\leq 20$ . See Dunlin.

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

Largest concentrations: 180 at Merja Zerga 6 Dec and 70 at Sebka Zima 10 Dec. Elsewhere  $\leq 20$ . See also Dunlin.

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

Only record: 60 on the meadows at Merja Zerga 8 Dec.

Dunling *Calidris alpina*

Largest concentrations: 250 at Sidi Moussa Lagoon 9 Dec (+ 250 *Calidris* sp.) 200 at Merja Zerga 6 Dec and 170 43 km south of El Jadida 9 Dec. Elsewhere 50. Note, however, that ~10.000 unidentified small waders were estimated at Merja Zerga 6 Dec, most of these were probably Dunlins, but Little Stints, Sanderlings, Ringed Plovers and Kentish Plovers were also present in large numbers.

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

All records: 3 at Merja Zerga 6 Dec, 7 at Larache 7 Dec, 100 at Merja Zerga 8 Dec, 5 31 km north of Oualidia 9 Dec, 5 at Sebka Zima 10 Dec and 1 at Tassila 12 Dec.

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

All records: 70 at Merja Zerga 6 Dec, 3 at Larache 7 Dec, 5 at Merja Zerga 8 Dec, 1 at Oued Tensift (Marrakesh) 10 Dec, 1 at Oued Massa 12 Dec and 4 at Oued Sous 13 Dec.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

The largest number by far, was counted at Merja Zerga, where about 2000 6 Dec and about 300 8 Dec. Elsewhere smaller numbers: 18 at Larache 7 Dec, 28 (+ 20 *Limosa* sp.) at Sidi Moussa Lagoon 9 Dec and 25 at Oued Sous 13 Dec.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

All records: 20 at Merja Zerga 8 Dec, 1 at Sidi Moussa Lagoon 9 Dec and 2 at Oued Sous 13 Dec.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

Only record: 1 at Oued Sebou (Kenitra) 8 Dec.

Slender-billed Curlew *Numenius tenuirostris*

1 at Merja Zerga 6 Dec seen shot in the leg.

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

Recorded on seven days. Largest concentration at Sidi Moussa Lagoon 9 Dec where 510 birds were roosting in the estuary. 100 at Merja Zerga 6 Dec and 65 at Oued Colorado 7 Dec. Elsewhere  $\leq 20$ .

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

All records: 5 at Merja Zerga 6 Dec, 1 at Merja Zerga 7 Dec. 1 113km north of Safi and 1 43 km north of Oualidia 9 Dec.

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

Easy to see and hear at wetlands. Recorded on eight days. Largest concentration at Merja Zerga where we had 500 6 Dec and 300 8 Dec. Elsewhere ( $\geq 50$ ): 90 at Oued Sous 29 Nov, 65 at Sebka Zima 10 Dec, 50 at Oued Colorado 7 Dec and 50 at Oued Sous 13 Dec.

Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis*

All records: 2 6 Dec and 1 7 Dec at Merja Zerga.

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

All records: 35 at Oued Sous 29 Nov, 20 at Merja Zerga 6 Dec, 10 at Ouedsta Colorada 7 Dec, 2 at Larache 7 Dec, 2 at Sidi Moussa Lagoon 9 Dec, 3 at Tassila 12 Dec and 5 at Oued Sous 13 Dec.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

All records: 1 at Tijnejdad 2 Dec, 3 at Merja Zerga 6 Dec, 3 at Larache 7 Dec, 2 at Oued Massa 12 Dec and 3 at Oued Sous 13 Dec.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

Recorded on seven days at eight sites, altogether 10 birds as follows: 2 at Oued Sous 29 Nov, 1 at Larache 7 Dec, 1 at Oued Sebou (Kenitra) 8 Dec, 2 8 km north of Oualidia 9 Dec, 1 at Cap Beddouza 10 Dec, 1 at Oued Massa and 1 at Tassila 12 Dec and finally 1 at Oued Sous 13 Dec.

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

All records: 5 at Merja Zerga 6 Dec, 1 at Ouesta Colorada 7 Dec, 2 at Asilah 7 Dec, 1 at Molay Busselham and 10 at Rabat 8 Dec, 2 at El Jadida and 25 at Sidi Moussa Lagoon 9 Dec and also recorded at Oued Sous 13 Dec.

Grey Phalarope *Phalaropus fulicarius*

All records: 7 31km north of Oualidia, 21 at Jemma Ouled Ghanem and 2 16 km north of Oualidia all 9 Dec.

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*

All records: 2 at Cap Rhir and 1 at Tarhazoute 30 Nov, 10 at Cap Beddouza 10 Dec.

Skua sp *Stercorarius sp.*

All records: 10 altogether at Molay Busselham and 1 at Rabat 8 Dec. 1 at El Jadida and 1 31 km north of Oualidia 9 Dec. 1 at Cap Beddouza 10 Dec. All better seen birds were Pomarine/Parasitic.

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

Only records: 13+1 at Sidi Moussa Lagoon 9 Dec in a flock of Black-headed and Audouin's Gulls.

Little Gull *Larus minutus*

Recorded only twice: 1 first-winter at Larache 7 Dec and 2 first-winters 31km north of Oualidia 9 Dec.

Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus*

At many sites on the shore we counted flocks of several hundred, for instance: 500 at Merja Zerga 6 Dec, 900 at Pont Muhammed 7 Dec, 300 at Ouesta Colorada. Scarce inland, for instance 3 at Sebka Zima 10 Dec.

Audouin's Gull *Larus audouinii*

All records: 80 at Tamri, 8 30km north of Agadir and 34 at Tarhazoute 30 Nov. 2 at Pont Muhammed 7 Dec, 1 at Molay Busselham and 1 at Rabat 8 Dec. 5 at Sidi Moussa Lagoon 9 Dec, 2 at Cap Beddouza 10 Dec, 12 at Oued Sous 13 Dec. The fact that the species is

becoming more common was obvious at the wintering area. We saw clearly larger numbers between Agadir and Tamri than in March 1987.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*

Common everywhere on the shore, for instance: 1000 at Tamri and 1200 at Tarhazoute 30 Nov, 400 at Larache 7 Dec and 1000 at Oued Sous 13 Dec. Also recorded inland, for instance 170 at Sebka Zima 10 Dec.

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*

Mostly seen singly or in small in the Lesser Black-backed flocks. Max 60 at Tarhazoute 30 Nov and 10 at Merja Zerga 6 Dec.

Caspian Tern *Sterna caspia*

All records: 5 at Merja Zerga 6 Dec, 2 at Pont Mohammed 7 Dec, 3 at Molay Bouselham 8 Dec and 9 Dec at Oualidia?

Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*

Recorded on eight days. Larger numbers ( $\geq 5$ ): 5 at Oued Massa 29 Nov, 40 at Merja Zerga 6 Dec, 10 at Rabat 8 Dec, 5 at Sidi Moussa Lagoon 8 Dec and 10 at Cap Beddouza 10 Dec.

Little Tern *Sterna albifrons*

One record: 2 at Sidi Moussa Lagoon 9 Dec.

Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybridus*

All records: 20 at Larache 7 Dec, 2 at Merja Zerga 8 Dec, 2 at Sidi Moussa Lagoon and 1 31 km north of Oualidia 9 Dec.

Black Tern *Chlidonias niger*

One record: 5 31 km north of Oualidia 9 Dec.

White-winged Tern *Chlidonias leucopterus*

20 31 km north of Oualidia 9 Dec.

Razorbill *Alca torda*

One record: 9 at Cap Beddouza 10 Dec.

Spotted Sandgrouse *Pterocles senegallus*

One Record: 1 + call + call 11 km east of Ouarzazate 1 Dec.

Black-bellied Sandgrouse *Pterocles orientalis*

12 + call + call 11 km east of Ouarzazate and 40 at Tagdilt Track 1 Dec. 50 at Tagdilt Track 2 Dec. 15 sp. were seen which probably were Crowned (*P. coronatus*).

Pin-tailed Sandgrouse *Pterocles alchata*

One record: 40 at Tagdilt Track 1 Dec.

Rock Dove *Columba livia*

Recorded every day.

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

All records: 20 at Taroudannt and 1 at Ouled Aissa 30 Nov, 4 at Sidi Yahia 9 Dec, 10 at Tizin-Test and 1 near Taroudannt 11 Dec.

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

Identified twice: 1 near El Ksar el Kbir 6 Dec and 1 at Oued Massa in the morning 12 Dec. An Asio-size Owl at Tagdilt Track 1 Dec just before complete darkness was possibly this species as was an Owl seen in the headlights at Mimouna 6 Dec.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

All records: 1 at Barrage El Mansour Eldahbi by its nest hole 1 Dec in the forenoon. 1 44 km south of Fes and 1 15 km south of Sefrou 5 Dec at dusk. 1 at Merja Zerga at dawn 6 Dec. 1 22 km west of Marrakesh 10 Dec daytime. 3 at Oued Massa on the pylons near Sidi R'bat in the morning 12 Dec.

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

One record: 1 in the headlights 14 km south of Asilah 6 Dec.

Marsh Owl *Asio capensis*

Recorded at Merja Zerga only. 3+10 6 Dec and 2 7 Dec. Most of the birds were at the south end.

Little Swift *Apus affinis*

Recorded twice: 5 at Oued Tensift (Marrakesh) 10 Dec and 20 near Taroudannt 11 Dec.

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

All records: 1 at Larache 7 Dec, 5 at Oued Massa and 1 at Tassila 12 Dec and 2 at Oued Sous 13 Dec.

Levaillant's Green Woodpecker *Picus vaillantii*

A female 'singing' at Dayet Aaoua 5 Dec in the trees around the pond.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopus major*

Recorded twice: 5 at Dayet Aaoua 5 Dec and call at Ouirgane 11 Dec.

Bar-tailed Desert Lark *Ammomanes cincturus*

3 at Tagdilt Track 2 Dec together with some Temminck's Larks. 1 at Erg Chebbi 3 Dec.

Desert Lark *Ammomanes deserti*

All records: 2 at Barrage El Mansour Eldahbi 1 Dec. 1 between Boumalne and Tinerhir, 1 at Gorges du Todra, 1 between Tinejdad and Jorf 2 Dec. 5 in the desert south of Mecissi 3 Dec. 3 west of Jorf and 1 between Jorf and Errashidia 4 Dec. 1 at Zeida 5 Dec.

Hoopoe Lark *Alaemon alaudipes*

One record: 1 tamish bird at Erg Chebbi 3 Dec.

Dupont's Lark *Chersophilus duponti*

2+1 singing before twilight at Zeida 5 Dec. The birds stopped singing before dawn and we could not find them again, despite searching for several hours. We also tried playing a tape to them, but without any results.

Thick-billed Lark *Rhamphocoris clotbey*

80 1 Dec and 150 2 Dec at Tagdilt Track. It was difficult to estimate the numbers as they appeared in flocks of 1-40 birds and flew around a lot.

Calandra Lark *Melanocorypha calandra*

About 20 27 km east of Chemaia and 3 48 km west of Marrakesh 10 Dec together with Skylarks.

Lesser Short-toed Lark *Calandrella rufescens*

Two records: about 500 at Tagdilt Track 2 Dec and 60 at Zeida 5 Dec.

Crested Lark *Galerida cristata*

The species was identified on seven days. Crested/Thekla was recorded on 4 additional days. The identification thus wasn't quite unproblematic. Most birds were identified according to the shape of the lower mandible and billlength. The colouration of head and breast were additional characters used.

Thekla Lark *Galerida theklae*

Identified on 4 days. (see also Crested Lark.)

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

Recorded on seven days. Larger numbers ( $\geq 10$ ): 30 30 km west of Taroudant 30 Nov, 10 at Tagdilt Track 1 Dec, 15 at Tagdilt Track 2 Dec, 30 at Merja Zerga 6 Dec and 50 at Merja Zerga 8 Dec.

Shore Lark *Eremophila alpestris*

Recorded three times: 30 at Zeida and 1 at Lac de Aquelmane de Sidi Ali 5 Dec. 20 at Oukaimeden 10 Dec.

Temminck's Horned Lark *Eremophila bilopha*

10 1 Dec and 30 2 Dec at Tagdilt Track.

Brown-throated Sand Martin *Riparia paludicola*

50 at Oued Massa 29 Nov, 10 at Oued Massa 12 Dec. 10 Hirundo/Delichon/Riparia 10 km north of Oualidia at dusk 9 Dec were possibly this species.

Crag Martin *Hirundo rupestris*

All records: 10 at Tinerhir 2 Dec, 15 at Oued Tensift 10 Dec, 2 Between Ouirgane and Idni, 6 between Tizi-n-Test and P32 11 Dec.

Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

2 at Oued Massa 29 Nov, 1 at Merja Zerga 6 Dec, 1 at Had Harrara 10 Dec, 2 near Taroudant 11 Dec (+10 Hirundo/Delichon/Riparia), 6 at Oued Massa 12 Dec and x at Oued Sous 13 Dec.

House Martin *Delichon urbica*

One record: 3 at Oued Massa 12 Dec on the telegraph lines.

Richard's Pipit *Anthus novaeseelandiae*

3 at Merja Zerga 6 Dec in a large flock of Meadow Pipits and Yellow Wagtails.

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

Recorded every day. Largest concentrations: 80 at Rissani-Erfoud 3 Dec, 300 at Merja Zerga 6 Dec.

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*

Recorded on six days. Most common at Merja Zerga where we had 100 6 Dec.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

All records: 3 at Gorges du Todra and 1 at Tinerhir 2 Dec. 1 at Dayet Aaoua 5 Dec, 1 at Oukaimeden 10 Dec. 1 at Asni, 3 between Ouirgane and Ifni and 1 between Tizi-n-Test and P32 11 Dec.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba*

Recorded between the desert and Oukaimeden. Most common at Merja Zerga where we estimated 100 6 Dec.

Common Bulbul *Pycnonotus barbatus*

Small numbers every day. Mostly found by call.

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

One record: 6 at Oukaimeden 10 Dec.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Two records: 3 singing at Sidi Bettache 9 Dec and one singing between Ouirgane and Idni 11 Dec.

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

Usually found calling in the morning in bushy areas and gardens, especially common at Sidi Bettache, where we estimated 100 9 Dec.

Bluethroat *Luscinia svecica*

Only records: 2 31 km north of Oualidia 9 Dec and 3 at Oued Massa 12 Dec.

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

Recorded almost every day we spent inland, but in small numbers.

Moussier's Redstart *Phoenicurus moussieri*

Recorded on six days, largest concentration at Cap Rhir 30 Dec, where we had 8.

Stonechat *Saxicola torquata*

Seen every day, largest concentrations at Merja Zerga, 15 6 Dec and at Larache, 15 7 Dec.

Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Only one record: 1 bird at Cap Beddouza 10 Dec.

Desert Wheatear *Oenanthe deserti*

Two males seen, one in the desert 3 Dec and one 15 km north of Goulimine 12 Dec.

Red-rumped Wheatear *Oenanthe moesta*

All records: 4 pairs at Tagdilt Track 1 Dec, 6 pairs at Tagdilt Track and 3 pairs between

Boumalne and Tinerhir 2 Dec, 3 pairs at Zeida 5 Dec, 1 pair 15 km north of Goulimine 12 Dec. They always seemed to be in pairs even in December.

Mourning Wheatear *Oenanthe lugens*

All records: 3 males and a female 11 km east of Ouarzazate, a female a few km eastwards and a male 9 km west of Skoura 1 Dec. The birds were of the halophila-race.

White-crowned Black Wheatear *Oenanthe leucopyga*

Daily numbers: 4 1 Dec, 12 2 Dec, 10 3 Dec, 32 4 Dec. They were mostly seen along the roadside, from Ouarzazate to Errashidia.

Black Wheatear *Oenanthe leucura*

Seen on 6 days. 1 near Cap Rhir and 2 between Taouline and Tizi-n-Taghaline 30 Nov, 9 at Gorges du Todra 2 Dec, approx. 15 at the quarry at Zeida, 1 in the Ourika Valley 10 Dec, 5 between Ouirgane and Idni and 3 near Tizi-n-Test 11 Dec. Also recorded 1 Dec.

Blue Rock Thrush *Monticola solitarius*

All birds were males. One at Gorges du Todra 2 Dec, 1 between Erfoud and Errashidia 4 Dec, 1 at Rabat 8 Dec.

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*

One record: 1 at Tizi-n-Talrhemt (24 km south of Midelt) at dusk on the mountainslope 4 Dec.

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

Small numbers on 11 days, largest numbers 5 at Sidi Bettache 9 Dec and 20 at Ouled Teima 11 Dec.

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

Two records: 1 at Asni and 1 between Asni and Ouirgane 11 Dec.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

All records: 3 at Mischliffen and 5 at Dayet Aaoua 5 Dec, 2 between Marrakesh and Ouikaïmeden 10 Dec.

Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti*

Recorded on six days. Largest numbers: 3 singing at Oued Massa 29 Nov, 3 at Sidi Bourhaba 8 Dec and 10 at Oued Massa 12 Dec.

Fan-tailed Warbler *Cisticola juncidis*

All records: 30 at Merja Zerga 6 Dec, 1 at Larache 7 Dec, 5 at Sidi Moussa Lagoon and 10 31 km north of Oualidia 9 Dec, 20 at Oued Massa 12 Dec. Also recorded at Oued Sous 13 Dec (one or two).

Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

A singing bird at Oued Massa 12 Dec.

Dartford Warbler *Sylvia undata*

Seen twice: 2 at Gorges du Todra 2 Dec and a male in the desert south-west of Rissani 3 Dec.



Tristram's Warbler *Sylvia deserticola*

All records: a male (Nana valley) and 2 (Israel valley) in the desert south-west of Rissani 3 Dec. A male between Tizi-n-Test and P32 11 Dec and 1 15 km north of Goulimine 12 Dec.

Spectacled Warbler *Sylvia conspicillata*

An unidentified warbler in the desert south-west of Rissani 3 Dec probably this species. 4 15 km north of Goulimine 12 Dec.

Sardinian Warbler *Sylvia melanocephala*

Recorded on seven days, largest number 20 at Sidi Bettache 9 Dec.

Desert Warbler *Sylvia nana*

4 in the desert (Nana Valley) 3 Dec.

Black-cap *Sylvia atricapilla*

All records: 3 at Gorges du Todra 2 Dec, 1 at Pont Mohammed 7 Dec, a female at Sidi Bettache 9 Dec, 2 between Asni and Ouirgane and 2 between Ouirgane and Idni 11 Dec.

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

Includes sp. Recorded on all days but one. Largest number at Oued Massa where 30 on the 29 Dec.

Firecrest *Regulus ignicapillus*

One record: A male at Dayet Aaoua 5 Dec in a flock of Short-toed Treecreepers and Coal Tits.

Fulvous Babbler *Turdoides fulvus*

All records: 4 in the desert (Israel Valley) 3 Dec, 10 near Ouled Teima 11 Dec, 10 + 1 15 km north of Goulimine 12 Dec.

Coal Tit *Parus ater*

All records: 1 6 km north of Ait Oafella, 3 at Mischliffen and 1 at Dayet Aaoua 5 Dec. 6 between Asni and Ouirgane 11 Dec.

Blue Tit *Parus caeruleus*

Recorded only twice. 10 at Sidi Bettache 9 Dec and 5 at Ouirgane 11 Dec.

Great Tit *Parus major*

All records: 1 6 km north of Ai Oafella 5 Dec, 1 at Merja Zerga 6 Dec, 3 at Sidi Bettache 9 Dec, 2 at Ouirgane and 1 between Ouirgane and Idni 11 Dec.

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

One record, 1 at Mischliffen 5 Dec.

Short-toed Treecreeper *Certhia brachydactyla*

All records: 1 6 km north of Ait Oafella, 1 at Mischliffen and 2 at Dayet Aaoua 5 Dec.

Great Grey Shrike *Lanius excubitor*

Recorded on all days but one. Most common in the Taroudant region, where we had several birds from the same viewpoint.

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Recorded three times. 1 9 km north of Ait Oafella and 2 at Dayet Aaoua 5 Dec. Call at Tiznit-Test 11 Dec.

Magpie *Pica pica*

All records: 1 30 km west of Taroudant 30 Nov, 3 at Sidi Bourhaba 8 Dec, 30 at Sidi Yahia 9 Dec, 26 at Ouled Teima 11 Dec and x between Tiznit and Bou-Izakarn 12 Dec.

Alpine Chough *Pyrrhocorax graculus*

One record, 6 + 2 at Lac de Aquelmane de Sidi Ali 5 Dec.

Chough *Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*

11 on the meadows at Lac de Aquelmane de Sidi Ali 5 Dec and 60 at Oukaimeden 10 Dec. In addition sp. 11 Dec 200 at Asni and 120 between Ouirgane and Idni.

Brown-necked Raven *Corvus ruficollis*

The only with certainty identified birds were seen at the gate of the desert, between Melissi and Rissani, where we had 35 on 3 Dec. Best site seemed to be rather close to Rissani.

Raven *Corvus corax*

Identified on nine days rather evenly along the route.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

Common Starling was recorded especially in the north, for instance 500 at Merja Zerga 6 Dec. Unidentified starlings (Starling + Spotless Starling) were seen in large flocks 2000 at Sebka Zima and 5000 57 km west of Marrakesh 10 Dec. Often both species were present in flocks.

Spotless Starling *Sturnus unicolor*

Recorded evenly along the route in small numbers ( $\leq 30$ ) almost daily. Largest numbers: 30 at Massa 29 Nov and 30 on the meadow at Lac de Aquelmane de Sidi Ali. Present in small numbers in the Starling flocks in the north.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

Varying numbers seen every day.

Spanish Sparrow *Passer hispaniolensis*

Only records: A male between Zeida and Dualegh 5 Dec, 2 males near Taroudant and 2 males (+ female sp.) between Taroudant and Ouled Teima 11 Dec.

Desert Sparrow *Passer simplex*

35 at Erg Chebbi (the oasis on the back) 3 Dec.

Rock Sparrow *Petronia petronia*

All records: 15 between Zeida and Gualagh, 7 + 2 at Lac de Aquelmane de Sidi Ali, 30 39 km south of Azrou and 15 between Ifrane and Dayet Aaoua 5 Dec. 60 at Oukaimeden 10 Dec and 15 between Ouirgane and Idni 11 Dec.

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

Recorded especially in the central and the north part of the country on eight days. Largest

flock 1000 birds at Sidi Bettache-Casablanca 9 Dec on a field together with Greenfinches and Corn Buntings.

Serin *Serinus serinus*

Recorded almost daily, but the numbers were small. 20 at Oued Sous and 30 at Oued Massa 29 Nov.

Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris*

Recorded on six days in small numbers. Max 30 at Sidi Bettache and 100 between Sidi Bettache and Casablanca 9 Nov.

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

Recorded almost daily, numbers between 1 and 100. A large flock of 1500 seen at Merja Zerga 6 Dec.

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

Recorded twice. 3 at Sidi Bettache 9 Dec and call at Oued Sous 13 Dec.

Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*

Recorded almost daily in small numbers. Largest flocks: 30 at Cap Rhir 30 Nov, 50 at Zeida 5 Dec and 40 at Merja Zerga 6 Dec.

Crimson-winged Finch *Rhodopechys sanguinea*

One record, 10 birds in a flock of the white-throated aliena form at the second ski-elevator at Oukaimeden 10 Dec.

Trumpeter Finch *Bucanetes githagineus*

Recorded on five days in the central and south-east part of the country. Max 70 11 km east of Ouarzazate 1 Dec, 30 at Tagdilt Track 2 Dec, 30 at Jorf 4 Dec and 10 at Zeida 5 Dec. Elsewhere small numbers ( $\leq 10$  birds/site).

Cirl Bunting *Emberiza cirlus*

One record, 1 on the south side of Ouirgane 11 Dec.

Rock Bunting *Emberiza cia*

All records: 1 at Errashidia - Rich 4 Dec, 1 8.7 km north of Ait Oafella 5 Dec, 1 at Ouirgane - Idni and 2 at Tizi-n-Test - P32 11 Dec.

House Bunting *Emberiza striolata*

Seen on six days in small numbers in towns and villages, for instance in Agadir, Jorf, Gorges du Todra, etc.

Corn Bunting *Miliaria calandra*

Largest flocks ( $\geq 50$ ): 50 at Cap Rhir 30 Nov, 50 at Merja Zerga 6 Dec and 50 at Sidi Bettache 9 Dec.

## List of Species 1990:

### Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

40 at Oued Massa, 2 at Tassila, 1 at crossing of P30 and Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 1 at Tamri on 10th Nov. 1 at Erfoud on 14th Nov. 30 at Dayet Aaoua on 15th Nov. 20 Sidi Moussa - Oualidia on 17th Nov. 30 at Oued Massa on 18th Nov. 40 at Oued Massa on 19th (car2) and 20th Nov.

### Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

7 at Barrage Mansour El Eddahbi (restaurant) on 12th Nov. 3 at Lac Aquelmane, 15 at Dayet Aaoua on 15th Nov. 3 at Oued Massa on 18th Nov. 2 at Oued Massa on 20th Nov.

### Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

1 at Oued Massa on 18th and 20th Nov.

### Cory's Shearwater *Calonectris diomedea*

10 at Cap Rhir on 10th Nov. 6 at Cap Rhir on 20th Nov (car2).

### Balearic Shearwater *Puffinus yelkouan*

10 at Cap Rhir on 10th Nov. 15 at Cap Rhir on 20th Nov (car2).

### Gannet *Sula bassana*

70 at Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 50 at Cap Rhir on 10th Nov. 20 at Oued Massa on 18th Nov. 6 at Oued Massa on 19th Nov (car2). 5 at Oued Massa on 20th Nov. 250 at Cap Rhir on 20th Nov (car2).

### Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

15 in Agadir harbour, 3 at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. 25 at Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 2 at Cap Rhir, 1 at Tamri, 1 in Agadir harbour on 10th Nov. 8 Sidi Moussa - Oualidia, 1 at Essaouira on 17th Nov. 5 at Oued Massa on 18th Nov. 4 at Oued Sous, 30 at Oued Massa on 19th Nov (car2). 15 at Oued Massa, 5 at Oued Sous on 20th Nov. 1 at Agadir harbour on 19th and 21st Nov. 1 at Cap Rhir and 2 at Tamri on 20th Nov (car2).

### Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

3 near Amesnaz (S of Cap Rhir) on 10th Nov.

### Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*

3 at Sidi Moussa on 17th Nov.

### Squacco Heron *Ardeola ralloides*

1 at Oued Massa on 18th Nov. Juvenile at Oued Massa on 19th Nov (car2).

### Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*

60 at Oued Massa, 10 at Tassila on 8th Nov. 180 Agadir - Taroudant, most at Agadir dump on 11th Nov. 20 in Ouarzazate on 12th Nov. 9 at Dayet Aaoua, 3 at Ifrane, 20 at El Hajeb, 135 El Hajeb - Meknes on 15th Nov. 150 at Merja Zerga, 1 at Kenitra on 16th Nov. 1 Sidi Bouzid - Jorf Lasfar on 17th Nov. 10 Sidi Moussa - Oualidia, 1 Oualidia - Cap Beddouza, 20 Safi - Essaouira on 17th Nov. 50 at Oued Massa on 18th Nov. 30 at Oued Massa on 19th Nov

(car2). 2 at Cap Rhir on 20th Nov (car2). 60 at Oued Massa on 20th Nov. 4 at Agadir harbour on 21st Nov.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

15 at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. 10 at Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 1 at Cap Rhir, 5 at Tamri, 5 at Oued Sous on 10th Nov. 7 at Barrage Mansour El Eddahbi (restaurant), 1 at Boumalne on 12th Nov. 3 at Erfoud on 14th Nov. 14 at Dayet Aaoua on 15th Nov. 10 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov. 3 Sidi Bouzid - Jorf Lasfar on 17th Nov. 10 Sidi Moussa - Oualidia on 17th Nov. 6 at Oued Massa on 18th Nov. 2 at Oued Sous, 8 at Oued Massa on 19th Nove (car2). 6 at Oued Massa, 5 at Oued Sous on 20th Nov. 2 at Tamri on 20th Nov (car2). 1 at Agadir harbour on 21st Nov.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

40 at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. 5 at Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 10 at Tamri, 60 at Oued Sous on 10th Nov. 7 at Barrage Mansour El Eddahbi (restaurant) on 12th Nov. 1 Tinerhir - Tijnejdad on 13th Nov. 1 at Lac Aquelmane, 1 at Fom Kheneg, 13 at Dayet Aaoua on 15th Nov. 5 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov. 10 Sidi Moussa - Oualidia on 17th Nov. 4 at Oued Massa on 18th Nov. 12 at Oued Sous, 10 at Oued Massa on 19th Nove (car2). 5 at Oued Massa, 10 at Oued Sous on 20th Nov. 16 at Tamri on 20th Nov (car2). 2 at Agadir harbour on 21st Nov.

White Stork *Ciconia ciconia*

3 at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. 20 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov. 2 Sidi Moussa - Oualidia on 17th Nov. 2 at Oued Sous on 19th (car2) and 20th Nov.

Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*

1 Sidi Moussa - Oualidia on 17th Nov.

Bald Ibis *Geronticus eremita*

1 S + 12 S at Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 4 at Tamri on 10th Nov.

Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*

12 at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. 3 at Tamri, 14 at Oued Sous on 10th Nov. 2 Sidi Moussa - Oualidia on 17th Nov. 8 at Oued Sous on 19th Nove (car2). 9 at Oued Sous on 20th Nov.

Greater Flamingo *Phoenicopterus ruber*

600 at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. 2 at Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 5 at Tamri, 850 at Oued Sous on 10th Nov. 200 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov. 15 Sidi Moussa - Oualidia on 17th Nov. 2 at Oued Massa on 19th Nov (car2). 2 at Oued Massa, 800 at Oued Sous on 20th Nov.

Greylag *Anser anser*

65 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov.

Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea*

7 at Oued Sous on 10th Nov. 2 pairs at Merzouga Lake on 14th Nov. 400 at Lac Aquelmane on 15th Nov. 14 at Oued Sous on 19th Nov. (car2). 1 at Oued Massa on 20th Nov. 7 at Oued Sous on 20th Nov.

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

3 at Oued Sous on 7th, 10th, 19th (car2) and 20th Nov.

Wigeon *Anas penelope*

Pair at Lac Aquelmane on 15th Nov. 5 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov. 5 Sidi Moussa - Oualidia on 17th Nov. 5 at Oued Massa on 18th Nov. 5 at Oued Massa on 20th Nov.

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

2 pairs at Oued Massa on 8th Nov. Male and two females at Dayet Aaoua on 15th Nov. 3 males and 2 females at Oued Massa on 18th Nov. 2 males and a female at Oued Massa on 19th Nov (car2). 12 at Oued Massa on 20th Nov.

Teal *Anas crecca*

5 at Tamri on 10th Nov. 8 at Lac Aquelmane, uncounted number at Dayet Ifrah, 5 at Dayet Aaoua on 15th Nov. 4 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov. 42 at Oued Massa on 20th Nov.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

10 at Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 4 at Barrage Mansour El Eddahbi (restaurant) on 12th Nov. 100 at Lac Aquelmane, uncounted number at Dayet Ifrah, 110 at Dayet Aaoua on 15th Nov. 3 at Oued Massa on 18th Nov. 5 at Oued Massa on 20th Nov.

Pintail *Anas acuta*

5 at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. 20 at Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 4 at Tamri on 10th Nov. 1 at Lac Aquelmane, pair at Dayet Aaoua on 15th Nov. 2 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov. 80 Sidi Moussa - Oualidia on 17th Nov. 15 at Oued Massa on 18th Nov. 1 female at Oued Massa on 19th Nov (car2). 20 at Oued Massa on 20th Nov.

Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

13 at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. 40 at Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 4 at Tamri, 2 at Oued Sous on 10th Nov. 5 at Lac Aquelmane, uncounted number at Dayet Ifrah on 15th Nov. 30 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov. 220 Sidi Moussa - Oualidia on 17th Nov. 50 at Oued Massa on 18th Nov. 40 at Oued Massa on 20th Nov. 2 at Tamri on 20th Nov (car2).

Marbled Duck *Marmaronetta angustirostris*

21 at Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 43 at Oued Massa on 18th Nov. 38 at Oued Massa on 19th Nov (car2). 111 at Oued Massa on 20th Nov.

Red-crested Pochard *Netta rufina*

2 males at Oued Massa on 20th Nov.

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

100 at Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 2 males and 3 females at Tamri on 10th Nov. 2 pairs at Lac Aquelmane on 15th Nov. Pair Sidi Moussa - Oualidia on 17th Nov. 600 at Oued Massa on 18th Nov. 200 at Oued Massa on 20th Nov.

Ferruginous Duck *Aythya nyroca*

1 at Oued Massa on 8th and 20th Nov.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

20 at Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 2 S at Cap Rhir on 10th Nov. 5 at Oued Massa on 20th Nov.

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

7 N at Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 3 S, 50 S, 5 S, 1 N, 2 S at Cap Rhir on 10th Nov.

Black-shouldered Kite *Elanus caeruleus*

1 at Oued Sous on 7th and 10th Nov. 1 at Oued Sayad (6km SW of Goulimine) on 9th Nov. 1 20km E of Taroudant on 11th Nov. 6 at Igoudar on 18th Nov.

Black Kite *Milvus migrans*

1 50 km S of Goulimine on 9th Nov.

Griffon Vulture *Gyps fulvus*

95 S + 1 at Tagdilt Track on 13th Nov.

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

1 first-winter at Oued Massa, 2 at Tassila on 8th Nov. 1 11km E of Ouarzazate on 12th Nov. 1 at Tagdilt Track on 13th Nov. Female at Dayet Aaoua on 15th Nov. 10 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov. 1 at Oued Massa on 19th Nov (car2). 2 at Oued Massa on 20th Nov.

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

Female + 2 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov.

Harrier sp. *Circus sp.*

1 at Kenitra on 16th Nov.

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

1 at Oued Massa, 1 at Tassila on 8th Nov. 1 at Igoudar on 11th Nov. 1 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov. 1 at Igoudar on 18th Nov. 1 at Oued Massa on 18th Nov. Male at Oued Massa on 19th Nov (car2).

Long-legged Buzzard *Buteo rufinus*

6 at Oued Sayad (6km SW of Goulimine), 10 + 8 sp. Goulimine - 55km S on 9th Nov. 1 at Igoudar, 3 Aoulouz - Tazenakht, 1 6km E of Tazenakht on 11th Nov. 2 Ouarzazate - 11km E on 12th Nov. 2 at Barrage Mansour El Eddahbi (restaurant), 3 Skoura - El Kelaa on 12th Nov. 2 at Boumalne, 6 at Tagdilt Track on 12th Nov. 17 at Tagdilt Track, 2 Boumalne - Tinerhir, 2 12km W of Jorf on 13th Nov. 1 at Merzouga Lake on 14th Nov. 3 in the Cedarwood (S of Col du Zad), 5 at Mischliffen on 15th Nov. 23 Goulimine - 100km SW on 19th Nov.

Buzzard sp *Buteo sp.*

1 in Agadir on 7th Nov. 1 at Oued Massa on 8th Nov.

Tawny Eagle *Aquila rapax*

1 subadult 33-35km S of Goulimine on 9th Nov. 1 subadult (probably the same) 28-30km SW of Goulimine on 19th Nov.

Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos*

2 35-50 km S of Goulimine on 9th Nov. 1 first-winter at Tagdilt Track on 13th Nov. 1 adult at Merzouga Lake on 14th Nov. 3 Goulimine - 100km SW on 19th Nov.

Bonelli's Eagle *Hieraetus fasciatus*

1 subadult at Tassila on 8th Nov. 1 50km S of Goulimine on 9th Nov. Juvenile 30km east of Agadir on 18th Jan (car2). 9 Goulimine - 100km SW on 19th Nov.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*

3 at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. 3 at Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 1 at Tamri, 2 at Oued Sous on 10th Nov. 1 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov. 1 at Oued Massa on 18th Nov. 2 at Oued Sous, 1 at Oued Massa on 19th Nov (car2). 1 at Oued Massa, 1 at Oued Sous on 20th Nov.

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

1 sp. in Agadir, 1 at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. 4 at Oued Massa, 3 at Tassila, 1 9km north of Tiznit on 8th Nov. 3 at Oued Sayad (6km SW of Goulimine), 5 Goulimine - 50km S on 9th Nov. 2 at Cap Rhir, 1 at Tamri on 10th Nov. 8 at Igoudar, 3 Aoulouz - Tazenakht, 1 6km E of Tazenakht on 11th Nov. 2 27-15km W of Skoura, 4 at Skoura - El Kelaa, 2 at Tagdilt Track on 12th Nov. 5 at Tagdilt Track, 3 Boumalne - Tinerhir, 1 Tinerhir - Tijnejdad on 13th Nov. 2 at Merzouga Lake on 14th Nov. 1 at Zeida, 1 in the Cedarwood (S of Col du Zad), 2 at Lac Aquelmane, 2 at El Hajeb on 15th Nov. 15 at Merja Zerga, 1 at Kenitra on 16th Nov. 1 Sidi Moussa - Oualidia, 2 Oualidia - Cap Beddouza, 1 Cap Beddouza - Safi on 17th Nov. 1 at Igoudar, 5 Igoudar - Taroudant, 1 at Oued Massa on 18th Nov. 3 at Oued Sayad (6km SW of Goulimine), 15 Goulimine - 100km SW on 19th Nov. 3 at Oued Massa on 19th Nov (car2). 5 at Oued Massa, 1 at Oued Sous on 20th Nov. 2 at Tamri on 20th Nov (car2).  
(*Falco tinnunculus/naumanni* is included here, even though the majority were identified.)

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

1 south-west of Bou-Izakarn on 8th Nov. Male Ouarzazate - 11km E on 12th Nov. 1 at Dayet Aaoua - Ifran on 15th Nov.

Lanner *Falco biarmicus*

7 Goulimine - 50km S of Goulimine on 9th Nov. 2 at Cap Rhir, 2 at Tamri on 10th Nov. 3 at Igoudar on 11th Nov. 2 at Tagdilt Track on 12th Nov. 4 at Tagdilt Track, 1 Boumalne - Tinerhir, 1 Tijnejdad - Touroug, 1 12km W of Jorf on 13th Nov. 1 at Lac Aquelmane, 1 at El Hajeb on 15th Nov. 1 at Igoudar on 18th Nov (car2). 47 Goulimine - 100km SW on 19th Nov.

Barbary Falcon *Falco pelegrinoides*

1 adult male + 1 at Igoudar on 11th Nov. 1 77km SW of Goulimine on 19th Nov. Adult at Tamri on 20th Nov (car2).

Peregrine/Barbary Falcon *Falco peregrinus/pelegrinoides*

1 adult probably Peregrine at Tassila on 8th Nov. 1 1km W of Errashidia on 14th Nov.

Large Falcon *Falco bia/per/pel*

1 at Tagdilt Track on 13th Nov.

Barbary Partridge *Alectoris barbara*

3 at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. 4 at Oued Massa, 2 in mountains north of Bou-Izakarn on 8th Nov. 1+3 at Oued Sous on 10th Nov. 5 Sidi Bouzid - Jorf Lasfar on 17th Nov. 7 at Oued Massa on 19th Nov (car2). 1 at Oued Sous on 20th Nov. 3 21km north of Agadir on 20th Nov (car2).

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Call at Oued Massa on 18th Nov. 4 heard calling at Oued Massa on 20th Nov.



Crake/Water Rail *Porzana sp./R. aquaticus*

1 at Oued Sous on 7th Nov.

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

50 at Oued Massa, 20 at Tassila, 1 at crossing of P30 and Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 4 at Tamri on 10th Nov. 5 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov. 16 Sidi Moussa - Oualidia on 17th Nov. 30 at Oued Massa on 18th Nov. 50 at Oued Massa on 20th Nov.

Coot *Fulica atra*

3000 estimated at Oued Massa, 200 at Tassila on 8th Nov. 50 at Dayet Aaoua on 15th Nov. 50 Sidi Moussa - Oualidia on 17th Nov. Estimated 4000 at Oued Massa on 18th and 20th Nov.

Crested Coot *Fulica cristata*

6 at Dayet Aaoua on 15th Nov.

Coot sp. *Fulica atra/cristata*

100 at Dayet Ifrah on 15th Nov.

Crane *Grus grus*

3 + 8 at Oued Massa on 20th Nov.

Houbara Bustard *Chlamyptotis undulata*

1 at Tagdilt Track on 12th Nov.

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

20 at Oued Sous on 10th Nov. 20 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov. 5 Sidi Moussa - Oualidia, 4 at Cap Beddouza on 17th Nov. 2 at Oued Sous on 19th Nov (car2). 28 at Oued Sous on 20th Nov.

Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*

30 at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. 2 at Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 30 at Oued Sous on 10th Nov. 4 at Dayet Aaoua on 15th Nov. 2 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov. 160 Sidi Moussa - Oualidia on 17th Nov. 20 at Oued Sous on 19th Nov (car2). 30 at Oued Sous on 20th Nov.

Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

200 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov. 210 Sidi Moussa - Oualidia on 17th Nov. 1 at Oued Sous on 20th Nov.

Cream-coloured Courser *Cursorius cursor*

7 9km north of Tiznit on 8th Nov.

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

2 at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. 2 at crossing of P30 and Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 2 at Oued Sous on 10th Nov. 1 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov. 1 Sidi Bouzid - Jorf Lasfar on 17th Nov. 3 at Oued Sous on 19th Nov (car2).

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

3 at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. 100 at Oued Sous on 10th Nov. 5 Sidi Bouzid - Jorf Lasfar, 10 Sidi Moussa - Oualidia on 17th Nov. 30 at Oued Sous on 19th Nov (car2).

Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus*

4 at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. 1 Agadir - Cap Rhir on 10th Nov. 60 at Oued Sous on 10th Nov.  
20 Sidi Moussa - Oualidia on 17th Nov. 10 at Oued Sous on 19th Nov (car2).

Small Sand Plovers *Charadrius sp.*

200 at Oued Sous on 20th Nov.

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

300 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov. 100 Sidi Moussa - Oualidia on 17th Nov.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

20 at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. Call at Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 30 at Oued Sous on 10th Nov.  
50 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov. 5 Sidi Bouzid - Jorf Lasfar, 20 Sidi Moussa - Oualidia on  
17th Nov. 1 at Oued Massa on 19th Nov (car2). 20 at Oued Sous on 20th Nov.

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

1 at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. 12 at Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 1 at Oued Sous on 10th Nov. 100  
at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov. 8 at Oued Massa on 20th Nov.

Knot *Calidris canutus*

2 at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. 3 at Oued Sous on 10th Nov. 25 Sidi Moussa - Oualidia on 17th  
Nov. 2 at Oued Sous on 20th Nov.

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

20 at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. 8 at Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 30 at Oued Sous on 10th Nov. 55  
at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov. 1 Sidi Bouzid - Jorf Lasfar on 17th Nov. 60 Sidi Moussa -  
Oualidia on 17th Nov. 6 at Oued Massa on 19th Nov (car2). 40 at Oued Sous on 20th Nov.

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

8 at Oued Sous on 10th Nov. 30 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov. 10 Sidi Bouzid - Jorf Lasfar on  
17th Nov. 50 Sidi Moussa - Oualidia on 17th Nov. 8 at Oued Sous on 20th Nov.

Temminck's Stint *Calidris temminckii*

Call Sidi Moussa - Oualidia on 17th Nov.

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

1 juvenile at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. 1 at Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 2 Sidi Moussa - Oualidia  
on 17th Nov. 4 at Oued Sous on 20th Nov.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

120 at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. 2 at Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 200 at Oued Sous on 10th Nov.  
10 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov. 1 Sidi Bouzid - Jorf Lasfar, 100 Sidi Moussa - Oualidia on  
17th Nov. 4 at Oued Massa, 100 at Oued Sous on 20th Nov.

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

15 at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. 11 at Oued Sous on 10th Nov. 17 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov.  
20 Sidi Moussa - Oualidia on 17th Nov. 10 at Oued Sous on 20th Nov.

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

2 at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. 4 at Oued Massa, 1 at crossing of P30 and Oued Massa on 8th

Nov. 5 at Oued Sous on 10th Nov. 10 at Lac Aquelmane on 15th Nov. 50 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov. 5 Sidi Moussa - Oualidia on 17th Nov. 1 at Oued Massa on 18th Nov. 1 at Oued Massa on 20th Nov.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

2 at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. 3 at Oued Sous on 10th Nov. 450 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov. 50 Sidi Moussa - Oualidia on 17th Nov. 5 at Oued Massa, 20 at Oued Sous on 20th Nov.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

4 at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. 5 at Oued Sous on 10th Nov. 1 at Oued Sous on 19th (car2) and 20th Nov.

Godwit *Limosa sp.*

100 at Oued Sous on 10th Nov.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

1 at Oued Sous on 7th Nov.

Slender-billed Curlew *Numenius tenuirostris*

3 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov.

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

15 at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. 15 at Oued Sous on 10th Nov. 15 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov. 1 Sidi Bouzid - Jorf Lasfar, 55 Sidi Moussa - Oualidia on 17th Nov. 13 at Oued Massa on 18th Nov. Call at Oued Massa, 14 at Oued Sous on 20th Nov.

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

60 Sidi Moussa - Oualidia on 17th Nov.

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

80 at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. 1 at Tamri, 50 at Oued Sous on 10th Nov. 30 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov. 5 Sidi Bouzid - Jorf Lasfar, 100 Sidi Moussa - Oualidia on 17th Nov. 40 at Oued Sous on 20th Nov.

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

15 at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. 10 at Oued Massa, 1 at crossing of P30 and Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 15 at Oued Sous on 10th Nov. 3 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov. 2 Sidi Moussa - Oualidia on 17th Nov. Call at Oued Massa on 18th Nov. 15 at Oued Sous on 20th Nov.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

3 at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. 2 at crossing of P30 and Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 4 at Oued Sous on 10th Nov. 1 Skoura - El Kelaa on 12th Nov. 5 at Foug Kheneg on 15th Nov. 10 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov. 2 at Oued Massa on 18th Nov. 1 at Oued Sous on 19th Nov (car2). 2 at Oued Sous on 20th Nov.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

3 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

1 in Agadir harbour, 8 at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. 2 at Oued Massa on 8th Nov. Call at Cap

Rhir, 1 at Tamri, 1 near Amesnaz (S of Cap Rhir), 5 at Oued Sous on 10th Nov. 1 Sidi Moussa - Oualidia, 1 at Cap Beddouza on 17th Nov. 1 at Oued Massa on 18th Nov. 1 at Oued Massa on 20th Nov. 1 at Cap Rhir on 20th Nov (car2).

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

3 at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. 5 Sidi Bouzid - Jorf Lasfar, 35 Sidi Moussa - Oualidia on 17th Nov. 1 at Oued Sous on 20th Nov.

Pomarine Skua *Stercorarius pomarinus*

1 subad in Agadir harbour on 7th Nov. 2 at Cap Rhir, 1 near Amesnaz (S of Cap Rhir) on 10th Nov. 1 in Agadir harbour on 18th and 19th Nov (car2). 1 at Oued Massa on 20th Nov. One pale, one dark at Cap Rhir on 20th Nov (car2). 1 in Agadir Harbour on 20th Nov (car2) and 21st Nov.

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*

1 at Cap Rhir, 1 near Amesnaz (S of Cap Rhir) on 10th Nov. 1 at Cap Beddouza on 17th Nov. 5 at Oued Massa on 18th Nov. 3 at Oued Massa on 20th Nov. 3 at Cap Rhir on 20th Nov (car2).

Skua sp. *Stercorarius sp.*

4 at Cap Rhir, 1 at Tamri on 10th Nov.

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

1 juvenile at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. 1 Agadir - Cap Rhir on 10th Nov. 5 adult, 1 second-winter and 2 first-winters Sidi Moussa - Oualidia, 1 first-winter at Essaouira on 17th Nov. First-winter in Agadir harbour on 18th Nov (car2). 2 first-winters in Agadir Harbour on 19th Nov (car2). 3 first-winters in Agadir Harbour on 20th Nov (car2). 7 at Agadir harbour on 21st Nov.

Little Gull *Larus minutus*

1 winter-plumaged adult at Agadir harbour on 20th (car2) and 21st Nov.

Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus*

Recorded on six days, for instance 100 at Oued Sous on 7th Nov.

Slender-billed Gull *Larus genei*

1 adult at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. Second-winter in Agadir harbour on 18th Nov (car2). 1 second-winter at Agadir harbour on 21st Nov.

Audouin's Gull *Larus audouinii*

1 second-winter at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. 85 at Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 75 at Agadir - Cap Rhir, 20 at Cap Rhir, 50 at Tamri on 10th Nov. 1 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov. 17 at Sidi Bouzid, 350 at Sidi Moussa - Oualidia, 15 at Cap Beddouza on 17th Nov. 30 at Oued Massa on 18th Nov. 3 at Oued Massa on 20th Nov. 6 at Cap Rhir, 40 at Tamri, 4 Agadir - Tamri on 20th Nov (car2).

Common Gull *Larus canus*

1 first-winter at Tamri on 10th Nov.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*

1000 at Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 1200 at Agadir - Cap Rhir, 250 at Tamri on 10th Nov. 400 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov. 200 at Sidi Moussa - Oualidia on 17th Nov.

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus* 10 (of which two were of the race *atlantis*) at Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 10 at Agadir - Cap Rhir, 10 at Tamri on 10th Nov. 50 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov. 1 at Sidi Moussa - Oualidia on 17th Nov.

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*

1 winter plumaged adult 4km north of Cap Beddouza on 17th Nov.

Gulls *Larus sp.*

5000 at Oued Sous on 7th, 10th and 20th Nov.

Caspian Tern *Sterna caspia*

2 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov.

Lesser Crested Tern *Sterna bengalensis*

1 adult and 1 juvenile in Agadir harbour on 7th Nov. 1 S at Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 1 at Cap Rhir, 1 at Tamri, 4 in Agadir harbour on 10th Nov. First-winter in Agadir harbour on 18th Nov (car2). 2 in Agadir harbour on 19th Jan (car2). 3 first-winters in Agadir Harbour on 20th Nov (car2).

Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*

35 in Agadir harbour, 80 at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. 20 at Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 40 at Cap Rhir, 30 in Agadir harbour, 50 at Oued Sous on 10th Nov. 10 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov. 5 at Sidi Moussa - Oualidia on 17th Nov. 40 at Oued Massa, 30 in Agadir harbour (car2) on 18th and 19th Nov. 20 at Oued Massa on 19th Nov (car2). 10 at Cap Rhir on 20th Nov (car2). 20 at Oued Massa, 5 at Oued Sous on 20th Nov. 60 in Agadir Harbour on 20th Nov (car2). 40 in Agadir harbour on 21st Nov.

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

7 in Agadir harbour, 1 juvenile at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. 10 S probably this species at Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 5 in Agadir harbour on 10th Nov. 1 at Agadir harbour on 18th (car2) and 21st Nov.

Terns *Sterna sp.*

3 of Common Tern size at Oued Sous on 7th Nov.

Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybridus*

1 at Sidi Moussa - Oualidia on 17th Nov.

Black Tern *Chlidonias niger*

1 in Agadir harbour, 3 juvenile at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. 1 juvenile at Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 1 in Agadir harbour on 10th Nov.

White-winged Tern *Chlidonias leucopterus*

1 juvenile at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. 1 in Agadir harbour on 10th Nov. 2 at Sidi Moussa - Oualidia on 17th Nov. 1 in Agadir harbour on 18th Nov (car2).

Razorbill *Alca torda*

1 at Cap Rhir on 10th Nov. 16 S at Cap Beddouza on 17th Nov. 20 at Oued Massa on 18th Nov. 20 at Oued Massa on 19th Nov (car2). 50 counted at Oued Massa on 20th Nov. 15 at Cap Rhir on 20th Nov (car2).

Crowned Sandgrouse *Pterocles coronatus*

14 at drinking pool 9.00-9.30 at Tagdilt Track on 13th Nov.

Spotted Sandgrouse *Pterocles senegallus*

20 N 17.15 12km W of Jorf on 13th Nov. 21 W 8.25 at Derkaoua on 14th Nov.

Black-bellied Sandgrouse *Pterocles orientalis*

6 50km S of Goulimine on 9th Nov. 1 11km E of Ouarzazate, 59 at Tagdilt Track on 12th Nov. 100 at Tagdilt Track on 13th Nov. 4 at Zeida on 15th Nov.

Pin-tailed Sandgrouse *Pterocles alchata*

50 at Tagdilt Track on 12th Nov. 20 at Tagdilt Track, 1 at Tinerhir on 13th Nov.

Sandgrouse sp. *Pterocles sp.*

20 at Tagdilt Track on 12th Nov. 80 at Tagdilt Track on 13th Nov.

Rock Dove *Columba livia*

4 at Derkaoua on 14th Nov.

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

1 at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. 55 at Agadir - Berrchil on 11th Nov. 25 in the Cedarwood (S of Col du Zad), 6 at Dayet Ifrah on 15th Nov. 15 at Agadir - Igoudar on 18th Nov.

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

1 flying over in the dark in Ouarzazate on 11th Nov. 1 dead (traffic victim) at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

1 at Oued Sayad (6km SW of Goulimine) on 9th Nov. 4 in the headlights at Tazenakht - Ouarzazate on 11th Nov. 1 displaying 77km SW of Goulimine on 19th Nov.

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

1 71km SW of Goulimine on 19th Nov.

Marsh Owl *Asio capensis*

6 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov.

Little Swift *Apus affinis*

1 in Agadir on 7th Nov. 2 sp. at Goulimine on 9th Nov. 7 at Igoudar on 11th Nov. 2 at Igoudar, 2 at Temsia on 18th Nov.

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

1 at Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 4 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov. 1 at Oued Massa on 18th Nov. 2 + call at Oued Massa, 1 at Oued Sous on 20th Nov.

Hoopoe *Upupa epops*

1 near Taroudant on 11th Nov (car2).

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopus major*

Female at Mischliffen, 1 at Dayet Aaoua on 15th Nov.

Bar-tailed Desert Lark *Ammomanes cincturus*

2 10-13km S of Goulimine on 9th Nov. 10 at Tagdilt Track, 1 at Tinerhir, 15 12km W of Jorf on 13th Nov. 2 at Derkaoua, 2 at Derkaoua - Erg Chebbi, 1 at Erg Chebbi, 3 at Merzouga Lake on 14th Nov. 1 29km SW of Goulimine on 19th Nov.

Desert Lark *Ammomanes deserti*

3 at Aoulouz - Tazenakht, 2 5km E of Tazenakht on 11th Nov. 40 11km E of Ouarzazate, 4 15km W of Skoura (23 E of Ouarzazate) on 12th Nov. 2 at Tinerhir, 4 at Tinerhir - Tijnejdad, 8 at Tijnejdad - Touroug, 1 at Touroug - 12km W of Jorf on 13th Nov. 1 at Erfoud - Errashidia on 14th Nov.

Hoopoe Lark *Alaemon alaudipes*

10 at Tagdilt Track, 14 12km W of Jorf on 13th Nov. 4 at Derkaoua, 11 at Erg Chebbi, 6 at Merzouga Lake on 14th Nov.

Dupont's Lark *Chersophilus duponti*

2 heard singing and 1 seen at Zeida on 15th Nov.

Thick-billed Lark *Rhamphocoris clotbey*

1 5km SE of Goulimine on 9th Nov. 1 37km E of Taliouine (48km W of Tazenakht) on 11th Nov. 60 at Tagdilt Track on 12th Nov. 230 at Tagdilt Track, 1 at Boumalne - Tinerhir on 13th Nov. 2 28km SW of Goulimine on 19th Nov.

Calandra Lark *Melanocorypha calandra*

10 at Ifrane - El Hajeb on 15th Nov.

Short-toed Lark *Calandrella brachydactyla*

1 at Tagdilt Track on 12th and 13th Nov. 1 at Erg Chebbi on 14th Nov.

Lesser Short-toed Lark *Calandrella rufescens*

6 + 50 sp. at Tagdilt Track on 12th Nov. 20 + 90 sp. at Tagdilt Track on 13th Nov. 70 38km SW of Goulimine on 19th Nov.

Crested Lark *Galerida cristata*

2 at Cap Rhir, 1 at Tamri on 10th Nov. 2 at Zeida on 15th Nov. 4 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov. 3 at Sidi Bouzid - Jorf Lasfar on 17th Nov. 2 at Igoudar - Agadir on 18th Jan (car2).

Thekla Lark *Galerida theklae*

3 at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. 2 at Oued Massa, 1 at crossing of P30 and Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 5 at Oued Sayad (6km SW of Goulimine) on 9th Nov. 2 at Tagdilt Track on 13th Nov. 2 at Lac Aquelmane on 15th Nov. 2 at Igoudar - Agadir on 18th Jan (car2). 4 at Oued Sayad (6km SW of Goulimine) on 19th Nov. 2 at Oued Massa on 19th Nov (car2). 3 at Cap Rhir on 20th Nov (car2).

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

2 at Cap Rhir on 10th Nov. 1 at Ait Melloul - Berrchil, 1 at Igoudar on 11th Nov. Call at Tagdilt Track on 12th Nov. 10 at Tagdilt Track on 13th Nov. 2 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov. 8 at Goulimine - 100km SW on 19th Nov.

Shore Lark *Eremophila alpestris*

16 at Lac Aquelmane on 15th Nov.

Temminck's Horned Lark *Eremophila bilopha*

12 at Tagdilt Track on 12th Nov. 15 at Tagdilt Track on 13th Nov.

Brown-throated Sand Martin *Riparia paludicola*

5 at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. 20 at Oued Massa, 20 at crossing of P30 and Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 10 at Oued Massa on 19th Nov (car2). 2 at Oued Massa on 20th Nov.

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

10 at Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 2 at Oued Massa on 19th (car2) and 20th Nov.

Crag Martin *Hirundo rupestris*

15 at Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 4 at Skoura - El Kelaa on 12th Nov. 2 at Boumalne on 12th Nov. 2 at Cap Beddouza - Safi on 17th Nov. 18 at Igoudar on 18th Nov. 5 at Oued Sayad (6km SW of Goulimine), 12 at Goulimine - 100km SW on 19th Nov. 6 at Oued Massa on 19th Nov (car2). 200 at Oued Massa on 20th Nov. 2 at Tamri on 20th Nov (car2).

Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

40 at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. 4 at Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 30 at Oued Sayad (6km SW of Goulimine) on 9th Nov. 1 at Cap Rhir, 1 at Oued Sous on 10th Nov. 1 at Boumalne on 12th Nov. 2 at Oued Massa on 19th Nov (car2). 5 at Oued Massa on 20th Nov.

Red-rumped Swallow *Hirundo daurica*

1 at Oued Massa on 8th and 19th (car2) Nov.

House Martin *Delichon urbica*

1 at Oued Massa on 8th and 20th Nov.

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

8 at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. Call at Oued Massa, 1 9km north of Tiznit on 8th Nov. 10 at Oued Sayad (6km SW of Goulimine), 6 at Goulimine - 50km S on 9th Nov. 2 at Cap Rhir on 10th Nov. Call at Tagdilt Track on 13th Nov. 1 at Merzouga Lake on 14th Nov. 7 in the Cedarwood (S of Col du Zad), 20 at Lac Aquelmane, 10 at Mischliffen on 15th Nov. 100 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov. 5 at Sidi Moussa - Oualidia on 17th Nov. Call at Goulimine - 100km SW on 19th Nov. 1 at Oued Massa, 1 at Oued Sous on 20th Nov. 1 in Agadir 'Bird Valley' on 21st Nov.

Red-throated Pipit *Anthus cervinus*

1 at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. Call at Oued Sous on 10th Nov. 2 calls at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov.

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

Call at Cap Rhir on 10th Nov. 2 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov.



Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*

2 at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. 2 at Oued Massa, 30 at Tassila, 1 at crossing of P30 and Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 1 at Tamri, 2 at Oued Sous on 10th Nov. 10 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov. 10 at Sidi Moussa - Oualidia on 17th Nov. 5 at Oued Massa on 20th Nov.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

1 at Tamri on 10th Nov. 1 at Oued Sous on 10th Nov. 1 at Ifrane - El Hajeb on 15th Nov. 1 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov. 1 at Oued Sous on 20th Nov. 1 in Agadir 'Bird Valley' on 21st Nov.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba*

2 of race subpersonata in Agadir harbour, 5 at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. 10 at Oued Massa, 1 of race subpersonata at crossing of P30 and Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 50 at Oued Sayad (6km SW of Goulimine) on 9th Nov. 2 subpersonata at Tamri, 2 subpersonata in Agadir harbour on 10th Nov. 2000 at Meknes on 15th Nov coming in to roost in the trees; flying around and sitting on houses in the center of the city at dusk. Just like insects on Snake Bight Trail (Everglades, Florida) or in Lapland (Finland). 2 subpersonata at Agadir harbour on 21st Nov.

Common Bulbul *Pycnonotus barbatus*

2 heard in Agadir on 7th Nov. 10 at Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 3 at Erfoud on 14th Nov. 15 at Igoudar - Agadir on 18th Nov (car2).

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

1 at Ifrane on 15th Nov.

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

Call at Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 2 at Oued Sayad (6km SW of Goulimine) on 9th Nov. 1 at Agadir - Cap Rhir, call at Tamri, 2 heard at Oued Sous on 10th Nov.

Bluethroat *Luscinia svecica*

1 at Oued Sous on 7th and 10th Nov.

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

Female in Agadir harbour on 10th Nov. 2 4km E of Tazenakht on 11th Nov. Female 15km W of Skoura (23 E of Ouarzazate) on 12th Nov. 2 males at Tagdilt Track, 1 at Boumalne - Tinerhir on 13th Nov. Female at Derkaoua, female 1km W of Errashidia on 14th Nov. Male and female in the Cedarwood (S of Col du Zad), 2 at Lac Aquelmane, 2 at Foug Kheneg on, 2 at Mischliffen, 2 at Dayet Aaoua on 15th Nov. 2 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov. 2 at Sidi Bouzid - Jorf Lasfar, 1 at Cap Beddouza on 17th Nov. 2 at Oued Massa on 19th Nov (car2). 1 at Oued Massa on 20th Nov.

Moussier's Redstart *Phoenicurus moussieri*

6 at Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 5 at Oued Sayad (6km SW of Goulimine) on 9th Nov. 3 at Cap Rhir on 10th Nov. Male 11km E of Ouarzazate on 12th Nov. Male at Derkaoua on 14th Nov. 3 at Agadir - Igoudar and 2 males (car2) at Igoudar on 18th Nov. Pair in Agadir and at Oued Massa on 19th Nov (car2). 1 at Oued Sayad (6km SW of Goulimine), female at Goulimine - 100km SW on 19th Nov. 4 at Oued Massa, 1 at Oued Sous on 20th Nov. 8 at Cap Rhir on 20th Nov (car2).

Stonechat *Saxicola torquata*

Recorded almost daily, largest numbers: 15 at Oued Massa, 10 at Tassila on 8th Nov. 10 at Oued Sayad (6km SW of Goulimine).

Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*

1 at Tassila, 2 9km north of Tiznit on 8th Nov. 3 at Oued Sayad (6km SW of Goulimine) on 9th Nov. 1 at Lac Aquelmane on 15th Nov. 1 at Oued Sayad (6km SW of Goulimine) on 19th Nov.

Black-eared Wheatear *Oenanthe hispanica*

Female at Igoudar on 11th Nov.

Desert Wheatear *Oenanthe deserti*

Male 9km north of Tiznit on 8th Nov. 6 at Oued Sayad (6km SW of Goulimine), 2 5km SE of Goulimine, 4 at Goulimine - 50km S on 9th Nov. Female at Aoulouz - Tazenakht on 11th Nov. Male 11km E of Ouarzazate, male at Barrage Mansour El Eddahbi (restaurant), female 15km W of Skoura (23 E of Ouarzazate) on 12th Nov. Male at Tinerhir - Tijnejdad on 13th Nov. 3 males and a female at Merzouga Lake on 14th Nov. 1 at Oued Sayad (6km SW of Goulimine), 19 males and 4 females at Goulimine - 100km SW on 19th Nov.

Red-rumped Wheatear *Oenanthe moesta*

5 males + 3 females 5km SE of Goulimine, 6 pairs at Goulimine - 50km S on 9th Nov. 8 pairs at Tagdilt Track on 12th Nov. 30 at Tagdilt Track, 2 at Boumalne - Tinerhir on 13th Nov. 13 males and 5 females at Goulimine - 100km SW on 19th Nov.

Mourning Wheatear *Oenanthe lugens*

2 males 6km E of Tazenakht on 11th Nov. 2 males at Ouarzazate - 11km E, 4 males and a female 11km E of Ouarzazate, 2 females 15km W of Skoura (23 E of Ouarzazate), 2 males at Skoura - El Kelaa on 12th Nov. Female at Tinerhir on 13th Nov.

White-crowned Black Wheatear *Oenanthe leucopyga*

1 4km E of Tazenakht on 11th Nov. 4 at Ouarzazate - 11km E, 5 11km E of Ouarzazate, 4 at Barrage Mansour El Eddahbi (restaurant), 4 at 27-15km W of Skoura, 2 at Skoura - El Kelaa on 12th Nov. 1 at Tinerhir - Tijnejdad, 13 at Tijnejdad - Touroug, 4 at Touroug - 12km W of Jorf, 5 12km W of Jorf on 13th Nov. 5 at Erfoud - Derkaoua, 3 at Derkaoua, 5 at Erg Chebbi, 4 at Merzouga Lake, 4 at Erfoud, 27 at Erfoud - Errashidia on 14th Nov.

Black Wheatear *Oenanthe leucura*

Pair in mountains north of Bou-Izakarn on 8th Nov. 6 at Aoulouz - Tazenakht, 1 6km E of Tazenakht on 11th Nov. 2 at Igoudar - Agadir on 18th Nov (car2). 1 at Goulimine - 100km SW on 19th Nov. 2 males and a female in Agadir on 19th Nov (car2). Pair at Tamri on 20th Nov (car2).

Blue Rock Thrush *Monticola solitarius*

Male at Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 1 S of Cap Rhir on 10th Nov. Male at Ouarzazate - 11km E on 12th Nov. Male at Tinerhir - Tijnejdad on 13th Nov. Male at El Hajeb on 15th Nov. 2 in Agadir on 19th Nov (car2). Female at Tamri on 20th Nov (car2).

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

Recorded almost daily, often singing outside the hotels at dawn. Easternmost record was a female at Derkaoua on 14th Nov.

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

2 at near Taroudant, 5 at Igoudar on 11th Nov. 1 at Derkaoua on 14th Nov. 1 at Dayet Aaoua on 15th Nov. 1 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov. 8 at Igoudar on 18th Nov.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

3 at Lac Aquelmane, 1 at Mischliffen on 15th Nov.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

5 at Mischliffen, 1 at Dayet Aaoua on 15th Nov.

Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti*

1 at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. 10 singing at Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 1 at Oued Sous on 10th Nov. 3 at Oued Massa on 19th Nov (car2). 5 heard singing and 1 seen at Oued Massa on 20th Nov. 1 at Oued Sous on 20th Nov.

Fan-tailed Warbler *Cisticola juncidis*

3 at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. 3 at Oued Massa, 1 at Tassila on 8th Nov. 1 at Oued Sous on 10th Nov. 1 at Igoudar on 11th Nov. 5 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov. 6 at Sidi Moussa - Oualidia on 17th Nov. 5 at Oued Massa on 20th Nov. 1 at Tamri on 20th Nov (car2).

Scrub Warbler *Scotocerca inquieta*

2 at Oued Sayad (6km SW of Goulimine) on 9th Nov. 3 at Oued Sayad (6km SW of Goulimine) on 19th Nov.

Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

3 at Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 1 at Oued Massa on 18th Nov. 2 at Oued Massa on 20th Nov.

Dartford Warbler *Sylvia undata*

1 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov.

Tristram's Warbler *Sylvia deserticola*

1 at Oued Sayad (6km SW of Goulimine) on 9th Nov. 2 males and a female plumaged at Merzouga Lake on 14th Nov. 2 15km SW of Goulimine on 19th Nov.

Spectacled Warbler *Sylvia conspicillata*

4 at Oued Sayad (6km SW of Goulimine), 1 about 10km S of Goulimine on 9th Nov. 1 at Ouarzazate - 11km E, 2 11km E of Ouarzazate on 12th Nov. 3 at Oued Sayad (6km SW of Goulimine) on 19th Nov. 2 at Goulimine - 100km SW on 19th Nov.

Sardinian Warbler *Sylvia melanocephala*

Recorded on ten days, max: 10 at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. 8 at Oued Massa 8th Nov. 10 at Oued Sayad (6km SW of Goulimine) on 9th Nov.

Desert Warbler *Sylvia nana*

2 at Merzouga Lake on 14th Nov.

Black-cap *Sylvia atricapilla*

2 males at Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 3 at Igoudar on 11th Nov.

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

10 at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. 2 at Oued Sayad (6km SW of Goulimine) on 9th Nov. 1 at Cap Rhir on 10th Nov. 6 at Derkaoua, 1 at Erg Chebb, 1 at Merzouga Lake on 14th Nov. 1 at Lac Aquelmane on 15th Nov. 1 at Oued Massa on 18th Nov. 20 at Oued Massa on 20th Nov. 1 at Agadir harbour on 21st Nov. Includes all *Phylloscopus* sp.

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

1 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov.

Firecrest *Regulus ignicapillus*

2 at Mischliffen, 1 at Dayet Aaoua on 15th Nov.

Fulvous Babbler *Turdoides fulvus*

9 at Derkaoua on 14th Nov.

Coal Tit *Parus ater*

1 in the Cedarwood (S of Col du Zad), 5 at Mischliffen on 15th Nov.

Blue Tit *Parus caeruleus*

1 near Taroudant on 11th Nov. 1 in the Cedarwood (S of Col du Zad), 1 at Mischliffen on 15th Nov. 3 at Oued Sous on 19th Nov (car2).

Great Tit *Parus major*

1 in Agadir on 7th Nov. Singing at Tamri on 10th Nov. 1 in the Cedarwood (S of Col du Zad) on 15th Nov. 2 at Oued Sous on 19th Nov (car2). 1 at Oued Massa on 20th Nov.

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

5 + call in the Cedarwood (S of Col du Zad), 3 at Mischliffen on 15th Nov.

Short-toed Treecreeper *Certhia brachydactyla*

2 at Mischliffen on 15th Nov.

Black-headed Bush Shrike *Tchagra senegala*

1 at Oued Massa (village of Sidi Benzaren) on 8th Nov. Pair at Oued Massa on 19th Nov (car2). 1 at Tamri on 20th Nov (car2).

Great Grey Shrike *Lanius excubitor*

1 race *algeriensis* at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. 5 at Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 6 at Oued Sayad (6km SW of Goulimine), 2 5km SE of Goulimine, 3 at Goulimine - 50 km S on 9th Nov. 2 at Cap Rhir, 1 at Tamri on 10th Nov. 10 at Igoudar, 2 at Aoulouz - Tazenakht on 11th Nov. 1 11km E of Ouarzazate, 2 at Skoura - El Kelaa on 12th Nov. 2 at Boumalne - Tinerhi, 6 at Tinerhir - Tijnejdad, 5 at Tijnejdad - Touroug, 4 at Touroug - 12km W of Jorf, 2 12km W of Jorf on 13th Nov. 2 at Derkaoua, 1 at Derkaoua - Erg Chebbi on 14th Nov. 1 at Erg Chebbi, 1 at Merzouga Lake, 3 at Erfoud - Errashidia on 14th Nov. 10 at Agadir - Igoudar, 2 at Igoudar, 1 at Oued Massa on 18th Nov. 4 at Oued Sayad (6km SW of Goulimine) on 19th Nov. 6 at Goulimine - 100km SW on 19th Nov. 2 at Oued Massa on 20th Nov. 1 in Agadir 'Bird Valley' on 21st Nov.

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

1 in the Cedarwood (S of Col du Zad), 5 at Mischliffen on 15th Nov.

Magpie *Pica pica*

5 at Ait Melloul - Taroudant on 11th Nov. 11 at Lac Aquelmane on 15th Nov. 9 at Agadir - Igoudar on 18th Nov.

Alpine Chough *Pyrrhocorax graculus*

10 at Timahdite (Meknes 103) on 15th Nov.

Chough *Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*

1 S in Griffon Vulture flock at Tagdilt Track on 13th Nov. 40 at Lac Aquelmane, 5 at Fom Kheneg, 4 at Timahdite on 15th Nov.

Brown-necked Raven *Corvus ruficollis*

1 at Derkaoua, 3 at Erg Chebbi on 14th Nov.

Raven *Corvus corax*

1 50km S of Goulimine on 9th Nov. 4 at Cap Rhir on 10th Nov. 25 at Boumalne on 12th Nov. 10 at Tagdilt Track, 40 at Tinerhir - Tijnejdad on 13th Nov. 40 1km W of Errashidia on 14th Nov. 2 at Zeida, 34 at Zeida - Cedarwood, 16 + call in the Cedarwood (S of Col du Zad), 10 at Lac Aquelmane, 4 at Fom Kheneg, 200 at Timahdite, 13 at Mischliffen, 4 at Dayet Aaoua on 15th Nov. 1 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov. 1 at Cap Beddouza, 2 at Cap Beddouza - Safi on 17th Nov. 2 at Goulimine - 100km SW on 19th Nov. 2 at Oued Massa on 20th Nov.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

80 at Tamri on 10th Nov. 1 at Oued Massa on 18th Nov.

Spotless Starling *Sturnus unicolor*

40 at Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 15 at Lac Aquelmane on 15th Nov. 2 at Igoudar - Agadir on 18th Jan (car2).

Starling//Spotless *Sturnus vulgaris//unicolor*

2000 at Tassila on 8th Nov. 200 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov. 30 at Oued Massa on 18th Nov. 4000 at Oued Massa on 20th Nov.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

Largest concentration 5000 probably all this species 3km SW of Goulimine on 9th Nov.

Spanish Sparrow *Passer hispaniolensis*

5 at Oued Sayad (6km SW of Goulimine) on 9th Nov.

Desert Sparrow *Passer simplex*

Female at Derkaoua, 3 females at Erg Chebbi on 14th Nov.

Rock Sparrow *Petronia petronia*

2 at Aoulouz - Tazenakht on 11th Nov. 8 at Zeida - Cedarwood, 50 at Timahdite on 15th Nov.

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

1 at Oued Massa, 5 at Tassila on 8th Nov. 2 at Tamri on 10th Nov. 1 at Zeida - Cedarwood, 3 in the Cedarwood (S of Col du Zad) on 15th Nov.

Serin *Serinus serinus*

10 at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. 10 at Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 1 at Oued Sayad (6km SW of Goulimine) on 9th Nov. 1 at Cap Rhir on 10th Nov. 10 at Boumalne on 12th Nov. 2 at Lac Aquelmane, 1 at Foug Kheneg on 15th Nov. 10 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov. 1 at Goulimine - 100km SW on 19th Nov. 200 at Oued Massa on 20th Nov.

Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris*

6 at crossing of P30 and Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 4 at Tamri on 10th Nov. 2 at Igoudar on 11th Nov. Call at Barrage Mansour El Eddahbi (restaurant) on 12th Nov. 1 at Merzouga Lake on 14th Nov. 1 at Zeida on 15th Nov.

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

10 at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. 40 at Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 20 11km E of Ouarzazate, 20 at Boumalne, 10 at Tagdilt Track on 12th Nov. 1 at Erg Chebbi on 14th Nov. 20 at Zeida, 25 at Zeida - Cedarwood, 3 at Lac Aquelmane, call at Timahdite on 15th Nov. 150 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov.

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

1 at Tamri on 10th Nov. Call at Dayet Aaoua on 15th Nov. 12 + 5 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov.

Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*

10 at Oued Sous on 7th Nov. 5 at Oued Massa on 8th Nov. Call at Oued Sayad (6km SW of Goulimine) on 9th Nov. 19 at Cap Rhir on 10th Nov. Call at Igoudar on 11th Nov. Call 11km E of Ouarzazate on 12th Nov. 3 at Tagdilt Track on 12th Nov. Call at Merzouga Lake on 14th Nov. Call at Zeida, 4 at Lac Aquelmane, 4 at Timahdite on 15th Nov. 20 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov. 12 at Goulimine - 100km SW on 19th Nov.

Trumpeter Finch *Bucanetes githagineus*

2 heard 3km SW of Goulimine on 9th Nov. 30 11km E of Ouarzazate, 3 at Barrage Mansour El Eddahbi (restaurant), 3 at Tagdilt Track on 12th Nov, 6 at Tagdilt Track, 2 at Boumalne - Tinerhir, 5 at Tijnejdad - Touroug, 50 12km W of Jorf on 13th Nov. 6 at Merzouga Lake on 14th Nov.

Cirl Bunting *Emberiza cirlus*

Pair + male 20km E of Taroudant, male + 2 singing at Igoudar on 11th Nov. 3 at Agadir - Igoudar, 1 at Igoudar on 18th Nov. 2 at Igoudar - Agadir on 18th Jan (car2).

Rock Bunting *Emberiza cia*

2 in mountains north of Bou-Izakarn on 8th Nov. 7 in the Cedarwood (S of Col du Zad) on 15th Nov.

House Bunting *Emberiza striolata*

Pair in Agadir on 7th Nov. 6 at Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 4 at Igoudar on 11th Nov. 3 at Tagdilt Track on 13th Nov. 3 males and 4 females in Agadir on 19th Nov (car2). 4 at Oued Massa on 19th Nov (car2).

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

1 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov.

Corn Bunting *Miliaria calandra*

3 at Oued Massa, 1 at crossing of P30 and Oued Massa on 8th Nov. 1 at Cap Rhir on 10th Nov. 30 at Aoulouz - Tazenakht on 11th Nov. Call 11km E of Ouarzazate on 12th Nov. 5 at Merja Zerga on 16th Nov. 10 at Goulimine - 100km SW on 19th Nov.