



STAGE

14

Sierra del Pedroso

Villanueva de Tapia

Punto de Agua

Punto de Agua

Villanueva de Algaidas

Arcas



La Alaya



STAGE 14

Vva. de Tapia - Vva. de Algaidas

LOCATION

Stage 14 starts in the south-eastern part of Villanueva de Tapia and takes you through the areas dedicated to olive production, interspersed with holm oaks which indicate the woodland type of environment of the area. After crossing Burriana river and walking for **16,7 km** in total, you will arrive in Villanueva de Algaidas.

DESCRIPTION

ABOUT THE BIRDLIFE:

As you enter Villanueva de Tapia you are surrounded by olive trees and this will be the prevailing type of environment during Stage 14. It is still quite easy to picture the forest which must



Iberian Grey Shrike. PHOTO: JLM

have once covered the area centuries ago, before the land was ploughed and devoted to farming. This is evident when you pass through the patches of young pine woods and by various large holm oaks; however there are only a few of these, they are very valuable to the birds and the fauna in general. The section along the stream Arroyo del Bebedero shows wealth of riparian vegetation where both holm oaks and Portuguese gall oaks are present.



DID YOU KNOW?

In these **farmland landscapes** dominated by the vast sweep of olive trees, it is the small strongholds of natural vegetation which play the key role in the conservation of wildlife and constitute true islands of biodiversity. Consequently, the patches of Mediterranean scrubland, the surviving holm oaks and riparian vegetation offer shelter and breeding spots to the

fauna, at the same time diversifying the landscape and favouring ecological continuity through some highly human-influenced environments. TEXT: JSM



Common Buzzard. PHOTO: JLM

HIGHLIGHTED SPECIES

In spite of being a large extensive monoculture, the olive grove supports a high diversity of species throughout the year. Additionally, during Stage 14 you will be passing through patches of interesting natural vegetation. In the olive groves the most frequently seen species are Common Buzzard, Red-legged Partridge, Eurasian Stone-curlew, European Turtle Dove, Red-necked Nightjar, Bee-eater, Hoopoe, Crested Lark, Song Thrush, Redwing, Common Blackbird, European Robin, Sardinian Warbler, Blackcap, Common Chiffchaff, Great Tit, Short-toed Treecreeper, Woodchat Shrike, Azure-winged Magpie, Spotless and Common Starling, Goldfinch, Greenfinch, Common Linnet, Serin and Corn Bunting. The presence of such species as rabbit, hare and the Red-legged Partridge, and the presence of mountains nearby, favour the occurrence of large birds of prey;

you may see along the way the Golden Eagle, Bonelli's Eagle and Eagle Owl. In the patches of natural vegetation some woodland species occur, such as Common Wood Pigeon, Cuckoo, Blue Tit,



Ocellated Lizard. PHOTO: JLM



Red-legged Partridge. PHOTO: JLM



Song Thrush. PHOTO: JLM

and in the villages at the beginning and the end of Stage 14 the urban-dwelling species prevail (mainly Eurasian Collard Dove, Common and Pallid Swifts, Barn Swallow, House Martin, Spotless Starling and House Sparrow).

TIMING

Hawfinch and Cirl Bunting, and the ruined farmhouses support Common Kestrel, Little Owl, Red-rumped Swallow and Blue Rock Thrush. In the open areas you can see Common Stonechat and Raven

The most suitable time to walk Stage 14 to birdwatch is spring, the breeding time, and winter when the abundance of birds is at its highest. ○



Little Owls. PHOTO: JLM