



BIRDING TOUR GREECE: LESVOS IN SPRING EXTENSION

06 – 10 MAY 2027

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*The main resident bird target on our Lesvos birding tour is **Krüper's Nuthatch** – a really beautiful representative of this large and widespread family. Lesvos offers one of the best places to see this species in the world.*

For the last 40 years, birders across the world have flocked to Lesvos for the awesome birding that this small Mediterranean island has to offer. Lesvos (part of Greece) is separated from mainland Turkey by just eight miles (14 kilometers) of the Mytilini Strait. Its position, at the borders of two continents, results in the island having a great diversity of bird species, of both European and Asian origin, which simply takes off during the migration season especially in the spring.

On this, the third-largest Greek island, extensive areas of very different habitats are found, such as olive groves, pine forest, garrigue, and maquis, while another very important aspect that lures the birds to the island is the number of wetlands that are found here. Lesvos has a surprisingly high bird list for a relatively small island, 348 species (following International Ornithological Congress (IOC) v15.1 taxonomy, as of June 2025), and as such this will prove an excellent short extension to our longer **Birding Tour Greece: Spring Birding Adventure** on the Greek mainland.

Spring on the island is an incredible experience as thousands of migrant birds pour into and over the island as they return from their sub-Saharan wintering grounds in Africa, some stopping to breed in Lesvos. Multiple species, including shorebirds (waders), crakes, birds of prey, warblers, flycatchers, wheatears, wagtails, and buntings, move through the island and boost an already impressive resident population of bird species.

Some of the top migrant highlights include **Little Crake, Baillon's Crake, White-winged Tern, Little Bittern, Levant Sparrowhawk, Eurasian Scops Owl, European Roller, European Bee-eater, Eleonora's Falcon, Lesser Kestrel, Masked Shrike, Olive-tree Warbler, River Warbler, Rüppell's Warbler, Rufous-tailed Scrub Robin, Common Nightingale, Collared Flycatcher, Eastern Black-eared Wheatear, Isabelline Wheatear, Citrine Wagtail, Red-throated Pipit, Black-headed Bunting, Cinereous Bunting, and Cretzschmar's Bunting.**



*We will search for the beautiful **Masked Shrike** on Lesvos.*

Being an island, Lesvos also has its own selection of interesting localized species and subspecies, including a couple of highly prized birds in **Krüper's Nuthatch** and **Western Rock Nuthatch**. Other interesting resident species include **Chukar Partridge**, **Greater Flamingo**, **Spur-winged Lapwing**, **Long-legged Buzzard**, **Middle Spotted Woodpecker**, **Short-toed Treecreeper**, **Long-tailed Tit**, **Sombre Tit**, and **Rock Sparrow**.



Western Rock Nuthatch is a sought-after species and occurs in beautiful mountain landscapes.

You could also combine our two Greece tours with our **Birding Tour Bulgaria and Romania: Birding the Balkans in Spring** tour, which offers a whole host of new species and experiences in two nearby beautiful countries bordering the Black Sea. This provides an ideal combination if you would like to extend your time in this beautiful and unique part of Europe, with some of the other great birds possible, including **Eastern Imperial Eagle**, **Saker Falcon**, **Red-footed Falcon**, **Wallcreeper** (a monotypic family), **Pied Wheatear**, and **Semicollared Flycatcher**.

Itinerary (5 days/4 nights)

Day 1. Arrival in Lesvos

We will be met at Lesvos airport and transferred to our nearby hotel in picturesque Skala Kalloni where we will base ourselves for the duration of this tour. Along the way we might get time to look out at sea where we could see **Mediterranean Gull**, **Yellow-legged Gull**, **Yelkouan Shearwater**, **Scopoli's Shearwater**, **Great Cormorant**, and **European Shag**.

Once we have checked into our accommodation, we will get straight into exploring the local area and familiarizing ourselves with its birds, in particular, common species such as **White Stork**,

Eurasian Hoopoe, European Bee-eater, Eurasian Golden Oriole, Red-backed Shrike, Woodchat Shrike, European Red-rumped Swallow, Eastern Olivaceous Warbler, Common Nightingale, and Whinchat. These species, along with many others, move through Lesvos throughout the spring migration season. The number and composition of species can vary daily, making it an especially exciting time for us.

The Lower Tsiknias Valley, not far from our accommodation, is a great migrant trap and we might find a range of waterbirds, including a trio of marsh terns (**Black, White-winged, and Whiskered Terns**), along with shorebirds, herons, ibises, and crakes. The scrub here can also be full of warblers and **Spanish Sparrows**, with the adjacent fields an excellent spot for shrikes, chats, and buntings. The area around our accommodation could also yield **Western Barn Owl, Eurasian Scops Owl, Long-eared Owl, and River Warbler.**



*Lesvos is a great place to look for the migratory **Levant Sparrowhawk**.*

The thrill of birding somewhere like Lesvos during the spring migration season is that a wide range of species can occur anywhere at any time. While exploring the island over the next few days we will keep an eye open (and skywards) for a diversity of raptor species that can be possible here, such as **Short-toed Snake Eagle, Levant Sparrowhawk, Western Marsh Harrier, Montagu's Harrier, Long-legged Buzzard, Lesser Kestrel, Red-footed Falcon, Eleonora's Falcon, and Peregrine Falcon.** The same is true for other groups of birds and so we will be prepared to stop and look at a moment's notice on what promises to be an exciting couple of days' birding.

Overnight: [Malemi Organic Hotel](#), or similar, Skala Kalloni

Day 2. Achladeri Pine Forest and Kalloni Gulf wetlands

Lesvos is one of *the* best areas in Europe for finding the localized **Krüper's Nuthatch**, and we have a wonderful chance to get close-up views of this highly sought-after species when we visit Achladeri Pine Forest. While looking for the nuthatch, we might also find **Middle Spotted Woodpecker**, **Short-toed Treecreeper**, the local form of **Long-tailed Tit**, and migratory **Masked Shrike**, **Woodlark**, and **Eastern Black-eared Wheatear**.

In the island's olive groves, such as those in the Achladeri area, we should get good sightings of **Olive-tree Warbler**, and **Eastern Subalpine Warbler**. As we move between the Achladeri Pine Forest and Kalloni Gulf wetlands, our other main site for the day, we may call into a rocky outcrop area with the chance of both **Western Rock Nuthatch** and **Blue Rock Thrush**.



*Found almost exclusively in olive tree stands during the breeding season, we will look for the migrant **Olive-tree Warbler** while in Lesvos.*

The **Kalloni Gulf** is surrounded by different types of coastal wetlands, including a large area of salt pans, making it an ideal place to search for migrating and breeding waterbirds, but plenty of other birds can also be found here too. We will look for breeding **Ruddy Shelduck**, **Black Stork**, **Little Bittern**, **Little Egret**, **Squacco Heron**, **Great Egret**, **Grey Heron**, and **Purple Heron**. Additionally, there can be an excellent variety of shorebirds (waders) present, such as the elegant **Black-winged Stilt**, along with **Eurasian Stone-curlew**, **Little Ringed Plover**, **Kentish Plover**, **Little Stint**, **Curlew Sandpiper**, and **Collared Pratincole**. We may even find the stunning **Spur-winged Lapwing**.

Overnight: [Malemi Organic Hotel](#), or similar, Skala Kalloni



Eastern Subalpine Warbler is one of several attractive warblers possible on this tour.



Eleonora's Falcon will be a target while birding on Lesvos.

Day 3. Kalloni Gulf wetlands, the central island, and Mount Lepetimnos

We will start the day searching nearby wetlands for species such as those mentioned above, as well as others including **Spotted Crake**, **Little Crake**, **Pied Avocet**, **Black-tailed Godwit**, **Wood Sandpiper**, **Marsh Sandpiper**, **Ruff**, **Little Tern**, **Black Tern**, **Whiskered Tern**, **White-winged Tern**, **Common Tern**, and **Black-crowned Night Heron**. We should also see plenty of gorgeous **Greater Flamingos** here, along with several duck species, **Eurasian Spoonbill** and **Glossy Ibis**.

It is also worth scanning the open areas here for **Pallid Harrier**, **Montagu's Harrier**, and **Red-footed Falcon**, arguably three of the best-looking raptors in Europe. We might also encounter flocks of wagtails and pipits, including several subspecies of the **Western Yellow Wagtail** complex, **Citrine Wagtail**, **Tawny Pipit**, and **Red-throated Pipit**.



*We should also see the stunning **Cretzschmar's Bunting** on this tour.*

From here we will make our way to the north of the island around Mount Lepetimnos, where we have the opportunity to see **Masked Shrike**, along with a high diversity of other exciting species, such as **Black Stork**, **Little Owl**, **Eurasian Scops Owl**, **Middle Spotted Woodpecker**, **Woodchat Shrike**, **Sombre Tit**, **Eastern Bonelli's Warbler**, **Olive-tree Warbler**, **Rüppell's Warbler**, **Eastern Subalpine Warbler**, **Western Rock Nuthatch**, **European Pied Flycatcher**, **Collared Flycatcher**, and **Black-headed Bunting**.

Driving the roads we might locate **Chukar Partridge**, **Alpine Swift**, **European Turtle Dove**, **European Roller**, **Lesser Grey Shrike**, **European Red-rumped Swallow**, or **Eurasian Crag Martin**. Mount Lepetimnos is another area that is usually particularly good for raptors, and we will keep a look out for **Short-toed Snake Eagle**, **Eurasian Goshawk**, or **Eleonora's Falcon**.

Overnight: Malemi Organic Hotel, or similar, Skala Kalloni

Day 4. Birding western Lesvos

Lesvos is one of the few islands where you can find **Cinereous Bunting**, and this species will be our main target for the day as we head out to the west of the island on what promises to be an exciting day. Today is often considered the most enjoyable day on Lesvos, due to the amazing scenery and birds possible.

While searching for **Cinereous Bunting**, we will also be able to see a number of species occupying the extensive garrigue areas (garrigue is a low, soft-leaved scrubland ecoregion and plant community found in the Mediterranean) on the western side of the island, with scattered and thin oak forest. We will also look for the gorgeous **Cretzschmar's Bunting**, along with **Little Owl**, **Eastern Orphean Warbler**, **Western Rock Nuthatch**, **Rufous-tailed Scrub Robin**, **Blue Rock Thrush**, **Northern Wheatear**, **Isabelline Wheatear**, **Eastern Black-eared Wheatear**, **Rock Sparrow**, **Common Linnet**, **European Goldfinch**, **European Serin**, and **Cirl Bunting**.



Cinereous Bunting will be a target while birding in the mountains of Lesvos.

Other birds we will be looking for in this general area could include **Chukar Partridge**, **Common Quail**, **Pallid Swift**, **Lesser Kestrel**, **Eleonora's Falcon**, and proper **Rock Doves**, not just the standard 'Feral Pigeons' that are so widespread around the world now, but their wild ancestors, the real deal! There are bound to be many other interesting birds found throughout the day too.

Overnight: [Malemi Organic Hotel](#), or similar, Skala Kalloni

Day 5. Departure

We should have time for some early morning birding around our accommodation before we wrap up our activities and make our way to Lesvos Airport for the flight back home in the afternoon.

Overnight: Not included

Please note that the itinerary cannot be guaranteed as it is only a rough guide and can be changed (usually slightly) due to factors such as availability of accommodation, updated information on the state of accommodation, roads, or birding sites, the discretion of the guides, and other factors. In addition, we sometimes have to use a different guide from the one advertised due to tour scheduling or other factors.

Duration:	5 days
Group Size:	4 - 8
Dates:	06 - 10 May 2027 06 - 10 May 2028
Start:	Mytilene International Airport, Mytilene, Lesvos
End:	Mytilene International Airport, Mytilene, Lesvos
Prices:	€2,650 per person sharing – based on 4 - 8 participants (2027) €2,920 per person sharing – based on 4 - 8 participants (2028)
Single Supplements:	€280 (2027) €310 (2028)

Price includes:

All accommodation based on two sharing (Day 1 to Day 4, as shown)
Meals (from dinner on Day 1 until breakfast on Day 5)
Drinking water – please bring a refillable water bottle
Expert tour leader and local guides
Birdwatching site entrance fees and travel permits
All ground transport and tolls/taxes while on tour, including airport pick-up and drop-off

Price excludes:

Flights to and from Mytilene International Airport, Mytilene, Lesvos
Expenditures due to flight cancellations/delays or other causes beyond our control (force majeure)
Airport transfers if you arrive before the tour starts or depart after the tour ends
Departure tax and visas if required
Any pre- or post-tour accommodation, meals, or birding/sightseeing/monument excursions

Alcoholic, soft drinks, teas, coffees etc. unless provided as part of a meal package (e.g. with breakfast)

Items of a personal nature, e.g. gifts, laundry, internet access, phone calls, etc.

Personal travel insurance

Gratuities (please see our [tipping guidelines blog](#))

Useful information:

During our tour, your guide will be driving you in a comfortable vehicle. The tour does not require a great deal of walking or steep hiking to see the bulk of the birds, however a basic level of fitness is required including the ability to walk on rough terrain at times.