

Sierra de Andùjar, 24th-25th February 2017

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Will Soar, James Lowen and I made a fairly last-minute trip (instigated by James, who was keen to try for Iberian and Eurasian Lynx in the same week), to take advantage of the new Flybe route from our home city of Norwich to Malaga. As the flights aren't on necessarily convenient days and times, it was quite a brief visit; but we still did very well for mammals.

I won't repeat the logistical details which have all been well covered on mammlawatching.com; the best starting point is still [Lee Dingain's](#) report. The only thing to note is that the track from Los Escoriales to La Lancha is now extremely potholed in places, and is grindingly slow. It's still passable in a 2WD, but the journey time from Los Pinos to the main lynx area is now at least 50 minutes.

In comparison with my visit in 2012, there seemed to be a bit more mammal activity in general, and numbers of bats were far greater, even though the temperatures were only a little higher.

Western Hedgehog – A large, pale individual just after midnight 3km NE of Andùjar, where the A-6177 crosses the Rumberal Canal.

European Free-tailed Bat – Several seen and heard flying up the Rio Jándula from the Encinarejo track before dark both evenings; also heard after dark.

Schreiber's Bat/Common Bentwing – Eight in the tunnel at the end of the Embalse del Jándula dam.

Serotine – Several mid-large, high-flying bats heading up the Jándula valley quite early both evenings were probably this species.

[pipistrelle sp. – several seen foraging along the Encinarejo track.]

Greater Mouse-eared Bat – At least three in the tunnels at the end of the Jándula dam. Good numbers of small-mid sized bats over the Encinarejo dam at dusk on 24th were probably mouse-eared sp.

Lesser Mouse-eared Bat – One bat in the Jándula Dam appeared to be this species – only five ear-folds counted, less yellowish in colour than the above species.

Daubenton's Bat – Around twenty (difficult to count as many were in groups in crevices) in the tunnels. There seemed to be quite a lot of variation in fur coloration both above (dark grey-brown to mid-brown) and below (bright, well-demarcated white to dingy), and in face and ear colour (blackish to more fleshy-toned). I've assumed all were Daubenton's, rather than mixed-species huddles, but was pretty confused. Also seen 'trawling' in the Jándula after dark.

[**Eurasian Otter** – spraints at a couple of paces along the Jándula; seen below the upper dam in 2012]

Iberian Lynx – Two sightings from the La Lancha track. Great views on one after only 25 minutes of searching on 24th, viewed from [38.212883,-3.959642](#); it appeared not far away on a ridge below the road, and gradually moved downslope, occasionally scent-marking. On 25th, some Spanish lynx-watchers kindly alerted us to a courting pair at around 10am, which were still on show when we finally left three hours later! They were on a fairly distant hillside at roughly [38.215149,-3.966123](#); best viewed from the gate at [38.215803,-3.962887](#). None of the three were radio-collared. No sightings in two afternoons/evenings at the Encinarejo track.



Iberian Lynx attended by Iberian Azure-winged Magpies; two rather distant Spanish Ibex

Wild Boar – A sounder of 12-15 disturbed by the Encinarejo track after along the dark on 24th.

Fallow Deer – Small numbers seen from both tracks; the biggest groups were opposite the stone cattle troughs north of Los Escolriales.

Red Deer – Common, plenty from both tracks.

Mouflon – Two females briefly from the first lynx spot on the La Lancha track on 24th. About 15 females & young males north of Los Escoriales at first light on 25th, opposite the stone troughs at [38.189943,-3.929651](#), with Fallow Deer.

Spanish Ibex – Seven southwest of the Embalse del Jándula dam on 24th. To view, walk south from the dam car park to [38.222483,-3.974327](#) and scan the steep rock slopes on the opposite side of the river and slightly downstream.

Iberian Hare – One mid-afternoon in orchards northeast of Andùjar (before climbing the hill to Los Pinos) on 25th.

European Rabbit – Regular sightings.

[**Southern Water Vole** – holes, runways and a feeding platform at various points in the Jándula along the Encinarejo track; a bit surprised we didn't see one, given a couple of hours scanning.]



[**Mediterranean Pine Vole** – skull and jawbones in an owl pellet in open pine forest opposite the viewpoint just west of Los Pinos (see left).]

[**Garden Dormouse** – some rodent bones in the owl pellet were too large to be anything other than this species (see left).]

Wood Mouse – Brilliant views of one in a culvert along the Encinarejo track after dark on 24th.

We were hoping to locate some horseshoe bats as per Vladimir Dinets' [report from 2014](#); however, the only way we could find down to the river from the Emblase de Jandùla was via steps which had a 'no entry' chain across. This passed by two large concrete pipes – presumably this is the spot? We were deterred from attempting to access them by the presence of dam workers.

Our bird records for the trip are on eBird [here](#).