



STAGE

13





STAGE 13

Archidona - Villanueva de Tapia

LOCATION

Stage 13 begins in Archidona and it leads through mountains as you walk direction north-west. The **17,1 km** stretch between the starting point and the end in Villanueva de Tapia is characterised by the olive groves and *dehesas* of mature holm oaks.

DESCRIPTION

ABOUT THE BIRDLIFE:

This stage of the walk starts off with the views towards the Sierra de Archidona quarries and as it continues it takes you through cultivated areas harbouring large specimens of holm oak. You will be walking through a patch of well-preserved *dehesa* and then, for the first time, you will step into a large extension of olive tree monoculture.



Azure-winged Magpie. PHOTO: DPM

HIGHLIGHTED SPECIES

In the Archidona area you will see Rock Dove, Eurasian Collared Dove, Pallid, Common and Alpine Swifts, White Wagtail, Common and Red-rumped Swallows, House and Crag Martin, Black Redstart, Common and Spotless Starling and House Sparrow. Once you leave the urban area behind, your attention

DID YOU KNOW?

If you have a look at the world distribution map of the Azure-winged Magpie you may be surprised to see that it occurs from Russia and China up to Japan, with a population separated by over 9000 kilometres in the Iberian Peninsula. This species is gregarious and noisy with a very characteristic long tail, bluish wings and a black cap. For quite a long time it has been assumed that it was the tradesmen who brought the bird to Iberia from Asia in the 16th Century. However, the recent discovery of the bird's fossils in Gibraltar started a theory that the bird populations had been separated by the last ice age. Currently, the Iberian Azure-winged Magpies (*Cyanopica cooki*) are considered different species from the Asian ones (*Cyanopica cyanus*). TEXT: ARM



Woodchat Shrike. PHOTO: JLM

is drawn to the mountain views and species such as Common Kestrel, Blue Rock Thrush, Western Jackdaw and Red-billed Cough, which are seen in the distance, as well as some large raptors such as Golden, Short-toed and Bonelli's Eagle or the Peregrine Falcon. Eagle Owl can also be found in the area. Species associated with crop fields are

mainly the following: Crested Lark, European Robin, Common Blackbird, Sardinian Warbler, Common Chiffchaff, Spotless and Common Starling, Goldfinch, Greenfinch, Common Linnet and Serin. The scattered holm oak trees at this section add the presence of Common Buzzard, Long-eared Owl, Great Tit, Raven and Common Chaffinch.

Serin. PHOTO: JLM





Melodious Warbler. PHOTO: JLM

Once you cross the motorway you will enter an area of *dehesa* where you may see Common Wood Pigeon, European Turtle Dove, Cuckoo, Hoopoe, Mistle and Song Thrush, Western Orphean and Sardinian Warbler, Common Blackbird, Common Chiffchaff, Spotted Flycatcher, Short-toed Treecreeper, Woodchat and Southern Grey Shrike, Blue Tit, Long-tailed Tit, and the quite visible, joyful flocks of

Azure-winged Magpies and Hawfinches. Now all you have left to do is walking down towards Villanueva de Tapia. Entering an olive grove you will be able to see some of the already mentioned species plus Eurasian Stone-curlew, Red-legged Partridge, Red-necked Nightjar, Crested Lark and, mainly, finches. As you arrive in the village the typical urban dwellers appear again. ○

Red-legged Partridge. PHOTO: JLM

