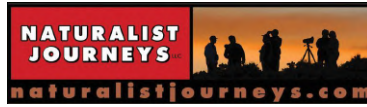


Morocco: Birding & Nature | April 2 – 16, 2026

Trip Report by Alex Cahill



With clients Ramona, Ira, Jim, Pam, Ben, Jane, John, Margaret, Cliff, Dick & Jenny and Local Guide Victor Porras & NJ Host Alex Cahill



Thurs., Apr. 2: Arrivals in Marrakech

The first official day of our trip! Some of us arrived early and met up the night before for some delicious local food at Restaurant Dar El Baroud which included some unexpected, but not unwelcome, dancing. On Thursday, we welcomed other arrivals and settled into our modern and centrally-located hotel, the Longue Vie. After admiring the rooftop views and sipping traditional mint tea, we set out for a short birding walk before dinner. Our expert guide, Victor, led us on a brief city walk to the nearby Parc El Haiti. It proved to be a gorgeous day - sunny with blue skies. Our first birding stop was successful: Booted Eagle, Eurasian Kestrel, Eastern and Western Olivaceous Warbler, Sardinian Warbler, European Greenfinch, and European Serin were present. We also got our first looks at several species that would be common throughout our trip: Spotless Starling, Eurasian Blackbird, European Turtle-Dove, Eurasian Collared-Dove, Barn Swallow, Pallid Swift, Common Bulbul, House Sparrow, House Bunting, White Stork, and (of course) Feral and Common Wood Pigeons. After returning to the Longue Vie, we enjoyed a



delicious dinner at the hotel, with some of us trying our first tagines of the trip! Tagine was a frequent

and a welcome dish. It's a traditional slow-cooked, savory stew, typically made with chicken, lamb, beef, or vegetables. Though we ate it often, each variation was unique and flavorful. It's something you keep looking forward to!

Fri., Apr. 3: Marrakech's Medina & Souk | High Atlas Mountains

City day! We enjoyed an incredible buffet-style breakfast at the Longue Vie, which of course had fresh mint tea and coffee ready for us. We then took off for a tour through Marrakech's vibrant and lively medina. The medina is the historic, walled, old quarter of the city - and it can feel like a bit of a maze! It is the heart of the community. We took our time meandering through the area, spotting a few species here and there (those White Stork nests that seemed to be teetering atop the medina walls!). We admired Bahia Palace and its beautifully intricate ceilings, impressively carved wooden doors, and (bonus!) spotted a Greek Tortoise in the garden.

For lunch, we stopped at Cafe Dar Touareg, where we sat on the open-air top floor and had views of the snow-capped High Atlas Mountains in the distance. We tried traditional dishes, including tagine, couscous, and kebab. We enjoyed the dessert of fresh, juicy orange slices topped with cinnamon, and of course, finished it all off with more mint tea (some of us...okay maybe just one of us...with extra sugar cubes.) After lunch we spent a bit more time in the city - visiting shops and street-vendors along the way. Several of us spent a little more than we anticipated at a local spice shop where we sampled lotions, oils, eucalyptus crystals, and more. We ended our city tour outside of the Koutoubia Mosque.

We boarded our van and our capable driver, Hassan, drove us away from the city and into the fresh air and beautiful natural scenery of the High Atlas. We arrived at Aurocher Lodge in time for a bit of birding before dinner, and we enjoyed the lodge's spacious grounds and terrace overlooking the mountainside. After a long day under a hot sun, the fresh, cool air was a welcome respite! Dinner, lemon chicken tagine, was tasty and food was plentiful. We retired to our cozy rooms for the night -



though Ben stayed up to score a few photos of insects and moths!

Sat., Apr. 4: High Atlas Mountains | Oukaïmeden

We started the day on the lodge's terrace, scanning the valley and mountainside. The tranquility of the grounds and the beauty of the surrounding area were both really special. Members of our group added a few new species to the list: Common Nightingale, European Red-rumped Swallow, African Chaffinch, African Blue Tit, Great Spotted Woodpecker, and European Robin, to name a few. We also observed a local dog munching on his breakfast: a Common Wood-Pigeon. Thankfully, our own breakfast was a much better spread.

Today we headed to Oukaïmeden, the highest ski resort in Africa. By April, the ski season is winding down but it remains a popular area for birding. We took a few stops along the way with breathtaking views of the mountains. During one of our stops, Ben spotted a Great Spotted Woodpecker, much to everyone's excitement. Throughout the day we'd tally a number of species: Short-toed Snake-Eagle, Eurasian Sparrowhawk, Long-legged Buzzard (a great spot by Hassan), Red-billed and Yellow-billed Cough, Common Raven, Thekla's Lark, Crested Lark, Horked Lark, Eurasian Crag-Martin, Mistle Thrush, Blue Rock-Thrush, Moussier's Redstart (a favorite), Atlas Wheatear, Black Wheatear, White-throated dipper, and others. Of particular interest, and requiring a bit of a hike up the rocky mountainside, was the Crimson-winged Finch, hopping around right where the snow began. Though it was a little chillier up here, it was a bright and sunny day.

We enjoyed a hearty lunch at a local restaurant, consisting of Moroccan salad, tagine, and traditional bread. A number of Choughs perched nearby and gave us some good photo opportunities.

We returned to Aurocher Lodge with stops along the way, spent a bit more time birding on the terrace, and enjoyed another wonderful dinner before heading off to rest.

Sun., Apr. 5: Travel Day – Tizi N'Tichka Pass

Today we packed up and got on the road to our next destination across the Tizi N'Tichka Pass. This route, known for linking Marrakesh to Ouarzazate (the "Gateway to the Sahara Desert"), is packed with

dramatic landscapes and spectacular panoramic views. Incredible geographic features surprised us around every turn - the drive itself was a must-have experience. It was incredible to watch the landscape change from mountains to rocky desert. We also took in the local villages and structures - Victor pointed out all the new construction as



communities have rebuilt with new materials following the 2023 earthquake that devastated many in the area.

Today was largely a travel day, but we had a number of stops on our route to bird and stretch our legs. Of note, we had our first look at a Common Hoopoe as it flew past. We took our time eating lunch at Cafe Resto Targa. Some of us tried the curious 'Hawai' drink recommended by Victor - a popular, tropical flavored Moroccan soda. We ate outdoors and enjoyed birding right from our seats: Woodchat Shrike, Eurasian Kestrel, African Blue Tit, Common Chiffchaff, White Wagtail, Laughing Dove, Common Bulbul, Common Nightingale, and (our very frequent friends) House Sparrow and Pigeon.

As we continued on our drive, we tallied up more species: Northern Wheatear, Desert Wheatear, Western Black-eared Wheatear, White-crowned Wheatear, Trumpeter Finch, Little Ringed Plover, European Bee-eater, Black Kite, Western Cattle-Egret, and others. We lingered briefly outside a cave that was likely inhabited by a Pharaoh Eagle-Owl but alas, the only sighting we had was of its droppings all over the cave entrance. Not to worry though, there would be more opportunities...

We checked into the modern and luxurious Amanar Hotel & Spa Ouarzazate. The decor, famous movie-star portraits, paid homage to the city's renowned role for film studios. Several major TV series and movies were filmed in Ouarzazate's surroundings and studios, including *Game of Thrones*, *Gladiator*, and *Larence of Arabia*. After completing our checklist out by the pool and enjoying a plentiful buffet-style dinner at the hotel, we retired to our comfortable rooms for the night.

Mon., Apr. 6: Ouarzazate | El Mansour Barrage | Boumalne Dades

After breakfast, we headed out to bird in the agricultural fields not far from our hotel. It was a beautiful, sunny day and we had a productive morning: Blue-cheeked and European Bee-eater, Gray Heron, Crested Lark, Common Hoopoe, and others we'd seen before (including hundreds of Pallid Swift, House Sparrow, Barn Swallow, and Western House-Martin).

Next we continued on to El Mansour Reservoir. What a beautiful place - so serene and peaceful. Out in the middle of the reservoir, there is an old crumbling kasbah - one of many we observed throughout our travels. The location proved to be another incredibly productive birding site; we observed: Ruddy Shelduck, Mallard, Common Sandpiper, Little Grebe, Great Crested Grebe, Great Cormorant, Glossy Ibis, Little Egret, Purple Heron, Melodious Warbler, Western Subalpine Warbler, Western Yellow Wagtail, Western Bonelli's Warbler, and others. We took our time here, walking around and taking it all in.



For lunch, we stopped at Restaurant La Famille. This was our first time trying Seffa - a traditional Moroccan specialty consisting of fine pasta (similar to angel hair), butter, cinnamon, and powdered sugar. It was delicious! We also had a consensus among the group that this restaurant had the best meatball tagine of the trip so far.

We checked into our hotel in Boumalne Dades, the Xaluca - the welcome serenade is not to be missed, haha! We met back up for a bit more birding before dinner and took a quick ride in the van to an area near the Tagdilt Tract. Here we were treated to a displaying Greater Hoopoe Lark. We also saw Thekla's Lark, Temminck's Lark, Atlas Wheatear, Desert Wheatear, Red-rumped Wheatear, and Trumpeter Finch. After hopping back in the van, we checked out another spot nearby where we saw similar species, as well as about twenty Greater Short-toed Lark. It was a windy but very worthwhile stop! We returned to the Xaluca, ate dinner in the hotel restaurant, and called it a day.

Tues., Apr. 7: Boumalne | Gorges du Dades | Draa Valley

Easily one of our group's favorite days of the trip! After an early breakfast at the hotel, we returned to some of the prior day's spots near the Tagdilt Track. Upon arrival, we were welcomed by two juvenile White-crowned Wheatear, one of which perched right on our van's rearview mirror! We made a few stops in the area, observing many of the same species as the day before (the Greater Hoopoe Lark was a crowd-pleaser!) as well as several new ones: A Montagu's Harrier soaring in the distance, two Black-bellied Sangrouse flying in tandem, and a Lanner Falcon (which we initially thought was a Barbary Falcon.)

We next made our way to and through the Gorges du Dades, taking in the incredible sights as we followed the winding, river-adjacent road through traditional villages and past ancient kasbahs. Dades River is streaked on either side by lush green foliage that contrasts starkly with the desert landscape. We made a few stops for scenic views and to scan for birds, including to Monkey Fingers - the stunning, surreal red rock canyons located in the Dades Valley. We continued on and reached the top of the Dades Gorges where we spotted Tristram's Warbler, Blue Rock-Thrush, Rock Bunting, Eurasian Kestrel, Black Wheatear, and Eurasian Crag-Martin.

We enjoyed a lovely lunch at Restaurant Panorama; seated outside on a beautiful terrace we were able to continue our birding right from our seats. We saw Common Hoopoe, Eurasian Linnet, European Goldfinch, European Serin, Black Wheatear, Common Nightingale, Eurasian Blackbird, Western House-Martin, Laughing Dove, Blue Rock-Thrush, Common Bulbul, and more. A perfect lunch - great food, great views, and great birding!



We made our way back to our hotel Boumalne Dades, where we had a bit of time to freshen up before heading back out to a nearby area comprised of cliffs, wadis, and rocky desert terrain - one of the more challenging landscapes we encountered. On our way, our driver Hassan made a pit stop in town where he had spotted a Little Owl - and it was still there when we arrived, perched and posing! Our first owl of the trip and a great surprise for all. We continued on and met a local shepherd and guide, Lassan, who is a talented scout. Our group embarked on a hike down into the wadi (a dry valley/riverbed) and though it was a bit rocky and steep, it was well worth the effort!

With Lassan leading the way, we took a look at a nesting Trumpeter Finch - its bright beak stood out against the rocky ground. We next used the scope to peer into a Pharaoh Eagle-Owl cave high up the rock wall in front of us - this time with luck! Two fluffy chicks peered back at us, their mom just behind them. Later on we'd see another two solitary adults - making for a total of five Pharaoh Eagle-Owls! We stopped to take some photos through the scope and watch for a bit, but our exciting encounters were far from finished. We took another look through the scope at two Lanner Falcon chicks, and another adult flying overhead. We also got good looks at a Long-legged Atlas Buzzard in its cliffside nest, Woodchat Shrike, Desert Lark, and another Montagu's Harrier. Wheatears were also present, including Atlas Wheatear, White-crowned Wheatear, and (the most anticipated of the outing) Maghreb Wheatear. Such good looks as it hopped around and posed for us!

For such an incredibly productive afternoon of birding, we almost couldn't believe our luck when Lassan told us he had yet another surprise in store - the Moroccan Horned Viper. Relatively small but highly venomous, we took care to give Lassan plenty of room as he pointed out the camouflaged snake. And true to its name, we could easily see its horns!

Having had plenty of excitement for one day, we returned to the hotel, enjoyed a buffet-style dinner, and headed off to our rooms.



Wed., Apr. 8: Boumalne de Dades | Todra Gorges | Sahara Desert | Erg Chebbi

Off to the Sahara Desert! We started the day with a bit of birding along a nearby bridge before getting on the road. We traveled through the Todra Gorges and admired the amazing geological formations throughout, and not without a few photos! When we stopped at the top of the gorge, we spotted Eurasian Crag-Martin, Pale Crag-Martin, Blue Rock-Thrush, and a couple of fearless rock climbers scaling the cliffs above! We stopped for tea and coffee at Auberge La Vallee, nestled right in the gorge. As we sipped our tea and took in the views from the back terrace, we observed a number of species: Common Hoopoe, Common Bulbul, Common Nightingale, European Pied Flycatcher, Common Redstart, Black Redstart, Blue Rock-thrush, Gray Wagtail, European Serin, House Sparrow, and House Bunting.

We drove through the town of Tinghir and stopped for another typical lunch of Moroccan salad and tagine as we continued on. At last, the dunes of Erg Chebbi rose in the distance. Erg Chebbi is the largest dune complex in the Moroccan Sahara. We excitedly arrived at our lodge for the next three nights: the Auberge Les Dunes D 'Or Merzouga. This hotel is designed to look like an old kasbah and is located right on the edge of the desert - you can literally walk out the door and into the dunes. It's really a spectacular, otherworldly place. We settled into our basic, but comfortable rooms and did a bit of birding around the grounds. We caught sight of our first Ruddy Shelduck as well as Blue-cheeked Bee-eater, European Bee-eater (many of both types!), Great Gray Shrike, Woodchat Shrike, Brown-necked Raven, Western Subalpine Warbler, White-crowned Wheatear and others. We also admired some of the colorful desert flora. After a bit of time to rest and explore (and find some extra towels!), we met back up again for a delicious dinner. While heading back to our rooms, a number of us took a peek into the entrance hall where dozens of bats were swooping around, likely trying to catch insects and/or escape the strong wind! Ben got some great photos of one (literally) hanging around near his room.

Thurs., Apr. 9: Full Day in the Sahara | Explore Igrane Gardens

Today was a full day! Several of us rose early for birding or watching the sun rise above the dunes. After breakfast, we met our 4x4 drivers and got ready for a full day of adventure traversing the landscape. It made for a beautiful birding backdrop! At our first stop, we got good looks at Spotted Sandgrouse, Crowned Sandgrouse, Cream-colored Courser, and Western Subalpine Warbler. We also saw Trumpeter Finch, Western Yellow Wagtail, Brown-necked Raven, and Western Marsh Harrier. We hopped back into our 4x4s and the convoy took off for our next



stop!

At our second stop, we tallied Woodchat Shrike, Greater Hoopoe-Lark, Bar-tailed Lark, Thekla's Lark, Melodious Warbler, Desert Wheatear and Trumpeter Finch. We then visited the Kam Kam Dunes Camp for a rest stop where we had good, up-close looks at Fulvous Chatterer and Desert Sparrow. We moved on to a special stop where we hoped to find Egyptian Nightjar - and as luck would have it, we spotted

two! We owed our good fortune to the kind local guide, who wakes up very early to observe where these birds land to roost.

After lunch and time to refresh, we headed back out. We explored the Igrane Gardens - local orchards and palmeries around the nearby town of Rissani. The area offered a welcomed, shaded reprieve from the wind that had grown quite strong by afternoon. We returned to Auberge Les Dunes for another hearty dinner.

Fri., Apr. 10: Sahara | Merzouga

After breakfast, we headed to what the local guides described as their "secret spot". It was a beautiful habitat of desert scrub not far from Rissani. We found our target - the African Desert Warbler, who put on quite a show for us. We also had good looks at Greater Hoopoe-Lark and Woodchat Shrike. As our convoy moved on to the next stop, the car in the lead actually flushed a Fennec Fox. Those of us in the cars behind saw it take off running - what an incredible animal! We had several subsequent stops this morning, often fanning out in search of familiar and new birds to add to our list, including Scrub Warbler. One of our drivers also pointed out sidwinding Moroccan Horned Viper tracks in the sand.

Lunch was a special treat - traditional Berber pizza served at Restaurant La Palmeraie in Rissani. Unlike the pizza



we're used to, Berber pizza is a hearty dough stuffed with spiced meat, vegetables, and herbs. Many of us also perused the adjacent shop, Mezane Fossil Store, and bought some souvenirs to take back home. Passing through one town, we picked up a box of delicious dates at a local store to snack on in the van.

We spent the afternoon at Lake Merzouga - which was full of water this year! We walked around the area, spotting Ruddy Shelduck, Eurasian Coot, Black-winged Stilt, Kentish Plover, Common Sandpiper, Gull-billed Tern, Whiskered Tern, Great Crested Grebe, Little Egret, Black Kite, Western Yellow and White Wagtail, and at least 100 Greater Flamingo!

We returned to Auberge Les Dunes where we parted ways with our lovely 4x4 drivers from the last few days. We had a bit of time to relax before our checklist and dinner. Alex practiced her tea-pouring skills (still needs a lot of work!)

Sat., Apr. 11: Birding to Ouarzazate

Our last morning in Erg Chebbi! Many of us were sad to go - Jane and Alex woke up extra early for a pre-sunset walk through the dunes. How beautifully orange they are when the sun rises!

We departed en route to Ourazazate. It was a very windy day, and even some rain as we left the desert. As always, we kept an eye out for birds and enjoyed the scenic drive. Victor said this was the most green he's ever seen the landscape. We continued through the Draa Valley, passing small towns and desert kasbahs. We made several short stops along the way, and had a delicious lunch at Kasbah Ennakhile. In the afternoon we arrived at our charming, family-run riad for the night - Riad Ait Ben Haddou. A riad is a traditional Moroccan house built around an open-air, central courtyard. Ours was located near Ait Benhaddou, a historic fortified village (also known as a ksar) and a designated UNESCO World Heritage site.

With a little free time before dinner, several of us explored a bit of town - meandering the narrow street and stopping to browse at the colorful shops. There's a bridge into the fortified village just a few minutes walk from the riad with beautiful views.

We met back up for our checklist and were joined by the owner's daughter - a very sweet little girl who was particularly keen to befriend Jenny! The family made us a delicious dinner of beef & prune, lemon chicken, and vegetable tagines. And of course - lots of bread for dipping!

Sun., Apr. 12: Return to Marrakech | Ounila Valley



After a lovely breakfast at our riad, we departed back to Marrakech. We made a very productive birding stop at Hotel Ksar Ljanoub, where we took a short walk around. We observed European Turtle Dove, Eurasian Collared-Dove, Little Ringed Plover, European Bee-eater, Woodchat Shrike, Desert Lark, Thekla's Lark, Bank & Barn Swallow, Whinchat, Western Black-eared Wheatear, Trumpeter Finch, Western Yellow Wagtail, among others. Perhaps the most exciting though was Pam's great spot just before getting back in the van - our first and only European Roller of the trip! What a magnificently colored bird.

We continued on through the Ounila Valley, admiring some of the best geological features of the trip. We followed the valley at the base of the mountains for its entire length, passing through small villages and occasionally stopping to stretch our legs and see some birds! We had a particularly delicious lunch at Cafe Argane Tichka. Next-door is a great shop for locally-made Argan oil products, including soaps, lotions, and other skincare. We saw many Argan trees during our drive - Pam was waiting to see the goats up in the branches of one!

After lunch, we took our time at one particular spot, hoping to catch a glimpse of Levillant's Woodpecker. We could hear it, and it responded to Victor's playback several times, but it was an elusive one. Jane and Alex did successfully befriend the local donkey. We also got good looks at a Eurasian Kestrel and spotted a Booted Eagle overhead. Later we also took a walk through a forested area, and though it wasn't the most birdy spot, it did feel nice to walk around and get some fresh air! There were lots of lovely wildflowers around.

After a long transfer day, we arrived back at our first hotel of the trip: Longue Vie. We enjoyed the fresh juice and mini pastries waiting for us at reception, and met back up a bit later for dinner. Though the hotel's restaurant certainly takes their time with dinner, it's always phenomenal (especially the traditional Harira soup and those desserts!)

Mon., Apr. 13: The Coast at Agadir | Shorebirds, Waders & Gulls

The most prompt group of travelers Victor's ever encountered, our group was ready to go and get on the road right after breakfast. We broke up the 3-hour journey with a bit of birding, tea & coffee, and some chocolates and cookies. Lunch was a very authentic experience. Though the restaurant may not seem like much from looks alone, never judge a book by its cover! We enjoyed delicious and plentiful tagine (with no tourists in sight!) before heading to our most productive birding spot of the trip - Oued Souss.

Oued Souss, known for a stunning variety of shorebirds and waterbirds, did not disappoint. We tallied 43 species at this spot. Many were new to our checklist, including: Marbled Duck, Eurasian Oystercatcher, Black-bellied Plover, Eurasian Whimbrel, Eurasian Curlew, Bar-tailed Godwit, Common Sandpiper, Common Redshank, Common Greenshank, Ruddy Turnstone, Sanderling, Dunlin, Little Stint, Slender-billed Gull, Black-headed Gull,



Yellow-legged Gull, Little Tern, Gull-billed Tern, Caspian Tern, Sandwich Tern, Great Cormorant, Eurasian Spoonbill, Little Egret, Osprey, and more. Many of the species, including Greater Flamingo, were present in impressive numbers. It was a delight. We also saw over a dozen Maghreb Magpie. We were surprised it was this far into the trip that we were really seeing them, but we enjoyed watching them hop around nearby. We kept an eye on the King's private land across the road - and Ramona spotted our trip's first and only Lesser Kestrel there. We made a second stop overlooking the marsh on a nearby bridge where we saw many of the same species.

After navigating a bit of city traffic, we arrived at Hotel Tildi in Agadir. Some of us joined Victor in a 15-minute walk down to the beach to check out the goings-on and the gulls. Agadir is a very popular beach destination, and the boardwalk was filled with people enjoying the views and ocean breeze. We returned for a buffet-style dinner at the hotel before heading to our respective rooms for some rest.

Tues., Apr. 14: Oued Souss Massa National Park

After breakfast at the hotel, we drove to the Oued Massa estuary located at the opposite end of the 130+ square mile Souss Massa National Park along Morocco's scenic coastline. On our way, a restroom break at a local pottery shop, La Poterie, turned into a more extended visit as several of us couldn't help but browse the beautiful and colorful handmade bowls, cups, tagines, and other works of art.

Our target bird for the day was one of the rarest birds in the world: the Northern Bald Ibis. The nesting colonies and roost-sites are located on protected coastal cliffs within the national park, and the coastal steppe habitats and fields are used as feeding areas. We actually stopped the van and hopped out as we saw three flying over. Later in the same area we'd see a few more, but they were keeping their distance!

We took an incredible walk past a very tempting, untouched beach and near some stunning ocean-side cliffs. We saw a number of species here, including Black-winged Stilt, Common Ringed Plover, Kentish Plover, Eurasian Whimbrel, Common and Spotted Redshank, Common Greenshank, Curlew Sandpiper, Greater Flamingo, Little Egret, Gray Heron, Osprey, Little Owl, Western Marsh Harrier, Thekla's Lark, Moussier's Redstart, Sardinian Warbler, and others. A few European Goldfinches and European Serins were taking turns in a little water bath. As we made our way back to the van, we encountered a few friendly camels - Mike made sure Jane got her photo with one!

We had a spectacular lunch at Restaurant Oued Massa. We were seated outdoors in their back garden and immediately treated to fresh juice. In addition to the delicious tagines, we had another variation of Seffa for dessert. This time, very fine couscous was topped with powdered sugar and cinnamon, with a sweet sauce made from almonds, honey, and Argan oil poured over top. Divine!



We spent the afternoon birding along the Massa River. Rich with birds, we were also excited to check out 7 Wild Boar on the other side of the river.

After a successful day, we returned to Hotel Tildi for dinner and rest.

Wed., Apr. 15: Oued Souss Massa National Park | Marrakech

This morning we returned to the Souss estuary in search of more birds. Established in 1991, the park is one of Morocco's top birding locations, so the more time we could spend here the better. We enjoyed observing many of the same species as we had on our prior visit to the estuary, and of course with lots of great photo opportunities.

Afterwards, we made our journey back to Marrakech. We stopped at a roadside restaurant for a quick lunch and arrived at Longue Vie for our final night. We said goodbye to our outstanding driver, Hassan, thanking him for his expert driving and help in spotting birds. We had a few hours before dinner to get packed up and ready for travel home, exchange money if needed, and rest.



We celebrated our final night with dinner at the Longue Vie, discussing our favorite moments and species throughout the trip. We also celebrated achieving our number one goal, according to Dick: finishing the journey with the same number of people that we started with. Highlights included the day spent in Marrakech's bustling city center, the serene Aurocher Lodge on the mountainside, the incredible number of target species seen during our afternoon exploring the wadi, and the beautiful rolling dunes of Erg Chebbi. We really had such a remarkable group of people on this trip - kind, patient, respectful, thoughtful, and (of course) always on time. Thank you all for your trust, your company, and your friendship. May we cross paths again on another Naturalist Journeys trip!

Thurs., Apr. 16: Departures

Time for our flock to disperse! Everyone had varied departures throughout the day, with some even staying on an additional day in search of the Barbary Partridge.

Photos: Birding in Igrane Gardens (Alex Cahill - AC), View from Lunch (Victor Porras - VP), Koutoubia Mosque (Jim Mathews - JM), Rock Sparrows (Ben Jesup - BJ) Mountain Reflection (AC), Mountain Landscape (AC), Moussier's Redstart (BJ), Atlas Wheatear (BJ), Crimson-winged Finch (BJ), Woodchat Shrike (BJ), Birding the Agricultural Fields (AC), Mansour Reservoir (AC), Ramona & Ira (AC), Dick & Jenny (AC), Selfie (JM), Little Owl (BJ), Black Kite (BJ), Black-bellied Sandgrouse (BJ), Blue Rock Thrush (BJ), Barbary Ground Squirrel (BJ), Fat Sand Rat (BJ), Moroccan Horned Viper (AC), Village (AC), Tea in the Gorge (AC), Erg Chebbi Dunes (AC), Pharaoh Eagle-Owl (BJ), Maghreb Wheatear (BJ), Trumpeter Finch (BJ), Egyptian Nightjar (BJ), Fennec Fox (BJ), Desert Landscape (AC), Tagine (AC), Berber Pizza (AC), Lunch Spread (AC), Seffa (AC), Common Ringed Plover (BJ), Cliff Views (AC), Moussier's Redstart with material (BJ), Thekla's Lark (BJ), Birdbath (BJ), Group Photo at Monkey Fingers (AC)