

RECORDS

2005

December 2005

31 Dec: The **Grey Heron** was again seen in the Botanic Gardens. 87 White Storks flew north over the Rock.

30 Dec: A **Long-legged Buzzard** was seen on the Upper Rock.

29 Dec: A **Short-toed Eagle** was again seen on the east side and at Windmill Hill.

28 Dec: An **Alpine Accentor** was at Prince Philip's Arch on the Upper Rock.

19 Dec: The "Botanic Garden **Grey Heron**" was seen fishing in the Open Air Theatre Pond.

18 Dec: A **Common Buzzard** over the East side sand slopes. A **Short-toed Eagle** was seen catching a snake on the same location.

15 Dec: A **Grey Heron**, possibly the same bird as below, flew from North Front towards Spain in the morning.

13 Dec: The **Grey Heron** was back on the 12th and today, fishing the young Koi Carp at the Open Air Theatre pond in the Botanic Gardens.

12 Dec: A **Common Buzzard** has been present around Rock Gun and Middle Hill for the last few days, and the **Short-toed Eagle** is still present and was observed hunting small birds. At least one **Long-legged Buzzard** is still present and some new photos were taken on the Upper Rock.



A composite photograph of the same Long-legged Buzzard.

R. Wheeler.

6 Dec: A **Grey Heron** was fishing in the pond in the Open Air Theatre inside the Botanic Gardens. A male **Spanish Sparrow** was with House Sparrows at Europa Point.

3 Dec-5 Dec: A **Short-toed Eagle** has been observed foraging around the Eastern side of the Rock over the weekend, and a flock of 52 **Flemingoes** took a short cut and flew west over the airfield on the 5th.

Flamingoes took a short cut and flew west over the airfield on the 5th.

2 Dec: Two **Sparrowhawks** present in the Rock Gun area for the last few days hunting in that area.

November 2005

28 Nov: **Thekla Larks** appear to be wintering in the southern parts of the Rock again. Two were seen today at Europa Point.

26 Nov: A **Sparrowhawk** was seen hunting at Signal Station Road on the Upper Rock. Possibly the same individual has been reported several times recently and may be wintering.

25 Nov: Both **Long-legged Buzzards** were seen near Jews' Gate.

15 Nov: A late **Short-toed Eagle** flew south over the Rock chased by the **Yellow-legged Gulls**, and a **Goldcrest**, a regional vagrant, was trapped and ringed at Jews' Gate by the Hershams Ringing Group.

14 Nov: A **Yellow-browed Warbler** was discovered inside the Carrefour superstore at Los Barrios, feeding on grapes at the fruit stand. The bird, unusual enough to be found indoors more so a rarity like this one was discovered by Ernest Garcia whilst shopping and luckily photographed. It was oblivious to the shoppers flying up to the roof when disturbed and will probably stay at the location unless it can find a way out.





Yellow-browed Warbler at the fruit stand at Carrefour superstore, Los Barrios.
E. Garcia.

12 Nov: A **Great Cormorant** flew south over West View Promenade. This species has been increasing in the region in recent years and is now a regular wintering bird in the Bay of Gibraltar, and occasionally seen from the Rock itself.

10 Nov: Single **Redwing** and **Ring Ouzel** were trapped and ringed at Jews Gate.

8 Nov: Late raptors flew in over the Rock as the wind became light easterly in the afternoon. They included a flock of 12 **Short-toed Eagles** and 2 light phase **Booted Eagles**. A couple of **Red-rumped Swallows** were seen flying with **Crag Martins** over Windmill Hill this morning. A male **Bullfinch**, a local vagrant, was trapped and ringed at Jews Gate, and possibly another bird was heard in the area the same day.

7 Nov: A **Long eared Owl**, possibly the same bird that was ringed on the 16th Oct, was observed sitting on a post opposite the Jews' Gate Observatory in the evening.

2 Nov: The adult **Long-legged Buzzard** was observed flying over town this morning, and has now been around for the last two months.



Long-legged Buzzard with Yellow-legged Gull

R. Wheeler

October 2005

30 Oct: The adult and juvenile **Long-legged Buzzards** were observed in mock food-passing over the Rock Gun area.

29 Oct: Large fall of migrants include 100s of **Black Redstarts** and the first large numbers of **Chiffchaffs**. Also late raptor passage included 20 **Booted Eagles**, 12 **Short-toed Eagles**, 8 **Honey Buzzards**, 60 **Griffon Vultures** and some **Sparrowhawks**.

26 Oct: Strong levanter conditions were responsible for a tremendous fall of migrants with many hundreds of **Black Redstarts**, **Blackcaps** and **Robins** and a good passage of finch species. A **Brambling** was caught and ringed and an **Eleonora's Falcon** was seen chasing migrants around Jews Gate.

24 Oct: A **Tree Sparrow**, a local vagrant, was observed on Windmill Hill with other grounded wintering and migrant birds.

Small numbers of **Skylark**, **Thekla Larks** and **Dartford Warblers** on Windmill Hill from mid-month onwards.

19 Oct: A **Ring Ouzel** and the first **Firecrest** was present around Jews Gate; the latter was subsequently caught and ringed.

18-19 Oct: A **Stone Curlew** was present and roosted overnight on Windmill Hill.

17 Oct: Arrival of many migrants including heavy passage of **Meadow Pipits**, **Song Thrush** and **Crag Martins**, and many flocks of finches, **Swallows**, **House Martins** and **White Wagtails**.

16 Oct: A **Long-eared Owl**, a local vagrant, was trapped and ringed at Jews Gate. A second **Long-legged Buzzard** was seen over the Rock. The bird, a pale juvenile, was later seen accompanying the adult throughout the rest of the month.



Long-eared Owl

C. Perez

12 Oct: Three **Siskins** were observed over Windmill Hill, a very early arrival of this scarce finch. The local pair of **Ravens** chased a third bird across the Bay.

Large numbers of **Blackcaps** and **Robins** were passing through from the 6 Oct onwards with over 100 birds of both species ringed during most mornings.

1 Oct: European Birdwatch weekend with many **Booted Eagles** (200+), **Sparrowhawks** and an **Egyptian Vulture** flying overhead and including the sighting of an **Eleonora's Falcon**.

September 2005

30 Sep: A **Woodlark** was observed on Windmill Hill.

28 Sep: A **Quail** was seen on Windmill Hill.

26 Sep: A flock of 4 **Turnstones** observed on the beach at Little Bay, and a **Grasshopper Warbler** on Windmill Hill.

20 Sep: A juvenile **Imperial Eagle** and two **Crossbills** were seen over the rock; the eagle is subject to confirmation by the rarities committee.

19 Sep: The first **Scops Owl** and **Red-necked Nightjar** of the autumn were seen at night on the roads of the Upper Rock.

3 Sep: A **Tawny Owl** was heard around Jews' Gate at 23:30, and another was heard at the Mount on the 18th.

2 Sep: A pair of **Crossbill** was seen and heard flying over Jews Gate. An adult **Long-legged Buzzard**, a vagrant, was observed hunting over Jews Gate, and seen over the Rock throughout the rest of the month.

August 2005

29 Aug: A flock of 15 **Flamingoes** was seen flying high over the Rock.

25 Aug: Twenty-five **Spoonbills** flying south off Europa Point, across the Strait.

24 Aug: A single **Cuckoo**, a rare migrant in the autumn was seen at Jews' Gate.

21 Aug: Large passage of **Bee-eaters** over the Rock.

4 Aug: Two juvenile **Chaffinches** feeding on Engineer road indicates possible breeding in the garden areas below.

July 2005

Bird of prey breeding successes: **Lesser Kestrels**, 14 nests, with 36 fledglings from 12 nests; two did not produce young. **Common Kestrels**, 9 nests, with 25 fledglings from six nests, three did not produce young, **Peregrines**, 7 nests, with 9 fledglings from four nests, 3 did not produce young, and of course the **Eagle Owls**, with 3 fledglings from one nest.

24 Jul: A juvenile female **Barn Owl** picked up at the North Front Cemetery is an indication of breeding either on the Rock or in nearby Spain.

23 Jul: Single **Southern Grey Shrike** on Windmill Hill.

17 Jul: Southward raptor passage commences with 4 **Black Kites**.

13-14 Jul: Early single **Hoopoes**.

1 Jul: A recently fledged juvenile **Robin** ringed at Jews' Gate. This and an adult a few weeks earlier strongly suggest nesting.

June 2005

25 Jun: A (presumably juvenile) **White Wagtail** was feeding among shoppers in the lobby of Morrisons Supermarket near West View Park.

24 Jun: Groups of **Griffon Vultures** have been passing north over Gibraltar on most days of Westerlies in June.

Barn Swallows were feeding two recently fledged young on the foreshore at Europa Point, the same location as in 2004.

15 Jun: A juvenile **White Wagtail** was seen at Montagu Gardens.

Fledgling **Peregrine Falcons** and **Eagle Owls** are now in evidence in various areas - a full count of young Peregrines will be made once again this year.

Fourteen **Lesser Kestrel** nests have been counted on the North Face of the Rock, not all showing evidence of young. Full count soon.

May 2005

16 May: A **White Wagtail** was seen at West View Park, Gibraltar, the site at which they nested for the first time in 2004. While there is no firm evidence of nesting this year, the presence of the bird at this time does suggest the possibility.

17 May: 2 adult **Spoonbills** flying north over Jews' Gate, Gibraltar, having been seen entering the Bay from the south.

14 May: 1 **Rufous Bush Robin** seen at Windmill Hill Flats, Gibraltar.

12 May: Two **Red-necked Nightjars** seen on the Upper Rock, Gibraltar.

4 May: Passage of raptors included a **Black Vulture** (the third for the spring), a **Black-shouldered Kite** and a **Red Kite**.

3 May: Birds ringed at Jews' Gate included a **Corn Bunting** with a brood patch, the first suggestion of nesting for at least 30 years.

2 May: Raptor passage at Gibraltar included 2000 **Black Kites**, 600 **Honey Buzzards** and 66 **Griffon Vultures**.

April 2005

28 Apr: A Male **Seebohm's Wheatear** was at Windmill Hill Flats, Gibraltar. Seen clearly and photographed by Keith Bensusan. This North African bird was in the company of **Northern Wheatears** and even got to sing some phrases of song.

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("Accepted by the Strait of Gibraltar Bird Observatory's Rarities Committee".)



The Seeborn's Wheatear at Windmill Hill.

K. Bensusan

20 Apr: A **Black Vulture** and the second **Honey Buzzard** seen over Gibraltar.

19 Apr: A **Black Vulture** and the first **Honey Buzzard** of the season seen over Jews' Gate.

16 Apr: CONFIRMED NESTING BY **EAGLE OWLS** IN GIBRALTAR. THREE YOUNG SEEN IN NEST HOLE, WITH ADULT MALE AND FEMALE IN PROXIMITY. First nesting confirmed for over 80 years.

7 Apr: Ninety-five birds were ringed at Jews' Gate, including 5 **Nightingales**, 6 **Subalpine Warblers**, 32 **Willow Warblers**, 3 **Woodchat Shrikes** and, most notably, a **Wood Warbler**.

4 Apr: Among the 26 birds ringed at Jews' Gate were 2 **Bee-eaters**, a **Nightingale** and 3 **Bonelli's Warblers**.

2 Apr: A flock of 30 **Audouin's Gulls** resting on Europa Point sports ground.

1 Apr: Three **Slender-billed Gulls** at Europa Point, eventually moving west. Also 5 **Mediterranean Gulls** and 400 **Puffins** flying west in one hour's watch.

March 2005

30 Mar: 186 **Puffins** were counted flying west past Europa Point in two and a half hours watch. A **Scops Owl** was seen at Jews' Gate.

24 Mar: 110 **Puffins** were counted flying west past Europa Point in two and a half hours watch.

23 Mar: Four **Turnstones** were on the rocks below Europa Point.

22 Mar: Birds seen at north Front Cemetery included 18 **Willow Warblers**, 15 **Chiffchaffs**, 12 **Woodchat Shrikes**, 14 **Subalpine Warblers**, 2 **Common Redstarts** and a **Song Thrush**.

21 Mar: Birds at Windmill Hill Flats included 20 **Chiffchaffs**, 6 **Willow Warblers**, a **Subalpine Warbler**, a **Whitethroat**, a **Northern Wheatear**, 3 **Hoopoes** and a **Wryneck**.

20 Mar: Birds ringed at Jews' Gate included 1 **Redwing**, a **Firecrest**, a **Subalpine Warbler**, 3 **Iberian Chiffchaffs**, 4 **Willow Warblers** and 2 **Hoopoes**. Two **Tree Pipits** were also at Jews' Gate. Over 600 **Black Kites** were among the raptors seen, together with **Marsh Harriers** and **Egyptian Vultures**.

19 Mar: Birds at the North Front Cemetery included over 100 **Chiffchaffs**, 20 **Willow Warblers**, 2 **Spectacled Warblers**, 3 **Common Redstarts**, a **Woodlark**, a **Corn Bunting** and a **Common Wheatear**. A **Tree Pipit** was seen at Jews' Gate, while birds ringed at that site included an **Orphean Warbler**, a **Nightingale**, a **Subalpine Warbler** and 3 **Iberian Chiffchaffs**. The first **Orphean Warbler** of the year ringed at Jews' Gate.

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18 Mar: A **Black-eared Wheatear** and a **Common Redstart** at North Front Cemetery.

13 Mar: 14 **Cranes** were seen flying north from over Jews' Gate.

12 Mar: A female **Bullfinch** was ringed at Jews' Gate.

11 Mar: The first **Willow Warbler** and **Spectacled Warbler** of the season were ringed at Jews' Gate. The first (2) **Subalpine Warblers** were seen at North Front Cemetery (where there were also 44 **Common Chiffchaffs**) and the first **Common Redstart** at Windmill Hill Flats.

7 Mar: A **Stone Curlew** at Windmill Hill, Gibraltar.

4 Mar: Evidence of a fall of early spring migrants. Birds at Europa Point included 8 Stonechats, 8 **Black Redstarts**, 6 **Meadow Pipits** and 3 **Hoopoes**. Nine **House Martins** flew north overhead and 5 **Mediterranean Gulls** were seen below the Point. At Windmill Hill Flats birds seen included 6 **Hoopoes**, 1 **Cuckoo**, 19 **Skylarks**, 1 **Common Starling**, 25 **Stonechats**, 19 **Song Thrushes**, 4 **Redwing** and 2 **Corn Buntings**. A **Pallid Swift** was also seen overhead and a flock of 80 **Alpine Swifts** flew north over Jews' Gate.

2 Mar: A third **Great Spotted Cuckoo** was handed in poor condition, having flown into a building in Town possibly also on 28 Feb. One was seen flying free and well at Jews' Gate, as was a Hoopoe. A Black-necked Grebe was offshore in the Bay by La Linea just north of Gibraltar.

1 Mar: 8 **Great Skuas** at Europa Point. Also 50 **Razorbills** flying east, presumably heading back into the Mediterranean after having been displaced by the easterly storm. 1 Hoopoe at the Gibraltar Botanic Gardens

February 2005

28 Feb: During a fierce easterly storm 600 **Cory's Shearwaters** were counted flying east past Europa Point in a 40min watch. A **Little Gull** was also present. Two **Great Spotted Cuckoos** were handed in poor condition having flown into buildings in Gibraltar town. One recovered fully and was subsequently ringed and released.

24 Feb: A **Great Spotted Cuckoo** at Windmill Hill Flats, Gibraltar.

22 Feb: A **Cetti's Warbler** at Windmill Hill Flats, Gibraltar.

17 Feb: A **Long-tailed Tit** was caught again at Jews' Gate ringing station. At the other end of the (size) scale, a female **Eagle Owl** was seen at the now usual site on the north-east cliff of the Rock. It emerged from the same recess as a male was seen some months ago, and thus the presence of a pair is strongly suggested.

14 Feb: Six **Hoopoes** on the Upper Rock were the first in Gibraltar for the spring.

8 Feb: A **Great Spotted Cuckoo** was seen in the Gibraltar Botanic Gardens.

7 Feb: A **Great Spotted Cuckoo** was at Jews' Gate.

2 Feb: A **Common Buzzard** seen over the Rock. **Two Long-tailed Tits** recaptured at Jews' Gate ringing station where the spring effort has already started. At least one other was in the area.

January 2005

30 Jan: Two **Black Kites** and a **Griffon Vulture** over Gibraltar. Several small groups of Lapwing also seen.

27 Jan: A **Short-toed Treecreeper** at the Gibraltar Botanic Gardens. A **Red-rumped Swallow** seen over Gibraltar.

26 Jan: A **Siskin** was seen at the Gibraltar Botanic Gardens. A **Griffon Vulture** and a **Black Kite** seen over the Rock, the latter clearly a migrant. Also an Alpine Accentor at the top of the Rock, and there was a notable increase in the number of **Robins** and **Black Redstarts** present.

19 Jan: A male **Lesser Kestrel** circling over the frontier - probably from the colony on the North Face of the Rock.

18 Jan: A light phase **Booted Eagle** hunting over the Rock, while the first migrant **Black Kite** was seen flying north over Gibraltar.

13 Jan: A **Cattle Egret** flew over the Gibraltar Botanic Gardens, a new bird for the Garden list. This may be the same individual seen throughout the winter near the rubbish dump at Europa. One (possibly the same one again), has also been seen regularly on the restored Great Sand Slopes on the east side of the Rock since 31 December.

Please send any records to cperez (at) gonhs.org or post them to Charles Perez, Bird Recorder, P.O. Box 843 Gibraltar.