Introduction

After reading a report by other Dutch Birders in 2011 (see literature) we formed the idea to copy their trip for a long weekend of snow, German beer and a couple of lifers. We decided to go there during Easter and were joined by Marten Hornsveld and Vivian Jacobs.

Itinerary

18-Apr  Left Utrecht @17.00 – drove to Erlangen (near Nuremburg)

Drove to Mittenwald, first cable car (09.00) up the Karwendelbahn, last car down
19-Apr  (15.45) than drove to Oberausen and birded Tatzelwurm for an hour.

Drove to Blindau, walked, back at Blindau 13.00, lunch in Oberaudorf, rest of
20-Apr  afternoon Tatzelwurm

21-Apr  Tatzelwurm until 11.00, drove back tot Utrecht (arrival 19.30)

Although spending an entire day on the Karwendel we did not find any Rock Ptarmigan, the views of the mountains were stellar though and the Wallcreepers were pretty good too. We flushed Capercaillie near Blindau and flushed a couple more near Tatzelwurm.

Practicalities

Weather

On our first morning fresh snow covered the valley and the mountains, on the Karwendel 20 centimeters of fresh snow had fallen, covering the ‘bowl’ usually good for the Ptarmigans. We had sunshine the whole day. Day 2 started with some drizzle but it cleared later on with spring temperatures, continueing on our final morning.
**Travelling**

We drove with our own car with inbuild navigation. We drove through Austria without a vignet (costs 8,50) in hindsight we should have bought one, the fines are steep (120 euros), although we avoided those.

**Eating & Sleeping**

We booked our hotels in advance, our first night we decided to sleep in Erlangen in a Ibis hotel. The next two nights we spent in the Hotel Lambacher in Oberaudorf (45 euros per room per night)

**Cost**

The weekend cost us 200 euro per person.

**Literature**

We got our idea for this trip via this report [http://www.dutchbirding.nl/news.php?id=587](http://www.dutchbirding.nl/news.php?id=587) (in Dutch). Some further specific sites for species was found on [http://www.observation.org](http://www.observation.org)

**Visited Sites**

A complete list of GPS points of sites and specific birds is available here [http://goo.gl/gCHfzy](http://goo.gl/gCHfzy), and can also be requested in e.g. .xml (for Google Earth), .gpx (for GPS devices and GPS software) format.

**Karwendelspitze**

Cable cars run up to the mountain hut (from Mittenwald, [http://www.karwendelbahn.de/](http://www.karwendelbahn.de/)). The Ptarmigans should be in the ‘bowl’ on the right hand side from the restaurant, but weren’t there. Keep immediately right (under the tube-formed building) and climb the slope for 50 meters for Wallcreeper, additional birds were seen at the end of the tunnel (entered from within the buildings), and along the panoramic route (from the pass on the far end of the bowl). We had Snow Finch there as well. Alpine Accentor was heard only at the end of the tunnel.

**Forests near Blindau**

Park here (47°39’38.28”N, 12°28’45.55”E), walk up the steep concrete road and turn right just before the mountain hut, we got Hazel Grouse on the first bit. After a kilometer or so the road becomes a trail (47°38’16.80”N, 12°29’42.00”E) and just after this we flushed a Capercaillie from the treetops. Higher on (knee-deep snow) we saw quite a few Capercaillie tracks and found Three-toed Woodpecker.

**Tatzelwurm**

At this site near Oberauser (park here: 47°40’45.19”N, 12° 4’56.82”E ), with much easier walking than at Blindau, we did not find white-backed woodpecker (apparently in 2011 near the parking area), but did find Three-toed woodpecker and lekking Capercaillies. We only heard them lekking, and flushed a couple of birds.
Species:
No complete list, just the noteworthy species (for us).

Hazel Grouse - *Tetrastes bonasia rupestris*
20-4, 2, Blindau, flushed from roadsides;

Western Capercaillie - *Tetrao urogallus crossirostris*
20-4, 2, Blindau, flushed from treetops;
21-4, 4+, Tatzelwurm;
*On our last morning we heard at least one bird lekking, and flushed 3 birds a bit further;*

Golden Eagle - *Aquila chrysaetos chrysaetos*
19-4, 1, Karwendel;

Eurasian Three-toed Woodpecker - *Picoides tridactylus alpinus*
20-4, 2, Blindau,
21-4, 2+, Tatzelwurm;

Black Woodpecker - *Dryocopus martius martius*
20-4, 1+, Blindau,
21-4, 1+, Tatzelwurm;

Grey-headed Woodpecker - *Picus canus canus*
19-4, 2, Tatzelwurm;
21-4, 1+, Tatzelwurm;

Alpine Chough - *Pyrrhocorax graculus graculus*
19-4, 20+, Karwendel;
*Common in afternoon, none early morning*

Willow Tit - *Poecile montanus montanus*
20-4, 4+, Blindau,

Wallcreeper - *Tichodroma muraria muraria*
19-4, 6+, Karwendel;

Ring Ouzel - *Turdus torquatus alpestris*
20-4, ++, Blindau,

White-winged Snowfinch - *Montifringilla nivalis nivalis*
19-4, +, Karwendel;

Alpine Accentor - *Prunella collaris collaris*
19-4, HO, Karwendel;