



BIRDING IN SPAIN'S WILD WEST

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Arribes Natural Park, Biosphere Reserve

As the Castilian plateau starts to dip down towards Portugal the climate and vegetation become more Mediterranean.

This is the Arribes Natural Park, divided between Salamanca and Zamora, and comprising the canyons of the Duero, Águeda and Huebra rivers.

The very interesting archeological sites such as the Iron age hillforts or Castros of Yecla or Merchanas and the defensive raised stones surrounding the fort of Saldeana show us something of the Vetón culture, the original dwellers of this area whose Stone Boar sculptures are so emblematic of Salamanca.

Here we might see Hoopoe, Hawfinch and Harriers on the way, Black stork and large populations of breeding Griffon Vulture in colonies on the cliff face. From the vantage point of the clifftops it is possible to see Alpine swift, Crag Martin and Blue Rock thrush alongside Egyptian Vulture and Peregrine Falcon as well as the spectacular Bonelli's Eagle. Sardinian and Western Orphean warblers can be seen amongst the Mediterranean scrub as well as Turtle Dove, Black-eared Wheatear, Bee-eater, Black-winged Kite and Penduline tit. On lush riverbanks and lagoons we may come across Spanish or European pond turtles basking in the sun, and if we're lucky we may see otters playing in the water. The vegetation ranges from Holm oak to Hackberry, Portuguese Oak, cultivated Olive, Almond, Cherry and Orange groves.

All year: Penduline Tit, Sardinian & Dartford warbler, Blue Rock thrush, Crag Martin, Griffon Vulture, Black-winged Kite, Golden Eagle, Bonelli's Eagle, Peregrine Falcon.

Autumn/Winter: Hen harrier, Hoopoe, Hawfinch.

Spring/Summer: Turtledove, Egyptian Vulture, Black Stork, Short-toed Eagle, Bee-eater, Alpine swift, Western Orphean & Melodious Warbler.

This area is a long drive from base, so has an added cost, and we recommend two days touring and an overnight stay in the area, to give time to really appreciate the birds, flora and the wonderful landscapes.

Price 1 -3 persons one day: **260€**

1-3 persons two days consecutive birding: **500€**

4 – 6 persons one day: **80€** per person.

4 – 6 persons two days consecutive birding: **160€** per person

Includes transport from accommodation, use of telescopes and binoculars, refreshments and picnic lunch.

When booking three or more subsequent tours, 5% discount will be applied to the overall price.

Pick-up at accommodation over 60km from base will be liable to an extra charge.

For accommodation suggestions please see Roosts page or contact us.