

SPRING BIRDWATCHING TOUR

22 - 29 April 2017 (Tour code: SB)

Leader: Mitko Petrakiev

Price: £1,050 (Based on a group of eight or more, a smaller group will incur a supplement).



The idea of this tour is to spend a full week in the same hotel, which makes for a relaxing stay. Day excursions will however take you to a variety of different habitats: wetlands in Greece, mountains and gorges in Bulgaria and even an extinct volcano.

Our Bulgarian tour leader, Mitko Petrakiev, is a mountain guide with over ten years' experience. He is qualified as a climbing instructor, and for cave rescue and first aid. He is a knowledgeable birder and has co-led some of our butterfly and flower tours.

Bulgaria's beautiful scenery, friendly people and excellent wine and food are additional highlights. The B-BS offers you the benefits of nearly forty years' experience of organizing tours to Bulgaria. For your financial protection our tour operators for twenty years, Balkania Travel Ltd. are licensed by the UK Civil Aviation Authority and bonded both by the CAA, ATOL 4465 and IATA, number 91-2 7839.

Our tour price includes a donation to the Bulgarian Society for the Protection of Birds or other conservation organization in Bulgaria.

The hotel is comfortable and welcoming (and well situated for this tour) but not luxurious. The holiday is on a Half-Board basis. Final details and bird lists will be sent to participants approximately two weeks before departure.

Projected Itinerary (which may be subject to adjustment)

Saturday 22 April Flight from Heathrow to Sofia. Drive to Melnik for a seven night stay. Observation stops along the way, looking for possible Griffon Vulture and looking for possible Griffon Vulture and Blue Rock Thrush.

Sunday 23 April Visit to Rupite and Belasitsa mountain, possible birds today include Long-legged Buzzard, Rock Nuthatch, Ortolan Bunting, Honey Buzzard, Bee-eater and woodpeckers.

Monday 24 and

Tuesday 25 April Visits to the western and eastern parts of Kerkini lake in northern Greece, looking for Pygmy Cormorant, pelicans, herons, egrets, Glossy Ibis, Black Kite and Penduline Tit. Nesting pelicans and herons can be seen in the middle of the lake, and Greater Flamingo may still be there, depending on the weather.

Wednesday 26 April Drive to Slavianka mountain for possible birds such as Wood Lark, Cirl Bunting, Calandra Lark, Short-toed Eagle and Sombre Tit.

Thursday 27 April Day spent around Melnik and nearby Rozhen. We hope to see Golden Oriole, Rock Thrush, Rock and Ortolan Bunting, Hawfinch and Sub-alpine Warbler.

Friday 28 April Visits to Ploski and Kresna Gorge, looking for Peregrine Falcon, Golden Eagle, Rock Nuthatch, wheatears and shrikes.

Saturday 29 April Return to Sofia, time permitting there may be a short stop at Rila Monastery for possible Pallid Swift, Goldcrest, Firecrest and Dipper.
Return flight to UK.

OUR PRICES INCLUDE:

- Return flights from Heathrow to Sofia.
- Airport departure taxes.
- Half Board.
- Accommodation in a small, friendly family-run hotel with en suite facilities on a twin bedded shared occupancy basis.
- Specialist Bulgarian leader.
- Donation to the Bulgarian Society for the Protection of Birds or other conservation organization.
- All reserve entrance fees.

NOT INCLUDED:

- Lunches (about £3 - £4).
- Travel Insurance (Compulsory). Balkania Travel can advise.
- Drinks and other personal expenses such as gratuities.
- Single room supplement (£75)

Published April 2016.