

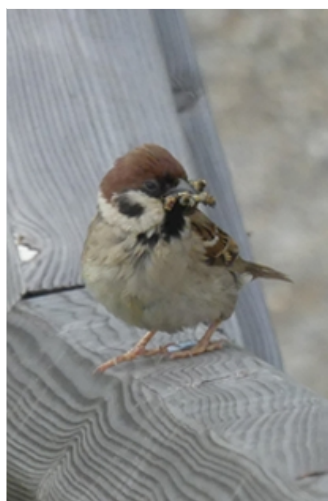
Trip Report

Austria and Hungary for a customised Ecotours tour

May 14-21 2019

14 May

We met up with our friends at Heathrow and had an easy flight with Austrian Airlines to Vienna. Our party of four (all 65+) met our guide Szimi (Gyorgy Szimuly). Arrived at Hotel Kaiserhof at Reichenau, comfortable rooms, very pine-clad. We opted for a walk after lunch. Just went through the village. Got ourselves into birding mode with common species and a few mountain birds.



Grey but dry apart from the odd snowflake. A pretty village with a fast stream running through it. We also drove for about 10 minutes outside the village and got nice views of the mountains until snow clouds blew in. We saw a black squirrel, which is really a red squirrel variant. We saw a red one too. Back at the hotel we retired to our rooms because we had been up since 3am.

15 May

The day started well with a good breakfast at 7.30. Unusually record snowfall had followed the spring thaw, making birding harder. The sun was out when we got out to the minibus. However it started to rain by the time we reached the Schwatzer river valley. We stopped at various places and looked over the

beautiful mountain river rushing along. We spent ages watching a dipper family hunting for food as they dipped under the water. We walked up a side valley to look for more birds but the rain obviously put them off. We caught sight of a woodpecker, firecrest and willow tit. Back at the van we were a bit chilly but a hot drink so warmed us up. A local hütte (cafe) was closed so our guide drove us into a village for lunch. We tried one more walk along the river, but it rained heavily and was rather cold. We decided to go back early to the hotel instead.

16th May

Today we had another 7.30 breakfast and were in the van by 8.45am. We were driven for about an hour to a car park at the base of a trail. We met another Hungarian guide. He and Szimy carried a picnic up the trail. It was a good trail wide enough for a vehicle. In fact it is used in the winter to take skiers up to a chair lift. It was however very steep in places so we had to keep stopping to admire the view or birds. It was dense woodland, a mixture of pine and beech trees. At about 1000 meters altitude we were walking in snow about 6 inches deep. This was hard work but we finally reached the buildings. They were all closed but a bench was cleared of snow and we enjoyed our picnic. It was a bit grey but at least it did not rain. The snow was melting on the hut roofs, so lumps kept falling down. It was much easier going down. We walked about 7 miles in total. We stopped in a town on the way back and indulged in coffee and apple strudel.

17th May

Our guide plus Mike and Jenny got up early and went out before breakfast. John and Jane had a bit more sleep. After breakfast we went to a local cable car and travelled the 8 minutes up the Rax mountain. The day had started sunny but we went into cloud. There was a lot of snow at the top. We saw some interesting birds, lots of ring ouzels and crossbills but had to give up looking for ptarmigan as the snow was so deep. It made walking at 1500 meters quite hard. Later we visited a couple of riverside sites we had been to before. The water had risen because of the melting snow. Next we circumnavigated the mountain. The weather was quite nice and sunny now and we found some nice flower meadows. We stopped for coffee and cake. Opting for Sachertorte this time. Finally, back at the hotel we had dinner and retired to pack. We were leaving after breakfast the next day.



18th May

Our new base was Tornados Panzio, a pension in Hegyko, Hungary and had WiFi. Delightful tee-shirt weather here. Our hotel was fine. Our room had sloping ceilings. We had goulash soup for lunch, served in cauldrons. Very tasty and filling. After lunch we went to inspect a local white storks nest on an electric supply pole.



Next we walked through farmland and giant reedbeds towards the edge of Lake Neusiedl. We saw lots of birds from woodpeckers to yellowhammers and birds of prey. Nightingales were singing. One interesting thing was an old watchtower left from iron curtain days. There were also samples of the various wire fences that had been used as the curtain. Some now re-purposed as a shrike larder. Apparently the fences were not placed on the real border. People would get over them and think they

were free but in fact the real border was about a mile away, so they mostly got caught and disappeared never to be seen again.

19th May

Today we went to a variety of sites. One of the highlights was seeing seven great bustards strut about fields fluffing up their feathers and fanning their tails. We had a couple of rain showers but mostly it was ok and even sunny. We were mostly on the Austrian side of the border. No problems crossing. That



morning they had inspected us but nothing coming back. We saw lots of birds of prey plus lots of hares.



The best eagle was a young imperial eagle sitting in a tree.

20/21 May

We were woken by heavy rain in the night and it continued through breakfast. However it had cleared by the time we got to a good birding spot. We had good sightings of an imperial



eagle, lots of waterbirds and even a couple of distant cranes.

We also saw some native breed Hungarian grey cattle with long horns. We retreated to a cafe for lunch (opposite the Esterhazy Palace). We toured around some more sites, climbing watch towers to get better views. We came across a farm with some mangaliza pigs. They are a Hungarian breed with curly coats. Another rain shower took us back into Hungary and the town of Sopron. The sun came out so we explored some of the historic centre. We had a later breakfast that morning in order to finish packing ready to fly. The mixture of habitats and conditions made for a very interesting trip. Our flight was fine until just as we were going to land at Heathrow. Wheels down we suddenly pulled up again with great acceleration. A few moments later there was a long explanation in German and finally

one in English that we had to abort the landing because of a slow moving Swiss Air plane.

John, Jane, Mike and Jenny a tour by [Ecotours](#).

Habitats

HOHE WAND

A rocky limestone plateau known as Hohe Wand rises from the adjacent plains and is covered with spruce and pine trees.

SCHNEEBERG MOUNTAIN

Schneeberg reaches 2075m in height and marks the north-easternmost limits of the Alps, just one hour south of Vienna. A rack-and-pinion railway goes to 1800m.

LAKE NEUSIEDL

A large brackish lake surrounded by broad belt of reed beds, it is a remnant of an old sea. The mosaic of steppe grassland, fields and shallow lakes.

Bird lists

14 May 2019

Number of Checklists: 2

Number of Taxa: 32

Checklists included in this summary:

(1): Raxalpenhof

(2): Prein an der Rax 87, Reichenau an der Rax AT-Lower Austria

3 Common Wood Pigeon (White-necked) -- (2)

1 Eurasian Sparrowhawk -- (1)

1 Common Buzzard -- (1)

2 Great Spotted Woodpecker -- (2)

2 Peregrine Falcon (Eurasian) -- (1),(2)

1 Eurasian Jay (Eurasian) -- (1)

1 Alpine Chough -- (1)

3 Carrion Crow -- (1)

3 Hooded Crow -- (1),(2)

2 Northern Raven -- (1)

1 Common House Martin -- (1)

2 Coal Tit (Continental) -- (1)

1 Willow Tit -- (1)

1 Eurasian Blue Tit -- (1)

3 Great Tit -- (1)

1 Eurasian Wren (Eurasian) -- (2)

1 Common Firecrest -- (1)

1 Common Chiffchaff (Common) -- (2)

2 Eurasian Blackcap -- (1),(2)

1 Lesser Whitethroat -- (1)

5 Black Redstart -- (1)

1 Mistle Thrush -- (2)

1 Common Blackbird -- (1)

1 Common Starling -- (1)

2 Grey Wagtail -- (1)

1 White Wagtail (White-faced) -- (1)

7 Common Chaffinch -- (1),(2)

2 European Greenfinch -- (1),(2)

11 Red Crossbill -- (2)

4 European Goldfinch -- (1),(2)

6 House Sparrow -- (1)

1 Eurasian Tree Sparrow -- (1)

15 May 2019

Number of Checklists: 7

Number of Taxa: 37

Checklists included in this summary:

(1): Raxalpenhof

(2): Höllental-Bundesstraße, Reichenau an der Rax AT-Lower Austria

(3):

(4): Höllental

(5): Sonnleitenstraße, Reichenau an der Rax AT-Lower Austria

(6): Großau 2, Reichenau an der Rax AT-Lower Austria

(7): Großau, Reichenau an der Rax AT-Lower Austria

3 Mallard -- (2)

1 Common Wood Pigeon (White-necked) -- (5)

5 Common Swift -- (1)

1 White-backed Woodpecker -- (4)

5 Great Spotted Woodpecker -- (5),(6)

1 European Green Woodpecker (Eurasian) -- (5)

1 Eurasian Hobby -- (4)

2 Eurasian Jay (Eurasian) -- (5)

7 Carrion Crow -- (5),(6),(7)

1 Northern Raven -- (5)

1 Barn Swallow -- (7)

5 Coal Tit (Continental) -- (2),(4),(5),(6)

1 Willow Tit -- (2)

3 Eurasian Blue Tit -- (2),(4),(5)

2 Great Tit -- (4),(6)

3 Eurasian Wren (Eurasian) -- (3),(4)

3 White-throated Dipper -- (2)

2 Common Firecrest -- (4)

1 Western Bonelli's Warbler -- (2)

1 Willow Warbler -- (4)

4 Common Chiffchaff (Common) -- (4),(5)

4 Eurasian Blackcap -- (2),(4),(5)

1 Lesser Whitethroat -- (5)

4 European Robin -- (4),(6),(7)

2 Red-breasted Flycatcher -- (4)

3 European Pied Flycatcher -- (4)

2 Black Redstart -- (5),(6)

2 Mistle Thrush -- (7)

6 Song Thrush -- (1),(4),(5),(6),(7)

5 Common Blackbird -- (1),(3),(5)

1 Ring Ouzel (Alpine) -- (4)

3 Grey Wagtail -- (2),(3)

1 White Wagtail (White-faced) -- (1)

1 Water Pipit -- (6)

21 Common Chaffinch -- (2),(3),(4),(5),(6),(7)

9 Eurasian Siskin -- (5)

3 House Sparrow -- (1)

16 May 2019

Number of Checklists: 4

Number of Taxa: 40

Checklists included in this summary:

(1): Raxalpenhof

(2): Thal, Muggendorf AT-Lower Austria

(3): Bahnstraße 1a, Pernitz AT-Lower Austria

(4): Höllental-Bundesstraße, Schwarzau im Gebirge AT-Lower Austria

2 Mallard -- (3)

3 Stock Dove -- (2)

11 Common Wood Pigeon (White-necked) -- (2)

1 Eurasian Collared Dove -- (3)

1 Golden Eagle -- (2)

3 Common Buzzard -- (2)

1 Boreal Owl -- (2)

2 Great Spotted Woodpecker -- (2)

2 Black Woodpecker -- (2)

1 Common Kestrel -- (4)

2 Eurasian Jay (Eurasian) -- (2)

2 Carrion Crow -- (3)

3 Northern Raven -- (2)

4 Eurasian Crag Martin -- (4)

10 Coal Tit (Continental) -- (2)

1 European Crested Tit -- (2)

2 Willow Tit -- (4)

4 Great Tit -- (2),(3)

4 Eurasian Nuthatch (Western) -- (2)

1 Short-toed Treecreeper -- (2)

1 Eurasian Wren (Eurasian) -- (2)

1 Goldcrest -- (2)

3 Common Firecrest -- (2)

1 Wood Warbler -- (2)

1 Western Bonelli's Warbler -- (2)

5 Common Chiffchaff (Common) -- (2)

4 Eurasian Blackcap -- (2),(4)

5 European Robin -- (2)

2 Black Redstart -- (1),(2)

2 Mistle Thrush -- (2)

7 Song Thrush -- (1),(2)

6 Common Blackbird -- (2),(3),(4)

2 Dunnock -- (2)

4 Grey Wagtail -- (2),(4)

2 White Wagtail (White-faced) -- (2)

23 Common Chaffinch -- (1),(2),(3),(4)

3 Eurasian Bullfinch (Eurasian) -- (2)

2 European Greenfinch -- (1)

42 Red Crossbill -- (2)

21 Eurasian Siskin -- (2)

17 May 2019

Number of Checklists: 8

Number of Taxa: 38

Checklists included in this summary:

(1): Doktor-Ewald-Bing-Straße 1, Reichenau an der Rax AT-Lower Austria

(2): Rax, Gatterlkreuz

(3):

(4): Höllental-Bundesstraße, Schwarza im Gebirge AT-Lower Austria

(5): Alpenhalthof, Schwarza im Gebirge

(6): Garden of Cafe Naturpark

(7): Grüne Schwarza

(8): Hauptstraße 53, Sankt Aegydt am Neuwalde AT-Lower Austria

1 Mallard -- (3)

1 Common Wood Pigeon (White-necked) -- (1)

1 Eurasian Sparrowhawk -- (6)

5 Common Buzzard -- (1),(4),(6)

1 Common Kestrel -- (4)

2 Carrion Crow -- (1),(6)

1 Northern Raven -- (2)

6 Eurasian Crag Martin -- (4),(6)

3 Common House Martin -- (6)

7 Coal Tit (Continental) -- (1),(2),(3),(7)

1 European Crested Tit -- (2)

1 Eurasian Blue Tit -- (5)

1 Great Tit -- (5)

1 Eurasian Wren (Eurasian) -- (7)

4 Goldcrest -- (2),(3),(7)

3 Western Bonelli's Warbler -- (1),(7)

4 Common Chiffchaff (Common) -- (1),(6),(7)

7 Eurasian Blackcap -- (1),(3),(4),(5),(6),(7)

1 Lesser Whitethroat -- (2)

1 Spotted Flycatcher -- (1)

4 European Robin -- (2),(7)

3 Black Redstart -- (1),(6),(8)

2 Mistle Thrush -- (2)

2 Song Thrush -- (2),(7)

2 Common Blackbird -- (1),(7)

24 Ring Ouzel (Alpine) -- (2)

28 Dunnock -- (2),(7)

7 Grey Wagtail -- (3),(4),(7)

1 White Wagtail (White-faced) -- (1)

4 Water Pipit -- (2)

30 Common Chaffinch -- (1),(2),(3),(6),(7),(8)

2 Eurasian Bullfinch (Eurasian) -- (7)

6 Common Redpoll -- (2)

40 Red Crossbill -- (2)

5 European Goldfinch -- (1),(5),(6)

3 Eurasian Siskin -- (2)

1 Yellowhammer -- (6)

2 House Sparrow -- (6)

18 May 2019

Number of Checklists: 4

Number of Taxa: 61

Checklists included in this summary:

(1): Raxalpenhof

(2): Harrer Confectionery, Sopron

(3): Fertő Cultural Landscape, Hidegség HU-Győr-Moson-Sopron

(4): Hegykői Tanösvény

3 Common Pheasant -- (4)
6 Stock Dove -- (4)
26 Common Wood Pigeon -- (4)
2 European Turtle Dove -- (4)
6 Eurasian Collared Dove -- (2),(3),(4)
3 Common Cuckoo -- (4)
11 Common Swift -- (1)
1 Northern Lapwing -- (4)
1 Black-headed Gull -- (4)
1 Caspian Gull -- (4)
4 White Stork -- (3),(4)
2 Little Bittern -- (4)
1 Purple Heron -- (4)
1 Great Egret (Eurasian) -- (4)
5 Western Marsh Harrier -- (4)
1 Eurasian Sparrowhawk -- (3)
1 White-tailed Eagle -- (2)
5 Common Buzzard -- (2),(4)
2 European Bee-eater -- (4)
9 Syrian Woodpecker -- (4)
1 Black Woodpecker -- (4)
2 Common Kestrel -- (4)
5 Red-backed Shrike -- (4)
4 Eurasian Golden Oriole -- (4)
17 Rook -- (2),(4)
6 Hooded Crow -- (1),(2),(4)
24 Barn Swallow -- (3),(4)
68 Common House Martin -- (2),(3),(4)
4 Eurasian Blue Tit -- (4)
2 Great Tit -- (3),(4)
1 Eurasian Penduline Tit -- (4)
2 Long-tailed Tit -- (4)
1 Eurasian/Siberian Nuthatch -- (4)
1 Willow Warbler -- (4)
1 Common Chiffchaff -- (1)
2 Common Chiffchaff (Common) -- (4)
4 Marsh Warbler -- (4)
3 Eurasian Reed Warbler -- (4)
6 Great Reed Warbler -- (4)
16 Eurasian Blackcap -- (1),(3),(4)
1 Garden Warbler -- (4)
1 Lesser Whitethroat -- (2)
2 Common Whitethroat -- (4)
3 Spotted Flycatcher -- (4)
7 Common Nightingale -- (4)
2 Black Redstart -- (1),(3)
1 European Stonechat -- (4)
1 Song Thrush -- (1)
4 Common Blackbird -- (1),(2),(4)

- 14 Common Starling -- (2),(4)
- 1 Grey Wagtail -- (1)
- 1 Western Yellow Wagtail (flava/beema) -- (4)
- 2 White Wagtail (White-faced) -- (3),(4)
- 5 Common Chaffinch -- (1),(2),(3),(4)
- 2 European Greenfinch -- (2),(3)
- 4 European Goldfinch -- (2),(4)
- 2 European Serin -- (2),(3)
- 6 Yellowhammer -- (4)
- 1 Common Reed Bunting -- (4)
- 7 House Sparrow -- (1),(3)
- 8 Eurasian Tree Sparrow -- (4)

19 May 2019

Number of Checklists: 6

Number of Taxa: 60

Checklists included in this summary:

- (1): Tadten Dammweg
- (2): Garden of Cafe Zwickl
- (3): Dammweg, Andau AT-Burgenland
- (4): Kirchenplatz
- (5): 7161, Apetlon AT-Burgenland
- (6): Neusiedler See - Seewinkel NP--Zicklacke

- 21 Greylag Goose (European) -- (6)
- 10 Common Shelduck -- (5),(6)
- 5 Common Quail -- (1),(5)
- 24 Common Wood Pigeon -- (1),(5)
- 9 European Turtle Dove -- (1),(5)
- 4 Eurasian Collared Dove -- (2),(4)
- 7 Great Bustard -- (1)
- 10 Common Cuckoo -- (1),(3)
- 2 Common Swift -- (4)
- 10 Pied Avocet -- (5),(6)
- 22 Northern Lapwing -- (1),(3)
- 15 Eurasian Curlew -- (1),(3)
- 9 Common Redshank -- (1),(5),(6)
- 33 Black-headed Gull -- (5),(6)
- 5 Caspian Gull -- (6)
- 2 Grey Heron -- (1)
- 1 Purple Heron -- (6)
- 28 Great Egret -- (1)
- 4 Great Egret (Eurasian) -- (3)
- 1 Eastern Imperial Eagle -- (5)
- 15 Western Marsh Harrier -- (1),(3),(6)
- 3 Montagu's Harrier -- (1)
- 5 Short-eared Owl -- (1)
- 11 Common Kestrel -- (1),(3),(5),(6)
- 1 Eurasian Hobby -- (3)
- 10 Red-backed Shrike -- (1),(3),(5)
- 15 Hooded Crow -- (1),(3),(5)
- 2 Northern Raven -- (3)
- 10 Eurasian Skylark (European) -- (1),(3),(5)
- 3 Crested Lark -- (1),(6)
- 16 Barn Swallow -- (1),(2)
- 4 Common House Martin -- (2)
- 1 Common Chiffchaff (Common) -- (3)
- 18 Sedge Warbler -- (1)
- 6 Marsh Warbler -- (1),(3)
- 2 Eurasian Reed Warbler -- (5)
- 9 Great Reed Warbler -- (1)
- 7 Common Grasshopper Warbler -- (1)
- 9 Eurasian Blackcap -- (1),(3)
- 4 Barred Warbler -- (1),(3)
- 7 Common Whitethroat -- (1),(3)
- 9 Common Nightingale -- (1),(3)
- 1 Black Redstart -- (2)
- 1 Whinchat -- (1)
- 4 European Stonechat -- (1)
- 3 Song Thrush -- (1),(2),(3)
- 4 Common Blackbird -- (1),(2)

8 Common Starling -- (1),(3)
30 Western Yellow Wagtail (flava/beema) -- (1),(5)
7 White Wagtail (White-faced) -- (1),(3)
8 Common Chaffinch -- (1),(2),(3)
8 European Greenfinch -- (1),(2),(3)
1 Common Linnet -- (1)
3 European Goldfinch -- (1),(3),(4)
3 European Serin -- (2)
4 Corn Bunting -- (1),(3)
1 Yellowhammer -- (3)
4 Common Reed Bunting -- (1),(5)
15 House Sparrow -- (2),(4)
36 Eurasian Tree Sparrow -- (1),(6)

20 May 2019

Number of Checklists: 8

Number of Taxa: 67

Checklists included in this summary:

(1): Fertő-Hanság National Park, Sarród HU-Győr-Moson-Sopron (47.6590,16.8572)

Date: 20 May 2019 at 09:08

(2): (47.6802,16.8458)

Date: 20 May 2019 at 09:25

(3): Fertő-Hanság NP

Date: 20 May 2019 at 10:00

(4): (47.7616,16.7763)

Date: 20 May 2019 at 14:08

(5): 7142, Illmitz AT-Burgenland (47.8074,16.8222)

Date: 20 May 2019 at 14:30

(6): Illmitz-Hölle

Date: 20 May 2019 at 14:41

(7): Fertő Cultural Landscape, Sopron HU-Győr-Moson-Sopron (47.6748,16.6732)

Date: 20 May 2019 at 17:11

(8): Fő tér 8., Sopron HU-Győr-Moson-Sopron (47.6864,16.5913)

Date: 20 May 2019 at 18:17

210 Greylag Goose (European) -- (2),(3),(4),(6)

54 Mute Swan -- (2),(3),(6)

13 Common Shelduck -- (2),(3),(5),(6)

1 Garganey -- (2)

12 Mallard -- (6)

484 Red-crested Pochard -- (2),(3),(6)

42 Common Pochard -- (2),(3)

1 Tufted Duck -- (3)

1 Great Crested Grebe -- (6)

8 Eurasian Collared Dove -- (3),(6),(8)

2 Common Cuckoo -- (1)

8 Common Swift -- (7),(8)

2 Common Crane -- (3)

26 Black-winged Stilt -- (3),(6)

11 Pied Avocet -- (2),(3),(6)

7 Northern Lapwing -- (3),(5),(6)

1 Little Ringed Plover -- (6)

1 Common Sandpiper -- (6)

4 Common Redshank -- (2),(3),(6)

1 Black-winged Pratincole -- (3)

6 Black-headed Gull -- (2),(6)

4 Little Gull -- (3)

48 Caspian Gull -- (6)

8 Black Tern (Eurasian) -- (3)

7 Whiskered Tern -- (3)

3 Common Tern -- (4),(6)

2 Pygmy Cormorant -- (3)

5 Grey Heron -- (2),(3),(6)

1 Purple Heron -- (3)

21 Great Egret (Eurasian) -- (1),(2),(3)

1 Squacco Heron -- (2)

1 Black-crowned Night Heron (Eurasian) -- (3)

3 Eurasian Spoonbill -- (3),(6)

1 Eastern Imperial Eagle -- (1)

4 Western Marsh Harrier -- (2),(3),(7)

1 Common Buzzard -- (3)

1 European Bee-eater -- (2)

10 Common Kestrel -- (1),(2),(3),(4),(5),(6),(8)
2 Eurasian Hobby -- (7)
1 Red-backed Shrike -- (2)
4 Eurasian Magpie (Eurasian) -- (1)
7 Western Jackdaw -- (3),(8)
41 Rook -- (3),(8)
2 Carrion Crow -- (6)
15 Hooded Crow -- (1),(4),(5),(6),(7)
9 Eurasian Skylark (European) -- (1),(3),(4),(5)
16 Barn Swallow -- (1),(3),(4),(6)
1 Great Tit -- (8)
7 Sedge Warbler -- (2),(3)
6 Eurasian Reed Warbler -- (2),(3)
11 Great Reed Warbler -- (2),(3)
2 Eurasian Blackcap -- (6),(7)
6 Common Nightingale -- (1),(4),(6)
2 Common Blackbird -- (8)
60 Common Starling -- (1),(4),(6)
1 Grey Wagtail -- (8)
10 Western Yellow Wagtail (flava/beema) -- (2),(3),(4),(6)
2 White Wagtail (White-faced) -- (3),(4)
2 Common Chaffinch -- (6)
1 European Greenfinch -- (7)
2 Common Linnet -- (4)
7 European Goldfinch -- (4),(6),(7)
1 European Serin -- (4)
4 Corn Bunting -- (2)
1 Yellowhammer -- (7)
25 House Sparrow -- (3),(6)
6 Eurasian Tree Sparrow -- (3),(4),(6)