

Birdwatching in Extremadura in 6 days

40
AÑOS TURISMO ESPAÑA



Tuesday Day # 1



01

Griffon Vulture
Black Stork
Spanish Imperial Eagle
Bonelli's Eagle
Peregrine Falcon
Egyptian Vulture
Eurasian Eagle Owl
Golden Eagle
...

02

Griffon Vulture
Egyptian Vulture
Bonelli's Eagle
Black Stork
White-rumped Swift
Iberian Magpie
...

03

Cinereous Vulture
Spanish Imperial Eagle
...

04

Cinereous Vulture
Black Stork
Egyptian Vulture
...

05

Griffon Vulture
Spanish Imperial Eagle
...



Cáceres (Monfragüe)

Arrive in the morning to Cáceres. Travel to Monfragüe for a full day of birding, Monfragüe is located in the centre of the province of Cáceres, at the confluence of the Tagus and Tiétar rivers.

It is the only national park in Extremadura and is also part of the UNESCO biosphere reserve bearing the same name, which occupies a much larger land surface around it. It is also a special protection area for birds (SPA) and a special conservation area (SAC).

We start the route at the Bird Centre in Torrejón el Rubio, heading along the EX-208 towards Monfragüe passing below the castle to reach **Salto del Gitano (observation point. 01)** in front of the impressive rocky cliff of Peña Falcón.

We continue along the road on the northern side of the ridge to Villareal de San Carlos, where the park's visitor centre is located. We continue until we take a right turn on the road sign posted Saltos de Torrejón to proceed to the **Tajadilla viewpoint (observation point. 02)** close to the Torrejón-Tiétar dam, where there is a hide, picnic area and ample parking. Opposite is a cliff allowing good observations

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Tuesday Day # 1

Cáceres (Monfragüe)

After crossing the dam of the Torrejón-Tiétar reservoir, we stop at the **Báscula viewpoint (observation point. 03).**

We continue to the **Higuerilla viewpoint (observation point. 04)** which provides a beautiful panoramic view of the Tiétar River.

Finally, we arrive at the **Tiétar gorge (observation point. 05),** at the northeast exit of the park. Although more modest in size than Peña Falcón, it is the other hot spot in Monfragüe.

Although the proposed route ends here, we can continue to La Bazagona along this road that first runs through an old cork oak forest where Lesser Spotted Woodpecker and Iberian Chiffchaff breed.

Beyond that is an area of dehesa favoured by red deer during the rut and a colony of White Stork and Grey Heron to the west, beside the Tiétar River. The final part of dehesas and irrigated crops is of great interest in autumn and winter due to the presence of Common Cranes and occasionally Brambling.

Stay 2 overnights in Cáceres @ [Parador de Cáceres](#)

TIMING

Although any time of the year allows you to see the characteristic species, the best is spring, although in autumn and winter nonbreeding species are also present, sometimes including surprising rarities.

In the months of July and August it is better to take advantage of the first and last hours of the day, as the middle of the day can be very hot and the birds slow down their activity.

Between September and October the deer rut takes place.

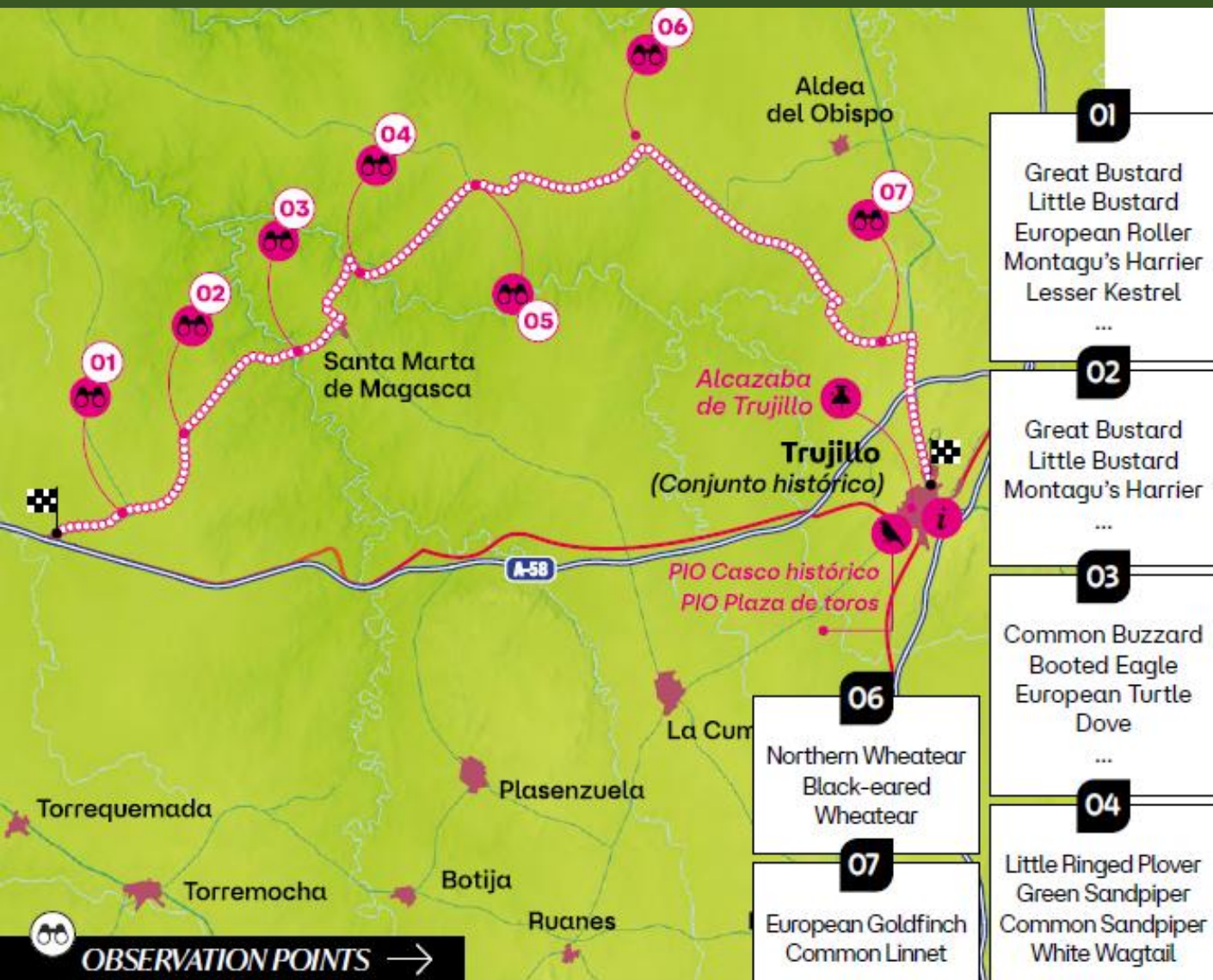


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Wednesday Day # 2



Cáceres (Trujillo)

Full day to visit the plains that extend between the cities of Cáceres and Trujillo, one of the areas of greatest ornithological importance in the region with four special protection zones for birds (ZEPA):
Llanos de Cáceres and Sierra de Fuentes, Magasca, Riberos del Almonte and Lesser Kestrel colonies in Trujillo and Cáceres.

01
Great Bustard
Little Bustard
European Roller
Montagu's Harrier
Lesser Kestrel
...

02
Great Bustard
Little Bustard
Montagu's Harrier
...

03
Common Buzzard
Booted Eagle
European Turtle Dove
...

04
Little Ringed Plover
Green Sandpiper
Common Sandpiper
White Wagtail
...

05
Great Bustard
Little Bustard
Montagu's Harrier
Pin-tailed Sandgrouse

06
Northern Wheatear
Black-eared Wheatear

07
European Goldfinch
Common Linnet
...

08
Lesser Kestrel
White Stork
Pallid Swift
Common Swift
...

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Wednesday Day # 2

Cáceres (Trujillo)

We start at exit 35 of the A-58 towards **Santa Marta de Magasca**, making the first stop (**observation point. 01**) to take the paved track to our left.

Following the route, we will stop at the entrance of another **farm (observation point. 02)**.

The **Tamuja River valley (observation point. 03)** offers a wooded habitat.

After the town of Santa Marta de Magasca, we will descend to the **Magasca River (observation point. 04)** to take a short walk along its banks.

We continue until the junction with the **CC-128 (observation point.05)** where a path parallel to the road allows us to explore the area on foot.

Later, we will walk along the **Puente Mocha trail (observation point. 06)** where most of the species of the plains can be observed.

Reaching the **Calleja de la Breña (observation point. 07)**, we will take a short walk through this area of holm oaks and granite outcrops.

Finally, in Trujillo we will visit its **historic centre (observation point. 08)** and its breeding colonies.

Return to Cáceres for overnight.

TIMING

The beauty of the plains and the contrast with the river valleys make this route possible at any time of the year, even in summer if you avoid the hottest hours of the day. Spring is the most appropriate time to visit due to the numerous summer species, although in winter it can be just as interesting with the residents and the arrival of numerous wintering birds.



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Thursday Day # 3

OBSERVATION POINTS →

Cáceres – Cornalvo – Mérida

Morning cultural visits in [Cáceres](#).
Thereafter, leave to visit Cornalvo and the Mérida wetlands located in the north centre of the province of Badajoz, a series of channels and reservoirs that include the special protection areas for birds (SPA) Los Canchales Reservoir, Montijo Reservoir and Cornalvo Reservoir and Sierra Bermeja, the latter declared a natural park.

01	Western Swampphen Little Bittern Black-crowned Night Heron ...
02	Great Crested Grebe Eurasian Coot Red-crested Pochard Northern Shoveler Eurasian Nuthatch Short-toed Treecreeper ...
03	Little Grebe Black-winged Stilt Garganey Grey Heron
04	Squacco Heron Purple Heron Water Rail
05	Glossy Ibis Eurasian Spoonbill Kentish Plover
06	Common Crane Great White Egret Eurasian Wigeon Common Shelduck Gull-billed Tern Osprey Black-winged Kite

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Thursday Day # 3

Cáceres – Cornalvo – Mérida

We begin at the **Roman bridge of Mérida (observation point. 01)** crossing the Guadiana River, one of the urban areas of greatest ornithological interest in Extremadura.

From Mérida we begin the trip by vehicle heading towards Trujillanos, where the Cornalvo Natural Park interpretation centre is located.

We continue to the **Roman dam of the reservoir (observation point. 02)** where we can take a circular route of about 6.5 km that completely surrounds it.

Returning to the dam, we continue by vehicle to the **Las Muelas reservoir (observation point. 03)**, a small wetland with a great diversity of water birds and waders, both breeding and non-breeders.

After leaving the park, we join the A-5 until the exit for Esparragalejo and before crossing the **Aljucén river** we will make a stop. A path will take us to the riverbank, next to an **old submerged bridge (observation point 04)**

We continue to **Esparragalejo** to visit its **Charca Grande (observation point. 05)**, a small wetland that attracts a multitude of waders on passage and with a great diversity of birds at different times of the year.

Finally, we visit the **Canchales reservoir**, one of the most important wetlands in Extremadura for birding, which we get to on a paved track just before reaching **La Garrovilla**.

This leads directly to the dam parking area. Crossing it on foot we go to a hide **(observation point. 06)** in front of which many birds roost.

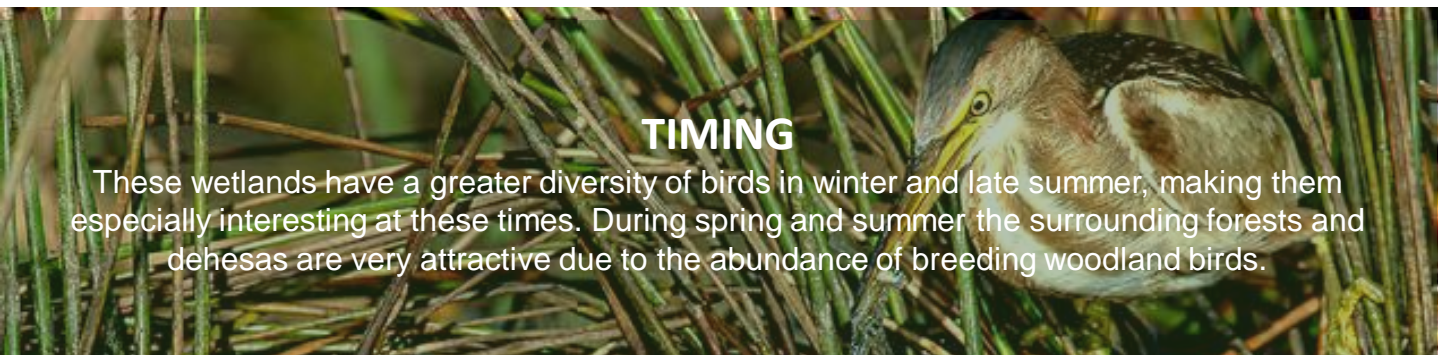
We return to the car park along the same path or take a circular route through a very interesting scrubland area for small birds such as warblers, Woodchat Shrike and Hawfinch.

Stay 3 overnights in a rural accommodation

[Termas Agua Libera](#), in the village of Aljucén or at the [Parador de Mérida](#)

TIMING

These wetlands have a greater diversity of birds in winter and late summer, making them especially interesting at these times. During spring and summer the surrounding forests and dehesas are very attractive due to the abundance of breeding woodland birds.



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Friday Day # 4



Mérida

Cultural walking tour of [Mérida](#).

Once capital of Lusitania (Spain and Portugal), Mérida was founded in 25 BC. It boasts some of the finest Roman ruins in the whole of Spain

The best way to discover the city is to wander through its old streets and see spectacular monuments such as the Roman Amphitheatre, Circus and Theatre, which has been the backdrop for the International Festival of Classical Theatre in summer since 1933.

Other sights not to be missed include the National Museum of Roman Art and the city's magnificent Arab heritage, such as the Alcazaba and the Archaeological Complex of the Morería.

Overnight in a rural accommodation

[Termas Aqua Libera](#), in the village of Aljucén or at the [Parador de Mérida](#)

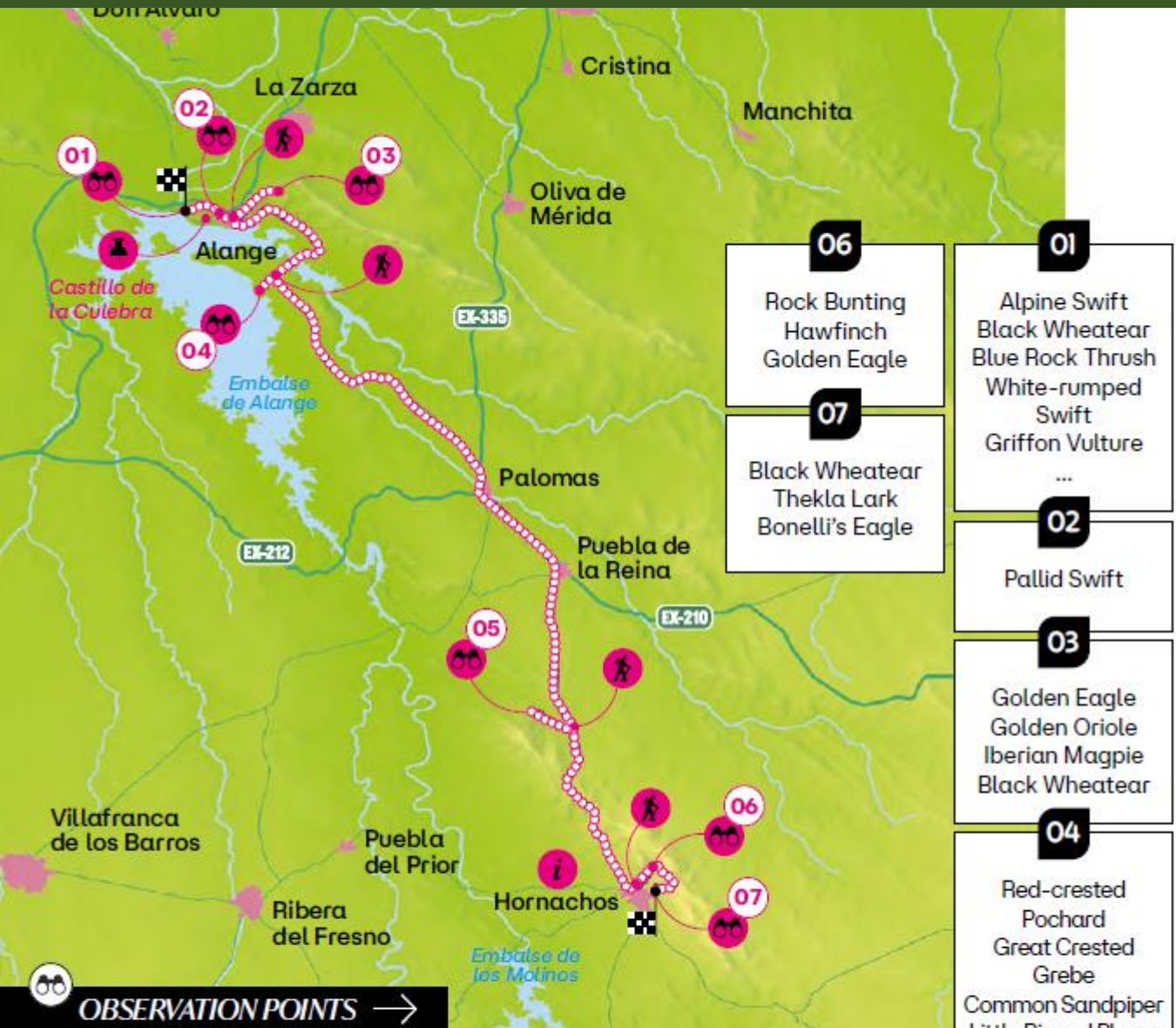


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Saturday Day # 5



Mérida (Alange – Hornachos)

Today visit Alange and Hornachos, located in the central area of Badajoz province; a group of small mountain ranges declared a special protection area for birds (SPA) Sierras Centrales and Embalse de Alange and area of regional interest (ZIR) Sierra Grande de Hornachos.

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Saturday Day # 5

Mérida (Alange – Hornachos)

We start at the **Alange dam (observation point. 01)** which has the largest colony of Alpine Swifts in Extremadura. From the car park we walk along the path below the outcrop.

We continue to Alange to visit the spectacular colony of Pallid Swift at the church of **Nuestra Señora de los Milagros (observation point. 02)**. From here we can continue to the end of Mesilla Street to take the round trip route on foot to the Jabata Valley and the Peñas Blancas mountain range.

Another attraction is a **small orchid reserve (observation point. 03)** which is well-signposted.

Returning to Alange we will continue along the Palomas road and after crossing the San Juan River bridge, we will take a track to the right that takes us directly to the **Alange reservoir (observation point. 04)**, where we can observe water birds and important winter roosts.

Optional visit [AMUS Wildlife Hospital](#) Today it is one of the reference wildlife hospitals in the country. AMUS was created in 1995 on a 1.5 ha farm, in the epicenter of the province of Badajoz. With very limited resources. Over the past 30 years, it has grown and hundreds of people have visited this place full of commitment to wildlife.

We continue along the Palomas road heading towards the Sierra Grande, but before reaching the town of Hornachos we make a stop to take a short walk in the lower area of the **Sierra de los Pinos (observation point. 05)**, a good place to see birds of prey.

At **Hornachos we go to the Plaza de España**, where the town hall and its House Martin colony are located, which in some years has remained active in the middle of winter. From there, we can start a circular route going up the valley of the Moors, where the Palomas pillar is located in the lower part and further on the laundry and the spring of the Moors (**observation point. 06**)

We continue along the Carrascal path and return through the Christians valley, to access **Hornachos castle (observation point. 07)**

Return to your rural accommodation
[Termas Agua Libera](#), in the village of Aljucén or at the [Parador de Mérida](#)

TIMING

The route is interesting all year round, even in summer, avoiding the hottest hours when birds reduce their activity. In spring it increases its appeal due to the breeding activity of all species, although during winter it maintains its interest thanks to the arrival of numerous winter visitors and the residents. During migration, the reservoir especially, can offer other unusual species.

Birdwatching in Extremadura in 8 days

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Sunday Day # 6

Mérida

Conclude your 6 day trip of birdwatching in Extremadura.

Short-toed Snake Eagle (*Circaetus gallicus*)