

**FIELD REPORT**

**GREECE:**  
**CIRCUMNAVIGATION OF THE PELOPONNESE**  
**Aboard the *Harmony V***

**MAY 25–JUNE 3, 2022**

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## **GREECE: CIRCUMNAVIGATION OF THE PELOPONNESE**

### **BY BARRY LYON**

Following successful circumnavigations of Greece's Peloponnese Peninsula in 2010 and 2018, we had every reason to anticipate an equally successful voyage in 2022. While we would indeed experience an enjoyable cruise, our triumphs did not come without some adversity. Only a week before the start of our trip, we received notice that the Canal of Corinth would remain closed due to landslides that had occurred within its interior the previous summer. This development led to a significant re-thinking of our cruise route, given that we could not perform the circumnavigation without transiting the canal. The second issue concerned COVID-19, specifically the tension that accompanied the threat of quarantine should any of us test positive (which we did not!)

Despite these challenges, we made it to all of the most important historical sites promised in the itinerary, and recorded a number of wonderful birds. One unforeseen benefit of the re-worked cruise route was our ability to include the Venetian site of Methoni and the famous Greek site of Corinth.

The Peloponnese is a starkly beautiful part of Greece and a region that holds a number of the country's most important historical sites (think Olympia and Delphi, for starters). Complementing the rich history of these sun-splashed lands is a compelling avifauna. Together these attributes combine to make the Peloponnese a richly attractive tour destination. The ability to explore the region by ship with an excellent staff is yet another enticement. Cruising the beautiful coastline in the comfort of our vessel provided a warm reminder of how nice it was not to change accommodations nightly, and instead simply move from port to port immersing into the history of ancient Greece while pursuing its modern-day birdlife.

Our route included calls in Nafplion—Greece's first modern capital, preceding Athens—and the gateway to the major historical sites of Mycenae and Epidaurus. In the former, we took in a guided tour of the ancient citadel and museum, while at the latter we beheld the ancient theater, almost perfectly preserved some 2,500 years after its construction. Here too were standout birds: Short-toed Snake-Eagle, Little Owl, Eastern Black-eared Wheatear, and Cirl Bunting.

From Nafplion we made our way to Pylos, on the opposite side of the Peloponnese, where we would spend parts of two days birding, touring, and sightseeing. A walking tour through Nestor's Palace offered a window onto Homer's Greece of three thousand years ago, and a visit to the Ottoman fortress above Pylos was a highlight from comparatively recent times. A first for this program, some of our guests also visited the Venetian site of Methoni, south of town. To the pleasure of the birders among us, nearby Dinari Lagoon held prizes such as Black-winged Stilt, Zitting Cisticola, Corn Bunting, and Sardinian, Cetti's, and Eastern Olivaceous warblers.

From Pylos, we retraced our route to the southeast and the city of Kalamata, jump-off point for vaunted Olympia. Under the superb leadership of our local guide, Dimitra Potsika, we enjoyed an informative tour of the site, punctuated by sightings of Eleonora's Falcons hunting dragonflies overhead and a cooperative Middle Spotted Woodpecker working the trees around us. Back aboard our vessel, we cruised back around the end of the Peloponnese and up the peninsula's eastern side—with sightings of Cory's "Scopoli's" and Yelkouan shearwaters en route—in advance of our visits to Corinth, a powerful city-state in ancient Greece that met its sad fate at the hands of the Romans, and Delphi, the renowned home of the Delphic Oracle and a ruins complex set amid majestic mountains and plunging valleys. It was here, while contemplating the distant past and its ancient Greeks, whose civilization had long since come to a close, we could peer at the present with the help of our binoculars, through which our gaze fell on the avian likes of Woodchat Shrike, Sombre Tit, and Blue Rock-Thrush.

The sightseeing, historical interpretation, and birding opportunities would have made this trip captivating enough, but the opportunity to travel with the renowned Dr. Larry Wolff and hear his lectures on the world of Homeric Greece were a huge bonus. And could we have asked for a better local guide than Dimitra Potsika? Of the cultural guides we've worked with here, Dimitra stands alone for her massive knowledge of her country—of which she is infinitely proud—from history and mythology to religion, culture, and pretty much anything else having to do with Greece.

## ITINERARY

**May 25, 2023** – Participants on **Greece: Circumnavigation of the Peloponnese**, departed home today aboard international flights to Athens.

**May 26** – Flights arrived in Athens throughout the day, with guests transferred upon arrival to the Divani Acropolis hotel. This evening, we gathered in one of the hotel's meeting rooms for a tour welcome and orientation. Victor and Barry introduced the VENT staff, and we all enjoyed the opportunity to meet our fellow travelers and hear the plans for the days to come.

**May 27** – Our Greece cruise programs typically start with part of a day in Athens followed by transfer to the port town of Piraeus for embarkation. This year was no different. Given our hotel's close proximity to the Acropolis and its immemorial marble monuments, our program kicked off with a morning at the nearby Acropolis Museum, a fabulous state of the art facility that showcases a vast and beautiful collection of sculptures, friezes, ceramics, and other vestiges from first millennium B.C. Athens. In the late morning, we departed for Piraeus, a short journey across the city, where, upon arrival, we enjoyed an excellent lunch outdoors. Afterward, a short driving tour of the port region ultimately led us to the marina where our vessel, *Harmony V*, awaited. Upon embarkation, we received a formal welcome from the captain and ship staff before settling into our cabins. The remainder of the day was spent outside, on the deck, enjoying pre-dinner snacks and drinks while cruising into the calming

waters of the Saronic Gulf. Our destination this evening was Nafplion, the lovely coastal town located at the head of the Argolic Gulf on the Peloponnese Peninsula.

**May 28** – Today we wasted no time digging into the heart of the program, as we would visit two major archaeological sites. Departing the ship after breakfast, we headed directly for the ancient site of Mycenae, where we would spend the duration of the morning. Mycenae was a civilization that flourished from approximately 1500–1100 B.C. and most notably was the location of the Atreid dynasty that sired the legendary Agamemnon, who was most famous as the commander of the Greek armies in their invasion of Troy. The highlights of a visit to Mycenae include a monumental beehive tomb, the remains of the ancient metropolis and nearby tholos tombs, Lion’s Gate, and on-site museum. Our exploration of the site did allow for some time for birding, and among the spoils of our time here were Common Buzzard, Eurasian Kestrel, Western Rock Nuthatch, Eastern Black-eared Wheatear, and Cirl Bunting. Upon our return to Nafplion in the late morning, guests had the option of walking into the town for a bit of shopping and exploration, or joining a short birding jaunt along the gulfshore. In the afternoon, we reboarded the coach for the fairly short transfer to the archaeological site of Epidauros. Whereas Mycenae pre-dated the Classic era of ancient Greece by many centuries, Epidauros was a Classic era site that reached its zenith in the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. Today, Epidauros is best-known for its remarkably well-preserved theater, but in fact, Epidauros was the center of healing and medicine in the world of ancient Greece. Our visit to the site included the ancient theater and a chance to wander among the ruins of the Askleion, where medicine and the science of healing were practiced. Back in Nafplion, guests had the opportunity to go into town after dinner and take in the nighttime ambience.

**May 29** – After cruising through the night, we awoke to find ourselves off the southern tip of the Peloponnese, en route to Pylos on the southwestern coast. The transit from Nafplion was lengthy, and we would spend the first half of the day completing the trip. We reached Pylos in the early afternoon. At this time, guests had the option of joining a birding excursion to Dinari Lagoon, on the north side of Navarino Bay, or simply spend time exploring the small town.

**May 30** – Pylos is the gateway community to the archaeological site of Nestor’s Palace, situated about forty-five minutes to the north. Nestor was another figure from the epic poetry of Homer, a king and a wise man who ruled in this part of the Peloponnese. The site is well-developed and showcases an elevated walkway that allows visitors to gaze on the palace complex from above. Nestor’s Palace is set amid rural, largely undeveloped surroundings and for this reason is a remarkably good area for birding. Upon returning to Pylos, our next activity was a tour of the Ottoman castle (Niokastro), set on a hill that affords sweeping views of the sea on one side and Pylos down below on the other. Here, we wandered among the buildings and small on-site museums, while others took the opportunity to enjoy a bit of birding. The afternoon included options for a historical site-seeing excursion or a return birding trip to Dinari Lagoon. Those opting for the former visited the Venetian fortress of Methoni, an experience that brought high praise. Highlights from the birding outing included several species of warblers and a few waterbirds. Afterward, the birders made a return visit to the Niokastro for another

opportunity to enjoy a bit of birding amid pleasing surroundings. *Harmony V* departed Pylos during the night and set a course back to the southwest, bound for the city of Kalamata.

**May 31** – Due to the closure of the Canal of Corinth, we were not able to reach the famed site of Olympia by traditional means, which consists of cruising farther north along the western side of the Peloponnese and disembarking in the town of Pelops in the Gulf of Corinth. Instead, this year *Harmony V* backtracked to Kalamata in advance of an overland trip to Olympia. The ship arrived in port in the early morning hours, which allowed us to reach Olympia after a transfer of moderate length. We would spend the entire day at the site, touring in the company of our amazing guide Dimitra Potsika. Our program included time in the exquisite on-site museum, a tour of the archaeological park, lunch on a hillside restaurant outside of town, and a visit to the museum of the ancient Olympic games.

**June 1** – After returning to the ship on the previous afternoon, we embarked on a transit back around the end of the Peloponnese and up the full length of the eastern coastline of the peninsula. Our destination was Nafplion, once again. The journey was lengthy enough to require a full morning at sea, which was certainly relaxing enough and which included seawatching from the deck and a historical presentation from Larry Wolff. Upon arrival in Nafplion, we boarded a coach for a trip to Corinth, another of the famous sites dating from antiquity. Interestingly, this year marked the first time we've visited this site, which, again, was due to the closure of the Canal of Corinth and our inability to completely circumnavigate the entire peninsula. Our tour of the site lasted for the duration of the afternoon and included the on-site museum. We returned to the ship about an hour before dinner.

**June 2** – This morning, our final full day of the voyage, we set our sights on Delphi, among the most famous of sites from the world of ancient Greece. Reaching Delphi required an overland transfer by coach, which we accomplished with no difficulty. Delphi is a spectacular site set amid spectacular surroundings. Our time here included a walk among the ruins and time in the on-site museum. As is characteristic of the other archaeological parks in southern Greece, Delphi offers opportunities for birding while exploring the ruins. Woodchat Shrike, Blue Rock-Thrush, Common Chaffinch, and European Greenfinch were some of the prizes from our time here. After lunch, we commenced the return journey to the ship.

**June 3** – *Harmony V* timed its nighttime cruise time so that we arrived back in Piraeus in the early morning. Guests prepared either for disembarkation and transfer to the airport, or to begin the **Athens Extension**.

## **BIRDS**

Taxonomy follows eBird/Clements, Cornell Lab of Ornithology version 2022.

### **Pigeons & Doves (*Columbidae*)**

Rock (Feral) Pigeon (*Columba livia*) – Common in cities and towns; seen every day of the trip.

Eurasian Collared-Dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*) – Common in cities and towns and at all

archaeological sites; seen every day of the trip.

### **Swifts (*Apodidae*)**

Alpine Swift (*Apus melba*) – Seen on both days we were in the Pylos area, especially around the port and at the Ottoman castle.

Common Swift (*Apus apus*) – This is a common species in Greece during the warmer months of the year. We saw this bird at all locations from May 28–June 2.

Pallid Swift (*Apus pallidus*) – A couple of individuals were seen around the port at Pylos, among the more numerous Common Swifts, on May 30.

### **Stilts & Avocets (*Recurvirostridae*)**

Black-winged Stilt (*Himantopus himantopus*) – A few individuals were seen in the wetlands of Dinari Lagoon, north of Pylos, where the species regularly breeds, on the afternoon of the 29<sup>th</sup>.

### **Plovers & Lapwings (*Charadriidae*)**

Kentish Plover (*Charadrius alexandrinus*) – A couple of individuals were discovered along the gulfshore during our late-morning birding excursion out of Nafplion on the 28<sup>th</sup>.

### **Gulls, Terns & Skimmers (*Laridae*)**

Yellow-legged Gull (*Larus michahellis*) – This is the most common gull species in the Mediterranean during the warmer months. This bird was seen well on every day of the trip.

Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*) – A couple of individuals were seen along the coastline during our morning birding excursion out of Nafplion on the 28<sup>th</sup>. This species breeds regularly in small numbers at this location.

### **Shearwaters & Petrels (*Procellariidae*)**

Cory's Shearwater (*Calonectris Diomedea*) – This species breeds on small islands throughout the Mediterranean basin, but is most common from Italy east. The birds of this group are not of the widely occurring nominate race (*borealis*) of the open Atlantic Ocean, but rather are of the distinct race (*diomedea*). Some authorities feel strongly that the birds of this group should be recognized as a distinct species “Scopoli's Shearwater,” but this split is not yet recognized. We saw numbers of these birds on three days of the trip: out of Piraeus on the first afternoon at sea (May 27), and again at sea on the 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> while en route to Pylos and back, respectively.

Yelkouan Shearwater (*Puffinus yelkouan*) – The small Yelkouan Shearwater is a specialty bird of the eastern Mediterranean, where it breeds on small islands at scattered locations. We saw the bird at sea on two days, May 27 and 29. In particular, the sightings on the 27<sup>th</sup> were especially memorable as the birds were numerous and seen in direct comparison with the much larger “Scopoli's” Shearwaters.

### **Herons, Egrets & Bitterns (*Ardeidae*)**

Gray Heron (*Ardea cinerea*) – A couple of birds at Dinari Lagoon, out of Pylos, on the morning

birding excursion of the 30<sup>th</sup> were the only ones seen.

Little Egret (*Egretta garzetta*) – This widespread bird was seen on four days of the trip: along the gulfshore out of Nafplion on the 28<sup>th</sup>, at Dinari Lagoon out of Pylos on the excursions of the 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>; and another bird on the excursion to Olympia on the 31<sup>st</sup>.

### **Hawks, Eagles & Kites (*Accipitridae*)**

Short-toed Snake-Eagle (*Circaetus gallicus*) – This beautiful eagle was seen on two occasions: the first sighting was of a bird over the archaeological site of Epidauros on the 28<sup>th</sup>, while the second sighting occurred at Delphi on June 2. The latter sighting was the superior of the two in terms of quality of views. We were at lunch following a morning at the archaeological park and museum, when a bird drifted up from the valley directly below where the restaurant was located. At one point, most of us enjoyed remarkable eye-level views of the bird before it rose up and out of sight.

Common Buzzard (*Buteo buteo*) – This species breeds throughout the region, and individuals were seen every day of the trip between May 27–June 2.

### **Owls (*Strigidae*)**

Little Owl (*Athene Noctua*) – A single bird was seen among the ruins of the citadel at the archaeological park of Mycenae on the 28<sup>th</sup>.

### **Hoopoes (*Upupidae*)**

Eurasian Hoopoe (*Upupa epops*) – We caught up with this highly charismatic bird toward the end of the trip, when we enjoyed good views of individuals at the archaeological site of Corinth on June 1 and the next day at Delphi, June 2.

### **Woodpeckers (*Picidae*)**

Middle Spotted Woodpecker (*Dendrocoptes medius*) – A most pleasing sighting was that of a single individual of this species at Olympia during our tour of the archaeological park on the morning of the 31<sup>st</sup>.

### **Falcons & Caracaras (*Falconidae*)**

Eurasian Kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*) – A handsome bird is the Eurasian Kestrel, and a species that proved fairly common over our trip; seen daily from May 28–June 2.

Eleonora's Falcon (*Falco eleonora*) – One of the trip's great birding highlights was the prolonged study of a group of Eleonora's Falcons over Olympia during our tour of the archaeological park on the morning of the 31<sup>st</sup>. This species occurs in the Eastern Mediterranean region only as a breeding bird before the entire population migrates to Madagascar and southeast Africa during the northern winter. Interestingly, the bird does not nest until the autumn, the reason for which is that its primary food source in that season is southbound songbirds migrating out of Europe toward Africa. During the spring and summer, the birds prey largely on dragonflies, and it was a large dragonfly emergence over Olympia that drew the birds to the site and thus to our attention. What a delight!

### **Shrikes (*Laniidae*)**

Woodchat Shrike (*Lanius senator*) – A pair of beautiful Woodchat Shrikes was seen well at the archaeological park at Delphi on the morning of June 2.

### **Crows, Jays & Magpies (*Corvidae*)**

Eurasian Jay (*Garrulus glandarius*) – On the one hand, this bird was recorded on five days of the trip from a variety of locations, indicating its status as common. On the other hand, it was actually seen well by everyone only on one occasion, and that was at the archeological site of Corinth on the afternoon of June 1.

Eurasian Magpie (*Pica pica*) – This species is among the most frequently seen birds in southern Greece, as demonstrated by the fact it was recorded on every day of the trip.

Eurasian Jackdaw (*Corvus monedula*) – Jackdaws were seen on five days of the trip. Although not exactly common, we did not really struggle to find the species either.

Hooded Crow (*Corvus cornix*) – A fairly common bird seen in low numbers daily from May 28–June 2.

Common Raven (*Corvus corax*) – Ravens were seen on May 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>. Our “best” sightings were of the individuals flying over the hills behind the port town of Pylos on the 29<sup>th</sup>.

### **Tits, Chickadees & Titmice (*Paridae*)**

Sombre Tit (*Poecile lugubris*) – The Sombre Tit is an inconspicuous and often secretive bird of dry woodland and scrub in the Eastern Mediterranean region. It seems to be a lower density species and, for that reason, is often overlooked. We were fortunate this year to see one or two birds very well at the archaeological park at Delphi on the morning of June 2. A few of the group also saw the bird at Pylos during our tour of Nestor’s Palace on the morning of the 30<sup>th</sup>.

Eurasian Blue Tit (*Cyanistes caeruleus*) – The sweet-looking, colorful Blue Tit was seen well at Nestor’s Palace, our of Pylos, on the morning of the 30<sup>th</sup>, and again the next day Olympia.

Great Tit (*Parus major*) – This species is the most common and widespread of the European tits. We recorded the birds on four days: at Mycenae and Epidaurus on the 28<sup>th</sup>, Nestor’s Palace on the 30<sup>th</sup>, Olympia on the 31<sup>st</sup>, and at Delphi on June 2.

Eurasian Penduline-Tit – Late in the morning of the 28<sup>th</sup>, we offered a birding excursion to the gulfshore, out of Nafplion following our return from Mycenae. Among the highlights was the discovery of a Penduline Tit at a nest-site among the low trees near the water’s edge.

### **Larks (*Alaudidae*)**

Crested Lark (*Galerida cristata*) – This widespread bird inhabits low-lying locations all around the Mediterranean Basin. We enjoyed many fine views of this bird on three consecutive days from May 28–30: along the gulfshore out of Nafplion on the morning of the 28<sup>th</sup>, at Dinari Lagoon out of Pylos on the afternoon of the 29<sup>th</sup>, and again at Dinari Lagoon on the morning of the 30<sup>th</sup>.

### **Cisticolas & Allies (*Cisticolidae*)**



Zitting Cisticola (*Cisticola juncidis*) – This little sprite of a bird was seen well at Dinari Lagoon, out of Pylos, on the afternoon of the 29<sup>h</sup>. The unusual name of “Zitting” is derived from the “zit” call issued by the bird non-stop when performing its bounding courtship display.

### **Reed Warblers & Allies (*Acrocephalidae*)**

Eastern Olivaceous Warbler (*Iduna pallida*) – This rather non-descript warbler is a fairly common, but often hard to see inhabitant of dry woodland and shrub in low-lying areas. We enjoyed excellent views of a couple of individuals at Dinari Lagoon on the afternoon of the 29<sup>th</sup>. It was heard only on our return visit on the morning of the 30<sup>th</sup>.

### **Martins & Swallows (*Hirundinidae*)**

Barn Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*) – A common bird in the region, individuals were seen daily from May 28–June 2 at a diversity of locations.

Red-rumped Swallow (*Cecropis daurica*) – This lovely bird is a regular but uncommon resident across much of southern Europe during the warmer months. We recorded the bird on four consecutive days from May 30–June 2: at Nestor’s Palace, out of Pylos, on the morning of the 30<sup>th</sup>, Olympia on the 31<sup>st</sup>, Corinth on June 1, and again the next day at Delphi.

Common House-Martin (*Delichon urbicum*) – A common bird seen on five days of the trip at a variety of locations.

### **Bush Warblers & Allies (*Scotocercidae*)**

Cetti’s Warbler (*Cettia cetti*) – Cetti’s Warbler is a secretive denizen of dense brush and woodland, and almost always in the vicinity of water. The bird was heard but not seen on our visit to the gulfshore, out of Nafplion, on the morning of the 28<sup>th</sup>, then seen well at Dinari Lagoon, out of Pylos, on the afternoon of the 29<sup>th</sup>, and again on our return visit on the morning of the 30<sup>th</sup>.

### **Sylviid Warblers, Parrotbills & Allies (*Sylviidae*)**

Sardinian Warbler (*Carruca melanocephala*) – An attractive and common little bird that abounds across the Mediterranean region; we saw the bird well on both visits to Dinari Lagoon, north of Pylos, on the 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>, respectively. Some of us also saw it at Olympia on the 31<sup>st</sup>.

### **Nuthatches (*Sittidae*)**

Western Rock Nuthatch (*Sitta neumayer*) – This highly charismatic bird is typically found in areas in with large boulders and open ground. In southern Greece, it so happens that the monumental stonework in the various archaeological parks serves as ideal habitat, and thus come the nuthatches. We enjoyed super views of this species at Myceane on the morning of the 28<sup>th</sup> and again at Delphi on the morning of June 2.

### **Treecreepers (*Certhiidae*)**

Short-toed Treecreeper (*Certhia brachydactyla*) – A few of the group finally observed this bird

among the tall pines outside the Museum of the Ancient Olympic Games in Olympia on the afternoon of the 31<sup>st</sup>. Unfortunately, we ran out of time on the day and were unable to get most of the group to where the bird was located.

### **Thrushes & Allies (*Turdidae*)**

Eurasian Blackbird (*Turdus merula*) – This widespread handsome bird was seen on every day of the trip from May 27–31; recorded in a variety of locations.

### **Old World Flycatchers (*Muscicapidae*)**

Spotted Flycatcher (*Muscicapa striata*) – This bird was seen very well repeatedly in the oak-shrub woodland around the archaeological park at Nestor's Palace, north of Pylos, on the morning of the 30<sup>th</sup>. Other were seen at Delphi on the morning of the 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Blue Rock-Thrush (*Monticola solitarius*) – Toward the end of the trip, we finally caught up with this bird at the archaeological park at Delphi (June 2). Here, the jumble of rocks and monumental carved stonework rest on a backdrop of steep and rocky hillside, presenting perfect habitat for this bird, as it does for the Western Rock Nuthatch.

Whinchat (*Saxicola rubetra*) – At least two individuals were in the coastal scrub along the gulfshore out of Nafplion on the morning of May 28. This species does not breed in the region, and the birds we saw were clearly passage migrants.

Eastern Black-eared Wheatear (*Oenanthe melanoleuca*) – This handsome species was seen on two days of the trip: at the ruins of Mycenae on May 28, and again at Delphi on June 2.

### **Old World Sparrows (*Passeridae*)**

House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) – A common and widespread resident species; seen on every day of the trip.

### **Wagtails & Pipits (*Motacillidae*)**

Western Yellow Wagtail (*Motacilla flava*) – We enjoyed views of a foraging bird along the gulfshore out of Nafplion during our late-morning birding excursion on May 28. This individual was probably a local breeder.

### **Finches, Euphonias & Allies (*Fringillidae*)**

Common Chaffinch (*Fringilla coelebs*) – A widespread bird, and a beautiful one to boot, was recorded on three days of the trip: at Nestor's Palace on May 30, Olympia on the 31<sup>st</sup>, and at Delphi on June 2.

Eurasian Linnet (*Linaria cannabina*) – The presence of linnets in the Pylos area was something of a surprise. These widespread attractive little finches are often enigmatic in their movements. Seemingly possible anywhere, this bird may appear with equal likelihood at the tops of mountains or along the coast. We saw them on May 30 and 31 at Dinari Lagoon and Nestor's Palace, respectively.

European Greenfinch (*Chloris chloris*) – A common and lovely bird, greenfinches were recorded every day of the trip from May 28–June 2.

European Goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*) – This bird was equally as common and widespread as the previous species; recorded on every day of the trip from May 28–June 2.

European Serin (*Serinus serinus*) – A few serins were seen foraging and performing flights displays among the pines at Olympia on May 31. Not an easy bird to find in lowland southern Greece.

### **Old World Buntings (*Emberizidae*)**

Corn Bunting (*Emberiza calandra*) – The area around Dinari Lagoon, north of Pylos, is a reliable spot for this species in the spring and early summer. We noted several birds during our visits to this location on May 29 and 30.

Cirl Bunting (*Emberiza cirlus*) – We enjoyed excellent views of this beautiful bird on three occasions, all at archaeological sites. The first sighting was at Mycenae on the 28<sup>th</sup>; the second was at Nestor's Palace, out of Pylos, on the 30, and the last was at Delphi on the morning of June 2.

## **MAMMALS**

Taxonomy arranged in accordance with *Mammals of Europe*, by David W. Macdonald and Priscilla Barrett, Princeton Field Guides; Princeton University Press, 2002.

### **Marine Dolphins (*Delphinidae*)**

Bottlenose Dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*)

## **BUTTERFLIES**

Taxonomy arranged in accordance with *Butterflies of Europe*, by Tom Tolman and Richard Lewington; Princeton Field Guides, Princeton University Press, 1997.

Small Bath White (*Pontia daplidice*)

Balkan Marbled White (*Melanargia larissa*)

Cleopatra (*Gonepteryx cleopatra*)

Large White (*Pieris brassicae*)

Lattice Brown (*Kirinia roxelana*)