

The Pontic Mountains in north-east Turkey is an ideal spot for all nature lovers. This excursion offers interesting discoveries for ornithologists as well as botanists. The journey starts at the Black Sea harbour town of Trabzon. After spending four nights in the idyllic mountain forest the journey continues over the Coruh Valley and Ispir to the higher ranges of the Kaçkar Mountains. During the course of our excursions we hope to see Caucasian Black Grouse and the Caspian Snowcock as well as rare orchids and other interesting plant varieties such as The Turk's Cap Lily and the Caspian rhododendrons. At the end of our journey we will visit the beautiful Sumela Monastery built into the steep mountain-side near Trabzon.

Sumela Monastery, Trabzon



Caucasian Black Grouse

Flora and Fauna in the Pontic Mountains



Alpine flora near Ispir with *lilium ponticum*

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in a simple guesthouse. (5 overnights)

Day 6-9: High Mountain Excursion/Kaçkar Mountains

The excursion today takes us to the region above 2000-3500 meters. The biotopes here are more continental. Above the woods one is more likely to see the Caspian Snowcock. It is also interesting to see the white Caspian rhododendrons. We will also visit a few

glacial lakes as well as the high plateau Dilber Düzü (2800 mtrs). Other places en route the summer village Göbe and the mountain village Düpüdüzü (2600 meters). A hike from Olgundar to Yalalar and in the smaller southern valley where Caspian Black Grouse can also be found. During this time it is also possible to see Lammer Vulture, Egyptian Vulture, Steppe Buzzard, Golden Eagle, Booted Eagle, Lanner Falcon, Perregrine Falcon, Crag Martin, Tree Pipit, Water Pipit, Grey Wagtail, Siberian Accentor, Whinchat, Stonechat, Rock Thrush, Ring Ouzel, Lesser Whitethroat, Kruper's Nuthatch, Red-backed Shrike, Alpine Chough, Red-billed Chough, Red-fronted Serin, Twite,



Red-fronted Serin

© N. Koch

Day 1: Arrival

Flight to Trabzon. Transport to hotel situated in a mountain valley surrounded by oriental beech, nordmann fir and oriental spruce. (4 overnights)

Day 2-4: Woods, Mountain Pastures and Cliff Faces

During these three days we will look for the rare Caucasian Black Grouse amongst the high shrubs in the Alpine Rose area. During this time we will get to know interesting orchids and other plants. In the cliff areas we will have the possibility to observe the rare Caucasian Black Grouse and eventually Lammergeier, Booted Eagle. Other species are Mountain Chiffchaff, Wallcreeper, Shore Lark and Snow Finch.

Day 5: Kaçkar Mountains

Journey through the orchards of the Coruh Valley to the Kaçkar Mountains via Ispir. Along the way we may be able to see Eurasian Griffon and Egyptian Vulture as well as Snow Finch, Alpine Swift, European Roller, European Bee-Eater, Hoopoe, Collared Flycatcher and Common Raven. Following the course of the river in the valley we reach the small mountain village of Olgunlar via Barhal where we will stay

Crimson-winged Finch, Common Rose Finch, Grey-necked Bunting.

Day 10: Çoruh Valley, Black-Sea Coast

The lower Coruh Valley has a Mediterranean climate with olives, Jerusalem's thorn, figs and pine trees. Here you can find Black-eared Wheatear, Rock Nuthatch, Red-rumped Swallow and Little Egret. From the Black-Sea coast we reach Macka via Trabzon which lies in the western mountain range at about 1000 meters. (3 overnights)

Day 11-12: Sumela Monastery

During the next two days we will visit the beautiful monastery and the surrounding countryside. In the past, amongst others we have also seen species such as Wallcreeper and Green Warbler. You can also find Northern Goshawk and Sparrowhawk as well as the Eurasian Jay.

Day 13: Departure

Transfer Trabzon airport. Return flight.

Date: 29.05.-12.06.2010

Price per person:
£1.350 (double room) / £1.520 (single room)

Number of participants: 8-18 persons

Includes:

- Flights (incl. airport taxes & fuel surcharge)
- Airport transfers
- All bus rides during the trip
- Accommodation in en-suite DR/SR
- Full board (picnic lunch)
- Travel guide
- Risk coverage certificate

Additional costs:

- Beverages

Note:

- Should the minimum number of participants not be met, the tour can still take place with an additional charge.
- We recommend a travel insurance.

Subject to alteration.

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