

In north-western Anatolia rare vulture and raptor varieties can easily be observed. The numerous landscapes – steppes, forests, bizarre rock mountains and wetlands – is the reason for the biodiversity. On our round trip, planned with years of birding experience in these locations, we visit natural forest and wetland areas as well as remote villages. The Bosphorus is the most important migration route for birds in Europe and the raptor and stork migration is famous all over the world. The headland between the Sea of Marmara and the Black Sea is crossed by all Black and White Storks as well as Eastern Europe's raptors that rely on thermal lift ('diurnal migrators').

Northern Turkey and Bosphorus

'Vulture Rocks' (Tour 1) and Bird Migration (Tour 2)

Vultures of Northern Turkey Tour 1

Day 1: Flight to Istanbul

Transfer to hotel in Istanbul. An opportunity for an evening visit of the town.

Day 2: Çamlica, Lake Iznik

Observation of bird migration at Çamlica Hill at the Bosphorus where the main migrating flock sometimes passes by. First you can see the actively migrating species and then the ones relying on thermal lift. Drive to the silted area of the Gulf of Izmit (waders) and to Lake Iznik. Hotel in Iznik.

Day 3: Bilecik, Rock Mountains, Sakarya Valley

Observation of Bearded Vulture, Egyptian Vulture and Eurasian Griffon Vulture near Bilecik. Drive in an eastward direction through a bizarre rock valley into the wetland and to the reservoirs of Sakarya River. Hotel in Bepazari where many silversmiths still carry on their trade.

Day 4: Kızılcahamam

To Soğuksu National Park via side roads. Black Stork, Egyptian Vulture and Eurasian Griffon Vulture at the river. Hotel in Kızılcahamam (hot springs).

Day 5: Walking-tour in National Park

A well-maintained road, miles long, leads up to the summit areas of the park. In the lower areas European Black Pine dominate, in the upper areas Bornmueller's Fir. We can see Cinereous Vulture, Bearded Vulture, Golden Eagle, Booted Eagle, Rock Bunting and Krüper's Nuthatch. Hotel in Kızılcahamam.

Day 6: Forest steppe, 'Crane Lake'

Observation in the area covered with fruit trees and single European Black Pine (Eastern Imperial

Eagle). Drive to Lake Yenice (breeding area of Common Crane, Lesser Spotted Eagle and Pygmy Cormorant). Hotel in Bolu.

Day 7: Small Çamlica Hill, Istanbul

We will be at the observation area at 11 a.m. – the best time to observe the raptor migration. Those who want to can visit the Grand Bazaar in Istanbul today. Hotel in Istanbul.

Day 8: Büyük Çekmece

Observation on the southern shore of Büyükçekmece Lake close to a Roman bridge (Sandwich Tern, Little Gull). Field trip at the shallow silted areas of the northern lakeshore (Red-footed Falcon, migration of small birds). Hotel in Istanbul.

Day 9: At your disposal, Return/Arrival

Departure for those who only booked Tour 1. Hotel in Istanbul for remaining time for participants of Tour 1 and 2.

Bird Migration on the Bosphorus Tour 2

Field trips to:

Prince's Island (1 day)

Ferry trip to the island BüyükAda. (Mediterranean Shearwater, dolphins). Enjoy the car-free island on a horse-drawn carriage. Observation of the bird migration in a garden restaurant on the highest summit of the mountain.

Lake Terkoz, Belgrad Forest (1 day)

Field trip to the steppe area at Lake Terkoz at the



Grey Heron, Black and White Stork



Egyptian Vulture

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coast of the Black Sea (Isabelline Wheatear, Pygmy Cormorant, Sermophili, Eastern Imperial Eagle) and into the large Belgrad Forest (deciduous forest), that many migratory birds use as a resting and sleeping place before crossing the Bosphorus.

Hills near Sariyer (2 days)

Beautiful observation area on the European side of the Bosphorus where raptors start crossing the Bosphorus Strait to the Asian side.

Çamlica Hills (2 days)

Biodiversity increases at the end of September. We spend the last two days of our journey on the Çamlica Hills which is an ideal spot to watch the migration. We can expect a large number of Steppe Buzzard, Black Stork, Lesser Spotted Eagle, Short-toed Snake-Eagle, Booted Eagle, Levant Sparrowhawk, Eurasian Sparrowhawk, Eurasian Hobby, Black Kite and European Bee-eater. Rarely you can see Egyptian Vulture, Long-legged Buzzard, Golden Eagle, Eastern Imperial Eagle and Greater Spotted Eagle.

Day 16: Departure

Transfer to the airport Istanbul. Return flight.

Dates:

2009: 29.08.-13.09.

2010: 28.08.-12.09.

Price per person (1 week):

£ 840 (double room) / £ 900 (single room)

Price per person (2 weeks):

£ 1.120 (double room) / £ 1.270 (single room)

Number of participants: 8-10 persons

Includes:

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

Additional costs:

- Beverages • Admission fees

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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