

# Birds of the Mar Menor

This month I will continue my series of articles on songbirds. Actually, half of all birds in existence are classified as songbirds, which accounts for 4,000 species. A songbird is one who uses song to attract a mate or to protect its territory and includes such families as thrushes, larks, wrens, warblers etc. I am focussing on those songbirds that are common around the Mar Menor.

Songbirds will normally chose a perch from which to sing, however, some birds that live in open countryside do not have access to a suitable perch. Therefore they chose to sing in flight, hence the term song-flight. A bird's song-flight is different to its normal flying pattern. Male birds normally use it, in order to attract females. During this song-flight the bird will sing loudly and generally show off to attract the attention of any females in the area. Song-flight can also used to demonstrate the extent of a birds territory.



My chosen bird this week is the Sardinian Warbler. There are a couple that frequently visit my garden. Unfortunately one took a high-speed dive into my conservatory window. It survived, I am glad to say and while it was sitting in a rather dazed fashion on my terrace I was able to get an unusually close look at it.

Sardinian Warblers are common around the Mediterranean but rarely seen further north. They are found in areas of scrub with scattered bushes and stones. They are normally seen in pairs or small family groups, but not in large flocks.

The song of the Sardinian Warbler is a rapid rattling chatter, in fact rather unmusical! Its flight is most unusual, it appears to bounce along in the air rather than glide. As far as I am aware it does not exhibit a song-flight though some other warblers do.

Next time we will look at some other warblers, including the Willow Warbler and Dartford Warbler. If you would like to take a look at any of the previous articles that I have written, please go to: <http://www.aqua-adicta.co.uk/articles.html>. There you will find articles on many birds common to this area including; flamingos, gulls, hoopoe, terns, avocet etc. etc

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