

# Trip Report

# Madeira

## 3-5th July 2005

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### Participants

Hans Bister, Bosse Carlsson, Göran Ekström, Niklas Holmström and Dan Zetterström, Sweden.

### Itinerary

Flight with Air Portugal (TAP) on 2nd July from Arlanda to Lisbon and from Lisbon to Funchal. We arrived one hour before midnight and were picked up by Filipe and Jorge Alves, who drove us to Gordon Residencial in central Funchal. Our main reason visiting Madeira was to undertake a five-day round trip to the Selvagens Islands with the sailing boat "Ventura do Mar", which we had chartered for this purpose. Because of the unpredictable weather and wind conditions when sailing to Selvagens from Funchal we had booked flights with three full days as margin. The plan was to sail to Selvagens on Monday 4th July, but the weather forecast looked bad for the return (e.g. very brisk wind from north) so we had to wait and see if the forecast changed. To cut a long story short: We were able to sail to Selvagens early in the morning on 6th July. This mean we birded on Madeira for three full days between 3rd to 5th July. We recorded all the Madeiran specialities with no effort at all.

**3rd July:** Seawatching from the jetty in Funchal harbour to 12:00 hours. We picked up our hired car at Gordon Residencial. We birded in the north-eastern part rest of the day: Machico – Caniçal – Ponta de São Lourenço. In the evening we were invited to join Ventura do Mar on a evening pelagic trip (18:50-21:45 hours), only for birders. On board was also the birdwatchers from Celtic Bird Tours, Frank Zino and his wife Elizabeth. A great pelagic with lot of seabirds, 100's of Atlantic Spotted Dolphins, Bottlenose Dolphins and two Sei/Bryde's Whales.

**4th July:** Early in the morning we drove to the valley Fajã da Nogueira (below Balcões, Ribeiro Frio) and saw at least 50-60 Trocaz Pigeons. Then coffee and cake at Ribeiro Frio as well a short visit at Pico do Areeiro. Then we birded at following places (with several stops along the road): Santana – São Vicente – Porto Moniz – Ponta do Pargo – Lugar de Baixo. We arrived to our accommodation at Gordon about 21:00 hours.

**5th July:** Seawatching at Ponta da Cruz in the morning. We spent the afternoon at Ponta do Pargo. At 20:00 hours we picked up Steve Gantlett at the airport, who finally arrived after a few days of stressful waiting for a final decision from the crew on Ventura, whether the boat tour to Selvagens would take place or not. In the evening Amílcar Vasconcelos (Madeira Aventura) picked us up at our hotel for a night expedition to Pico do Areeiro, listening for the Zino's Petrel. We heard maybe a dozen birds calling in the dark and few seen briefly.

**6-10th July:** We was onboard "Ventura do Mar" for a five-day round trip to the Selvagens Islands. See that trip report, which will be available on the Selvagens website in mid September 2005.

**11th July:** We left Madeira early in the morning and arrived to Arlanda, Stockholm, late afternoon.

### Photos from our visit

You will find many photos on birds, views and birders from our trip on the website Birding Madeira:

<http://madeira.seawatching.net/gallery.html>

And on the website Bird Photos by Göran Ekström: <http://www.tristis.com>

### Species List (English, Scientific and Swedish names)

A total of 33 species were recorded during these three days.

#### Zino's Petrel – *Pterodroma madiera* – Madeirapetrell

Probably a dozen heard calling at the breeding ledges at Pico do Areeiro at night on 5th July. A few were seen briefly in the duskily darkness. We visited the breeding area along with the guide Amílcar Vasconcelos from the company Madeira Aventura.

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

One seen from the jetty in Funchal harbour in late morning on 3rd July. The bird was travelling around close to the sea surface for about 15 minutes and allowed nice views. In calm wind conditions this species is easily overlooked as a Cory's Shearwater.

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

A total of 104 Bulwer's were recorded during the pelagic tour with "Ventura do Mar" in the evening (18:50-21:45 hours) on 3rd July. Many was seen close to the boat and offered excellent views. Six seen off São Vicente on 4th July and a single off Ponta da Cruz in the morning on 5th.

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

Seen everywhere along the coast. 100's seen from the jetty in Funchal harbour on 3rd July, about 400 seen during the pelagic trip with Ventura in the evening on 3rd. At least 1000's Cory's seen off Ponta da Cruz in the morning on 5th July.

**Manx Shearwater** – *Puffinus puffinus* – Mindre lira

Two seen during the pelagic trip with "Ventura do Mar" in the evening on 3rd July.

**Manx/Little Shearwater** – *Puffinus puffinus/assimilis baroli* – Mindre-/dvärglira

One distant seen travelling close to the sea surface in the calm wind off the jetty in Funchal harbour on 3rd. Most features pointed towards Little, but the possibilities to ID it correctly was limited by the distance and heat haze.

**Little Egret** – *Egretta garzetta* – Silkeshäger

1-2 seen along the river in Machico on 3rd July, one in the lagoon at Lugar de Baixo on 4th and one in Funchal harbour in the morning on 6th July.

**Grey Heron** – *Ardea cinerea* – Gråhäger

One at Ponta do Pargo on 5th and two at Santa Cruz on 5th July.

**Buzzard** – *Buteo buteo harterti* – Ormvråk

Widespread and conspicuous. Seen daily and at least five were present at Ponta do Pargo on 3-4th July.

**Kestrel** – *Falco tinnunculus canariensis* – Tornfalk

Widespread and conspicuous. Seen daily with up to 10-15 each day.

**Quail** – *Coturnix coturnix* – Vaktel

One heard calling at Ponta do Pargo on 5th July.

**Moorhen** – *Gallinula chloropus* – Rörhöna

About 10 in the pond of Lugar de Baixo on 4th July.

**Coot** – *Fulica atra* – Sothöna

About 10 in the pond of Lugar de Baixo on 4th July.

**Whimbrel** – *Numenius phaeopus* – Småspov

One at the river mouth in São Vicente on 4th July.

**Atlantic Yellow-legged Gull** – *Larus michahellis atlantis* – "Medelhavstrut"

Common along the coast particularly in Funchal harbour, Caniçal harbour, Ponta da Cruz, Porto Moniz and Porto Santo.

**Sandwich Tern** – *Sterna sandvicensis* – Kentsk tärna

One adult passed the jetty in Funchal harbour on 3rd. A very uncommon summer visitor in Madeira.

**Roseate Tern** – *Sterna dougallii* – Rosentärna

One adult seen several times both on the sea-side and harbour-side of the jetty in Funchal harbour on 3rd July. Two adults seen among Common Terns along the shore at São Vicente for at least one hour on 4th. All three was also heard calling (recalling that of Spotted Redshank).

**Common Tern** – *Sterna hirundo* – Fisktärna

Small numbers and flocks were seen daily along the coast, both adults and newly fledged juveniles. Good numbers in Caniçal harbour, Funchal harbour and São Vicente. At the latter place about 80 were seen along the shore and the river mouth.

**Feral Pigeon** – *Columba livia* – Stadsduva

Common, but we didn't find any pure Rock Doves.

**Trocaz Pigeon** – *Columba trocaz* – Madeiraduva

Two at Ribeiro Frio on 4th July and about 50-60 birds in the valley of Fajã da Nogueira. Very nice views of birds in flight and many perched ones. We also heard one pigeon briefly.

**Alpine Swift** – *Apus melba* – Alpseglare

One present at Ponta do Pargo on 4-5th July (a rare visitor to the Madeira archipelago).

**Pallid Swift** – *Apus pallidus* – Blek tornseglare

2-4 present at Ponta do Pargo on 5th July (among the Plain Swifts close to the restaurant).

**Plain Swift** – *Apus unicolor* – Enfärgad seglare

Common everywhere. Most numerous in localities at higher altitudes and steep cliffs along the coast.

**Grey Wagtail** – *Motacilla cinerea schmitzi* – Forsärla

Common and seen almost anywhere, but especially along rivers and river mouths, seen daily.

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

At least 6-8 seen at Ponta de São Lourenço on 3rd July. Several seen at Ponta do Pargo on 4-5th July.

**Robin** – *Erithacus rubecula* – Rödhake

Seen and heard here and there as well as many singing in the valley of Fajã da Nogueira on 4th July.

**Blackbird** – *Turdus merula cabrerae* – Koltrast

Heard and seen almost everyday, with up to 10 birds. Easiest to see at dawn and in the evening. Several singing at and Fajã da Nogueira.

**Blackcap** – *Sylvia atricapilla heineken* – Svarthätta

Heard calling and singing everyday, especially on higher altitudes, but also in centre of Funchal. Rarely seen. Many in song especially in the valley of Fajã da Nogueira.

**Madeira Firecrest** – *Regulus madeirensis* – Madeirakungsfågel

Several heard here and there at stops in the right habitat during our travels by car in higher altitudes. Both adults and juveniles seen and heard in the valley of Fajã da Nogueira on 4th July.

**Spanish Sparrow** – *Passer hispaniolensis* – Spansk sparv

At least 40-50 seen and heard in the area of Caniçal on 3rd July, also seen outside the city.

**Rock Sparrow** – *Petronia petronia* – Stensparv

At least 50 (but probably more) were seen along the road to Ponta de São Lourenço on 3rd July, just north of Caniçal (after the last roundabout). Two at Ponta do Pargo on 4th July.

**Chaffinch** – *Fringilla coelebs maderensis* – Bofink

Heard and seen when visiting higher altitudes, with up to 20 birds. Many singing at Ribeiro Frio and Fajã da Nogueira.

**Canary** – *Serinus canaria* – Kanariesiska

Beware of this species which is both common and extremely vocal. The calls sometimes are very like Linnet, Greenfinch, Twite and Goldfinch! The most numerous and widespread landbird on the main island.

**Goldfinch** – *Carduelis carduelis parva* – Steglits

Seen daily in small numbers. Recorded in relatively good numbers at Machico and Ponta do Pargo.

**Common Waxbill** – *Estrilda astrild* – Helenaastrild

At least 10 were seen and heard at the end of the river in Machico on 3rd July. As always this is the most reliable site for this species in Madeira.

## **Cetaceans**

### **Atlantic Spotted Dolphin** – *Stenella frontalis* – Atlantisk fläckdelfin

Several schools with up to 100 in total were seen during the pelagic trip with Ventura in the evening on 3rd July. Incredible nice views of these species bow-riding, doing high jumps and playing around the boat too.

### **Bottlenose Dolphin** – *Tursiops truncatus* – Öresvin (Flasknosdelfin)

A close school of about 15 were seen during the pelagic trip with Ventura in the evening on 3rd July.

### **Unidentified smaller dolphins**

About 40 dolphins divided in two groups seen off the jetty in Funchal harbour on 3rd and 20 off Ponta da Cruz on 5th July. All those were probably either Spotted or Common, but Striped Dolphin do also occur in these waters.

### **Sei/Bryde's Whale** – *Balaenoptera borealis/edeni* – Sejval/Brydes fenval

At least two were seen during the pelagic trip with Ventura in the evening on 3rd July.

## **Amphibians and reptiles**

### **Perez's Frog** – *Rana perezi* – Iberisk sjögroda

Many heard and few seen in the river at Machico on 3rd. Several heard in small river pools in Fajã da Nogueira and at Lugar de Baixo on 4th July. This species is originally introduced to Madeira.

### **Madeiran Wall Lizard** – *Teira dugesii* – Madeiraödla

Seen everywhere in right habitat. However, there are two different subspecies that are sometimes treated as species, which occur on Porto Santo and Desertas (Deserta Grande and Bugio). In the Botanical Garden in Funchal you can also find the Canarian Lizard, which was recently introduced from Tenerife.

### **Moorish Gecko** – *Tarentola mauritanica* – Murgecko

One heard in the evening at Gordon Residencial on 2-4th July. This species is originally introduced to Madeira.

## **Butterflies**

### **Monarch** – *Danaus plexippus* – Monarkfjäril

Seen daily on several occasions. At least 10 were seen along the river bed in Machico on 3rd July. Note, this species is resident in the Madeiran archipelago as in Canaries and do not have its origin from North American migraters.

## **Compiled by:**

Niklas Holmström

Öja Björkebo

S-640 40 Stora Sundby

SWEDEN

E-mail: [madeira@seawatching.net](mailto:madeira@seawatching.net)