

TURKEY 9 – 13th July 2012

Introduction

The purpose of this short tour to Turkey with Birdfinders (www.birdfinders.co.uk) was to see the recently (re)discovered Brown Fish Owl and to catch up with Krüper's Nuthatch that I somehow managed to miss during an earlier trip to Turkey.

I flew to Antalya before the group from London arrived and was picked up from the airport by Soner Bekir. In the afternoon we did some birdwatching in the surrounding of Antalya. Despite the heat we saw a showy Krüper's Nuthatch and had a swim afterwards before we picked up the rest of the group from the airport.

The group was so eager to see Brown Fish Owl that we went out the same night and luck was on our side: from some distance we saw a nice bird sitting in a tree for a long time. We saw the same or another bird much closer two nights later, after drawing a blank the night before. As you can understand I cannot give any details about where we saw the owl, but it was not at the usual place, the Oymapinar reservoir, where most birders see the owl. Some general information about the (conservation of) Brown Fish Owl can be found on the Birdfinders website.

During the mornings and afternoons of the other 4 days we watched birds in the general area of the Taurus mountains, usually having a siesta at noon. The general area was full of birds and the array of different habitats (high mountains, lakes) produced a wide range of different species. In the countryside I had the best views ever of Olive-tree Warblers and Scops Owl with a supporting cast of Rock Nuthatch, Eastern Bonelli's Warbler, Finsch's Wheatear, *tephronotus* Long-tailed Tit, Cretzschmar's Bunting and Rüppell's Warbler among others. In the mountains we saw Snowfinch, Crimson-winged Finch and Red-fronted Serin. At Beysehir Gölü (=lake) the most remarkable birds were Lesser Spotted Eagle and an adult White-tailed Eagle. .

On the last day Soner dropped me near a rather kitschy hotel in Antalya and I used a taxi to get to the airport the next day to catch the flight back to Amsterdam.

Despite the heat (especially in the coastal areas) I had five days of relaxed birdwatching with many birds seen well, nice scenery and good company. I saw both my target birds with ease and a handful of new and interesting subspecies as well.

I used the following itinerary:

Su 8	train to Schiphol, hotel CitizenM
Mo 9	flight HV525 from Schiphol (06.05) to Antalya (10.50) pick-up airport by Soner and afternoon birding arrival group at 19.10 transfer to Taurus-mountains (4 nights)
Tu 10	Taurus-mountains birding
We 11	Taurus-mountains birding, visit to Beysehir Gölü
Th 12	Taurus-mountains birding
Fr 13	Taurus-mountains birding departure group 22.20 hotel Antalya (Bilem High Class Hotel)
Sa 14	flight HV816 from Antalya (09.20) to Schiphol (12.35) train home

Birds seen

	Subspecies	9	10	11	12	13
Great Crested Grebe	cristatus			+		
Little Grebe	ruficollis			+		
Cormorant	sinensis			+		
Grey Heron	cinerea			+		
Purple Heron	purpurea			+		
Little Egret	garzetta			+		
White Stork	ciconia	+		+		1
Mallard	platyrhynchos			+		
White-tailed Eagle	monotypic			1		
Short-toed Eagle	monotypic		1		1	
Marsh Harrier	aeruginosus			+		
Sparrowhawk	nisus					1
Buzzard	buteo		1			1
Long-legged Buzzard	rufinus			1	1	
Lesser Spotted Eagle	monotypic			1		
Kestrel	tinnunculus		+			
Chukar	cypriotes				1	
Coot	atra			+		
Avocet	monotypic			+		+
Little Ringed Plover	curonicus	1				+
Kentish Plover	alexandrinus					1
Collared Pratincole	pratincola					1
Spur-winged Lapwing	monotypic					3
Temminck's Stint	monotypic					1
Common Sandpiper	monotypic					+
Green Sandpiper	monotypic			+		+
Wood Sandpiper	monotypic			+		
Redshank	totanus					1
Black-headed Gull	ridibundus			+		
Yellow-legged Gull	michahellis	+				+
Sandwich Tern	monotypic					2
Common Tern	hirundo					
Whiskered Tern	hybrida			+		
White-winged Tern	monotypic			+		
Rock Dove	livia			+		
Woodpigeon	palumbus	+		+	+	+
Collared Dove	decaocto			+		
Turtle Dove	turtur	+	+	+	+	
Laughing Dove	phoenicophila		+	+	+	+
Brown Fish Owl	semenowi	1		1		
Scops Owl	cycladum		1		3	
Tawny Owl	sylvatica				H	
Nightjar	meridionalis			1		
Swift	apus			+		
Bee-eater	monotypic			+		+
Roller	garrulus				1	
Hoopoe	epops		+		1	+
Syrian Woodpecker	syriacus		+	+	+	+

Middle Spotted Woodpecker	anatoliae			+	+	+
Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	danfordi				1	
Sand Martin	riparia			+		
Crag Martin	monotypic		+			
House Martin	meridionalis // urbicum	+		+		+
Red-rumped Swallow	rufula	+				+
Tawny Pipit	monotypic		+			
Black-headed Wagtail	monotypic			+		
Grey Wagtail	cinerea		+		+	
White Wagtail	monotypic		+	+	+	+
Wren	seilerni				+	
Dipper	olympicus		+		+	
Yellow-vented Bulbul	monotypic	+	+			+
Graceful Prinia	akyildizi					1
Reed Warbler	fuscus			+		+
Great Reed Warbler	arundinaceus			+		
Olive-tree Warbler	monotypic				3+	
Rüppell's Warbler	monotypic				+	
Eastern Orphean Warbler	crassirostris			+	+	
Whitethroat	communis // icterops		+		+	
Eastern Bonelli's Warbler	monotypic			+		+
Goldcrest	buturlini				+	
Isabelline Wheatear	monotypic		+	+		
Wheatear	libanotica		+	+		
Eastern Black-eared Wheatear	monotypic		+	+	+	+
Finsch's Wheatear	finschii		+			
Blackbird	syriacus	+	+	+	+	+
Mistle Thrush	viscivorus			+	+	
Bearded Tit	russicus			+		
Long-tailed Tit	tephronotus		+	+		
Blue Tit	caeruleus // persicus		+	+		+
Great Tit	major		+	+	+	+
Coal Tit	abietum		+		+	
Sombre Tit	anatoliae			+	+	
Krüper's Nuthatch	monotypic	1	+			+
Nuthatch	levantina					2
Rock Nuthatch	zarudnyi // syriaca		+			
Short-toed Treecreeper	stresemanni				1	
Red-backed Shrike	monotypic		+		+	
Lesser Grey Shrike	monotypic				+	
Masked Shrike	monotypic		+		+	+
Jay	anatoliae	+	+	+	+	+
Magpie	pica			+		+
Starling	tauricus			+		
Alpine Chough	digitatus		+			
Chough	docilis		+			
Hooded Crow	pallescens // sharpii		+	+		+
Raven	corax // laurencei		+			+
House Sparrow	balearoibericus		+	+	+	+
Spanish Sparrow	hispaniolensis // transcaspus			+		
Rock Sparrow	exigua		+			
Snowfinch	leucura		+			
Chaffinch	schiebeli // syriaca		+	+	+	

Red-fronted Serin	monotypic		+			
Serin	monotypic		+			1
Greenfinch	muehlei // chlorotica			+		+
Goldfinch	niediecki		+	+	+	+
Linnet	bella		+		+	
Crimson-winged Finch	monotypic		+			
Ortolan Bunting	monotypic		+			
Cretzschmar's Bunting	monotypic		+	+	+	
Black-headed Bunting	monotypic		+	+	+	
Corn Bunting	calandra				+	

If you would like more information please contact:

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