

Tenerife Bird Trip Report by Steve Webb (steve.a.webb@talk21.com) **27th July to 2nd Aug 2011**

All the endemics and possible endemics can be seen in 1 day. Although my trip was meant to be a family holiday I spent a lot of my time on sea birds.

Maps

Used Kompass map 233 and was good enough. Used this with a car hire map.

Information

Used the reports on the www, Tony Clarke's Birdwatcher's Guide, and Tony Clarke's Birds of the Atlantic Islands and Collins Bird Guide.

Car Hire

Car was booked via holidayautos.com which turned out to be Hertz. I very rarely pay for the full waiver option but I did this time which was just as well as I got a puncture and so was covered.

General Advice

I went on 4 boat trips to La Gomera. The time of day did not seem to be important. However the amount of wind was important. Wind was from the north-west by west. I saw most Macaronesian Shearwaters when the sea was completely flat. The flocks of 2 and 3 were feeding in the area and would fly around and then sit on the sea so the fewer white horses the better as they fly low and you can scan more when it is flat.

Localities visited

Las Lajas

This site is on the TF21 about 10.8 km north of Vilaflor. The picnic tables and barbeque areas are visible from the road. Best early in the morning or late afternoon when no or few people around. In the morning when people started to arrive I walked a track on the right hand side out of the picnic area where Blue Chaffinch and other good birds were still easy to see.

El Fraile area

Drive down the TF66 from Guaza towards Las Galletas. About a kilometre before Las Galletas there is a roundabout. Turn to the right and drive to the end of Calle Fuerteventura except the last 100 metres, then turn left just before the walled football pitch, then right along its side. Then park and walk, or drive further along the tracks. This is where I got my puncture on the dirt tracks. The only area where I found water was in between banana plantations which is a long walk west. It was fenced off and I could not see into it directly so I climbed the highest mound and looked down into it from a distance.

Amarillo Golf course and Golf de Sur

Golf de Sur is far too busy with people for many birds and in a built-up area so other than Barbary Partridge I would suggest do not bother with it. Amarillo Golf course is much less busy and I saw 11 Hoopoe (even mid-afternoon) on the northern part.

Monte del Agua

Follow the details in Clarke and Collins. By the rock I saw Robin but it is useless for pigeons.

Mirador Lagrimonas

Drive west along the TF5 as if coming from Los Realejos and after a tunnel park in a small layby on the right for three cars. Look across the road and up the steep slope that is covered with bushes and trees. On a map this can be located by finding Playa del Socorro and looking at the TF5 south of this. I don't know of anyone who has failed to see Laurel Pigeon here.

Punta de Teno

Follow the details in Clarke and Collins. Drive to the lighthouse gates and park to one side. Set up your telescope on the right hand side and watch for birds. Saw Macaronesian Shearwater about 18.00 hours which was feeding in the area.

Above the village of Teno Alto

Drive through the village on to a small track for Rock Sparrow. Drive on the track going straight out of Teno Alto and then on to other tracks flushing birds from the fields on to the rocks and wires. Once the birds are found then get out of car – the birds were skittish.

Playa del Fraile

Going towards Punta de Teno from Buenavista del Norte is a viewing spot with a solitary standing rock by an arch that cars go through before the first tunnel. Parking is difficult as they have now blocked off the small car park. I saw male and female Barbary Falcons well (including sitting on rocks) looking slightly west.

Pico Del Ingles and picnic spot north-east of Las Mercedes

Driving north-east out of Las Mercedes the road does a lot of zig-zags. On these zig-zags on the right hand side there is a yellow sign saying something like Anaga Rural parks. Carry on further to a cobbled turning on the left hand side with a signpost picnic spot. This is the only cobbled turning on the left. Drive into the small car-park then walk further on into picnic area. Normally Bolle's Pigeon can be seen on the ground but when I was there campers were there so I only 6 birds in the trees perched

but 2 very close indeed. Carry on driving north-east to Pico Del Ingles. However this was fog bound so the only Bolle's for me were at the picnic spot.

Daily Account

27th July

Based at Callao Salvaje in the south-west and got to bed gone 2330 hours on the 26th. Out by 0530 to the motorway to Pico Del Ingles and picnic spot north-east of Las Mercedes. Map reading in the dark on my own I got lost in Santa Cruz but managed to get to these 2 sites by 0730 which is fine given that first light is around 0715. Got Bolles so then to Mirador Lagrimonas for Laurel Pigeon. Then rushed off to Monte del Agua to the large rock area (by driving all the way to the rock which you are not meant to) for Tenerife Robin. Saw 2 Robins well by the big rock. Then drove to Playa del Fraile for Barbary Falcon and saw them well within 30 minutes. Then drove to Punta de Teno and on-route did a bit of walking in the disused fields but saw nothing. Started sea-watching around 1645 and saw Macaronesian Shearwater at a distance feeding about 1800. Whilst most birds were flying east this bird went west. Stopped birding at 2000 back at Callao Salvaje by 2200. A long but satisfying day.

28th July

Las Lajas for Blue Chaffinch at 0830. Very easy to see along with Woodpecker and Tenerife Kinglet. Spent the rest of the day sightseeing in the mountains.

29th July

First light near Punta de la Rasca near lighthouse. Plenty of Cory's. 1430 ferry to La Gomera and back on 1630 ferry. Medium north east winds. Brief distant view of Macaronesian Shearwater. Also 2 Bulwer's. Evening to El Fraile – good for Southern Grey Shrike. Got a puncture from driving on the dirt tracks. Had to get another car.

30th July

First light at El Fraile then drove in the afternoon north to Punto de Teno for sea watching but winds were not that good. Then around 2000 hours in the fields above the village of Teno Alto for Rock Sparrow.

31st July

0845 La Gomera ferry and back on the 1130 ferry. Winds were too strong with plenty of white horses. Just 2 Bulwer's. Afternoon with the kids to Siam Park.

1st Aug

Golf de Sur - even at first light it was too busy. The only good bit was in the north-east with 15 Barbary Partridge and 1 Cattle Egret on the pool. Did Guirgello area but was rubbish – too many people and no water. 1400 ferry to La Gomera and back on the 1700 ferry. 7 Bulwer's nearly all close good views. 1 brief close view of Macaronesian Shearwater. Late evening a small pool on the edge of industrial estate going towards Amarillo golf course.

2nd Aug

First light Amarillo Golf course. 0845 La Gomera ferry and back on the 1130 ferry. Little wind. Saw 6 (bird flocks of 1, 2, 3) Macaronesian Shearwater very well indeed. Afternoon El Fraile, Amarillo Golf course and near Golf de Sur.

Detailed Log

Barbary Partridge *Alectoris barbara koenigi*

1 on 28th. 6 (4 and 2) near/at Masca on the 30th, 15 on Golf de Sur golf course.

Cory's Shearwater

Widespread

Macaronesian Shearwater *Puffinus baroli*

Punta de Teno: 1 on 27th, the rest on ferry: 1 on the 29th, 1 on the 1st Aug and 6 on the 2nd.

Bulwer's Petrel

Seen from the ferry. 2 on the 28th and 31st, 7 on the 1st and 3 on the 2nd.

Petrel sp

A few storm petrel types from the ferry

Night Heron

Immature on the 1st and 2nd on a small pool on the edge of industrial estate going towards Amarillo Golf course

Cattle Egret

1 on the 1st on Golf de Sur golf course.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

2 on the 1st and 6 on the 2nd

Common Kestrel

Common but small numbers. Max of 6 on the 27th.

Barbary Falcon *Falco pelegrinoides*

Male and female at Playa del Fraile

Eurasian Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus granti*

One on the 30th

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo insularum*

Over 8 on the 27th and 1 on the 30th, 1 on the 2nd

Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

6 on Golf de Sur golf course.

Common Coot *Fulica atra*

8 on El Fraille Reservoir.

Yellow-legged Gull *Larus michahellis*

Common

Common Tern

1 on the 31st and 1st from the ferry

Rock Dove/Feral Rock Dove *Columba livia*

Seen most days

Bolle's Pigeon *Columba bollii*

Excellent views of 6 at picnic spot north-east of Las Mercedes

Laurel Pigeon *Columba junoniae*

Mirador Lagrimonas: 6 on 1st

African Collared Dove

Several seen daily

Laughing Dove *Streptopelia senegalensis*

A few birds

Plain Swift *Apus unicolor*

Common

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major canariensis*

Las Lajas: 4 on the 28th

Hoopoe *Upupa epops*

11 at Amarillo Golf course northern end

Southern Grey Shrike *Lanius meridionalis koenigi*

El Fraille area: 1 on 29th and 30th, 3 on the 1st, 1 at Guirgello on the 1st, 1 at Amarillo Golf course on the 2nd

Common Raven *Corvus corax tingitanus*

6 on the 30th at Teno Alto

Tenerife Blue Tit *Cyanistes teneriffae*

2 on the 27th and 30th. Over 10 at Las Lajas on the 28th

Canary Islands Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus canariensis*

Very common

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla heineken*

1 on 31st at Siam Park. 3 on 1st at Amarillo Golf course northern end. 2 on the 2nd

Spectacled Warbler *Sylvia conspicillata orbitalis*

El Fraille area: 6 on the 1st.

Sardinian Warbler *Sylvia melanocephala leucogastra*

Male near Masca on the 27th. Male and female on the 30th at Teno Alto.

Tenerife Kinglet *Regulus teneriffae*

Las Lajas: 3 on the 28th

Eurasian Blackbird *Turdus merula cabreræ*

Maximum count of 6 on the 27th.

Canary Islands Robin *Erithacus superbus*

3 at Monte del Agua.

Spanish Sparrow *Passer hispaniolensis*

Maximum of over 20 on 2nd

Rock Sparrow *Petronia petronia*

4 at Teno Alto.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea canariensis*

1-3 every day

Berthelot's Pipit *Anthus berthelotii berthelotii*

Big numbers at El Fraille area. Seen elsewhere

Blue Chaffinch *Fringilla teydea teydea*

Las Lajas: over 10 on the 28th.

Atlantic Canary *Serinus canaria*

Common

Common Linnet

2 on the 30th at Teno Alto

Corn Bunting

Over 120 on the 30th at Teno Alto.