

Birds of the Mar Menor

You may well have noticed that there are now many more birds to see throughout the day. Many species are already returning from their travels to Northern Europe.

This week, rather than focus on one or two birds I will tell you about the sightings I have made while travelling around the area last week. I wasn't specifically out bird watching at any time, however if you just keep your eyes open you can see plenty of birds even while driving along in the car.

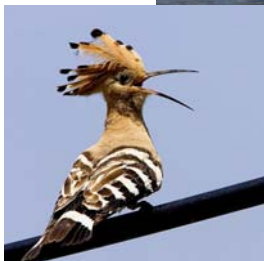
On Monday I took a walk to Caravanning La Manga from Mar de Cristal and spotted House Martin swooping for insects. I should have

taken more notice as by the time I got home I realised I had been bitten to pieces by the mosquitoes. There are so many out there at the moment, even at 5pm you can't go out unprotected. Having been used to a mosquito free environment during the summer it comes as a nasty shock!



On Tuesday we took a trip to the Calblanque National Park with a couple of kayaks. We launched at Playa de las Cañas and then paddled up to Playa Negrete, returning to so some wave surfing.

Driving through the park on the way back two Hoopoe



flew across our path. We stopped the car quickly to try and get a better look but they disappeared into some reeds.

On Wednesday we took a trip all the way to the end of the Mar Menor on our power boat (Bob) to collect another dinghy. We set off on beautiful flat waters and spotted Cormorant on Isla del Sujeto. As well as (of course) large numbers of yellow-legged gulls. The way back was rather less tranquil as the Leveche wind kicked

in and we towed the dinghy through a large swell with water splashing over the boat from all angles.

By the time we reached the sailing club at Playa el Vivero we were soaked and cold!



On Thursday we went to San Javier to collect a launching trolley for our Pastinaca. Driving back from Los Alcazares I spotted a Grey Heron standing by the waters edge on the open land before you reach Punta Brava. It stood so still you could have thought it was one of

those plastic ones people put by their ornamental ponds.

On Friday while sitting on the terrace I watched Monk Parakeet feasting on dates from the Date



Palm growing over the road. In fact I see the parakeets every day and even if I don't see them I can hear them first. Their squawk is very distinctive.

On Saturday driving past the Marchamalo Salinas to the sailing club I spotted Flamingo, Black winged Stilt and Avocet.

As you can see it is worth keeping a record of the birds you spot, especially if you are going to be in the same area the following year.



Lesley Singleton
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