

Trip report - Madeira 13-27 August 2003

By Magnus Unger

Travel info

I and my girlfriend booked our trip via the Swedish travel agency Fritidsresor. The first week we stayed at Hotel Luamar at the western part of Porto Santo and for the second week we had rented a car and stayed at Hotel Gorgulho in the western part of Funchal close to Lido. The car was a Volkswagen Polo with only 1.2 litre engine so most of the time I had to drive on gear 1-3, while the gear 4 and 5 was almost only used on the motorway between Ribeira Brava and Machico. The second week we drove 930 kilometres and fuelled the car with 77 litres, so despite the non-economic driving the car used less than one litre per 10 km.

Day by day report

13 August

The flight from Stockholm arrived at Madeira 13:00, then flight to Porto Santo. In the evening I took a walk up in the mountains west of Ponta towards Pico das Flores. Here at a 3-way crossing near the Miradouro das Flores I saw a couple of Rock Sparrows.

14 August

A morning walk before breakfast to Ponta da Calheta where I saw the first Cory's Shearwaters for the trip. After breakfast we walked to the centre and up to the Tanque pond where I found a Little Stint and a Gargany, probably the first for Madeira. In the afternoon relaxing and bathing in the sea.

15 August

At Ponta da Calheta before breakfast I saw my first Fea's/Zino's Petrel although it was distant the black underwing showed well. I also found out that the stony lava beach NE of Calheta was quite good for waders - 14 Kentish Plovers, Ringed Plover, 15 Whimbrels, 3 Sanderlings and Turnstone. After breakfast we took the bus into the town centre and walked to the harbour. In the evening I visited Ponta da Calheta again and saw my first Bulwer's Petrels, most of them very distant.

16 August

A walk to Ponta da Calheta before breakfast produced three Little Egrets and a Pallid Swift. On the way back to the hotel, ca 1 km NE of Calheta, I heard and saw 2 Spectacled Warblers and one House Martin. After breakfast bus to the town centre and walk to the Tanque pond where the Little Egrets were seen again.

17 August

After an early breakfast (07:30) a walk to Ponta da Canaveira. A few Rock Sparrows were seen on the way and 3 Bulwer's Petrels were coming much closer than the ones at Ponta da Calheta. Sunbathing in mid-day and bus to Ponta da Calheta in the evening.

18 August

Ponta da Calheta, after early breakfast, produced nothing new, just the same waders as before. But on the way there and back at ca 1 km NE of Calheta approximately 5 Spectacled Warblers and one Quail were flushed. After that I took a walk to look at the other ponds north of Ponta and at Lapeiras. Unfortunately they were both dried up. In the evening we walked to Ponta da Canaveira where I saw 2 distant big whales, presumed Fin Whales.

19 August

After breakfast I went to Ponta da Calheta and from there I took the bus to the town centre and walked up to Tanque. There I stay for 2,5 hours. This gave one Turtle Dove and 2 Rock Sparrows who came to drink water.

20 August

Early morning at Ponta da Calheta produced a few Kentish Plovers and the 3 Little Egrets again flying towards NE. On the way back a couple of Spectacled Warblers were seen. Flight to Madeira at 13:30 and taxi from the

airport to our hotel where we arrived at 14:40. The rental car was delivered to the hotel at 15:00. Then we drove down to the harbour to verify our boat trip reservation to the Desertas. Here I saw my first Roseate Terns at the end of the long jetty. After that we drove to Ponta de São Lourenço with stops at Machico and Caniçal. On the way back we stopped at Garajau between 21:10 and 22:00 and listened to Cory's Shearwaters, which arrived to their nests and chicks at the high cliffs, as usual in the dark.

21 August

Ponta da Cruz before breakfast 7:30-8:50. Nothing special besides a flock of approximately 15 small whales. After breakfast a drive to Balcões which took one hour with a few stops. At Balcões it was drizzling and quite foggy but we still took the levada walk to the Balcões watch point. Here I saw my first Trocaz Pigeon. After that we made a short stop along the road to Fajã da Nogueira. After that we drove almost directly to Porto Moniz. This drive took 2,5 hours on the winding roads. I watched seabirds 16:00-20:00 while my girlfriend spent the time at the natural swimming pools. This produced one Fea's/Zino's Petrel, Roseate Tern, Pomarine Skua and 22 Manx Shearwaters. After that we took a break to eat something. Before we went home I took a last look over the sea at 20:45 and found another Manx Shearwater. The Roseate Tern at Porto Moniz was a very nice observation. I discovered it by the call, which I first took for a distant Spotted Redshank. But when I saw the almost all white tern, with dark outer primaries, I understood that it was a Roseate Tern.

22 August

Early breakfast and then walk down to the harbour for the Desertas trip with "Ventura do Mar". The boat left at 9:00 and arrived at Desertas at 13:00. We left at 16:00 and came back to Funchal at 19:20. On the boat there were 3 German birders. These were the only birders I met on the whole trip. One of them I also met at Porto Moniz the last full day of the journey. On the way to Desertas we saw one Roseate Tern when we were leaving the harbour, one Sei Whale, Bulwer's Petrels (seen quite well), 6 Fea's/Zino's Petrels (maybe two were seen twice) all were seen between 11:30 and 12:10. Unfortunately they all flew away from us so they produced no good views. At Desertas we had lunch on the boat and after that we went ashore for a short guiding tour on the island. I saw one Fea's/Zino's Petrel from land and we found one dead Bulwer's Petrel. On the way back we saw a total of 8 Fea's/Zino's Petrels, all were quite distant except the first two which we saw quite well together with three Cory's Shearwaters that chased the petrels. All but one Fea's/Zino's Petrels were flying towards Desertas between 16:40 and 18:00. One Fea's/Zino's Petrel flew towards west at 18:00 and a little later we probably found out why as we passed right through a big flock of feeding Cory's. At last a short watch from our hotel balcony between 20:20 and 20:45 produced 42 Bulwer's Petrels and approximately 100 Cory's Shearwaters.

23 August

Ponta da Cruz before breakfast produced one Fea's/Zino's Petrel, a presumed Fin Whale and a few unidentified dolphins. After breakfast we drove to Cabo Girão (a few kilometres west of Funchal) and enjoyed the view. After that to Ponta do Sol and through Canhas up to Paúl da Serra, then we continued to Ponta do Pargo where I saw a Great Spotted Cuckoo at the lighthouse. Arrived at Porto Moniz at 16:00 where I was seawatching until 20:00. This produced my first Great Shearwaters and a flock of 11 adult Long-tailed Skuas which were seen for 17 minutes, circling high over the sea before they went towards west. When we came back to Funchal we took a walk along the shore-parade at Ponta da Cruz at 21:50 watching/listening after Barn Owl and Cory's Shearwater without any luck.

24 August

Ponta da Cruz before breakfast produced 5 Fea's/Zino's Petrels at quite close range for this site and also a few dolphins and one or two unidentified whales. Walked along the long jetty in the harbour after breakfast looking at Roseate Terns at very close range, down to 5 meters. A drive towards Ponta de São Lourenço, with stops at Machico and Caniçal produced nothing new. After that we drove to Porto Moniz. Seawatching from 16:00 until 20:00, counted 461 Great Shearwaters and one Fea's/Zino's Petrel. When we came 'home' to our hotel room I sat on the balcony with a cold beer in my hand, suddenly at 21:30 a Barn Owl flew by just 20 metres away shown well in the city lights.

25 August

Skipped breakfast. Left the hotel at 6:15 for Porto Moniz. Started seawatching at 7:30 and watched with some rain pauses until 13:45 when I went back to Funchal where I had left my girlfriend shopping. This morning produced 771 Great Shearwaters and 22 Fea's/Zino's Petrels and one Great Skua. When I came home I fell

asleep on the bed and woke up realising that I was counting Great Shearwaters in my sleep. They sure made a real good impression on me.

In the evening, between 18:00 and 20:15, I counted at least 2000 Bulwer's Petrels and 4 Fea's/Zino's Petrels at Ponta da Cruz.

26 August

Seawatching at Ponta da Cruz between 7:20 and 9:00 produced the first and only Little Shearwater. Although it wasn't close the flight was quite different from Manx Shearwater. The pale head showed quite well. Also two Fea's/Zino's Petrels were seen and a few unidentified whales. After breakfast we drove to the top of Pico do Arieiro for the view, but when we came up there it was so foggy that you hardly could see 100 metres in front of you. After this failure we drove to Porto Moniz again and this time we arrived at 15:00 and watched until 20:00. Great Shearwaters was seen everywhere. 952 birds between 15:00 and 18:00 and 1 980 birds between 18:00 and 20:00, clearly points out that they were seen more frequently after 18:00. At 17:30 one of the German birders from the Desertas trip joined me and after he came it was very hard to count all the Great Shearwaters. It was difficult to talk to him and at the same time keep track of the hundreds of Great Shearwaters. Still I am very glad I meet him because thanks to him we were able to hear Zino's Petrels at their breeding grounds in the high mountains that evening. We heard the first call at 22:40 and then between 23:30-23:45 we heard at least 2 or 3 birds calling. It was really fantastic. They sounded quite like calls from male Tawny Owls.

27 August

The first morning I stayed in bed! After breakfast I returned the hired car and after that we were picked up by a bus to the airport. We left 13:35 for Stockholm. When we arrived in Stockholm 19:30 it was only 10 degrees and raining and there we were in shorts and t-shirt freezing as hell.

Interesting places

Porto Santo

This island is much drier than Madeira. The most interesting places here in my opinion are Ponta da Calheta and the Tanque pond. At Ponta da Calheta you can watch some seabirds like Cory's Shearwater and Bulwer's Petrel although they are often quite distant. I also saw Fea's/Zino's Petrel here. Furthermore you can see Red-legged Partridge, Spectacled Warbler, Pallid Swift, Kentish Plover and other waders on the beach. The Tanque pond seems to be the only pond of the three (the other two North of Ponta and at Lapeiras was dried out when I was there) that has any water this time of the year. This attracts freshwater-dependent species like Coot, Moorhen, Little Egret, vagrant shorebirds and ducks. You can also see Rock Bunting, Turtledove and Blackcap in the area. The following species were much more easy to find at Porto Santo than in Madeira: Spanish Sparrow, Hoopoe, Linnet, Berthelot's pipit, Rock Bunting, Spectacled Warbler and species like Canary and Goldfinch were much more common here.

Porto Moniz

This is by far the best seabird site at Madeira with a great variation of species. Unfortunately there were much building and construction working at the spots that has been pointed out as the best in other reports so I had to test different places to see which was the best.

I watched seabirds here 5 times, 16:00-20:00 21/8, 23/8, 24/8, 7:30-13:45 25/8 and 15:00-20:00 26/8. The best time in the evening was clearly between 18 and 19, the best day 26/8. This hour I saw 1160 Great Shearwaters and 16 Manx Shearwaters. The best time in the evening for Fea's/Zino's seemed to be around 16:40 for some reason I can't explain, three of the four birds passing by at this time.

The first day I tested the shore parade, which is the closest spot to the Mole Island. This offered me some view west of the Island between the Restaurant Cascelote and some fort-like building they just had built up. From this point I had views both east and west of Mole Island. After this visit I was not so impressed by watching east of Mole island because I often found birds west of the island that I had missed on the east side. On my second visit I tried to seawatch west of the Mole Island, I sat on the small concrete walls beside the shore parade down to the entrance to the natural swimming pools. From here I had a good view over the birds flying west. My opinion is that many birds came almost from the north so it would have been impossible to see them east of the Mole Island. I used the same spot the other two evenings too, but the morning visit was quite windy and rainy. I searched for a better shelter and found a good spot along the stairway up behind Hotel Calhau. This spot was situated a bit higher over the sea level and I probably missed a few birds that passed too close to the shore (out of my scope).

The weather on my four evening visits was quite similar, light winds from N or NE and more or less sunny with few clouds. My morning visit 25/8 was completely different. When I started in the morning it was cloudy and light winds. About 9 o'clock it started blowing from west and it was very dark along the west horizon. About 10 o'clock a light rain started and at 10:30-10:45 it was raining so much that I had to take a break. After that I watched until 11:10 when I again had to break for the rain until 12:25. At 13:45 I went back to Funchal because the rain didn't stop. This day gave me the most experience because I could watch all the seabirds under similar circumstances as they would appear at home. This was also the day with the most variation of species. A total of 22 Fea's/Zino's Petrels were seen that morning most of them at a distance of 400-800 m. Many were so close that I found them by accident at the bottom of my telescope view so I probably missed a few. Everyone except one came between 9:10 and 11:00. The number of Great Shearwaters increased during the day and the last hour was the best with approximately 280 birds.

Species like Cory's Shearwater and Bulwer's Petrel are not so common here as on the south side of Madeira but they often came much closer here than at Ponta da Cruz.

Driving here from Funchal takes approximately one hour and there is a big Modelo supermarket very convenient just after Ribeira Brava. I think we stopped here almost every time we went to Porto Moniz to buy some water and fruit.

Ponta da Cruz

This is the best spot if you want to see high numbers of Bulwer's Petrel and Cory's Shearwater. It is also located near the hotel zone in Funchal so it is quite easy to get there if you stay in Funchal. Unfortunately the birds often were seen very far away, at more than 2 km. This is probably because the winds are often very light and blowing from the north-sector, at least on my visit. Due to the light winds you don't get a good experience of the birds in windy conditions. A total of 12 Fea's/Zino's Petrels were seen from here and all of them passed by very distantly, except for one day when I had 5 towards west. All of them came at a distance of approximately one kilometre which I consider as very near for this site. The reason for this I can not explain there were nothing special with the winds this morning. And the funny thing was that also the Bulwer's Petrels came much closer this day. But I didn't have any high numbers of them so this was quite a mystery. Another interesting thing with the Fea's/Zino's Petrels was that the first one in the morning always was discovered at approximately 08:30. They were very punctual.

The only evening I watched here I saw 2000 Bulwer's Petrels between 18:00 and 20:15. The evenings seemed much better for Bulwer's than the mornings because I had no morning with over 100 birds. On the other hand the mornings seemed better for Cory's Shearwater but I haven't got so much to compare with. I saw one Little Shearwater here the 26/8 which was also quite distant.

The place I watched from here was the place recommended by Niklas Holmström (2002): a few hundred meters east of the southernmost point. They are building a big hotel, Pestana Grand, near Ponta da Cruz. Just 100 m from that hotel there's a small path leading down from the shore-parade to some cliffs. I also watched from the shore-parade at the southernmost point which also worked but often felt to high over the sea.

Ponta do Pargo

The west end of Madeira. You would think that this is a good sight for seabirds but it is too high over the sea level. I had to search some time before finding any Cory's Shearwater. The lighthouse has a garden which turned out to be a good resting place for a Great Spotted Cuckoo a juvenile bird. This is also one of the places where you can see Berthelot's pipit and Spectacled Warbler although I didn't see any of the latter.

Funchal Harbour

Seems to be a good spot for Roseate Tern. I had at least one adult and one juvenile here at the end of the long jetty. I also saw Turnstone and Little Egret here.

Balcões

I stopped at Ribeiro Frio where the levada to the Balcões starts. Already at the parking lot I saw and heard several Chaffinches, Firecrests and Blackcaps and on the walk to the watch point I saw several more and also some Grey Wagtails. At the Balcões watch point I managed to see one Trocaz Pigeon. After that I drove about 7 km towards Faial. There is a road to Fajã da Nogueira just before a bridge over a river. I drove 1 km on that road and from there I saw the Balcões watch point. In the nearly dried out river I saw another Trocaz Pigeon and heard several Blackcaps singing and a few Robins calling.

This area is highly recommended if you don't want to spend too much time in the woods and prefer sea-watching. In approximately two hours I had almost all the woodland species.

Ponta de São Lourenço

I didn't see much here except the Berthelot's Pipits but other trip reports tell about Rock Sparrow. The nature is very beautiful here. There is a path leading towards the east end but I never had time to take it. The path takes approximately 3 hours one way according to one source and along this path you should have a good chance to see Rock Sparrow.

Machico

At the river mouth I had a few Grey Wagtails but nothing else. Others have had waders here and a bit up along the river you can find Common Waxbill which is an introduced species. I didn't know about this when I was here, so I didn't see any.

Canical

A small river end by the fishing harbour turned out to be quite interesting with Little Egret, Common Sandpiper, Turnstones, many Grey Wagtails and the only place on Madeira where I found Spanish Sparrow.

Ponta do Garajau

At this place you can listen to Cory's Shearwaters at night. I heard the first calls at 21:30. Other birders had also reported Madeiran Storm Petrel heard here at night.

Just before the parking lot to the Christ statue, west of the statue there is a small road leading down to the shore, I walked halfway down this. Here I had the Cory's very near, sometimes just over my head.

Desertas

I went there with 'Ventura do Mar'. This trip is worth the money even if you don't see the birds so good from the boat (depending on weather and winds). It is often fully booked so it is recommended to book before you leave, I did it 2 weeks in advance.

<http://www.venturadomar.com>

Pico do Arieiro

This is where the **Zino's petrels** breed. To get there you can go with a guide that can be booked through 'Madeira Ventura'.

<http://www.madeiraventura.com>

Species list

A total of 56 species were counted in the two weeks. 37 on Porto Santo, 39 on Madeira, 9 on Desertas.

Fea's/Zino's Petrel – *Pterodroma feae/madeira* – Atlant-/Madeirapetrell

A total of 54 sightings of which 39 from land. My opinion is that all the birds seen from Ponta da Cruz and the Desertas boat were probably Fea's, because they clearly matched the Desertas movement pattern. No birds south of the island were seen so good that I could clearly say that they were Fea's.

On the other hand the birds I saw from Porto Moniz often came very close and I am pretty sure some or maybe all of them were Zino's. I think this because all the birds that came close had rounded wingtips with the two longest primaries equal in length and the hand was shorter than the arm. Not at all so long and pointed that you can see in good pictures of Fea's. On one bird that at first seemed to have a pointed wingtip I even saw that the second longest primary was missing and therefore giving the more pointed impression, although the hand was short also on this bird. Another thing was that I could not spot the W-pattern on the wings on any bird. One of the birds also had paler forehead. The bill was very hard to judge because it was often hard to spot it even at close range, but I think it would have felt bigger on Fea's.

One more thing that maybe can support this theory is the difference in numbers of Bulwer's petrels and Cory's Shearwater between Ponta da Cruz and Porto Moniz. There is almost no difference in the appearance of Fea's and Zino's between these two locations, actually I saw more of them here at Porto Moniz than at Ponta da Cruz.

The distance at Ponta da Cruz was always over 1 km, sometimes up to 2-3 km. At Porto Moniz all birds passed within 1 km and some of them as close as 400-500 metres.

Porto Santo:

One very distant towards E Ponta da Calheta 08:15 15/8. One very distant at Ponta da Calheta 16/8.

Madeira:

Seen at Porto Moniz as follows: 1 towards E 16:40 21/8, 1 towards W 16:34 24/8, 22 towards W 09:10-12:47 25/8, 2 (16:52 towards E and 17:41 towards W) 26/8. Seen at Ponta da Cruz as follows. 1 towards W 08:29 23/8, 5 towards W 08:28-9:17 24/8. 4 towards E 18:45-19:29 25/8. 2 towards W 08:30-08:39 26/8.

Desertas:

A total of 15 observations on the trip (6 on the way to Desertas, 1 from land at Desertas and 8 on the way back).

Zino's Petrel – *Pterodroma madeira* – Madeirapetrell

This species is endemic to Madeira and only breeds with c 40 pairs in the high mountains.

Madeira:

2-3 birds heard calling Pico do Arieiro 26/8. The first call heard at 22:40 then between 23:30 and 23:45 several times.

Bulwer's Petrel – *Bulweria bulwerii* – Spetsstjärtad petrell

The best spot on Porto Santo seems to be Ponta da Calheta but they often came much closer at Ponta da Canaveira. The best spot on Madeira is clearly Ponta da Cruz although they are often very distant. At Porto Moniz they often came much closer. At Ponta da Cruz it is clearly in the evening you see the highest numbers. I had no morning with over 100 birds.

Porto Santo:

c 25 at Ponta da Calheta 15/8. 6 at Ponta da Calheta 16/8. 3 at Ponta da Canaveira 17/8. c 150 at Ponta da Calheta 17/8. c 5 Ponta da Calheta 18/8. c 30 Ponta da Canaveira 18/8. 5 Ponta da Calheta 20/8.

Madeira:

Seen from Ponta da Cruz, Porto Moniz and my hotel balcony. Best count 2000 from Ponta da Cruz in the evening 25/8. Seen at Porto Moniz as follows c 30 21/8, c 10 23/8, c 5 24/8, c 60 25/8

Desertas:

c 50 from the boat to Desertas and also one found dead on the island.

Cory's Shearwater – *Calonectris diomedea borealis* – Gulnäbbad lira

Contrary to Bulwer's Petrel it seems to be more Cory's migrating in the morning at Ponta da Cruz but I have only one evening watch to compare with so it could be a wrong assumption.

Porto Santo:

Seen every day mostly at Ponta da Calheta and Ponta da Canaveira. Best day 17/8 at Ponta da Calheta with c 500.

Madeira:

Seen almost everywhere along the coasts, best places Ponta da Cruz and Porto Moniz. Also heard at night at Ponto do Garajau between 21:30-22:00 on 20/8. Highest counts c 1000 towards W at Ponta da Cruz 21/8 and c 1500 towards W same place 26/8. At Porto Moniz I had no day with more than c 150 more or less stationary birds.

Desertas:

Ca 200 seen from the boat to Desertas.

Great Shearwater – *Puffinus gravis* – Större lira

A total of 4185 birds were seen. On the best day 26/8 I probably missed counting approximately 500-1000 birds because they were too many and it was very hard to count and still looking closely on all the Manx and petrels that passed by. Most of the birds came about 1 km from the coast but sometimes down to 400-500 metres and also up to 2-3 km. The last day quite a lot was more or less stationary in small flocks roosting on water together with Cory's.

Madeira:

Seen at Porto Moniz as follows: 21 (17 towards W and 4 to the E) 23/8. 461 towards W 24/8. 771 towards W 25/8. 2932 towards W 26/8.

Sooty Shearwater – *Puffinus griseus* – Grålira**Madeira:**

2 towards W Porto Moniz 24/8. Both of them came very close, one of them together with two Great Shearwaters.

Manx Shearwater – *Puffinus puffinus* – Mindre lira

A total of 97 birds was quite a disappointment compared to Niklas Holmströms numbers (1403) from 2002 but probably they will be more numerous the following weeks.

Madeira:

Seen at Porto Moniz as follows: 23 (22 towards W and one E) 21/8. 12 towards W 23/8. 10 towards W 24/8. 40 towards W 25/8. 52 towards W 26/8.

Little Shearwater – *Puffinus assimilis baroli* – Dvärglira

Only one seen was a disappointment compared to other trip reports that often tell about several birds especially at Porto Moniz.

Madeira:

1 towards W Ponta da Cruz 07:52 26/8.

Little Egret – *Egretta garzetta* – Silkeshäger**Porto Santo:**

3 towards NE Ponta da Calheta 16/8. Probably the same birds seen at the Tanque pond at 16/8 and 19/8. 3 towards NE at Ponta da Calheta 20/8 probably also the same. Maybe they roost at night on the island south of Calheta.

Madeira:

1 Funchal harbour 20/8. 1 at Caniçal 20/8.

Grey Heron – *Ardea cinerea* – Gråhäger**Porto Santo:**

3 seen from Ponta da Canaveira on the island Ilhéu de Ferro on the 18/8.

Madeira:

1 towards E over Funchal 23/8.

Garganey – *Anas querquedula* – Årta**Porto Santo:**

1 female/juv seen in the Tanque pond on the 14/8, 16/8 and 19/8. Probably the first sighting for the Madeira islands.

Sparrowhawk – *Accipiter nisus granti* – Sparvhök

This subspecies is found in Madeira and the Canary islands.

Madeira:

1 Paúl da Serra on the road from Canhas 23/8. 1 Paúl da Serra from the parking lot near Rabaçal 23/8. 1 Funchal from the bus to the airport 27/8.

Buzzard – *Buteo buteo harterti* – Ormvråk

This subspecies is only found in Madeira and sometimes lumped with the nominate. My opinion is that they looked very much like dark phase of the nominate subspecies but the call was quite different. Sometimes very much like Golden Plover.

Porto Santo:

A few seen daily.

Madeira:

Seen occasionally when driving around the island, ca 5 at Ponta do Pargo.

Kestrel – *Falco tinnunculus canariensis* – Tornfalk

This subspecies is found in Madeira and the western Canary Islands. It is smaller and darker than the nominate race.

Porto Santo:

A few seen daily.

Madeira:

A few seen daily.

Red-legged Partridge – *Alectoris rufa* – Rödhöna**Porto Santo:**

7 Cabeco do Zimbralinho 13/8. 2 at 1 km E of Ponta da Calheta 16/8 and 18/8.

Quail – *Coturnix coturnix* – Vaktel

Porto Santo:

One 1 km E of Ponta da Calheta 18/8.

Moorhen – *Gallinula chloropus* – Rörhöna

Porto Santo:

Seen at the Tanque pond as follows: 12 (6 ad + 6 juv) at the 14/8. 17 (7 ad + 10 juv) at the 16/8. 30 (18 juv + 12 ad) at the 19/8.

Coot – *Fulica atra* – Sothöna

Porto Santo:

Seen at the Tanque pond as the following. 1 ad at the 14/8. 2 ad at the 16/8 and 19/8.

Ringed Plover – *Charadrius hiaticula* – Större strandpipare

Porto Santo:

1 ad Ponta da Calheta 15/8, 16/8, 18/8 and 19/8.

Kentish Plover – *Charadrius alexandrinus* – Svartbent strandpipare

Porto Santo:

14 in winter plumage Ponta da Calheta 15/8. 2 along the beach E of my hotel 15/8. c 10 Ponta da Calheta 16/8. 7 Ponta da Calheta 17/8. 12 Ponta da Calheta 18/8. 7 along the beach SW of our hotel 20/8. 3 Ponta da Calheta 20/8.

Sanderling – *Calidris alba* – Sandlöpare

The juvenile bird seen 19/8 seemed quite early.

Porto Santo:

3 ad Ponta da Calheta 15/8. 2 ad Ponta da Calheta 16/8 and 18/8. 7 ad at Ponta da Calheta 19/8. 1 juv on the beach NE of our hotel 19/8.

Little Stint – *Calidris minuta* – Småsnäppa

Could have been the same bird both times but I didn't find it 16/8.

Porto Santo:

1 ad Tanque pond 14/8 and 19/8.

Dunlin – *Calidris alpina* – Kärrsnäppa

Porto Santo:

1 ad Tanque pond 19/8. 1 ad Ponta da Calheta 20/8.

Whimbrel – *Numenius phaeopus* – Småspov

Porto Santo:

Seen almost daily at Ponta da Calheta a maximum of 15 on 14/8 and 15/8.

Madeira:

1 towards E Porto Moniz 21/8. 1 Porto Moniz 25/8. 12 towards E Ponta da Cruz 25/8. 1 Porto Moniz 26/8.

Common Sandpiper – *Actitis hypoleucos* – Drillsnäppa

Madeira:

1 at Caniçal 20/8.

Desertas:

1 in the "harbour".

Turnstone – *Arenaria interpres* – Roskarl

Porto Santo:

1 ad Ponta da Calheta 15/8. 2 Ponta da Calheta 16/8.

Madeira:

2 Funchal harbour 20/8. 3 Caniçal 20/8. 1 Ponta da Cruz 21/8. 1 Porto Moniz 21/8. 1 Lugar de Baixo 23/8. 3 Funchal harbour 24/8. 3 Porto Moniz 25/8. 1 Ponta da Cruz 25/8. 3 Funchal harbour 26/8.

Pomarine Skua – *Stercorarius pomarinus* – Bredstjärtad labb

Madeira:

Seen at Porto Moniz as follows: 1 ad towards W 21/8, 1 3-4K towards W 24/8 and 1 ad towards W 26/8.

Arctic Skua – *Stercorarius parasiticus* – Labb

Madeira:

3 (2 pale adults and one probably subad) Porto Moniz 25/8.

Desertas:

1 probably juvenile seen hunting terns in the “harbour”.

Long-tailed Skua – *Stercorarius longicaudus* – Fjällabb

Madeira:

11 ad (only one with all tail feathers) towards W Porto Moniz 23/8.

Great Skua – *Catharacta skua* – Storlabb

Madeira:

1 towards W Porto Moniz 25/8.

Arctic/Long-tailed Skua – *Stercorarius parasiticus/longicaudus* – Labb/Fjällabb

Madeira:

5 ad towards W Porto Moniz 23/8 (in one flock probably Arctic Skuas).

Arctic/Pomarine Skua – *Stercorarius parasiticus/pomarinus* – Labb/Bredstjärtad labb

Madeira:

1 1K-2K (looked like a juvenile Pomarine Skua but it felt too early) towards W Porto Moniz 23/8.

Atlantic Herring Gull – *Larus michahellis atlantis* – ”Medelhavstrut”

This subspecies is found on the Atlantic islands.

Porto Santo:

Seen almost everywhere along the costs. High numbers roasting at night on the island south of Ponta da Calheta.

Madeira:

Seen almost everywhere along the costs. High numbers roasting at night on the islands east of Ponta de São Lourenço.

Desertas:

A few seen from the “harbour”.

Lesser Black-backed Gull – *Larus fuscus* – Silltrut

All birds where probably intermedius/graellsii.

Porto Santo:

2 ad Ponta 13/8. 1 ad Ponta da Calheta 14/8, 15/8 and 17/8. c 5 Tanque pond 14/8. 2 at Tanque pond 16/8 and 19/8.

Madeira:

1 ad Ponta da Cruz 26/8.

Roseate Tern – *Sterna dougallii* – Rosentärna

Madeira:

Seen in Funchal harbour at the end of the pier. 2-3 (1-2 ad + 1 juv) 20/8, 1 ad 22/8 and 2 (ad + juv) 24/8. 1 ad towards E at Porto Moniz 21/8.

Common Tern – *Sterna hirundo* – Fisktärna

Porto Santo:

Seen almost everywhere along the costs.

Madeira:

Seen almost everywhere along the coasts. A few first summer birds were seen at Funchal harbour and Porto Moniz.

Desertas:

Ca 10 in the "harbour" and also some first summer birds.

'Comic' Tern – *Sterna hirundo/paradisaea* – Fisk-/silvertärna**Madeira:**

High numbers migrating at Porto Moniz. 386 towards W 23/8. 815 towards W 24/8.

Feral Pigeon/Rock Dove – *Columba livia* – Tamduva/Klippduva**Porto Santo:**

Very common. Some birds looked like pure Rock doves especially along the high coasts.

Madeira:

Very common near civilization.

Trocaz Pigeon – *Columba trocaz* – Madeiraduva

This species is endemic for Madeira.

Madeira:

One seen from the watch point at Balcões 21/8. One seen in the almost dried out river a couple of hundred meters along the road to Faja da Nogueira 21/8.

Turtle Dove – *Streptopelia turtur* – Turturduva**Porto Santo:**

1 juv Tanque pond 19/8.

Great Spotted Cuckoo – *Clamator glandarius* – Skatgök**Madeira:**

1 juv Ponta da Pargo by the lighthouse 23/8.

Barn Owl – *Tyto alba schmitzi* – Tornuggla

This subspecies is only found on the Madeira islands.

Madeira:

1 seen from my hotel balcony in Funchal 21:30 24/8.

Plain Swift – *Apus unicolor* – Enfärgad seglare**Porto Santo:**

Seen everyday in small numbers. Best places: Pico de Ana Ferreira, Ponta da Calheta and Villa Baleira.

Madeira:

Very common, seen everyday. High numbers at Paúl da Serra ca 100 at 23/8.

Pallid Swift – *Apus pallidus* – Blek tornseglare**Porto Santo:**

1 towards NE at Ponta da Calheta 16/8. 2-3 towards NE at Ponta da Canaveira 17/8. 1 at Ponta with Plain Swifts 18/8.

Madeira:

2 at Cabo Girão 23/8.

Hoopoe – *Upupa epops* – Härfågel**Porto Santo:**

Several seen daily with 6 at most on 18/8.

Barn Swallow – *Hirundo rustica* – Ladusvala**Porto Santo:**

2 near the Tanque pond along the channel on the 14/8.

House Martin – *Delichon urbica* – Hussvala

Porto Santo:

1 towards NE at Ponta da Calheta. Later also seen together with Plain Swifts at Ponta.

Grey Wagtail – *Motacilla cinerea schmitzi* – Forsärkla

This subspecies is only found on the Madeira islands.

Madeira:

Seen and heard almost everywhere along the coasts. Highest count c 20 at Caniçal 20/8 and c 10 Ribeira da Janela 24/8.

Berthelot's Pipit – *Anthus berthelotii madeirensis* – Kanariepiplärka

This subspecies is only found on the Madeira islands.

Porto Santo:

Very common everywhere once you learn how it sounds. Often pretty tame especially at Ponta da Calheta.

Madeira:

Seen Ponta do Pargo, Paúl da Serra, Pico do Arieiro and Ponta de São Lourenço.

Desertas:

A few around the "harbour".

Robin – *Erithacus rubecula* – Rödhake

Madeira:

A few heard calling along the road to Faja da Nogueira 21/8. A few heard between Canhas and Paúl da Serra 23/8.

Blackbird – *Turdus merula cabreræ* – Koltrast

This subspecies is found on Madeira and the western Canary Islands.

Madeira:

Seen in Funchal and Porto Moniz and heard from the car near Seixal.

Spectacled Warbler – *Sylvia conspicillata bella* – Glasögonsångare

This subspecies is only found on the Madeira islands.

Porto Santo:

The best place was 1 km E of Ponta da Calheta in the scrubby area between the road and the beach. Birds seen here as follows. 2 (one male) at the 16/8, c 5 heard and seen (both males and females) at 18/8 and 2-3 heard on the 20/8. 1 Campo de Baixo at 18/8. 1 behind the restaurant Ponta da Calheta at 19/8.

Blackcap – *Sylvia atricapilla heineken* – Svarthätta

This subspecies is found in western Iberia, NW Africa and on the Madeira islands and the Canary Islands.

Porto Santo:

Only heard calling. No singing birds. Seen very seldom. Mostly along the channel from the Tanque pond but also at the dried out pond above Ponta.

Madeira:

Heard singing and calling almost everyday.

Madeiran Firecrest – *Regulus ignicapillus madeirensis* – Brandkronad kungsfågel

This subspecies is only found on Madeira.

Madeira:

c 30 at Balcões 21/8. Heard occasionally from the car when driving in the mountains.

Spanish Sparrow – *Passer hispaniolensis* – Spansk sparv

Porto Santo:

Very common in the village, even seen in the mountains.

Madeira:

The only place I found this species was c 10 birds by the river mouth in Caniçal, although I didn't look for it so hard.

Rock Sparrow – *Petronia petronia madeirensis* – Stensparv

This subspecies is found on the Atlantic islands.

Porto Santo:

18 in the mountains W of Ponta along the road to Morenos 13/8 and c 10 at the same location the 17/8. 2 Morenos 17/8. 2 Tanque pond 19/8.

Chaffinch – *Fringilla coelebs madeirensis* – Bofink

This subspecies is only found on Madeira.

Madeira:

c 30 at Balcões 21/8. Seen occasionally from the car when driving in the mountains.

Canary – *Serinus canaria* – Kanariefågel

Porto Santo:

Very common seen almost everywhere. Often in high numbers.

Madeira:

Common but not at all as on Porto Santo. Seen almost everyday.

Desertas:

A few seen around the "harbour".

Linnet – *Carduelis cannabina nana* – Hämpling

This subspecies is only found on the Madeira islands it is very similar to one of the Canary Island races.

Porto Santo:

Seen occasionally near the dried out pond above Ponta and up along the road around Pico de Ana Ferreira. Ca 100 on the 13/8.

Goldfinch – *Carduelis carduelis parva* – Steglits

This subspecies is found in South-West Europe.

Porto Santo:

Very common. Seen almost everywhere. High numbers at Ponta da Calheta.

Madeira:

Common but not at all as on Porto Santo. Seen almost everyday.

[Northern Red Bishop] – *Euplectes franciscanus* – Nordlig oryxvävare

Madeira:

1 male seen together with Canaries and Goldfinches several times at Ponta da Cruz. At the same spot there were also another probable escaped bird I didn't get any photos of. It was in colour like the canaries but it had a black bandit-mask. I have no clue what it could be.

Butterflies

Small White – *Artogeia rapae* – Rovfjäril

A few seen on both Porto Santo and Madeira.

Clouded Yellow – *Colias crocea* – Rödgul höfjäril

2 seen on Madeira.

Long-tailed Blue - *Lampides boeticus* – Långsvansad blåvinge

3 on Porto Santo and one on Madeira.

Painted Lady – *Cynthia cardui* – Tistelfjäril

A few seen on both Porto Santo and Madeira.

Sothern Grayling – *Hipparchia aristaeus ssp. maderensis* - Sydlig sandgräsfjäril
Quite common at Paúl da Serra, Madeira.

Monarch – *Danaus plexippus* – Monark
A few seen daily on Porto Santo and Madeira.

References:

Trip report pages:

<http://www.algonet.se/~nho/madeira/>

<http://www.club300.se/resedatabas/>

<http://www.eurobirding.co.uk>

A nice site where I found information about Madeira and all the races for these islands.

Compiled by:

Magnus Unger
Månads gatan 8A
S-415 08 Göteborg
Sweden
Email: magnus.unger@comhem.se