

Trip Report: Austria, Hungary, Greece and Italy 2023 (August and September)

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Introduction:

I am a teen from Cantabria, Spain and since I was little, I am in love with nature, especially animals. I loved mammals, especially monkeys, but I thought in my country there weren't any mammals, and I thought that the mammals that were here were hard to find, so I became a birdwatcher. This is until I accidentally found mammalwatching.com now over 1 year ago, and since that moment I have become more or less a mammal watcher (this doesn't mean I don't birdwatch anymore, but I prefer to be called a mammal watcher rather than a birdwatcher). Thankfully my family helps me in my animal-obsession, even if sometimes this means that instead of having normal trips, we normally end up looking for a strange lizard, bird or mouse. I have read reports and I always wanted to do one, so, by trying I don't lose anything.

Destiny and preparation:

Every summer, in the last part of the vacations, my family and I go to some place new, so I was extremely excited for these years. We decided to book a flight to Vienna and from there improvise a little bit, (with more or less a plan in our heads). The initial day was going to be the 24th of August and we had to come back before the 10th because that's when High School started. I planned a little bit for the trip with some reports I am going to a link in the end and tried to convince my parents to go to the Alps to find Alpine Chamois (PS: It didn't happen).

For Birding List: <https://ebird.org/tripreport/156595>

Day 1: Departure Santander-Vienna (24 of August)

We took a flight at 19 and landed in Vienna at 21/22 hours approx. We took a taxi to the hotel in the center of the city and saw a couple of **Small Bats sp.** and a dead **House Rat**.

Day 2: Vienna (25 of August)

Not much mammalwatching, just museums and birding in the nearby parks.

Day 3: Vienna (26 of August)

On this day we went to Schonbrun and Meidling Cemetery (Locations in the end). Saw **Brown Hare, Red Squirrel, House Mouse** and **Eurasian Roe Deer** in Schonbrun and from me, the best mammal in Vienna, the **Common Hamster**. They weren't hard to find and they were so easy to see my dad even took photos (he usually takes photos of landscapes).

Day 4: Vienna (27 of August)

Visited more parts of the city, such as Belvedere Park, where we saw **Eurasian Red Squirrel** and Donauinsel where I tried finding **Eurasian Beaver** without luck (I managed only to find some trees with marks).

At night in Copa Beach many **bats sp**, maybe **Particolored Bats** or **Pipistrelles**.

Day 5: Viena- Airport Budapest-Corfu (28 of August)

We caught a Bus from Vienna to Budapest at approximately 8 AM, because we had a plane to catch to Corfu at 17:30. From the bus we saw many bird species, and mammals, **Western Roe Deer, European Hare** and **European Rabbit**. We ate nearby the airport, in a Gas Station, where I managed to observe a group of **European Ground Squirrel**.

Landed in Corfu at around 8 PM, went to the Hotel in Kontokali Bay and took a walk, no mammals seen.

Day 6 and 7: Corfu City, Kontokali and nearby Villages(29 and 30 of August)

I put these two days together, because we were just visiting and doing things that weren't much related with animals, but I managed to find some things, because I am always looking for them, my dad says even when I am asleep. Mammals seen were: **Coypu, House Mouse, Roof Rat, Bats sp. (pipistrelles and maybe one myotis)**, a rare dead **Balkan Mole**, that, from my knowledge, is rare in Corfu and an even rarer **Big Mouse sp.(¿Western Broad-toothed Field Mouse?)**, big mouse, greyish with a clear belly. I thought it was a western broad-toothed field mouse, but this

species isn't in Corfu, so someone maybe knows what it could be. Sadly, I couldn't take a photo.

In these two days I found some reptiles and many birds so the small percentage of mammals wasn't a problem.

Day 8: Boat Trip around the Eastern Part of Corfu (From Gouvia to Erimitis) (31 of August)

The day before, we booked a typical Tourist activity, a boat trip. I knew watching animals with a group of 50 British and Italian tourists isn't the ideal mammalwatching trip, but it was quite fun and I managed to see a couple of them. The boat took off at around 10 AM and it went along the eastern coast of Corfu stopping at some amazing beaches and jumping spots.

At around 11 30 AM, while looking with my father, we managed to find a group of 8 **Common Bottlenose Dolphins!!!** They went around the boat for a couple of minutes and everyone managed to take photos.

The rest of the day I was trying to find Mediterranean Monk Seal with no luck, but I think I had very little chance of actually seeing one, but who knows? We went to an amazing beach called Erimitis, where I managed to find some more birds and a couple lizards.

We arrived back at Kontokali at around 8 PM.

Day 9, 10, 11 and 12: Exploring Parts of The Island (Sidari, Kerkyra and The Western Part, Palaiokastritsa) (1 to 4th of September)

These 4 days were spent more exploring the cultural and gastronomical part of the island and mainly "relaxing" (while still everyday looking for animals). In these days we visited a couple villages around the whole island (except the South), and we stayed in a very crowded village called Sidari, in the Northwest, near Cape Drastis.

In these days I saw more bird species, the best ones being: Chukar Partridge, Eleonora's Falcon and Eastern Black-Eared Wheatear (Ebird Trip Report Above)

Also saw a couple more reptiles and mammals a couple **unidentified big, medium and small bats** around Sidari (one even made weird high-pitched noises) and a dead **Northern white-breasted Hedgehog**.

Day 13: Corfu Town and Flight to Budapest (5th of September)

In this day, our flight took off at 6 PM so we had almost a day in Corfu Town, so we visited this beautiful town for the last time. Didn't manage to see any Mammals, but I finally saw **Hermann's Tortoise**, 15 minutes before taking the bus to the Airport :).

It was here:

<https://www.google.com/maps/place/Cementerio+Brit%C3%A1nico/@39.6189164,19.9136173,861m/data=!3m2!1e3!4b1!4m6!3m5!1s0x135b5dd854c9e3b5:0xa239ea1c7437ce77!8m2!3d39.6189123!4d19.9161922!16s%2Fg%2F11b8vd3ywl?entry=ttu>

A British cemetery in the middle of the town, a weird place to see tortoise, but after seeing the Hamsters in Vienna also in a Cemetery, I think animals like these types of places. (I know the tortoise it's not a mammal, but I think it's a cool animal to find)

After this, we said goodbye to the Island and caught a Flight to Budapest (with a little delay). After arriving at around 9 30/10 PM we directly went to my Grandparents village called Monor, that it's not too far from Budapest (Around 1 hour).

Day 14, 15 and 16: Family Time in Monor and Budapest (6th, 7th and 8th of September)

These days were spent with my Dads Family, mainly catching up and eating very, very, very much Hungarian food (I think in 3 days I ate 15.000 calories). Obviously, I managed to find time to look for animals, and as my grandpa is a Beekeeper, I looked mainly around the bee panels (And also in Budapest in some parks and the Danube River)

Being summer, it was very hot and I managed to find quite a lot of reptiles (but not huge variety). Also, as it was the start of autumn bird migration I saw a couple of interesting birds, such as: **European Roller**, **Red-throated Pipit** and the incredible and mythical **Sacre Falcon** (and a lot more birds).

In the mammal part I managed to find **Common Pipistrelle** and **Bechstein Myotis** (Huge Bat!!), **European Hare**, **European Rabbit**, **Western Roe Deer** and **Eurasian Harvest Mouse**. All the mammals were seen near my grandpa's panels, except the Roe Deer that was seen around the Panels and Also near the Airport.

Day 17 and 18: Flight from Budapest to Bergamo, Night in Bergamo and last flight from Bergamo to Santander (9th and 10th of September)

After saying goodbye to the family, we went to the Airport at around 10 AM and caught the flight to Bergamo at 1 PM. Arrived in the City at around 3 30 PM, and as our flight to Santander didn't took off after the next day at 6 AM we had a whole day and night to kill. As our budget was running low, we decided to don't pay for a hotel, and be on the city until the last bus to the airport takes off (at around 1 AM) and sleep in the airport (we weren't the only ones with this idea, as many, many people were in the airport and only the first area was open, so the part with the seats and everything was closed, but it was fun).

The whole afternoon we were visiting the city, eating pizza and watching the views of the Pre-Alps.

Surprisingly I managed to find a couple of reptiles and birds, a lifer being the **Italian Sparrow**.

And also, mammals, these being: a couple **Common Pipistrelles**, a **small bat sp.** and a two introduced **Eastern Cottontail**. These rabbits were seen near the airport, while riding the bus, at first, I thought they were normal rabbits, but after searching for mammals in Bergamo online, I found out that in the city there's only Eastern Cottontails.

After the difficult but fun night in the Airport, we cached the flight to Santander at around 6 AM and arrived in the city at 8 AM.

It was a very fun holiday, and while not being an animal watching trip, I think I managed to see a couple species.

Birding List above

Reptile List:

Greece

Colubrid Snakes (Colubridae)		
1	Balkan Whip Snake	<i>Hierophis gemonensis</i>
Dragons (Agamidae)		
2	Roughtail Rock Agama	<i>Laudakia stellio</i>
Typical Blind Snakes (Typhlopidae)		
3	Eurasian Blind Snake	<i>Xerotyphlops vermicularis</i>

Typical Geckos (Gekkonidae)		
4	Mediterranean House Gecko	<i>Hemidactylus turcicus</i>
Wall Lizards (Lacertidae)		
5	Balkan Wall Lizard	<i>Podarcis tauricus</i>
6	Ionian Wall Lizard	<i>Podarcis ionicus</i>
7	Green Lizard	<i>Lacerta viridis</i>
8	Balkan Green Lizard	<i>Lacerta trilineata</i>
9	Blue-throated Keeled Lizard	<i>Algyroides nigropunctatus</i>
Phyllodactylid Geckos (Phyllodactylidae)		
10	Moorish Gecko (Introducido)	<i>Tarentola mauritanica</i>
Sand Snakes (Psammophiidae)		
11	Western Montpellier Snake	<i>Malpolon monspessulanus</i>
Eurasian Pond, River, and Neotropical Wood Turtles (Geoemydidae)		
12	Western Caspian Turtle	<i>Mauremys rivulata</i>
Tortoises (Testudinidae)		
13	Hermann's Tortoise	<i>Testudo hermanni</i>

Hungary

Wall Lizards (Lacertidae)		
	Viviparous Lizard	<i>Zootoca vivipara</i>
	Common Wall Lizard	<i>Podarcis muralis</i>
	Balkan Wall Lizard	<i>Podarcis tauricus</i>
	Green Lizard	<i>Lacerta viridis</i>
	Sand Lizard	<i>Lacerta agilis</i>

Italy

Wall Lizards (Lacertidae)		
	Common Wall Lizard	<i>Podarcis muralis</i>
	Italian Wall Lizard	<i>Podarcis siculus</i>

Austria

Wall Lizards (Lacertidae)		
1	Viviparous Lizard	<i>Zootoca vivipara</i>
2	Common Wall Lizard	<i>Podarcis muralis</i>

Mammal List:

Greece

Spiny Rats and Hutias (Echimyidae)		
1	Coypu (Introducido)	<i>Myocastor coypus</i>
Old World Mice and Rats (Muridae)		
2	Western Broad-toothed Field Mouse (Not clear)	<i>Apodemus epimelas</i>
3	House Mouse (Introducido)	<i>Mus musculus</i>
4	Brown Rat (Introducido)	<i>Rattus norvegicus</i>
5	Roof Rat (Introducido)	<i>Rattus rattus</i>
Hedgehogs and Gymnures (Erinaceidae)		
6	Northern White-breasted Hedgehog (Dead)	<i>Erinaceus roumanicus</i>
Moles and Desmans (Talpidae)		
7	Balkan Mole (Dead and Traces)	<i>Talpa stankovici</i>
Canids (Canidae)		
8	Domestic Dog (Introducido) - DO	<i>Canis familiaris</i>
Felids (Felidae)		
9	Domestic Cat (Introducido) - DO	<i>Felis catus</i>
Equines (Equidae)		
10	Domestic Ass (Introducido) - DO	<i>Equus asinus</i>
Bovids (Bovidae)		
11	Domestic Goat (Introducido) - DO	<i>Capra hircus</i>
12	Domestic Cattle (Introducido) - DO	<i>Bos taurus</i>
Suids (Suidae)		
13	Domestic Pig - DO	<i>Sus domesticus</i>
Oceanic Dolphins (Delphinidae)		
14	Common Bottlenose Dolphin	<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>
Bats		
15	Medium bat sp.	
16	Small bat sp.	
17	Large bat sp.	

Hungary

Hares and Rabbits (Leporidae)		
1	European Hare	<i>Lepus europaeus</i>
2	European Rabbit (Introducido) - EN	<i>Oryctolagus cuniculus</i>
Squirrels (Sciuridae)		
3	European Ground Squirrel - EN	<i>Spermophilus citellus</i>
Old World Mice and Rats (Muridae)		
4	Eurasian Harvest Mouse	<i>Micromys minutus</i>
Evening Bats (Vespertilionidae)		
5	Bechstein's Myotis	<i>Myotis bechsteinii</i>
6	Nathusius's Pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus nathusii</i>
Deer (Cervidae)		
7	Western Roe Deer	<i>Capreolus capreolus</i>

Italy

Hares and Rabbits (Leporidae)		
1	Eastern Cottontail (Introducido)	<i>Sylvilagus floridanus</i>
Evening Bats (Vespertilionidae)		
2	Common Pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>
3	Small bat sp.	

Austria

Hares and Rabbits (Leporidae)		
1	European Hare	<i>Lepus europaeus</i>
Squirrels (Sciuridae)		
2	Eurasian Red Squirrel	<i>Sciurus vulgaris</i>
Beavers (Castoridae)		
3	Eurasian Beaver (Traces)	<i>Castor fiber</i>
Hamsters, Voles, Lemmings, and Allies (Cricetidae)		
4	Common Hamster - CR	<i>Cricetus cricetus</i>
Old World Mice and Rats (Muridae)		
5	House Mouse (Introducido)	<i>Mus musculus</i>
6	Brown Rat (Introducido)	<i>Rattus norvegicus</i>
Evening Bats (Vespertilionidae)		
	Small bat sp.	
	Medium bat sp.	
	Big bat sp.	
	Common Pipistrelle (Maybe)	<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>
	Eurasian Particolored Bat (Maybe)	<i>Vespertilio murinus</i>
Deer (Cervidae)		
13	Western Roe Deer	<i>Capreolus capreolus</i>

Sites:

I am just gonna put the most relevant sites, the places where I could find easily the animals, places where I found big density of them or places where I found strange animals.

Austria:

1. Schonbrunn Park:

<https://www.google.com/maps/place/Sch%C3%B6nbrunn,+Vien,+Austria/@48.1774767,16.290973,13.89z/data=!4m6!3m5!1s0x476da80ad2a4c1ed:0x196f2bfdca190964!8m2!3d48.1812448!4d16.3085816!16s%2Fg%2F11gfhsc9z?entry=ttu>

Park with a big variety of birdlife and a great French-style scenery.

Easily you can find **Eurasian Red Squirrel** around the whole park and **Eurasian Roe Deer, Hares** and **Wild Boars** (I didn't manage to see the boars), in the more forested areas in the Park, mainly behind the Café Gloriette, in the middle part of the park.

2. Meidling Cemetery:

<https://www.google.com/maps/place/Friedhof+Wien+Meidling/@48.1714626,16.3392273,2006m/data=!3m1!1e3!4m6!3m5!1s0x476da8476c1a164f:0x5ca5e413330738f!8m2!3d48.1734479!4d16.3385292!16s%2Fg%2F122vl59b?entry=ttu>

I am not going to talk much about this place as it is already a known place for **Common Hamster**, but, from what I have searched up, the hamsters are very rare between the months of October to April, as they are in their burrows. They are very easy to find in the other months.

3. Donauinsel (Copa Beach Area):

https://www.google.com/maps/place/Donauinsel/@48.229188,16.4097763,669m/data=!3m1!1e3!4m14!1m7!3m6!1s0x476d06d127a831ab:0x7cc9686bc88d5e87!2sIsle+del+Danubio!8m2!3d48.2106899!4d16.4350074!16zL20vMDZkcnu!3m5!1s0x476d06e3bf697257:0x31e6fcb59d5136b!8m2!3d48.2291208!4d16.4112149!16s%2Fg%2F1yw0_t9c3?entry=ttu

Supposedly great place for **Eurasian Beaver**, but I didn't get a lot of time and couldn't find any (Although a few trees had beaver marks on them), the invasive American Weasel is also supposedly easy to

find here. Other mammals also live in the Island such as: **Red Fox, Brown Hare, Eurasian Roe Deer, Wild Boar or Eurasian Badger.**

Hungary:

1. My Grandparents Land

<https://www.google.com/maps/@47.3460869,19.4122605,795m/data=!3m1!1e3?entry=ttu>

Not an incredibly diverse place, but you can find many bird species in the area including Bee-Eaters, Pheasants and the enormous, White-Tailed Eagle.

In mammal life you can find easily **Eurasian Roe Deer, Brown Hare, European Rabbit and Mouses** (couple species). Also, you can find **Red Fox, Eurasian Red Squirrel, Northern White-Breasted Hedgehog** and many more small mammals. If anyone is near the area and wants to take a look, I think my grandfather would be pleased to show you the place. My contact is down below if you are interested in visiting, although I may say my grandpa isn't an expert on animals.

Greece:

In Greece, almost all the animals I found accidentally, and many of them where Road kills. But I am going to put a couple interesting places.

1. Kontokali:

<https://www.google.com/maps/place/Kontokali,+Grecia/@39.6468448,19.8655022,2555m/data=!3m1!1e3!4m6!3m5!1s0x135b5c09f76d3c69:0x2600bd2df7516232!8m2!3d39.6459325!4d19.8480094!16s%2Fm%2F07k9pcm?entry=ttu>

Little town in the outskirts of Kerkyra, but not great for mammal diversity. Many mice were seen at night around the whole town, as well as Bats.

2. Coypu place :

<https://www.google.com/maps/place/Gerekos+island+apartments/@39.6501456,19.8585926,234m/data=!3m1!1e3!4m15!1m8!3m7!1s0x135b5c09f76d3c69:0x2600bd2df7516232!2sKontokali,+Grecia!3b1!8m2!3d39.6459325!4d19.8480094!16s%2Fm%2F07k9pcm!3m5!1s0x135b5c743a8d5f45:0xa0facfa88e0bd6f5!8m2!3d39.650909!4d19.85778!16s%2Fg%2F113gwnh38?entry=ttu>

In this hotel, there are many, many cats, and the owner leaves food for them, but as I have seen the cats aren't the only ones eating the food, as 1 coypu was also 2 mornings eating the food.

In the Island you can't find a lot of mammals, but for more information read this article that I read before the trip:

https://kmkjournals.com/upload/PDF/RJT/20/ther20_2_204-214.pdf

An interesting mammal that is findable in the island is the Eurasian Otter.

Tortoise Place:

This isn't a mammal, but I think this is an interesting place where I saw Hermann's Tortoise, and they are extremely easy to see, just by taking a walk.

<https://www.google.com/maps/place/Cementerio+Brit%C3%A1nico/@39.6189123,19.9136173,969m/data=!3m2!1e3!4b1!4m6!3m5!1s0x135b5dd854c9e3b5:0xa239ea1c7437ce77!8m2!3d39.6189123!4d19.9161922!16s%2Fg%2F11b8vd3ywl?entry=ttu>

It's in the middle of the city, the British Cemetery. They are all around the Cemetery, but the best place is near the entrance, in the shade of the trees.

4. Erimitis Beach

Beautiful beach, and great area, with little human activity (as the beach is far from the road and best accessible by boat). I think with a couple more hours I could have found mammals too, as there where a couple small lakes nearby that looked as a perfect Otter habitat.

<https://www.google.com/maps/place/Erimitis/@39.7716865,19.9516694,583m/data=!3m1!1e3!4m6!3m5!1s0x135b6a00f6288065:0xf083e95ca2569eec!8m2!3d39.771318!4d19.9516855!16s%2Fg%2F11bbrlyq86?entry=ttu>

Italy:

The two rabbits that I saw were in the bus ride, near this location:

[https://www.google.com/maps/place/Bergamo+\(BRL\)+VOR%2FDME/@45.6715243,9.683043,1063m/data=!3m1!1e3!4m15!1m8!3m7!1s0x47815111bc62ae73:0xd32fcb8f0be5a4d1!2sB%C3%A9rgamo,+Italia!3b1!8m2!3d45.6982642!4d9.6772698!16zL20vMDFqcDRz!3m5!1s0x4781517f63fb655f:0](https://www.google.com/maps/place/Bergamo+(BRL)+VOR%2FDME/@45.6715243,9.683043,1063m/data=!3m1!1e3!4m15!1m8!3m7!1s0x47815111bc62ae73:0xd32fcb8f0be5a4d1!2sB%C3%A9rgamo,+Italia!3b1!8m2!3d45.6982642!4d9.6772698!16zL20vMDFqcDRz!3m5!1s0x4781517f63fb655f:0)

[x3029ee27c536f701!8m2!3d45.6730835!4d9.6816936!16s%2Fg%2F11v5f
pnmg5?entry=ttu](https://www.inaturalist.org/observations?iconic_taxa=Mammalia&place_id=30805&view=species)

Not far from the city, in the Mountains you can find species like Alpine Ibex, Alpine Marmot or Alpine Chamois, so I hope I will be able to come back with more time to find these species.

Useful Sites:

https://www.inaturalist.org/observations?iconic_taxa=Mammalia&place_id=30805&view=species

https://www.inaturalist.org/observations?iconic_taxa=Mammalia&nelat=48.322563&nelng=16.5774545&place_id=any&swlat=48.1179032&swlng=16.1818304&view=species

https://www.inaturalist.org/observations?iconic_taxa=Mammalia&place_id=33145&view=species

https://www.mammalwatching.com/gd_place/austria/

<https://www.mammalwatching.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/MK-Vienna-2016.pdf>

<https://www.mammalwatching.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/JW-Vienna-2018.pdf>

<https://www.mammalwatching.com/2021/09/16/mammal-watching-stopover-in-austria/>

Photos:

(I didn't take many photos from the animals we saw, but the couple ones my dad took I am going to put them here)

<https://photos.google.com/share/AF1QipPsD2yz2PUdD4euYbHmSSrJhUqgjQlcvltBMUhDjvopesIvIIOMm3tbgCJNwBPdRw?key=V3NiT2pzR2FzWWJtUXhNUWVpZGpRRkpFcXZnZ1BB>

Contact (For any questions):

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