

Trip report from Madeira: July 2-16 2003

by Göran and Edvin Hansson

We travelled on a charter trip with the agency Fritidsresor. We went in July, which is a good period for breeding seabirds. We had also chosen a period when there would be a full moon- we hoped that would be useful for night watching in breeding areas. This turned out to be true!

We had arranged through Fritidsresor a rental car, a Renault Clio, for the whole trip. A small car is useful on many narrow mountain and coastal roads but there is also a good and fast road system to most areas.

We had read much about mad drivers, but it turned out to be very exaggerated. But the Madeirans' way of parking their cars is something special!

The weather at this time of year is usually warm (25-30°C) and sunny. Often afternoon clouds in the Funchal area and low clouds with drizzle in the mountains. There are usually moderate trade winds from north-east.

Day by day notes

July 2

We flew from Stockholm, Arlanda at 08 hours, arrived in Funchal 12:30. A good start, 2 pallid swifts among the plain swifts at the airport! Transport to hotel Casa Branca in the Lido area where we got our rental car.

We went to the harbour marina to talk with people from Ventura do Mar about various boat trips we were planning. Then we walked out to the end of the pier and, to our surprise, there were 4-5 roseate terns! We had very close, and educating, views (and calls!) of roseate terns together with common terns. Surprisingly much red on the bills at this time of the year- you have to check all the characters carefully. Later we found out that roseate terns are often seen in this area during summertime. A few pairs probably breed in the harbour area and at Ponta Cruz.

July 3

In the morning we drove to Machico to look for waders. There were no waders, maybe not surprising at this time of the year. However, there were 3-4 common waxbills in the vegetation in the river bed. This introduced bird is usually found right here.

We continued to the eastern peninsula Ponta Sao Laurencu, a beautiful place with semi-desert vegetation. A lot of Berthelot's pipits, a few rock sparrows and one pallid swift together with the plain ones.

In the evening we did some seawatching at Ponta Cruz. We saw 400 Cory's shearwaters, 85 Bulwer's petrels, 1 little shearwater, 4 Manx shearwaters and 2 roseate terns. After dark we saw a pair of barn owls in the area at close range in the telescope and illuminated with a maglite torch. Beautiful!

July 4

In the early morning we drove to Balcoes in the central mountains covered with laurel forest. The first long-toed pigeons were heard while walking towards the view balcony, where we saw another one. We saw and heard some firecrests, blackcaps, robins and blackbirds as well, but the number of forest species in Madeira is very low!

We drove along a small road leading to the power station Faja de Nogueira in the laurel forest below Balcoes. Another 7-8 long-toed pigeons were seen here.

Then we drove along very narrow and winding roads, often just a ledge on the cliff face, on the north coast to Porto Moniz, where we stayed for one night in the hotel Recidencial Salgueiro.

In the evening we seawatched for 3.5 hours, and that gave us at least 1200 Cory's shearwaters and 86 Manx shearwaters. Then we enjoyed the noise from a local festival, just outside our hotel-room during the night...

July 5

A two hours morning watch gave only moderate numbers of Cory's, 9 Manx shearwaters and 1 Bulwer's. The highlight was the observation of 4 sperm whales, although far out at sea. We saw the blows directed forwards and the big bodies and tails in the air ("fluke up") before diving. Fantastic animals.

We drove on to Ponta do Pargo, the very western point of Madeira. Not good for seawatching, but obviously a nice place for Madeiran rarities! We had a short-toed lark coming in over land from the sea. When the rest of our family was here (unfortunately we couldn't go on the same trip), they saw 1 turtle dove and 2 little swifts! In the cultivated fields we heard 6 quail playing and we saw some rock sparrows in the same area as well.

We continued to the high plateau of Paul de Serra, had a walk on the steppe-like plain with large areas of ferns. Another 2 quail were playing and a group of 70 linnets was seen well. In this area "the ladies" had seen a roller on the telephone wires one week ago, but unfortunately it was gone.

A short evening seawatch at Lido gave us about 500 Cory's and 10 Bulwer's.

July 6

The morning was spent seawatching at Ponta Cruz. There was a stiff north-east wind and a good movement of seabirds. At 07:00 we counted 150 Cory's/minute! It decreased to 70/min at 07:30 and 40/min at 08:00. In total about 5700 Cory's in 1,5 hours, and also 15 Bulwer's and 5 Manx shearwaters.

After Ponta Cruz we went westwards to Lugar de Baixo. A previous report have mentioned a good wader lagoon there, but now it turned out there is no lagoon anymore, just construction work.

After a visit to the Botanical Garden, with lots of tame robins and firecrests, we went to the harbour. 2 roseate terns were still there and the only turnstone of the trip was seen as well (turnstones are common in winter).

We had an appointment with skipper Carlos at 18:00 to take us out in his boat to land on the outer islands of Ponta Sao Laurencu. We were a bit worried- there had been a stiff wind all day and whitecaps all over the sea- would the trip be cancelled? We hoped Carlos had a big boat.

He had not! Carlos was worried too- there would be rough seas out there and he had a very small and quite open speed-boat. "It's all right with me- but are you really sure you want to go?". Well, as long as it was safe with the boat we were. "All right" said Carlos with a smile, pulled on his wetsuit and started the engines.

There was no birdwatching on the way out. It was a matter of holding on very tightly and try to counterbalance as the boat smashed violently against the waves. Carlos was almost insulted when we asked if the boat could take all this beating. "This is a professional boat - I've been out in worse" he said.

Finally we got under lee of Sao Laurencu and could land. We had a walk and looked at the colony of *ichthya* herring gulls.

At dusk we were in the boat again, on our way back to Funchal. Now we went in the same direction as the waves, and it was much better, although we were soaked to the skin! Now the Cory's were active- what a delight to have shearwaters a few meters away, shearing effortlessly in the wind! For a few minutes we also had company with a flock of 4 spotted dolphins next to the boat.

We were glad to be ashore again after this sailing experience. Maybe we have added to the opinion of some people that birdwatchers are completely crazy?

July 7-9 Porto Santo

We took the car-ferry to Porto Santo in the morning. This is a 2,5 hour trip which, at least sometimes, can produce good seabird observations. For a good position you need a first class ticket (18 euros extra). We counted 100 Cory's, 17 Bulwer's and our first Fea's/Zino's petrel at rather close range. We also saw 10 flying fish!

Porto Santo is a small island with mainly semi-desert vegetation. It's a popular tourist destination because of a 7km long beach- there are no beaches on Madeira itself. We had 2 full days there, which is plenty of time to drive around the island many times

The best birding spot was Tanque, a small water reservoir near the airport. We were there 4 times and noted 15 common moorhens, 3 little egrets, 1 grey heron, 1 kentish plover and 1 turtle dove. We also saw a stationary "funny" duck at Tanque. Mostly it looked like a teal but with several untypical characters such as too much yellow on bill, too black speculum and no white line on the side of the tail. We took some photos and back home Niklas Holmström identified it as a Speckled teal, a South American species! But most certainly an escaped bird.

In the north-east there are also two small reservoirs and this area is good for red-legged partridge. We saw around 20 birds. Another good area is the cultivation and bushland, just north of the sand dunes along the south coast, especially the western part. In this area we found 1 spectacled warbler, 2 quail and lots of hoopoes (common on this island). Along the shore we saw 4 kentish plovers- before they were scared away by the joggers and other people.

When you look at the map Ponta de Calheta in the south-west coast and south of Calhau in the southeast look very good for seawatching; they are on a suitable level above the sea and the nearby small islands are said to be good breeding areas.

We seawatched both early morning and late evening, but we were a bit disappointed. Only moderate numbers of Cory's. However we saw 1 pomarine skua and 1 unidentified whale, probably one of the smaller beaked whales.

On the 9th we took the ferry back to Madeira in the evening (19:00-21:30 hours). On the way back we saw about 200 Cory's and 62 Bulwer's, often at very close range.

July 10

Watched seabirds at Ponta Cruz early from first light. This morning the movement of Cory's was much lesser than on the 6th, "only" 1000 this time, compared to 5700 on the 6th... Maybe the reason was the strong winds on the 6th?

The rest of the day we spent sightseeing in Cural das Freiras. Besides the beautiful scenery we saw some rock doves and long-toed pigeons.

In the evening we made another try for the roseate terns in the harbour, but they were gone now, so we had to comfort ourselves with one lesser black-backed gull.

July 11

Early start at 04:30 and we drove up to Pico de Areiro at 1800m elevation, the second highest peak on Madeira and quite accessible by car. We had hoped to hear some sounds from Zino's

petrel which breeds somewhere in the area and leave the sites while it's dark. No petrels were heard, but the sunrise was beautiful however and the mountain landscape was magnificent.

Then we drove to Casa de Queimadas in the north and made a long levada walk. Here is a large area of mountains covered with intact laurel forests. A very beautiful levada walk with lots of firecrests.

Here we, by chance, met Arfon Williams, a birdwatcher from Wales who was going to join the coming two day trip to Desertas Island. It turned out that Arfon had managed to arrange with a guide for the coming night to go up to the breeding areas of Zino's petrel and he asked if we were interested to join! We certainly were- thank you Arfon!

So at night the guide drove us up in the same area we were in the morning and we walked out along a path to a cliff-face.

And, as predicted, between 23:00 and midnight the petrels arrived! What a magnificent experience! The full moon was illuminating the beautiful mountains and we saw the Zino's petrels, one of the rarest birds in the world, fly around and we heard their eerie calls. It was easy to understand the old tales that this was the cries from the unhappy souls of dead nuns. Fantastic birds in a fantastic landscape!

We heard some encouraging news about Zino's petrel. These birds breed on vegetated ledges in the mountains. The land has now been bought by the government and all the grazing goats have been removed as they destroy the borroughs. There is also a program to control cats and rats. So the number of Zino's petrels is now increasing, but only slowly. Besides, quite recently a new colony was discovered so there are probably over 50 pairs of Zino's.

Therefore there are more than 100 Zino's in Madeiran waters and about 300 Fea's petrels, breeding on Bugio in the Desertas. There are also a few hundred Fea's on Cap Verde (they now believe this is a separate species). This means that when you see a *Pterodroma* at sea around Madeira it's not safe to exclude Zino's for statistical reasons as there is at least a 25% chance that it's a Zino's!

July 12-13 The Desertas Islands

We went to the Desertas with the sailing boat Ventura do Mar with Filipe as skipper. We had tried for a long time to make it a two-day trip to be able to stay overnight at Desertas, but this had been a problem as a minimum of eight people was required and ordinary tourists usually go on one-day trips only. However, Filipe managed to find a group from Funchal who was interested in a weekend trip and together with the birdwatchers- Arfon and ourselves, the trip was on.

We sailed from Funchal and the sea was like a mirror, but out at sea there was a stiff wind and big Atlantic swells made the boat roll. This wasn't appreciated by everyone and Filipe's plastic bag came into use!

But the seabird-watching was excellent. During the 4 hour trip we counted a few hundred Cory's and quite a lot of Bulwer's too. Though, the most sought-after species on this trip is the Fea's/Zino's petrel. This bird is very unpredictable- according to Filipe there are no petrels at all on some trips, often a few and occasionally plenty. We were very lucky with 20 petrels during the sea trip and another 7 from the shore of Grand Deserta. Furthermore two of the petrels came at very close range so it was possible to identify them as Fea's petrel. So, in 24 hours we had both *Pterodroma*- petrels identified- that's luck!

After some relaxing and seawatching we enjoyed Filipes traditional Madeiran espetada barbecue in the evening. Then things started to happen!

We saw the amount of Cory's build up at sea, they came closer and formed rafts of birds sitting on the water, numbers around 1300 birds were estimated. Then a movement of

Bulwer's petrel started, first a few, then groups of birds and then a continuous band of Bulwer's along the coast. In 30 minutes over 3000 Bulwer's passed by!

By then it was dark and the air was full of Bulwer's, and their dog-like barking calls were heard everywhere. In the moonlight we saw the shadows of birds everywhere and the Bulwer's, who breed in the flat, rocky area where you can walk, came so close that their wings almost slapped you. We heard the thuds from their clumsy landings and some could be seen lying on the ground in the torchlight resting a while before crawling down to their nests. Also Cory's were heard all the time- they breed higher up in the sea cliffs.

After an hour a new sound was heard, the Madeiran storm-petrels arrived.. After a while the squeaky calls of the storm-petrels were heard everywhere, probably in the order of 100 birds (they breed in a cave nearby).

What a birding night! We just sat for hours listening to the calls and looking at the shadows. We directed our binoculars to the full moon and all the time there were silhouettes of shearwaters, petrels and storm-petrels!

At 2 o'clock in the morning we fell into an intermittent sleep on a mattress on the ground. We woke up again at 5 o'clock- now the Cory's were very active leaving the island and flew around screaming, often only a few meters away. At 6 o'clock most of them were gone. At 06:30, at first daylight, the show was over, only a few Cory's were seen far out at sea

During the daytime Desertas is a very quiet place, a few terns, canaries and Berthelot's pipits. The seabirds are far away at sea- or well hidden in their nesting holes.

There was time to do some relaxed birdwatching, swimming and snorkelling- plenty of fish in the clear water. Then the boat sailed back and we could add another 6 Fea's/Zino's petrels to the list, but the top observation was a blowing fin whale! They look big even at a 500 meter range!

We certainly recommend birdwatchers going to Madeira during the breeding season to arrange a 2 day trip to Desertas. This is birding at it's very best! As Arfon pointed out: when we have retired and look back on our top birding experiences this night will surely come forward!

July 14-15

After catching up with some sleep we started out for our final trip to Paul de Serra, Ponta do Pargo, and an overnight stay at Porto Moniz. In the mountains there was heavy fog and drizzle and also at Ponta do Pargo there were some rain showers and low clouds.

7 quail were heard this time at Ponta do Pargo and there was 1 grey heron standing on a cliff side. Also 2 barn swallows were seen- no swallows breed on Madeira, but are sometimes seen on migration. There was also a turtle dove singing nearby- they probably breed in this area.

We had one evening and one morning at Porto Moniz, and in total we noted 1200 Cory's, 34 Bulwer's, 17 Manx shearwaters, 6 Fea's/Zino's petrels, 1 pomarine skua and 1 pomarine/arctic skua.

We had the feeling that Porto Moniz was not the very hot-spot mentioned in many travel reports. We believe the reason is that Porto Moniz is the best place later in season- during the true migration. In the summer there are probably more birds moving to and from the breeding places, then mainly in the waters around Desertas and along the south-coast.

On the way back we made a final stop at Ponta do Pargo- this time 1 pallid swift and very nice views of 2 spectacled warblers (race *bella*) with food in their bills (probably breeding birds) in the bushland east of the lighthouse.

In the mountains we had a sightseeing walk to Rabacal in the heath forests with many firecrests and tame chaffinches. But, again, very few landbirds.

We spent our last evening on Madeira at Ponta Cruz. As usual around 600 Cory's and we saw 2 Manx, 1 unidentified whale and 1 flying fish as well.

After dark we saw again the pair of barn owls and a dozen Cory's coming to their nesting holes in the cliffs. The cries of Cory's shearwaters was a fitting end to our birdwatching in Madeira!

July 16

Our plane left at noon and after 4,5 hours in the air we landed in Stockholm where it was even warmer than on Madiera! Then we had a long and warm night on trains and buses before we finally came back to Halmstad in the morning, after two wonderful weeks!

Species list

Birds

The underlined names means that we took photographs of this species. If you are interested in seeing these pictures, just contact us!

Fea's/Zino's petrel – *Pterodroma feae/madeira* – Atlant/madeirapetrell

In total we had surprising **39** birds: **1** ex from the Porto Santo ferry 7/7, at least **25** from Desertas and Ventura do Mar (the boat) 12/7, **7** from Ventura do Mar on the way back from Desertas 13/7, **5** from Porto Moniz 14/7 and **1** from Porto Moniz 15/7. Note that the only birds seen from “mainland” Madeira was seen at Porto Moniz when we had northern winds which pressed the birds closer to land.

1. Fea's petrel – *Pterodroma feae* – Atlantpetrell

2 birds were seen from Ventura do Mar 12/7. These birds came extremely close to the boat (10-15 meters!!) and could be identified as Fea's petrels.

2. Zino's petrel – *Pterodroma madeira* – Madeirapetrell

About **4** ex. was heard and seen in the mountains where they breed.

3. Bulwer's petrel – *Bulweria bulwerii* - Spetsstjärtad petrell

85 birds at Ponta Cruz 3/7, **1** at Porto Moniz and **10** at Lido 5/7, **20** at Ponta Cruz 6/7, **17** from the Porto Santo ferry 7/7, and **62** from the same ferry 9/7, about **50** birds from Ventura do Mar 12/7 and about **70** on the way back the next day. We also had **33** at Porto Moniz 14/7. Though, the best place to see this bird (both close and in large numbers) is definitely Desertas where we saw at least **3000** birds in the evening and heard and saw them (at least **100**) everywhere at the colony.

4. Cory's shearwater – *Calonectris diomedea borealis* - Gulnäbbad lira

This species breeds on sea cliffs everywhere around Madeira, Desertas and Porto Santo and could be seen anywhere on the sea in the morning and evening (birds leaving and coming to their nests), and was seen every day except 11/7 when we were up in the mountains all day. The largest numbers of Cory's was **5700** (!) at Ponta Cruz in the morning 6/7, **1500** from Desertas 12/7, **1250** at Porto Moniz 4/7, **1137** at Porto Moniz 14/7. Note that we didn't count these birds one by one, as we wanted to have time to enjoy them! We counted for one minute

each every 15 minutes, then we calculated the total number of birds that passed every minute. This means that the numbers are not exact, but a good approximation.

5. Little shearwater – *Puffinus assimilis baroli* - Dvärglira

We have to say that it was a bit of a disappointment with only one **1** bird at Ponta Cruz 3/7! Though, when we asked Filipe about it he told us that he had seen a lot of them in May and June, but no birds at all in July, so we were probably lucky to see it at all!

6. Manx shearwater – *Puffinus puffinus* – Mindre lira

Mostly seen at Porto Moniz with **86** birds 4/7, **9** 5/7, **16** 14/7 and **1** 15/7. A few birds could be seen from Ponta Cruz and we saw **4** birds 3/7.

7. Madeiran storm petrel – *Oceanodroma castro* - Oceanlöpare

When we stayed overnight at Desertas we both heard and saw this species (at night)! It's hard to count at night when it's dark, but we estimate the numbers to around **100** (several hundred pairs breed nearby).

8. Little egret – *Egretta garzetta* – Silkeshäger

Seen now and then, most birds was seen at Porto Santo with **5** birds in total there (7-8/7). We also saw **1-2** in Funchal's harbour 2/7 and 6/7, **3** at Machico 3/7, **2** at Ponta Cruz 10/7 and **1** from the airport 16/7.

9. Grey heron – *Ardea cinerea* – Gråhäger

We saw in total **4** birds: **2** at Porto Santo 7-9/7, **1** at Machico 3/7 and **1** at Ponta do Pargo 14/7.

Speckled teal – *Anas flavostris* – Gulnäbbad kricka

1 bird resident at Tanque, Porto Santo. This is a duck native to the Andes of South America so this was most certainly an escaped bird.

10. Sparrowhawk – *Accipter nisus granti* – Sparvhök

1 seen at Noguera 4/7.

11. Common buzzard – *Buteo buteo buteo/harterti* – Ormvråk

Rather common, especially in the mountains and Porto Santo. Very numerous at Ponta do Pargo. Seen almost every day. Highest number was **15-20** at Ponta do Pargo 5/7.

12. Kestrel – *Falco tinnunculus canarensis* – Tornfalk

Common, seen every day except 16/7 (travelling day). Very common at Ponta do Pargo.

13. Red-legged partridge – *Alectoris rufa hispanica* – Rödhöna

Only seen at Porto Santo: c.**20** 7/7, c.**5** 8/7 and c.**10** 9/7. We only observed this species between the two lakes in the north-eastern parts of the island.

14. Quail – *Coturnix coturnix coturnix/confisa* – Vaktel

A lot more common than we thought! In total we heard at least **13** birds! The best place was Ponta do Pargo with **6** 5/7, **7** 14/7 and **2** 15/7. Note that many of the birds at Pargo are the same birds. We also had **2** at Paul de Serra 5/7 and **2** (one of them was a new one) 15/7. Also **2** Porto Santo 7/7 and **1** at the same place 8/7. Two of the birds where seen when flushed.

15. Common moorhen – *Gallinula chloropus* – Rörhöna

Easily seen in the lakes on Poto Santo with the best numbers in Tanque with c.15 8/7.

16. Kentish plover – *Charadrius alexandrinus* – Svartbent strandpipare

Seen on Porto Santo only. **1** female was seen 7-9/7 at Tanque and **4** along the beach 8/7 (and two of them was seen 9/7).

17. Whimbrel – *Numenius phaeopus* – Småspov

The least unusual wader. **1** at Ponta Cruz 3/7, **3** at Ponta Sao Laorenco 6/7, **2** Porto Santo 8/7 and **6** Porto Santo 9/7. The two birds seen at 8/7 could be the two of the six seen the day after.

18. Turnstone – *Arenaria interpres* – Roskarl

1 seen in Funchal's harbour 6/7.

19. Pomarine skua – *Stercorarius pomarinus* – Bredstjärtad labb

1 (probably a younger bird) Porto Santo 8/7 and **1** (an older bird) Porto Moniz 14/7.

Pomarine/arctic skua – *Stercorarius pomarinus/parasiticus* – Bredstjärtad labb/lab

1 Porto Moniz 14/7.

20. Yellow-legged gull – *Larus (argentatus) michahellis* – “Medelhavstrut”

Common by the sea (especially in Funchal's harbour). A group of about **150** birds were seen on Paul de Serra.

21. Lesser black-backed gull – *Larus fuscus graellsii* (+*intermedius*?) – Silltrut

2 in Funchal's harbour 7/7. We are not gull-professionals, but one of them was a *graellsii* and the other one probably an *intermedius*.

22. Roseate tern – *Sterna dougallii* – Rosentärna

4-5 in Funchal's harbour 2/7, **2** at Ponta Cruz 3/7 and **2** in Funchal's harbour 6/7.

23. Common tern – *Sterna hirundo* – Fisktärna

Rather common by the coast, seen every day except 16/7 (travelling day).

24. Feral dove/Rock dove – *Columba livia domesticus/Columba livia* – Tamduva/Klippduva

The feral dove extremely common! Seen in large numbers everywhere except on Desertas and high up in the mountains. We also saw **5** pure Rock doves at Curral das Freiras.

25. Long-toed pigeon – *Columba trocaz* – Madeiraduva

In total we saw or heard at least **11-12** individuals. At Balcoes and in the valley below (Nogueira) we observed **9-10** birds 4/7. At Curral das Freiras we saw **2** 10/7.

26. Turtle dove – *Streptopelia turtur* – Turturduva

1 at Tanque, Porto Santo 7/7 and **1** seen and heard playing at Ponta do Pargo 15/7. We think that the bird at Pargo may breed as another observation was made there a week earlier

27. Barn owl – *Tyto alba schimtzii* – Tornuggla

2 birds were seen and heard at Ponta Cruz 3/7 and 15/7.

28. Plain swift – *Apus unicolor* – Enfärgad seglare
Very common, seen everywhere except on Desertas.

29. Pallid swift – *Apus pallidus brehmorum* – Blek tornseglare
2 at the airport 2/7, 1 at Ponta Sao Laorenco 3/7 and 1 at Ponta do Pargo 15/7. All the birds except the one on Pargo were seen together with plain swifts.

30. Hoopoe – *Upupa epops* – Härfågel
Only seen at Porto Santo, though it was common there. 13 7/7, 14 8/7 and 9 9/7.

31. Short-toed lark – *Calandrella brachydactyla* – Korttålarcka
This was the “rarity” of the trip with 1 seen and heard calling while flying in over land at Ponta do Pargo 5/7.

32. Barn swallow – *Hirundo rustica* - Ladusvala
2 at Ponta do Pargo 14/7.

33. Grey wagtail – *Motacilla cinerea schmitzi* – Forsärla
Common close to water and in the mountains, also in the city on Funchal! A few birds seen every day except on Porto Santo and Desertas.

34. Berthelot’s pipit – *Anthus berthelotii madeirensis* – Kanariepiplärka
Common or very common in the right terrain, like on Ponta Sao Laorenco, Desertas, Ponta do Pargo and Paul de Serra.

35. Robin – *Erithacus rubecula rubecula/microrynchus* – Rödhake
Common in the mountains. Very hard to miss in the Botanical Garden with nearly tame birds jumping around on the paths!

36. Blackbird – *Turdus merula cabrerae* – Koltrast
Common, seen at most places except on Porto Santo and Desertas. Very common in the mountains.

37. Blackcap – *Sylvia atricapilla heineken* – Svarthätta
Very common everywhere except on Desertas. As this is the only warbler (except for the Spectacled warbler) this species seems to have adapted to most terrains.

38. Spectacled warbler – *Sylvia conspicillata bella* – Glasögonsångare
1 bird (a female) at Porto Santo 9/7 and 2 (a pair with food in the bills) birds at Ponta do Pargo 15/7. It was a lot darker than the nominate race, and the dark chin gave it a funny moustache.

39. Firecrest – *Regulus ignicapillus madeirensis* – Brandkronad kungsfågel
Common in the mountains, easily seen and heard, especially at Quiemadas where we even saw the nest.

40. Spanish sparrow – *Passer hispaniolensis* – Spansk sparv
Very common on Porto Santo. 2 birds in Machico.

41. Rock sparrow – *Petronia petronia madeirensis* – Stensparv

5 at Ponta Sao Laorenco 3/7, 3 at Ponta do Pargo 5/7, 2 at Ponta do Pargo 14/7 and 2 at Ponta do Pargo 15/7 (probably not the same birds as we saw these at an other location).

42. Chaffinch – *Fringilla coelebs madeirensis* – Bofink

Common in the mountains. At some places like Rabacal and Balcoes almost tame birds jumped around our feet.

43. Canary – *Serinus canaria* – Kanariesiska

Common everywhere (even on Desertas!). Seen every day.

44. Goldfinch – *Carduelis carduelis parva* – Steglits

Most birds were seen at Porto Santo, where it was common. On mainland Madeira we observed this species on three days.

45. Linnet – *Carduelis cannabina guentheri* – Hämpling

Observed on five days. Largest group of 70 birds was seen on Paul de Serra. Small numbers were seen at Porto Santo and Ponta do Pargo.

46. Common waxbill – *Estrilda astrild* – Helenaastrild

3-4 birds were seen in Machico 3/7.

Mammals

1. Sperm whale – *Physeter catodon* - Kaskelott

3-4 at Porto Moniz 5/7.

2. Fin whale – Fenval

1 from Ventura do Mar 13/7.

Unidentified whales

1 at Porto Santo 7/7 (a species of beaked whale) and 1 at Ponta Cruz 15/7.

3. Spotted dolphin – *Stenella frontalis* - Fläckdelfin

4 from Carloz's boat 6/7.

4. Rabbit – *Oryctolagus cuniculus* - Kanin

Common in the right terrain.

5. House mouse – *Mus domesticus* - Husmus

1 at Rabacal 15/7.

Other

Madeiran wall lizard – *Teira dugesii*

This funny lizard could be seen almost anywhere. We also saw the subspecies on Porto Santo and Desertas. A funny thing to do is to feed these lizards with melon or banana. Be careful though, on the Desertas we found about ten lizards crawling around in our bag containing food...

Loggerhead turtle – *Caretta caretta*

2 from Ventura do Mar 12/7 and 1 from Ventura do Mar 13/7.

Sally lightfoot crab – *Grapsus grapsus*

Easily seen from the pier in Funchal. Some seen from Ponta Cruz and on Desertas as well.

Perez's frog – *Rana perezii*

Often heard when close to water, especially on Porto Santo.

Useful contacts

Ventura do Mar, skipper Filipe, offers sailing trips to Desertas and other places. A 2-day trip to Desertas was 120 Euros each. E-mail: venturadomar@iol.pt

Amilcar Vascancelos has a mountaineering company which helps the biologists working with Zino's petrel. He can arrange night trips to the breeding area (you are not allowed to go there on your own at night!). This costs 45 euro plus 20 euro to a conversation fund. E-mail: geral@madeiraventura.com

We can also recommend hotel Casa Branca in Funchal! This hotel was excellent for us, with helpful staff, reserved parking space and good rooms with a little kitchen and you were able to seawatch from the balcony.

In Porto Moniz we can recommend hotel Residencial Sulgueiro. It was cheap (30 euros per night), good breakfast (a bit late, we had it after the seawatching) and best of all: perfect seawatching abilities from the balcony.

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