



Rockjumper Birding Tours

Worldwide Birding Adventures

Tunisia

4th - 9th February 2007



White Stork by David Hoddinott

Trip Report compiled by Tour Leaders Erik Forsyth & David Hoddinott

Tour summary

On the first day of the tour we headed off to a wetland situated on the outskirts of Tunis. This proved to be very productive and our bird-list started in earnest with Eared Grebe, Greater Flamingo, Eurasian Golden Plover and the attractive “pink flushed” Slender-billed Gull. Our next stop was the ruins at Carthage and while taking in the history from our local guide we still managed a few excellent birds including European Goldfinch, Dartford and Sardinian Warbler, a sunbathing Eurasian Wryneck and several Black Redstarts. The best find however was a Hedge Accentor or Dunnock found by Mark.

This is a scarce winter visitor to North Africa. After leaving Tunis we soon arrived at Mt Zaghuan, famous for the spring that supplied ancient Carthage with its entire water supply nearly 70km away. Highlights here were a pair of Lanner Falcon, Peregrine Falcon, Blue Rock Thrush and close views of several Red Crossbill. Arriving at Sidi Jedidi in the afternoon we quickly found our target bird: the rare and threatened White-headed Duck. Good scope views were enjoyed of this attractive duck and a bonus was brief views of a Water Rail running through the reedbed. *En route*, a flock of sixty Common Crane were seen. We finally arrived in Mahres after dark and sat down to a welcome meal after a full day of birding and antiquities. A great way to start the tour!

Today we had an early start for a visit to the Bou Hedma NP. This park was created as a conservation area for the protection of rare and threatened North African antelope. Just before the entrance gate to the Park we found our first Moussier's Redstart, a North African endemic and an attractive bird at that. In the same area we found the first of many Barbary Partridges and enjoyed good close looks. The Park did not disappoint on the mammal front either and our drive produced great views of Addax, Scimitar-horned Oryx and Dama and Dorcas Gazelles. Other mammal highlights included Golden Jackal, Red Fox (found by Sara) and the cute Gundi (a hamster-like rodent which belongs to a unique family represented by just a few species in North Africa). Other birding highlights included flying Black-bellied Sandgrouse, a Bonelli's Eagle, Spectacled Warbler and a pair of Fulvous Chatterer. After an enjoyable picnic lunch we headed to the Thyna Salina Saltworks first stopping to enjoy another group of confiding Fulvous Chatterers. At the saltworks we added several new birds to our growing list including Spotted Redshank, Dunlin, Caspian Tern, Common Shelduck and several wintering Water Pipits.

The following day an early start was required for the long journey to reach our Berber tented camp deep in the Sahara Desert. Our first stop for a stretch and stroll in a small valley produced several new birds including Eurasian Linnet and Trumpeter Finch. We then drove on to Matmata visiting several fascinating Troglodyte homes, (underground houses where people have lived for hundreds of years to escape the repressive heat during the summer months). One such home, now turned into a basic hotel was used in the legendary Star Wars film. We then birded the "Pipeline Road" and great birds seen here included Red-rumped and Mourning Wheatear and Desert and Temminck's Lark. After an appetizing lunch we headed onwards deep into the Saharan sanddunes. Approaching our camp in the late afternoon we found a pair of Cream-colored Courser on a gravel plain, the spectacular Greater Hoopoe-Lark with its white wing primaries displayed in flight, as well as several Bar-tailed Desert Larks. Our tented Berber camp was an idyllic way to relax after a long, hot day and even better was the fact that there were no other people around and we had the Sahara Desert as our doorstep!

We awoke just before sunrise to be greeted by a fantastic sight of the sun rising behind large golden dunes right at the edge of our camp. A leisurely breakfast was soon aborted as Mark had spotted our target bird. We all stood delighted watching three stunning Desert Sparrows sitting on one of our 4x4 vehicles. On this high note we continued our breakfast and then packed up taking a slow drive to Douz. Birding highlights included a small group of four Eurasian Dotterel (a lifer for most including the guides), brief views of a Streaked Scrub-Warbler, several more Cream-colored Coursers, a pair of White-crowned Black Wheatear, the splendid Greater Hoopoe-Lark and a few Bar-tailed Desert Larks. We left the wild Saharan Desert behind and arrived in Douz in the early evening. Our group was in agreement that our stay in the desert at the Berber camp was a highlight which would be hard to beat.

The following day produced an earlier than expected start as two or three Eurasian Scops-Owls were



calling outside our rooms before dawn. Soon we were all enjoying great spotlight looks at one of these cute little critters. After this momentous beginning we headed off to a number of freshwater wetlands. Our first stop at a reedbed proved very fruitful and we enjoyed good looks at Water Rail, Spotted Crake and Cetti's Warbler. Other wetlands held thousands of waterfowl of several species including our target bird, the globally threatened Marbled Duck. In total we recorded about 400 hundred of these rare birds at their wintering grounds. Other birding highlights included a pair of Ruddy Shelduck, a Peregrine Falcon and a wintering male Hen Harrier. We then set off for El Jem, a remarkably well-preserved monument, (the third largest amphitheatre ever built by the Romans and not much smaller than the Colosseum in Rome) with a packed lunch arriving in the late afternoon. It was perfectly timed as there were just a few other visitors around and the light was perfect for photographs in the late afternoon. We arrived at Hammamet in the evening after a long but most enjoyable and productive day.

The following morning, a calling Common Quail was a nice surprise, before leaving our hotel and heading to a wetland around Tunis. Here we added several new birds including Black-shouldered Kite, Northern Lapwing, a pair of statue-like Eurasian Thick-knee, Black-tailed Godwit and Green Sandpiper. Several thousand Greater Flamingo were present but we did not have time to count them accurately. Our final stop was the airport and we bade farewell to Steve and Debbie who were sadly not joining us for the Moroccan extension. A great thanks to our drivers and Tarek for their generous hospitality and showing us their beautiful country.

Annotated Checklists of Birds and Mammals

Birds: nomenclature and taxonomy follows J. F. Clements *Birds of the World: A Checklist 5th Edition* (2000) Ibis Publishing Company, with updates to July 2005. Any deviations from Clements are indicated by square brackets and explained in taxonomic notes. Extensive research has been conducted into potential splits.

Mammals: nomenclature and taxonomy follows J. Kingdon *The Kingdon Fieldguide to African Mammals* (1997) Academic Press.

BIRDS

Grebes Podicipedidae

Little Grebe

Tachybaptus ruficollis

Twenty-three at wetlands in Tunis, four at Thyna Saltworks and also heard at wetlands near Douz.

Great Crested Grebe

Podiceps cristatus

Twenty at wetlands around Tunis with a further sighting of twelve at Thyna Saltworks.

Eared Grebe

Podiceps nigricollis

Thirty birds were recorded at a wetland in Tunis.

Cormorants & Shags Phalacrocoracidae

Great Cormorant

Phalacrocorax carbo

Fifty around Tunis and forty at Thyna Saltworks, Mahres.

NOTE: The resident white-breasted African subspecies P. c. lucidus is regarded by some authorities to be a distinct species; White-breasted Cormorant.

Hérons, Egrets & Bitterns Ardeidae

Gray Heron

Ardea cinerea



Regularly recorded at most wetland sites with highest daily count of twenty at Thyna Saltworks.

Great Egret*Ardea alba*

Two in Tunis and three at Thyna Saltworks.

NOTE: The nominate Old World Great Egret may be split from the New World *A. a. egretta* which would become American Egret. This split is as yet not recognized by Clements.

Little Egret*Egretta garzetta*

Regularly recorded at water bodies with highest number being five each in Tunis and at Thyna Saltworks.

NOTE: Clements lumps Little and Madagascar's Dimorphic Egret *E. dimorpha* into a single species. This treatment is not widely accepted.

Cattle Egret*Bubulcus ibis*

Only recorded in Tunis where we saw twenty and two near Mahres.

NOTE: This group may be split into 2 species, the nominate Common Cattle Egret (which is what we recorded in Tunisia) and the Asian/Australasian Eastern Cattle Egret *E. coromanda*. This split is as yet not recognized by Clements.

Storks Ciconiidae**White Stork***Ciconia ciconia*

Up to seven birds were seen at their nests, which are typically placed on tops of chimneys and roofs of buildings.

Ibises & Spoonbills Threskiornithidae**Glossy Ibis***Plegadis falcinellus*

Five birds were seen at a wetland near Douz.

Eurasian Spoonbill*Platalea leucorodia*

Three in Tunis, ten at Thyna Saltworks and three at a wetland close to Douz.

Flamingos Phoenicopteridae**Greater Flamingo***Phoenicopus ruber*

Recorded in good numbers at wetlands throughout Tunisia with our highest count of three thousand+ seen at a wetland in Tunis.

NOTE: The Greater Flamingo (*P. roseus*) and the Caribbean Flamingo (*P. ruber*) are now considered monotypic species according to Clements.

Swans, Geese & Ducks Anatidae**Ruddy Shelduck***Tadorna ferruginea*

Two birds were found after scouring wetlands around Douz.

Common Shelduck*Tadorna tadorna*

Thirty at Thyna saltworks, one hundred and forty nine at wetlands around Douz and a whopping four hundred and fifty two at a wetland in Tunis.

Eurasian Wigeon*Anas Penelope*

Thirty birds including several striking males were recorded at a wetland around Douz.

Gadwall*Anas strepera*

Seven birds were seen at a wetland close to Douz.

Eurasian Teal*Anas crecca*

Three in Tunis, fifteen hundred at wetlands around Douz and a further thousand at a large wetland in Tunis.

Mallard*Anas platyrhynchos*

Recorded in small numbers at wetlands throughout.



Northern Pintail*Anas acuta*

A single bird in Tunis, two at Thyna Saltworks and fifty near Douz.

Garganey*Anas querquedula*

A drake spotted by Mark near Douz was our only sighting of this species.

Northern Shoveler*Anas clypeata*

Recorded at several wetlands throughout Tunisia with a high count of two hundred and fifty at a wetland near Douz.

Marbled Duck*Marmaronetta angustirostris*

We recorded up to four hundred at wetlands around Douz. This is a globally threatened species with a small population that winters in Tunisia.

Common Pochard*Aythya ferina*

Our only sighting was of eight birds seen at a wetland in Tunis.

Tufted Duck*Aythya fuligula*

A single bird was found at a wetland in Tunis.

White-headed Duck*Oxyura leucocephala*

Twenty-seven of this globally threatened species were seen at the Sidi Jedidi wetland.

Hawks, Kites, Eagles & Vultures Accipitridae**Black-shouldered Kite***Elanus caeruleus*

A single bird was found on our last day at a wetland in Tunis.

Western Marsh-Harrier*Circus aeruginosus*

Recorded at wetlands throughout Tunisia with our highest count of five birds around Douz.

Hen Harrier*Circus pygargus*

A male of this attractive species was found hunting at a wetland near Douz. A scarce winter visitor to Tunisia.

Eurasian Sparrowhawk*Accipiter nisus*

A single bird was seen at Mount Zaghuan.

Long-legged Buzzard*Buteo rufinus*Eight birds were recorded in total with our first sightings *en route* to Mahres.**Bonelli's Eagle***Hieraaetus fasciatus*

An adult was seen soaring in the morning at Bou Hedma NP.

Falcons & Caracaras Falconidae**Eurasian Kestrel***Falco tinnunculus*

Recorded daily throughout Tunisia with our highest count of twenty birds on our drive from Tunis to Mahres.

NOTE: Some authorities split this species into Common Kestrel, F. tinnunculus which we observed (occurring in East Africa and the Palearctic region) and Rock Kestrel, F. rupicolus which occurs in Southern Africa. Clements does not as yet recognize these splits.

Lanner Falcon*Falco biarmicus*

Eight birds recorded with our first sightings at Mount Zaghuan.

Peregrine Falcon*Falco peregrinus*

Two at Mount Zaghuan with a further sighting at a wetland near Douz.

Pheasants & Quails Phasianidae**Barbary Partridge***Alectoris barbara*We had excellent looks at ten+ birds at Bou Hedma NP with further sightings of four *en route* from

Mahres to Jebil NP. Our final sighting was of a single bird *en route* from Douz to Tunis.

Common Quail *Coturnix coturnix*

A bird was calling from dense vegetation at our hotel at Hammamet on the last day.

Cranes Gruidae

Common Crane *Grus grus*

Sixty-six birds were recorded on our drive from Tunis to Mahres with further sightings of four birds seen *en route* to Bou Hedma NP and *en route* from Mahres to Jebil NP.

Rails, Gallinules & Coots Rallidae

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Brief looks were had of a calling bird at Sidi Jedidi Wetland but we had excellent looks at another bird at a wetland near Douz.

Spotted Crake *Porzana porzana*

We enjoyed good but brief views of a single bird at a freshwater marsh near Douz.

Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

Heard calling but not seen at wetlands in Tunis and Douz.

Eurasian Coot *Fulica atra*

Recorded at wetlands throughout with our highest count of two-hundred birds in Tunis.

Stilts & Avocets Recurvirostridae

Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*

Seventy recorded at wetlands around Tunis with another sighting of three birds near Douz.

Thick-knees Burhinidae

Eurasian Thick-knee *Burhinus oedicnemus*

A pair were found at a wetland in Tunis.

Couriers & Pratincoles Glareolidae

Cream-colored Courser *Cursorius cursor*

Thirteen birds were seen in total on gravel plains at Jebil NP.

Plovers & Lapwings Charadriidae

Northern Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

One hundred and fifty birds were found at a wetland in Tunis. Most birds are winter visitors.

Eurasian Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

Twelve were seen on our first day in Tunis.

Black-bellied Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

Fifty at wetlands in Tunis and thirty at Thyna Saltworks.

Common Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

Two at Thyna Saltworks.

Snowy (Kentish) Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus*

Recorded at Thyna Saltworks, wetlands around Douz and at the coast near Mahres.

Sandpipers & Allies Scolopacidae

Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*



A single bird at a wetland in Tunis and a further three at a wetland near Douz were our only sightings.
Note: New World race delicata of Common Snipe has been raised to species level, Wilson's Snipe Gallinago delicata.

Black-tailed Godwit*Limosa limosa*

Eighty at the Thyna Saltworks and one hundred and twenty at a wetland in Tunis.

Eurasian Curlew*Numenius arquata*

Ten at wetlands in Tunis, fifty at the coast at Mahres and a single at a large wetland on our last day in Tunis.

Spotted Redshank*Tringa erythropus*

At least three birds seen at dusk at Thyna Saltworks.

Common Redshank*Tringa totanus*

A single bird at a wetland in Tunis and two at Thyna saltworks were our only sightings.

Common Greenshank*Tringa nebularia*

Five at Thyna Saltworks and singleton's near Douz and in Tunis.

Green Sandpiper*Tringa ochropus*

Two recorded at wetlands near Douz and a single bird in Tunis.

Wood Sandpiper*Tringa glareola*

A single bird near Douz and another in Tunis.

Common Sandpiper*Actitis hypoleucos*

Six birds at Thyna saltworks.

Ruddy Turnstone*Arenaria interpres*

Twenty at Thyna saltworks.

Little Stint*Calidris minuta*

Two hundred at Thyna saltworks, twenty-five near Douz and two at a wetland in Tunis.

Temminck's Stint*Calidris temminckii*

Mark found three birds at a wetland near Douz.

Curlew Sandpiper*Calidris ferruginea*

Ten birds were found amongst hundreds of Dunlin at Thyna Saltworks.

Dunlin*Calidris alpina*

Up to two-thousand birds were seen at Thyna Saltworks.

Ruff*Philomachus pugnax*

Two at Thyna and twenty at wetlands near Douz.

Eurasian Dotterel*Charadrius morinellus*

Four birds were found foraging on gravel plains in Jebil NP. A scarce winter visitor so far south.

Oystercatchers Haematopodidae**Eurasian Oystercatcher***Haematopus ostralegus*

Six birds were seen at the coast near Mahres.

Gulls Laridae**Yellow-legged Gull***Larus michahellis*

Twenty each in Tunis and at Thyna and a further sighting of two hundred + near Mahres.

Lesser Black-backed Gull*Larus fuscus*

Two in Tunis and single birds at Thyna and near Mahres.

Black-headed Gull*Larus ridibundus*

Thirty-five recorded at wetlands around Tunis.

Slender-billed Gull*Larus ichthyaetus*

Twenty-five including a few individuals in stunning pink breeding plumage were seen at wetlands around Tunis. A further three were seen at the coast near Mahres.

Mediterranean Gull*Larus melanocephalus*

Mark spotted a flock of twenty winter plumaged birds flying at dusk, Thyna Saltworks. A further three birds were seen at the coast near Mahres (*en route* to El Jem).

Terns Sternidae**Caspian Tern***Sterna caspia*

Three at Thyna saltworks and a single bird at the coast near Mahres.

Sandwich Tern*Sterna sandvicensis*

Ten were seen at wetlands around Tunis.

Sandgrouse Pteroclididae**Black-bellied Sandgrouse***Pterocles orientalis*

Two groups comprising twenty birds were seen at Bou Hedma NP.

Doves & Pigeons Columbidae**Rock (Pigeon) Dove***Columba livia*

Commonly seen at scattered localities throughout the trip.

Eurasian Collared-Dove*Streptopelia decaocto*

Commonly recorded throughout towns in Tunisia. This species has only recently colonized this country and is has now colonized the southern city of Douz.

Laughing Dove*Streptopelia senegalensis*

Commonly recorded, almost daily, at many scattered sites throughout Tunisia.

Typical Owls Strigidae**European Scops-Owl***Otus scops*

We enjoyed excellent views of two birds spotlighted after hearing their calls in the early morning at Douz. This is a scarce wintering bird in Tunisia

Little Owl*Athene noctua saharae*

We had good looks at this species. Seven birds were seen in total and typically seen sitting on buildings.

Hoopoes Upupidae**Eurasian Hoopoe***Upupa epops*

Small numbers seen on almost every day of the tour, at scattered sites throughout Tunisia. Our first sighting was at Carthage.

NOTE: Clements only recognizes two species of Hoopoe; Eurasian U. epops and Madagascar U. marginata. One further species, is widely recognized namely African U. africana and a 4th is sometimes recognized, West/Central African U. senegalensis. We only recorded the nominate Palaearctic form U. e. epops.

Woodpeckers & Allies Picidae**Eurasian Wryneck***Jynx torquilla*

A single bird was admired sunning itself on a wall during our visit to Carthage.

Larks Alaudidae**Bar-tailed Lark***Ammomanes cincturus*

Fourteen birds were recorded at Jebil NP. The song reminded us of a windmill turning!

Desert Lark *Ammomanes deserti*

Sixteen birds were recorded between Matmata and in Jebil NP.

Greater Hoopoe-Lark *Alaemon alaudipes*

Fourteen birds were recorded on our visit to Jebil NP. It's melancholy piping song was heard in the early morning and at dusk. In flight the upper wings showed the large white secondaries flashes.

Lesser Short-toed Lark *Calandrella rufescens*

A single bird calling in flight was found by Mark.

Temminck's Lark *Eremophila bilopha*

Sixteen birds were recorded west of Matmata and in Jebil NP.

Crested Lark *Galerida cristata*

Recorded daily throughout the tour with the highest count of forty *en route* from Mahres to Jebil NP.

Thekla Lark *Galerida theklae*

Thirty birds were recorded in Bou Hedma NP.

Sky Lark *Alauda arvensis*

Small flocks totaling fifty birds were seen in grasslands *en route* to Mahres.

Swallows Hirundinidae

Eurasian Crag-Martin *Ptyonoprogne rupestris*

Three birds were seen at Bou Hedma NP.

House Martin *Delichon urbica*

Six birds were seen at *en route* from Tunis to Mahres.

Wagtails & Pipits Motacillidae

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba*

Small numbers seen daily throughout Tunisia.

Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta*

Up to six birds were seen at the Thyna Saltworks.

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

A single bird was seen and heard calling at a wetland in Tunis.

Bulbuls Pycnonotidae

Common Bulbul *Pycnonotus barbatus*

Recorded in Tunis and wooded habitats at Bou Hedma NP.

NOTE: Another very confusing polytypic species complex. Several Asian and African forms have already been recognized as distinct species within the super-species. Several other forms are likely to be recognized as distinct once genetic analysis and further study is completed.

Thrushes & Allies Turdidae

Blue Rock-Thrush *Monticola solitarius*

A male was spotted by Louise at Mount Zaghouan.

Eurasian Blackbird *Turdus merula*

Recorded in wooded habitats throughout. First seen in Carthage.

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

Up to forty birds seen feeding in Argana woodland at Mount Zaghouan.

Hedge (Dunnock) Accentor *Prunella modularis*

A single bird was found by Mark at Carthage, Tunis. This is a rare winter visitor to North Africa.



Cisticolas & Allies Cisticolidae**Zitting Cisticola***Cisticola juncidis*

Three birds were seen at Carthage, a single bird near Mahres and six recorded at wetlands around Douz.

Streaked Scrub-Warbler*Scotocerca inquieta*

A single bird was seen flying between bushes at Jebil NP. Unfortunately we could not relocate it.

Old World Warblers Sylviidae**Cetti's Warbler***Cettia cetti*

We had excellent looks at a bird at a wetland near Douz.

Eurasian Reed-Warbler*Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

A single bird heard singing in a reedbed at Douz.

Common Chiffchaff*Phylloscopus collybita*

Recorded daily in small numbers throughout the tour with a high count of eight near Douz.

NOTE: Most authorities split; including Clements have split the Chiffchaff complex into 4 full species. The nominate form which we recorded is known as Common Chiffchaff P. collybita.

Blackcap*Sylvia atricapilla*

Three birds were seen at Mount Zaghouan.

Sardinian Warbler*Sylvia melanocephala*

Commonly recorded in scrubby vegetation throughout with a high of twenty seen *en route* from Tunis to Mahres.

Spectacled Warbler*Sylvia conspicillata*

Excellent scope views were had of this attractive species at Bou Hedma NP. We had a further sighting *en route* to Jebil NP.

Tristram's Warbler*Sylvia deserticola*

A stunning male was seen at the "the Pipeline Road" near Matmata.

Dartford Warbler*Sylvia undata*

Two birds were seen at Mount Zaghouan and a further three at Bou Hedma NP.

Old World Flycatchers Muscicapidae**European Robin***Erithacus rubecula*

Up to fifteen birds were seen at Carthage and Mount Zaghouan with further sightings of a single bird at Bou Hedma and two *en route* to Jebil NP.

Black Redstart*Phoenicurus ochruros*

Recorded almost daily throughout and often seen favoring buildings and ruins. First recorded at Carthage.

Moussier's Redstart*Phoenicurus moussieri*

This North African gem was pleasantly common in scrub vegetation. Our first birds were seen at Bou Hedma NP.

Common Stonechat*Saxicola rubicola*

Recorded in rank vegetation adjoining wetlands.

White-tailed (White-crowned Black) Wheatear*Oenanthe leucopyga*

A pair were found on a rocky hillside in Jebil NP.

Black Wheatear*Oenanthe leucura*

First recorded at Bou Hedma NP with several other sightings at Jebil NP and around Douz.

Northern Wheatear*Oenanthe oenanthe*

A single bird was found by Eric at our lunch stop on the “Pipeline Road” near Matmata.

NOTE: The North-West African race may be split off as Black-throated Wheatear O. seebohmi. The Palaearctic migrant forms which we recorded would remain within the nominate group.

Mourning Wheatear *Oenanthe lugens*

Three birds were seen well at the “Pipeline Road” near Matmata.

NOTE: This extremely variable complex with an extensive range and many distinctive isolated populations is a perfect candidate for multi-splitting.

Red-rumped Wheatear *Oenanthe moesta*

A pair at Bou Hedma NP and three at our lunch stop on the “Pipeline Road”.

Desert Wheatear *Oenanthe isabellina*

We recorded ten birds in the deserts around Matmata, Jebil NP and Douz.

Babblers Timaliidae

Fulvous Chatterer *Turdoides fulvus*

We were fortunate to find several groups around Bou Hedma NP.

Tits Paridae

African Blue Tit *Cyanistes teneriffae*

Three birds were seen at Carthage in Tunis.

Shrikes Laniidae

Southern Gray Shrike *Lanius elegans*

A common roadside bird seen at several localities throughout the tour.

NOTE: This complex which used to be lumped with Northern Shrike L. excubitor is being considered for further splitting. These splits would include the nominate Southern Gray Shrike, the migrant Steppe Shrike (L. pallidirostris) and Saharan Shrike (L. leucopygos) which is the form we recorded in Tunisia during our tour. Clements recognizes the split from Northern Shrike but not the further splits of the Southern Gray Shrike group.

Crows, Jays & Magpies Corvidae

Brown-necked Raven *Corvus ruficollis*

Only found in the desert areas around Jebil NP and around Douz.

Common Raven *Corvus corax*

Recorded in the mountainous country around Mount Zaghouan and Bou Hedma NP.

Starlings Sturnidae

Spotless Starling *Sturnus unicolor*

Several large flocks were seen at Sidi Jedidi and *en route* to Bou Hedma NP.

Old World Sparrows Passeridae

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

A pair was seen on our first day *en route* to Mahres.

Spanish Sparrow *Passer hispaniolensis*

Several large flocks were seen throughout with one hundred+ on the first day.

Desert Sparrow *Passer simplex*

Four of these scarce birds were seen at our camp in Jebil NP.

Rock Petronia *Petronia petronia*

Two birds were seen at the Troglodyte homes at Matmata.



Siskins, Crossbills & Allies Fringillidae

- Common Chaffinch** *Fringilla coelebs africana*
Six of the attractive, resident subspecies *Africana* were seen on our first day.
- Red Crossbill** *Loxia curvirostra*
Two birds were seen at Mount Zaghouan.
- European Greenfinch** *Carduelis chloris*
Commonly recorded in the Mountains and wooded areas of eastern Tunisia.
- European Goldfinch** *Carduelis carduelis*
Up to fifty birds were seen on our visit to Bou Hedma NP.
- Eurasian Linnet** *Carduelis cannabina*
Small flocks were seen in the mountains and wooded areas.
- European Serin** *Serinus serinus*
Commonly recorded in mountains and wooded areas.
- Trumpeter Finch** *Rhodopechys githaginea*
Two at Bou Hedma NP and a further eight on the "Pipeline Road" *en route* to Jebil NP.

Buntings Emberizidae

- Rock Bunting** *Emberiza cia*
A single bird was seen at Bou Hedma NP
- House Bunting** *Emberiza striolata*
A pair were seen at Bou Hedma NP and a further sighting was *en route* to Jebil NP.
- Corn Bunting** *Emberiza calandra*
Up to six birds were seen and heard in song *en route* to Mahres.

MAMMALS**Dogs & Allies Canidae**

- Red Fox** *Vulpes vulpes*
Sara spotted a single animal at Bou Hedma NP, which allowed good views.
- Golden Jackal** *Canis aureus*
A single animal was seen briefly at Bou Hedma NP.

Rats Muridae

- Fat Sand Rat** *Psammomys obesus*
One of these cute rodents was seen at Jebil NP.

Gundi

- Gundi** *Ctenodactylus gundi*
Five, including a mother with young was seen at Bou Hedma NP. Another individual was seen near Matmata.

Bovids & Horned Ungulates Bovidae

- Scimitar-horned Oryx** *Oryx dammah*
Fifty-one of these strikingly marked mammals were seen at Bou Hedma NP.



Addax

Addax nasomaculatus

Fifteen of these rare mammals were seen at Bou Hedma NP.

Dorcas Gazelle

Gazella dorcas

Thirty-six were recorded at Bou Hedma NP.

Dama Gazelle

Gazella dama

Eight of these stunningly marked antelope were seen in Bou Hedma NP.

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