# A Birdwatcher's guide to



### **Foreword**

Birding Franconia sometimes seems like going birding, where no birder has gone before. Several profitable sites are underwatched and because of this also underestimated. To improve this lack of information and to make Franconia more popular among birders, I developed the website www.birdingfranconia.de a year ago. Since then I have been able to add a lot of new site descriptions and I hope that a lot more have yet to come.

This small guide is a compact summary of that featuring 10 profitable sites in sum. Some of these might already be known, but I'm quite sure that others have been unknown until now. A main resource was the internet platform <code>www.ornitho.de</code>, which substitutes <code>ebird</code> in Germany. Since the data from <code>www.ornitho.de</code> are an essential basis for scientific analyses, it is important to submit your observations there. Without these data it wouldn't have been possible to fill the "Interesting Birds" -sections.

Even more important as a reference was the book "Vögel beobachten in Süddeutschland" (Wagner and Moning, Stuttgart 2012), seven of the described sites are based on the descriptions given there. In this context I want to thank Christian Wagner not only for allowing me to use the above mentioned book as a resource but also for his valuable comments on the guide, which helped improve the concept a lot.

Since it is quite difficult to get information on where to go birdwatching in Germany for people who don't speak German, I wanted this small guide to also be available in English. I know that my English could be better and therefore I want to thank Charlotte Wasylik for proofreading.

Now I hope that this small guide is a real help for anyone coming here. Any comments and suggestions on how to improve it are welcome.

Thomas Büttel, info@birdingfranconia.de

## Birding in Franconia



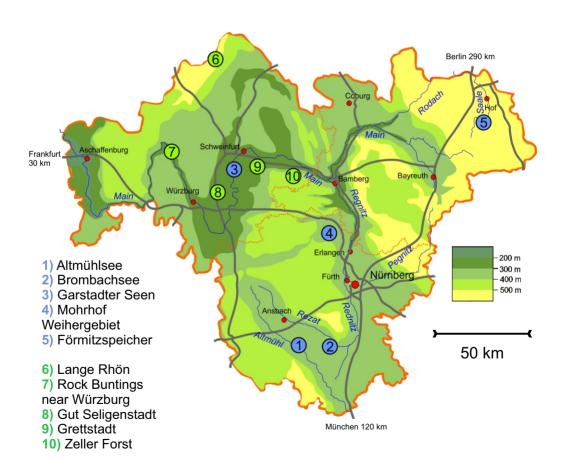
Franconia is situated in Southern Germany and is roughly said the northern part of Bavaria. It is not exactly well known for being a top birding destination, but I hope that this will change soon. Because of its location in the inland of Germany you cannot expect to find masses of resting migrants as for example in the Wadden Sea, but it is a superb destination for observing a huge range of breeders (more than 160 species).

Furthermore Franconia offers the great possibility of connecting nature with culture as no other region in Germany does. Some of the described sites are not far away from old and beautiful cities like Würzburg, Nuremberg or Bamberg, which are worth a visit as well.

Characterising the birdlife of Franconia is difficult. Especially wood- and farmland birds are well represented. As a speciality Franconia hosts both Ortolan Bunting and Rock Bunting. Therefore the best season for a visit is from April to May.

I selected these ten sites to cover as many target species as possible. Each description contains the best season for a visit, the typical species, which can be seen there, the access by car and by public transport.

If you're interested in a special target species, you'll find a checklist with all birds, that are regularly occurring in Franconia, on the last pages. The highly regarded species are each attached with a reference to the corresponding pages.



Altmühlsee





Best Season: J F M A M J J A S O N D

*Winter:* Black-throated Diver, (Tundra) Bean Goose, Greater White-fronted Goose, Goosander, Hen Harrier, Merlin, Red-breasted Merganser, Rough-legged Buzzard, Short-eared Owl, Velvet Scoter, White-tailed Eagle

**Spring / Autumn:** Black Kite, Black Stork, Black Tern, Caspian Tern, Curlew Sandpiper, Garganey, Little Egret, Little Gull, Osprey, Red-crested Pochard, Ruff, Shelduck, Shoveler, Snipe, Spotted Crake, Temminck's Stint, Whimbrel, many waders in general, rarities

Interesting Breeders: Black-necked Grebe, Black-tailed Godwit, Bluethroat, Corn Bunting, Corn Crake, Curlew, Garganey, Grasshopper Warbler, Mediterranean Gull, Penduline Tit, Red-crested Pochard, Redshank, Snipe, Teal, Water Rail, Whinchat, White-tailed Eagle

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**Introduction:** Franconia is known for being a low-moisture region. To compensate for this a couple of lakes were developed in the South of Franconia the largest being Brombachsee, Rothsee and the Altmühlsee.

In the winter a huge variety of waterfowl can normally be watched at the lake, at least until it is completely frozen (quite rare however). Apart from that the northern part is of special interest, where a big isle has been designed under ornithological consideration. Many sandbanks offer perfect conditions for resting waders, waterfowl and many more.

An important wetland area called "Wiesmet" is also located next to the lake, which has once been the most important breeding area for birds bound to wetlands in Bavaria and is still of importance. The Altmühlsee is a real hotspot with more than 300 recorded species.

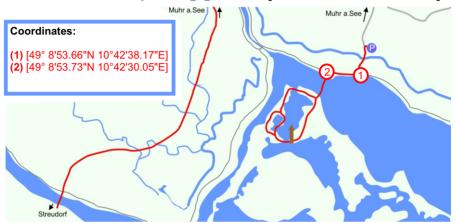


#### Access:

By Car: Take the federal street B 13 from "Ansbach" to "Weißenburg" and follow the signs towards "Gunzenhausen". You have to leave the federal street at the only exit of "Muhr a. See". Stay on the main street inside of the village till you'll come to the main square and turn left to the "Fichtenstraße". A few hundred meters after you've left the village the main parking ground will appear on your left hand side.

By Public Transport: "Muhr a. See" can be reached by train, but you will have to bring your bicycle with you. Coming from the station turn right to the "Bahnhofstraße" and follow it to the main square. Turn left to the "Fichtenstraße", after a while you will leave the village and find the parking ground for cars on your left hand side.

#### Coordinates of the parking ground: [49°08'58"N 10°42'39"E]



#### A) "Altmühlsee - Vogelinsel":

Follow the street to the dam, where you have to turn right (1). Shortly afterwards a bridge will appear on your left hand side (2), which leads you to the mentioned isle. From a small circuit walk you have the best chances for the above mentioned species, especially from the big observation tower. A visit will take you at least two hours.

The path on the dam leads around the lake and has a length of 14 kilometers. It is suitable for bicycling.

#### B) "Wiesmet":

The meadows of the "Wiesmet" can be seen well from the street from "Muhr / See" towards "Streudorf". Therefore you just have to go straight on at the main square of Muhr. There is, furthermore, a viewpoint near "Mörsach". Take therefore in "Streudorf" the street to "Mörsach" and turn afterwards right at the church in "Mörsach" in the direction of "See/Flussbad". You may park at a kiosk [49°8'57"N 10°40'45"E]. From here you have to cross the ditch of the river "Altmühl" and follow the path to the left till you arrive at the observation tower. Note that all paths into the meadows may not be used from the 1st of March to the 30th of June, only the described path is allowed to use all around the year.

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#### C) "Altmühlsee - Wald":

For observing waterfowl in the winter this is a suitable spot being best approached in afternoon. Stay in "Streudorf" on the street in the direction of "Wald". Leave the main street to the left after you've passed "Wald" and turn once again to your left behind a couple of houses. It shouldn't take long until you arrive at a parking ground [49° 7'33.24"N 10°42'59.68"E]. From the path on the dam you have a good overview of the lake.

#### D) "Altmühlsee - Schlungenhof":

Return to the B 13 from Muhr and leave it at "Muhr a. See / Fähre / Seezentrum". Going straight on you'll come directly to the parking ground [49° 7'52.90"N 10°44'10.05"E]. Here you'll sometimes find suitable resting conditions for waders and terns, though this place is best approached in the morning.







Interesting Birds: Black-throated Loon, Caspian Gull, Greater Scaup, Mew Gull, Red-breasted Merganser, Red-crested Pochard, Red-necked Grebe, Red-throated Loon, Slavonian Grebe, Smew, Velvet Scoter, Wigeon, Yellow-legged Gull

**Introduction:** The "Brombachsee" is part of the "Fränkische Seenland" like the "Altmühlsee". Since it is much bigger than the latter, it stays ice-free even longer and is therefore the perfect destination for observing any kind of waterfowl in the winter.

In the summer however it is frequented by many tourists and attracts not many birds during that season of the year.

All observation points can easily be reached and are signposted. It can easily be combined with the "Altmühlsee".

#### Access:

By Car: The perfect starting point for a tour around the lake is the small town "Pleinfeld". You'll reach it via "Hiltpoltstein" and "Heideck" when leaving the motorway A9 at the exit 56 "Hiltpoltstein".

By Public Transport: Some towns at the southern shore have a station, but you won't get to the northern shore without using a bicycle, which is not recommended in the winter. It is better and a lot more comfortable to use a car.

When all observation points are combined, the order as described here is best.



A)

Leaving "Pleinfeld" to the north in the direction of "Stirn / Brombachsee Nord" you'll come after a while to a junction. Turn here to the left towards "Allmannsdorf". Shortly afterwards you'll reach the parking ground for the "Freizeitanlage Allmannsdorf" on your left hand side. From here you have good access to the lake.

Coordinates: [49° 8'3.07"N 10°57'43.04"E]

B)

Go back to the street towards "Pleinfeld" and follow it till a signpost for the "Freizeitanlage Pleinfeld Süd" appears on your right hand side. Following these signposts you'll reach a big car park at the lake after 1,5 kilometers.

Coordinates: [49° 7'9.65"N 10°57'55.94"E]

C)

Leaving "Pleinfeld" to the west in the direction of "Rehensbühl/Ramsberg" you have to follow the street till a signpost is leading you to "Ramsberg". Crossing the rails below you'll reach the village soon afterwards. Keeping right on the "Dorfstraße" you'll come after a few hundred meters to the café "Zottmann". Here you can park and walk the last meters to the shore.

**Coordinates:** [49° 7'9.37"N 10°56'24.96"E]

D)

Going back to the centre of the village you have to turn right to the "Leitenbuckstraße", which will lead you directly to the big leisure facilities at the shore. Following this street further you'll finally come back to the undergrade crossing.

Coordinates: [49° 7'18.17"N 10°55'37.18"E]

E)

Having reached the junction described at C) again you have to turn right towards "Rehensbühl". After a few kilometers you'll reach the village, leave here the main street in the direction of "Langlau/Absberg". Afterwards the street goes parallel to the shore for a small stretch. When the street finally bends to the left and is therefore removing from the lake, a parking ground is located on your right hand side.

Coordinates: [49° 8'12.78"N 10°52'9.15"E]

F)

When you've finally reached "Absberg" look out for a sign towards "Freizeitanlage Abensberg Seespitz". Following these signs you'll come to another car park after almost 2 kilometers. From the nearby dam you have a great overview of the lake.

**Coordinates:** [49° 8'21.65"N 10°53'54.20"E]

G)

A last viewpoint is reached when going from "Absberg" in the direction of "Stockheim". After a while you'll cross the lake. Immediately afterwards a small parking ground is located on your right hand side.

**Coordinates:** [49° 9'12.01"N 10°53'4.88"E]



Best Season:	J	ш	М	Α	М	7	J	Α	S	0	Z	D	
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*Winter:* Bearded Reedling, Bittern, Goldeneye, Goosander, Great Grey Shrike, Greater White-fronted Goose

**Spring / Autumn:** Black Kite, Black Tern, Common Sandpiper, Eurasian Hobby, Garganey, Green Sandpiper, Greenshank, Lapwing, Little Gull, Osprey, Red-crested Pochard, Red-necked Grebe, Shoveler, Snipe, Teal, Wigeon, Wood Sandpiper

Interesting Breeders: Bluethroat, Collared Flycatcher, Great Reed Warbler, Grey-headed Woodpecker, Grey Heron, Purple Heron, Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, Little Bittern, Middle Spotted Woodpecker, Red-backed Shrike, Savi's Warbler, Turtle Dove, Water Rail, Wryneck, Yellow-legged Gull

Introduction: For almost 30 years the former quarry ponds located near Heidenfeld have been attracting a variegated birdlife. Especially for birds that specialize on the reeds, the "Garstädter Seen" are important. It is perhaps the only place in Bavaria to successfully observe Purple Herons. Apart from that you'll mainly find interesting waterfowl and passerines all around the year. A total of at least 50 species should not be difficult to reach from March to October. The most interesting spots can be reached on a circuit walk, for which you should consider at least two hours (three or four hours are more likely).

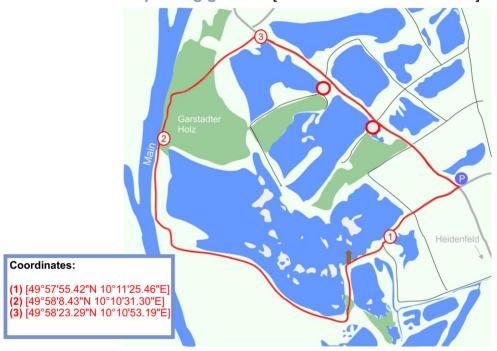


#### Access:

By Car: The nature reserve "Garstädter Seen" is located near the village of "Heidenfeld". You leave the motorway A 70 at the exit 7 "Schweinfurt - Zentrum / Schwebheim" and follow the federal road B 286 in the direction of "Schwebheim". After a few kilometers you have to turn off the federal road in the direction of "Röthlein". The village will come in sight soon afterwards. In "Röthlein" you have once again to turn left in the direction of "Heidenfeld", which is located just 3 kilometers from "Röthlein". The street however is not running through "Heidenfeld", but is leading you around the small village. Shortly after you have passed "Heidenfeld" on your left hand side turn right to the first lane (driving on it is permitted). Finally you'll come to a crossing, where also the parking ground is located.

By Public Transport: From the main station of "Schweinfurt" it is 10 kilometers to the reserve via "Bergrheinfeld" and "Grafenrheinfeld", so it is recommendable to use a bicycle. "Heidenfeld" is also reached by the bus line 8137 from "Schweinfurt". From "Heidenfeld" you have to cross the bypass-road and follow the smaller lane to a parking ground.

#### Coordinates of the parking ground: [49°58'1.96"N 10°11'37.23"E]



For exploring the nature reserve on the already mentioned circuit walk you have to take the opposite lane viewed from the parking ground. Shortly afterwards you should already be able to see the water surface on your right hand side (1). Finally you get to a barrier for cyclists, from this point it is only 100 meters to the observation tower. The latter allows you to overview the front part of the lake.

The path will run next to the shore from this point on, though most of the time you cannot look through the trees and bushes at the lake. Now and then there are however gaps in the vegetation. Especially the back part of the lake is very interesting because of the breeding Grey Herons and Cormorants.

Afterwards you're going through a little wood called "Garstadter Holz" (2), pay attention to Collared Flycatcher and Woodpeckers here. Finally you're passing another lake on your right hand side, which is normally not very interesting. Just a few hundred meters beyond that you'll come to a last crossing (3), turn here to your right. From this point on it will take you only a few more minutes to reach the parking ground (left hand side). On your way you can look at another lake on your right hand side, which has proven to be a good place for waders.

## Mohrhof -Weihergebiet





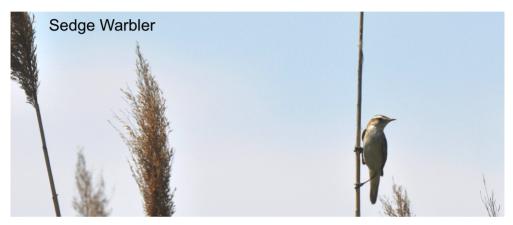
Best Season:	J F	М	Α	М	J	J	А	S	0	N	D	
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Winter: Bearded Reedling

**Spring / Autumn:** Black Kite, Black Tern, Curlew Sandpiper, Dunlin, Garganey, Mediterranean Gull, Osprey, Ruff, Snipe, Spotted Crake, Spotted Redshank, Temminck's Stint, Whiskered Tern, Waders in general

Interesting Breeders: Black-necked Grebe, Gadwall, Great Reed Warbler, Little Bittern, Purple Heron (occasionally), Red-crested Pochard, Savi's Warbler, Sedge Warbler, Water Rail, White Stork

**Introduction:** In the west of "Erlangen" and in the south of "Höchstadt/Aisch" several hundred ponds are located. They attract not only a lot of interesting breeders but also many waders and other resting birds during migration. The most interesting part of this area lies in the north of the small village "Mohrhof". Especially well represented are birds bound to reed for example Reed Warblers (all four species) and waterfowl.



#### Access:

By Car: Leave the motorway A3 at the exit 80 "Höchstadt - Ost" and follow the B 470 to "Gremsdorf". Turn in "Gremsdorf" left in the direction of "Krausenbechhofen". Staying on this street you'll get straight to "Biengarten" via "Krausenbechhofen" and "Poppenwind" which is a good starting point for a trip to the ponds.

Leave "Biengarten" in southern direction and turn left into the second path, where you can also park your car.

By Public Transport: The nearest railway station is located in "Höchstadt/Aisch". From there it is five kilometers to the site. So it is recommended to take your bicycle with you. The best starting point for a tour through the site is the small village "Biengarten", which is reached from "Höchstadt" via "Großneuses" and "Boxbrunn". "Biengarten" can also be approached by bus, for example the bus line 248 stops in "Biengarten".

Having left "Biengarten" in southern direction you have to take the second path on your left hand side.

Coordinates of the parking ground: [49°39'33.43"N 10°49'41.04"E]

The following circuit walk (length: 2,5 km) is just an example and it is likely that you can observe the species mentioned above, but also take into account to expand your tour. If you proceed as described here, it will take you between two and three hours with the observation-time being already considered.

Going straight on from the parking ground you'll find soon afterwards ponds on your left and right hand side. After one kilometer you'll meet another path, turn here left (1). For the next 400 meters there will be a big pond ("Großer Strichweiher") on your left hand side which is very good for the most species. Turn afterwards once again to your left (2) and keep going on till you meet the street from "Biengarten" (3).

Unfortunately you have to follow the street back to the parking ground for a stretch of 150 meters.

Generally the smaller trails between the ponds may not be used between the 1st March and the 31st August.



## Förmitzspeicher

## 5



Best Season:	J	F	М	Α	М	J	J	Α	S	0	Z	D	
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**Breeders:** Black Woodpecker, Grey-headed Woodpecker, Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, Little Ringed Plover, Pygmy Owl, Red-backed Shrike, Red Crossbill, Lesser Redpoll, Spotted Nutcracker, Tengmalm's Owl, White-throated Dipper

**Spring / Autumn:** Black-necked Grebe, Black Tern, Caspian Gull, Common Tern, Curlew Sandpiper, Dunlin, Garganey, Golden Plover, Great Ringed Plover, Greenshank, Little Stint, Mediterranean Gull, Northern Wheatear, Osprey, Redbreasted Merganser, Ruff, Shoveler, Wigeon

*Winter:* Black-throated Diver, Caspian Gull, Goldeneye, Goosander, Great Grey Shrike, Hen Harrier, Mew Gull, Red-throated Diver, Teal, Wigeon, Yellow-legged Gull

**Introduction:** The "Förmitzspeicher" is a reservoir near the city "Hof". While it is mainly used for water sports in the summer, it holds notable gatherings of waterfowl in the winter. Furthermore it offers regularly good resting conditions for waders and gulls on passage. So a visit is recommendable all around the year apart from the summer months.

#### Access:

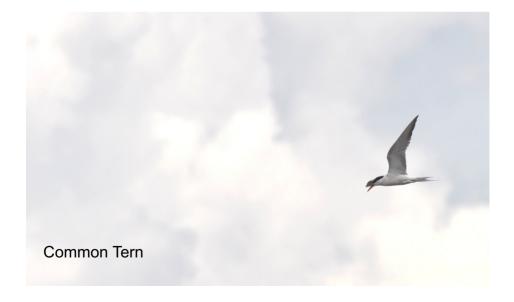
By Car: Leave the motorway A 9 either at the exit 35 "Münchberg Nord" or at the exit 36 "Münchberg Süd" and follow the street into the small town. Take afterwards the B 289 in the direction of "Weißdorf", where you will arrive shortly after that. Pay there attention to a street towards "Albertsreuth" on your right hand side. Having arrived at the latter you have to turn right in the direction of "Götzmannsgrün". Just a few hundred meters beyond the small village a parking ground is located on your right hand side.

The second parking ground can be reached from "Schwarzenbach" via "Baumersreuth" and "Völkenreuth". Generally the reservoir is signposted and the navigation isn't difficult

By Public Transport: The next station is located in Förbau, which is only 1,5 kilometers away from the lake. Because of the exemplary signposting it shouldn't be too difficult to find the lake.

#### Coordinates of the parking grounds:

- Götzmannsgrün [50°11'42.00"N 11°54'7.71"E]
- Völkenreuth [50°11'17.59"N 11°54'44.48"E]



Especially the southern part of the lake is of interest because of the huge sandbank there. However it can as well be worth to look on the fields around the lake in the hope of migrants. A circuit walk is running along the shore, only at the eastern shore you cannot look on the lake.

Pay attention to calling owls in early spring, Tengmalm's Owls are reported regularly then. In the winter a scope is indispensable, since the most waterfowl will be far away from the shore.



## 6 Lange Rhön



Best Season: J	F M	A M	J J	А	S	0	Z	D	
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Interesting Breeders: Black Grouse, Common Rosefinch, Corn Crake, Goshawk, Grashopper Warbler, Great Grey Shrike, Meadow Pipit, Quail, Raven, Red-backed Shrike, Red Crossbill, Red Kite, Snipe, Spotted Nutcracker, Stonechat, Tree Pipit, Whinchat

**Passage:** Black Kite, Eurasian Hobby, Honey Buzzard, Lesser Redpoll, Northern Wheatear, Ortolan Bunting, Ring Ouzel

Introduction: Located in the far Northwest of Franconia with hills towering almost 1000 meters above sealevel the "Rhön" borders on Hesse and Thuringia. Especially the nature reserve "Lange Rhön" is interesting for birdwatching because of the variegated and bushy landscape with the included upland moors. It hosts an unique birdlife in Central Europe, which is best observed in spring. A visit during that season is very recommendable.

#### Access:

By Car: The site can be reached from the motorway A71 in the east and from the A7 in the south. Coming from the A7 you have to leave the motorway at the exit "Bad Brückenau / Wildflecken". Follow then the signs towards "Bischofsheim a. d. Rhön" and leave afterwards the federal street in the direction of "Fladungen". After 12 kilometers you'll come to a junction on a plateau, where also the best starting point, a parking ground, is located.

The A 71 can be left at the exits 25 "Bad Neustadt a. d. Saale" and 24 "Mellrichstadt". In the first case you have to follow the federal street B 278 in the direction of "Bischofsheim a. d. Rhön", pay then attention to the details described above. In the other case you'll come via "Mellrichstadt", "Ost"- and "Nordheim v.d. Rhön" to "Fladungen". From there you have to follow the signs towards the "Schwarzes Moor", where you'll come to a junction. Turning there left you'll directly come after a few kilometers to the junction described above.

By Public Transport: Basically it's quite difficult to reach the site via public transport. The only train station of the region is located in Gersfeld in Hesse. From there you have to take the bus or your bicycle, though the latter is not fully recommendable because of the steep slopes. However the so-called "Hochrhönbus" (line 8305) stops on the plateau at the weekend from May to October. Furthermore, Fladungen is approached by the lines 8007, 8153, 8183 and 8185, though the junction is still about 14 kilometers away from there.

#### Coordinates of the parking grounds:

- Junction [50°28'7.55"N 10° 1'26.05"E]
- "Rotes Moor" [50°27'37.62"N 9°59'6.93"E]
- "Thüringer Hütte" [50°28'44.10"N 10° 4'53.74"E]
- "Schwarzes Moor" [50°31'26.19"N 10° 4'20.41"E]



Generally the nature reserve covers a huge area, which is best explored by hiking. It is definitely worth to stay for a longer time. In this case my tips can be used as a guideline. If you'd like to investigate the area yourself a mixture of moors, bushy slopes and forest will give you good chances to see the most species. The attractions and the hiking trails are all singposted and there are several hiking car parks. On p. 39 you can find an examplary hiking guide.

Some notes on observing Black Grouses: Black Grouses are very scarce in Franconia and in the most regions of Germany, they absolutely need protection. To avoid major disturbances I will not give concrete tips on where to observe Black Grouses in the nature reserve.

*I. Route:* Advisable is the path to the "Heidelstein" and the following descend to the "Rotes Moor": Starting point is the parking ground at the junction. Following the signs towards the "Heidelstein" you have to cross the street. Afterwards the path is leading softly uphill through an interesting area with several bushes, look out especially for Great Grey Shrikes and Common Rosefinches. A bit confusing is an old wooden signpost (1), which has to be ignored, keep always straight on the trail till you'll reach the top of the "Heidelstein", from where you have a great panorama and good chances for raptors. From there you can descend to the "Rotes Moor", for which you only have to follow the path into the forest and to cross afterwards a street. Along the subsequent path and from the look-out (2), which is reached after a few hundred meters, any kind of forest-bird and also in some years the Ortolan Bunting can be observed. There is also a parking ground especially for the "Rotes Moor" (see for the coordinates on p. 22), in case that you want to visit this site separately.

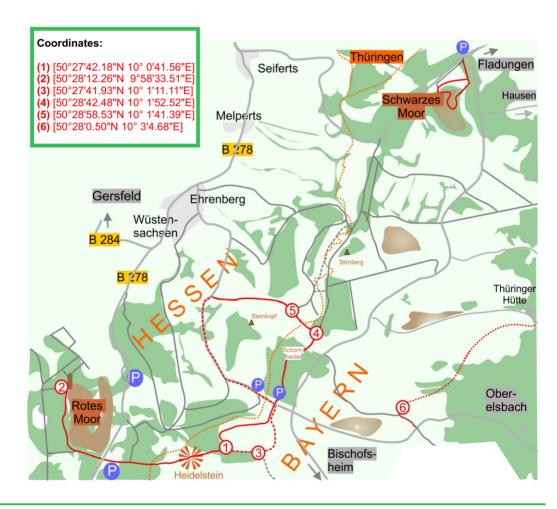
Altogether the trail has a length of 4,8 kilometers and an altitude difference of 100 meters. Concerning the way back you have to consider two hours only for the hike. On your way back you can also take a variant into account. When you reach (1) again, you may turn right and follow the trail to a monument (3), where you have to turn left. The subsequent path leads you through an interesting area with a lot of bushes back to the parking ground.

*II.* Route: Interesting as well is the surrounding area of the "Schornhecke" and of the "Steinkopf", which offers many different possible combinations. Take from the parking ground the path towards the "Stirnberg". After a while you'll leave the forest (4), pay attention to a small path on your left hand side, which leads you downhill to another major path (5). Having reached the T-junction turn once again to your left. The slope on your left hand side is of special interest, for example both Whinchats and Stonechats are breeding there. Finally you'll meet the street towards "Ehrenberg", which you have to follow uphill to the parking ground.

**III. Route:** Profitable as well is the plateau itself, which can be seen well from the street towards "Fladungen". If you want to take a closer look, you should focus on the "Hangenleite" **(6)**. A suitable parking ground is located at the "Thüringer Hütte".

*IV. Route:* Finally also the "Schwarzes Moor" is worth a visit being however more botanically interesting. It takes an exceptional position, since it is the only still expanding upland moor in Central Europe. Typical species like the Meadow Pipit should be possible.

To reach it you have to follow the street from the junction towards "Fladungen". After a few kilometers you'll come to another junction, where both parking ground and information centre are located. The moor is best explored from the sign posted nature trail.



## Rock Buntings near Würzburg



Best Season: J	F	М	Α	M	J	J	Α	S	0	Z	D
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Interesting Breeders: Jackdaw, Nightingale, Rock Bunting, Woodlark

**Introduction:** The Rock Bunting is mainly a mediterannean species, though it has spread in Germany along the valley of the Rhine. As a franconian speciality it also occurs in small numbers in the valley of the Main, just a few kilometers north of Würzburg. The best season for this highly desired species is the end of March.

The described site is just an example, another promising site is located near Veitshöchheim ("Ruine Ravensburg").

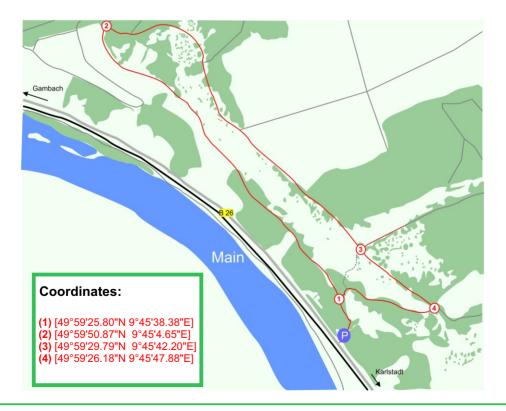
#### Access

By Car: The best starting point is the parking ground of the "Falteshütte" near Gambach. Coming from Würzburg you have to follow the federal street B 27 to Karlstadt and afterwards the B 26 in the direction of Gemünden. After you've left the small town behind look out for the "Falteshütte" on you right hand side.

By Public Transport: The next station is located in Karlstadt, from there it is only 4 kilometers to the parking ground. Apart from that you can also take the bus line 8060 from Karlstadt, which stops twice in Gambach. The most suitable bus stop is "Gambach - Rathaus". Follow then the "Bachgasse" and afterwards the "Stadtweg". Still staying on the subsequent smaller path you'll soon reach a T-junction (2), which is another good starting point for the circuit walk.

#### Coordinates of the parking ground: [49°59'23.19"N 9°45'38.16"E]

Following the small trail uphill you'll soon reach the first T-junction (1), turn here left. The subsequent part of the circuit walk is very promising for Rock Buntings. After a while another T-junction (2) comes in sight at the edge of the forest, take here the right path in the direction of the "Edelweiß" (the left path would lead you to Gambach). At the summit cross of the "Edelweiß" (3) you can make a detour by turning left, where you have good chances to observe Woodlarks. Back on the main trail you have to follow it for 200 meters and turn then right (4). Shortly afterwards you'll find yourself at the first T-junction (1).



## 8 Gut Seligenstadt



Best Season: J	F	M A	М	J	J	Α	S	0	N	D
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Interesting Breeders: Grey Partridge, Montagu's Harrier, Skylark

**Passage:** Dotterel, Marsh Harrier, Montagu's Harrier, Northern Wheatear, Redthroated Pipit, Tawny Pipit, Whinchat

*Introduction:* The estate (dt. "Gut") of Seligenstadt is located near the city of Würzburg. Being surrounded by almost treeless hills and huge fields it is one of the most important breeding areas for Montagu's Harriers in Bavaria. However you should focus on passage, since then several rare species can be seen resting on the fields near the estate. The site has become especially well known, since it is from the end of August to mid-September the most reliable place in Bavaria for Dotterels.

#### Access:

*By Car:* Leaving the motorway A 3 at the exit 72 "Rottendorf" you have to follow at first the federal street B 8 towards "Würzburg" and turn shortly afterwards right on the B 22 in the direction of "Dettelbach". Stay on the street till you reach the turn-off towards "Bibergau" and turn here left.

After a while you'll come to the small village of Euerfeld, turn here left towards "Seligenstadt / Prosselsheim" and stay on the street till you reach the estate after 2 kilometers.

By Public Transport: The nearby village "Seligenstadt" has a station, which can be approached from Würzburg. Follow the street from the station in the direction of "Euerfeld" till you reach the estate. It is recommended to bring your bicycle with you because of the distances (the way there and back has a length of 5 kilometers).

#### **Coordinates of the estate:** [49°50'33.19"N 10° 6'19.38"E]

Coming from "Euerfeld" you have to turn right immediately after reaching the estate. Stay on the lane till you reach a junction (1), where also a windbreak hedge should be on your right hand side. You'll get a good overview from the top of a nearby hill (2), for which you only have to follow the left path at the junction.

If you're coming from the station at "Seligenstadt" you have to go through the estate at first and turn then left.

You'll need much patience to successfully observe Dotterels, since it is quite difficult to spot them on the fields, although they're not shy. The prefer shortly grubbed fields, which are not showing towards North-East. Because this is not always the case, it is recommended to search also on the fields nearby. Of course this counts also for the other species as well.

A spotting scope is indispensable.



#### Coordinates:

**(1)** [49°50'33.18"N 10° 7'13.45"E] **(2)** [49°51'0.80"N 10° 7'1.33"E]

## 9 Grettstadt



Best Season: J	F M	A M	<b>J</b> J	А	S	0	N	D	
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Interesting Breeders: Black Woodpecker, Collared Flycatcher, Middle Spotted Woodpecker, Ortolan Bunting, Quail, Red-backed Shrike, Turtle Dove, Wryneck

Introduction: Franconia hosts an isolated population of Ortolan Buntings, the only one in Southern Germany. The attractive Bunting can only be found at places with diversified vegetation. This diversity is however threatened by the intensive agriculture. That's the reason why the population here in Franconia is declining. Between "Grettstadt" and "Sulzheim" however there are still good chances to see this species.

#### Access:

By Car: Between "Grettstadt" and "Sulzheim" you'll find one of the last reliable places for observing Ortolan Buntings in Franconia. The best time of day is around the sunrise and around the sunset. Leave the motorway A 70 at the exit 8 "Gochsheim" and follow the street in the direction of "Gochsheim", which you'll reach shortly afterwards

From this point on there will be signs leading you to "Grettstadt", you'll arrive after a few kilometers. Now you only have to stay on the main street. After you've passed "Grettstadt" the parking ground is only a few more kilometers to go. At first you'll pass a wood on your right, afterwards a wood on your left. Turn right to the second lane after the last wood, where also a couple of trees are standing. Additionally there is a small blue sign indicating the parking ground.

By Public Transport: There is no station near the site, however you can go by bicycle from the main station of "Schweinfurt" via "Gochsheim". The distance is about 13 kilometers. The villages of "Grettstadt" and "Sulzheim" (the village south of the site) are both approached by the bus line 8160, which starts in "Schweinfurt". For closer navigation to the site please pay attention to the clues given in the section Access - By Car.

#### Coordinates of the parking ground: [49°57'20.78"N 10°19'23.52"E]



Near the parking ground however you won't yet be able to observe Ortolan Buntings. For reaching the first territories you have to walk a bit at first. Follow the main trail for a few hundred meters. On your left hand side you can see a mixed area with trees, hedges and bushes being a reliable place for Red-backed Shrike, Turtle Dove and Wryneck. Sometimes also Quails are calling from the fields around.

Finally you'll come to a very long row of trees, which is running almost parallel to the street. Immediately behind this row you have to turn right (1) and follow a smaller path along the trees. After almost two kilometers the path will end in another trail (2). Here you should be able to hear the melancholical song of the Ortolan Bunting. Quite reliable for this species as well is also the edge of the near forest, where furthermore Collared Flycatcher and Middle Spotted Woodpecker can be encountered. Turn to your right and shortly afterwards left till you reach the edge of the forest (3). Now you can walk along the forest and turn to your left after having passed it. Turn at the next left and follow the path till you reach the row of trees (2), where you have started the small circuit walk.

For reaching the first territories of Ortolan Buntings you have to walk at least 3 kilometers from the parking ground. If you expand your walk to the forest, you will have yet to spend another hour.



## 10 Zeller Forst



Best Season: J	F M	A M	J	J	Α	S	0	N	D	
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Interesting Breeders: Black Woodpecker, Collared Flycatcher, Firecrest, Hawfinch, Middle Spotted Woodpecker, Pied Flycatcher, Red-breasted Flycatcher, Wood Warbler

**Introduction:** The ancient beeches of the "Steigerwald" attract a huge variety of woodland birds. It is currently the only place in Germany to observe all three Ficedula species together. Apart from the Zeller Forst, you should also take into account to visit the forest around "Ebrach" and "Fabrikschleichach".

#### Access:

By Car: Leave the motorway A 70 at the exit 11 "Knetzgau" and follow the street in the direction of "Zell a. Ebersberg", which you will reach after one kilometer. Stay in Zell in the direction of "Oberschleichach" and turn right into the last street ("Böhnleinstraße") of the small village. After a few hundred meters you'll directly come to a parking ground.

By Public Transport: The next railway station is located in Haßfurt, from there you have to take a bicycle or the bus. In the first case you'll come via Knetzgau after 10 kilometers to Zell.

Apart from that you can also reach Zell with the bus line 8178 from Haßfurt. Pay afterwards attention to the details which you'll find at *Access - By Car*.

#### Coordinates of the parking ground: [49°57'36.12"N 10°33'48.75"E]

Viewed from the parking ground you have to take the left path, which soon leads you into the wood. Shortly afterwards you're already passing suitable habitats for flycatchers (1). After about one kilometer you'll reach a crossing (2). Either you turn right at that point and follow the small trail downhill back to the parking ground (red-dotted path) or you can expand your hike from here.

In the first case the circuit walk has a length of 2.2 kilometers. A hiking map for the Steigerwald is recommendable for better orientation.

#### Coordinates:

(1) [49°57'25.65"N 10°33'51.42"E] (2) [49°57'10.98"N 10°33'49.59"E]



## Checklist

Below you'll find a checklist of all birds which can regularly be found in Franconia. Furthermore I've added for some species the corresponding page numbers.

#### Some Notes on the abbreviations:

**B** = regular and widespread breeder; **rb** = local breeder; **b** = scarce or irregular breeder; **Z** = regular to be seen on passage; **z** = irregularly appearing on passage; **W** = common winter guest; **w** = scarce winter guest

B, Z, W Z, W B Z, W B, Z, W Z, W b, Z b B b, Z, w Z, W b, Z, W	p.5-8
B, Z, W	
b, Z, W	p. 5 - 17
Z	·
B, Z, W	
B, Z, W	
z, w	p. 9 - 11
z, w	
z, w	p. 5 - 11
z, w	
Z, W	
z, w	
b, Z, W	
Z, W	p. 5 - 11, 18 - 20
b, z	p. 21 - 24, 29 - 31
В	
b	
rb	p. 21 - 24
b	
B, Z, W	
Z, W	p. 9 - 11
	Z, W B Z, W B, Z, W Z, W b, Z, W b, Z, W b, Z, W b, Z, W b, Z, W b, Z, W z, W z, w z, w z, w z, w z, w z, w z, w z, w

Olassanian Onaka (Dadiaana assitua)		0 44
Slavonian Grebe (Podiceps auritus)	Z, W	p. 9 - 11
Black-necked Grebe (Podiceps nigricollis)	b, Z, W	p. 5 - 8, 15 - 20
Red-throated Diver (Gavia stellata)	Z, W	p. 9 - 11, 18 - 20
Black-throated Diver (Gavia arctica)	Z, w	p. 5 - 11, 18 - 20
Cormorant (Phalacrocrax carbo)	B, Z, W	
Bittern (Botaurus stellaris)	b, z, w	p. 12 - 14
Little Bittern (Ixobrychus minutus)	rb, z	p. 12 - 17
Night Heron (Nycticorax nycticorax)	b, z	
Great Egret (Casmerodius albus)	Z, W	
Grey Heron ( <i>Ardea cinerea</i> )	B, Z, W	
Purple Heron (Ardea purpurea)	rb, z	p. 12 - 17
Little Egret (Egretta garzetta)	Z	
Black Stork (Ciconia nigra)	b, z	
White Stork (Ciconia ciconia)	B, Z, w	
Osprey (Pandion haliaetus)	Z	
Honey Buzzard (Pernis apivorus)	B, Z	
Hen Harrier (Circus cyaneus)	Z, W	p. 5 - 8
Montagu's Harrier (Circus pygargus)	rb, z	p. 27 - 28
Marsh Harrier (Circus aeruginosus)	rb, Z	p. 12 - 17
Goshawk (Accipiter gentilis)	B, Z, W	
Sparrowhawk (Accipiter nisus)	B, Z, W	
Red Kite (Milvus milvus)	B, Z, w	p. 21 - 24
Black Kite (Milvus migrans)	B, Z	•
White-tailed Eagle (Haliaeetus albicilla)	rb, z, w	p. 5 - 8
Common Buzzard (Buteo buteo)	B, Z, W	•
Rough-legged Buzzard (Buteo lagopus)	z, w	p. 5 - 8
Merlin (Falco columbarius)	z, w	p. 5 - 8
Red-footed Falcon (Falco vespertinus)	Z	
Eurasian Hobby (Falco subbuteo)	B, Z	
Peregrine Falcon (Falco peregrinus)	b, Z, W	
Kestrel (Falco tinnunculus)	B, Z, W	
Common Crane (Grus grus)	Z	
Water Rail (Rallus aquaticus)	B, Z, W	
Corn Crake (Crex crex)	b, z	p. 5 - 8, 21 - 24
Spotted Crake (Porzana porzana)	b, z	p. 5 - 8, 15 - 17
Moorhen ( <i>Gallinula chloropus</i> )	B, Z, W	
Coot ( <i>Fulica atra</i> )	B, Z, W	
Grey Plover (Pluvialis squatorola)	Z	p. 5 - 8, 18 - 20
Golden Plover (Pluvialis apricaria)	Z	p. 5 - 8, 18 - 20
Lapwing (Vanellus vanellus)	b, Z, w	
Little Ringed Plover (Charadrius dubius)	b, Z	
Great Ringed Plover (Charadrius hiaticula)	Z	
Dotterel (Charadrius morinellus)	Z	p. 27 - 28
Whimbrel (Numenius phaeopus)	Z	p. 5 - 8, 18 - 20
Curlew (Numenius arquata)	rb, Z	p. 5 - 8
Black-tailed Godwit (Limosa limosa)	rb, Z	p. 5 - 8
Bar-tailed Godwit (Limosa lapponica)	Z	p. 5 - 8
Woodcock (Scolopax rustica)	b, z, w	
Jack Snipe (Lymnocryptes minimus)	z, w	
Common Snipe (Gallinago gallinago)	b, Z, w	p. 5 - 8, 21 - 24

Common Sandpiper (Actitis hypoleucos) Spotted Redshank (Tringa erythropus) Common Redshank (Tringa totanus) Greenshank (Tringa nebularia) Green Sandpiper (Tringa ochropus) Wood Sandpiper (Tringa glareola)	b, Z Z rb, Z Z Z Z Z	p. 5 - 8
Ruff ( <i>Philomachus pugnax</i> ) Turnstone ( <i>Arenaria interpres</i> ) Red Knot ( <i>Calidris canutus</i> ) Sanderling ( <i>Calidris alba</i> )	Z Z Z Z	p. 5 - 8, 18 - 20 p. 5 - 8
Little Stint (Calidris minuta) Temminck's Stint (Calidris temminckii) Dunlin (Calidris alpina)	Z Z Z Z	p. 5 - 8, 15 - 20 p. 5 - 8, 15 - 20
Curlew Sandpiper ( <i>Calidris ferruginea</i> ) Little Gull ( <i>Hydrocoloeus minutus</i> ) Black headed Gull ( <i>Larus ridibundus</i> ) Mew Gull ( <i>Larus canus</i> )	Z Z, w B, Z, W Z, W	p. 5 - 8, 15 - 20
Mediterranean Gull ( <i>Larus melanocephalus</i> ) Herring Gull ( <i>Larus argentatus</i> ) Yellow legged Gull ( <i>Larus michahellis</i> )	rb, Z z, w b, Z, W	p. 5 - 8, 15 - 20
Caspian Gull ( <i>Larus cachinanns</i> ) Lesser Black backed Gull ( <i>Larus fuscus</i> )	Z, W z, w	p. 9 -11, 18 - 20
Caspian Tern ( <i>Hydropogne caspia</i> ) Whiskered Tern ( <i>Chlidonias hybrida</i> ) White-winged Tern ( <i>Chlidonias leucoptera</i> )	z z z z Z	p. 5 - 8 p. 5 - 8, 15 - 17 p. 5 - 8, 15 - 17
Black Tern (Chlidonias niger) Common Tern (Sterna hirundo) Stock Dove (Columba oenas) Wood Pigeon (Columba palumbus) Collared Dove (Streptoptelia decaocto)	b, Z B, Z B, Z, W B	p. 5 - 8, 18 - 20
Turtle Dove (Streptoptelia turtur) Cuckoo (Cuculus canorus) Barn Owl (Tyto alba)	b, Z B, Z B	p. 12 - 14, 29 - 31
Tengmalm's Owl (Aegolius funereus) Pygmy Owl (Glauceridium passerinum)	rb rb	p. 18 - 20 p. 18 - 20
Little Owl (Athene noctua) Long-eared Owl (Asio otus) Short-eared Owl (Asio flammeus) European Eagle Owl (Bubo bubo) Tawny Owl (Strix aluco) Nightjar (Caprimulgus europaeus) Common Swift (Apus apus) Kingfisher (Alcedo atthis) Bee-eater (Merops apiaster)	rb b z, w rb B b, z B, Z B, Z, W b, Z	p. 18 - 20
Hoopoe ( <i>Upupa epops</i> ) Wryneck ( <i>Jynx torquilla</i> ) Grey headed Woodpecker ( <i>Picus canus</i> ) Green Woodpecker ( <i>Picus viridis</i> )	b, z B, Z B B	p. 12 - 14, 29 - 31 p. 12 - 14, 18 - 20

Black Woodpecker (Dryocopus martius)	В	p. 18 - 20, 29 - 33
Gr. Spotted Woodpecker (Dendrocopos major)	В	
M. Spotted Woodpecker (Dendrocopos medius)	В	p. 12 - 14, 29 - 31
L. Spotted Woodpecker (Dendrocopos minor)	В	p. 12 - 14, 18 - 20
Golden Oriole (Oriolus oriolus)	B, Z	
Red backed Shrike (Lanius collurio)	B, Z	p. 12 - 14, 29 - 31
Great Grey Shrike (Lanius excubitor)	b, Z, w	p. 21 - 24
Magpie ( <i>Pica pica</i> )	В	
Jay (Garrulus glandarius)	В	
Spotted Nutcracker (Nucifraga caryocatactes)	rb, z, w	p. 18 - 24
Jackdaw (Corvus monedula)	B, Z, W	
Carrion Crow (Corvus corone)	B, Z, W	
Rook (Corvus frugilegus)	rb, Z, W	
Common Raven (Corvus corax)	b, Z, w	
Penduline Tit (Remiz pendulinus)	b, Z	p. 5 - 8
Blue Tit (Cyanistes caeruleus)	B, Z, W	
Great Tit (Parus major)	B, Z, W	
Coal Tit (Periparus ater)	B, Z, W	
Crested Tit (Lophophanes cristatus)	B, Z, W	
Marsh Tit (Poecile palustris)	B, Z, W	
Willow Tit (Poecile montanus)	B, Z, W	
Crested Lark (Galerida cristata)	rb	
Skylark ( <i>Alauda arvensis</i> )	B, Z	
Woodlark (Lullula arborea)	b, Z	p. 25 - 26
Sand Martin ( <i>Riparia riparia</i> )	B, Z	
House Martin (Delichon urbicum)	B, Z	
Barn Swallow ( <i>Hirundo rustica</i> )	B, Z	
Bearded Reedling (Panurus biarmicus)	b, z, w	p. 12 - 17
Long-tailed Tit (Aegithalos caudatus)	B, Z, W	
Wood Warbler (Phylloscopus sibilatrix)	B, Z	p. 32 - 33
Willow Warbler (Phylloscopus trochilus)	B, Z	
Chiffchaff (Phylloscopus collybita)	B, Z, w	
Grasshopper Warbler (Locustella naevia)	B, Z	
Savi's Warbler (Locustella luscinioides)	rb, z	p. 12 - 17
River Warbler (Locustella fluviatilis)	b, z	
Sedge Warbler (Acrocephalus schoenobaenus)	b, z	p. 15 - 17
Great Reed Warbler (Acrocephalus arundinaceus)	b, z	p. 12 - 17
Marsh Warbler (Acrocephalus palustris)	B, Z	
Reed Warbler (Acrocephalus scirpaceus)	B, Z	
Icterine Warbler (Hippolais icterina)	B, Z	
Blackcap (Sylvia atricapilla)	B, Z	
Garden Warbler (Sylvia borin)	B, Z	
Common Whitethroat (Sylvia communis)	B, Z	
Lesser Whitethroat (Sylvia curruca)	B, Z	
Goldencrest (Regulus regulus)	B, Z, W	
Firecrest (Regulus ignicapilla)	B, Z, w	
Bohemian Waxwing (Bombycilla garrulus)	z, w	
Nuthatch (Sitta europaea)	В	

Chart to ad Transara man (Carthia humahuda at da)	D 7 \\\	
Short-toed Treecreeper (Certhia brachydactyla)	B, Z, W	
Eurasian Treecreeper (Certhia familiaris)	B, Z, W	
Wren (Troglodytes troglodytes)	B, Z, W	
Starling (Sturnus vulgaris)	B, Z, w	
White-throated Dipper (Cinclus cinclus)	В	p. 18 - 20
Mistle Thrush (Turdus viscivorus)	B, Z, W	
Ring Ouzel (Turdus torquatus)	Z	p. 21 - 24
Blackbird (Turdus merula)	B, Z, W	
Fieldfare (Turdus pilaris)	B, Z, W	
Song Thrush (Turdus philomelos)	B, Z	
Redwing (Turdus iliacus)	Z, w	
Spotted Flycatcher (Muscicapa striata)	B, Z	
Red-breasted Flycatcher (Ficedula parva)	rb, z	p. 32 - 33
Collared Flycatcher (Ficedula hypoleuca)	rb, z	p. 12 - 4, 29 - 33
Pied Flycatcher (Ficedula albicollis)	B, Z	p. 32 - 33
Whinchat (Saxicola rubetra)	rb, Z	
Stonechat (Saxicola rubicola)	rb, Z	
Robin ( <i>Erithacus rubecula</i> )	B, Z, W	
Nightingale (Luscinia megarhynchos)	B, Z	
Bluethroat (Luscinia svecica)	rb, Z	p. 5 - 8, 12 - 17
Black Redstart (Phoenicurus ochruros)	B, Z, w	
Redstart (Phoenicurus phoenicurus)	B, Z	
Northern Wheatear (Oenanthe oenanthe)	b, Z	p. 21 - 24, 27 - 28
Dunnock (Prunella modularis)	B, Z, W	
House Sparrow (Passer domesticus)	В	
Tree Sparrow (Passer montanus)	B, Z, W	
Tawny Pipit (Anthus campestris)	Z	p. 27 - 28
Red-throated Pipit (Anthus cervinus)	Z	p. 27 - 28
Tree Pipit (Anthus trivialis)	B, Z	·
Meadow Pipit (Anthus pratensis)	b, Z, w	
Water Pipit (Anthus spinoletta)	Z, W	
Grey Wagtail (Motacilla cinerea)	B, Z, W	
Blue-headed Wagtail (Motacilla flava)	B, Z	
White Wagtail (Motacilla alba)	B, Z, W	
Chaffinch (Fringilla coelebs)	B, Z, W	
Brambling (Fringilla montifringilla)	z, w	
Bullfinch ( <i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i> )	B, Z, W	
Hawfinch (Coccothraustes coccothraustes)	B, Z, W	
Serin (Serinus serinus)	B, Z, w	
Red Crossbill (Loxia curvirostra)	B, Z, W	
Green Finch (Carduelis chloris)	B, Z, W	
Golden Finch (Carduelis carduelis)	B, Z, W	
Siskin (Carduelis spinus)	B, Z, W	
Linnet (Carduelis cannabina)	B, Z, W	
Lesser Redpoll (Carduelis flammea)	b, Z, W	p. 18 - 20
Corn Bunting (Emberiza calandra)	B, Z, W	p. 5 - 8
Yellowhammer ( <i>Emberiza citrinella</i> )	B, Z, W	•
Rock Bunting (Emberiza cia)	rb, z	p. 25 - 26
Ortolan Bunting (Emberiza hortulana)	rb, Z	p. 29 - 31
Reed Bunting (Emberiza schoeniclus)	B, Z, w	
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