



Birdwatching route through the steppes of Belen to the reservoir of Alcollarin – 165 kms

Leaving the gate of Finca Las Abubillas, turn right to the village. At the waterhole close to the village you might see birds like Little Grebe, White Stork, Little Egret, swallows, Black Kite and sometimes Kingfisher (depending season). At the end of the road reaching the NV turn left and after a hundred metres turn right to the highway A5 in the direction of Trujillo.

Once on the A5, after approximately 9 kms., take the exit to Torrecillas de la Tiesa. In the little village of Torrecillas you enter directly to a roundabout and you take the first road (tarmac) on your right into the village. Just follow this road through the village. When you are right you will see a petrol station within a few hundred metres. Follow the main road that leaves the village. This road leads to Aldeacentenera. You enter the steppes landscape. After about two kms. you will see some piles of grey stones on your left hand in the midst of a field. There are always Little Owls to be seen here. Follow the road you are on, till a tarmac road goes on your right hand into the steppes. Take this road that finally brings you to the hamlet of Belen, close to Trujillo. This is a nice road for birdwatching. You can drive slowly and look carefully for all kind of steppe birds that can be seen here: Calandra Lark, Crested Lark, Corn bunting, White Storks, Southern Grey Shrike, Kestrel and Lesser Kestrel, Little Owl, and with a little bit of luck you might find Great and Little Bustards and Sandgrouse. Pay extra attention to old farmhouses and sheds where all kind of small birds can be found, like Spotless starling, Spanish sparrow and Hoopoe for instance.

Best place to find Bustards is at the end of this road, when you are quite close to Belen. Look carefully into the fields on your right. Use your binoculars and a scope if you own one.

The road ends in the hamlet of Belen. Drive through the village and keep going straight on till you leave Belen. The road goes underneath the highway A5 and ends on a junction with the former highway NV. Turn left to Trujillo.

Once you enter Trujillo you will see a garage of Peugeot on your right hand side. At that point turn left till you reach another crossroad. Ahead of you lies the Arena of Trujillo where you can find a good number of Lesser Kestrel that have their nests on the roof. You can have a look there of course, but bear in mind that on this crossroad you have to turn left in the direction of Guadalupe (road number Ex.208)

Follow the Ex. 208 until you reach the village of Herguijuela. In this village a small road turns to the right, it is called CC.24.1 towards Santa Cruz de la Sierra. Take this road. This road leads through beautiful examples of dehesa. After a few kms. you will see a new built kind of castle on your left. A little further there is another crossroad. Go to the left on a tarmac road. It is signed Zorita, which is the next village. It is again a nice road for birdwatching with good chances of Great Spotted Cuckoo. The road ends close to Zorita. Turn right there. Within a few kms. you enter Alcollarin. Drive through the village. Once you are on the end of the village, a newly built tarmac road turns right to the Reservoir of Alcollarin. This is an important wetland, nicely incorporated in the surrounding dehesas. You can drive on both sides along the lake and stop wherever you like to find birds. It is a good place for waterfowl, with grebes and all kind of ducks. You might even spot a Red knobbed Coot. There is also plenty of little birds and waders to be found here. Take your time and enjoy the richness of this place.

When you want to go back, take the same road back towards Zorita. Drive into this village until a crossroad. Turn left to Trujillo (Ex. 208). Follow this road till you enter Conquista de la Sierra. On your right hand side you will see a bar that is called El Parador.

Depending time you can choose to go straight back to Finca Las Abubillas, in which case you just follow the Ex.208 to Trujillo, or drive through the outskirts of Las Villuercas mountains. Then you turn right at the bar El Parador into Conquista. Drive the main road through Conquista. Keep on going. Next village is the pretty hamlet of Garciaz. At the beginning of Garciaz turn left and follow this road. The road leaves Garciaz, crosses a little stream and goes on to Aldeacentenera. It leads through a beautiful rolling landscape with nice dehesas of Portugese Oak trees and beautiful views. Finally you enter Aldeacentenera. At the first roundabout take the second exit that goes round the village (village on your right hand). At the next roundabout you take again the second exit that goes to Torrecillas and the Highway A5. Just follow this road until you reach the A5. Turn right in the direction of Madrid. Take exit number 232 to Jaraicejo. You will easily find your way back to Las Abubillas.

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