Eagle-Eye Tours

Morocco Trip Report (April 8 - 20, 2026)

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Our April Morocco tour delivered superb birding across the High Atlas, rocky plateaus, desert dunes and Atlantic wetlands. Highlights included Egyptian Nightjar, Northern Bald Ibis, Pharaoh Eagle-Owl, Thick-billed Lark, Desert Sparrow, Crimson-winged Finch and a rich supporting cast of migrants. Excellent scenery, varied habitats and a plethora of delicious local food made for a memorable spring migration adventure for all.

Day 1 — Arrival in Marrakesh (8 April)

Guests arrived throughout the afternoon and settled into our hotel on the edge of the city. A short walk around the grounds produced early trip species including Common Bulbul, African Chaffinch and House Bunting. After a welcome briefing, we enjoyed our first Moroccan dinner and prepared for the dramatic High Atlas the following morning.

Common Bulbul © Nacho Barrionuevo

Day 2 — High Atlas: Oukaimeden Plateau

We travelled up to the alpine terrain of Oukaimeden, where we enjoyed excellent views of Red-billed and Alpine Choughs, Horned Lark, Moussier's Redstart, Atlas Wheatear and Crimson-winged Finch. The diminutive Narcissus bulbocodium peppered grassy areas, while snow lingered on the mountainsides. On the way down through the Ourika Valley, we stopped for Barbary Ground Squirrel and early migrants in the orchards.

Snowy Atlas Cedar forest © Nacho Barrionuevo

Narcissus bulbocodium © Ed Hutchings

Crimson-winged Finches sat in the van © Ed Hutchings

Yellow-billed Chough © Nacho Barrionuevo

Atlas Wheatear © Nacho Barrionuevo

Moussier's Redstart © Nacho Barrionuevo

Day 3 — Tizi n’Tichka Pass to Ait Ben Haddou

We climbed the famous pass, stopping at Escale Forest for Coal Tit and a wonderful assemblage of flora. Booted Eagle and Black Wheatear appeared along the roadsides. After crossing the pass, we descended into the Telouet Valley and continued to Ait Ben Haddou, where White-crowned Wheatear performed well around the infamous kasbah.

Ait Ben Haddou © Ed Hutchings

Day 4 — Valley of the Roses & Tagdilt Track

We travelled east through the Valley of the Roses before reaching the rocky hamada of the “Tagdilt Track”. The landfill area was productive, giving us Temminck’s Lark, Red-rumped Wheatear and several migrant Western Yellow Wagtails, while Fat Sand Rats popped up. A brief sandstorm added atmosphere without hindering birding.

Day 5 — Tagdilt & Dades Gorges

An early return to Tagdilt produced Desert Wheatear and more larks. At nearby cliffs, local knowledge paid off with views of Pharaoh Eagle-Owl, Lanner Falcon and the scarce Maghreb Wheatear, not to mention a close encounter with a Horned Viper which could make knees wobble. In the afternoon we explored the dramatic Dades Gorges, where Blue Rock Thrush led us on a merry dance around the red sandstone formations.

Pharaoh Eagle Owl © Marilyn Buhler

Saharan Horned Viper © Nacho Barrionuevo

Dades Gorges © Nacho Barrionuevo

Tristram's Warbler © Nacho Barrionuevo

Day 6 — Goulmima, Erfoud & Arrival in Merzouga

We targeted Streaked Scrub Warbler near Goulmima and eventually secured views of this elusive species. Near Erfoud we explored khettara irrigation systems, finding migrant warblers and Brown-necked Raven. By late afternoon we reached Merzouga, where the dunes glowed orange at sunset. Migrant passerines were in abundance around the ringing station behind the hotel. Yellow Cistanche rose like tower blocks from the dunes, while Green Toads hopped about the hotel at night. A magical place.

Brown-necked Raven © Nacho-Barrionuevo

Green Toad © Ed Hutchings

Yellow Cistanche © Ed Hutchings

Day 7 — Sahara 4x4 Excursion

A superb day in the Erg Chebbi dunes. At a remote waterhole we watched Spotted and Crowned Sandgrouse arriving cautiously to drink. We located Desert Sparrow at a desert camp, an unexpected Fennec Fox in the open and Bar-tailed Lark in scattered vegetation. A local guide led us to a roosting Egyptian Nightjar, a major highlight.

Sand dune © Marilyn Buhler

Desert Sparrow © Nacho-Barrionuevo

Crowned Sandgrouse © Nacho-Barrionuevo

Tent camp in the dunes © Nacho barrionuevo

Day 8 — Rissani & Todra Gorge.

We explored Rissani's souk and surrounding palm forest, finding Blue-cheeked Bee-eater and Crested Lark. Rissani was the last stop on the great caravan route and the cultural atmosphere here made a memorable contrast to the desert. A gentle afternoon walk through the Todra Gorge produced Eurasian Crag Martin and Grey Wagtail.

Blue-cheeked Bee-Eater © Nacho-Barrionuevo

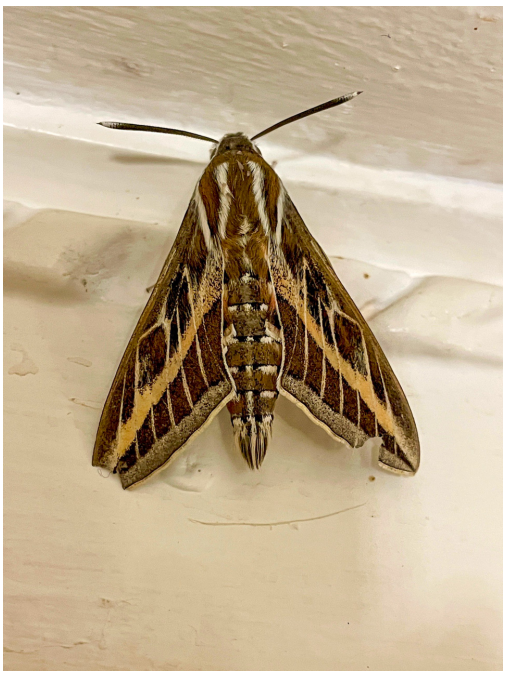
Group photo © Ed Hutchings

Rissani souk scene © Ed Hutchings

Day 9 — Todra Gorge to Taroudant

A productive stop at the bridge at Tiouiyine produced Bonelli’s Eagle as soon as we had left the vehicle, as well as Cetti’s Warbler, Common Nightingale and Berber Toad. The long drive west that followed passed through beautiful saffron country near Taliouine.

Bonelli's Eagle © Nacho Barrionuevo



Striped Hawk-moth © Ed Hutchings

Day 10 — Agadir & Tamri: Northern Bald Ibis

We crossed the Argan Biosphere Reserve and reached Tamri, where we enjoyed excellent views of Northern Bald Ibis, one of the world's rarest birds. Audouin's Gull was also noted, while Margarita's Fringe-fingered Lizard darted amongst the sandy flora.

Northern Bald Ibis © Nacho Barrionuevo

Euphorbia officinarum © Ed Hutchings

The group seawatching at Cap Ghir © Nacho Barrionuevo

Day 11 — Souss Massa National Park

A full day in varied coastal habitats produced Marbled Duck, Red-necked Nightjar, Brown-throated Martin and a wide range of shorebirds. The ibis colony was active, offering further views. Golden Fringe-fingered Lizard replaced its northerly cousin here.

Red-necked Nightjar © Nacho Barrionuevo

Great Gray Shrike (Sahara subspecies) © Nacho Barrionuevo

Day 12 — Souss Estuary & Return to Marrakesh

Our final birding day delivered Greater Flamingo, Kentish Plover, White Stork, Eurasian Spoonbill, Western Osprey and numerous migrant shorebirds. A fascinating visit to an Argan co-operative preceded the return to our Marrakesh hotel for our final evening.

Rufous-tailed Scrub-Robins © Nacho Barrionuevo

Maghreb Magpies © Marilyn Buhler

Day 13 — Departure

Departures throughout the day concluded a rewarding spring tour across Morocco’s most iconic birding regions. Despite the severe heat, we felt we’d seen much to enjoy.