

## Trip Report Madeira 22 February – 1 March 2005

Together with my two children, Alexander 13 years and Nina 9 years I made a combined vacation and birding tour to Madeira. We flew from Malmö-Sturup airport to Funchal, Madeira with Solresor travel agency. The flight took 4:20 hours. We bought the trip on the Internet (on the very good site for finding low fare travels: solfaktor.com). We paid 891 € (8067 SKr) in total and that included a regular hotel (Estrelícia) double room and breakfast. We rented a Renault Clio through the Internet in advance on Avis. It cost us 195 € (1765 SKr) for a week including free mileage, insurance and self reduction.

The weather was quite rainy and windy for two days and with showers and sun the others. Temperatures were around 16 at the coast but once in the mountains even below zero with snow.

Travelling with two children and only my son with birding as an interest, made us not birding 100%, but were also doing some more typical tourist activities. In total 33 bird species were seen.

### Tuesday 22 February

#### Garajau 16:30

*From the bus.*

Common Buzzard	2
Feral Pigeon	75
Plain Swift	25

#### Hotel Estrelícia, Funchal 17:00-17:30

Blackcap	1 warning
Atlantic Canary	10

#### Funchal harbour 17:40-18:30

*See-watching from the tall outer pier. It was possible to park on the outer pier; finding parking places near the marina seems to be quite difficult.*

Manx Shearwater	10 flying W
Ruddy Turnstone	1
Yellow-legged Gull	150, many first winters and a few second winters
Lesser Black-backed Gull	15 ad, looking like <i>fuscus</i>
Black-headed Gull	25
Mediterranean Gull	1 first winter
Roseate Tern	1 ad fishing at sea off the harbour pier
Common Blackbird	1

### Wednesday 23 February

#### Canical harbour 10:15-11:30

*Quite windy. Walked along the promenade to the west, but not much seen. Walked up the stream west of the harbour for a few hundred meters. To reach this stream you need to walk a few hundred meters along a newly constructed promenade along the beach.*

Common Kestrel	1
Common Sandpiper	1
Ruddy Turnstone	1
Yellow-legged Gull	20

Grey Wagtail	5
Spanish Sparrow	10 in the Palm trees near the harbour. More birds were heard higher up from the sea in the village.

### **Ponta de São Lourenço 11:50-13:15**

*Stayed close to the parking area. The Meadow Pipits stayed just to the North of this area.*

Feral Pigeon	25
Eurasian Collared Dove	1 outside Caniçal
Berthelot's Pipit	20
Meadow Pipit	2
Common Linnet	15 in flock with Canaries
Atlantic Canary	5 in flock with Linnets

### **Thursday 24 February**

#### **Porto Moniz 11:45-13:35**

*Showers and moderate wind from South West. Sea-watching from the terrace above the pool-area.*

Cory's Shearwater	120 flying W
Manx Shearwater	4 flying W
Common Kestrel	1
Yellow-legged Gull	5
Atlantic Canary	5
Common Dolphin	3 laying near the surface and slowly swimming S

#### **Rabaçal, Levada Risco 15:15-17:05**

*Rather late for getting the Trocaz Pigeons, but nevertheless we tried. Getting to the waterfall area took a little more than 30 minutes.*

European Robin	10 singing
Madeira Firecrest	15

### **Friday 25 February**

#### **Ribeiro Frio 9:40-11:40**

*Took the path by the yellow sign "Portela 8" at Victor's Restaurante. After crossing the small river we walked North along the levada for 20 minutes. Two minutes after passing a tunnel to the right we reached a flat, hexagonal flat stone with circular indentations in the middle of the path. Just after this place there is a small opening to your left with good views across the valley. The pigeons were found quite low in the valley.*

Trocaz Pigeon	103 sitting in 4 different groups low in the slopes downhill from Ribeiro Frio. A few were photographed.
Grey Wagtail	2
European Robin	2
Madeira Firecrest	10

#### **Machico 12:40-13:10**

*We could not find any reedbeds nor any Waxbills. I guess that these habitats have been destroyed when constructing a new bridge near the river mouth. The promenade up streams, on the western side of the river, offered good views of the river and the gardens nearby.*

Little Egret	1
Mew Gull	1 first winter
Black-headed Gull	10 first winter

Common Sandpiper	1
Ruddy Turnstone	2
Feral Pigeon	15
Grey Wagtail	2
Blackcap	5
European Goldfinch	5
Atlantic Canary	5

### **Funchal harbour 15:30-18:30**

*Birding from the promenade at the marina, where the terns and Mediterranean Gull were resting. See-watching from the outer pier.*

Cory's Shearwater	3 flying W
Manx Searwater	25 flying W
Yellow-legged Gull	75 several different age classes. A few photographed
Lesser Black-backed Gull	5 ad. A few photographed
Mediterranean Gull	1 first winter photographed
Roseate Tern	1 ad seen very well and photographed when resting among Black-headed Gulls
Sandwich Tern	1 photographed
Ruddy Turnstone	20. A few photographed
Grey Wagtail	3
Atlantic Canary	15

### **Saturday 26 February**

#### **Funchal-Ribeira Brava-Serra de Agua-São Vicente-Faial-Porto da Cruz-Ribeiro Frio-Funchal 10:30-14:30**

*Torrential rain. Tour by the car. Few birds seen.*

### **Funchal harbour 13:50-14:15**

*A walk along the promenade just to the east of the big balloon.*

Yellow-legged Gull	25
Black-headed Gull	20
Mediterranean Gull	1 First winter
Sandwich Tern	1
Ruddy Turnstone	20
Feral Pigeon	50
Grey Wagtail	1
Atlantic Canary	5

### **Sunday 27 February**

#### **Ponta da Cruz 16:20-17:43**

*Could not find the path through the hedge. As a matter of fact the hedge seemed to have been removed and replaced by a fence.*

Cory's Shearwater	15 flying W and 1 flying E
Manx Shearwater	119 flying W and 1 flying E

### **Monday 28 February**

#### **Ponta do Pargo 12:55-14:15**

*Very windy. Made a small search on the hills above the light-house.*

Common Buzzard	2
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Common Kestrel	1
Feral Pigeon	15
Eurasian Skylark	4
White Wagtail	1
Atlantic Canary	40 in one foraging group

### Porto Moniz 15:00-16:10

*Strong winds from the South. Again see-watching from the terrace above the pool-area.*

Cory's Shearwater	20 flying S
Manx Shearwater	2 flying S and 1 flying N
Yellow-legged Gull	20 flying S

### Tuesday 1 March

#### Lido, Funchal 8:05-9:35

Cory's Shearwater	4 flying E
Yellow-legged Gull	55 resting on cliffs
Common Tern	1 ad flying W
Ruddy Turnstone	2
Feral Pigeon	5
Common Blackbird	1 singing
Atlantic Canary	5
Common Dolphin	10 slowly swimming E
Madeira Wall Lizard	1

### Species list

#### **Cory's Shearwater** (*Calonectris diomedea borealis*)

120 flying W Porto Moniz 24<sup>th</sup>, 3 flying W Funchal harbour 25<sup>th</sup>, 15 flying W and 1 flying E Ponta da Cruz 27<sup>th</sup>, 20 flying S Porto Moniz 28<sup>th</sup> and 4 flying E Lido, Funchal 1<sup>st</sup>

#### **Manx Shearwater** (*Puffinus puffinus*)

10 flying W Funchal harbour 22<sup>nd</sup>, 4 flying W Porto Moniz 24<sup>th</sup>, 25 flying W Funchal harbour 25<sup>th</sup>, 119 flying W and 1 flying E Ponta da Cruz 27<sup>th</sup>, 2 flying S and 1 flying N Porto Moniz 28<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Little Egret** (*Egretta garzetta*)

1 Machico 25<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Common Buzzard** (*Buteo buteo harterti*)

2 Garajau 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2 Ponta do Pargo 28<sup>th</sup>. Seen also in Paul da Serra and along the southern coasts.

#### **Common Kestrel** (*Falco tinnunculus canariensis*)

1 Caniçal harbour 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1 Porto Moniz 24<sup>th</sup> and 1 Ponta do Pargo 28<sup>th</sup>. A few birds observed along the motorways and a stationary couple near the hotel in Funchal.

#### **Common Sandpiper** (*Actitis hypoleucos*)

1 Caniçal harbour 23<sup>rd</sup> and 1 Machico 25<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Ruddy Turnstone** (*Arenaria interpres*)

1 Funchal harbour 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1 Caniçal harbour 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2 Machico 25<sup>th</sup>, 20 Funchal harbour 25<sup>th</sup>, 20 Funchal harbour 26<sup>th</sup> and 2 Lido, Funchal 1<sup>st</sup>.

#### **Mediterranean Gull** (*Larus melanocephalus*)

1 first winter Funchal harbour 22<sup>nd</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup>, and 26<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Black-headed Gull** (*Larus ridibundus*)

25 Funchal harbour 22<sup>nd</sup>, 10 first winter Machico 25<sup>th</sup> and 20 Funchal harbour 26<sup>th</sup>

#### **Mew Gull** (*Larus canus*)

1 first winter Machico 25<sup>th</sup>.

**Lesser Black-backed Gull** (*Larus fuscus*)

15 ad Funchal harbour 22<sup>nd</sup> and 5 ad Funchal harbour 25<sup>th</sup>.

**Yellow-legged Gull** (*Larus michahellis atlantis*)

150 Funchal harbour 22<sup>nd</sup>, 20 Caniçal harbour 23<sup>rd</sup>, 5 Porto Moniz 24<sup>th</sup>, 75 Funchal harbour 25<sup>th</sup>, 25 Funchal harbour 26<sup>th</sup>, 20 flying S Porto Moniz 28<sup>th</sup> and 55 Lido, Funchal 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Sandwich Tern** (*Sterna sandvicensis*)

1 Funchal harbour 25<sup>th</sup> and possibly the same bird Funchal harbour 26<sup>th</sup>.

**Roseate Tern** (*Sterna dougallii*)

1 ad Funchal harbour 22<sup>nd</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>.

**Common Tern** (*Sterna hirundo*)

1 ad flying W Lido, Funchal 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Feral Pigeon** (*Columba livia*)

75 Garajau 22<sup>nd</sup>, 25 Ponta de São Lourenço 23<sup>rd</sup>, 15 Machico 25<sup>th</sup>, 50 Funchal harbour 26<sup>th</sup>, 15 Ponta do Pargo 28<sup>th</sup> and 5 Lido, Funchal 1<sup>st</sup>. Birds seen in almost every village and in the mountains.

**Trocaz Pigeon** (*Columba trocaz*)

103 Ribeiro Frio 25<sup>th</sup>.

**Eurasian Collared Dove** (*Streptopelia decaocto*)

1 outside Caniçal 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**Plain Swift** (*Apus unicolor*)

25 Garajau 22<sup>nd</sup>. A few small groups were seen around Funchal on several occasions.

**Eurasian Skylark** (*Alauda arvensis*)

4 Ponta do Pargo 28<sup>th</sup>.

**Berthelot's Pipit** (*Anthus berthelotii madeirensis*)

20 Ponta de São Lourenço 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**Meadow Pipit** (*Anthus pratensis*)

2 Ponta de São Lourenço 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**Grey Wagtail** (*Motacilla cinerea*)

5 Caniçal harbour 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2 Ribeiro Frio 25<sup>th</sup>, 2 Machico 25<sup>th</sup>, 3 Funchal harbour 25<sup>th</sup> and 1 Funchal harbour 26<sup>th</sup>.

**White Wagtail** (*Motacilla alba*)

1 Ponta do Pargo 28<sup>th</sup>.

**European Robin** (*Erithacus rubecula*)

10 singing Rabaçal, Levada Risco 24<sup>th</sup> and 2 Ribeiro Frio 25<sup>th</sup>. Several more birds seen and heard singing in the mountains and in Funchal.

**Common Blackbird** (*Turdus merula cabrerae*)

1 Funchal harbour 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1 singing Lido and Funchal 1<sup>st</sup>. Common in many places.

**Blackcap** (*Sylvia atricapilla heineken*)

1 warning Hotel Estrelícia, Funchal 22<sup>nd</sup> and 5 Machico 25<sup>th</sup>. Single birds seen or heard in most places.

**Madeira Firecrest** (*Regulus madeirensis*)

15 Rabaçal, Levada Risco 24<sup>th</sup> and 10 Ribeiro Frio 25<sup>th</sup>.

**Spanish Sparrow** (*Passer hispaniolensis*)

10 Caniçal harbour 23<sup>rd</sup> and more birds heard in the Caniçal village.

**Common Chaffinch** (*Fringilla coelebs maderensis*)

A few heard in the mountains.

**Atlantic Canary** (*Serinus canaria*)

10 Hotel Estrelícia, Funchal 22<sup>nd</sup>, 5 Ponta de São Lourenço 23<sup>rd</sup>, 5 Machico 25<sup>th</sup>, 15 Funchal harbour 25<sup>th</sup>, 5 Funchal harbour 26<sup>th</sup>, 40 Ponta do Pargo 28<sup>th</sup> and 5 Lido, Funchal 1<sup>st</sup>.

**European Goldfinch** (*Carduelis carduelis parva*)

5 Machico 25<sup>th</sup>. Also observed on several occasions in Funchal and other places.

**Common Linnet** (*Carduelis cannabina nana*)

15 in flock with Canaries Ponta de São Lourenço 23<sup>rd</sup>.

## **Mammals**

**Common Dolphin** (*Delphinus delphis*)

3 laying near the surface and slowly swimming S Porto Moniz 24<sup>th</sup> and 10 slowly swimming E Lido, Funchal 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Rabbit** (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*)

One road-killed.

## **Reptiles**

**Madeira Wall Lizard** (*Teira dugesii*)

1 Lido, Funchal 1<sup>st</sup>

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