



Trip Report

Caucasus Winter Bonanza

An eight-day birdwatching tour to Georgia
From 1st to 9th March 2022



Güldenstädt's Redstarts *Phoenicurus erythrogastus*.
Picture by Alexander Rukhaia

Tour leader: Alexander Rukhaia
Trip report complete by: Alexander Rukhaia

INTRODUCTION

The 'Caucasus Winter Bonanza' is a full-fledged eight-day package tour, which is held once a year, in the first week of March - an extremely convenient time for comfortable birding, especially in the Caucasus Mountains. This period in itself is quite peculiar and very remarkable from the point of view of excellent opportunities to see a huge array of both the most famous representatives of the Caucasian endemic fauna and wintering bird species, but also many early migrants, among which there are good chances to see some rare specimens for the Western Palearctic.

The route is saturated with a variety of landscapes and habitats. It is enough to see only the list of target birds to understand this without further ado. Starting from Tbilisi, the first part of the tour includes several days in the Greater Caucasus, where real winter still reigns, while the second part of the tour is dedicated to eastern Georgia with its outstanding protected areas that offer great birding experiences. This part of the country, on the contrary, is located at a much lower altitude and consists of rather dry habitats, and is therefore much warmer here. This is a classic combination of two ornithological hotspots that perfectly harmonize with each other. The final part of the tour is shorter than the previous two, and it is dedicated to visiting a couple of inland steppe lakes and forest parks near Tbilisi.

One of the main attractions of the tour are certainly the birds of the Greater Caucasus. **Caucasian Snowcocks** and **Caucasian Grouse**, as several other must-see high-altitude birds of Georgia, of course, are an integral part, but, nevertheless, the main highlights are the wintering flocks of **Güldenstädt's Redstarts** and **Great Rosefinches**, which can be commonly found in decent numbers right in the environs of the small alpine town of Stepantsminda. Eastern Georgia is all about **Eastern Imperial Eagles** and many other species of local, wintering and migratory birds of prey. The vast steppes of this part of the country are especially attractive to all of them. Another key species we are targeting in these parts are wintering **Little Bustards**, local **Black Francolins**, **Calandra Larks**, **Turkestan Short-toed Larks**, **Western Rock Nuthatches**, **Wallcreepers**, **Isabelline Wheatears**, **Rock Sparrows** and many more. Birds such as **Pallas's Gulls**, **Pygmy Cormorants** and **Dalmatian Pelicans** are regular encounters on inland lakes near Tbilisi. All these observations relate to the final part of the tour, as well as **Krüper's Nuthatches** and several species of woodpeckers, including **Syrian** that we find in pine woodlands and other forest parks, also near Tbilisi.



Great Rosefinch
Picture by Alexander Rukhaia

SUMMARY

Tuesday, 1st March: Some of the group mates arrived a few days earlier; Christopher made it first, then Richard and Guy arrived next day, while Penny had already been in Tbilisi since September last year. Yes, a slow travel journey full of many memorable moments, Penny says. By the way, she has already returned to the USA after this tour. The last three, Tim, Mark and Andrew (from the [Army Ornithological Society](#)), were due to arrive today. Their plane landed before five in the morning. Now, the whole group is assembled. No delays, no consequences at passport control, no loss of luggage - everything went smoothly. A short rest before departure at the hotel, and after breakfast, we set off for Kazbegi. We see several **Great Cormorants**, **Black-headed** and **Armenian Gulls** from the minibus along the main Kura River. First stop, the famous Ananuri Fortified Church, which is now almost abandoned. We are looking for a **Wallcreeper**. After a while we spot it under the bridge, hopping on concrete column. Nice movements, but we need to sit down to look at it from the right angle. A minute later, the bird flies into the fortress courtyard, where we were looking for it earlier. We follow the bird, and here it is, trying to grab insects from the cracks under the dome. Much better views now, and long enough!

Wallcreeper
Picture by Tim Cowley



Ananuri Fortified Church
Picture by Tim Cowley

Soon, having reached Gudauri resort, we make another stop to get a better look at the raptors soaring over the buildings that we spot from the minibus - two **Golden Eagles** joined by other three. Five such impressive birds displaying overhead at the same time is a delightful moment, but we're almost blocking traffic, and people are looking at us like we're some kind of weirdos. **Horned Larks** are also present, they are all around, and several dozen **Red-billed Choughs** clattering in the sky.

We continue on our way. Near Stepantsminda, there is a small village Kanobi, where we get the first pack of red-listed **East Caucasian Turs**, several **Ring Ouzels**, **White-throated Dipper**, and an impressive close-up of an adult **Bearded Vulture** cruising through the fog in its typical, wary glide in our direction. Briefly landing on the side of the road, it quickly takes off and merges with the snowy landscapes as imperceptibly as appears. We're all pleased and happy, and now ready for lunch.



East Caucasian Turs
Picture by Tim Cowley



Bearded Vulture
Picture by Alexander Rukhaia

Soon we arrive at our hotel (Hotel Alpenhaus Kazbegi). Just as we were starting lunch, Tim came in and said - if anyone wants to see, Mark and I got a few **Caucasian Snowcocks** in the scope right from our room. Some jump up from the table but quickly come back, thinking that we would easily get them later. Some managed to see the birds, but not all, perhaps someone accidentally shifted the scope to the side and lost sight of them. There were thirteen individuals on the grassy slope below the snowline – actually quite low. All our subsequent attempts to find the birds again in the following days were mostly unsuccessful... always because of the weather conditions. After lunch we go to explore the surroundings of Stepantsminda and the Terek River Valley. So far, we find only one male **Güldenstädt's Redstart** along with numerous **Blackbirds**, **Eurasian Blue**, **Great** and **Long-tailed Tits**. One **Griffon Vulture** hovering over the cliffs. The distant **Golden Eagle** is already the sixth for today. So a huge flock of more than seven hundred **Alpine Choughs** descended from the mountains down into the river valley - very impressive sight. As the locals say, this is a prerequisite for an imminent snowfall.

Excited Mark ☺
Picture by Tim Cowley



Alpine Choughs
Picture by Alexander Rukhaia

In the evening we move higher, to the Kuro Gorge, hoping to see **Caucasian Snowcocks**. The weather is not favorable - a strong, cold wind does not allow to work properly with the scope. A glimpse of one high-

flying bird does not count. Local **Twites** are less active, sheltering from the wind at the bottom and in the cracks of boulders around our viewpoint, but some, from time to time, show well and even pose. In those short periods of time without wind, we find a small group of **Great Rosefinches**. Far away on the opposite rocky slope, but still clearly distinguishable males and females.



Alpine Choughs
Picture by Alexander Rukhaia

Twite
Picture by Alexander Rukhaia



Twites
Picture by Alexander Rukhaia

Wednesday, 2nd March: We are going on an early birding to explore the lower slopes of the Kuro Gorge. It hasn't fully dawned yet. The weather has clearly worsened over the night. Dark snow clouds limit the view, but somehow we still manage to find a flock **Caucasian Grouse** - very high. The snowfall obviously forced **Güldenstädt's Redstarts** to descend into the valley again. There are a few nice males and females around our spot. A little pack of **East Caucasian Turs** can also be seen grazing quite low. In such weather, even **Calandra Larks** had to suspend their flight in the valley for a while.

We return to the hotel for breakfast and much needed hot coffee. The next place is Sea Buckthorn thickets near the water dam, which are now literally teeming with numerous **Güldenstädt's Redstarts** and **Great Rosefinches**. The other birds include **Horned Larks**, **Eurasian Bullfinches**, **Rock Buntings**, **Mistle Thrush**, **Fieldfares**, **Ring Ouzels**, couple of **Bearded Vultures**, several hundreds of **Alpine Choughs**

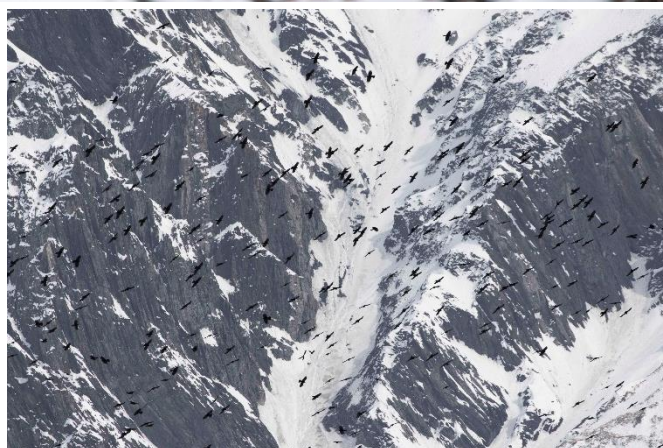
again, and a local pair of **White-throated Dippers**. A **Wallcreeper**, I have to say, was a rather unexpected at this time of year here, but we were delighted to see it again.



Güldenstädt's Redstart
Picture by Alexander Rukhaia



Horned Lark
Picture by Alexander Rukhaia



Alpine Choughs
Picture by Alexander Rukhaia



Alpine Choughs
Picture by Alexander Rukhaia



Great Rosefinch
Picture by Alexander Rukhaia

After lunch, we paid another visit to the Kuro Gorge. The weather hasn't improved, but we have a debt. **Caucasian Grouse** showing better now, and much lower this time, but these are not the birds we are targeting. After a while of scanning, suddenly, Mark bumps on four **Caucasian Snowcocks**, but a strong wind does not help to keep the targets in focus and we lose birds. Another disappointment. The last hope is pinned on tomorrow morning before the planned trip to eastern Georgia.

Thursday, 3rd March: Pleasant views of **Caucasian Grouse** before breakfast, but then we are informed that due to the fear of an avalanche, the Jvari Pass is closed at least until tomorrow, and this is the only road connecting Kazbegi region with the rest of the country. The weather is changing rapidly, and soon it starts pouring like from a bucket. There is no chance of any activity, so in order to somehow kill time, we have to stay at the hotel, forcing ourselves to play backgammon.



Richard and Andrew
Picture by Alexander Rukhaia



Terek River Valley
Picture by Tim Cowley

In the afternoon, we head to the Gveleti Ponds in the Dariali Gorge. It's pretty close to the Russian border. There are several **Güldenstädt's Redstarts** around, and several **Griffon** and **Bearded Vultures** overhead, but then we flush four **Garganeys** from the pond. On the way down we see **Rocky Buntings**.

Being so close, we visit the Dariali Monastery. Miserable weather, unpleasant for birding, but we got good views of **Jays** and several **Coal Tits** - the new bird of the tour.

Gveleti Gorge
Picture by Tim Cowley



Terek River Valley
Picture by Tim Cowley



Dariali Monastery
Picture by Tim Cowley



Rock Bunting
Picture by Tim Cowley

Friday, 4th March: Waking up with the hope of escaping from Stepantsminda, we see the surroundings covered with at least twenty-centimeter layer of snow. We're not going to make it today, that's obvious. Besides, it's still snowing. At breakfast, we watch from the restaurant an impressive continuous flight of hundreds of **Horned Larks** moving in our direction from Gudauri resort. We can't wait to get outside. The sea buckthorns around the town are full of frolicking birds – they are practically everywhere, however, colorful male **Güldenstädt's Redstarts**, **Great Rosefinches** and **Eurasian Bullfinches** are incomparable. And here are those **Horned Larks** - literally a carpet of several hundred **Horned Larks** foraging together. And again, good views of **Wallcreeper**. Such a good morning made us hungry.

Alex, Penny, Guy & Christian
Picture by Alexander Rukhaia



Horned Lark
Picture by Alexander Rukhaia



Horned Larks
Picture by Alexander Rukhaia



Horned Larks
Picture by Alexander Rukhaia



Güldenstädt's Redstarts
Picture by Alexander Rukhaia

After lunch, we intend to try our luck again to find **Snowcocks**. Instead, we find several **Grouse** – even much lower this time. Soon the sun shone, and finally, opens the view of Mount Kazbegi, for the first time during our stay, but it is still windy, and this is not comforting. We are driving higher, to a potentially better place. Some people stay in the minibus, but Tim, Guy and I make the last journey of the Samurai. Snow-trudge – set up scopes – freeze – not see the birds and there is no vocal sign of them either, as in previous days, but still we must try. Passions are heating up. Almost two hours later, on the verge of hypothermia, we get, but we get on something completely different; three **Lynxes** - mother and two well grown cubs. We watched them literally for two or three minutes at most, but it's a pity that not everyone managed to see them. Of course, we immediately called everyone, but before they got to our place, the **Lynxes** have slowly disappeared behind the rocks. There were more than twenty **East Caucasian Turs** on the same slope, which may have played a role. Later, Guy, who desperately wanted to see a Snowcock, said that seeing a Lynx was a much better observation for him, offsetting everything else.

Despite everything, I have a difficult burden on me; two unplanned extra days spent in Kazbegi mean two birding days less in eastern Georgia. It's time to make harsh decisions to adjust the program, and it's not

easy at all. In the end, it doesn't look so bad, but it's just vitally important for us to get out of this region. The weather looks promising for tomorrow, so this is our chance!

Saturday, 5th March: And the truth – sunny morning, clear blue sky and a fascinating view of Mount Kazbegi. At breakfast, we receive a phone call informing that the road will be open sometime in the afternoon. Our personal connections are always more efficient than the lazy Roads Department. We prefer not to wait in the town, but to be as close as possible to the post in order to escape at the first opportunity. The post is a police station next to the cable car station in Kobi - this is our plan B.

Ring Ouzel

Picture by Tim Cowley



Abandoned shepherds village

Picture by Tim Cowley

We arrive at the place. As we were informed, the pass is not open yet, as the machinery is still clearing some of the remaining sections. It will most likely take some time, but no problem, we keep ourselves busy; next to the road, there is a forgotten graveyard with old gravestones and one stand of a lonely frozen tree in the center, the red winter berries of which attract plenty of thrushes, such as **Song** and **Mistle Thrushes**, **Common Blackbirds**, **Fieldfares** and **Ring Ouzels**. In the stone ruins of once Ossetian shepherd houses we find **Alpine Accentors** and **Red-fronted Serins**.



Alpine Accentor

Picture by Tim Cowley



Red-fronted Serin
Picture by Alexander Rukhaia

Now the question is where to have lunch; because we cannot find better place nearby, but also because we have to be quick, we spontaneously deploy a camping table next to our minibus surrounded by other cars in the queue. What to do, harsh times call for harsh measures. We were ready for such a situation and had everything we needed with us, even hot coffee.

The opening of the road is delayed indefinitely, and the police cannot give a concrete answer. It's not worth the risk, therefore, we leave our luggage in the minibus, take with us only what we need and get on the cable car. The way to the ski resort on the other side of the pass takes four lines of eleven minutes each. Meanwhile, the road is being opened. From the cab we can see our minibus driving along the road – so ironic, but it turned out to be an exciting excursion. Arriving in Gudauri almost simultaneously, we get into our minibus and drive straight to Dedoplistskaro.

Tim and Mark
Picture by Tim Cowley



Guy and Andrew
Picture by Tim Cowley



Kobi-Gudauri Cable Car
Picture by Tim Cowley



Glad to see Mark happy
Picture by Tim Cowley



Sunday, 6th March: We need to catch up, so we leave very early in the morning after a cup of coffee at our cozy lodge (Guesthouse Savanna). Today we use SUVs. Communication is maintained via Woki Toki. We drive in the dark, through vast plains of wheat fields... flushing a lot of **Crested** and **Calandra Larks** along the way. It's almost dawn, and now we can see the birds – a small group of **Common Chaffinches** and **Bramblins**, and one adult **Steppe Eagle** perched on the top of the hill. Soon we take a break for breakfast at Pantishara Gorge. Here, at the campsite, there is a good infrastructure for this purpose. This is the territory of the Vashlovani National Park, and being here so early is a huge advantage. There are quite attractive dry landscapes, as well as the habitat itself. The weather looks fine, except for the wind, however, being surrounded by high sandy cliffs, we are somehow protected from it. Quite good action during breakfast; several **European Greenfinches**, a couple of **Western Rock Nuthatches** and a **Wallcreeper** at our campsite, followed by overhead sights of raptors, such as **Steppe Eagle**, presumably

the same, **Griffon Vulture**, **Northern Goshawk**, **Eurasian Sparrowhawk**, **Common Kestrel**, a couple of **Hen Harriers** and an adult male **Pallid Harrier**.

We drive several kilometers further into the gorge until we come across an interesting activity of various passerines near a water source, among which we also find several **Red-fronted Serins** and **Yellowhammers**. As soon as it got warmer, **Griffon Vultures** began to circle - we got at least nine individuals in the same kettle. On the Samukhi Plains, we are questing for wintering **Little Bustards**, but we can't find any, except for poor sight of only three birds in flight, but in compensation for this we got very good views of both **Isabelline** and **Finsch's Wheatears**, as well as up to seventy **Goitered Gazelles**. On the way back, **Chukar Partridges** are frequently met - several dozen individuals in different places. It looks like a sunny day lured them out of hides.



Finsch's Wheatear
Picture by Alexander Rukhaia

On the way to the Vashlovani N.P.
Picture by Tim Cowley



Enjoying Finsch's Wheatears
Picture by Alexander Rukhaia

A relaxing lunch break at the ranger shack next to the viewpoint gave us a good respite, and the first observations of flying **Long-legged Buzzards** and **Cinereous Vultures**.



Goitered Gazelles
Picture by Tim Cowley

We continue on our way, but large groups of **Eurasian Skylarks** and **Calandra Larks** all over Shiraki Plains make us take a lot of pauses along the drive - too much, and time consuming, to be able to conduct a thorough scan of all single movements, so we focus on the most numerous flocks. Amongst one of these foraging flocks we bump on much wanted **Turkestan Short-toed Larks**. Another highlight of the trip is the migration of large eagles, such as **Steppe** and **Lesser Spotted Eagles**, including one light adult. Raptors in general are abundant today, especially **Hen Harriers** observed in good number, both males and females, **Long-legged Buzzards** and a couple of **Merlins**.



Turkestan Short-toed Lark
Picture by Tim Cowley

Monday, 7th March: We again leave very early, drive in the dark, arrive at the Dali Reservoir, set breakfast on a bench under a tree... hot coffee, and here is the first bird; **Syrian Woodpecker** showing very well. Later we walk down to the reeds, picking up **Western Marsh Harriers**, **White-tailed Eagle**, **Grey Herons**, **Great Egrets**, one female **Bearded Reedling**, several **Eurasian Wrens**, etc. Then from the bridge we scan the reservoir; a few **Armenian Gulls**, a distant **Cormorants**, both **Great** and **Pygmy**, several **Tufted Ducks**, **Little**, **Great Crested** and **Horned Grebes**, one male **Smew**, and suddenly two **Black-throated Loons** popping up in the view – quite unexpected species for this place. Soon both **Griffon** and **Cinereous Vultures** appear out of nowhere, giving an excellent close-up glide.



Cinereous Vultures
Picture by Alexander Rukhaia

The way back through the steppe plains of Taribana offers again plenty of **Eurasian Skylarks** and **Calandra Larks**. In addition, **Great Grey Shrikes**, **Isabelline Wheatears**, **Spanish Sparrows**, **Corn Buntings** and quite a few more. A **Rock Sparrow** is a new bird for the list – there are more than thirteen individuals on a wire near the old farm. There's one bit target today that is still missing, but soon we find them around a known place on a pylon – meaning a pair of **Eastern Imperial Eagles**. A bit distant view at first place. We try to approach closer, but bearing distance to avoid disturbance. By the time we arrive, the birds take off, but putting on a nice show in flight. Meanwhile, I get a phone and highly important information - thanks to my friends Asmus and Christian, who are also on a birding duty nearby, now we know exactly where to find **Little Bustards**.

After a picnic lunch, we are heading for steppe plains of Shiraki, making a short spontaneous stop at our hotel to recharge with hot coffee. The recommended spot is only several minutes away. A few short checks of different sites and soon we get on the first poor of **Little Bustards** foraging in a fresh green wheat field. Later, another, slightly larger flock appears, looking for a suitable place... landing nearby. At that same moment, we observe various birds of prey, among which there is one oddly-looking pale bird that turned out an immature **Eastern Imperial Eagle**.

The weather has improved and looks just perfect, much warmer now, and we have yet to visit the Eagle Gorge. It's near hotel in the town. **Griffon Vultures** do not surprise, as we have had plenty in recent days,

but **Black Storks** in the nest and local **Peregrine Falcons** are new for the trip... nice views, by the way. By that time our driver had already arrived from Tbilisi to pick us up. We return to the hotel, load our luggage into the minibus and head to Tbilisi (Hotel Magnolia).



Calandra Lark
Picture by Alexander Rukhaia



Eastern Imperial Eagle
Picture by Alexander Rukhaia



Griffon Vulture
Picture by Tim Cowley



Eagle Gorge
Picture by Alexander Rukhaia

Tuesday, 8th March: The last morning of the last day begins with an early visit to the Kojori Pine Forest near Tbilisi. The first location doesn't seem to be very successful, so we relocate to another where we quickly get several **Krüper's Nuthatches** showing great.

A shallow, salyan Lake of Kumisi south of Tbilisi, looks quite impressive with a dense gathering of various ducks, the most numerous among which were **Ruddy Shelducks**, **Northern Shovelers**, **Northern Pintails**, **Red-crested Pochards** and **Common Pochards**, as well as several **Ferruginous Ducks** and a single female **Smew** – the second for the trip. Among other things, more **Rock Sparrows**, our first observation of **Black Redstarts** and the best view of the local **White-tailed** and **Eastern Imperial Eagle** in a week. It would be great to stay longer here to explore more, but there are still a couple of other places to visit before sunset.

An hour's drive further south is another lake called Jandari. The weather still looks pretty good... for a while, and we enjoy watching plenty of **Pygmy Cormorants** and **Armenian Gulls**, and distant **Dalmatian Pelicans** circling over the lake. And suddenly a strong wind, without any foresight. Fighting the wind with all our might, as we are still looking for a **Pallas's Gull** - almost lost the hope and ready to give up, when Richard gets on one floating adult male. And we escape. On the way back to Tbilisi, we still have time to visit the Ponichala Forest Park. The wind seems calmer and even better as we enter the woods. A leisurely stroll among the still leafless trees, as expected, leads to excellent observations of the **Middle Spotted**, **Syrian**, **Great** and **European Green Woodpeckers**, and, of course, **Black Woodpecker** thanks to Mark and Tim, who discovered a new hole. In a word, just the perfect end to the day and the tour.

Black Woodpecker
Picture by Tim Cowley



Krüper's Nuthatch
Picture by Tim Cowley



Middle Spotted Woodpecker
Picture by Alexander Rukhaia



Our group
Picture by someone from the hotel staff ©

Conclusions

After reading our report, you probably guessed that we had to change the second part of the program, as a result of which we had to skip visits to several planned places in eastern Georgia. In this situation, we were simply powerless to influence the situation, since the only road entering and leaving the Kazbegi region was blocked, and we fully depended on how quickly the road would be cleared for a safe escape. We were not the only ones stuck there, but also many other tourists and locals. On the one hand, it's quite sad, but on the other hand, it's not as bad as it might seem at first - we spent a good time, and we can say we were completely sated with the main specialties of the Caucasus. After all, this is the main highlight of this tour. It can also be said that the loss of those almost two days did not entail disastrous results. We still managed to catch up with the program and visit all the main birding sites, seeing all the main bird species of the tour. Of course, it cost us early morning outings a couple of times. We hope that next year, as promised, the construction of the tunnel will be completed, meaning the end of such logistical puzzles.

About Snowcocks: of course, it could have been better, but this time we were just unlucky with the weather conditions. Rain and snow are not a problem, but we had windy days that made the work with scopes extremely difficult or impossible when trying to detect such camouflaged objects like Snowcocks.

Otherwise, everything went very well, even though some logistical issues had to be adapted to the situation, sometimes last minute. Overall, we had a really good time - a lot of fun and at the same time quite exciting with many good birds.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the group (Richard Eagles, Guy Campbell, Christopher Elmer, Andrew Bray, Mark Easterbrook, Tim Cowley and Penny Warren) once again for being a great company!

Continue to the final bird checklist...

Annotated List of Birds

Developed on the basis of the IOC World Bird List (v 12.1) 2022.

Observation status code:

Number = quantity seen and counted
 Number + = more than mentioned quantity seen (roughly counted)
 (m) = male
 (f) = female
 n/f = numerous or frequently observed (uncounted)
 H = heard, but not seen
 Hs = heard several

Total = **134 species**; 131 seen and 3 heard

N	Family Scientific Name	English Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
			Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
Anatidae		Swans, Geese & Ducks								
1	Cygnus cygnus	Whooper Swan								6
2	Tadorna tadorna	Common Shelduck								2
3	Tadorna ferruginea	Ruddy Shelduck						10		100+
4	Spatula querquedula	Garganey			4					15+
5	Spatula clypeata	Northern Shoveler								60+
6	Mareca strepera strepera	Gadwall								20+
7	Mareca Penelope	Eurasian Wigeon								20+
8	Anas platyrhynchos platyrhynchos	Mallard								25+
9	Anas acuta	Northern Pintail								100+
10	Anas crecca	Eurasian Teal								30+
11	Netta rufina	Red-crested Pochard								20+
12	Aythya ferina	Common Pochard								50+
13	Aythya nyroca	Ferruginous Duck								4
14	Aythya fuligula	Tufted Duck							11	10+
15	Mergellus albellus	Smew							1 (m)	1 (f)
Phasianidae		Pheasants & Allies								
16	Lyrurus mlokosiewiczzi	Caucasian Grouse		46	44	8				
17	Tetraogallus caucasicus	Caucasian Snowcock	13	4						
18	Alectoris chukar kleini	Chukar Partridge						40+	3	
Otididae		Bustards								
19	Tetrax tetrax	Little Bustard						3	80+	
Columbidae		Pigeons & Doves								

N	Family Scientific Name	English Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
			Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
20	<i>Columba livia livia</i>	Rock Dove	n/f	n/f	n/f	n/f	n/f	n/f	n/f	n/f
21	<i>Columba oenas oenans</i>	Stock Dove						13	15+	
22	<i>Columba palumbus columbus</i>	Common Wood Pigeon							4	2
23	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	Eurasian Collared Dove						1	2	3
24	<i>Spilopelia senegalensis</i>	Laughing Dove	3							
Rallidae		Rails, Crakes & Coots								
25	<i>Rallus aquaticus aquaticus</i>	Water Rail							Hs	
26	<i>Gallinula chloropus chloropus</i>	Common Moorhen							4	2
27	<i>Fulica atra atra</i>	Eurasian Coot								600+
Podicipedidae		Grebes								
28	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis fuficollis</i>	Little Grebe							2	20+
29	<i>Podiceps cristatus cristatus</i>	Great Crested Grebe							6	15+
30	<i>Podiceps auritus</i>	Horned Grebe							1	
31	<i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>	Black-necked Grebe								2
Charadriidae		Plovers								
32	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	Northern Lapwing						30	30+	24
Laridae		Gulls, Terns & Skimmers								
33	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	Black-headed Gull	n/f							n/f
34	<i>Ichthyaelus ichthyaelus</i>	Pallas's Gull								1
35	<i>Larus cachinnans</i>	Caspian Gull								1
36	<i>Larus armenicus</i>	Armenian Gull	12+						3	50+
Gaviidae		Loons								
37	<i>Gavia arctica</i>	Black-throated Loon							2	
Ciconiidae		Storks								
38	<i>Ciconia nigra</i>	Black Stork							2	
Phalacrocoracidae		Cormorants & Shags								
39	<i>Microcarbo pygmaeus</i>	Pygmy Cormorant							6	50+
40	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	Great Cormorant	3					11	11	40+
Ardeidae		Hérons & Bitterns								
41	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	Grey Heron	1						2	12+
42	<i>Ardea alba</i>	Great Egret							15	40+
43	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	Little Egret								14+
Pelecanidae		Pelicans								
44	<i>Pelecanus crispus</i>	Dalmatian Pelican								13
Accipitridae		Kites, Hawks & Eagles								
45	<i>Gypaetus barbatus barbatus</i>	Bearded Vulture	3	2	3	1	3			
46	<i>Gyps fulvus fulvus</i>	Griffon Vulture	1		3	6	2	13	9	

N	Family Scientific Name	English Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
			Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
47	<i>Aegypius monachus</i>	Cinereous Vulture						3	7	
48	<i>Clanga pomarina</i>	Lesser Spotted Eagle						8	2	
49	<i>Clanga clanga</i>	Greater Spotted Eagle						1		
50	<i>Aquila nipalensis</i>	Steppe Eagle						14	8	
51	<i>Aquila heliaca</i>	Eastern Imperial Eagle							3	1
52	<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>	Golden Eagle	6							
53	<i>Accipiter nisus nisus</i>	Eurasian Sparrowhawk	1					1	1	1
54	<i>Accipiter gentilis marginatus</i>	Northern Goshawk						1		
55	<i>Circus aeruginosus aeruginosus</i>	Western Marsh Harrier							4	5
56	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>	Hen Harrier						9+	4	
57	<i>Circus macrourus</i>	Pallid Harrier						1		
58	<i>Haliaeetus albicilla albicilla</i>	White-tailed Eagle							1	2
59	<i>Buteo rufinus rufinus</i>	Long-legged Buzzard						6+	5	2
60	<i>Buteo buteo menetriesi</i>	Common Buzzard		1		2			1	1
Strigidae			Owls							
61	<i>Athene noctua indigena</i>	Little Owl								H
Picidae			Woodpeckers							
62	<i>Dendrocoptes medius caucasicus</i>	Middle Spotted Woodpecker								4
63	<i>Dryobates minor colchicus</i>	Lesser Spotted Woodpecker							1	
64	<i>Dendrocopos syriacus transcaucasicus</i>	Syrian Woodpecker							2	1
65	<i>Dendrocopos major tenuirostris</i>	Great Spotted Woodpecker	1							1
66	<i>Dryocopus martius martius</i>	Black Woodpecker								1
67	<i>Picus viridis karelini</i>	European Green Woodpecker	H						1	6
Falconidae			Falcons							
68	<i>Falco tinnunculus tinnunculus</i>	Common Kestrel		1		1		3	2	1
69	<i>Falco columbarius</i>	Merlin						2		
70	<i>Falco peregrinus brookei</i>	Peregrine Falcon							2	
Laniidae			Shrikes							
71	<i>Lanius excubitor</i>	Great Grey Shrike		1				2	2	
Corvidae			Crows & Jays							
72	<i>Garrulus glandarius krynicki</i>	Eurasian Jay	5		2			1	2	2
73	<i>Pica pica bactriana</i>	Eurasian Magpie	2					n/f	n/f	n/f
74	<i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax docilis</i>	Red-billed Chough	40+				1			
75	<i>Pyrrhocorax graculus graculus</i>	Alpine Chough	700+	600+	50+	200+	20+			
76	<i>Coloeus monedula soemmerringii</i>	Western Jackdaw						4	30+	
77	<i>Corvus frugilegus frugilegus</i>	Rook								35+
78	<i>Corvus cornix sharpii</i>	Hooded Crow	n/f	n/f	n/f	n/f	n/f	n/f	n/f	n/f

N	Family Scientific Name	English Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
			Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
79	<i>Corvus corax corax</i>	Northern Raven	n/f	n/f	n/f	n/f	n/f	6	n/f	6
	Paridae	Tits								
80	<i>Parus ater michalowskii</i>	Coal Tit			6	1	H			1
81	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus satunini</i>	Eurasian Blue Tit	5	2		3		3	3	6
82	<i>Parus major major</i>	Great Tit	3	1		1	1	2	5+	2
	Panuridae	Bearded Reedling								
83	<i>Panurus biarmicus</i>	Bearded Reedling							1 (f)	
	Aegithalidae	Bushtits								
84	<i>Aegithalos caudatus major</i>	Long-tailed Tit	2			1			1	1
	Alaudidae	Larks								
85	<i>Alauda arvensis cantarella</i>	Eurasian Skylark						300+	200+	
86	<i>Galerida cristata caucasica</i>	Crested Lark						n/f	n/f	n/f
87	<i>Eremophila alpestris penicillata</i>	Horned Lark	40+	4		500+				
88	<i>Calandrella brachydactyla artemisiana</i>	Greater Short-toed Lark						2		
89	<i>Melanocorypha calandra calandra</i>	Calandra Lark		6		2		1000+	150+	
90	<i>Alaudala heinei heinei</i>	Turkestan Short-toed Lark						20+	4	
	Phylloscopidae	Leaf Warblers & Allies								
91	<i>Phylloscopus collybita caucasicus</i>	Common Chiffchaff								2
	Troglodytidae	Wrens								
92	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes hyrcanus</i>	Eurasian Wren							3	
	Sittidae	Nuthatches								
93	<i>Sitta krueperi</i>	Krüper's Nuthatch								4
94	<i>Sitta neumayer neumayer</i>	Western Rock Nuthatch						2		Hs
95	<i>Sitta europaea caucasica</i>	Eurasian Nuthatch								2
	Tichodromidae	Wallcreeper								
96	<i>Tichodroma muraria muraria</i>	Wallcreeper	1	1		1		1		1
	Certhiidae	Treecreepers								
97	<i>Certhia familiaris caucasica</i>	Eurasian Treecreeper								1
	Sturnidae	Starlings								
98	<i>Sturnus vulgaris caucasicus</i>	Common Starling		1		4		100+	100+	150+
	Turdidae	Thrushes								
99	<i>Turdus philomelos philomelos</i>	Song Thrush					1			
100	<i>Turdus viscivorus viscivorus</i>	Mistle Thrush	2	1			3	8	3	2
101	<i>Turdus merula aterrimus</i>	Common Blackbird	n/f	n/f	n/f	n/f	n/f	n/f	n/f	n/f
102	<i>Turdus pilaris</i>	Fieldfare		4	1		10+			
103	<i>Turdus torquatus amicornum</i>	Ring Ouzel	14	10	1	1	20+	2		
	Muscicapidae	Old World Flycatchers								

N	Family Scientific Name	English Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
			Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
104	<i>Erithacus rubecula caucasicus</i>	European Robin	1						1	Hs
105	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros ochruros</i>	Black Redstart								2
106	<i>Phoenicurus erythrogaster erythrogaster</i>	Güldenstädt's Redstart	1	40+	5	30+				
107	<i>Oenanthe isabellina</i>	Isabelline Wheatear						2	2	2
108	<i>Oenanthe finschii</i>	Finsch's Wheatear						2		
Cinclidae		Dippers								
109	<i>Cinclus cinclus caucasicus</i>	White-throated Dipper	1	2		1				
Passeridae		Old World Sparrows								
110	<i>Petronia petronia exigua</i>	Rock Sparrow							13+	5
111	<i>Passer montanus transcaucasicus</i>	Eurasian Tree Sparrow							2	6
112	<i>Passer hispaniolensis transcaspicus</i>	Spanish Sparrow							50+	
113	<i>Passer domesticus (ssp uncertain)</i>	House Sparrow	n/f			3	n/f		2	1
Prunellidae		Accentors								
114	<i>Prunella collaris montana</i>	Alpine Accentor					2			
115	<i>Prunella modularis obscura</i>	Dunnock								1
Motacillidae		Wagtails & Pipits								
116	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	Grey Wagtail								1
117	<i>Motacilla alba alba</i>	White Wagtail	2			5		3	4	n/f
118	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	Meadow Pipit		2						
Fringillidae		Finches								
119	<i>Fringilla coelebs coelebs</i>	Common Chaffinch	n/f		n/f	n/f		n/f	n/f	n/f
120	<i>Fringilla montifringilla</i>	Brambling						4		3+
121	<i>Coccothraustes coccothraustes nigricans</i>	Hawfinch						5	50+	
122	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula rossikowi</i>	Eurasian Bullfinch		8	3	1				
123	<i>Carpodacus rubicilla rubicilla</i>	Great Rosefinch	7	30+	H	37+				
124	<i>Chloris chloris bilkevitchi</i>	European Greenfinch						n/f	n/f	n/f
125	<i>Linaria flavirostris brevirostris</i>	Twite	30	30+		1	1			
126	<i>Linaria cannabina cannabina</i>	Common Linnet						15		
127	<i>Loxia curvirostra guillemardi</i>	Red Crossbill							H	
128	<i>Carduelis carduelis brevirostris</i>	European Goldfinch					6	n/f	10+	
129	<i>Serinus pusillus</i>	Red-fronted Serin	1	1			2	5	3	
130	<i>Spinus spinus</i>	Eurasian Siskin								12+
Emberizidae		Buntings								
131	<i>Emberiza calandra calandra</i>	Corn Bunting							7+	1
132	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>	Yellowhammer						4		
133	<i>Emberiza cia prageri</i>	Rock Bunting		4	7	4			1	
134	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus caspia</i>	Common Reed Bunting						15	1	1

Other Wildlife

1	<i>Myocastor coypus</i>	Nutria								1
2	<i>Lepus Europaeus</i>	European Hare							1	
3	<i>Paralaudakia caucasia</i>	Caucasian Agama						2		
4	<i>Gazella subgutturosa</i>	Goitered Gazelle						70		
5	<i>Lynx lynx dinniki</i>	Caucasian Lynx				3				
6	<i>Capra cylindricornis</i>	East Caucasian Tur	53	7	8	33				

Thank you for reading our report.

We wish you strong health and good birding!



Birding Adventures Caucasuswide

www.birdingcaucasus.com

info@birdingcaucasus.com

+995 557 900909

Or find us also on Facebook & Twitter: @BirdingCaucasus