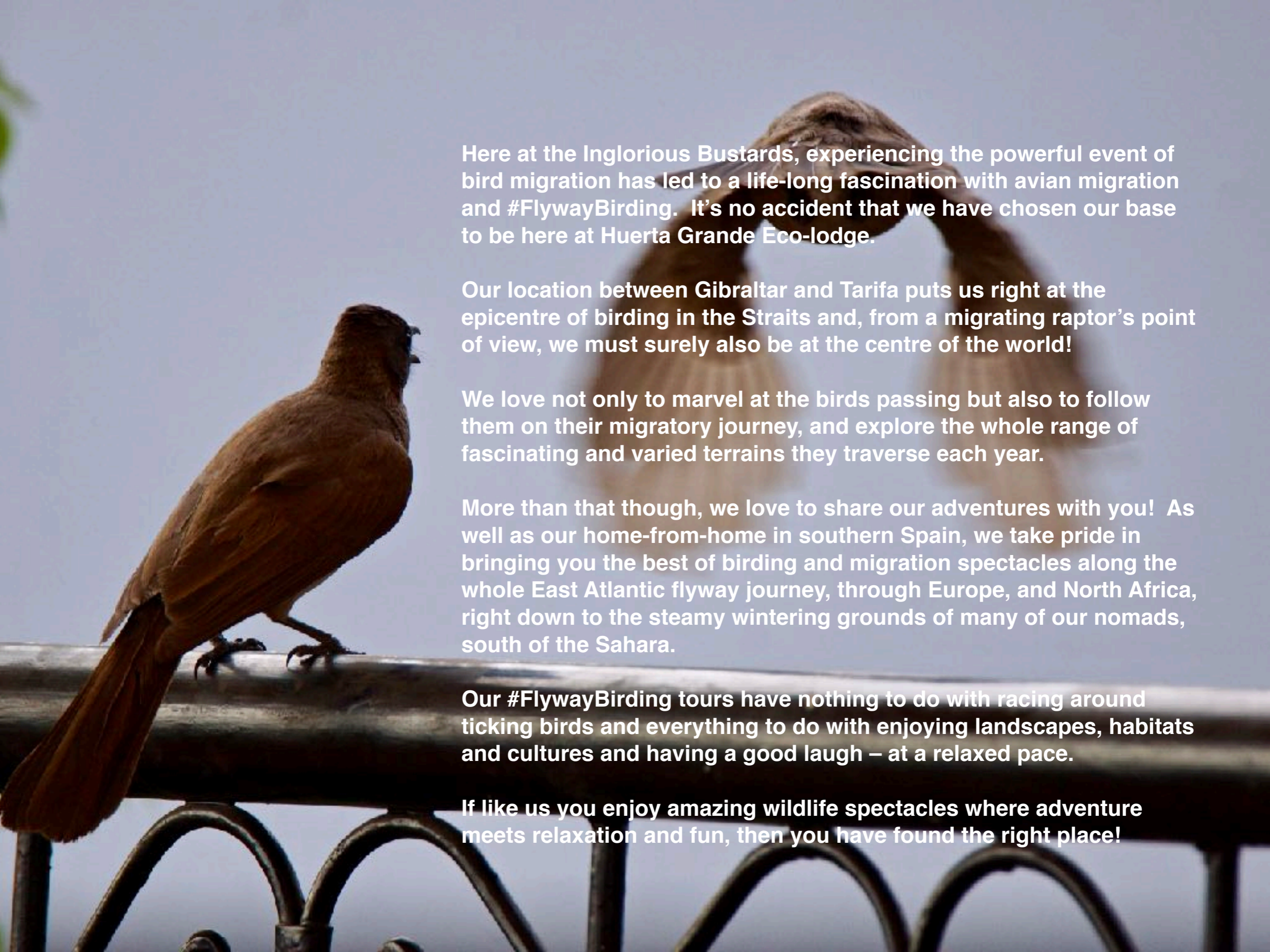


Inglorious Bustards

Birding, Wildlife Tours and Conservation



Tours 2018



Here at the Inglorious Bustards, experiencing the powerful event of bird migration has led to a life-long fascination with avian migration and #FlywayBirding. It's no accident that we have chosen our base to be here at Huerta Grande Eco-lodge.

Our location between Gibraltar and Tarifa puts us right at the epicentre of birding in the Straits and, from a migrating raptor's point of view, we must surely also be at the centre of the world!

We love not only to marvel at the birds passing but also to follow them on their migratory journey, and explore the whole range of fascinating and varied terrains they traverse each year.

More than that though, we love to share our adventures with you! As well as our home-from-home in southern Spain, we take pride in bringing you the best of birding and migration spectacles along the whole East Atlantic flyway journey, through Europe, and North Africa, right down to the steamy wintering grounds of many of our nomads, south of the Sahara.

Our #FlywayBirding tours have nothing to do with racing around ticking birds and everything to do with enjoying landscapes, habitats and cultures and having a good laugh – at a relaxed pace.

If like us you enjoy amazing wildlife spectacles where adventure meets relaxation and fun, then you have found the right place!

“Booking with us doesn’t involve us sending you! We take you! Adventure, together!”



Who are the Bustards ?



Simon was raised in Plymouth and legend has it he was found on a rubbish tip being raised by Gulls. Truth is, it all started when, at nine years old, his enthrallment with the natural world led him to sneak out with his father's massive binoculars at first light, returning home many hours after dark covered in estuarine mud and other indescribable detritus, to face the music!

Fulfilling a boyhood dream, Simon has worked for the RSPB full-time for many years; the first projects he was involved in were to protect breeding Hen Harriers and Bee-eaters in the North of England. Simon has lectured in ornithology, specialising in a variety of subjects including bird ethology, migration and bird populations. He has worked in farmland bird conservation for the last 15 years and recently worked at the RSPB's headquarters in Sandy. Simon has conducted research on Corn Bunting crop nest site selection and on the seed palatability of farmland granivores.

He also co-launched *Operation Turtle Dove*, co-ordinating efforts in the UK and internationally to save the species from extirpation. Simon has worked as the Conservation Manager for Conservation Grade, working on ground-breaking and exciting conservation projects in Spain, Portugal, Central America, Morocco, Senegal and the Gambia and is widely travelled in these countries, being particularly familiar with their avifauna, lepidoptera and mammalian species.

Niki was given a YOC (Young Ornithologist Club) membership for her 6th birthday, and has loved nature ever since. Somehow, Niki has managed to remain a member of the RSPB Wildlife Explorers under 9's to this day, and has found her intellectual level in the Rookie cartoons.

Describing herself as a professional tree-hugger, Niki worked and volunteered for the RSPB for 12 years, managing habitats, brandishing chainsaws with varying levels of threat to limbs (her own and others) and honing her birding skills in some of the best wetland, upland and coastal habitats in the UK.

In recent years she had the pleasure of working with nature-friendly farmers to make the countryside a better place for wildlife. Latterly she headed up RSPB's Eastern England farmland advisory team which, together with the other partners in Operation Turtle Dove, is working to ensure a future for this iconic bird.

Niki is one of the original members of #teampeanut – a crack troop of A-team style conservationists looking at ways in which West African peanut growers can not only provide peanuts for your birdfood but also provide habitats for struggling migratory species including Turtle Doves through Fair to Nature accreditation.

Seeing first hand the challenges faced by journeying birds all across the flyway has given Niki a deep passion for the epic spectacle of migration.



Our Tours

Booking is not a drawn out process, we have made it easy ! Simply email us with your preferred tour and dates and we will send out the relevant tour information and forms for you to complete.

We are pleased to advise you of relevant flights ideally from your chosen departure airport, contact us and we will be happy to provide you with options relevant to your tour. When emailing us to book your tour simply state your preferred departure airport.

Once you arrive at the airport we will pick you up (unless you have made alternative arrangements) and our adventure will begin!

Our dates are flexible and our prices are competitive, meaning we can tailor our tours to your budget, Find the tour that most interests you for prices and more details or simply contact us to find out more.

All days out come complete with a delicious lunchtime picnic including locally sourced wines and beers, cheeses and meats with freshly baked bread each day. Where possible we buy direct from local conservation projects we work with, so your food comes with a conservation story too. We make sure you can be sipping wine and enjoying local delicacies in the field whilst still enjoying great scenery and wonderful wildlife, rather than being cooped up in a restaurant dipping lifers while waiting for the bill!



Birding Two Continents

A Red-capped Manikin bird is perched on a dry, brown branch. The bird has a black cap with a white stripe, a black throat, and a bright orange-red body. The background is a soft, out-of-focus landscape with more dry branches and a light sky.

8 days – 5th September – 12th September 2017

8 days – 20th April – 27th April 2018 – NOW FULL

8 Days 5th October – 12th October 2018

£1,100 for 8 days – price includes all accommodation, meals, guiding, transportation, ferries, taxes and entrances but excludes flights.

Single supplement: £180

Deposit: £220 (payable upon booking).

We recognise this is a popular tour therefore additional dates are available upon request for private groups and individuals during Spring (March, April, May and June) Autumn (August, September and October). Contact us for more information.

Legend has it that Hercules used his incredible strength to separate the continents of Europe and Africa, creating the Straits of Gibraltar. The Inglorious Bustards are all set to use our outstanding local knowledge and expertise to bring them back together for you! This is our feature specialist tour, and our experience of the area and local contacts mean we can take you where other guides fear to tread.

The point at which Africa and Europe meet is also the epicentre for one of the world's most spectacular bird migrations. Every year, millions of birds make the 14 km journey across the Straits of Gibraltar, making use of uplifts and thermals rising off the Rock of Gibraltar and the stunning Moroccan peak of Jebel Musa. An estimated 250,000 raptors pass over this rugged terrain during these periods, as well as untold thousands of other journeying passerines and seabirds.

On this trip we will experience the very best of two continents from cracking locations in both Spain and Morocco. As well as being at the heart of the thrilling migration spectacle, we will look for Marsh Owls, Northern Bald Ibis and Barbary Macaques as well as the seabirds and cetaceans of the Straits on a boat excursion and Moroccan specialities in both mountain and wetland sites.

There'll be plenty of time to really enjoy the cultural differences too – one day you'll be sharing tapas by the sea, the next you'll be sipping mint tea on a rooftop!

Strait Birding & Cetaceans

7 Days – 27th August – 2nd September 2017 – NOW FULL

7 days – 9th March – 15th March 2018

7 days – 21st August – 27th August 2018

£900 for 7 days

£180 deposit

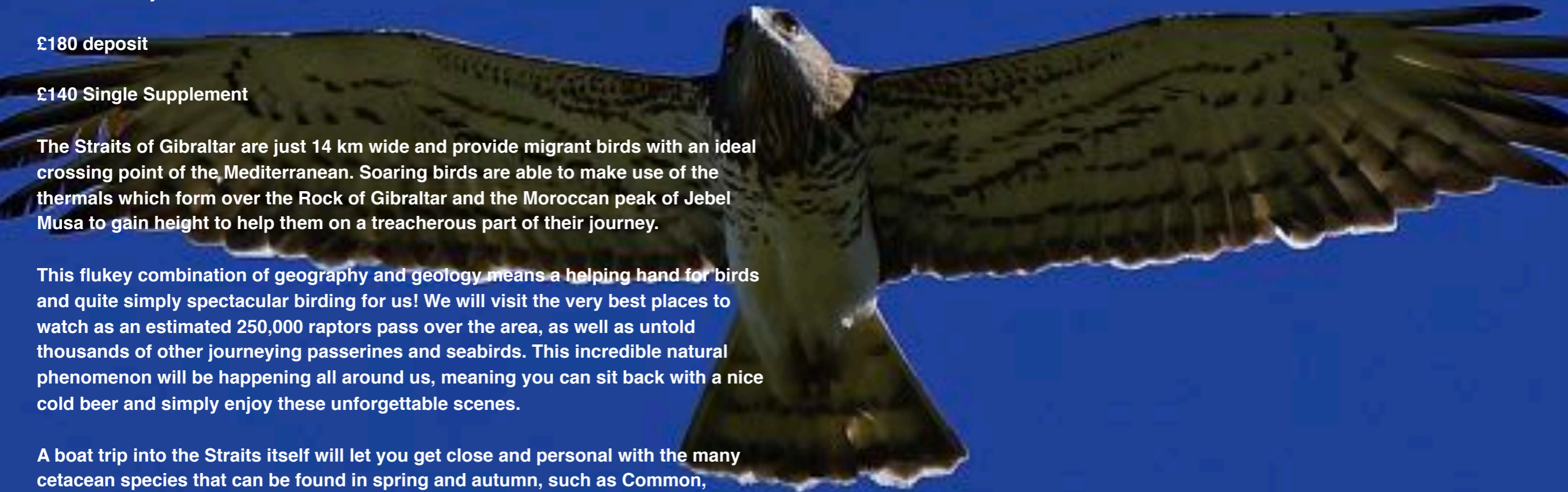
£140 Single Supplement

The Straits of Gibraltar are just 14 km wide and provide migrant birds with an ideal crossing point of the Mediterranean. Soaring birds are able to make use of the thermals which form over the Rock of Gibraltar and the Moroccan peak of Jebel Musa to gain height to help them on a treacherous part of their journey.

This flukey combination of geography and geology means a helping hand for birds and quite simply spectacular birding for us! We will visit the very best places to watch as an estimated 250,000 raptors pass over the area, as well as untold thousands of other journeying passerines and seabirds. This incredible natural phenomenon will be happening all around us, meaning you can sit back with a nice cold beer and simply enjoy these unforgettable scenes.

A boat trip into the Straits itself will let you get close and personal with the many cetacean species that can be found in spring and autumn, such as Common, Bottlenose & Striped Dolphins and Long-finned Pilot Whale – even Fin, Sperm Whales and Orca are possible here.

There will also be time to explore the local area in and around Tarifa, where we'll visit some superb wetland and woodland areas. Because we're based here, our local knowledge will allow us to show you some real hidden gems – for both birding and celebrating!



“Simon and Niki have made my birding experiences memorable delivering on all I asked of them. They far exceeded expectations. I was wearing a smile that swallowed my ears!”



The Unknown Vulture Spectacle!



7 days – 12th October – 18th October 2017.

7 days – 25th October – 31st October 2017.

7 days – 17th October – 23rd October 2018.

£1,190 for 7 days – price includes all accommodation, meals, guiding, transportation, taxes and entrances but excludes flights.

Deposit £240

Single Supplement £180

This trip offers the chance to experience not one but two exceptional wildlife areas, combining the lush mountain scenery of the Ronda area with the unparalleled migration spectacle of thousands of Vultures migrating the Straits.

As we travel along narrow, winding roads through thousands of acres of cork and laurel forest towards Ronda, we will hopefully have seen birds like Alpine Accentor, Ring Ouzel, Fieldfare and Redwing before we even arrive. As if the journey wasn't picturesque enough, your first view of Ronda, perched high above the massive El Tajo canyon, will take your breath away.

The neighbouring Sierra de las Nieves and Sierra de Grazalema mountain ranges are UNESCO Biosphere Reserves and host the densest raptor populations in Europe. There'll be amazing photographic opportunities for Griffon and Egyptian Vultures and we'll also be looking for Bonelli's, Short-toed, Booted and Golden Eagle which all breed in the area. While we're exploring the area we should see species like Rock Bunting, Chough, Blue Rock Thrush, and European Eagle Owl, as well as woodland birds like Crested Tit, Hawfinch Short-toed Treecreeper, and Firecrest.

You'll also have chance to explore some of the many pretty traditional whitewashed hilltop villages of the area – we'd be particularly excited to show you the quirkiest of them, Juzcar, whose inhabitants voted to go against the grain and decorate the village with Smurf murals!

Returning to our home-from-home at Huerta Grande we can then take you to all the best places to observe thousands of vultures, eagles, kites and storks soaring across the 16km of water that separates Europe from Africa at the Straits of Gibraltar. The vulture migration is particularly spectacular, with as many as 2,300 birds recorded crossing the Strait in a single hour! You can not see this anywhere else in the world!

We will engage in observing a Vulture picnic where many of the birds may come to feed upon a carcass.

There will also be time to explore the local area in and around Tarifa, where we'll introduce you to some of our favourite wetland, woodland and inter-tidal areas, and quite likely a couple of our favourite bars as well.

Swift Weekender



4 days – 13th – 16th July 2018

£595 for 4 days – price includes all accommodation, meals, guiding, transportation, taxes and entrances but excludes flights.

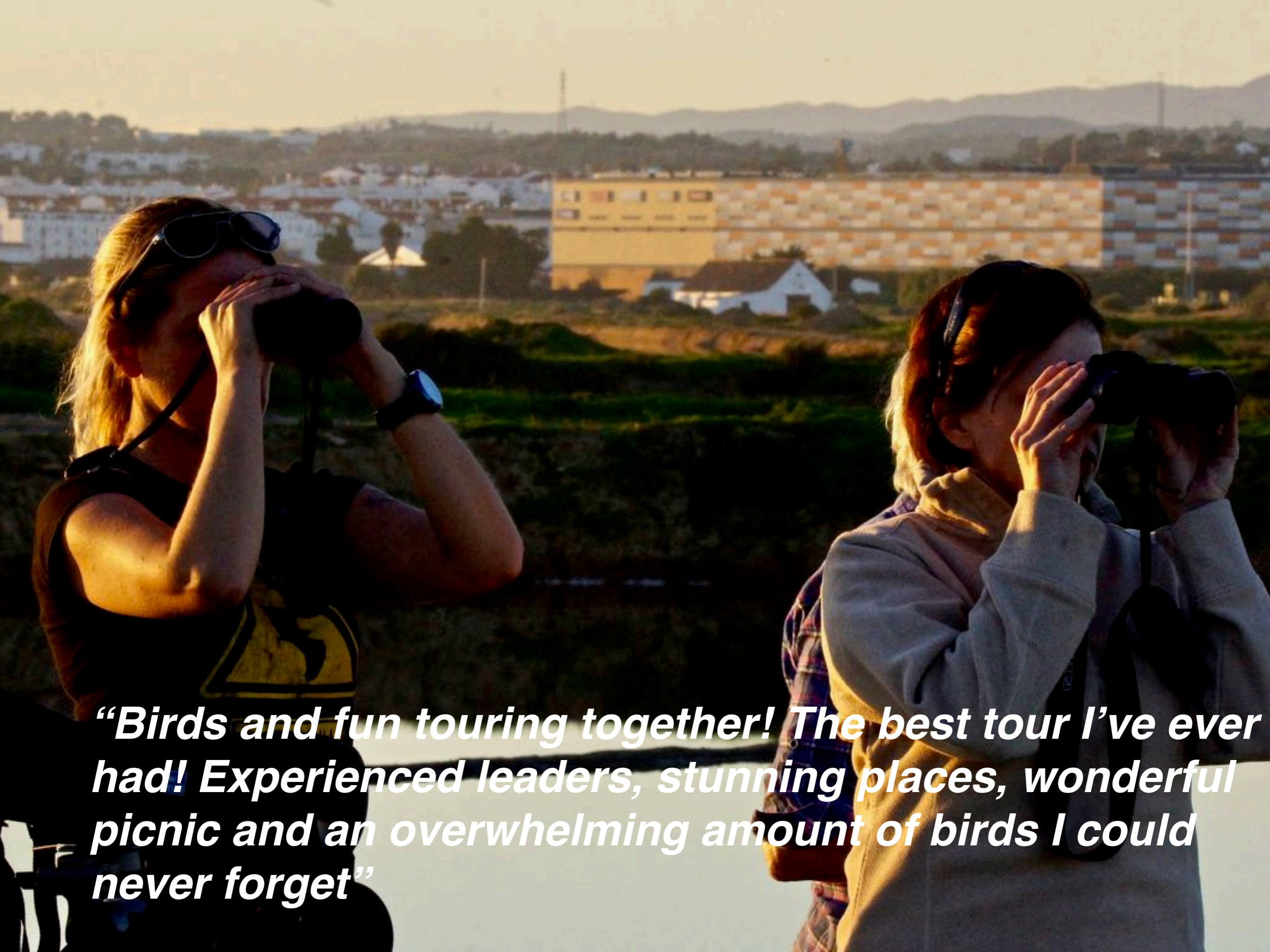
Single supplement: £80

Deposit: £120 (payable upon booking).

Common, Pallid, Alpine, Little and White-rumped. From our home in Andalusia, we endeavour to bring you together with all five species of that most aerially superb genus, the Swift, all over the course of a weekend of fantastic and varied birding!

Because of its strategic position at the gateway of two continents, Andalusia is a unique blend of European and African, with our beloved Apus species passing through on their way to and from breeding grounds, and the more typically African amongst them choosing the Iberian peninsula as one of their very localised breeding sites in Europe. It's one of the very few places in Europe you can see them all!

This southernmost Spanish province is the most biodiverse region not only in Spain but the whole of Europe. So, set our swift-spotting against a background of superb resident species in intertidal, wetland, farmland, woodland and urban habitats, accompanied with fantastic tapas, passionate discussions, and welcoming people, and you're looking at a weekend to remember!



“Birds and fun touring together! The best tour I’ve ever had! Experienced leaders, stunning places, wonderful picnic and an overwhelming amount of birds I could never forget”

All-star Birding in Morocco

7 days – 12th June – 18th June 2018.

£1,195 per person (excludes flights)

Deposit: £240

Single supplement – £180

This seven-day holiday takes in three diverse but equally enthralling bases, all within an easy drive of one another. This will allow us to enjoy the very best of the local reserves and habitats while minimizing time spent on the road. Apart from a refreshing boat trip on a tranquil lagoon, most of our exploring will be done by short walks on well-kept tracks. We have plenty of room in our itinerary for relaxing in the shade with a mint tea, watching the vibrant tapestry of Moroccan life unfold in front of us.

There has been a fortress in Essaouira since 1506, but the modern day town was founded in 1760 by Mohammed III. The town's name in fact means 'little fortress', but can also be translated as 'beautifully designed'. It's easy to see why as you wander the streets of the medina or old town, which is listed as a UNESCO World Heritage site. Around the town, the port and the beach offer beautiful views of the coast and opportunities to see House Buntings, Common Bulbuls and Little Swift.

Essaouira, formerly Mogador, lies just north of where the beautiful Oued Ksob river reaches the sea. Travel a few kilometres upriver and you will be treated to spectacular scenery where the river passes through magnificent gorges and valleys. This area is host to local specialities like Moussier's Redstart, Brown-throated Martin and Barbary Partridge. Eleonora's Falcons, which breed on the île de Mogodor just offshore, use the river's pools and meanders as bathing sites, and there are thrilling opportunities to observe and photograph their behaviour.

The pretty little resort of Oualidia spreads around a languid crescent-shaped lagoon fringed with golden sands and protected from the Atlantic surf by a rocky breakwater. What better place to visit to explore a diversity of local habitats? From here, along the scenic road stretching north to El Jadida, rolling fields stretch right down to the coast to meet marshes, reedbeds, saltpans, sandy beaches and rocky outcrops. The varied wetland sites we will visit on foot and by boat afford great opportunities to see Marbled Duck, Greater Flamingo, Terns and stunningly close fishing Western Ospreys and a host of wading birds replete in their summer plumages. As well as being extremely picturesque, the area is an important resting site for migrating birds and literally anything can turn up!

On the neighbouring farmland, in 2007, a living Andalusian Hemipode was photographed for the first time in the Western Palearctic. Thought extinct, the small population that breeds here was rediscovered in the 2000s. It should go without saying that it is vitally important for the future of this population that bird-watchers keeping a respectful distance during the breeding season. Luckily the many farm tracks through scrub and fallow land should give opportunities to hear and perhaps even see this most elusive of birds. The farming here is traditional and non-intensive, so offers fantastic habitat for other resident and migrant species such as Turtle Doves and Speckled Flunkey Moth.

Marrakech, known as the 'Red City' for the vibrant colour of the walls of its UNESCO Heritage medina, is not to be missed. Its thriving souks are a whirlwind of colour and spicy smells and there is architectural splendour all around. House Buntings and Little Swifts can be seen flitting through and over the city's exquisite gardens, intricately carved archways and ornate mosques. At night the main square comes alive with performers, musicians, entertainers, dancers and circus acts, providing a sensational end to this vivid tapestry of a trip.

Bird Party in the Gambia



11 days – 13th November – 23rd November 2017

11 days – 5th February – 15th February 2018

£1,800 for 11 days – price includes all accommodation, meals, guiding, transportation, taxes and entrances but excludes flights.

Deposit £360

Single supplement £100

This tiny, friendly West African gem has long been a favourite with birders, and with good reason. As the gleaming Gambia River bends gently inland to form its welcoming 'grin', it provides access to teeming habitats ranging from coastal creeks to mangrove swamps to freshwater lakes, with species-rich Sahelian scrubland in between.

Occupying about the area of Norfolk and Suffolk combined, this small, accessible country embraces the shores of the languid Gambia River, which flows through its very heart before emptying into the Atlantic Ocean. Extensive protected areas interspersed with low-key traditional agriculture make for a welcoming wildlife haven, rich in eye-poppingly colourful flora and fauna.

Appealing, hospitable and easy to visit, this simply amazing birding destination provides an ideal introduction to sub-Saharan Africa, with raptors galore and a myriad of colourful and exciting target species. Bursting with life and culture, it is well-deserving of its nickname of 'Africa's Smiling Coast', not just for its geographical appearance, but also because of the genuinely warm welcome waiting for you here.

Doñana Delights

5 days – 17th March – 21st March 2018.

£800 for 5 days – including all accommodation, meals, guiding, transport, entrances and taxes. Flights from major UK airports to Seville.

Deposit £160

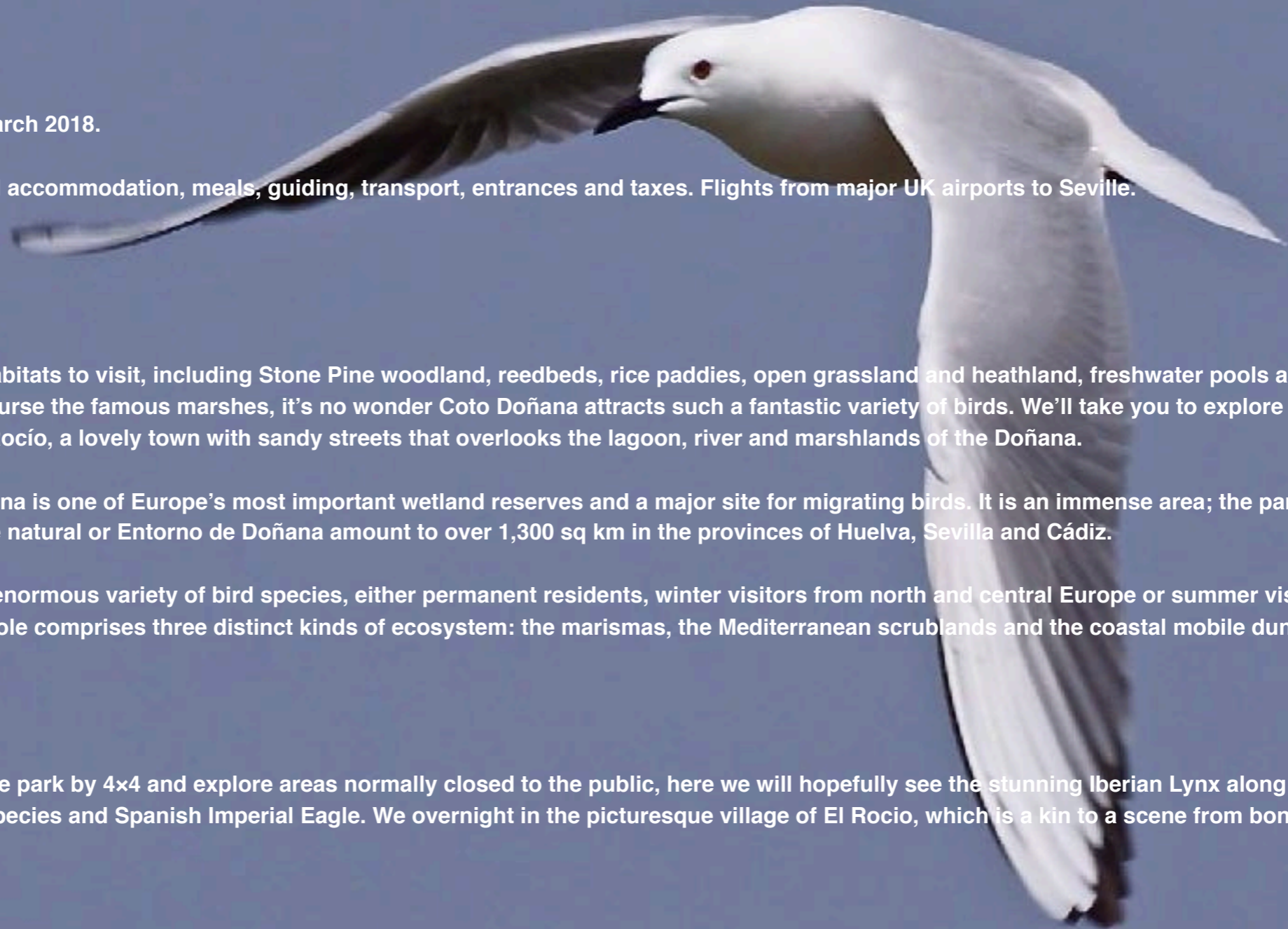
Single Supplement £80

With a fascinating range of habitats to visit, including Stone Pine woodland, reedbeds, rice paddies, open grassland and heathland, freshwater pools and coastal sand dunes and of course the famous marshes, it's no wonder Coto Doñana attracts such a fantastic variety of birds. We'll take you to explore these habitats from our base in El Rocío, a lovely town with sandy streets that overlooks the lagoon, river and marshlands of the Doñana.

The Parque Nacional de Doñana is one of Europe's most important wetland reserves and a major site for migrating birds. It is an immense area; the park itself and surrounding parque natural or Entorno de Doñana amount to over 1,300 sq km in the provinces of Huelva, Sevilla and Cádiz.

Doñana is well known for its enormous variety of bird species, either permanent residents, winter visitors from north and central Europe or summer visitors from Africa. The park as a whole comprises three distinct kinds of ecosystem: the marismas, the Mediterranean scrublands and the coastal mobile dunes with their beaches.

We will enter the interior of the park by 4x4 and explore areas normally closed to the public, here we will hopefully see the stunning Iberian Lynx along with a vast array of wetland bird species and Spanish Imperial Eagle. We overnight in the picturesque village of El Rocio, which is a kin to a scene from bonanza!



Partners



Wherever possible the Inglorious Bustards like to spread the love! we have conservation in our hearts, we care about the things that you care about too! That is why we try to link our eco-tourism to conservation and wider sustainable societal gains wherever possible.

We will be continually adding new connections, networks and partners as we find new and exciting ways of ensuring conservation remains at the very heart of everything we do. We will continually share our expertise with other individuals and organisations to achieve real measurable benefits for nature.

We already work with many you can check them out on our website.

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