

Istanbul



22 -25 January 2026

Introduction

My wife was in Istanbul for the week for work so I flew out on Thursday for the weekend. I flew with to Istanbul with no issues. It was a touristy weekend so my only wildlife target was the Persian squirrel which has a very limited European range, the European part of Turkey, and a few Turkish and Greek islands, notably Lesbos where I had failed to see them before. All other sightings were incidental during our sightseeing.

The weather was mostly overcast but mild with some rain on Friday.

The flights were with [Turkish air](#) from Gatwick and we stayed close to the Blue Mosque.

Blue Mosque



Thursday 22nd January

I arrived early afternoon and after checking in at the hotel we took a walk in Gulhane park where we quickly encountered the feral cats which the city is famous for. Ring necked parakeets, hooded crows, feral pigeons and common myna's dominated the park birdwise but we did find a black redstart and some laughing doves.



Friday 23rd January

We did some touristy things working our way to Yidiz park, a few cormorants along the Bosphorus of note. In the park we were after Persian squirrels in the light drizzle, and we quickly located a confiding individual, after having our fill of photos we headed off encountering a much darker and more timid one. Feral cats were present along with some of the commoner birds. The rest of the day was filled with sightseeing.



Persian Squirrel

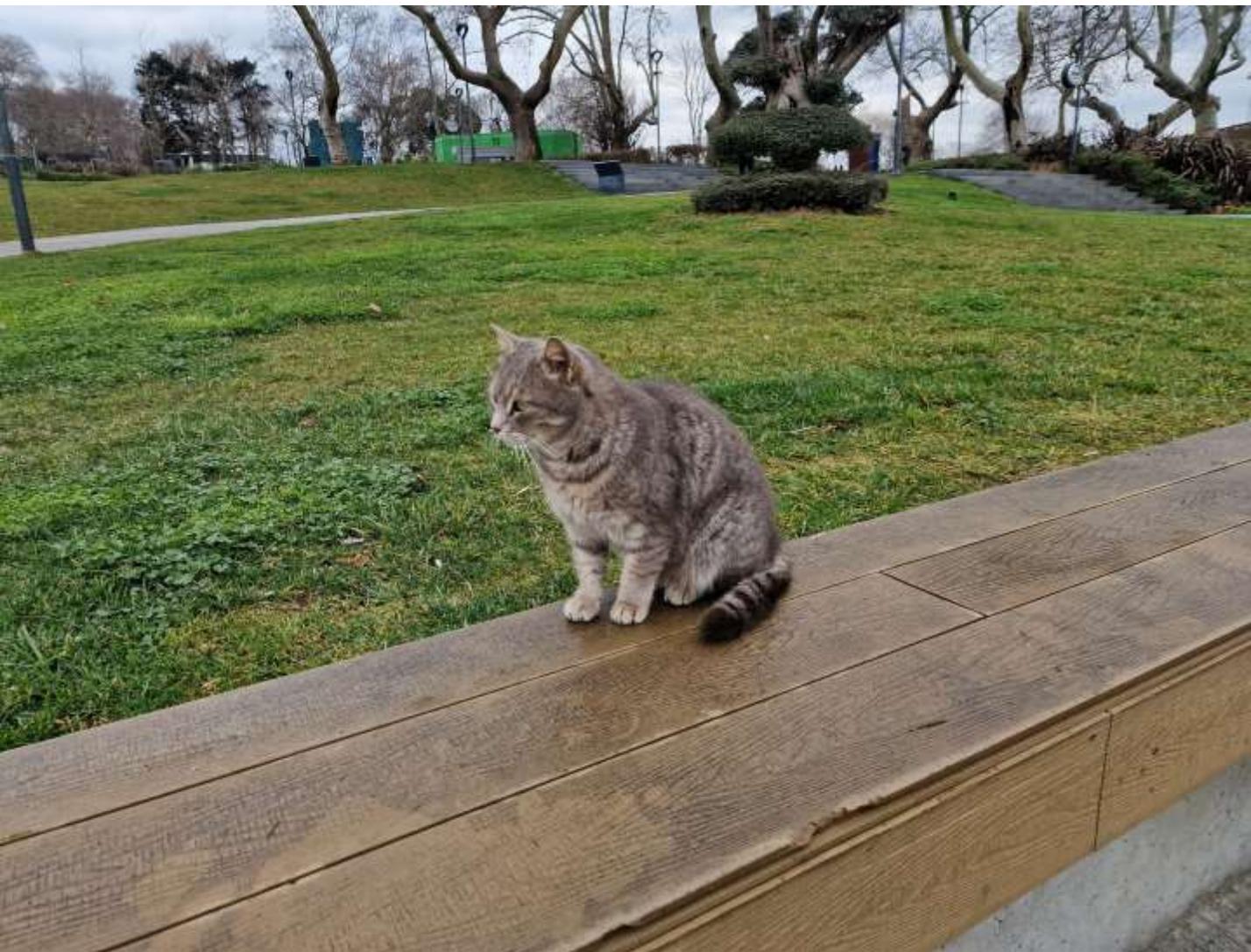
Historic Tram



Hooded Crow

Saturday 24th January

After some sightseeing we headed to the Asian side and eventually ended up along the Bosphorus where there were large numbers of Yellow legged gulls and coots around the ferry terminal. We crossed on the ferry but only a few cormorants, although passengers were feeding a large flock of black headed gulls following the ferry.



Feral Cat

Sunday 25th January

We had a walk in Gulhane park before we headed to the airport, the wildlife was largely the same as our previous trip and that finished our brief trip to Istanbul.



Ring Necked Parakeet



Persian Squirrel



Wildlife List



Laughing Dove

Persian Squirrel	Feral Cat	Mallard
Black Headed Gull	Laughing Dove	Black redstart
Jackdaw	Feral Pigeon	Yellow Legged Gull
Cormorant	Coot	Ring Necked Parakeet
House Sparrow	Hooded Crow	Grey Heron
Common Buzzard	Magpie	Great Tit
Starling	Common Myna	Blue Tit
Blackbird	Collared Dove	White Wagtail
Tree Germander		

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