

Bird watching & trekking tour in Montenegro



Montenegro offers the perfect introduction to overseas bird-watching, with a rich array of species, a good climate and reasonable prices. Montenegro provides one of the best centers for southern European birding holiday, often at a more competitive price than other destinations in the region. Situated on the Adriatic coast opposite the "Heel" of Italy, Montenegro is bordered by Albania to the southeast, and with Croatia to the northwest. While still maintaining mainly "Balkan" avifauna, many northern-bound species pass through the region on migration, making April, May, August and September the best months to go.

First day: Arrival at Tivat airport, transfer to Budva, Petrovac or some other coastal resort accommodation in hotel. Your hotel base should ideally be at Petrovac, giving immediate access to its hills and adjacent Buljarica marches. Hotel "Danica" is located in a pine wood close to the sea promenade.

Second day: walk to the Buljarica Marshes about three km. from the hotel taking large running out of the town, closest to the beach in south-easterly direction, passing the football pitch to the edge of Lucica beach (bay). Walk continues to the scrub, up to saddleback between two hills. All three species of the shrike can be seen together with olivaceous and sub alpine Warbler Hoopoe, Tawny Pipit and Black-eared Wheatear can be seen. Reports can be good depending on weather and time of year and can include Goshawk and Red-footed Falcon. On reaching the "saddle" we'll continue straight down the steep descent to the path leading to Buljarica. Both Black-headed and Cirl Buntings are present with alpine Swift, Bee-eater, and Red-rumped Swallow performing overhead. From Buljarica beach we'll continue south east along the beach side of the meadows and Marsh. With the light behind you can scan for Marsh and Montagu's Harriers. The pools and marsh hold little Egret, Squacco, Purple and Grey Herons, Glossy Ibis, Garganey, Ferruginous Duck, Wood Sandpiper Yellow Wagtails, Water Pipit, plus the chance at Little Crake or other scarce migrant. At the end of the beach we'll turn left and head in land for about a mile, there we'll take a track which leads to wood, a nice area to see Turtle Dove, Icterine Warbler and Golden Oriole. This is walking tour which is planned to last 3-4 hours.

Third day: Perhaps one of Europe's most impressive bird wetlands can be witnessed either side of the main corseway at lake Skadar (Skadarsko jezero) just 45 minutes from Petrovac in the north close to the capital of Montenegro-Podgorica. At the fishing village of Vranjina we'll start our walk along the main road and railway forwards the bridge spanning the Moraca river, a good area to see Little Bittern, Night Heron, Pygmy Cormorant and Spoonbill. The trees and bushes around have Golden Oriole and Olive Tree Warble. Another parking place by the bridge is also the start of a path along the south bank of the Moraca river. This can be followed for two

kilometers for Marsh Harrier, Peregrine, several Ducks, Black-tailed Godwit, Ruff and a good chance of Dalmatian Pelican on the open water. One kilometer or less away from the bridge at the local railway station in a nearby willows a good view to Spanish Sparrows. At a south-east side of a huge Skadarsko lake at the place where motel "Plavnica" is located there is a nice bird-watching site. From here most of the Herons on the European list can be looked for together with Pygmy Cormorant, Dalmatian Pelican, Glossy Ibis, Lesser Spotted Eagle, Black Kite, Mediterranean Gull, all three marsh terns, Great Reed, Moustached Savi's and Cetti's Warblers. The willows next to motel are good for Lesser-spotted and Syrian Woodpeckers. Exploring the southern shore of the lake close to the village of Virpazar we'll have good views to Great White Egret, White -tailed Eagle, the hilly ground behind is good for Short-toed Eagle, Rock Nuthatch and Olive Tree Warbler. Walking along the south-west side of the village of Virpazar is a good area to scan Golden and Lesser Spotted Eagle. Obviously, this huge area deserves at least one or two complete full days coverage. All in all this is easily worked area with an excellent range of breeding and migrant species. Over 270 species can be seen at Skutary Lake.

Fourth day: After breakfast a trip to southern most town at the Montenegrin coast town of Ulcinj where we'll enter salt pence of Ulcinj (Our agency provides the permit for the group) which gives a chance of spectacular views and choice of species to scan. From salt pence we'll continue to River Bojana near Ada Island can be rewarding: Pelican, Pygmy Cormorant, Great White Egret, Red-footed Falcon etc. This is a whole day trip. If we'll have time, it would be interesting to visit small lake Sas about 20 km from Ulcinj.

Fift day: Trip towards the town of Tivat and to the Tivat Salinas (one hour tip by coach from the hotel). Tivat Salinas is an area of tidal mad, saltpans, pools, marsh, woodland, fields and hills. The area can be teeming with birds and deserves at least two visits. There you can see Booted Eagle, Osprey, Spoonbill, Honey Buzzard, Black-winged Stilt, Avocet, Kentish Plover, Caspian Tern, Marsh and Curlew Sandpiper, Temminck's and a little Stints Wryneck, Orphean and Melodious Warblers and Rutous Bushchat.

Sixt day:  After breakfast leaving Petrovac towards Kotor and later continuing by famous serpentine road along the southern slopes of the mount Lovcen towards Krstac village from where hiking begins this day. 3- 4 hours hiking trough wonderful landscape and beautiful path enjoying the views to the Bay at the south and mount Lovcen peaks on the north. A day trip to National park of Lovcen a vast area of spectacular mountainous country overlooking Kotor and the Adriatic, with breath taking views. From the village of Krstac there are three tracks, all worth exploring for Golden, Bonelli's and Short-toed Eagle, Levant Sparrowhawk, Rock Partridge, Rock Dove, Woodlark Alpine Chough, Three- toed Woodpecker, Crested Tit, Rock Trush, Bonelli's Warbler, Cirl and Rock Bunting.



Seventh : Day after breakfast leaving by bus towards Budva and later direction Cetinje. Stop at the fortress Kosmac . Ready to make 3-4 hours hiking tour. Enjoy the beautiful views on the Budva Riviera

Eight day: Transfer back to Tivat airport and flight back.

- Alternative airports can be Podgorica or Dubrovnik (in Croatia).













FRAN TRAVEL
JOY OF TRAVEL

Estuary of the river Bojana, Sas lake, Ulcinj Salinas



Skadar lake National Park and conflux of the river Moraca - over 270 bird species have temporary or permanent home here



Area around Skadar lake



Stone cliffs of the Moraca river canyon



National Park Durmitor

Recommended links to: <https://avibase.bsc-eoc.org/checklist.jsp?region=EUE> , <https://czip.me/> , <https://www.birdforum.net/>
<http://www.buckinghampress.co.uk/best-birdwatching-site-guides.html> , <https://www.birdingplaces.eu/en>

