

Fuerteventura 29 November to 6 December, 2001

I visited Fuerteventura with my wife for one week in late November and early December, 2001. Birding was concentrated on endemic species and subspecies and was less intensive toward the end of the stay. The weather was rather nice above 20 centigrade at noon every day even in the relatively cool city of Corralejo where our hotel was situated. Only one morning was cloudy but wind was rather strong all the time carrying salty mist from the sea over several hundreds of meters. Therefore, car windows had to be cleaned every morning. On one day, the sky was cover with thin sand, possibly originating from Sahara.

We hired a car from CICAR at Corralejo and left it at the airport. An Opel Astra costed 4000 pesetas a day, kilometers unlimited and full insurance. It was possible to reserve the car via internet but we decided not to use this option due to security issues - there were two intervening operators between CICAR and the client. The streets are in excellent condition. Even quite narrow road are paved and most tracks can be used with a normal car as far as the dunes in the northeast (south of Corralejo) and south (El Jable) are avoided. Even the narrow street from Morro Jable to the lighthouse Faro de Jandia is were driveable if you want to twist the steering wheel for fourty kilometers - we didn't.

Walking in the bush is less dangerous than it might seem since there are no snakes. Beware of dogs, however, when birding near farmhouses.

On one day, we visited the volcanic island Isla de los Lobos in front of Corralejo. There are two carriers. The first departure is at 10 a.m. and the last return at 5 p.m. Buying a round-trip ticket is advisable although this means that your choices are limited as regards the time of return. Be careful not to buy a ticker for a three hours cruce. Another time of the year, it might be tempting to stay overnight on the island to be able to see the seabirds to come to their nests. There are several small ruins on the plateau just north of the Lobos peak that would give shelter against the wind. However, staying overnight in a natural park is most probably prohibited.

Our map was Michelin's España, Islas Canarias, and the site guide Tony Clarke's and David Collins' A Birdwatchers' Guide to The Canary Islands.

We used a Garmin GPS 12 for recording sites and routes. The datum below is WGS 84, the latitude and longitude are in degrees (- stand for western longitudes), arrival times are Greenwich normal time. If you find these GPS information useful, I would appreciate receiving similar data from you on other sites on Atlantic Islands and Southern Iberia. Comments on the occurrence of wild Helmeted Guineafowl on Fuerteventura are also welcomed.

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(\* acceptable record of a new taxon to me)

Playa del Bajo de la Burra along the road from Corralejo to Majanicho  
- take a dirty road just north of Corralejo bus terminal which is on the western side of the main road to the harbor (Puerto de Corralejo)  
28.744499004, -13.9150912408, 29-NOV-01 17:29

*Egretta garzetta*, 1  
*Aredea cinerea*, 1  
*Platalea leucorodia*, 3 (one with light blue rings on both legs)  
*Numenius phaeopus*, 1  
*Charadrius dubius*, 2

*Larus argentatus atlantis* or *Larus michahellis atlantis* (my preference), 7 (not mentioned later on since was found during almost every coastal stop)

#### Puerto de Corralejo

- rough shore in front of the northernmost buildings near Dunas Club hotel  
29-NOV-01

\* *Burhinus oedicephalus insularum*, 2 calling well after sunset, were also seen in the light of full moon (there was at least 1 also 03-DEC-01)

#### La Oliva

- just south of the village, take the old road running along FV-10 and try to find tracks ascending the slopes of Montaña Oliva

28.608398438, -13.9518750552, 30-NOV-01 10:03

*Buteo buteo insularum*, 1 (standing on a small damp place)

*Alectoris barbara*, 2 (running on the plain road)

*Anthus berthelotii berthelotii*, 8 (not mentioned later on due to the ubiquity of the species)

*Corvus corax tingitanus*, 2 (was much commoner than in Tenerife a year earlier)

28.611627817, -13.9388019685, 30-NOV-01 11:05

*Oenanthe oenanthe*, 2

\* *Falco tinnunculus dacotiae*, 1

#### Tindaya

- take off from FV-10 just north of the northern junction to the village and follow what resembles a track towards an abandoned house near the hill to the west

28.593115211, -13.9699585084, 30-NOV-01 11:20

*Upupa epops*, 1

\* *Lanius excubitor koenigi* or *Lanius meridionalis koenigi* (my preference), 2

\* *Calandrella rufescens polatzeki*, 4 (singing mostly on the ground - very difficult to locate due to the wind)

#### Las Parcelas (as signposted, on the maps Colonia de García Escámez)

- the southbound track starting at the sharp right curve of the road to Los Molinos is the only advisable access to the reservoir

28.525266051, -14.0410102252, 30-NOV-01 12:45

\* *Falco peregrinus pelegrinoides* or *Falco pelegrinoides* (my preference), 1 (hunting feral doves without success)

*Neophron percnopterus*, 2 (hanging on the western hills)

#### Embalse de Los Molinos (see also 01-DEC-01)

- leave the car at the dam although the fence can be opened - the road disperses quickly

28.505868316, -14.0285272244, 30-NOV-01 13:55

*Tadorna ferruginea*, 4 (apparently two pairs)

*Fulica atra*, 30 (identified from a distance but nothing hinted towards crested coots)

Tringa erythropus, 1  
28.486942649, -14.0161461476, 30-NOV-01 16:29  
Hieraaetus pennatus, 1 (dark phase, glided southwards - perhaps on migration)  
Corvus corax tingitanus, 1 (mobbing the eagle)  
Saxicola dacotiae, 2 (a pair at the rim of the barranco at the point where a road descends towards the southern end of the reservoir)  
\* Buchanetes githagineus amantum, 2 (100 metres from the parking place towards the nearest goat farm)

#### Los Molinos

- near the ridiculous bridge over nothing  
30-NOV-01

Egretta garzetta, 1 (not mentioned later on - single individuals in most moist places)  
Anas platyrrhynchos, 1

#### El Cotillo

- take the obvious track to the beach and drive slowly in the dawn stopping every now and then

28.641614914, -14.0164572839, 01-DEC-01 07:52

\* Chlamydotis undata fuertaventurae, 1 (near small brown ruins)  
01-DEC-01

Pluvialis squatarola, 1  
Charadrius alexandrinus, 2  
Larus marinus, 1 (adult in a small pool in the harbor at close range)  
Sylvia conspicillata, 1 (singing in one of the two creeks reaching the track)

The road FV-416 between Valle de Sta Inés and Antigua

28.442997336, -14.0247131232, 01-DEC-01 10:30

Pterocles orientalis, 12 (stopped for a while near the road during apparent daily flight to or from a drinking place)

#### Tiscamanita

28.361045122, -14.0325237159, 01-DEC-01 11:07

Buteo buteo insularum, 1 (sitting on a high voltage line post)  
Falco tinnunculus dacotiae, 2 (a pair hunting lizards under palm trees near the road)

#### Pájara

- search the barranco and the parks (the most flourishing on the island)

28.350525498, -14.1070623044, 01-DEC-01 11:44

Buteo buteo insularum, 3 (hanging on the northeastern hill)  
Corvus corax tingitanus, 4 (among the buzzards)  
Erithacus rubecula rubecula, 4  
Sylvia conspicillata, 1 (singing in the barranco)  
\* Parus caeruleus degener or Parus degener (my preference), 2 (on palm trees near the main bridge)  
Phylloscopus collybita, 2 (silent birds of unknown subspecies)  
Passer hispaniolensis, 30 (near the only working wind-operated well)

#### Pájara-Mézcuez

- a huge farm with what can bearly called as greenhouses on both sides of the road FV-621

28.358625770, -14.1228873376, 01-DEC-01 12:59

*Saxicola dacotiae*, 2 (a pair)

#### Barranco de Ajyu

- search the probably largest forest like habitat on the island north of the road

01-DEC-01

*Turdus philomelos*, 7

*Erithacus rubecula rubecula*, 2

*Sylvia conspicillata*, 4

#### Puerto de la Peña

01-DEC-01

*Columba livia*, 30 (most tickable rock doves in and near the cave at the end of the well posted path beginning at the north end of the beach)

#### Embalse de Los Molinos (see also 30-NOV-01)

*Tadorna ferruginea*, 4

*Buteo buteo insularum*, 1 (eating in the midst of goats what might have been a newborn kid)

\*? *Numida meleagris*, 11 (4 adults and 7 juveniles at large but suspiciously close to a farm with turkeys)

*Fulica atra*, 30

*Tringa erythropus*, 2

*Actitis hypoleucos*, 1

*Buchanetes githagineus amantum*, 3 (midway the dam and the village)

#### La Oliva

01-DEC-01

*Passer hispaniolensis*, 70 (near the museum)

\* *Acanthis cannabina harterti*, 40 (near the museum)

#### Corralejo

- the dunes

28.671483994, -13.8330907468, 02-DEC-01 09:04

*Platalea leucorodia*, 1

*Charadrius dubius*, 2

*Calidris alba*, 5

*Numenius phaeopus*, 1

*Pluvialis squatarola*, 1

*Limosa lapponica*, 1

*Sterna sandvichensis*, 3

*Arenaria interpres*, 1

*Lanius meridionalis koenigi*, 1

#### La Lajita

- the mouth of the barranco

28.174062967, -14.1975546721, 02-DEC-01 11:09

*Phoenicurus ochruros*, 1

*Motacilla alba*, 1

*Lanius meridionalis koenigi*, 1

*Calidris alba*, 40

*Calidris alpina*, 4

Arenaria interpres, 1  
Numenius phaeopus, 1  
Pluvialis squatarola, 10  
Limosa lapponica, 3  
Actitis hypoleuca, 1  
Charadrius hiaticula, 4

#### El Jable

- along the road FV-605 from Matas Blancos to La Pared, turn left at the signpost Pueblo del Mar and be careful to turn left again after 50 metres onto a rough track which passes a fence and take right towards the northern end of the large barranco just when the main track begins to climb the hille on the left side

28.191025257, -14.2330027465, 02-DEC-01 12:14

Cursorius cursor, 7 (among small bushes as the other birds too)  
Pterocles orientalis, 2  
Chlamydotis undata fuertaventurae, 1  
Calandrella rufescens polatzeki, 5

#### Hable del Gorriones

- just before hotels there is a southbound sandy track from where you can nicely approach the lagoon in the afternoon but be prepared to nasty comments from naturists that abound on the beach behind

28.134950995, -14.2485059146, 02-DEC-01 17:07

Sterna sandvichensis, 5  
Calidris alba, 80  
Calidris alpina, 10  
Charadrius alexandrinus, 70  
Charadrius hiaticula, 40  
Numenius phaeopus, 2  
Pluvialis squatarola, 10  
Pluvialis apricaria, 1  
Limosa lapponica, 7  
Anthus pratensis, 1

#### Playa de Sotavento

- along the main road FV-2

02-DEC-01

Platalea leucorodia, 4 (flying northwards)

#### Isla de los Lobos

- if and only if it's low tide you can walk from the harbour westwards and around the peak following all the time the seashore but be prepared to climb on unstable lava rocks occasionally

03-DEC-01

Pandion haliaetus, 1 (eating fish on the seashore and staying on the island also later on)

Sterna sandvichensis, 3  
Charadrius hiaticula, 7  
Numenius phaeopus, 6  
Pluvialis squatarola, 10  
Limosa lapponica, 8  
Tringa nebularia, 3  
Actitis hypoleucos, 2  
Arenaria interpres, 1

*Columba livia*, 6

*Sylvia conspicillata*, 4 (on the central plateau)