

OLU DENIZ, SOUTH-WEST TURKEY, SEPTEMBER 2007

by Geoff Hargreaves

Olu deniz is in southwest turkey on the edge of the Taurus Mountain Range mountain range, the nearest town is Fethiye and is a small resort typical of many in the Mediterranean.

Although not a birding holiday by any means I packed my gear in case an opportunity to go birding presented itself. Despite being not rich in bird life I managed to see some 26 species and even photographed a few. I concentrated on three areas during my visit ,the scrubland around the hotel, the natural lagoon at the beach, and an abandoned village a short bus ride away. I made mostly early morning visits to avoid the midday heat.

The hotel and scrubland produced :

Red-backed Shrike, Jay, Collared Dove, Great Tit, Blue Tit, Coal Tit, Blue Rock Thrush, Long-tailed Tit, Blackbird, Spotted Flycatcher, Lesser Whitethroat, Raven, Pied Wagtail, White Wagtail, Blackcap and Robin.



Above: Top, Lesser Whitethroat and bottom, Spotted Flycatcher



Above: Top, male Blue Rock Thrush and bottom, White Wagtail (with a very large ant!)



Above and below: Jays of the race *atricapillus*, with an all black crown and paler face than our own British birds



The lagoon and swamp

Kingfisher, Wood Warbler, Little Egret, Great Reed Warbler, House Sparrow and Water Rail (heard only).



Above: Kingfisher



Above: Long-legged Buzzard

The abandoned village

(Western) Rock Nuthatch, Krupers Nuthatch, Goldfinch and Syrian Woodpecker.



Above and below: Western Rock Nuthatch



Middle, Syrian Woodpecker and bottom, Krupers Nuthatch (out of focus slightly but the deep rusty-red breast patch still obvious)



Above: Left and right, Krupers Nuthatches

I also encountered quite a few raptors and warblers which I failed to identify and met a couple of birders on my travels who spoke of Wryneck at the lagoon, Olivaceous Warbler on their balcony and one intrepid paraglide described a Horned Lark in the mountains. The most difficult bird to find was the Krupers Nuthatch which after two mornings (of almost birdless) hiking in the pine forest were found close to the bus stop/cemetery. It is worth noting that unlike birding in Greater Manchester its worth locating a source of fresh water and waiting for the birds to come to it.



Above: Geoff's viewing balcony complete with all the essential, bins, scope, beer and what looks like his dress?

Geoff Hargreaves, November 2007

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