

Wise Birding Holidays

Bird and mammal watching tours



GEORGIA & ARMENIA: Birding the Caucasus

Tuesday 25th April - Saturday 6th May 2023

6 Wise Birding Clients

Leaders: Chris Townend & Dachi Shoshitashvili

HIGHLIGHTS OF TRIP

Caucasian Snowcock & Caspian Snowcock: Great views of both species were enjoyed during our stays at Kazbegi in Georgia and Yeghegnadzor Mts in Armenia.

Great Rosefinch: A small group of birds including some stunning males at Kazbegi.

Güldenstädt's Redstart: Fabulous views every day whilst in Kazbegi.

Levant Sparrowhawk: Perfect views of a perched bird at very close range.

Radde's Accentor: A singing male posed beautifully for us in Armenia.

Armash Fishponds: Menetries's, Paddyfield, Moustached and Savi's Warblers as well as White-tailed Lapwings were enjoyed at this internationally important site.

Red-tailed and Finsch's Wheatears: Visits to the Oorts Mts and Vedi Gorge allowed for some great views of these two sought after species.

Bimaculated Lark: At least 3 birds seen well in flight and on the ground.

Brown Bear & Cubs: A wonderful sighting of a mother and two cubs whilst scanning for Caspian Snowcock! [See video HERE](#)



Caucasian Snowcock was just one of the many highlights

Summary

This was Wise Birding's second tour to Georgia and Armenia.

Quite simply both Georgia and Armenia have fabulous birding, great food, wonderful accommodation and hospitality, spectacular scenery and fantastic mammals too!

Our tour began in the spectacular Greater Caucasus Mountains and the small mountain village of Stepantsminda, or Kazbegi as it is better known. It was a truly impressive journey as we worked our way up into the mountains and over the Jvari Pass. Our three nights here allowed us ample time to see some target species with great views of both Caucasian Snowcocks and Caucasian Grouse. Luckily, this year the weather was in our favour and the snow had pushed down the other key target species, so finding both Great Rosefinch and Gldenstdt's Redstart was far easier this year! Of course, Wallcreepers and Bearded Vultures were also a fabulous distraction, as was the stunning scenery! Our accommodation was in the best place for birding and we were truly spoiled with food and hospitality at this friendly family run hotel. A visit to the lowland forests and Steppe country of Georgia gave a very different experience and many more birds. Visits to Kumisi Lake, Krtsanisi and Kojori Forest allowed us to see a good selection of woodland and wetland birds including Levant Sparrowhawk, 6 species of woodpecker, Krper's Nuthatch and Demoiselle Cranes whereas the Steppe area and David Gareja produced Calandra Larks & Pied Wheatear.

In Armenia, the lush deciduous forest of Dilijan NP greeted us and we enjoyed the wonderful sights and sounds of Semicollared Flycatchers and Green Warblers. Then down to the lower elevation at Lake Sevan where White-winged Terns and Armenian Gulls dominated our daily counts of birds. Crossing over the Vardenyats Pass at around 2,400M was a memorable day as we enjoyed singing Radde's Accentor and Bluethroat with a backdrop of stunning scenery and a visit to the Silk Road. The spectacular scenery continued as we visit the Yeghegnadzor region and the Gndasar Mountains where one of the tour highlights was seeing a female Brown Bear with two cubs and Caspian Snowcock all within minutes of each other!

A visit to the lowlands and the Armash Fishponds was also a highlight whilst in Armenia. This internationally recognised site is an Important Bird Area (IBA) and we enjoyed wonderful views of Menetries's Warbler, Moustached and Paddyfield Warblers as well as the beautiful White-tailed Lapwings and White-headed Ducks. The nearby Oorts Mountains produced the hoped for Red-tailed Wheatear and some great views of Eastern Orphean Warblers. A visit to the farmland below the slopes of Mount Aragats, Armenia's highest mountain at just over 4,000M, was an exciting day. Here we enjoyed singing Bimaculated Larks and a mixed flock of Ortolan Buntings and Red-throated Pipits and Lesser Grey Shrike nearby too. The mountain road gave a different experience seeing Twite and Horned Larks in the snow and a lovely Lesser Spotted Eagle lower down. Our final day was mostly travelling back through Armenia and into Georgia, but we had an enjoyable visit to the local rubbish dump(!) where we had great views of Egyptian Vultures directly overhead.

A huge thanks to Dachi for all his hard work in ensuring a fun and successful tour.

We recorded a total of 221 species of bird and 6 mammals on this tour.

SUMMARY OF DAILY ACTIVITIES

DAY	DATE	ITINERARY / HIGHLIGHTS DAY BY DAY
1	Tue 25 April	Arrival Tbilisi very early morning. After some rest in a nearby hotel we head into the mountains & Ananuri Forest and our first RB Flycatcher. Impressive count of Gldenstdt's Redstart on our first evening. Overnight Kazbegi
2	Wed 26 April	Kazbegi Elea Monastery: Caucasian Snowcock & Grouse Darialy Valley: Raptors Overnight Kazbegi
3	Thur 27 April	Morning: Kazbegi: Great Rosefinches and Wallcreeper Afternoon: Kobi migrants & Darialy scanning for bears Overnight Kazbegi
4	Fri 28 April	Morning: Kazbegi & Gdauri VP: Alpine Choughs & Ring Ouzels Afternoon: Kojori Forest and Kumisi Lake: Krper's Nuthatch & Demoiselle Cranes. Overnight Tbilisi
5	Sat 29 April	Krtsanisi Forest Park: Levant Sparrowhawk & Woodpeckers. Kumisi Lake and David Gareja: Phalaropes and more Cranes Wheatears & Calandra Larks Overnight Tbilisi
6	Sun 30 April	Travel to Armenia Dilijan Forest: Semi-collared Flycatcher and Green Warbler. Lake Sevan Norashen: Pygmy Cormorant, Armenian Gull. Overnight Tspatagh Village, Armenia
7	Mon 01 May	Tspatagh Village: Honey Buzzards at breakfast! Vardenyats Pass, Caravanserai Silk Rd, Zedea & Norovank: Radde's Accentors, Bluethroat, White-throated Robins. Overnight Vayk, Armenia
9	Tue 02 May	Yeghegnadzor Mountains & Vedi Gorge: Mother Bear and 2 cubs and Caspian Snowcocks. Finsch's Wheatear and Grey-necked Bunting. Overnight Yerevan, Armenia
10	Wed 03 May	Arماش Fishponds: Menetries's, Moustached & Paddyfield Warblers, White-tailed Lapwing, White-headed & Ferruginous Duck. Oorts Mountains: Red-tailed Wheatear & Orphean Warblers. Overnight Yerevan, Armenia
11	Thur 04 May	Aragats Mountains & Yeghvari: Bimaculated Larks, RT Pipits and Ortolan Buntings, Horned Larks and Twite in the snow! Overnight Yerevan, Armenia
12	Fri 05 May	Dilijan Forest - Marneveli Rubbish Dump Green Warblers and Egyptian Vultures. Overnight Tbilisi, Georgia
13	Sat 06 May	Morning: Transfer to Tbilisi airport



Gergeti Church, Kazbegi



Mount Kazbek 5,054M



Male Great Rosefinch



Female Great Rosefinch



Male Golden Plover's Redstart



Golden Plover's Redstarts





Ring Ouzel



"Caucasian" Dunnock



Kumisi Lake, Georgia



White-winged Terns



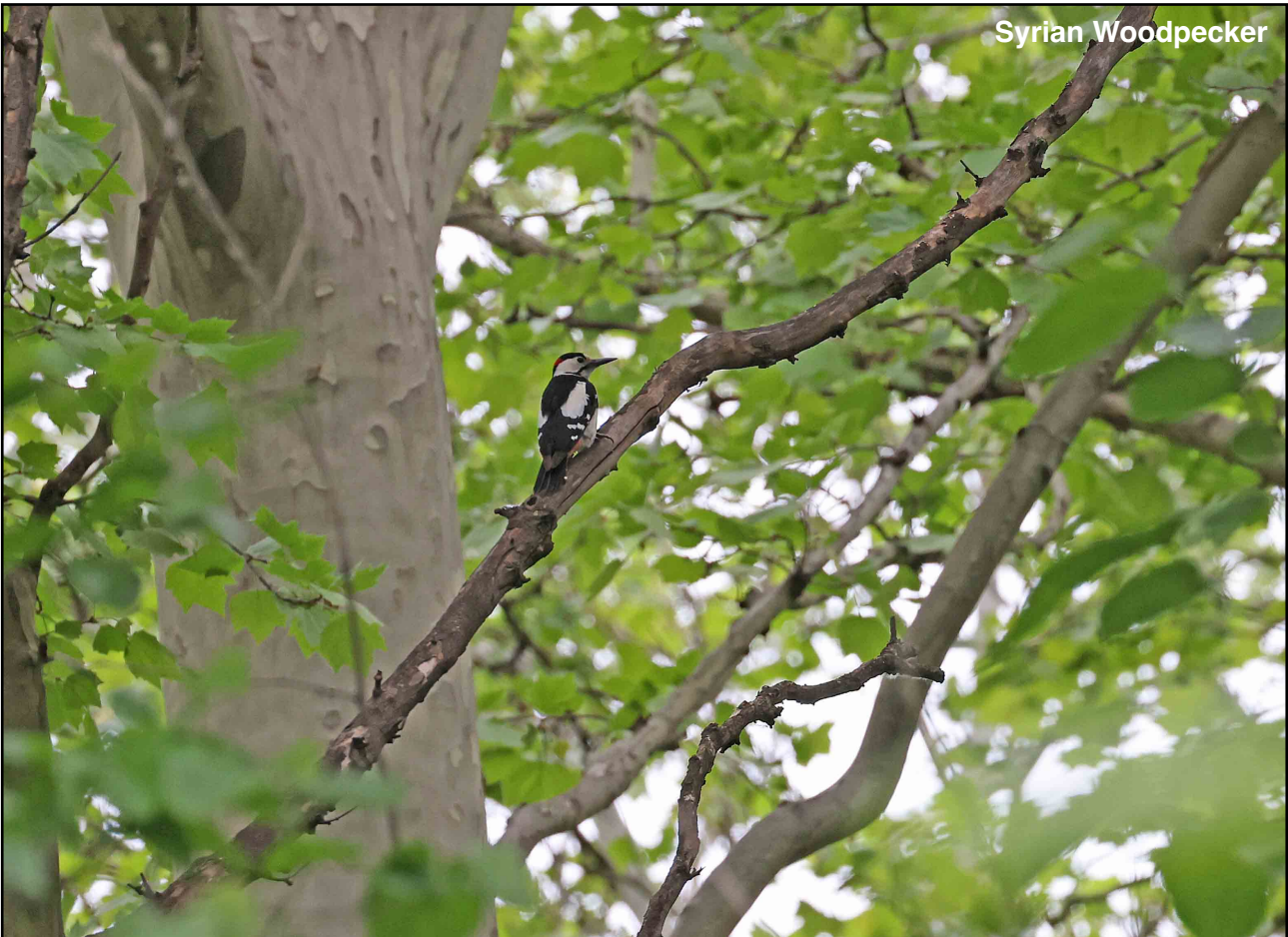
Citrine Wagtail



White-winged Terns



Levant Sparrowhawk



Syrian Woodpecker



Near the Vardenyats Pass, Armenia



Radde's Accentor



Male Bluethroat



Radde's Accentor

White-winged Snowfinch



Noravank Monastery, Armenia

Red-fronted Serin



Male Black-headed Bunting





Eastern Rock Nuthatch



Western Rock Nuthatch

Eastern Rock Nuthatch



Eastern Rock Nuthatch at the nest



Yehgegnadzor Mountains, Armenia



Long-legged Buzzard



Male White-throated Robin

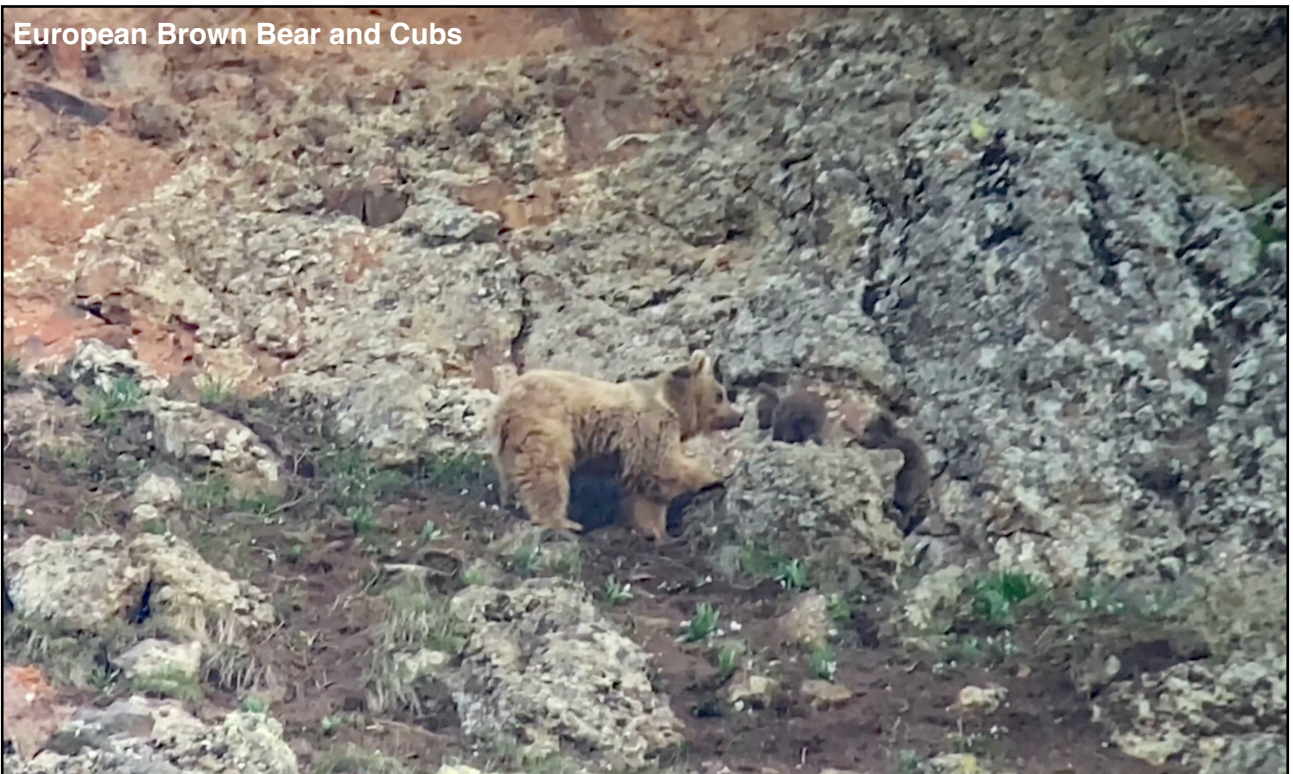


Male White-throated Robin





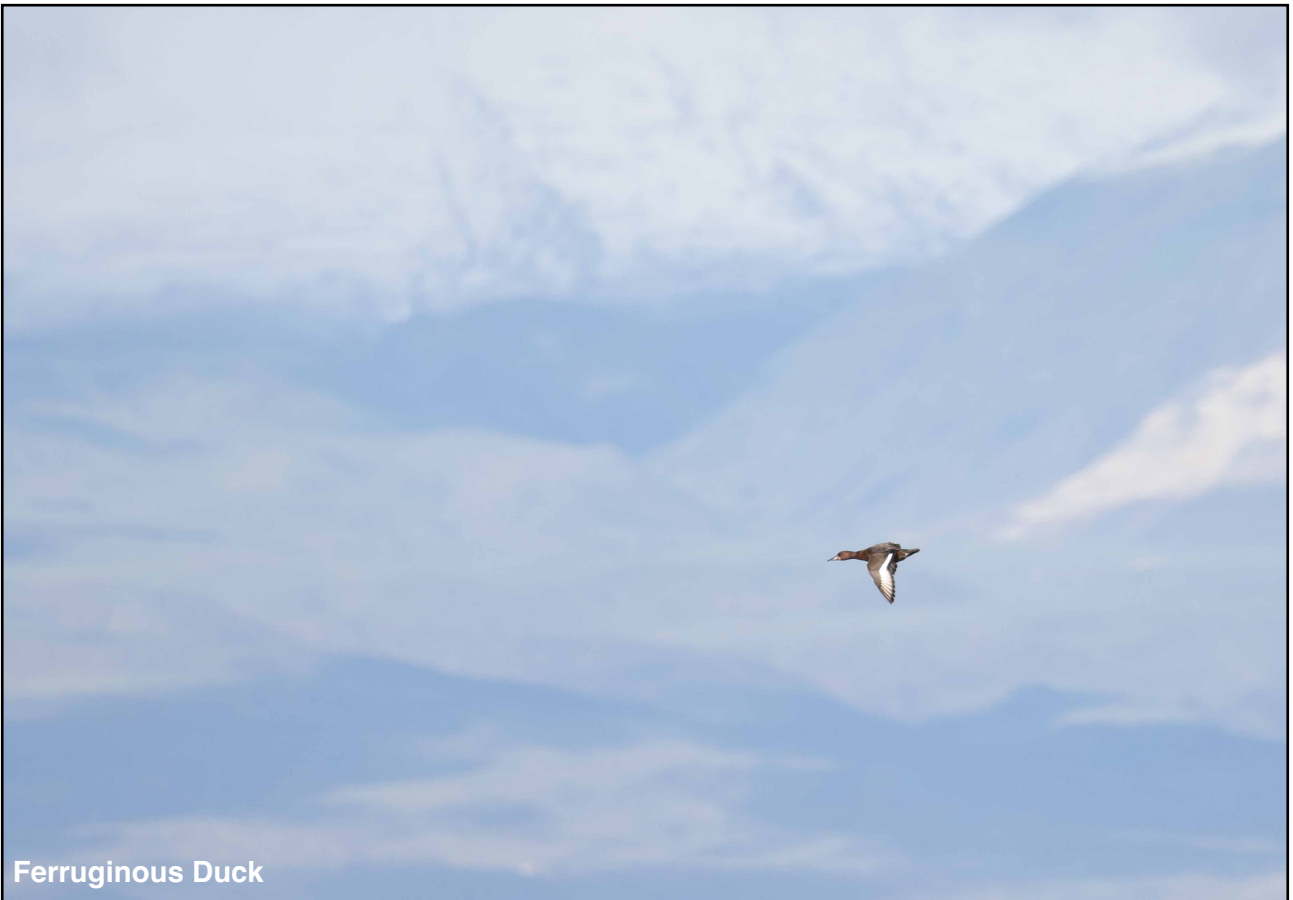
Caspian Snowcock



European Brown Bear and Cubs



Looking from the Oorts Mts towards Armash Fishponds



Ferruginous Duck



Paddyfield Warblers



Paddyfield Warbler



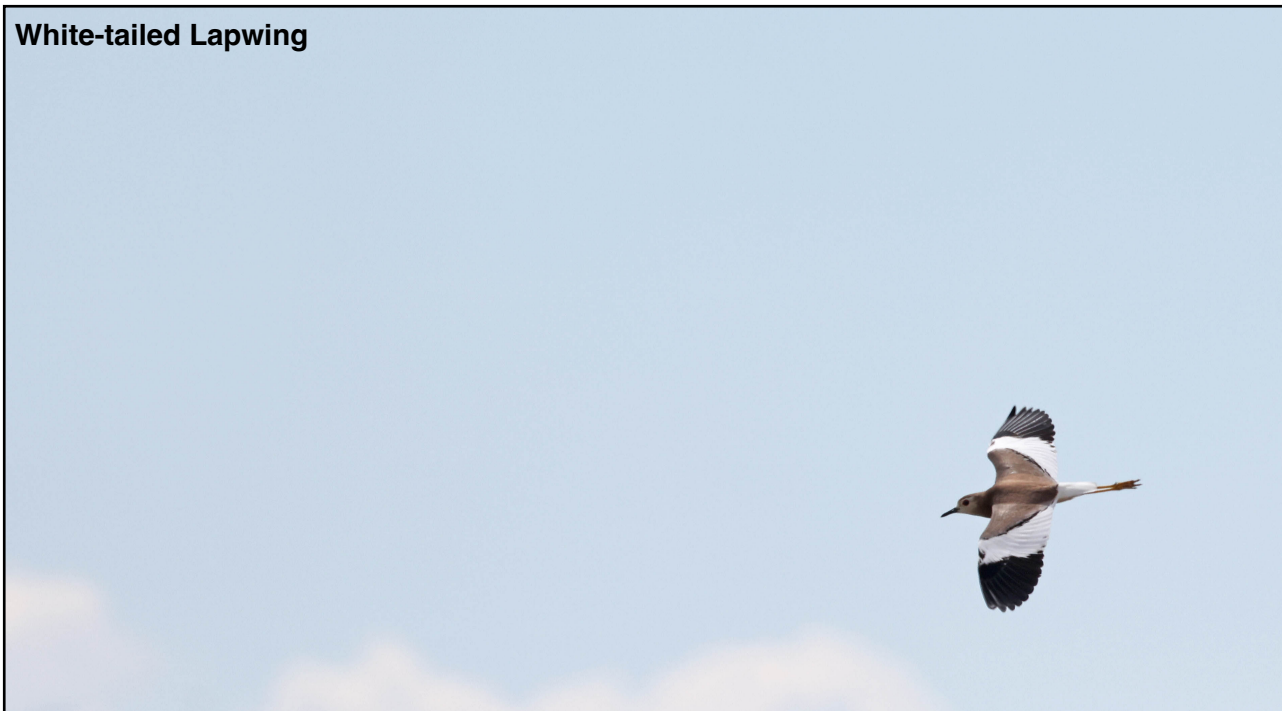
Male Menetries's Warbler



Blue-cheeked Bee-Eater



White-tailed Lapwing



Rosy Starlings





Grey-necked Bunting



Ortolan Bunting

Mountain Chiffchaff



Finsch's Wheatear



Bimaculated Lark



Bimaculated Lark

Lesser Grey Shrike



Egyptian Vulture





View from Mount Aragats



“Caucasian” Horned Lark



Twite

Green Warbler



Male Semicollared Flycatcher

Conservation Donation – Following this tour to Georgia and Armenia, **£150** was transferred to the **Wise Birding Holiday's** central conservation fund.

Wise Birding Holidays has been supporting a number of small conservation projects over the years. However, we now believe that to try and make a bigger difference to conservation it is best to pool the donations from most of our tours into one central fund. Once a target amount has been reached this money will be used to support one single project in the hope of achieving more for conservation. Currently this amounts to over £10,000. Some tours will continue to donate money to help some of the smaller projects that we feel will still benefit from smaller donations. Please visit www.wisebirding.co.uk to find out more.



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The following bird checklist follows the nomenclature and classification from Gill F, D Donsker & P Rasmussen (Eds). 2023. **IOC World Bird List** (v13.1). <https://www.worldbirdnames.org/new/>
The mammal checklist mostly follows the IUCN framework (Red List) but also the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF) www.gbif.org and Handbook of The Mammals of the World.

The IOC World Bird List complements three other primary world bird lists that differ slightly in their primary goals and taxonomic philosophy, i.e. [The Clements Checklist of the Birds of the World](#), [The Howard & Moore Complete Checklist of the Birds of the World](#), 4th Edition, and [HBW Alive/Bird Life International](#).

Total number of birds recorded: 221 species (4 heard only)

Common Shelduck

Tadorna tadorna

A single bird at Kumisi Lake (GE) on the 28th.

Ruddy Shelduck

Tadorna ferruginea

Recorded on four days high count 65. Seen at Kumisi Lake (GE) and Sevan Lake (AM).

Garganey

Spatula querquedula

Recorded on four days. High counts 25+Kumisi Lake (GE) & 20+ Armash Fishponds (AM).

Northern Shoveler

Spatula clypeata

Recorded in both countries over three days.

Gadwall

Mareca strepera

Recorded in both countries over four days.

Eurasian Wigeon

Mareca penelope

Singles at Kumisi Lake on two days (GE) and 2 birds at Armash Fishponds (AM).

Mallard

Anas platyrhynchos

Recorded in both countries over five days.

Eurasian Teal

Anas crecca

Recorded in both countries over five days with counts up to 10 birds.

Red-crested Pochard

Netta rufina

A count of 50+ birds at Armash Fishponds (AM).

Common Pochard

Aythya ferina

Recorded in small numbers of up to 10 birds at Kumisi Lake (GE) and at Sevan Lake (AM) and at least 20 birds at the Armash Fishponds (AM).

Ferruginous Duck

Aythya nyroca

A minimum of 15 birds at the Armash Fishponds (AM).

Tufted Duck

Aythya fuligula

Recorded in both countries over four days with most birds at Lake Sevan (AM).

White-headed Duck

Oxyura leucocephala

A single bird at Kumisi Lake (GE) on the 29th and 3 drakes at the Armash Fishponds (AM).

Caucasian Grouse

Lyrurus mlkosiewiczii

Good views of this target species with 10+ birds on the 26th April and then at least 5 birds recorded on the 27th and 2 birds on the 28th, all around the Kazbegi Mountains (GE).

Caucasian Snowcock***Tetraogallus caucasicus***

Fabulous views of another target species with birds seen and heard very well around the Kazbegi Mountains (GE). Two birds gave great scope views on the mornings of the 26th and 27th in addition to other birds heard whilst exploring the Kazbegi area.

Caspian Snowcock***Tetraogallus caspius***

Excellent scope views on the morning of the 2nd May with 2 birds seen and heard. The first sighting was more distant and we had a distraction of a Brown Bear with cubs too! The 2nd bird gave much closer scope views for all to enjoy!

Common Quail

A single bird flushed on the 29th at David Gareja was seen in flight by some of the group. Up to 3 birds were also seen and heard by some on the 4th at Mount Aragats and a final bird was heard calling on the 5th at our lunch stop in Armenia, close to the Georgia border.

Chukar Partridge***Alectoris chukar***

Heard only in both Georgia and Armenia.

Alpine Swift***Tachymarptis melba***

Our only sighting was of 30+ birds from the Gdauri VP near Kazbegi on the 28th.

Common Swift***Apus apus***

Recorded on nine days. Great to see so many screaming groups with thousands of birds in Armenia!

Common Cuckoo***Cuculus canorus***

Recorded in both Georgia and Armenia over five days. Counts of just 1- 2 birds.

Rock Dove***Columba livia***

Recorded in both Georgia and Armenia daily

Common Wood Pigeon***Columba palumbus***

Recorded in both Georgia and Armenia over five days.

Eurasian Collared Dove***Streptopelia decaocto***

Recorded in both Georgia and Armenia over five days.

Laughing Dove***Spilopelia senegalensis***

Two birds near our hotel in Georgia on our last evening.

Water Rail***Rallus aquaticus***

Heard only at Sevan Lake and the Armash Fishponds (AM).

Spotted Crake***Porzana porzana***

A great spot by Nigel of a bird at Armash Fishponds. Seen well before it sneaked into thick vegetation.

Common Moorhen***Gallinula chloropus***

Recorded on two days but only seen at Armash Fishponds (AM).

Eurasian Coot***Fulica atra***

Recorded in both Georgia and Armenia over five days.

Demoiselle Crane***Grus virgo***

Great to see six birds feeding at Kumisi Lake on the 28th and 29th. The best views on the 28th when the birds allowed close approach for those that chose to walk round the lake.

Little Grebe***Tachybaptus ruficollis***

Small numbers recorded in Armenia on two days.

Great Crested Grebe***Podiceps cristatus***

High counts of over 60 birds recorded in both Georgia and Armenia over five days.

Black-necked Grebe***Podiceps nigricollis***

Seen at Kumisi Lake (GE) on two days with a count of 20+ birds.

Black-winged Stilt***Himantopus himantopus***

Small numbers on just two days at Kumisi Lake (GE) and Armash Fishponds (AM).

Northern Lapwing***Vanellus vanellus***

Four birds at the Vardenyats Pass (AM).

White-tailed Lapwing***Vanellus leucurus***

One of the highlights of Armash Fishponds were a group of 13 birds that performed perfectly as they fed in a flooded meadow and allowed great scope views.

Common Ringed Plover***Charadrius hiaticula***

Single birds at Kumisi Lake (GE) on two days and also seen at Armash Fishponds (AM).

Little Ringed Plover***Charadrius dubius***

Two birds in Kazbegi on the 26th and counts of up to 10 birds at Kumisi Lake (GE).

Kentish Plover***Charadrius alexandrinus***

Six birds at Armash Fishponds (AM).

Eurasian Whimbrel***Numenius phaeopus***

Two birds at Kumisi Lake (GE) on the 28th.

Ruff***Calidris pugnax***

Counts of 30+ birds Kumisi Lake (GE) on two days and 20+ birds Armash Fishponds (AM).

Little Stint***Calidris minuta***

Three birds at Kumisi Lake on the 29th and 4 birds on the Armash Fishponds (AM).

Common Snipe***Gallinago gallinago***

Recorded in both countries with counts of 1-3 birds over four days.

Red-necked Phalarope***Phalaropus lobatus***

A group of 9 birds distantly at Kumisi Lake (GE) on the 29th.

Common Sandpiper***Actitis hypoleucos***

Counts of 1-2 birds in both Georgia and Armenia over seven days.

Common Redshank***Tringa totanus***

Counts of 1-2 birds recorded on two dates whilst in Armenia.

Marsh Sandpiper***Tringa stagnatilis***

A single bird at Kumisi Lake (GE) on the 28th.

Wood Sandpiper***Tringa glareola***

Recorded in both Georgia and Armenia over four days.

Common Greenshank***Tringa nebularia***

Recorded in both Georgia and Armenia over three days.

Collared Pratincole***Glareola pratincola***

The only sighting was of 40+ birds mostly in flight at Armash Fishponds on the 3rd May.

Slender-billed Gull***Chroicocephalus genei***

Recorded only at Kumisi Lake (GE) with 5 birds on the 28th and a single on the 29th.

Black-headed Gull***Chroicocephalus ridibundus***

Recorded in both Georgia and Armenia over four days.

Armenian Gull***Larus armenicus***

Recorded on six days in both countries with the most impressive numbers at Lake Sevan (AM) at a breeding colony.

Lesser Black-backed Gull***Larus fuscus***

A single bird at Kumisi Lake (GE) on the 29th.

Yellow-legged Gull***Larus michahellis***

A single bird at Kumisi Lake (GE) on the 29th.

Gull-billed Tern***Gelochelidon nilotica***

Counts of 4 birds at Kumisi Lake (GE) on the 28th, a single on the 1st May whilst travelling and 10+ birds at Armash Fishponds (AM).

Little Tern***Sternula albifrons***

Two birds at Kumisi Lake (GE) on the 29th.

Common Tern***Sterna hirundo***

A single bird at Kumisi Lake (GE) on the 29th.

Whiskered Tern***Chlidonias hybrida***

Great views of this marsh tern at Kumisi Lake (GE) on two days with 20+ birds on the 28th.

White-winged Tern***Chlidonias leucopterus***

One of the lasting memories of both countries was seeing wonderful flocks of this beautiful species. Counts of 120+ birds at Kumisi Lake, 250+ at Sevan Lake and 500+ birds at Armash Fishponds (AM).

White Stork***Ciconia ciconia***

Recorded in both countries over seven days with many nesting birds.

Pygmy Cormorant***Microcarbo pygmaeus***

Recorded in both countries over three days and the high count was 50+ at Armash Fishponds (AM). No obvious breeding colony at Sevan Lake this year.

Great Cormorant***Phalacrocorax carbo***

Recorded in both countries over three days and the breeding colony at Sevan Lake seems to have increased in size.

Glossy Ibis***Plegadis falcinellus***

A single at Kumisi Lake (GE) on the 28th, 12 birds at Sevan Lake and 250+ birds at Armash Fishponds (AM).

Eurasian Spoonbill***Platalea leucorodia***

Twelve birds at Kumisi Lake (GE) on the 28th and 2 birds at Armash Fishponds (AM).

Eurasian Bittern***Botaurus stellaris***

Single birds seen at Sevan Lake and Armash Fishponds (AM).

Little Bittern***Ixobrychus minutus***

A single bird at Krtsanisi Forest Park was seen by some.

Black-crowned Night Heron***Nycticorax nycticorax***

Recorded in both Georgia and Armenia over five days.

Squacco Heron***Ardeola ralloides***

A minimum of 20birds at Armash Fishponds (AM).

Western Cattle Egret***Bubulcus ibis***

Recorded in both Georgia and Armenia over seven days.

Grey Heron***Ardea cinerea***

Small numbers recorded in both countries over five days.

Purple Heron***Ardea purpurea***

Counts of up to 3 birds at Sevan Lake and Armash Fishponds in Armenia.

Great Egret***Ardea alba***

Small numbers recorded in both countries over three days.

Little Egret***Egretta garzetta***

Small numbers recorded in both countries over six days.

Great White Pelican***Pelecanus onocrotalus***

A count of 6 birds in flight over the Armash Fishponds (AM) on the 3rd May.

Bearded Vulture***Gypaetus barbatus***

Some great views whilst in the mountains of Kazbegi in Georgia and Mount Aragats region in Armenia. Recorded on three days with a max. day count of 2 birds.

Egyptian Vulture***Neophron percnopterus***

Recorded in Georgia at the Marneveli Rubbish Dump on our last day with 8 birds seen.

European Honey Buzzard***Pernis apivorus***

Recorded in Armenia on four days with much lower counts than last year. The highest day count was just 10 birds on the 3rd May and the remaining days were 1, 3 and 8 birds. One of the most memorable sightings were birds flying low over our hotel at Tspatagh (AM).

Griffon Vulture***Gyps fulvus***

Recorded in both countries over eight days with counts of up to 3 birds.

Cinereous Vulture***Aegypius monachus***

Recorded only in Georgia with 4 birds on the 29th and a single bird on our last day.

Short-toed Snake Eagle***Circaetus gallicus***

Single birds at Kumisi Lake (GE) on 29th and other single birds on 1st and 3rd in Armenia.

Lesser Spotted Eagle***Clanga pomarina***

A single bird in the lower hills of Mount Aragats (AM) was the only sighting.

Booted Eagle***Hieraaetus pennatus***

Recorded in both countries over three days (1,1, 2) and all were light phase birds.

Golden Eagle***Aquila chrysaetos***

Recorded around the Kazbegi mountains on three days and also in Armenia on the 1st.

Levant Sparrowhawk***Accipiter brevipes***

Wonderfully close perched views of a single bird at Krtsanisi Forest Park on the 29th.

Eurasian Sparrowhawk***Accipiter nisus***

Recorded on five days (four whilst in GE) with day counts of 1-2 birds.

Northern Goshawk***Accipiter gentilis***

A male on the 4th May at Mount Aragats.

Western Marsh Harrier***Circus aeruginosus***

Recorded in both countries over six days. Max. count 30 birds at Armash Fishponds (AM).

Montagu's Harrier***Circus pygargus***

Two birds including a male on the 3rd and ringtail on the 4th in Armenia. Single ringtails in Georgia on the 25th and 26th were not seen well enough to confirm to species.

Black Kite***Milvus migrans***

Recorded in both countries over three days with a high count of 26 birds moving through the Kazbegi Mountains on the 26th (GE).

White-tailed Eagle***Haliaeetus albicilla***

A single at Kumisi Lake (GE) on the 28th April.

Long-legged Buzzard***Buteo rufinus***

Counts of 1-4 birds in Armenia over five days.

Common (Steppe) Buzzard***Buteo buteo***

Recorded on ten days in both countries. **Subsp.** *vulpinus*

Little Owl***Athene noctua***

A single bird at David Gareja on the 29th (GE).

Eurasian Scops Owl***Otus scops***

A single bird heard calling by our hotel on the evening of the 2nd at Vayk (Am).

Eurasian Hoopoe***Upupa epops***

Recorded on 10 days.

European Roller***Coracias garrulus***

Recorded in both countries over five days with counts of 1-4 birds.

Common Kingfisher***Alcedo atthis***

A single bird at the Armash Fishponds (AM).

Blue-cheeked Bee-eater***Merops persicus***

Four wonderful birds at Armash Fishponds (AM).

European Bee-eater***Merops apiaster***

A familiar sight and sound over nine days with counts up to 70+ birds.

Eurasian Wryneck***Jynx torquilla***

A single bird on the 30th seen by Peter.

Middle Spotted Woodpecker

A single bird at Krtsanisi Forest Park showed well for everyone.

Dendrocoptes medius

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker

Heard calling Ananuri Forest on the 25th followed by 2 birds seen at Krtsanisi Forest Park.

Dryobates minor

Syrian Woodpecker

Three birds seen well Krtsanisi Forest Park (GE) followed by singles in Armenia on 2 days.

Dendrocopos syriacus

Great Spotted Woodpecker

Recorded on three days (GE &AM).

Dendrocopos major

Black Woodpecker

A single bird seen well Krtsanisi Forest Park (GE).

Dryocopus martius

European Green Woodpecker

At least one bird at Krtsanisi Forest Park (GE).

Picus viridis

Common Kestrel

Recorded in both countries over ten days.

Falco tinnunculus

Merlin

A female type seen near Mount Aragats (AM) on the 4th May.

Falco columbarius

Eurasian Hobby

Two birds on the 27th passing through Darialy(GE) and 1 bird in Armenia.

Falco subbuteo

Peregrine Falcon

Seen on two days in Armenia.

Falco peregrinus

Red-backed Shrike

All sightings in Armenia with counts of 3, 5 and 10 birds over three days.

Lanius collurio

Lesser Grey Shrike

Single birds on the 4th and 5th whilst in Armenia.

Lanius minor

Woodchat Shrike

Recorded in both countries over four days with counts of 1-2 birds.

Lanius senator

Eurasian Golden Oriole

Two birds at Krtsanisi Forest Park (GE) and a single in Armenia.

Oriolus oriolus

Eurasian Jay

This distinctive black-capped **subsp** *krynickyi* was recorded on eight days.

Garrulus glandarius

Eurasian Magpie

Recorded on nine days.

Pica pica

Red-billed Chough

Recorded in both countries in the mountainous areas over five days.

Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax

Alpine Chough

Recorded only in the Kazbegi mountains (GE) on three days.

Pyrrhocorax graculus

Western Jackdaw

Recorded in both countries over six days.

Coloeus monedula

Rook

Recorded in Armenia on just one day.

Corvus frugilegus

Hooded Crow	<i>Corvus cornix</i>
Recorded daily.	
Northern Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>
Recorded daily.	
Coal Tit	<i>Parus ater</i>
Recorded on two days in Georgia and one day in Armenia in the Dilijan Forest.	
Eurasian Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>
Recorded on eight days.	
Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>
Recorded on nine days.	
Bearded Reedling	<i>Panurus biarmicus</i>
A common species seen very well at Armash Fishponds (AM).	
Woodlark	<i>Lullula arborea</i>
Heard singing and seen well in both countries over four days.	
Eurasian Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>
Recorded on two days in Armenia.	
Crested Lark	<i>Galerida cristata</i>
Recorded in both countries over seven days.	
Horned Lark (Caucasian)	<i>Eremophila alpestris</i>
A total of 10 birds at the Vardenyats Pass and 30+ birds seen in the Aragats Mountains (AM). The subsp. <i>pencillata</i> is one of numerous subspecies in the world and named by some as Caucasian Horned Lark.	
Greater Short-toed Lark	<i>Calandrella brachydactyla</i>
A single bird at Kazbegi on the 25th and 4 birds in Armenia on the 4th.	
Bimaculated Lark	<i>Melanocorypha bimaculata</i>
A total of three birds seen in song flight and/or on the ground near Yeghvari.	
Calandra Lark	<i>Melanocorypha calandra</i>
Seen on farmland en route to David Gareja Monastery (GE).	
Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>
Recorded in both countries on two days. Notable for the time of year were 1000s of birds at Armash Fishponds seemingly migrating still.	
Eurasian Crag Martin	<i>Ptyonoprogne rupestris</i>
Recorded in Armenia over four days.	
Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>
Recorded on ten days with thousands on the 3rd in Armenia.	
Common House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>
Recorded in both countries over nine days.	
Cetti's Warbler	<i>Cettia cetti</i>
Recorded in both countries. Heard on two days and seen on three days.	

Long-tailed Tit***Aegithalos caudatus***

Three birds of the **subsp** *major* seen well in the Kazbegi area (GE).

Wood Warbler***Phylloscopus sibilatrix***

A single bird at Ananuri Forest on the 25th.

Willow Warbler***Phylloscopus trochilus***

Recorded in both countries over nine days with daily counts of 1-6 birds.

Mountain Chiffchaff***Phylloscopus sindianus***

Heard calling and seen well whilst in the Kazbegi Mountain on four days and 3 birds also in the Oorts Mountains (AM) on the 3rd.

Common Chiffchaff***Phylloscopus collybita***

Recorded in both countries over eight days.

Green Warbler***Phylloscopus nitidus***

Recorded in Krtsanisi Forest Park (GE) and Tspatagh and Dilijan Forest (AM). The best views were in the Dilijan Forest on our final day where 3 birds were singing.

Great Reed Warbler***Acrocephalus arundinaceus***

All records from Armenia. Heard singing at Seven Lake and finally seen at Armash Fishponds with up to 4 birds seen.

Moustached Warbler***Acrocephalus melanopogon***

A minimum of 2 birds seen at the Armash Fishponds (AM).

Sedge Warbler***Acrocephalus schoenobaenus***

A single bird at Armash Fishponds (AM).

Paddyfield Warbler***Acrocephalus agricola***

Numerous birds seen well and heard singing at Armash Fishponds where once again numbers seemed to be high with 20+ birds.

Eurasian Reed Warbler***Acrocephalus scirpaceus***

Recorded at Kumisi Lake (GE) and again at Armash Fishponds (AM).

Savi's Warbler***Locustella luscinioides***

Great to see and hear with a minimum of 4 birds at the Armash Fishponds (AM).

Eurasian Blackcap***Sylvia atricapilla***

Recorded in both countries over eight days.

Barred Warbler***Curruca nisoria***

An early migrant male at the Vardenyats Pass in Armenia was a nice surprise.

Lesser Whitethroat***Curruca curruca***

Recorded on seven days with many birds singing.

Eastern Orphean Warbler***Curruca crassirostris***

A single female at David Gareja Monastery (GE) was followed by at least 6 birds in the Oorts Mountains (AM) including a bird on a nest.

Menetries's Warbler***Curruca mystacea***

Great views of at least 3 birds at Armash Fishponds (AM).

Common Whitethroat

Recorded in both countries over five days.

Curruca communis

Eurasian Wren

Recorded in the mountains of Kazbegi and in Armenia. The **subsp.** is *hyrcanus* restricted to the Crimean Peninsula, N Turkey, Caucasus and N/W Iran.

Troglodytes troglodytes

Krüper's Nuthatch

Great views of a single male in the Kojori Forest (GE).

Sitta krueperi

Western Rock Nuthatch

Birds recorded on two days in Armenia with counts of 2 birds on each day. A single bird also seen on our final day in Georgia.

Sitta neumayer

Eastern Rock Nuthatch

Recorded on three days in Armenia at various sites with 1-4 birds seen each day.

Sitta tephronota

Eurasian Nuthatch

Seen and heard (very different call to UK subsp) in the Ananuri Forest (GE) and the Dilijan Forest (AM). **Susp.** *Caucasia*

Sitta europaea

Wallcreeper

Recorded on two days in around the Kazbegi Mountains with up to 3 birds seen one day.

Tichodroma muraria

Eurasian Treecreeper

Recorded in the Dilijan Forest only (AM).

Certhia familiaris

Rosy Starling

An impressive flock of 200+ birds near the Oorts Mountains (AM).

Pastor roseus

Common Starling

Recorded in both countries over eight days.

Sturnus vulgaris

Song Thrush

Low numbers recorded on two days only in Armenia.

Turdus philomelos

Mistle Thrush

Recorded in the Kazbegi region and on three days in Armenia.

Turdus viscivorus

Common Blackbird

A common species recorded daily.

Turdus merula

Ring Ouzel

Seen very well in the Kazbegi mountains on four days with counts up to 12 birds and then again in Armenia in the Yeghegnadzor and Aragats Mountains. **Subsp.** *amicorum*

Turdus torquatus

Spotted Flycatcher

Counts of just 1 bird in Georgia and 1 bird in Armenia.

Muscicapa striata

European Robin

Recorded only in the Dilijan Forest (AM) on two days.

Erithacus rubecula

Bluethroat

A stunning singing male and a female at the Vardenyats Pass (AM).

Luscinia svecica

Common Nightingale

Heard singing and seen in both countries over five days.

Luscinia megarhynchos

White-throated Robin***Irania gutturalis***

This stunning species posed beautifully on a number of occasions in Armenia with both males and females seen on two days including a female nest building.

Red-breasted Flycatcher***Ficedula parva***

Counts of 1-7 birds in Georgia (3 days) and one bird in Armenia (1 day).

Semicollared Flycatcher***Ficedula semitorquata***

Recorded on three days. A male in the Ananuri Forest briefly, then a migrant male at Kobi (GE). The best sightings were in the Dilijan Forest (AM) where up to 4 birds were present.

Black Redstart***Phoenicurus ochruros***

A common species, particularly in mountainous areas. Recorded on seven days and the red-bellied **subsp. *ochruros***.

Common "Ehrenberg's" Redstart***Phoenicurus phoenicurus***

Counts of up to 10 birds (males & females) recorded in both countries over eight days. Of the males, most were the **subsp. *phoenicurus***. A male in Dilijan Forest on two days showed a strong white wing panel and was presumed to be of the **subsp. *samamisticus***.

Güldenstädt's Redstart***Phoenicurus erythrogastrus***

The weather was in our favour to see this sometimes tricky and very beautiful species! We recorded birds on three days in Kazbegi with max. day counts of 7, 12 and 21 birds.

Common Rock Thrush***Monticola saxatilis***

Two birds in Kazbegi (GE) and then birds in Armenia on two days with counts of 2 birds at Yeghegnadzor and 2 birds in the Aragats Mountains on our last day.

Blue Rock Thrush***Monticola solitarius***

Counts of 1-2 birds in both countries over three days.

Whinchat***Saxicola rubetra***

Recorded in both countries over six days with highest day counts of 8 in GE and 6 in AM.

European Stonechat***Saxicola rubicola***

The only sighting was at David Gareja (GE) on the 29th April.

Northern Wheatear***Oenanthe oenanthe***

Small numbers recorded, mostly in the mountains, on seven days.

Isabelline Wheatear***Oenanthe isabellina***

Recorded in Armenia on two days and Georgia on our last day.

Eastern Black-eared Wheatear***Oenanthe melanoleuca***

Recorded in both countries over seven days, but most sightings in Armenia.

Pied Wheatear***Oenanthe pleschanka***

A female near David Gareja on the 29th.

Finsch's Wheatear***Oenanthe finschii***

Four birds seen well at Vedi Gorge in Armenia on the afternoon of the 2nd.

Red-tailed Wheatear***Oenanthe chrysopygia***

A singing and displaying male in the Oorts Mountains was a highlight.

White-throated Dipper

Recorded on three days in the Kazbegi region (GE).

Cinclus cinclus

Rock Sparrow

Small flocks in Georgia near Kumisi Lake with 30+ birds and three days in Armenia.

Petronia petronia

White-winged Snowfinch

At least 7 birds seen very well near the Vardenyats Pass (AM).

Montifringilla nivalis

Eurasian Tree Sparrow

A relatively common species with birds recorded in Armenia on four days.

Passer montanus

Spanish Sparrow

Recorded only in Armenia on three days.

Passer hispaniolensis

House Sparrow

A common species recorded on eight days.

Passer domesticus

Alpine Accentor

Two birds seen at distance in Kazbegi whilst searching for Caucasian Snowcocks.

Prunella collaris

Radde's Accentor

A highlight of the tour was seeing a singing male at the Vardenyats Pass on the 1st May.

Prunella ocularis

Dunnock

Recorded on three days in the mountainous region of Kazbegi. The **subsp.** *obscura* is sometimes referred to as Caucasian Dunnock.

Prunella modularis

Western Yellow Wagtail

Counts of up to 50+ birds over seven days. **Subsp** recorded were mostly *feldegg*.

Motacilla flava

Citrine Wagtail

Three birds at Kumisi Lake (GE) on the 28th April was the only sighting.

Motacilla citreola

Grey Wagtail

Recorded in both countries over five days, mostly in the mountains.

Motacilla cinerea

White Wagtail

A common species recorded daily.

Motacilla alba

Tawny Pipit

A single bird near David Gareja (GE) and 5 birds on the 4th in Armenia.

Anthus campestris

Tree Pipit

Recorded on four days as migrants and singing birds in breeding habitat.

Anthus trivialis

Red-throated Pipit

An impressive flock of 60+ birds (in with Ortolan Buntings) whilst birding near the Bimaculated Lark site in Armenia.

Anthus cervinus

Water Pipit

A common species in suitable mountainous breeding sites, recorded on seven days.

Anthus spinoletta

Common Chaffinch

Small numbers recorded in both countries over eight days.

Fringilla coelebs

Eurasian Bullfinch

Heard only on the 27th in Georgia whilst in Kazbegi.

Pyrrhula pyrrhula

Common Rosefinch***Carpodacus erythrinus***

Two males posed for us in Armenia whilst birding an area at Shahap.

Great Rosefinch***Carpodacus rubicilla***

Recorded on two days around Kazbegi though it took time to get good views of a settled male. A pair on the 26th near our hotel and 3 f and 1m on the 27th at the mineral pools.

European Greenfinch***Chloris chloris***

Recorded in both countries over five days.

Twite***Linaria flavirostris***

Recorded in both countries over six days but birds were often fly-overs. The best views on the ground at close range were in the Aragats Mountains on the 4th. **Subsp. *brevirostris***.

Common Linnet***Linaria cannabina***

Small numbers recorded in both countries over six days.

European Goldfinch***Carduelis carduelis***

A common species recorded on ten days.

Red-fronted Serin***Serinus pusillus***

This very smart species was seen on five days whilst birding around Kazbegi (GE) and again at Noravank and the Yeghegnadzor Mountains (AM).

Corn Bunting***Emberiza calandra***

Small numbers recorded in both countries over eight days.

Rock Bunting***Emberiza cia***

Two birds at David Gareja (GE) and also seen in Armenia on two days.

Grey-necked Bunting***Emberiza buchanani***

After some searching a male was seen well in the Vedi Gorge (AM) on the 2nd May.

Ortolan Bunting***Emberiza hortulana***

Single bird briefly en route to David Gareja on 29th April and an impressive flock of 60+ birds (in with Red-throated Pipits) whilst birding near the Bimaculated Lark site in Armenia.

Black-headed Bunting***Emberiza melanocephala***

Counts of 1-4 birds in Armenia over four days.

Total number of mammals recorded: 6 species including dead Hedgehog

Southern White-breasted Hedgehog***Erinaceus concolor***

The only record was of a road casualty on one day in Armenia.

Golden Jackal***Canis aureus***

Single animals, both during the day, at Vedi Gorge and the Armash Fishponds.

Red Fox***Vulpes vulpes***

A single animal hunting in the snow whilst in Georgia.

Brown Bear***Ursus arctos***

A total of three animals seen. A female with 2 cubs in the Yeghegnadzor Mountains of Armenia on the morning of the 2nd May whilst a calling male Caspian Snowcock tried its best to distract us! [See video HERE](#)

Bezoar / Wild Goat

Great scope views in Armenia with sightings at Noravank and the Yeghegnadzor Mountains with a max. count of 10 animals.

Capra aegagrus

East Caucasian Tur

Recorded on three days whilst exploring the Kazbegi Mountains and a max. day count of 45 animals.

Capra cylindricornis

REPTILES

Spur-thighed Tortoise

A single animal in Vedi Gorge.

Testudo grace

European Pond Terrapin

Recorded at Kumisi Lake and the Armash Fishponds.

Emys orbicularis

Caucasian Agama

Recorded in Armenia on the 1st.

Paralaudakia caucasia

Caspian Green Lizard

Recorded in Armenia on the 4th.

Lacerta strigata

European Glass Lizard

Seen at David Gareja (GE) and in Armenia on the 2nd.

Pseudopus apodus

BUTTERFLIES

Large Tortoiseshell

Nymphalis polychloros

Painted Lady

Vanessa cardui

Comma

Polygonia c-album

Peacock

Aglais io

Wise Birding Holidays

Bird and mammal watching tours

