

AZORES 7th – 14th Nov 2005

After positive experiences of our (Rami Lindroos, Keijo Wahlroos) trip to Azores on Sep 2005, we decided to make another trip on Nov. Partial reason was also amazing numbers of American vagrants on Corvo seen by Peter Alfrey.

7th Nov SAO MIGUEL

Arrived to Sao Miguel around 12.30, and tried to get flights to Corvo. Unfortunately Corvo flights were already fully booked, so we changed our plans and booked flights to Flores via Terceira. Then rented a car for one day and checked Lagoa Azul & Verde and Mosteiros. Slept in Hotel Ponta Delgada.

8th Nov SAO MIGUEL – TERCEIRA

Had couple of hours light time before the flight to Terceira, so checked the harbour of Ponta Delgada. Then gave our car away and flew to Terceira. On Terceira, we had c. 3 hours, so took a taxi to Cabo da Praia quarry. After two hours birding, took the same taxi back to airport and flew to Flores. Rented a car from Flores airport, but didn't have light time left to do birding there. Slept in Hotel Ocidental.

9th Nov FLORES

Started the morning at Lajes harbour, then checked some places at southern shore. Later checked the crater lakes and continued to Punta Faja Grande. Finally in the evening, checked old football field area in Ponta Delgada.

10th Nov FLORES

Most of the day was spent in Punta Faja Grande by searching the Indigo Bunting seen yesterday by RL. Checked also Lagoas Lomba and Branca, as well as Lajes harbour.

11th Nov FLORES

The morning was spent in Ponta Delgada area. After that we still had time to check quickly Lagoas Lomba & Branca and Punta Faja Grande. Then gave our car away and flew back to Sao Miguel.

12th Nov SAO MIGUEL

Started birding at Rabo de Peixe harbour. Then continued to Lagoa das Furnas & Terra Nostra Park. Then spent some time at Serra de Trongueira, and rest of the day was spent by checking harbours of small villages in eastern part of the island.

13th Nov SAO MIGUEL

Before breakfast decided to check the harbour of Ponta Delgada. After breakfast birded at Mosteiros and then continued to Lagoa Azul & Verde. Later drove around inner parts of the island and then checked some harbours on southern coast of the island. Finally stayed last daylight moments at the harbour of Ponta Delgada.

14th Nov SAO MIGUEL

Last day. In the morning started again at Ponta Delgada harbour. After that still had some time to check the harbour of Rabo de Peixe before leaving back to Finland.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks for Bosse Carlsson, Svante Åberg and Ingvar Torsson about good company and sharing some observations. Staffan Rodebrand gave me important addresses and Peter Alfrey told facts about the island of Corvo. Jukka J. Nurmi helped for processing pictures taken during our trip.

SPECIES LIST (SM = Sao Miguel, FL = Flores, TE = Terceira)

WOOD DUCK *Aix sponsa*

12th Nov SM Furnas, Terra Nostra –park 1 adult male. The same long-staying bird as in previous trip.

EURASIAN WIGEON *Anas penelope*

7th Nov SM Lagoa Azul 3.

9th – 11th Nov FL Lagoa Branca 1 eclipse / juvenile male.

12th Nov SM Lagoa das Furnas 1.

EURASIAN / AMERICAN WIGEON *Anas penelope / americana*

9th – 10th Nov FL Lagoa Branca 1 with Eurasian Wigeon.

11th Nov FL Lagoa Branca 2 with Eurasian Wigeon.

GADWALL *Anas strepera*

10th Nov FL Lagoa Lomba 1.

12th Nov SM Lagoa das Furnas 2 near feral ducks.

COMMON / GREEN-WINGED TEAL *Anas crecca / carolinensis*

9th Nov FL Lagoa Branca 8.

10th Nov FL Lagoa Branca 5.

12th Nov SM Lagoa das Furnas 24.

MALLARD *Anas platyrhynchos*

12th Nov SM Lagoa das Furnas 1 female near feral ducks.

AMERICAN BLACK DUCK *Anas rubripes*

9th Nov FL Lagoa Branca 1 male.

10th Nov FL Lagoa Branca 2 females.

The birds were seen in a flock of ducks, in where other birds were clearly hybrids between Mallard and American Black Duck. In these birds I couldn't find any character which doesn't fit to pure American Black Duck, but the speculum area from one of the females was not seen.

MALLARD X AMERICAN BLACK DUCK *Anas platyrhynchos x Anas rubripes*

9th Nov FL Lagoa Branca 2 males and 1 female.

10th Nov FL Lagoa Branca 4 males and 2 females.

11th Nov FL Lagoa Branca 7.

On 11th Nov the flock was sleeping, and I didn't put much effort to identify them, so the number may include some pure looking birds as well.

BLUE-WINGED TEAL *Anas discors*

7th and 13th Nov SM Lagoa Verde 2, of which at least one bird was male moulting to breeding plumage.

SHOVELER *Anas clypeata*

13th Nov SM Lagoa Verde 1 female with Blue-winged Teals.

RING-NECKED DUCK *Aythya collaris*

7th and 13th Nov SM Lagoa Verde a flock of 3 males and 2 females.

COMMON QUAIL *Coturnix coturnix conturbans*

8th Nov TE Cabo da Praia quarry 1 calling shortly.

PIED-BILLED GREBE *Podilymbus podiceps*

9th Nov FL Lagoa Funda (southern) 1 juvenile / winter plumage.

12th Nov SM Lagoa das Furnas 1 adult nearly on winter plumage.

CORY'S SHEARWATER *Calonectris diomedea borealis*

Clearly less numerous than on Sep. Few birds were seen every time when scanning the sea. Highest numbers on 9th Nov FL Lajes harbour c. 250 and on 11th Nov FL Ponta Delgada c. 250.

CATTLE EGRET *Bubulcus ibis*

12th – 14th Nov SM Ponta Delgada harbour 1.

13th Nov SM Mosteiros 2.

LITTLE EGRET *Egretta garzetta*

8th Nov SM Ponta Delgada harbour 2.
13th Nov SM Ponta Delgada harbour 1.
SM Mosteiros harbour 1.
14th Nov SM Ponta Delgada harbour 2.

GREAT EGRET *Egretta alba egretta*

12th Nov SM Lagoa das Furnas 2, of which one took off towards Lagoa Seca.
13th Nov SM Vila Franca do Campo 1.
All birds had uniform greyish black legs, which indicates North American subspecies *egretta*. The bird in Vila Franca do Campo had colour ring, which we managed to read. I have sent the data to Portuguese Ringing Center, but haven't got any details yet.

GREY HERON *Ardea cinerea*

7th Nov SM Lagoa Azul 2.
SM Lagoa Verde 1.
SM Mosteiros 1.
9th Nov FL Lagoa Funda (southern) 2.
FL Ponta Delgada 1.
11th Nov FL Ponta Delgada 2.
12th Nov SM Lagoa das Furnas c. 6.
13th Nov SM Lagoa Azul 2.

GREAT BLUE HERON *Ardea herodias*

9th and 11th Nov FL Lagoa Branca 1 adult.

COMMON BUZZARD *Buteo buteo rothschildi*

SM abundant, on best day c. 30 birds were seen.

COMMON MOORHEN *Gallinula chloropus*

7th Nov SM Lagoa Azul 8.
13th Nov SM Lagoa Azul 6.

EURASIAN COOT *Fulica atra*

7th Nov SM Lagoa Azul 5.
12th Nov SM Lagoa das Furnas c. 15.
13th Nov SM Lagoa Azul 13.

COMMON RINGED PLOVER *Charadrius hiaticula*

8th Nov TE Cabo da Praia quarry 2.

SEMIPALMATED PLOVER *Charadrius semipalmatus*

8th Nov TE Cabo da Praia quarry 1.
11th Nov FL Ponta Delgada 1.

KILLDEER *Charadrius vociferus*

9th Nov FL Ponta Delgada 1, took off towards NW.

KENTISH PLOVER *Charadrius alexandrinus*

8th Nov TE Cabo da Praia quarry c. 25.

GREY PLOVER *Pluvialis squatarola*

8th Nov TE Cabo da Praia quarry 7.

SANDERLING *Calidris alba*

8th Nov TE Cabo da Praia quarry c. 50.
13th Nov SM Ponta Delgada harbour 1.

SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPER *Calidris pusilla*

8th Nov TE Cabo da Praia quarry 1cy bird moulting to winter plumage.

LITTLE STINT *Calidris minuta*

8th Nov TE Cabo da Praia quarry 1 juvenile.

LEAST SANDPIPER *Calidris minutilla*

8th Nov TE Cabo da Praia quarry 1 on winter plumage.

WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER *Calidris fuscicollis*

8th Nov TE Cabo da Praia quarry 1 juvenile.

9th Nov FL Lajes harbour 1 on winter plumage.

13th Nov SM Lagoa Azul 1 juvenile with Lesser Yellowlegs.

CURLEW SANDPIPER *Calidris ferruginea*

8th Nov TE Cabo da Praia quarry 2 on winter plumage.

RUFF *Philomachus pugnax*

8th Nov TE Cabo da Praia quarry 1.

COMMON SNIPE *Gallinago gallinago*

10th Nov FL 1 was flushed from roadside near Lagoa Rasa.

11th Nov FL Lagoa Lomba 1.

EURASIAN WOODCOCK *Scolopax rusticola*

10th Nov FL Ponta Faja Grande 1. Seen only by RL.

BLACK-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa limosa*

13th Nov SM Ponta Delgada harbour 3 on winter plumage.

BAR-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa lapponica lapponica*

8th Nov TE Cabo da Praia quarry 1 on winter plumage.

13th – 14th Nov SM Ponta Delgada harbour 1 on winter plumage.

WHIMBREL *Numenius phaeopus phaeopus*

13th Nov SM Ponta Delgada harbour 1.

SM Mosteiros 1 at harbour and 1 near sea watching place.

SM Vila Franco do Campo harbour 1.

WHIMBREL *Numenius phaeopus hudsonicus*

11th Nov FL Ponta Delgada 1 arrived from the sea, landed for a short while, took off towards Corvo.

UPLAND SANDPIPER *Bartramia longicauda*

11th Nov FL Ponta Delgada 1.

COMMON GREENSHANK *Tringa nebularia*

7th and 13th Nov SM Lagoa Azul 1.

LESSER YELLOWLEGS *Tringa flavipes*

7th Nov SM Lagoa Azul juvenile.

13th Nov SM Lagoa Azul 2 juveniles, of which one was the same bird as on 7th Nov.

RUDDY TURNSTONE *Arenaria interpres*

7th Nov SM Mosteiros 1. Seen only by KW.

8th Nov SM Ponta Delgada harbour 1.

TE Cabo da Praia quarry c. 35.

9th Nov FL Lajes harbour 4.

10th Nov FL Lajes harbour 6.

13th Nov SM Ponta Delgada harbour c. 20.

14th Nov SM Ponta Delgada harbour c. 25.

LAUGHING GULL *Larus atricilla*

In total at least 13 birds were seen!

8th Nov SM Ponta Delgada harbour at least 9 (both 1st winter plumage and +1st winter plumage birds).

9th Nov FL Lajes harbour 2 (+1st winter plumage birds).

10th Nov FL Lajes harbour 3 (+1st winter plumage birds).

12th Nov SM Ponta Delgada harbour at least 2 birds seen from car while driving by.

SM Rabo da Peixe harbour 1 (+1st winter plumage).

13th Nov SM Ponta Delgada harbour 9 (5 +1st winter plumage and 4 1st winter plumage birds).

14th Nov SM Ponta Delgada harbour at least 7 (4 +1st winter plumage and 3 1st winter plumage birds).

FRANKLIN'S GULL *Larus pipixcan*

13th Nov SM Ponta Delgada harbour 1 adult on winter plumage in the morning in a flock of Black-headed Gulls. The flock took off early, and headed towards inland.

BLACK-HEADED GULL *Larus ridibundus*

8th Nov FL airport 1.

10th Nov FL Lagoa Lomba 1.

13th Nov SM Ponta Delgada harbour c. 20.

14th Nov SM Ponta Delgada harbour 17.

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus fuscus graellsii / intermedius*

12th Nov SM Ribeira Quente 2 adults.

YELLOW-LEGGED GULL *Larus michahellis atlantis*

Common but rather scarce. Highest counts on 11th Nov FL Ponta Delgada c. 70 far at the sea and on 13th Nov SM Ponta Delgada harbour c. 150.

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus marinus*

11th Nov FL Ponta Delgada 1st winter plumage bird.

COMMON TERN *Sterna hirundo*

Most often only few birds were seen at harbours or elsewhere near shore, but highest counts on 7th Nov SM Mosteiros c. 80 and on 12th Nov SM Ribeira Quente c. 20.

ROCK DOVE / FERAL PIGEON *Columba livia atlantis / domesticus*

Abundant.

COMMON WOOD PIGEON *Columba palumbus azorica*

Only few birds were seen on SM and TE.

ROSE-RINGED PARAKEET *Psittacula krameri*

14th Nov SM Ponta Delgada 1 flying by near Hotel Ponta Delgada.

GREY WAGTAIL *Motacilla cinerea patriciae*

Abundant.

EUROPEAN ROBIN *Erithacus rubecula*

SM Common, but not very numerous.

COMMON BLACKBIRD *Turdus merula azorensis*

Abundant. F ex 10th Nov FL Ponta Faja Grande c. 50.

BLACKCAP *Sylvia atricapilla gularis*

Abundant. F ex 10th Nov FL Ponta Faja Grande c. 100.

GOLDCREST *Regulus regulus inermis*

FL Rather common in suitable habitat.

GOLDCREST *Regulus regulus azoricus*

SM Rather common in suitable habitat.

COMMON STARLING *Sturnus vulgaris granti*
Common, several flocks of few dozens were seen.

HOUSE SPARROW *Passer domesticus*
Abundant. F ex 10th Nov FL Ponta Faja Grande c. 150.

COMMON WAXBILL *Estrilda astrild*
8th Nov TE Cabo da Praia quarry c. 20.

COMMON CHAFFINCH *Fringilla coelebs moreletti*
Abundant. F ex 10th Nov FL Ponta Faja Grande c. 150.

CANARY *Serinus canaria*
Abundant at almost all kind of habitats.

EUROPEAN GREENFINCH *Carduelis chloris vanmarli*
13th Nov SM Sete Cidades 1.

EUROPEAN GOLDFINCH *Carduelis carduelis parva*
Observed few times on SM and TE, biggest flock on 8th Nov TE Cabo da Praia quarry c. 15.

COMMON CROSSBILL *Loxia curvirostra*
12th Nov Serra de Tronqueira flight call of one bird, heard only by RL.

INDIGO BUNTING *Passerina cyanea*
9th Nov FL Ponta Faja Grande 1, probably 1cy. Seen only by RL (despite of 8 hours searching in two days!).