

Lesvos

24 April – 1 May 2003

Participants:

Brian and Helena Barrett

Richard Headford

Jill Johnson

Roger and Patricia Love

John and Sarah Lucas

Pam Mason

John Sands

Elizabeth Whitelaw



Leaders: Bob Buckler and Jack Mallinson

Eastern Olivaceous Warbler

Strong prevailing north-easterly winds for the first three days made conditions quite cold and difficult for bird-watching but had the advantage of holding migrants up on the island with a great variety of species on show, but none in great numbers. From day four the wind began to ease, the temperature began to rise and numbers of migrant species began to reduce. An influx of warblers was reported on day five, which included Blackcap, Common and Lesser Whitethroats, Barred, Garden, Wood and Willow Warblers. Flycatchers were in good supply for most of the week but large migrant "falls" passed the island by. The group tally of 169 species was the best ever for Birdfinders, which reflected the high quality of birding skills within the group, especially that of Jack and Richard.

Day 1: Flight from Gatwick to Mytilini and transfer to hotel.

Day 2: During a long walk in the general area of Skala Kallonis we amassed a creditable list of 90+ species, which set the holiday off on a high note and emphasized the quality of birding on the island. Excellent views of Collared Pratincole and Greater Short-toed Lark were had along the East River. Two Stone Curlews on the banks of the West River, a stunning male Montagu's Harrier, a tally of seven tern species, a Collared Flycatcher on the track between Skala Kallonis and the East River gave us a top quality tally for our first full day.

Day 3: A juvenile Dalmatian Pelican on the salt pans and good views (albeit brief) of Ortolan Bunting were overshadowed by Krüper's Nuthatch and a Black Kite on day three.

Day 4: An early start found us at the picturesque Inland Lake where both Spotted and Little Crake were recorded along with Moustached Warbler and Black-crowned Night-heron. The rest of the day was spent traveling to Sigri via Ipsolou where we added some of the island's specialties such as Isabelline Wheatear, Cretzschmar's and Cinereous Buntings, Western Rock Nuthatch and Rock Sparrow. The highlight in Sigri was the Semi-collared Flycatcher at the upper Faneromeni Ford.

Day 5: Saw us heading to the north coast with visits to Petra, Molivos and a scary drive along the dirt track to Skala Sikaminias culminating with inch perfect driving along the quayside. That day we saw Rüppell's Warbler, a distant European Roller and Audouin's Gull.

Day 6: The highlight was a brief but exciting view of an immature Golden Eagle, a just reward for an arduous climb through the chestnut wood at Agiasos.

Day 7: Found us on the Goat Pit track, Upper East River where we had spent some time the previous evening searching for Barred Warbler and a "suspect" report of Olive-tree Warbler. From there we scoured the Napi Valley adding Hawfinch and finished the afternoon at the headland of Aghios Stephanos where we found Sardinian Warbler. A sleeping Eurasian Scops-owl ended the day's outings.

Day 8: A return to the Inland Lake on the morning of day eight held us spellbound with its magical setting and rounded off a superb week of top quality bird-watching.

In addition to our list a detailed and accurate description of a Spur-winged Plover by Jill was a fly-over sighting missed by the rest of the group along the East River. A report of this species on the same day came from the salt pans near Achladeri thus confirming Jill's sighting. We set off for home furnished with some life long, wonderful memories and a good bird list to boot, a testament to the excellence of Lesvos, the birding Jewel of the Aegean.

Sites visited:

Thursday 24th – late afternoon – Kalloni Pool

Friday 25th – Kalloni Pool before breakfast. East and West River walks.

Saturday 26th – Salt Pans and East River before breakfast. Derbyshire and Achladeri.

Sunday 27th – Inland Lake pre-breakfast. Devil's Bridge (Cinereous Bunting site). Ipsilou Monastery and Sigri. Fanerameni Ford p.m. Stop off at "Grand Canyon " on the way back.

Monday 28th – Potamia Valley before breakfast. Petra, Molivos (Reservoir), Eftalou coastal track (Roller).

Tuesday 29th – Potamia Valley before breakfast. Dipi Larssos reedbeds, Agiasos woodland walk and finally Upper East River.

Wednesday 30th – Salt Pans pre-breakfast. Upper East River. Napi Valley, Aghios Stephanos.

Thursday 1st – Inland Lake.

Sightings

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

2 on the sea from Kalloni beach 25th.
Singles on the sea from the salt pans 26th and 30th.

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

3 on sea from Kalloni Beach 25th.
3 on sea from Derbyshire 26th.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

1 on Kalloni Pool most days. 1 Inland Lake both visits.

Levantine Shearwater *Puffinus yelkouan*

Several groups passed Sigri 27th including 7 close by.

Dalmatian Pelican *Pelecanus crispus*

Single juv. salt pans 26th.

Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo sinensis*

2 off Eftalou coastal track on the 28th.

European Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis desmarestii*

3 off Sigri on the 27th.
2 off Aghios Stephanos on the 30th.

Little Bittern *Ixobrychus minutus*

2 at Skala Kalloni Pool (1 seen regularly – taken by Peregrine 3rd May).
2 at East River - 25th.
1 at Faneromeni Ford - 27th.
3 at Inland Lake 27th & 1st.

Black-crowned Night-heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*

1 seen flying over Kalloni on the 26th.
1 at Inland lake on 27th & 1st.

Squacco Heron *Ardeola ralloides*

Seen almost daily at Skala Kalloni Pool and on visits to the East River.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Widespread and seen regularly at Kalloni Pool, East River and Kalloni salt pans. Highest count was 7 at Kalloni salt pans.

Great White Egret *Egretta alba*

Seen most days on salt pools beside Derbyshire, a regular fly over Kalloni.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

Seen regularly at Kalloni salt pans.

Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea*

Singles regularly at Skala Kalloni Pool and Inland Lake.

Black Stork *Ciconia nigra*

Seen most days in ones and twos.

White Stork *Ciconia ciconia*

Seen almost daily around Skala Kalloni and nesting on top of one of the churches.

Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*

Seen daily feeding in Kalloni Pool. Highest count 41 on 27th.

Greater Flamingo *Phoenicopterus ruber*

Large numbers throughout at Kalloni salt pans.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

1 flying along Kalloni beach 28th & 4 seen flying over salt pans 30th.

Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea*

2 on 26th & 30th at Kalloni salt pans.

Common Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

3 on 26th at Kalloni salt pans.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

1 male on the Kalloni Pool 24th – 28th.

Northern Pintail *Anas acuta*

1 on Kalloni Pool 24th – 27th.

Garganey *Anas quercedula*

4 on 24th at Skala Kalloni Pool and then seen most days.

Common Pochard *Aythya ferina*

1 on Kalloni Pool 24th – 28th.

Black Kite *Milvus migrans*

1 seen over Achladeri (Krupe's site) 26th.

Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos*

1 seen over Mt. Olympus 29th.

Short-toed Eagle *Circaetus gallicus*

Seen sporadically for 5 out of 8 days.

Western Marsh-harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

Seen most days hunting at the back of Kalloni salt pans.

Montagu's Harrier *Circus pygorgus*

Flyover Kalloni Pool 24th

Male seen very well at the back of West River 25th.

Eurasian Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

1 on 28th at Kalloni salt pans

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

Singles seen on 4 days.

Long-legged Buzzard *Buteo rufinus*

1 on 28th over Mount Olympus another over Upper East River same day.

Lesser Kestrel *Falco naumanni*

12 on 27th hunting over the approaches to Sigri.

Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Singles seen most days.

Red-footed Falcon *Falco vespertinus*

8 birds seen arriving over West river on 25th. 3 over the salt pans 26th.

4 high over at Derbyshire. Singles on two other occasions.

Eurasian Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

1 seen over the East River 25th.

1 seen over Ipsilou Monastery 27th.

1 along Napi Valley 30th

Eleonora's Falcon *Falco eleonora*

2 possibly 3 over West River 25th.

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

3 on 28th on cliffs between Petra and Molivos.

Singles seen on two other occasions.

Chukar *Alectoris chukar*

1 on 25th in ploughed field along East River.

Common Quail *Coturnix coturnix*

Heard calling on 26th & 27th in fields between salt pans and East River.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

1 seen 24th and heard 29th Kalloni Pool.

Spotted Crake *Porzana porzana*

Single on 27th and 1st at the Inland Lake.

Little Crake *Porzana parva*

2 most days on the Kalloni Pool and up to three on the inland Lake.

Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

Seen regularly on Skala Kalloni Pool and East River.

Common Coot *Fulica atra*

Seen most days on Kalloni Pool.

Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*

Seen daily on Skala Kalloni Pool and visits to Kalloni salt pans.

Pied Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

Seen in good numbers (100+) on visits to Kalloni salt pans.

Stone-curlew *Burhinus oedicnemus*

2 on 25th West River,

Singles at Kalloni salt pans, 26th & 30th.

Collared Pratincole *Glareola pratincola*

1 on 25th from Kalloni Beach.

11 in ploughed field along East River on 25th.

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

Seen regularly in ones and twos in the ditch and sheep field at Kalloni salt pans and the lower East River.

Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus*

Seen on all visits to Kalloni salt pans in the sheep field. Highest count was 6 on 26th.

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

Seen in most visits to Kalloni salt pans.

Temminck's Stint *Calidris temminckii*

2 on 25th along lower East River.

1 on 26th at Kalloni salt pans.

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

Seen in all visits to Kalloni salt pans with 3 on 26th being the highest count.

Dunlin *Caladris alpina*

1 seen on 26th at Kalloni salt pans.

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

Seen on most visits to Kalloni salt pans.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa Lapponica*

1 seen on 29th at Kalloni salt pans.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Small flock on the Kalloni salt pans 26th.

Common Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

1 seen at the Kalloni salt pans 30th.

Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis*

4 seen on 26th & 27th Kalloni salt pans.

Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

1 on 26th, 27th & 30th on Kalloni salt pans.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

Seen daily on all fresh water sites - the most ubiquitous wading bird of the tour, no counts made.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

1 on West River on 25th and 1 on 27th at Kalloni salt pans.

Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

Single on Kalloni salt pans 27th.

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

2 on 25th on the sand bar at the mouth of the East River

Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus*

Single on sand bar at East River 25th.

Yellow-legged Gull *Larus cachinnans michahellis*

Good numbers throughout the Island,

Audouin's Gull *Larus audouinii*

2 sightings of single birds along the track between Eftalou and Skala Sikamenias,

Gull-billed Tern *Sterna nilotica*

2 seen along East River mouth 25th.

Several sightings at the Salt Pans 26th, 27th & 30th.

Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*

7 on 25th at the mouth of East River.

15+ on the Kalloni Salt Pans 26th.

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

Seen almost daily between Skala Kalloni harbour and Lower East River and on all visits to the Kalloni salt pans.

Little Tern *Sterna albifrons*

Seen almost daily between Skala Kalloni harbour and Lower East River and on all visits to the Kalloni salt pans.

Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybridus*

Seen almost daily over Skala Kalloni Pool. 3 birds on 25th.

Black Tern *Chlidonias niger*

1 along the East River 25th.

2 on 26th over Kalloni salt pans.

3 on 27th over Kalloni salt pans.

White-winged Black Tern *Chlidonias leucopterus*

Seen most days on Skala Kalloni Pool and over the salt pans.

Eurasian Collared-dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

Seen daily throughout the Island widespread and abundant.

Eurasian Turtle-dove *Streptopelia turtur*

Seen in ones and twos throughout the island.

Common Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

1 seen flying from the West River 25th
1 seen well along the track at Derbyshire 26th
Heard twice along Napi Valley on 29th.

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

1 on 29th on roof near Skala Kalloni Square.

Eurasian Scops-owl *Otus scops*

1 on 30th roosting in a Plane tree in Skala Kalloni.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

1 at Devil's Bridge (St John's Chapel) on 27th.
1 along Napi Valley 30th.

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

1 juv. on nest and 1 adult nearby on 28th (5 aside pitch - road to Petra).

Common Swift *Apus apus*

Small numbers seen most days.

Alpine Swift *Apus melba*

Small numbers on 25th, 27th & 28th.

Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

1 on 26th at Kalloni salt pans.
1 at the Inland Lake on 27th.

European Bee-eater *Merops apiaster*

Up to 9 regularly seen in the fields around Kalloni salt pans and along the East River.

European Roller *Coracias garrulus*

1 on 28th very distant from the track to Skala Sikaminias.

Hoopoe *Upupa epops*

Heard and seen on three days but only distant views along Napi Valley 30th.

Middle Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos medius*

1 seen on route to inland lake site 27th.
2 seen along Potamia Valley on 28th and 29th.
1 seen along Napi valley 30th.

Short-toed Lark *Calandrella brachydactyla*

6 seen regularly in the ploughed field along the East River 25th.
4 seen in sheep field behind salt pans 26th.

Crested Lark *Galerida cristata*

Abundant and widespread seen every day.

Woodlark *Lullula arborea*

1 on 27th at Ipsilou Monastery.

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

Seen regularly in large numbers over Skala Kalloni Pool.

European Crag-martin *Ptyonoprogne rupestris*

Several seen over Kalloni Pool 25th.

Eurasian Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

Abundant in all areas.

Red-rumped Swallow *Hirundo daurica*

Seen most days - a nest site along eastern edge of salt pans was noted.

2 on 26th collecting mud from track puddle at salt pans.

House Martin *Delichon urbica*

Abundant in the Skala Kalloni area with numerous nests on the hotel.

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*

1-2 birds on 28th along track from Eftalou – Skala Sikaminias.

Red-throated Pipit *Anthus cervinus*

Good numbers in the sheep fields at the Salt pans, reducing as the week progressed.

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*

Seen most days.

Blue-headed Wagtail *Motacilla flava flava* (Blue-headed Wagtail)

Individuals noted along West and East River and salt pan area 25th - 27th.

Black-headed Wagtail *Motacilla flava feldegg*

Seen most days along East River and in sheep fields around the salt pans.

Ashy-headed Wagtail *Motacilla tunbergi*

1 seen along West River 25th.

Grey Wagtail *motacilla cinera*

1 seen along river above Agiasos 29th.

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba alba*

1 on 25th and 26th along the lower East River.

Eurasian Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

2 on 29th in woodland above Agiasos.

European Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

2 on 29th in woodland above Agiasos

Rufous Nightingale *Luscinia megarhynchos*

Heard regularly everywhere and seen very well in the open above Agiasos on 29th.

1 singing in the hotel grounds kept some people awake!

Common Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

1 (female) seen at Chapel east of Achladeri 26th

1 (male) seen at St John's Chapel, Parakila on 27th

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

Seen regularly most days, numbers reducing through the week.

Common Stonechat *Saxicola torquata*

1 on 27th at Parakila Marsh.

1 at Molivos reservoir 28th.

Isabelline Wheatear *Oenanthe isabellina*

2 on 27th near Ipsilou Monastery.

Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*

1 Seen along West River area 25th.

1 seen along beach track near Skala Sikaminias.

(Eastern) Black-eared Wheatear *Oenanthe hispanicus melanoleuca*

Widespread in rocky areas, seen most days.

Blue Rock-thrush *Monticola solitarius*

1 on 27th at Parakila Marsh.

1 on 27th on rocks at Ipsilou Monastery.

1 at Liminos Monestry 28th.

Common Blackbird *Turdus merula*

Seen almost daily in all habitats including the hotel grounds.

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

1 seen singing in the chestnut wood above Agiasos 29th.

Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti*

Seen and heard almost daily around Skala Kalloni Pool and East River.

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaemus*

Many seen at inland lake 27th and Skala Kalloni Pool early on in the week, but became less obvious by 30th.

Moustached Warbler *Acrocephalus melanopogon*

1 pair seen at the inland lake 27th.

European Reed-warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

As above, also seen at Dipi Larssos reedbed on 29th.

Great Reed-warbler *Acrocephalus arundinaceus*

Up to 10 on 27th at Inland Lake, 3 on 1st Inland Lake

Also seen along East River 25th

Eastern Olivaceous Warbler *Hippolais elaeica*

Seen and heard along East River 25th and along Goat Pit track 30th.

Icterine Warbler *Hippolais icterina*
1 seen along track near Derbyshire 26th.

Subalpine Warbler *Sylvia cantillans*
1 on 26th along track near Derbyshire.
1 in Hotel grounds 27th- 30th.
2 on road up Ipsilou Monastery 27th.
nest site found at top of walk through Chestnut Wood 29th.

Sardinian Warbler *Sylvia melanocephala*
1 seen singing on 30th on heathland near Aghios Stephanos.

Ruppell's Warbler *Sylvia rueppelli*
1 on 28th along road just above Petra.

Eastern Orphean Warbler *Sylvia crassirostris*
2 seen and heard singing on 28th along track between Eftalou and Skala Sikaminias
1 pair seen on Goat Pit track 29th.

Common Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*
1 seen most days.

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*
1-3 birds seen most days.

Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*
1 on 26th along track near Derbyshire.
1 on 27th on road up to Ipsilou Monastery.

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*
1 seen along East River 25th.
1 seen up the Potamia Valley 28th, 29th.

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*
Seen regularly between 26th & 30th.

Collared Flycatcher *Ficedula albicollis*
Male seen well on 25th along track near East River.
Another seen well at the Kruper's site near Achladeri.

Semi-collared Flycatcher *Ficedula semitorquata*
1 seen at the upper Foranemina Ford 27th.

Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*
2 on 25th along track to East River
2-3 along track in woods at Kruper's site near Achladeri.

Sombre Tit *Parus lugubris*
A pair seen at Devil's Bridge on 27th.
1 seen along track from Eftalou on 28th.

2 seen along Napi Valley 30th.

Blue Tit *Parus caeruleus*

Widespread seen every day in all habitats.

Great Tit *Parus major*

Widespread seen everyday.

Kruper's Nuthatch *Sitta krueperi*

Pair seen feeding on 26th at nest site in woods at Achladeri picnic site (5 chicks fledged on 6th May).

Western Rock Nuthatch *Sitta neumayer*

2 on 27th at Ipsilou.

2 on 28th at Petra.

Short-toed Treecreeper *Certhia brachydactylia*

2 on 26th along track near Kruper's site at Achladeri.

Eurasian Golden Oriole *Oriolus oriolus*

Seen regularly in flight.

3-4 on 26th along coastal track from Eftalou.

2-3 on 30th along Napi Valley.

Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio*

Seen on 26th along coastal track from Eftalou.

1 seen along Napi Valley 30th.

Lesser Grey Shrike *Lanius minor*

1 on 27th along track from Sigri to Foranemino Ford.

Woodchat Shrike *Lanius senator*

Most abundant shrike seen most days.

Masked Shrike *Lanius nubicus*

Several sightings from 27th.

Eurasian Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Seen regularly in woodland and from vehicle along tracks and roads.

Western Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

2 + 8 on 27th at Sigri.

2 on 30th in Paraskevi.

Hooded Crow *Corvus cornix*

Seen daily everywhere.

Common Raven *Corvus corax*

1 seen over Kruper's Site 26th.

1 seen over Agiasos 29th.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

Widespread and abundant.

Spanish Sparrow *Passer hispaniolensis*

Seen almost daily around Skala Kalloni Pool breeding in the hotel complex.

Rock Sparrow *Petronia petronia*

1 on 27th at Ipsilou Monastery.

Common Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

Widespread, especially in woodland.

European Serin *Serinus serinus*

2-4 on 29th along track near lake above Agiasos.

1 flyover on 26th in woods near Kruper's site near Achladeri.

Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

2 seen along Napi Valley 30th.

European Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris*

Widespread, seen almost daily.

European Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

Widespread and abundant.

Common Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*

Seen on several days. A flock of 12 over the pool on 24th.

2+4 birds at the Ruppell's site above Petra 28th.

Cirl Bunting *Emberiza cirlus*

Widespread - seen daily.

Cinereous Bunting *Emberiza cineracea*

1 on 27th at Devil's Bridge.

Cretzschmar's Bunting *Emberiza caesia*

Widespread in the north and east, 6 counted along coast road at Eftalou on 28th.

Black-headed Bunting *Emberiza melanocephala*

Widespread during the latter part of the week.

Corn Bunting *Miliaria calandra*

Widespread and abundant.

Butterflies

Swallowtail	Scarce Swallowtail	Orange Tip	Small white
Clouded yellow sp.	Cleopatra	Small Blue	Holly Blue
False Apollo	Painted Lady	Small Heath	Small Copper Brown
Meadow Brown			

Mammals

Persian Squirrel	Mole Rat	Common Shrew	Pipistrelle Bat
Beech Marten (road kill near Derbyshire)			

Reptiles and amphibians

Spur-thighed Tortoise	Stripe-necked Terrapin	Agama Lizard	Balkan green lizard
Marsh Frog	Turkish Gheko		