

## Madrid - 19 Dec 2015



Rob Gordijn & Helen Rijkes (gordijnrob@gmail.com)

When checking the flight to Brazil we found an option with excellent flight times, but with a long lay-over in Madrid on the way there. This provided an opportunity to try for Spanish Imperial Eagle a lifer for Helen.

### Logistics

Friday evening we flew from Amsterdam to Madrid, rented a car with Avis (a Fiat 500x) and drove to our hotel (Zarzuela park hotel, booked through booking.com). The next day we drove to the close by El Pardo and saw some nice species (see below) in a short morning. At 11am we drove back to the airport (a 20 min. drive from the airport).

### Birding at El Pardo

This is a park area below a dam/reservoir just north of Madrid (we also saw city busses, so it is possible to bird with public transport). The area around the dam is apparently closed off for the public, but we walked around in a park-like area just south of the dam and saw at least 3 Spanish Imperial Eagles from this viewing point (40°32'5.60"N, 3°47'18.25"W) in quick succession. Earlier in the morning we tried a higher area near a restaurant (40°31'13.70"N, 3°47'36.16"W). We saw Azure-winged Magpies and some tits and Firecrest here. Later in the morning we saw an Imperial Eagle soaring above this area from the park.

### Birding list

- **Spanish Imperial Eagle** – *Aquila adalberti*: 3+, around 11.00 raptors started flying and we soon had 4 sightings in quick succession.
- **Iberian Green Woodpecker** – *Picus sharpie*: 1 seen at hotel ground, and more heard in El Pardo. Can be a difficult species on a regular Spain trip, but the bird is common in Madrid.
- **Iberian Magpie** – *Cyanopica cooki*: 10+, a group seen near the restaurant area;
- **Spotless Starling** – *Sturnus unicolor*: A few near our hotel.
- **Crested Lark** – *Galerida cristata pallida*: El Pardo
- **European Crested Tit** – *Lophophanes cristatus weigoldi*: El Pardo
- **Coal Tit** – *Periparus ater vieirae*: El Pardo
- **Cetti's Warbler** – *Cettia cetti cetti*: El Pardo
- **Common Firecrest** – *Regulus ignicapilla ignicapilla*: El Pardo