



## Mallorca Puerto Pollensa and area

**Mike, Emma, James & Holly Cram**

**11<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> February 2010**

**Thursday 11Feb10** *Cloudy, very cold NE wind*

We arrived on time in Palma at 1130h via our scheduled **Easy Jet** flight from **Bristol** (£248 rtn total). Our family holiday began positively as we were pleased to be double upgraded to a VW Touran (Diesel) with **AVIS** (£284 for the week including one child booster seat). Ironically I own one! Finally on our way at about 1230h we headed to the NE of the island to my cousin's apartment in **Puerto Pollensa** our base for the next 4 days. En route we saw several **Cattle Egrets** and a **Black Kite** of note. We arrived at our apartment around 1400h and immediately took the picturesque route along the **Pine Walk** to stock up on some provisions. Along the way we saw the first of many **Great Cormorant** and **Yellow-legged Gulls**, single **Common Crossbill** of the *balearic* race, **2 Sardinian Warbler**, **4 Black Redstart** and **3 Blackcap**.



**Bocquer Valley**



**Booted Eagle**



**Black Redstart**

**Friday 12Feb10** *Sunny early, then clouding over with showery sleet!*

We took a morning walk along the wood **Bosquet de Boquer** and along the **Formentor bypass** to the base of the **Bocquer Valley** and back through town. A **Hoopoe** showed briefly on our garden along with a few **Woodpigeon**, **Blackbird**, **Song Thrush**, **Robin** and **Blackcap**. As we walked along the bypass, I swear I have never seen so many **Black Redstart**, there were scores of them. This area was very productive and we also noted **Collared Dove**, **White Wagtail**, **Wren**, dozens of **Sardinian Warbler**, **Stonechat**, **Great Tit**, **Greenfinch** and **Goldfinch**. Emma saw a **Common Kestrel**.

In the afternoon 1300 to 1500h we walked much of the famous **Bocquer Valley**. It was a beautiful afternoon as we entered the valley and we saw a **Cattle Egret**, dozens of **Black Redstart**, a **Raven** and then enjoyed stunning views of **2 Booted Eagle** (light and dark phase). A **Black Vulture** flew along the ridge to the north and **3 Blue Rock Thrush** were active in the rocks above. As we reached the more scrubby areas, Mike managed to see **2 male Balearic Warbler**. We did hear one singing briefly, but as expected they were typically elusive. As the weather turned worryingly wintry, we retired to the **Codfather** in town for very nice meal and took the **Pine Walk** home again where **2 Crossbill** were again present.

**Saturday 13Feb10** *Sunny clear start, cloudier later*

A visit to the [Albufuera](#) reserve; 1030 to 1315h; south of [Alcudia](#). The children enjoyed the walk and looking at all the wildlife. We parked in the car park near the main road and had to enter the reserve on foot as is the norm now. We were welcomed by the site of about **100 Stone Curlew** taking flight and a roost of **16 Night Heron**. As we followed the canal we encountered the first of several rather confiding **Purple Swamp-hen**. Numerous **Cetti's Warbler** were calling and it was not long before we encountered the first singing **Moustached Warbler**. With some patience we eventually got excellent scope views of singing birds. WE logged over 40 species in all with further highlights being **Little Grebe**, **2 Glossy Ibis**, **200+ Shoveler**, **Red-crested Pochard**, **50 Teal**, **1 Red-knobbed Coot**, **2 Marsh Harrier**, **2 Kentish Plover**, **1 Common Snipe**, **500+ Woodpigeon**, **10+Crag Martin**, **1 Zitting Cisticola**, **2 Sardinian Warbler** and **10+ Chiffchaff**.

As we drove back along the coast just north of Alcudia, we saw an **Audouin's Gull** on rocks near [S'Albufuereta](#).



**Stone Curlew**



**Purple Swamp-hen**



**Audouin's Gull**

Back in [Puerto Pollensa](#), a Kingfisher visited the garden and then we saw Sandwich Tern and 10 Crag Martin during an evening walk.

**Sunday 14Feb10** *A bit dull and miserable; Cold and windy with persistent rain showers.*

**Kingfisher** and **Little Egret** again fishing in the pools in the garden. [Puerto Pollensa Bay](#) was quiet; **1 desmarestii race Shag**, **10 Black-headed Gull**, **3 Sandwich Tern** and **3 sinensis race Cormorant**. We ventured up to the first panoramic viewpoint on the [Formentor road](#) with only **Lark sp** (probable Thekla) **Robin**, **Blackbird** and numerous **Black Redstart**. Highlight of the day, a little touch of Britain with a Sunday Roast at the [Codfather](#) in Puerto Pollensa.

**Monday 15Feb10** *Pretty much rained all day.*

A supermarket visit in Alcudia, the highlight was good views again of the **Audouin's Gull** in flight at [S'Albufuereta](#). Usual birds in garden and Puerto Pollensa bay. Much of the day amusing the kids indoors. Thank goodness for the DVDs we brought!

**Tuesday 16Feb10** *Rain overnight, quickly cleared and sunny all day.*

A visit to the nature reserve as [S'Albufuereta](#). 1000 to 1200h. As we left Puerto Pollensa there was an **Audouin's Gull** and 7 **Sandwich Tern** roosting on a small area of offshore rocks not far from the [Pollensa Park Hotel](#). It was quiet at [S'Albufuereta](#) but we still noted 33 species, the highlights being **Great White Egret, Cattle Egret, 50+ Red-crested Pochard, 50+ Coot, Water Rail** heard, **1 Green Sandpiper, 2 Greenshank, 30+ Kentish Plover, 1 Spotted Redshank, 1 Audouin's Gull, 2 Zitting Cisticola, 10 Goldfinch** and a **Corn Bunting**.

We took an early afternoon walk near the [Bellesreguard](#) complex where we were staying and we saw **2 Sparrowhawk**, a pair of **Booted Eagle** and a pair of **Peregrine Falcon** soaring in the nearby mountains and **Wren, Stonechat, Common Starling** and **3 Greenfinch** in the gardens.

**Wednesday 17Feb10** *Rain clearing am Sunny & calm, cold easterly breeze strengthening.*

Walked to the market in town, observed female **Crossbill** again at [Pine Walk](#).

In the afternoon we walked the lower part of the [Bocquer Valley](#) 1400-1500h. There were 2 dark and 2 light phase **Booted Eagle** and a pair of **Common Kestrel**.

Gardening work back at the apartment meant no birds were seen in garden apart from the regular **Little Egret** and **Sardinian Warblers**.

**Thursday 18Feb10.**

Departure day – or so we thought! We dropped off the car at [Palma](#) airport, checked in and smoothly proceeded to the departure lounge. From there it was a shambolic effort from the staff at [Easy Jet](#) there. We knew that there was bad snow in the Bristol area, yet they had omitted to tell us that the plane never took off and our 1215h flight was now cancelled! 3 hours wasted, it was then every man for himself as we were told to pick up our baggage and continue the long walk with kids to queue for 2 hours at the information desk. No priority was given to elderly, disabled or the several families like us with young children. When we finally got to our turn we were offered a flight home, six days later with the offer of being put up at their expense in the meantime – wholly unacceptable! After a bit of running about and a few conferences among those of us in the same situation with jobs and homes to get back to, we all booked the half hour 1925h flight to [Alicante](#) with [Air Berlin](#). I forked out 500 Euros on the credit card for this. From there [Easy Jet](#) put us up overnight in a four star hotel and arranged to fly us to Bristol late the following day. A long day ended at 2100h when we finally arrived via Taxi in a very wet [Alicante](#). The hotel was nice and we crashed out in 2 double rooms.

**Friday 19Feb10**

We chilled, took early breakfast and watched bit of Spanish children's television. We witnessed a westward passage of **Barn Swallows** from the hotel. We headed to the airport early at 1200h and it paid off as we got the last 4 seats on the 1410h flight instead of waiting for the late evening slot originally arranged. The rest of the journey home was the usual smooth [Easy Jet](#) experience we're used to and we were on our way into the Bristol traffic by 1700h and home by 1900h. The moral for anyone caught in this situation – don't panic, take time to consider your options and keep all your receipts. Our complaint and claim for reimbursement of [Air Berlin](#) flight, taxi, meals, subsistence and other expenses was finally settled by [Easy Jet](#) after a lot of chasing 3 weeks ago, but we're still waiting for the 589 Euro refund to be applied to our credit card!

## SPECIES LIST (76):

8 lifers for Emma, 3 for Mike.

Purple Swamp-hen was a Western Palearctic lifer for Mike

|                       |                                |                            |                       |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Little Grebe          | Cormorant ( <i>sinensis</i> )  | Shag ( <i>desmaresti</i> ) | Great White Egret     |
| B-crowned Night Heron | Cattle Egret                   | Little Egret               | Grey Heron            |
| Glossy Ibis           | Mallard                        | Eurasian Teal              | Eurasian Wigeon       |
| Northern Shoveler     | Gadwall                        | Red-crested Pochard        | Black Vulture         |
| Booted Eagle          | Black Kite                     | Marsh Harrier              | Common Buzzard        |
| Common Kestrel        | Eurasian Sparrowhawk           | Peregrine Falcon           | Purple Swamp-hen      |
| Common Coot           | Common Moorhen                 | Red-knobbed Coot           | Water Rail (hd)       |
| Red-legged Partridge  | Stone Curlew                   | Kentish Plover             | Northern Lapwing      |
| Common Redshank       | Green Sandpiper                | Common Greenshank          | Spotted Redshank (hd) |
| Common Snipe          | Black-headed Gull              | Audouin's Gull             | Sandwich Tern         |
| Wood Pigeon           | Rock Dove                      | Collared Dove              | Hoopoe                |
| Common Kingfisher     | Crag Martin                    | Barn Swallow               | Grey Wagtail (hd)     |
| White Wagtail         | Meadow Pipit                   | Lark sp (Prob Thekla)      | Winter Wren           |
| European Robin        | Common Blackbird               | Song Thrush                | Blue Rock Thrush      |
| Black Redstart        | Cetti's Warbler                | Moustached Warbler         | Blackcap              |
| Balearic Warbler      | Sardinian Warbler              | Zitting Cisticola          | Common Chiffchaff     |
| Great Tit             | Common Stonechat               | Carrion Crow               | Common Starling       |
| House Sparrow         | Common Chaffinch               | European Greenfinch        | European Goldfinch    |
| Common Linnet         | Crossbill ( <i>balearica</i> ) | Reed Bunting               | Corn Bunting          |

**Thanks to:** My cousin Chris Mumford for the loan of his apartment, also to Nev Davies for the loan of his Mallorca map and his comprehensive update of good sites to watch in the area.

If you ignore the unplanned costs of the detour to Alicante reimbursed by Easy Jet, we paid about £200 for the week mainly to cover cleaning, caretaking and utility costs. Add tot his the £284 for the Car Hire, £248 for the flights, £40 for Meet and Greet Parking at Bristol, £30 Diesel in Mallorca, £20 Diesel and Severn Bridge in UK, the whole break cost **£822** plus our spending money for food, personal, souvenirs of approx **£330**.

**Written by Mike Cram (1<sup>st</sup> April 2010)**