



4-DAY BIRDING TRIPS IN NORTHEAST SPAIN WITH **BIRDINGINSPAIN**

Birding breaks in northeast Spain – the concept

Enjoy a 4-day, 3-night **birding break** in **northeast Spain** organized and led by an expert local guide. **Short and sweet birding** that will take you straight to the **birding hotspots**, but will also allow you to enjoy some of the **best scenery** the region has to offer.

There is no corner cutting in terms of quality with these trips: the price you pay will **include all that you should need**, including airport pickup and drop-off, all transport in private vehicle driven by your expert guide, all meals, accommodation in en-suite twin bedded room in a quality medium-grade hotel, apartment or rural guest house near the birding sites (single supplement applicable), all guiding, fuel and tolls.

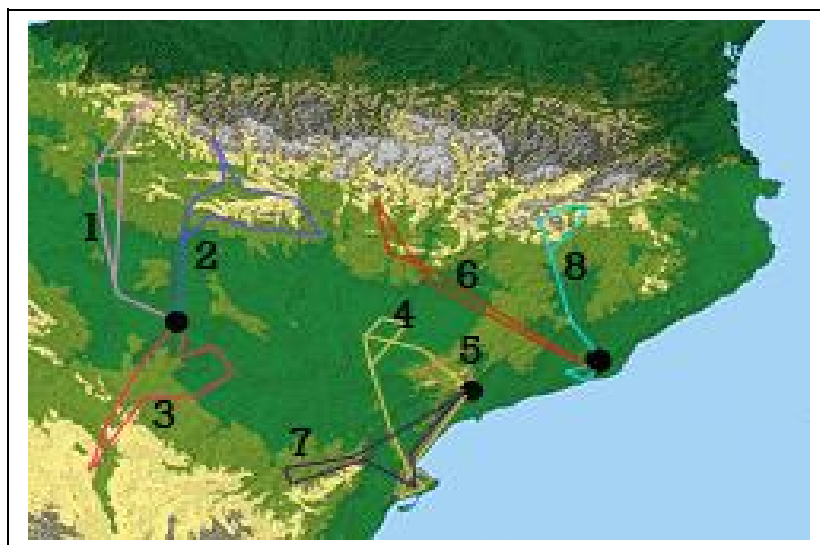
All inclusive, minimum group size 3, maximum 7 plus guide.

All that for the price of **495 euros (plus flights)**

There are **regular cheap flights** from major UK and European airports to **Barcelona, Zaragoza** (UK from Stansted) and **Reus**. The birding program has been drawn up to make the most of the possible flight combinations at the best time of year for each trip.

A quick look at the trip menu

1. **Navarra:** Plains, lakes, gorges and Pyrenees. Return flight Stansted-Zaragoza. Day 1 Friday - Day 4 Monday. *Sep-Nov, Feb-June*
2. The best of the **Pyrenees** and **Pre-pyrenees**. Return flight Stansted-Zaragoza. Day 1 Friday – Day 4 Monday. *Sep-Nov, Apr – June*
3. **Plains and Cranes**. Return flight Stansted-Zaragoza. Day 1 Friday – Day 4 Monday. *Nov-Mar*
4. Wetlands and drylands of **Catalonia**. Return flights to Reus from Luton (Wed-Sat), Glasgow (Sat-Tue), Bristol (Sat-Tues), Dublin (Fri-Mon), Stansted (Fri-Mon). *Feb-May*
5. *Mediterranea:* **Mountains and sea**. Return flights to Reus from ...(see 4). *Sep-June*
6. The **Wild West** of Catalonia. From Barcelona or Reus. *Sep-May*
7. **Southern Catalonia:** Vultures and herons. Return flights to Reus (see 4). *Sep-Nov, Mar-Jul*
8. **Winter wonderland**. From Barcelona *Mid-October to March*



Pack 1: Navarra - plains, lakes, gorges and Pyrenees



A wonderfully varied and bird-rich itinerary suitable for a winter or spring visit. Enjoy the autumn colours of the mountain forests, home of the Black Woodpecker, and easy access to high mountain specialities like Wallcreeper, Alpine Accentor, Citril Finch and Alpine Chough in the Pyrenees of Navarra. Hawfinches and Snowfinches are present in winter, while species like Lammergeier, Rock Bunting and Blue Rock Thrush are present all year round.

Bardenas is the name given to the dry plains of Navarra, and the Bardenas are home to a very different array of birds including Pin-tailed and Black-bellied Sandgrouse, Dupont's, Calandra, Thekla and Lesser Short-toed Larks, Black-eared Wheatear, Lesser Kestrel, Spectacled Warbler and many more.

To complete the picture we will also endeavour to visit a rocky gorge and probably one or more of the many interesting lakes of the area, where we could see Red-crested Pochard, Black-necked Grebe, Bearded Tit, and Bittern, among others.

Day 1: Arrival at Zaragoza airport. Transfer to hotel in Roncal valley, birding en-route.

Day 2: Birding in the Roncal Valley. High mountain and forest species.

Day 3: Birding around the lower Roncal Valley.

Day 4: Pitillas lake, Bardenas and return flight (if time permits).

Your accommodation will be:



<http://www.metsola.es/indexUK.html>

Pack 2: The best of the Pyrenees and Pre-Pyrenees



Approaching from the south the Pre-pyrenees announce their presence with spectacular rock formations and some great birds. In the winter months alpine species like Wallcreeper and Alpine Accentor frequent these warmer, sunnier slopes, which are also home to a wide range of birds of prey including Lammergeier, Golden Eagle, Egyptian Vulture and more. Other warmth-loving species to be found in the area include Black Wheatear, Black-eared Wheatear, Thekla Lark, Bee-eater, Rock Sparrow, Blue Rock Thrush, Spectacled Warbler, Dartford Warbler.

The Pyrenees themselves are not far away. And well worth visiting for birds like Citril Finch, Black Woodpecker, Eagle Owl, Western Bonelli's Warbler, Subalpine Warbler, Rock Bunting, Rock Thrush,

Day 1: Arrival at Zaragoza airport. Transfer to Santa Cruz de Serós via Riglos, birding en-route.

Day 2: Birding around San Juan de la Peña and the Hecho Valley.

Day 3: Transfer to Loarre, birding sites along the southern face of the Pre-Pyrenees.

Day 4: Visit to Loarre castle if time permits before transfer to Zaragoza airport.

Your accommodation will be:



<http://www.elmiradordesantacruz.com/ingles/descripcion.htm>

<http://www.hospederiadeloarre.com/en/index.html>

Pack 3: Plains and cranes



Every winter **tens of thousands of Common Cranes** gather at **Gallocanta**. Their flights to and from their roosts at the lagoon itself are one of the most impressive **wildlife spectacles of Europe**.

Depending on the water levels Gallocanta lagoon can hold some interesting birds like Kentish Plover, Red Crested Pochard and Black-necked Grebe, among others. Furthermore, a small population of **Great Bustard** frequent the surrounding area.

Between Gallocanta and Zaragoza lies the **SEO reserve of Belchite**, set within what is among the best steppeland in all of Spain. We will spend some time birding this fascinating land looking for the likes of Pin-tailed Sandgrouse, Black-bellied Sandgrouse, Little Owl, Blue Rock Thrush, Calandra Lark, Lesser Short-toed Lark, Thekla Lark, and the rare and elusive **Dupont's Lark**.

Other species that could fall within our reach include Bonelli's Eagle, Golden Eagle, Black Wheatear, Rock Sparrow, Dartford Warbler and Sardinian Warbler.

Day 1: Arrival at Zaragoza airport. Transfer to Gallocanta and local birding.

Day 2: Birding around Gallocanta lagoon in the morning. Transfer to Lécera and local birding.

Day 3: Birding around the Belchite plains with special emphasis on steppeland birds, especially the Dupont's Lark.

Day 4: Visit to Belchite ruins and transfer to Zaragoza airport.

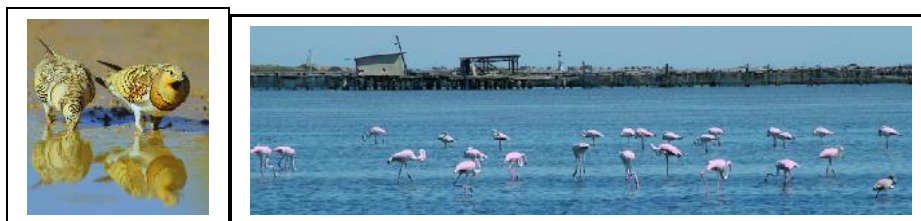
Your accommodation will be:



<http://www.allucant.com/index-en.php>

http://www.rincondelcierzo.com/hotel_eng.html

Pack 4: Wetlands and drylands of Catalonia



There is a very different world to be discovered by the birder at just over an hour's drive from Catalonia's **Mediterranean coast**. Here the remaining **drylands**, all within the province of Lleida, are home to a surprising array of birds, which include Little Bustard, Pin-tailed Sandgrouse, Black-bellied Sandgrouse, Calandra Lark, Greater Short-toed and Lesser Short-toed Larks, Thekla Lark, Black Wheatear, Great Spotted Cuckoo, Penduline Tit, Bee-eater, Stone Curlew, Spectacled Warbler, and more.

Birds of prey are numerous and varied in this region too, and we are likely to see a good variety which could include Golden Eagle, Short-toed Eagle (from March), Black-winged Kite, Lesser Kestrel, Montagu's Harrier (from April), Griffon Vulture, Egyptian Vulture (from March), and more.

Nearby inland wetlands can also come up with a few interesting birds such as Night Heron, Purple Heron, Great Reed Warbler, Moustached Warbler, Bearded Tit, Penduline Tit, etc. That will serve us as a gentle introduction to the **hundreds of wetland birds** that await our arrival at the **Ebro delta**. Apart from herons and egrets local specialities include Audouin's and Slender-billed Gulls, Collared Pratincole, Caspian Tern, Purple Gallinule, Savi's Warbler, Greater Flamingo and a long etcetera.

Day 1: Arrival at Reus airport. Transfer to hotel near Lleida. Local birding.

Day 2: Birding the drylands and afternoon transfer to the Ebro delta.

Day 3: Birding the Ebro delta.

Day 4: Return to Reus airport.

Your accommodation will be:



<http://www.garbinada.com/>

<http://www.deltahotel.net/eng/index.html>

Pack 5: *Mediterranea*: mountains and sea



Montsant is a charming Mediterranean massif, home of some of the most appreciated red wines in the world (Montsant and Priorat) and also some very good extra virgin olive oil!

In terms of birds it has a typical array of **Mediterranean species**, including Bonelli's Eagle, Golden Eagle, Short-toed Eagle, Griffon Vulture, Hoopoe, Bee-eater, Golden Oriole, Western Bonelli's Warbler, Sardinian Warbler, Orphean Warbler, Subalpine Warbler, Blue Rock Thrush, Black Wheatear, Red-rumped Swallow, Rock Bunting and Cirl Bunting.

The **Ebro delta**, one of the 3 most important wetlands in the Western Mediterranean, is little more than a stone's throw to the south. As such it provides the ideal opportunity to combine the Mediterranean birds of Montsant with a **host of wetland birds**. These include Audouin's and Slender-billed Gulls, Purple Gallinule, Glossy Ibis, Great White Heron, Collared Pratincole, Caspian, Whiskered and Gull-billed Terns, Greater Flamingo, and an ever-changing array of waders and seabirds.

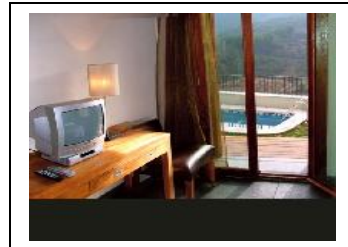
Day 1: Arrival at Reus airport. Transfer to Ebro delta and local birding.

Day 2: Birding in the Ebro delta and afternoon transfer to Montsant.

Day 3: Birding in the Montsant massif.

Day 4: Return to Reus airport.

Your accommodation will be:



<http://www.deltahotel.net/eng/index.html>

<http://www.davallplaca.com/index-ang.html> (to be confirmed)

Pack 6: The Wild West of Catalonia



The **open plains** set against a backdrop of the abrupt, **rocky mountains** of the Pre-pyrenees give this trip a bit of a wild west feel to it. The **Montsec range** in particular is one of the least explored **bird-rich areas** in Catalonia and home to the splendid Lammergeier and many other birds of prey. Close by it is possible to see **all 4 European vultures**. The plains of Lleida are the last stronghold for a series of steppeland birds in the whole of Catalonia.

Birds: Little Bustard, Lammergeier, Black Vulture, Griffon Vulture, Golden Eagle, Bonelli's Eagle, Calandra Lark, Thekla Lark, Stone Curlew, Black Wheatear, Rock Sparrow, Southern Grey Shrike, Blue Rock Thrush, Rock Bunting, Dartford Warbler, Eagle Owl, Great Spotted Cuckoo, Montagu's Harrier, Hobby, Lesser Kestrel, Roller, Golden Oriole, Short-toed Eagle, Booted Eagle, Egyptian Vulture, Western Bonelli's Warbler, Subalpine Warbler,

Day 1: Arrival at either Barcelona or Reus airport. Transfer to Montsec and local birding.

Day 2: Birding the nearby drylands and southern face of the Montsec range.

Day 3: Birding deeper into the Pre-pyrenees, home of Lammergeiers and vultures.

Day 4: Return to Reus or Barcelona.

Your accommodation will be:



<http://www.monestirdelesavellanes.com/>

Pack 7: Southern Catalonia - vultures and water birds



The scenery of the abrupt **Ports massif** is astounding. The birding is not too bad either, especially as far as birds of prey are concerned: Golden Eagle, Bonelli's Eagle and Short-toed Eagle, Griffon Vulture, Egyptian Vulture and even the occasional Black Vulture can all be found here. We will be staying at a **vulture feeding station** for the first night, with **marvellous opportunities for photography**, so don't forget your camera!

Raptors aside we should also encounter most of the other species the area has to offer, including Bee-eater, Hoopoe, Firecrest, Crested Tit, Short-toed Treecreeper, Blue Rock Thrush, Cirl Bunting, Rock Bunting, Subalpine Warbler, Sardinian Warbler, Orphean Warbler, Western Bonelli's Warbler, etc.

The **Ebro delta**, one of the 3 **most important wetlands** in the Western Mediterranean, is just a short drive away. As such it provides the ideal opportunity to combine the Mediterranean birds of the Ports with a **host of wetland birds**. These include Audouin's and Slender-billed Gulls, Purple Gallinule, Glossy Ibis, Great White Heron, Little Bittern, Collared Pratincole, Caspian, Whiskered and Gull-billed Terns, Greater Flamingo, and an ever-changing array of waders and seabirds, depending on the time of year.

Day 1: Arrival at Reus airport. Transfer to the Ports and local birding.

Day 2: Vulture watch, birding in the Ports massif. Afternoon transfer to Ebro delta.

Day 3: Birding in the Ebro delta.

Day 4: Return to Reus airport.

Your accommodation will be:



<http://www.masdebunyol.com/index.php>

<http://www.deltahotel.net/eng/index.html>

Pack 8: Winter wonderland



The **winter wonderland** trip combines concentrated birding around the small Llobregat delta reserves with the huge landscapes of the Pyrenees. The **Llobregat delta**, in spite of its location on the edge of the metropolis of Barcelona and the city's airport, is a very productive area for birding. It consists of a number of smallish **wetland sites** often thriving with birds, including gulls, waders, terns, herons and more; most of which can be watched from spacious, **comfortable hides**. Additionally, a short stint of seawatching can often reveal skuas, shearwaters and other seabirds.

What a contrast to the **Pyrenees!** Up at the often **snowy heights** and mountain forests we hope to find a very different array of birds including Alpine Chough, Wallcreeper, Alpine Accentor, Lammergeier, Snowfinch, Citril Finch, Black Woodpecker, Crested Tit, Crossbill, Rock Bunting, Cirl Bunting, Golden Eagle, Griffon Vulture, etc.

Day 1: Arrival at Barcelona airport. Birding at Llobregat delta and transfer to accommodation in the Pyrenees.

Day 2: Birding the alpine heights of the Serra del Cadí.

Day 3: Birding the fields, forests and heights of the Serra del Cadí.

Day 4: Return to Barcelona airport, birding at the Llobregat delta if time permits.

Your accommodation will be:



<http://www.leseres.com/>

Our compromise:

BirdingInSpain will donate **25 euros** to the **bird club** or **ornithological society** of the client's choice for every client on every single trip and every time the client comes.

So, for example, if 4 members of the same bird club come together on a trip that will be **100 euros** for the bird club, for the club's cause, for helping to fund an outing, or whatever. And if the same people return for another trip then that would be another 100 euros we would donate to the club.

Programmed 4-day trips

The basic idea of these 4-day trips is for interested individuals or parties to choose their trip from the trip menu and then to plan their dates as best suits them. We at BirdingInSpain will coordinate the groups and make all the necessary arrangements once the trip has been confirmed.

It couldn't be simpler! Read the tour description, think of the birds, think of the dates that most suit you or your group and then get in touch with us. We'll take it from there!

For birders needing just a little more encouragement we have already planned the following trips.

18th to 21st February 2011
(Friday to Monday)
Plains and Cranes
Airport: Zaragoza

27th to 30th May
(Friday to Monday)
Navarra
Airport: Zaragoza

23rd to 26th February 2011
(Wednesday to Saturday)
Wetlands and drylands
Airport: Reus

1st to 4th June
(Wednesday to Saturday)
Mediterranea
Airport: Reus

23rd to 26th February 2011
(Wednesday to Saturday)
Winter Wonderland
Airport: Barcelona

1st to 4th June
(Wednesday to Saturday)
Southern Catalonia
Airport: Reus

Feel free to ask us for any additional information on the area and the possibility of a trip extension. And don't forget there is plenty of information on the birds, routes, hotels etc. at the BirdingInSpain website.

Flights

Search for your flight with **Ryanair** by following this link:

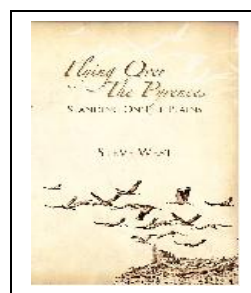
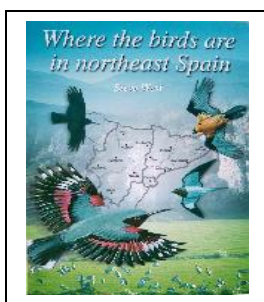
<http://www.ryanair.com/en>

Search for your flight with **Easyjet**

<http://www.easyjet.com/asp/en/book/index.asp?lang=en>



Birder-friendly northeast Spain



Steve West, already keen on birding at the age of 8, grew up in England and studied **Ecology** at the University of East Anglia. A few years later he moved to **Catalonia**, Spain, where he has been living for more than 20 years. Steve has been leading, designing and organizing **bird tours** in Spain and other parts of Europe for the last 15 years. He has been actively and professionally involved in regional bird atlas surveys, and bird censuses, and holds frequent training courses and talks on different aspects of bird identification. He is fluent in both Spanish and Catalan.

Steve is also the author of **two books** for birders

- (i) Where the birds are in northeast Spain
- (ii) Flying over the Pyrenees, standing on the plains

You might be interested in learning more about these two well-received books by following this link:

<http://www.birdinginspain.com/birding-in-ne-spain-books.html>

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