



Photo: Eurasian Eagle Owl, by Pedro Marques

## Short-break Birdwatching Programme in Southern Portugal

Lisbon Estuaries & Alentejo

Birds & Nature Tours Portugal

### **Overview**

Portugal offers a fantastic diversity of habitats and consequently of birds in a relatively small area, so the birding programmes designed by Birds & Nature Tours Portugal enable you to visit several species rich areas without needing to travel long distances.

In practical terms, you will find within half an hour's drive from Lisbon city centre and its International Airport the Tagus Estuary and the Sado Estuary Nature Reserves. These two remarkable protected wetland areas have extensive bird lists that include Greater Flamingo, White Stork, Eurasian Spoonbill, Glossy Ibis, Little Bittern, Squacco and Purple Herons, Booted Eagle, Black-winged Kite, Purple Swamphen, Little Bustard, Collared Pratincole, Little Owl, Pallid Swift, Eurasian Hoopoe, Common Kingfisher,

European Bee-eater, Bluethroat, Sardinian, Dartford, Savi's and Melodious Warblers, Iberian Chiffchaff, Iberian Grey and Woodchat Shrikes, Iberian Magpie, Spotless Starling, Rock Sparrow, European Serin, Cirl Bunting and an excellent selection of ducks, waders, gulls and terns.

A further one hour's drive takes you to complementary biotopes and consequently new bird species in the Alentejo. Here, you will visit both the rolling plains of Castro Verde (the home of Great Bustard, Common Crane, Red Kite, Montagu's Harrier, Lesser Kestrel, Stone Curlew, Black-bellied Sandgrouse, Great Spotted Cuckoo, European Roller, Calandra Lark, Tawny Pipit, Rufous Bush Robin, etc...) and the bluffs and hills of the Guadiana Valley Nature Park, noted for species like Black Stork, Iberian Imperial, Golden and Bonelli's Eagles, Eurasian Black and Griffon Vultures, Eurasian Eagle Owl, White-rumped Swift, Iberian Green Woodpecker, Eurasian Crag Martin, Red-rumped Swallow, Black-eared Wheatear, Blue Rock Thrush, Golden Oriole, Spanish Sparrow, Hawfinch and Rock Bunting.

## **Itinerary**

Day 1 – Transfer from Lisbon Airport (or from your Lisbon hotel). Travel to Alcochete. Visit several areas and a variety of habitats within the Tagus Estuary Nature Reserve, including the inter-tidal mudflats and salt marshes of Hortas, the salt pans of Atalaya, Ribeira das Enguias and Samouco and the Barroca d'Alva rice fields and pastures. Overnight stay at the Hotel Quinta da Praia das Fontes, in Alcochete (or equivalent).

Day 2 – Visit other interesting sites and habitats in the Tagus Estuary Nature Reserve, including the open fields, rice fields, reed beds, lagoons, inter-tidal mudflats and salt marshes of the Ponta da Erva area and the cork oak woodlands of Pancas. During the breeding season, we visit a heronry on the Tagus river. Overnight stay at the Hotel Quinta da Praia das Fontes (or equivalent).

Day 3 – Travel to Mértola, in the Alentejo region. Visit the great Castro Verde rolling plains. Overnight stay at the Hotel Museu, in Mértola (or equivalent).

Day 4 – Visit the bluffs and hills of the Guadiana Valley Nature Park, including the Mértola, Mina de São Domingos and Alcaria Ruiva areas. Overnight stay at the Hotel Museu (or equivalent).

Day 5 – Return to Lisbon, visiting on the way the inter-tidal mudflats, salt marshes and rice fields of Comporta and Carrasqueira (Sado Estuary Nature Reserve). Transfer to Lisbon Airport for return flight (or to your Lisbon hotel).

## **Price**

1.440 Euros per person (based on 2 people). Price includes guide fees, transfers from/to the airport/hotel, ground transport (in air-conditioned vehicles), accommodation (including breakfast), bottled water throughout the tour, free use of optical equipment (quality binoculars and telescopes) and field guides, bird list, entrance fees to private or protected areas, participant's accident insurance and VAT. Single supplement: 140 Euros. Not included are flights, meals and items of a personal nature. Meals in selected restaurants can be included if you wish, as a supplement, at a fixed extra cost. Please note the price per person will be reduced as the number of participants increases.

## **Note**

If you prefer to arrive at and depart from Faro, we also have a Short-break Programme covering the Algarve and the Alentejo, available from there. If you need accommodation for the nights before and/or after the tour, we are happy to help. We suggest you discuss your flight details with us, before booking your flights.

### **For enquiries, please contact us:**

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