

Azores (Santa Maria and São Miguel) February 14th – March 2nd 2008, a short trip-report.

Logistics: Vila Franca do Campo 14/2 (waiting for connection flight to Santa Maria). Vila do Porto, Santa Maria 15-17/2 (rental car), Mosteiros, São Miguel 18/2-2/3 (rental car). When in Mosteiros birding mostly locally, and to the western parts of the island.

Participants: Ingegerd and Staffan Rodebrand.

Weather: Normal for this time of the year, from almost calm, sunny and 19°C to 14°C windy and rain. In the mountains and craters often more rainy and foggy, and a temperature down to 10°C.

Bird list:

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*. 1 at Vila Franca do Campo 14/2.
Eurasian Wigeon *Anas Penelope*. 1 male in Lagoa Azul 18-29/2.
Common Teal *Anas crecca*. 9 in Caldeira do Alferes 19/2 and 14 there 1/3, 2 at Lagoa dos Espriados and 125 in Lagoa das Furnas 22/2.
Green-winged Teal *Anas carolinensis*. 1 female in Caldeira do Alferes 1/3.
Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*. At least 6 in Lagoa Azul and Caldeira do Alferes.
Northern Shoveler *Anas clypeata*. 4 in Caldeira do Alferes 19/2, and 2 there 1/3.
Ring-necked Duck *Aythya collaris*. 11(6 males, 5 females) in Lagoa Verde 18-29/2.
Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*. 3 (2 males, 1 female) in Lagoa Verde 18-20/2, and another female there 24-25/2.
Greater Scaup *Aythya marila*. 2 (females) in Lagoa Verde 18/2-2/3.
Lesser Scaup *Aythya affinis*. 1 female in Lagoa Verde 24/2.
Hooded Merganser *Mergus cucullatus*. 1 female at Batalha golf course 27/2-2/3.
Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*. 1 first-winter at Mosteiros 18/2-2/3.
Cory's Shearwater *Calonectris diomedea borealis*. Common on both islands. Thousands counted at Mosteiros.
Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*. A total of around 21 birds passing Mosteiros 18/2-2/3.
Little Shearwater *Puffinus assimilis baroli*. 1 at Mosteiros 24/2.
Northern Gannet *Morus bassanus*. 1 on Santa Maria 16/2, and seen daily at Mosteiros with up to around 15 birds fishing together. Also a small but steady stream of passing birds.
Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*. 1 at Vila do Porto 16-17/2.
Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*. 22 at Fajã de Cima 25/2, and 27 there 2/3.
Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*. On Santa Maria at least 6 different birds (Vila do Porto, São Lourenço, Anjos, and Praia Formosa). On São Miguel 3 in Mosteiros, 1 at Lagoa Azul (the long staying bird that have some plumage details reminding of Snowy Egret), 3 in Ponta Delgada, and 2 at Fajã de Cima (together with the Cattle Egrets).
American Great Egret *Egretta alba egretta*. 1 at Vila do Porto 15-17/2.
Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*. 3-5 around Vila do Porto on Santa Maria. In São Miguel single birds on a few places, at least 5 in Lagoa Azul/Verde, and 24 in Lagoa das Furnas 22/2.
Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo rothschildi*. Common on Santa Maria and São Miguel.
Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*. 1 displaying in small wetlands south of the airport on Santa Maria, and 1 in Ribeira de S. Francisco 17/2. In Lagoa Azul at least 6 birds, and in Caldeira do Alferes at least 3.
Eurasian Coot *Fulica atra*. Up to 31 in Lagoa Azul. 14 in Lagoa das Furnas, and 1 in Lagoa S. Brás 22/2.
Common Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*. 1 at Ponta Delgada (ETAR) 27/2 and 2/3.
Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus*. 550-600 at the southern end of the airport of Santa Maria 17/2.
Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*. 1 at Mosteiros 26/2, and 4 at Ponta Delgada 27/2 and 2/3.
Red Knot *Calidris canutus*. 3 at Ponta Delgada 27/2.
Sanderling *Calidris alba*. 14 at Ribeira Grande 22/2, and 1 at Ponta Delgada 27/2 and 2/3.
Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*. 1 at Mosteiros 21/2, and 2 in Ponta Delgada (ETAR) 2/3.
Dunlin *Calidris alpina*. 2 at the southern end of the airport of Santa Maria 2008-02-17.
Whimbrel *Numenius p. phaeopus*. Singles or 2-3 on several places on both islands. A flock of 15 on the airport in Ponta Delgada 14/2.
Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularius* 1 at Lagoa Azul 21/2.
Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*. Singles and small groups on many shores on both islands. Highest number was around 40 on the southern end of the airport at Santa Maria, and 48 in Ponta delgada (ETAR) 2/3..
Great Skua *Catharacta skua*. 1-3 locals at Mosteiros, but also a steady passage of birds towards west; 3 (18/2), 4 (19/2), 12 (20/2), 3 (21/2), 3 (23/2), 9 (25/2), 6 (26/2), 8 (28/2), 1 (29/2), 2 (1/3), and 3 (2/3).
Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*. 1 first-winter at Ponta Delgada 25/2.
Bonaparte's Gull *Larus Philadelpha*. 1 first-winter at Ponta Delgada 25/2.
Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus*. Around 130 outside the pier at Ponta Delgada 25/2.
Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*. Around 15 at Vila Franca do Campo 14/2, 2 on Santa Maria 16/2, and a few in Lagoa Azul, Mosteiros and Ponta Delgada.

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*. 2 juveniles at Vila Franca do Campo 14/2, 2 juveniles at Santa Maria 16/2, and at Mosteiros 1 adult 25/2 and 2 juveniles 26/2.

American Herring Gull *Larus smithsonianus*. 1 second-winter at Vila Franca do Campo 14/2. 1 first-winter at Mosteiros 25/2.

Yellow-legged Gull *Larus michahellis atlantis*. Common on São Miguel, and maybe up to two hundred on Santa Maria.

Iceland or Glaucous Gull *Larus glaucooides/ hyperboreus*. 1 flying west far out at sea at Mosteiros 19/2.

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*. 1 first-winter at Vila Franca do Campo 14/2.

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*. 2 at Vila Franca do Campo 14/2, 1 first-winter at Santa Maria 16/2.

Black-legged Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*. 3 at Mosteiros 18/2, and 1 there 19/2.

Rock Dove *Columba livia*. Common on Santa Maria and São Miguel.

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus azorica*. Just 1 seen on Santa Maria, but common on São Miguel.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea patriciae*. Common on Santa Maria and São Miguel.

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba*. One *a. alba* at the southern end of the airport of Santa Maria 17/2.

European Robin *Erithacus rubecula*. Common on Santa Maria and São Miguel.

Blackbird *Turdus merula azorensis*. Common on Santa Maria and São Miguel.

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla gularis*. Common on Santa Maria and São Miguel.

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*. 1 at Mosteiros 24/2.

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus sanctaemariae/azoricus*. Common on Santa Maria and São Miguel.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris granti*. Common on Santa Maria and São Miguel.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*. Common on Santa Maria and São Miguel.

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs moreletti*. Common on Santa Maria and São Miguel.

Atlantic Canary *Serinus canaria*. Common on Santa Maria and São Miguel.

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis parva*. At least 2 birds in Vila do Porto, Santa Maria, and singles or pairs in several places in São Miguel.

Category C species:

Common Waxbill *Estrilda astrild*. A party of 25 birds in Mosteiros, and 9+3 at Batalha golf course 27/2.

2008-03-06 Staffan Rodebrand, rodebrand@yahoo.com