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December 8, 2015

Winged Wonderland: Avian Symbolism and Seasonality in the Villa of Livia Garden Room

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Abstract

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Augustus, first Emperor of Rome, created a visual language designed to demonstrate his commitment to traditional Roman civic virtues and creation of a new Golden Age of Rome. The painted garden in the house of his wife, Livia, is an idealized depiction of his new era of peace and prosperity expressed via specific species of plants and birds.

Previous research on the fresco has demonstrated the plants depicted would not have been able to bloom and fruit at the same time of year, but in Livia's garden room, all of the plants are at their peak. This theme is traditionally interpreted by scholars as a symbolic illustration of the fertile and prosperous reign of Augustus. However, there had not yet been any extensive discussion of the painted animals. The various species of birds present in the fresco were identified, along with their migration routes, so that it may be seen if all of the species represented could have been together in Rome in the same season.

21 out of 69 total birds were re-identified from the original classification, and the current species now include a Cattle Egret and a Purple Gallinule, each of which used to be classified as Pigeons under the old identification. All of the birds are spring and summer visitors to Italy or live there year round, setting the reign of Augustus in a particularly lush time of the year normally teeming with floral and faunal abundance. Virgil, Ovid, and Horace write on the Golden Age of Augustus, where all is eternal spring, and the migration patterns of the bird species depicted in the garden room of the Villa of Livia link these textual and artistic messages.

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Chapter 1: Site and Prior Research

Villa at Prima Porta

Nine miles outside of Rome in the ancient town of Prima Porta, Livia Drusilla, the future wife of Augustus, received an omen while at her estate. Pliny the Elder recounts how an eagle dropped a hen of “remarkable whiteness” (*gallinam conspicui candoris*) into her lap.¹ The hen had not been harmed by the fall or the eagle, and was miraculously carrying a sprig of laurel covered with berries. Augurs ordered that the hen and its offspring be tended “with religious care,” and that the laurel sprig be planted at the location where the miracle had occurred, the site known thereafter as the *Villa ad Gallinas Albas* (“to/towards the white hens”).² According to Pliny, the laurel sprig multiplied into a grove that was closely associated with the Caesars. Augustus carried branches from the original plant in his triumphs, and all of the succeeding Julio-Claudian emperors continued this tradition, planting their laurel branch back in the grove after carrying it in the triumph.³ The trees were so intimately tied to the lives of the Caesars that supposedly “just before the death of each [emperor], the tree that he had planted withered,” and Suetonius reported that in Nero’s last year, the entire grove and all of the chickens died.⁴

This sign appeared when Livia was engaged to the then-Octavian while six months pregnant with her ex-husband’s child. Her impending marriage was controversial, but the omen

¹ Pliny the Elder *Natural History* 15.40. Suetonius also describes the omen in *Lives of the Caesars Galba* 1.

² That the hen should have offspring at all is significant, as both Varro and Columella recommend red hens for egg-laying, with Columella going so far as to advise against investing in white hens because they are unprolific. Varro *De Re Rustica* 3.9.4, Columella *De Re Rustica* 8.2.7.

³ Pliny *Natural History* 15.40.

⁴ Suetonius *Galba* 1, translated by B. Kellum in Kellum 1994.

of fertility and growth was a demonstration that the union would be auspicious.⁵ The same laurel that Augustus held in his martial triumph also served as a reminder of his marital one.⁶

The building containing the garden room was first excavated in 1863.⁷ The Villa of Livia complex has been excavated several times since then, and notable finds include the famous Augustus of Prima Porta statue, originally located near the underground garden room.⁸ More recent excavations have found evidence of an artificially leveled terrace framed on three sides by a Π-shaped portico where the actual laurel grove may have stood.⁹ The terrace assuredly held a garden of some kind, which can be inferred by the fragments of 17 terracotta planting pots and traces of stake holes.¹⁰ Different species of mollusks found in separate regions of the terrace excavation support the theoretical plan, where a shady area with a large amount of human activity encircled a dry, open space in the center.¹¹ This elevated terrace would have had an excellent view of 6th to 4th century BCE Latin shrines and sanctuaries, and the sanctuaries of Iuppiter Lariaris and Diana Nemorensis in the facing Alban mountains were both still of major

⁵Kellum, B. A. 1994. "The Construction of a Landscape in Augustan Rome: The Garden Room at the Villa ad Gallinas." *The Art Bulletin* 76(2):211-224.

⁶ Kellum 1994.

⁷ Gabriel, M. M. 1955. *Livia's Garden Room at Prima Porta*. New York, NY: New York University Press. 2.

⁸ Settis, S. 2008. *La Villa di Livia: Le Pareti Ingannevoli*. Rome: Electa.

⁹ Klynne, A. 2005. "The Laurel Grove of the Caesars: Looking In and Looking Out." In *Roman Villas around the Urbs. Interaction with Landscape and Environment. Proceedings of a Conference Held at the Swedish Institute in Rome, 2004*, edited by B. Santillo Frizell and A. Klynne, 1-9. Rome: The Swedish Institute in Rome. Reeder, J. C. 2001. *The Villa of Livia ad Gallinas Albas: A Study in the Augustan Villa and Gardens*. Providence, RI: Brown University. Whether the portico fully enclosed the terrace is debated. Heinz Kähler reconstructed the portico with at least three sides, but it is unclear if he intended the portico to completely enclose the terrace or not. Kähler, H. 1959. *Die Augustusstatue von Prima Porta*. Cologne: DuMont Schauberg.

¹⁰ Klynne 2005.

¹¹ Pinto-Guillaume, E. M. 2002. "Mollusks from the Villa of Livia at Prima Porta, Rome: The Swedish Garden Archaeological Project, 1996-1999." *American Journal of Archaeology* 106(1):37-58.

importance during the Augustan period.¹² The underground Garden Room may have originally been a triclinium (a dining room), and measures 11.7 meters by 5.9 meters, with the frescos (moved to the Palazzo Massimo in 1951-1952) 3.0 meters high from the floor.¹³ They are from c. 40-30 BCE.¹⁴

Garden Painting

The frescos from the Garden Room from the Villa of Livia are thought to be the first example of such realistic depictions of gardens.¹⁵ There had been examples of garden rooms from c. 80-40 BCE, but these depicted plants as more of a fuzzy green backdrop, with occasionally identifiable tendrils of ivy or grape.¹⁶ Three sites from c. 40-20 BCE change this paradigm, starting with the Villa of Livia, then the Auditorium of Maecenas and the *viridarium* in the Villa beneath the Farnesina. In this new style, plants and birds are painted with precision and emphasis on how they would appear in real life, with trees having defined fruits, leaves, and trunks that mimic their actual growth habit, and birds depicted in their natural postures and colors.

The Auditorium of Maecenas was underground like the Garden Room from the Villa of Livia, but the garden scenes were in niches painted as a window arcade.¹⁷ Each niche had a single tree with shrubs behind a lattice fence, and while the Villa of Livia also has a fence

¹² Reeder 2001.

¹³ Giesecke, A. L. 2001. "Beyond the Garden of Epicurus: The Utopics of the Ideal Roman Villa." *Utopian Studies* 12(2):13-32. Gabriel 1955. Grottoes were frequently used as dining rooms: see below.

¹⁴ Kuttner, A. 1999. "Looking Outside Inside: Ancient Roman Garden Rooms." *Studies in the History of Gardens and Designed Landscapes* 19(1):7-35.

¹⁵ Giesecke 2001, Reeder 2001.

¹⁶ Kuttner 1999.

¹⁷ Settis 2008, Kuttner 1999.

containing a wilder thicket of shrubs, the Auditorium's scenes keep the viewer "inside," looking at an imaginary garden through imaginary windows. The *viridarium* of the Villa beneath the Farnesina, originally located across the Tiber in Trastevere and attributed to Agrippa, also places the viewer "inside," this time gazing upon panels with marble basins and another shrub wall from inside of a painted pavilion.¹⁸ However, the Garden Room from the Villa of Livia does not use niches or panels to create individual sections. Instead, the entire room is one large, uninterrupted panorama, without any painted columns or niches to separate the viewer from the outdoor scene. The only hint that the viewer is not outside herself is the fringe of stalactites at the top of the fresco.¹⁹ These give the impression that one is looking out from the rim of a cave or grotto.

Tiberius, Livia's son and the second emperor of Rome, owned a grotto at Sperlonga that was used as a dining room, and the grotto tradition was continued throughout the Julio-Claudian emperors. Claudius hewed out his own cave for a triclinium, and Nero built an artificial grotto in the heart of Rome as part of his *Domus Aurea*.²⁰ One purpose of a grotto is to frame the view, as by its capture, "the whole wider landscape was made subservient to the one villa and could be thought of as serving the purposes of its owner."²¹ Setting the Garden Room in the context of a grotto implies ownership of the entire scene, and the viewer would be enjoying the outdoor vista in the shady, human-created and controlled space.

¹⁸ Kuttner 1999.

¹⁹ Kuttner 1999.

²⁰ Carey, S. 2002. "A Tradition of Adventures in the Imperial Grotto." *Greece and Rome* 49(1):44-61.

²¹ Purcell, N. 1987. "Town in Country and Country in Town." In *Ancient Roman Villa Gardens*, edited by E. MacDougall, 185-203. Washington DC: Dumbarton Oaks.

Gardens

Gardens themselves had a changing history. Pliny the Elder writes that Epicurus, an advocate for withdrawal from the trials of this world, invented the *hortus*, which in itself is not a negative association.²² However, leaders in the early 1st century BCE such as Sallust were criticized for withdrawing from the political world into their *horti*, and L. Licinius Lucullus was called “Xerxes in a toga” for the extravagance of his house and gardens.²³ The kings of Rome were said to have cultivated their gardens with their own hands, and Tarquin the Proud “cut off the heads of his garden poppies as a metaphor intended to exhort his son to kill the chief men of the state.”²⁴ These gardens and gardeners are not to be praised, and the negative traits associated with them did not change until Julius Caesar and Pompey used their wealth and power to donate vast tracts of land to the public.²⁵ Pompey created the first public park (the *Porticus Pompeiana*) in 55 BCE, and Julius Caesar bequeathed his *horti trans Tiberem* to the people in his will.²⁶ On the other hand, gardens and groves had been associated with the divine as well.

Pliny states that “groves were the first temples of the gods,” and that the rustic country-dwellers continued to worship trees in their ancient rites.²⁷ The sacred grove of Diana at Nemi

²² Pliny *Natural History* 19.19

²³ Wallace-Hadrill, A. 1998. “*Horti* and Hellenization.” In *Horti Romani*, edited by M. Cima and E. La Rocca, 1-22. Rome: L’Herma di Bretschneider. Littlewood, A. R. 1987. “Ancient Literary Evidence for Pleasure Gardens.” In *Ancient Roman Villa Gardens*, edited by E. MacDougall, 7-30. Washington DC: Dumbarton Oaks.

²⁴ Pliny HN 19.19 and Livy 1.54. Totelin, L. M. V. 2012. “Botanizing Rulers and their Herbal Subjects: Plants and Political Power in Greek and Roman Literature.” *Phoenix* 66(1/2):122-144.

²⁵ Boatwright, M. T. 1998. “Luxuriant Gardens and Extravagant Women: The *Horti* of Rome Between Republic and Empire.” In *Horti Romani*, edited by M. Cima and E. La Rocca, 71-82. Rome: L’Herma di Bretschneider.

²⁶ Gleason, K. L. 1994. “*Porticus Pompeiana*: A New Perspective on the First Public Park of Ancient Rome.” *The Journal of Garden History* 14(1):13-27. D’Arms, J. H. 1998. “Between Public and Private: The *Epulum Publicum* and Caesar’s *Horti Trans Tiberim*.” In *Horti Romani*, edited by M. Cima and E. La Rocca, 33-43.

²⁷ “*Haec fuere numinum templa*” *Natural History* 12.2

began as a Latin site and retained its religious significance in the Augustan age. It did not have a physical temple until c. 500 BCE, but rather the grove itself was the sacred site.²⁸ Diana was one of the patron goddesses of Augustus, and the lush, tree-filled garden room would have reminded the view of her arboreal “temple.”²⁹

Garden Room Iconography

There has already been a great deal of research on the symbolic value of the botanical elements from the garden room from the Villa of Livia, some of which will be explained below. All of the plants are in riotous bloom, with every species simultaneously fruiting and flowering. This idyllic landscape is not possible in real life, since the blooming season for each plant species varies from early spring to late fall, and periwinkles and viburnum would not be in flower at the same time as quinces and pomegranates.³⁰ However, since the paintings were created with such meticulous attention to detail on everything from the growth habits to the behaviors of different species, this cannot be considered an oversight. The artists would have had to sketch the plants in different seasons in order to see each one at its peak, so they would know that all of the plants have different seasonal growth. Painting all of the plants blooming in the same place at the same time was a deliberate choice to favor an idealistic landscape over a real one.³¹ This ever-productive wonderland fits with descriptions of the Golden Age, an era Augustus wanted to recreate.

That said, no one to date has examined the significance of the birds depicted in the Garden Room. Many of the bird species are migratory, and would only be present in Italy during

²⁸ Reeder 2001.

²⁹ Reeder 2001.

³⁰ Gabriel 1955.

³¹ Ibid.

specific seasons. All of the birds were identified to the lowest possible taxonomic level, and their seasonal occurrence determined so as to investigate the possibility of continued Golden Age imagery, with birds of different migratory patterns miraculously present in the same place at the same time.

Chapter 2: Example Symbolic Plant Species

Arbutus (*Arbutus unedo*)

The arbutus, also called the “strawberry tree” or “unedo,” has associations with the Golden Age. In this purer time when the earth produced fruit of her own accord, people ate “mountain strawberries,” the somewhat sour fruit of the arbutus.³² Pliny the Elder suggests the name “unedo” arrived because people would only eat one berry (*unum edo*).³³ Hermes was nourished beneath an arbutus.³⁴

Laurel (*Laurus nobilis*)

There has been a great deal of research on the significance of laurel in Augustan propaganda, and these are only a few of the many observations.³⁵ Augustus received the right to place laurel trees in front of his front door, a right usually restricted to major religious buildings such as the Regia and the Temple of Vesta.³⁶ Laurels were planted on the Mausoleum of Augustus, and roots of *Laurus nobilis* were found in planters outside of the Temple of Divus Iulius.³⁷ Apollo chose the laurel as his sacred plant after Daphne was transformed into it while he was pursuing her.³⁸ As Augustus’ patron deity, symbols that were important for the god were

³² Ovid *Metamorphoses* 1.89-112.

³³ Pliny *Natural History* 15.28.

³⁴ Pausanias *Descriptions of Greece* 9.22.2.

³⁵ Stackelberg, K. T. 2009. *The Roman Garden: Space, Sense, and Society*. New York, NY: Routledge., Kellum 1994. Flory, M. B. 1995. “The Symbolism of Laurel in Cameo Portraits of Livia.” *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* 40:43-68.

³⁶ Cassius Dio *Roman History* 53.16, Stackleberg 2009, 90.

³⁷ Kellum 1994, 213.

³⁸ Ovid *Metamorphoses* 1.556-566, Pliny *Natural History* 12.2.

also important for his human heir. Ovid claims the laurel in front of Augustus' house showed that his house was loved by Apollo and had earned ceaseless triumph.³⁹

Pliny the Elder calls the laurel an emblem of peace and of victory.⁴⁰ It was tied to the fortune of the Julio-Claudian emperors, beginning with the Julius Caesar receiving an omen of his death when a kingbird carrying laurel, his personal emblem, was ripped to pieces by other birds the day before his was assassinated, continuing with Livia's omen at her Villa ad Gallinas Albas, and ending the year before Nero's assassination, when all of the laurels from Livia's original sprig died.⁴¹

Myrtle (*Myrtus communis*)

Myrtle is Venus' sacred tree, and can be used as a form of shorthand to refer to her.⁴² Venus hid herself behind myrtle when she was discovered bathing by Satyrs.⁴³ According to Pliny, it was still seen as slightly exotic because it retained its Greek name, μύρτινη, but it was tied to the beginnings of Rome as well since the Romans and Sabines purified themselves with sprigs of myrtle after they were saved from battle.⁴⁴ The place of their purification held a statue to Venus even to Pliny's time.⁴⁵ Quirinus was synonymous with the deified Romulus, and his temple had two myrtles in front, one called the Plebeian myrtle, and one called the Patrician myrtle.⁴⁶ The Patrician myrtle thrived as long as the Senate did, but after the Social Wars, the

³⁹ Ovid *Tristia* 3.1.39-46.

⁴⁰ Pliny *Natural History* 15.40.

⁴¹ Suetonius *Divus Julius* 81, Pliny *Natural History* 15.4, Suetonius *Galba* 1. See previous chapter as well.

⁴² Pliny *Natural History* 12.2, Horace *Odes* 2.7.

⁴³ Ovid *Fasti* 4.140-143.

⁴⁴ Pliny *Natural History* 15.36.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Kellum 1994, 211, Pliny *Natural History* 15.36.

Plebeian myrtle started overtaking its fellow. Augustus repaired the Temple of Quirinus and therefore appropriated both myrtles while associating himself with Quirinus/Romulus.⁴⁷

Augustus also claimed to be a descendant of Venus through Aeneas, which left him free to use her symbolic tree as a reminder of himself. This message was spread by contemporary authors. During the tumult of the civil wars and triumvirates, before Octavian had even assumed his title “Augustus,” Virgil imagines him “winding myrtle, your mother’s plant, around your head,” in one fell swoop recalling Augustus’ divine heritage and praying to a peaceful end to the long conflict, since myrtle wreathes were awarded for wars won without bloodshed.⁴⁸

Pomegranate (*Punica granatum*)

The pomegranate is bound to ideas of fertility, based in part because of its many seeds.⁴⁹ It was cultivated in Italy, and excavations at the Villa of L. Crassius Tertius at Oplontis uncovered over 2,000 pounds of the fruit in storage.⁵⁰ However, since the pomegranates must have been harvested before the eruption on August 24, they were not yet ripe (pomegranates ripen in late autumn), leaving their intended purpose unknown.⁵¹ Persephone is trapped in the Underworld for six months every year because she ate six pomegranate seeds after she was captured by Pluto. Persephone’s return brings in a new year of growth and reproduction each

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Translated by Flory 1995, 52.

⁴⁹ Caneva, G., V. Savo, and A. Kumbaric. 2014. “Big Messages in Small Details: Nature in Roman Archaeology.” *Economic Botany* 68(1):109-115.

⁵⁰ Jashemski, W. F. 1987. “Recently Excavated Gardens and Cultivated Land of the Villas at Boscoreale and Oplontis.” In *Ancient Roman Villa Gardens*, edited by E. MacDougall, 31-75. Washington DC: Dumbarton Oaks.

⁵¹ Gabriel 1955, 11.

spring aided by her mother, Ceres/Demeter, who is responsible for good harvests and fertility.⁵²

The pomegranate can serve as a reminder of Ceres' gifts of plenty, and Livia appropriated the symbols of Ceres in her own Imperial imagery.⁵³

Oak (*Quercus robur*)

The oak tree was sacred to Jupiter, and in the *Metamorphoses*, the simpler, godfearing people of the Golden Age eat acorns from Jupiter's oak, and the leaves drip honey.⁵⁴ The oak's ties to Jupiter and the spoils of war were combined when Romulus hung the arms of his defeated enemy on an oak tree on the Capitoline then dedicated the first temple in Rome, one to Jupiter Feretrius that would receive the *spolia optima*.⁵⁵ Augustus restored this temple, claiming responsibility for both the temple and its accompanying symbols.⁵⁶ Displaying an enemy's arms on an oak has an even more ancient parallel, since Pallas pledged an oak laden with the spoils of his enemy to the Tiber and Aeneas himself hung the spoils of King Mezentius on an oak.⁵⁷ Augustus claims Aeneas as an ancestor, and Aeneas is the first person in Italy to dedicate arms on an oak. If this connection were not enough, the tie to Romulus and the first temple in Rome can convince of Augustus' piety and divine heritage.

Oak branches also have military connotations. The *corona civica*, a crown made of oak leaves, was awarded to a soldier who had saved the life of a fellow Roman in battle.⁵⁸ This was a traditional Republican honor, and it was awarded to Augustus for rescuing all citizens by ending

⁵² Zanker, P. 1988. *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*. Translated by A. Shapiro. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, p. 174.

⁵³ Flory 1995, 53.

⁵⁴ Ovid *Metamorphosis* 1.89-112.

⁵⁵ Livy *History of Rome* 1.10.

⁵⁶ Augustus *Res Gestae* 19.

⁵⁷ Virgil *Aeneid* 10.423, 11.5-7.

⁵⁸ Zanker 1988, 93.

the civil wars.⁵⁹ Once it passed to Augustus, it became a symbol of imperial clemency since Augustus had end the bloodshed of the last decades.⁶⁰ That the crown was made of leaves instead of gold reflected its Republican origins, an idealized period when value was placed on honor instead of material gain, at least according to the contemporary authors reflecting on the glory days of old.⁶¹ The Jupiter-oak connection comes to light in one of Ovid's poems, when he imagines seeing an oak wreath on a door and is inspired to ask if it is the house of Jove. When told that it is actually the house of Augustus, Ovid replies that it is truly the house of Jove, his conviction strengthened now that he knows the actual inhabitant.⁶² The oak wreath prompted Ovid to assume the owner was Jupiter himself. Augustus also received an oaken omen when an ancient tree that had been dying on Capri was suddenly revived when he came to visit.⁶³

Date Palm (*Phoenix dactylifera*)

Rhea Silva, mother of Romulus and Remus, had a vision of two palm trees on the night Mars came to her, with one palm growing taller than the other, eventually covering all of the world with its branches and touching the highest stars with its top.⁶⁴ This portent of her children's destinies tied the founder of Rome to a palm, which could be a factor in its use by Augustus. The palm also had connections to Apollo and his twin, Artemis, since Leto gave birth to them underneath a palm.⁶⁵ Pausanias described a sanctuary to Artemis with palms growing in

⁵⁹ Zanker 1998, 93, Augustus *Res Gestae* 34, Pliny *Natural History* 16.3, Ovid *Tristia* 3.1.47-48.

⁶⁰ Pliny *Natural History* 16.3

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ovid *Tristia* 3.1.35-38

⁶³ Suetonius *Divus Augustus* 92.

⁶⁴ Ovid *Fasti* 3.31-34.

⁶⁵ Homer *Hymn to Apollo* 3.117.

front, and Pliny reported of a palm tree at Delos that dates from their birth.⁶⁶ When a palm sprung up in front of his house on the Palatine, Augustus transplanted it to the adjoining Temple of Apollo and took “great care to ensure it flourished” (*utque coalescerent magno opere curavit*).⁶⁷

In addition to being a symbol of victory, the palm was seen as a highly “manly” plant, and Pliny said the palm’s natural growth habit is for one male tree to be encircled by female trees who bow and caress it, and that just the sight of a male tree “with leaves bristling and erect” is enough to fertilize all of the surrounding female trees.⁶⁸ Also, if the male tree is cut down, all of the female trees become barren in their state of widowhood.⁶⁹ Palm trees are dioecious, which means they do indeed have separate male and female plants, and are mostly wind-pollinated, so the presence of a male tree would likely be sufficient to pollenate surrounding trees.⁷⁰ These attributes of the palm were enough to associate it with extraordinary virility and fertility, but it also had connections to immortality.⁷¹ The date palm, genus *Phoenix*, was supposed to be able to die and come back to life, and the phoenix apparently borrowed its own name from the palm.⁷² One of the world’s first palms was still bearing fruit even to Pliny’s date, and a palm mentioned before had been alive since the birth of Apollo and Artemis.⁷³ Augustus campaigned on the promise that he was bringing about the rebirth of Rome, and a self-resurrecting plant would be an ideal symbol for the new era.

⁶⁶ Pausanias *Descriptions of Greece* 9.19.8, Pliny *Natural History* 16.89.

⁶⁷ Suetonius *Divus Augustus* 92.

⁶⁸ Pliny *Natural History* 13.7.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ Al-Mahmoud, M. E., E. K. Al-Dous, E. K. Al-Azwani, J. A. Malek. 2012. “DNA-Based Assays to Distinguish Date Palm (*Arecaceae*) Gender.” *American Journal of Botany* 99(1):7-10.

⁷¹ Pliny *Natural History* 13.9.

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ Pliny *Natural History* 13.9, 16.89.

Chapter 3: Avian Analysis

Partridge (*Alectoris sp. or Perdix perdix*)

Partridges were known for their sexuality. Pliny the Elder wrote that females could become pregnant just from hearing a male's voice or by wind blowing from the direction of a male.⁷⁴ This extreme fertility came with aggression, since supposedly both male and female Partridges would fight a decoy of the same sex, and good parental care, with females pretending to be wounded so as to draw predators away from the nest.⁷⁵ The new Golden Age of Rome is a time of fruitful fecundity, and images of Partridges would fit with this claim.

In the *Metamorphoses*, the famous inventor Daedalus threw his nephew Perdix off the sacred citadel of Athena because Perdix had become too much competition.⁷⁶ Athena saved his life by changing him into a Partridge, and he kept his name forever, though he does not perch above the ground or make his nest in a high place because he remembers the fall.⁷⁷ The Grey Partridge (*Perdix perdix*) has the same name, and all Partridges are primarily ground-dwelling birds. In the Garden Room, all of the Partridges are firmly on the ground.

Dove (*Columba livia*)

Sacred to Venus, one of Augustus' divine relations, Doves are the domesticated version of the wild Rock Doves. The Garden Room has eight confirmed and four potential Doves out of the 69 total birds and most of them are in a central location. Many are white, a color rarely found in nature outside of snow-heavy climates, and these specimens would likely not survive under

⁷⁴ Pliny *Natural History* 10.51.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ovid *Metamorphoses* 8.236-259.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

natural conditions. This vulnerability was noted by Columella, who advised against purchasing white hens because they were infertile and were often eaten by raptors.⁷⁸ That this profusion of white Doves is able to walk around in the open without danger may indicate this garden is protected, domesticated, and safe, a message well suited to Livia, the supposed leader of domestic harmony.⁷⁹ In addition, their color may have served as a reminder of the original white hen that fell into Livia's lap at that location, her *Villa ad Gallinas Albas*.

Doves and Wood Pigeons are two different species, a fact recognized by Pliny. He wrote that Wood Pigeons (*Columba palumbus*) can live to be 30 or 40 years old, while Doves (*Columba livia*) only live for eight.⁸⁰ Though this is not accurate, it demonstrates his ability to discriminate between them. In addition, he distinguished subsets of Doves, stating that white Doves are gentle and naturally shy compared to the differently colored varieties.⁸¹ This could be one reason so many of the Doves in the Garden Room are white.

According to Pliny, they are famous for their domestic harmony, with a high degree of affection for their offspring, a kissing ceremony before mating, and no capacity for infidelity by their very nature, helpful associations for Augustus and Livia since they were in charge of living out Augustus' new moral standards encouraging procreation and forbidding adultery.⁸²

Egret (*Egretta sp.*)

“Heron” and “Egret” are often used interchangeably, though they refer to several different species of bird. There are two types of heron that live in Europe: The Grey Heron and

⁷⁸ Columella *De Re Rustica* 8.2.7.

⁷⁹ Totelin, L. M. V. 2012. “Botanizing Rulers and their Herbal Subjects: Plants and Political Power in Greek and Roman Literature.” *Phoenix* 66(1/2):122-144.

⁸⁰ Pliny *Natural History* 10.52.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁸² Pliny *Natural History* 10.52, 10.79. Zanker 1988.

the Purple Heron. The Grey Heron has a robust yellow beak, a slate-colored body, white head, and two black plumes starting behind its eyes and extending past the back of its neck. In Egypt, it was seen as a symbol of rejuvenation of the deceased, and stories about it drove the myth of the phoenix, a spectacular bird capable of rebirth by fire.⁸³ It was also associated with the sun god, Re.⁸⁴ This would make it an ideal symbol for Augustus to appropriate since he claimed to be responsible for the rebirth of Rome and to be the child of Apollo, the Roman sun god, but the Grey Heron is not depicted in the Garden Room. Instead, one of several possible species of Egret was painted standing on the wicker fence of Panel V (Cat. 51). This may be due to their contribution to the pre-established theme of white coloring indicating domesticity, but it is not clear why exactly the Egret was chosen.

Sparrow (*Passer sp.*)

Lesbia's beloved *passer* mentioned by Catullus was most likely not even of the *Passer* genus, given that they are "the most intractable and least amiable of cage birds," according to Thompson.⁸⁵ Instead, Toynbee suggests it was a Bullfinch (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*), a species more capable of "honey-sweet" (*mellitus*) behavior.⁸⁶ Pliny noted the Italian Sparrow's seasonal color change, saying that at the start of spring, males have no black on their beaks, but develop this coloration with the advent of summer.⁸⁷ In the Garden Room, all of the Sparrows have black beaks and bibs.

⁸³ Bailleul-LeSuer, R., ed. 2012. *Between Heaven and Earth: Birds in Ancient Egypt*. Chicago: The Oriental Institute.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Thompson, D. W. (1936). *A Glossary of Greek Birds*. London: Oxford University Press, Catullus *Carmina* 2.1.

⁸⁶ Ibid 278.

⁸⁷ Pliny *Natural History* 10.52.

Peacock (*Pavo cristatus*)

The exclusion of peacocks from this painted garden is unusual. Peacocks are frequently depicted as residents in the collection of frescos from Campania, even in “gardens” painted in light wells so small they were barely capable of sustaining real plant life.⁸⁸ They were imagined to come from the Temple of Hera in Samos (in spite of their actual origin in southeast Asia), and were therefore associated with the goddess.⁸⁹ Hera/Juno also claims ownership of the peacock because she took the head of Argus, the hundred-eyed guard who was killed by Mercury, and placed it upon the tail of her sacred bird, giving the peacock its shining eye-spots.⁹⁰

With these ties to the goddess of marriage and fertility, it seems strange that it would be absent from Livia’s Garden Room, since Livia was so invested in promoting her role as a domestic paragon.⁹¹ However, it is possible the peacock’s more negative associations outweighed the positive. Even though Varro and Columella call the peacock the most beautiful of birds, Cicero speaks of it in reference to parts that serve no purpose and Pliny the Elder says it was known for being vain and spiteful, though he admits he is at a loss to explain how these traits would manifest themselves in a bird.⁹² Varro also reports that the first person to serve peacock in a banquet was seen as luxurious instead of virtuous.⁹³ Augustus portrayed himself as a traditional Republican man, free from corrupting *luxuria*. Adding a bird famous for its

⁸⁸ Jashemski, W. F. 1979. *The Gardens of Pompeii, Herculaneum, and the Villas Destroyed by Vesuvius*. Vol. I. New Rochelle, NY: Caratzas.

⁸⁹ Watson, G. E. “Birds: Evidence from Wall Paintings, Mosaics, Sculpture, Skeletal Remains, and Ancient Authors.” In *The Natural History of Pompeii*, edited by W. F. Jashemski and F. G. Meyer, 357-400. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

⁹⁰ Ovid *Metamorphoses* 1.719-722.

⁹¹ Flory, M. B. 1995. “The Symbolism of Laurel in Cameo Portraits of Livia.” *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* 40:43-68.

⁹² Varro *De Re Rustica* 3.6.2, Columella *Res Rustica* 8.11.1, Cicero *De Finibus Bonorum et Malorum* 3.5, Pliny *HN* 10.22.

⁹³ Varro *De Re Rustica* 3.6.6.

flamboyant looks and vain temperament may have seemed too frivolous for someone known as a sober, simple man.⁹⁴

Purple Gallinule (*Porphyrio porphyrio*)

Though their current range does not extend throughout Italy, it is likely the Purple Gallinule had a much wider distribution 2,000 years ago, give the frequency with which they are depicted in Pompeian wall paintings.⁹⁵ According to Pliny, the most admired variety has a red beak and very long red legs.⁹⁶ The Purple Gallinule in the Garden Room has both of these attributes.

Blackbird (*Turdus merula*)

The Blackbird's beak also changes color with the season, with their black bill transformed to yellow in the summer. This was noticed by the ancients, and Pliny added that they sing different songs depending on the time of year.⁹⁷ Most of the Blackbirds in the Garden Room have traces of yellow on their beaks and those that do not are fairly destroyed, perhaps destroying the yellow paint. All of them are midflight.

⁹⁴ Augustus' temperate lifestyle and simple house, furniture, and clothing are the focus of Suetonius *Augustus* 72-73.

⁹⁵ Watson, G. E. "Birds: Evidence from Wall Paintings, Mosaics, Sculpture, Skeletal Remains, and Ancient Authors." In *The Natural History of Pompeii*, edited by W. F. Jashemski and F. G. Meyer, 357-400. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

⁹⁶ Pliny *Natural History* 10.63.

⁹⁷ Pliny *Natural History* 10.42.

Chapter 4: Seasonality Conclusion

Of the 69 birds identified by Gabriel, 21 of them have been reclassified as different species. This 30% difference is the result of extensive comparison between several guides to the birds of Europe, analysis of contemporary works, and identification criteria used by other authors.

This re-identification is exciting and will allow for future work on the symbolic significance of the bird species represented. Many of the species are songbirds or are even capable of speech, so perhaps the Garden Room would have been filled with the imagined sounds of its painted occupants. All of the birds are either permanent residents of Italy or summer migrants, and many of the permanent residents are in their summer plumage. This means the theme of eternal spring and summer found in the plants is continued in the birds, with the depiction of an avian Golden Age.

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Catalogue of Birds

Taxonomy is a constantly evolving field that now relies on DNA evidence to demonstrate the degree of relatedness between species. This means that animals which are now classified as two separate species may have been considered one and the same until recently, and it is likely that they will be re-organized again. Before, the only method of determining separate species was through observation of behavior, morphology, habitat, etc. To the ancients (and even after Linnaeus), there were far fewer species because the tools to tease out phylogenetic relationships were not available. This is to explain that even though this catalogue attempts to identify the birds to the lowest possible classification, the ancient works may not necessarily differentiate between a Melodious or Icterine Warbler. This is not to say that the images or writings are incapable of identifying specific species, or that species-level differences do not matter, but that the distinction between names is a modern convention (for example, the difference between an Eastern and Western Orphean Warbler was only recently determined to be sufficient enough to warrant a separation of species). The birds themselves have not changed, just the categories they are placed in. There is a good chance that some of the species written here will be updated and placed into the category of subspecies, have their species epithet changed, or be split into two new species. Such is the nature of the beast.

These identifications are based off of the coloration, posture, and behavior of the birds in the fresco. Identifications made in the field usually come from a combination of clues gathered while watching the bird in motion, an opportunity that is obviously not possible here.

Finally, these species' current ranges may not be the same as they were 2000 years ago. It is very likely the current ranges are smaller than the original distribution, so I have occasionally

extended the range from its current placement if the bird's other characteristics were compelling enough. I did not take a bird found only in Russia and extend its summer range to include Italy, but if a species presently lives slightly outside of Italy, I may have included it for consideration while identifying these birds.

Cat. 1 Melodious Warbler, Icterine Warbler, or Yellow Wagtail

Figures 7-10

Panel I, Bird 1

Gabriel's Identification: Warbler or Wagtail

Author's Identification: Melodious or Icterine Warbler (*Hippolais sp.*): Summer (Aug-Oct, few in spring)Yellow Wagtail (*Motacilla flava*): Summer (Apr-Sep / early Oct)

As there are currently over 70 species of warbler that might be seen in Europe, the Near East, and North Africa, it is understandable that Gabriel would not want to limit herself to one particular species. That said, the bright yellow underbelly combined with a clear distinction between the brown crown and back with the yellow neck, breast, and underbelly strongly suggest a Melodious Warbler, Icterine Warbler, or Yellow Wagtail. The closest candidate is likely the Melodious Warbler since it lacks wing barring, but does not completely rule out the other two possible species. Yellow Warblers have a variety of different color morphs, and Icterine Warblers do not always have clear wing bars. The bird is standing on a high branch above the entrance.

Cat. 2 Song Thrush

Figures 11-15

Panel I, Bird 2

Gabriel's Identification: Thrush

Author's Identification: Song Thrush (*Turdus philomela*): Permanent

The speckled breast, belly, and underparts indicate this is a Song Thrush. The solid brown back and wings without white and black bars rule out the Meadow and Tree Pipits, even though they have similarly streaked yellow breasts. The bird is standing on the highest branch of a quince with its head turned over its back.

The Song Thrush's migratory habits were discussed by Pliny, who noticed they had a band of speckled color around their necks in the summer, and were not as colorful in the winter.⁹⁸ This bird's breast is brightly speckled, indicating it is in its summer plumage.

⁹⁸ Pliny *NH* 10.35.

Cat. 3 Pigeon

Figures 16-18

Panel I, Bird 3

Gabriel's Identification: Pigeon

Author's Identification: Pigeon (*Columba livia*): Permanent

This is unmistakably a Pigeon. The Rock Dove (*Columba livia*) is also called a Dove or Feral Pigeon. Rock Doves are the wild progenitors of Pigeons, escaped domesticates in a wide array of colors. Dove is another name for domesticated Rock Doves, and they also come in a variety of plumages that would not be advantageous in the wild. This white specimen is standing huddled under a fir tree. Its white plumage, red beak, and purple shading all support the identification as a Dove.

I am choosing to call *Columba livia* a Dove instead of a Pigeon in my analysis as it evokes more of the associations with Classical tradition instead of visions of the “flying rats” of New York. For the purposes of the catalogue, “Pigeon” and “Dove” will be used interchangeably.

Cat. 4 Cetti's Warbler or Nightingale

Figures 19-22

Panel I, Bird 4

Gabriel's Identification: Nightingale

Author's Identification: Cetti's Warbler (*Cettia cetti*): PermanentNightingale (*Luscinia megarhynchos*): Summer (Apr-Sep)

This bird's color pattern is more similar to that of a Cetti's Warbler than that of a Nightingale, but there are not enough distinguishing characteristics to rule it out. Even though the posture is very typical of a Warbler, the Cetti's Warbler is supposed to sit in a more upright position with the tail held at an angle from the body (as opposed to the more-streamlined look of other Warblers—See Figure 20). The bird is standing on the highest branches of an oleander.

Cat. 5 No Identification

Figures 23-26

Panel I, Birds 5-7

Gabriel's Identification: No Identification: "Resembles our hummingbirds"

Author's Identification: No Identification

These birds hanging from the stalactites around the rim of the "grotto" look like a mix between a Treecreeper (*Certhia familiaris*) and a Lesser Spotted Woodpecker (*Dendrocopos minor*). They have the long, curved bill and dark brown coloring of a Treecreeper, but the hanging posture and small size are also very similar to that of the Lesser Spotted Woodpecker. Some of the images have a small spot of red on the throat, and while red would favor a Woodpecker identification, the Lesser Spotted Woodpecker only has red on its crown. It is also possible that this is a species that has since gone extinct.

There is another bird from a fresco at the House of Marine Venus that is also clinging upside-down, this time from a garland acting as the upper border as opposed to the Garden Room's stalactite roof. The bird from the House of Marine Venus also has a red patch on the side of its neck (see fig. 51), but it does not have the same long, curved beak or short tail.

If these birds are indeed meant to be Woodpeckers, they could be used as shorthand to refer to Mars, the father of Romulus and Remus. The Woodpecker of Mars, a winged representative of the god of War, is sometimes featured in images of Romulus and Remus as a reminder of their father watching over their progress.⁹⁹ Augustus may have taken the existing iconography of the Woodpecker to emphasize his connections with the founder of Rome.

Cat. 6 Pigeon

Figures 18, 27

Panel II, Bird 1

Gabriel's Identification: Pigeon

Author's Identification: Pigeon (*Columba livia*)

Another white Dove, this one on a low branch with its head turned over its back. It is more faded than the last Dove, but the coloring and size make it unmistakable.

⁹⁹ Zanker 1988.

Cat. 7 Golden Oriole

Figures 28-31

Panel II, Bird 2

Gabriel's Identification: Golden Oriole or Icterine Warbler

Author's Identification: Golden Oriole (*Oriolus oriolus*): Summer (May-Aug)

The solid yellow face, breast, and belly with black wings all indicate a Golden Oriole. The dark beak and brown crown are problematic, as male Orioles have pink beaks and solidly yellow heads, but these factors do not overrule the thick and pointed beak or striking contrast between the yellow belly and shoulder with the black wing, both of which point to the Oriole. While the Icterine Warbler has a brown crown and back, it does not have such a stark color change from shoulder to wing and it has the same problem of a pink bill. The Oriole is leaning down from the top of a pomegranate tree to peck at the fruit.

Cat. 8 Song Thrush or Tree Pipit

Figures 14, 12, 32

Panel II, Bird 3

Gabriel's Identification: Thrush

Author's Identification: Song Thrush (*Turdus philomelus*): Permanent
Tree Pipit (*Anthus trivialis*): Summer (Apr-Sep)

While this is most likely a Song Thrush because of its solidly brown wings without bars and streaked belly, this is not a copy of the same Song Thrush from Panel I. This bird has distinct stripes of white above and below its eye and a light-colored beak. These traits are more typical of the Tree Pipit, which has stronger white facial markings than the Song Thrush does. It is standing on an oleander at middle height.

Cat. 9 Nightingale

Figures 21, 33

Panel II, Bird 4

Gabriel's Identification: Nightingale

Author's Identification: Nightingale (*Luscinia megarhynchos*): Summer (Apr-Sep)

While it is difficult to see distinguishing characteristics on the bird itself, the fact that it is in a cage makes it most likely to be a Nightingale and the parts of the image that are still visible are consistent with this identification. Nightingales were kept as pets, and Agrippina the Younger received one worth 6,000 sesterces.¹⁰⁰ Pliny the Elder was highly appreciative of their musical talent, crediting them with the ability to sing continuously for fifteen days and nights.¹⁰¹ The cage is sitting on the low brick wall.

Cat. 10 Blackbird

Figures: 34-35

Panel II, Bird 5

Gabriel's Identification: Blackbird

Author's Identification: Blackbird (*Turdus merula*): Permanent

The most interesting part of this image is the beak. While Blackbirds are permanent residents of Italy, their beak color changes from black to yellow in the summer, something known to Pliny the Elder.¹⁰² This Blackbird's beak is in its summer morph. All of the blackbirds in the fresco are in flight. This one is about to land on an oak.

¹⁰⁰ Pliny *Natural History* 10.43.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Pliny *Natural History* 10.42.

Cat. 11 European Robin

Figures 36-37

Panel II, Bird 6

Gabriel's Identification: Lark

Author's Identification: European Robin (*Erithacus rubecula*): Permanent

The solid brown back combined with a red throat and breast indicate this is a Robin. The grey border between the cream belly and red breast add to the identification. While the grey color may be exacerbated by the crack in the plaster, its presence or absence alone does not change the identification. European Robins are not closely related to the American Robin (*Turdus migratorius*), which is much more like the Song Thrush (*Turdus philomelus*). Unlike the American Robin, it is solitary and defends a territory. This Robin is standing on the front lattice fence at an opening in the fence in front of the oak.

Cat. 12 Quail

Figures 38-41

Panel II, Bird 7

Gabriel's Identification: Quail

Author's Identification: Quail (*Coturnix coturnix*): Summer

Even though this image of a Quail does not exactly match the typical plumage, it still has the dark neck ring and dull coloration that are found in the Quail. Its round, football-like shape and crouching posture are much stronger indicators of a Quail, as Partridges stand more upright with their necks higher than their bodies. They are summer residents of Italy, a fact known to Pliny, who also said they eat poison, which is why "our tables have condemned them."¹⁰³ It is crouching on the top of the red brick fence in the niche for the oak.

¹⁰³ Pliny *Natural History* 10.33.

Cat. 13 Garden Warbler, Nightingale, or Cetti's Warbler

Figures 20, 21, 42-45

Panel II, Bird 8

Gabriel's Identification: Bunting

Author's Identification: Garden Warbler (*Sylvia borin*): Summer (Apr-Sep)

Nightingale (*Luscinia megarhynchos*): Summer (Apr-Sep)

Cetti's Warbler (*Cettia cetti*): Permanent

This bird, because of its lack of highly-distinguishing characteristics, is difficult to identify. The Garden Warbler, with its pointed black beak, dark primaries, cream belly, and occasional neck ring, seems like a close bet, but those characteristics do not rule out other species. The Nightingale can also have a neck ring and its solid back contrasts with its off-white belly, but they are a rustier brown than the Warbler. However, the image may have a white eye-ring, which Nightingales often possess as well. The Cetti's Warbler has a light-colored face below its eye that matches the painted bird's cream-colored cheeks and face and also has clear distinction between the brown top of its body with its white belly. In spite of all these subtle differences, it is highly unlikely the bird is a Bunting. Buntings have bold markings and come in bright yellow, light pink, or stark black plumage (See Fig. 44-45). This bird is remarkable for its blend of generic traits, whereas Buntings are generally much more distinctive. It is standing on a high branch of the panel's central oak tree.

Cat. 14 Golden Oriole

Figures 29, 46

Panel II, Bird 9

Gabriel's Identification: Golden Oriole

Author's Identification: Golden Oriole (*Oriolus oriolus*): Summer (May-Aug)

The solidly-yellow breast, back, and head mark this bird as an Oriole. It is turned with its head over one shoulder, perhaps to peck at the oleander behind it.

Cat. 15 Song Thrush

Figures 14, 47

Panel II, Bird 10

Gabriel's Identification: Thrush

Author's Identification: Song Thrush (*Turdus philomelus*): Permanent

The key element separating this bird from a Tree Pipit is the coloration of the plumage on the underside of its wings. Song Thrushes have dark coverts and light primaries, which is the opposite from Pipits. This means that even though the streaking is not as pronounced as on the other Song Thrush specimens so far, this bird is still a Song Thrush. It is midflight, about to land on a quince tree.

Cat. 16 House Martin

Figures 48-50

Panel II, Bird 11

Gabriel's Identification: House Martin

Author's Identification: House Martin (*Delichon urbica*): Summer (Apr-Oct)

There is not an abundance of information on this bird as the section of wall it resided on is fairly destroyed. However, there are clues that point to its identification as a House Martin. Gabriel states the bird has a long, forked tail that resembles that of a Swallow.¹⁰⁴ This cannot be a Swallow because they have a red throat. Flycatchers, the other stark black and white option, do not have sharply-forked tails. That is more the province of Swallows, Swifts, and Martins, and the House Martin is the only one with this particular coloration. The bird is standing in a patch of laurel underneath the quince.

¹⁰⁴ Gabriel 1955, 35.

Cat. 17 No Identification

Figures 23-26, 51

Panel II, Bird 12-14

Gabriel's Identification: No Identification: "Resembles our hummingbird"

Author's Identification: No Identification

There are three more examples of the small birds described in Cat. 5. One in particular has a white eye-stripe, red throat, and pink belly. Again, the presence of red could indicate a Woodpecker, but there are not extant Woodpeckers with this plumage pattern. They are hanging off of the stalactites of the "grotto" opening.

Cat. 18 Magpie

Figures 52-53

Panel III, Bird 1

Gabriel's Identification: Magpie

Author's Identification: Magpie (*Pica pica*): Permanent

Magpies, with their long tails, large beaks, and solid black tails, are unmistakable. This one is sitting on the middle branch of a pine.

Cat. 19 Blackbird

Figures 35, 54

Panel III, Bird 2

Gabriel's Identification: Blackbird

Author's Identification: Blackbird (*Turdus merula*): Permanent

The solid black plumage and pointed beak suggest this is a blackbird. It is flying over the pine tree the Magpie is currently occupying.

Cat. 20 No Identification

Figures 55-57

Panel III, Bird 3

Gabriel's Identification: Black Lark

Author's Identification: No Identification

This bird is highly destroyed, making an identification difficult. However, Gabriel's suggestion of a Black Lark (*Melanocorypha yeltoniensis*) seems unlikely. The Black Lark lives on the steppe, and the furthest west it comes is through Russia and Turkey. While the Roman Empire covered an extensive area and could have encountered this species through trade or exploration, it is difficult to imagine it becoming so widespread as to be part of a fresco. The bird is flying over a pomegranate.

Cat. 21 Blackbird

Figures 35, 58

Panel III, Bird 4

Gabriel's Identification: Black Lark

Author's Identification: Blackbird (*Turdus philomela*): Permanent

Even though this bird is also highly destroyed, there is enough evidence to support an identification as a Blackbird. The uniform black color without the suggestion of a contrasting pattern is in keeping with a Blackbird, as is the more robust beak. The bird is portrayed with its feet angled down in the same midflight position as the previous Blackbirds, and it is on the verge of landing on a pomegranate.

Cat. 22 Eurasian Jay

Figures 59-62

Panel III, Bird 5

Gabriel's Identification: Eurasian Jay

Author's Identification: Eurasian Jay (*Garrulus glandularius*): Permanent

This is unmistakably a Jay. The pinkish brown body, black primaries and tail, large size, and blocky blue coverts all confirm it as an Eurasian Jay. It is comfortably settled in the central branches of a quince with its head turned over a shoulder.

Cat. 23 Pigeon

Figures 18, 63-64

Panel III, Bird 6

Gabriel's Identification: Pigeon

Author's Identification: Pigeon (*Columba livia*): Permanent

This is the only proper Dove (*Columbia livia*, as opposed to *Columba palumbus*) that is purple. It is displaying its lovely ruff, which is shining with blue-green highlights. The strutting posture and red legs are typical of the Dove, and it is posturing behind the wicker fence in front of a spruce.

Cat. 24 Pigeon

Figures 18, 64-66

Panel III, Bird 7

Gabriel's Identification: Pigeon

Author's Identification: Pigeon (*Columba livia*): Permanent

Part of a pair with Cat. 23, this white Dove is facing its purple counterpart. It has a purple ruff and tan wing bars, which suggest it is not the product of a wild Rock Dove. This pattern is also found in Pompeian wall paintings (Fig. 66). Its head is down as it stands behind the lattice fence.

Cat. 25 Spotted Flycatcher, Pied Flycatcher, or Cetti's Warbler

Figures 20, 67-69

Panel III, Bird 8

Gabriel's Identification: Bunting

Author's Identification: Spotted Flycatcher (*Muscicapa striata*): SummerPied Flycatcher (*Ficedula hypoleuca*): SummerCetti's Warbler (*Cettia cetti*): Permanent

The high and somewhat exposed perch combined with an upright posture suggest it could be a Flycatcher. The Spotted Flycatcher has a grey-brown back and wings with a white belly. The breast is predominantly white but it is lightly streaked with grey, which is similar to the image. It is unlikely to be a Pied Flycatcher since they have large white patches on their wings and are of a deeper black, but female Pied Flycatchers have less white and are more grey-brown than black, so they cannot be entirely dismissed. Color pattern alone could also point to Cetti's Warbler, but Warblers tend to face downward, with their rump at the same height as their heads, if not higher. The objections to it being identified as a Bunting are the same as with Cat. 13.

Cat. 26 Red-throated Pipit

Figures 70-71

Panel III, Bird 9

Gabriel's Identification: Thrush

Author's Identification: Red-throated Pipit (*Anthus cervinus*): Summer (Apr-Jun, Aug-Nov)

With a pink-brown head and throat, a speckled breast, and a brown crown, this Red-throated Pipit is in its full summer plumage. The bill, with its yellow central line fading to black on the top and bottom, adds to the identification. It is standing midway up a clump of oleander.

Cat. 27 Golden Oriole, Melodious Warbler, or Icterine Warbler

Figures 29, 8-9, 72

Panel III, Bird 10

Gabriel's Identification: Golden Oriole or Warbler

Author's Identification: Golden Oriole (*Oriolus oriolus*): Summer (May-Aug)

Melodious or Icterine Warbler (*Hippolais sp.*): Summer (Aug-Oct, few in spring)

This bird shares some of the same problems as Cat. 7, which also had a solid yellow breast, face, and belly, and black wings, all of which point to a Golden Oriole, in addition to a dark beak and brown crown, which do not. This specimen is even more troubling, as the dark swath from crown to back is painted more clearly and deliberately. This gives more credence to the argument for a Melodious or Icterine Warbler, which has the brown crown. However, the robust and curving beak, even if it is dark, are more typical of the Oriole. It is possible the artist is portraying a female Golden Oriole, which has a dark olive-brown back and head and yellow flanks, but there is not a specific bird that precisely matches this specimen. It is standing high on an arbutus with its head turned over its shoulder.

Cat. 28 Italian Sparrow

Figures 73-74

Panel III, Bird 11

Gabriel's Identification: Nightingale

Author's Identification: Italian Sparrow (*Passer italiae*): Permanent

The Italian Sparrow is a recently-added species that had previously been considered a stable hybrid between the House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) and Spanish Sparrow (*Passer hispaniolensis*) until it was determined there was a reproductive barrier preventing Italian Sparrows from breeding successfully with Spanish Sparrows, despite their close contact (Hermansen et al. 2011).¹⁰⁵ This bird's dark bib, red-brown crown, white cheeks and belly, brown back, and dark beak all help identify it as an Italian Sparrow. It is standing at middle height surrounded by an arbutus, quince, and palm.

¹⁰⁵ Hermansen, J. S., S. A. Saether, T.O. Elgvin, T. Borge, E. Hjelle, G. Saetre. 2011. "Hybrid Speciation in Sparrows I: Phenotypic Intermediacy, Genetic Admixture and Barriers to Gene Flow." *Molecular Ecology* 20:3812-3822.

Cat. 29 Rock Partridge

Figures 75-79

Panel III, Bird 12

Gabriel's Identification: Quail or Partridge

Author's Identification: Rock Partridge (*Alectoris graeca*): Permanent

On a low branch just above the brick fence, this bird closely resembles a Rock Partridge because of its red feet, white throat bordered with black and grey crown, purple-brown back, and light brown belly and underparts. The wings are fairly destroyed and it is impossible to see if it had the distinct patch of stripes on its side. The upright posture with its head stretched above its body is more characteristic of a Partridge instead of a Quail, which tends to crouch low with its head down, and it does not have the orange face of a Grey Partridge.

Cat. 30 No Identification

Figure 80

Panel III, Bird 13

Gabriel's Identification: No Identification

Author's Identification: No Identification

This bird does not have enough distinguishing characteristics to come to an identification. The white belly and brown neck ring are not unique to a particular species, and while the beak is about the size and shape of a Flycatcher's, that is not enough to rule anything else out. It is midflight, soaring past a palm.

Cat. 31 Pigeon

Figures 18, 81

Panel III, Bird 14

Gabriel's Identification: Pigeon

Author's Identification: Pigeon (*Columba livia*): Permanent

This Dove, part of a pair ensconced within an oak, is staring at its purple-crowned partner. It is white with a purple crest like its counterpart, and is standing on a lower branch of the oak with its head turned over a shoulder.

Cat. 32 Pigeon

Figures 18, 81

Panel III, Bird 15

Gabriel's Identification: Pigeon

Author's Identification: Pigeon (*Columba livia*): Permanent

Cat. 31's partner, this Dove is standing between two branches of an oak tree, looking down at its partner. It is also white with a purple crown.

Cat. 33 Golden Oriole

Figures 29, 82

Panel IV, Bird 1

Gabriel's Identification: Golden Oriole

Author's Identification: Golden Oriole (*Oriolus oriolus*): Summer (May-Aug)

Throwing its head back midsong, this is a yellow-bodied, black-winged Golden Oriole. The problems of the last Oriole identification are absent in this bird, as it lacks the defined brown stripe down its head and back and even has the correct pink beak.

Cat. 34 Wood Pigeon

Figures 18, 83-85

Panel IV, Bird 2

Gabriel's Identification: Pigeon

Author's Identification: Wood Pigeon (*Columba palumbus*): Permanent

The comparatively smaller head to body size ratio, broad tail, and large size distinguish this Wood Pigeon from the similar-looking Dove (*Columba livia*). Despite the somewhat destroyed head, there also appears to be a white patch on its neck, a characteristic of Wood Pigeons. It is standing near the bottom of an oleander with its head turned over a shoulder.

Cat. 35 Cetti's Warbler or Nightingale

Figures 20-21, 86

Panel IV, Bird 3

Gabriel's Identification: Nightingale

Author's Identification: Cetti's Warbler (*Cettia cetti*): Permanent

Nightingale (*Luscinia megarhynchos*): Summer (Apr-Sep)

This bird's cleanly-defined russet back and white belly and entirely white face are most in keeping with a Cetti's Warbler. That said, the Nightingale is still a candidate because the bird's face and beak are gone. The Cetti's Warbler is noted for standing with its tail held at an angle up from its body as opposed to the traditional streamlined Warbler posture, but this bird appears to be scolding the nearby Wood Pigeon based on its pointed stance directed towards its target, and this could affect its normal posture. It is standing on a pomegranate branch just above and to the right of the Wood Pigeon, who seems oblivious to its scolding.

Cat. 36 Great Reed Warbler or Orphean Warbler

Figures 87-89

Panel IV, Bird 4

Gabriel's Identification: Blackcap

Author's Identification: Great Reed Warbler (*Acrocephalus arundinaceus*): Summer (May-Aug)

Orphean Warbler (*Sylvia crassirostris*, *S. hortensis*): Summer

The Orphean Warbler was recently divided into an Eastern (*S. crassirostris*) and Western (*S. hortensis*) species with slightly different ranges, but they are similar enough in appearance and their ranges overlap in Italy that for the purposes of identification, they will be treated as the same species. This could be an Orphean Warbler based off of its dark crown and back, white throat and belly, dark beak, and possible neck ring, but the size is problematic. In the painting, the bird is almost as large as a Golden Oriole, which is about 20-22 cm. The Orphean Warbler is only 15-16.5 cm. The Great Reed Warbler is a better candidate for this identification, since it is large enough at 16-20 cm, has a robust bill, similar coloring, and tends to sit on high, exposed perches. This bird is standing on a currently-destroyed plant that places it in one of the highest spots in this panel.

Cat. 37 Italian Sparrow

Figures 74, 90

Panel IV, Bird 5

Gabriel's Identification: Bunting or Linnet

Author's Identification: Italian Sparrow (*Passer italiae*): Permanent

The white cheek-patch and conical bill surrounded by black mark this as an Italian Sparrow. Its solid white belly and red-brown cap aid this identification, and it is in the possible size range since it looks smaller than the Song Thrush (20-22 cm) it is standing above and the Italian Sparrow only reaches 14-16 cm. It is standing on a high branch of laurel, scolding the Song Thrush below it who is in the process of eating arbutus berries.

Cat. 38 Song Thrush

Figures 14, 91

Panel IV, Bird 6

Gabriel's Identification: Thrush

Author's Identification: Song Thrush (*Turdus philomelos*): Permanent

The vast amount of brown on this bird is much more in keeping with the Song Thrush's plumage than the Golden Oriole's. The yellow beak and white face are also characteristic of a Song Thrush, as Orioles have red-pink beaks and a more uniform yellow around the head and body. This Song Thrush is standing with its head turned back over one shoulder and its mouth open in order to peck at an arbutus.

Cat. 39 No Identification

Figure 92

Panel IV, Bird 7

Gabriel's Identification: Pigeon

Author's Identification: No Identification

Gabriel reports a white Pigeon standing in the lower branches of the spruce, but that area is highly destroyed and the bird was not distinguishable. It is possible the small spots of white on the ground next to the spruce are the remnants of the Dove, which would make it part of another pair of Doves with Cat. 40.

Cat. 40 Pigeon or Reef Egret

Figures 18, 93-94

Panel IV, Bird 8

Gabriel's Identification: Pigeon

Author's Identification: Pigeon (*Columba livia*): Permanent

Reef Egret (*Egretta gularis*): Current range outside of Italy, but has been greatly affected by human interference

The positioning of this bird is somewhat unclear, but its large size, rounded shape, and blue-purple plumage identify it as most likely a Dove. There is the possibility that it is a dark morph of the Reef Egret, which is also large and dark blue, but since this bird's bill, legs, and feet are missing, it is difficult to confirm. It is standing on the ground in front of the spruce, looking up at the trees on the right.

Cat. 41 Italian Sparrow

Figures 74, 95

Panel IV, Bird 9

Gabriel's Identification: Black Lark

Author's Identification: Italian Sparrow (*Passer italiae*): Permanent

Again, the Black Lark's range is too far outside of Italy for it to have been a recognizable household bird, so it is unlikely to have been deliberately painted here. This bird looks much more like an Italian Sparrow with its conical beak, black bib, brown back, and white underparts. It is midflight over an oleander.

Cat. 42 Pied Flycatcher or Orphean Warbler

Figures 69, 89, 96-97

Panel IV, Bird 10

Gabriel's Identification: Flycatcher

Author's Identification: Pied Flycatcher (*Ficedula hypoleuca*): Summer

Orphean Warbler (*Sylvia crassirostris*, *Sylvia hortensis*): Summer

The solid black crest, neck, and back are similar to those of the Pied Flycatcher, along with the white spot above the beak, white stripes on either side of the neck, and pure white breast and belly. However, the Orphean Warbler also has some of these characteristics, like the white throat and black crest, neck, and back. It lacks the white stripes on its neck and the white spot above the bill, but it has light eyes, something the Pied Flycatcher does not. The posture of the bird is not very helpful in the identification either. It is clinging vertically to the highest branch of a laurel, with its head turned over its back. Flycatchers are known for waiting on high, exposed perches like this one to scan for insects, but this is not their typical posture. However, birds are living, breathing, moving animals, and it is by no means impossible to imagine one taking up this position.

Cat. 43 Pigeon

Figures 18, 98

Panel IV, Bird 11

Gabriel's Identification: Pigeon

Author's Identification: Pigeon (*Columba livia*): Permanent

Large, white, and lovely, this is clearly a Dove. It has a purple ring around its neck, much like Cat. 24 and Pompeian examples. It is standing midway up a pine.

Cat. 44 Blackcap

Figures 99-101

Panel IV, Bird 12

Gabriel's Identification: Bunting or Linnet

Author's Identification: Female or Immature Blackcap (*Sylvia atricapilla*): Permanent

The russet-brown cap, grey mantle, brown back, pale yellow belly and underparts, and small, pointed beak mark this as a female or immature Blackcap. Males have a pure black cap and an overall grey tint. It is perched on a high branch of laurel.

Cat. 45 No Identification

Figure 102

Panel IV, Bird 13

Gabriel's Identification: Pigeon

Author's Identification: No Identification

Gabriel was able to see another white Dove in the corner of this panel but it is currently too destroyed to make out.

Cat. 46 Pigeon

Figures 18, 103

Panel V, Bird 1

Gabriel's Identification: Pigeon

Author's Identification: Pigeon (*Columba livia*): Permanent

Another lovely white Dove with a purple ring around its neck. It is on a quince branch.

Cat. 47 Song Thrush

Figures 14, 104

Panel V, Bird 2

Gabriel's Identification: Thrush

Author's Identification: Song Thrush (*Turdus philomelos*): Permanent

This bird's large bill with a yellow base, lack of wing bars, eye stripe, yellow sides, and streaked breast and belly confirm its identification as a Song Thrush. It is standing high on an oleander with its head turned over its shoulder.

Cat. 48 Cetti's Warbler

Figures 20, 105-106

Panel V, Bird 3

Gabriel's Identification: Hedge Sparrow (Another name for Dunnock)

Author's Identification: Cetti's Warbler (*Cettia cetti*): Permanent

This bird's rather generic markings mean that an exact identification is difficult, but the Cetti's Warbler has the same coloration, albeit with a duller yellow bill. However, this discrepancy is much less significant than the differences between this bird and the Dunnock, which is predominantly grey and brown, heavily streaked, and has a dark grey throat and eye ring. The Dunnock also has a black bill, so it is not better in this respect either. The bird is perched just above the brick fence.

Cat. 49 Goldfinch

Figures 107-108

Panel V, Bird 4

Gabriel's Identification: Goldfinch

Author's Identification: Goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*): Permanent

The red mask and yellow wing spots confirm the identification as a Goldfinch. It is standing up high, next to a palm.

Cat. 50 Wood Pigeon or Pigeon

Figures 18, 84, 109

Panel V, Bird 5

Gabriel's Identification: Pigeon

Author's Identification: Wood Pigeon (*Columba palumbus*): Permanent

Pigeon (*Columba livia*): Permanent

Since this bird's head is behind a clump of myrtle, it is not possible to see whether it has the small head and large body characteristic of Wood Pigeons. This means that even though it is larger than the other pigeons depicted, regular Doves cannot be ruled out as possible candidates. It is weighing down a branch of myrtle near the bottom of the painting.

Cat. 51 Egret

Figures 94, 110-115

Panel V, Bird 6

Gabriel's Identification: Pigeon

Author's Identification: Egret—One of three possible species

Cattle Egret (*Bilbilcus ibis*): Permanent

Little Egret (*Egretta garzetta*): Permanent

Reef Egret (*Egretta gularis*): Current range outside of Italy, but has been greatly affected by human interference

This bird presents some challenges for identification. It is standing on the top of the front wicker fence with long black legs and possibly yellow feet. Its head is folded down and it has a long, curving yellow bill. These characteristics all point to this being some type of Egret, but the specific species identification is problematic.

The Cattle Egret is the only bird with such a robust and curved yellow beak, but it has golden plumes on its head, throat, and lower back during the summer and its legs are usually yellow, though they can be darker. The light morph of the Reef Egret can have a yellow bill along with black legs and yellow feet, but the bird is usually only found on the coast, as its name suggests. The Little Egret has a black bill, which does not fit with this identification, but it has black legs and yellow feet.

Cat. 52 Orphean Warbler

Figures 89, 116

Panel V, Bird 7

Gabriel's Identification: Hedge Sparrow (Another name for Dunnock)

Author's Identification: Orphean Warbler (*Sylvia crassirostris*, *Sylvia hortensis*): Summer

The black wings, back, and crown with a white belly are all in keeping with an Orphean Warbler, right down to the beak's black tip. The black and white colors rule out Thrushes and Pipits, which are predominantly brown, even though this specimen seems to have more white on its face than is usually found. It is perched at the opening in the wicker fence across from the Egret.

Cat. 53 Italian Sparrow

Figures 74, 117

Panel V, Bird 8

Gabriel's Identification: Bunting

Author's Identification: Italian Sparrow (*Passer italiae*): Permanent

This bird's white cheek patches and brown crest, neck ring, and back indicate an Italian Sparrow. The beak is the correct dark color and conical shape, and it appears to have had the black throat patch characteristic of the Italian Sparrow. It is standing high up next to an arbutus.

Cat. 54 Eurasian Jay

Figures 59-62, 118

Panel V, Bird 9

Gabriel's Identification: Eurasian Jay

Author's Identification: Eurasian Jay (*Garrulus glandularius*): Permanent

The Eurasian Jay is in the process of eating an arbutus berry, and is displaying its black moustache, beak, and tail, pinkish body, and white undertail-coverts.

Cat. 55 Rock Partridge

Figures 75-79, 119

Panel V, Bird 10

Gabriel's Identification: Partridge

Author's Identification: Rock Partridge (*Alectoris graecia*): Permanent

This Partridge identification has the same problem as the last one in Cat. 29, namely that it does not have the striped side patches underneath its wings. The wings and breast are fairly destroyed, so it is possible the patches were present at one point. However, it has the red beak and feet of a Rock Partridge, plus the purple breast that fades into a tan underbelly and white throat. The posture is again unlike a Quail's, since Partridges tend to extend their necks above their bodies while Quail favor a low, crouching stance. This Partridge is striding along the top of the pink brick wall.

Cat. 56 Golden Oriole

Figures 29, 120

Panel V, Bird 11

Gabriel's Identification: Golden Oriole

Author's Identification: Golden Oriole (*Oriolus oriolus*): Summer (May-Aug)

This is an excellent example of a Golden Oriole and it is intriguing for the other identifications so far because, while it has brown on the top of its head and back, this color is a result of painted shadowing. The entire head, breast, and back are all the same yellow, but the painter has made parts of the bird darker to compensate for the light source. The Oriole has his head thrown back while he is standing on a pine branch.

Cat. 57 Blackbird

Figures 35, 121

Panel V, Bird 12

Gabriel's Identification: Blackbird

Author's Identification: Blackbird (*Turdus merula*): Permanent

Like the other Blackbirds, this bird is in midair, here about to land on a pomegranate. It is in the summer morph with a yellow beak.

Cat. 58 Common Rosefinch

Figures 122-123

Panel V, Bird 13

Gabriel's Identification: Yellow Bunting

Author's Identification: Common Rosefinch (*Carpodacus erythrinus*): Summer (May-Aug)

This bird's distinctive red head and breast contrasted with a brown eye-stripe, back, and wings mark it as a male Common Rosefinch. Its white belly adds evidence to this identification. Gabriel suggests a Yellow Bunting, but that bird is not present in Europe.

Cat. 59 No Identification

Figures

Panel V, Bird 14

Gabriel's Identification: No Identification: "Resembles out hummingbirds"

Author's Identification: No Identification

There used to be another example of the small, hanging birds on the painted stalactites in this panel, but as of now, it is only visible in the 19th-century engraving *Antike Denkmäler* since that part of the fresco has since been lost.

Cat. 60 Stonechat or Reed Bunting

Figures 124-126

Panel VI, Bird 1

Gabriel's Identification: Flycatcher

Author's Identification: Stonechat (*Saxicola torquata*): PermanentReed Bunting (*Emberiza schoeniclus*): Permanent

This bird's entirely black head and beak with white stripes in a half-collar mark this as a Stonechat or Reed Bunting. It is rare to find stripes that are perpendicular to the beak since most often they begin at the beak and branch out into moustachial, malar, crown, or eye-stripes. This is why the most likely identification is a Stonechat, since it completely lacks stripes emerging from the beak, as opposed to the Reed Bunting's small white moustachial stripe. The Stonechat also has a half-collar of white, while the Reed Bunting's white collar goes all the way around its neck. However, even with these discrepancies, the Reed Bunting cannot be eliminated as a candidate. It has a brown back, which is more in keeping with this bird's coloration, as opposed to the Stonechat's dark brown or black back. It is worth noting that this is the spring or summer plumage for both species, so regardless of which it actually is, the bird is painted in its summer coloration. The bird is standing on the top branch of an oleander with its head turned back over its shoulder.

Cat. 61 Song Thrush or Great Reed Warbler

Figures 14, 88, 127

Panel VI, Bird 2

Gabriel's Identification: Thrush

Author's Identification: Song Thrush (*Turdus philomelos*): Permanent

Great Reed Warbler (*Acrocephalus arundinaceus*): Summer (May-Aug)

The somewhat destroyed condition of this bird makes a specific identification difficult. The yellow-brown breast and lack of wing bars are typical of a Song Thrush, but the belly is not spotted, which is one of its key markings. Another possibility is the Great Reed Warbler, an identification strengthened by the streamlined, "pointed" posture of a Warbler, brown back and crown, robust beak, and white throat and belly. The problem with this identification is the yellow breast, something not found in Great Reed Warblers. It is leaning down from its perch on an oleander.

Cat. 62 Blackbird

Figures 35, 128

Panel VI, Bird 3

Gabriel's Identification: Blackbird

Author's Identification: Blackbird (*Turdus merula*): Permanent

This blackbird is flying over a quince. It is possible it originally had the yellow beak found on several other blackbirds in the room and that the paint has since faded, since several of the other blackbirds' beaks are fading gradually from yellow to underlying black.

Cat. 63 No Identification

Figures 129-130

Panel VI, Bird 4

Gabriel's Identification: Flycatcher

Author's Identification: No Identification

Pied or Collared Flycatchers, the birds Gabriel seems to be imagining for this identification, are not viable candidates for this bird. It is understandable to immediately think of a Flycatcher with the pure black back and wings and white underbelly, but Pied and Collared Flycatchers have an entirely white belly and throat, and have a patch of white directly over their beaks, whereas this bird has a black head and bib. Also, Flycatchers have very small, pointed beaks, while this bird's beak is more conical and almost finch-like. It is either in the process of landing or has just taken off from a spruce.

Cat. 64 Purple Gallinule

Figures 131-134

Panel VI, Bird 5

Gabriel's Identification: Pigeon

Author's Identification: Purple Gallinule/Swamphen (*Porphyrio porphyrio*): Permanent

The bird striding along in front of a spruce has stilt-like red legs, a long neck, and a red beak and frontal plate. This collection of characteristics marks it as a Purple Gallinule (also known as a Purple Swamphen), a large and beautiful wading bird. Its current range does not include Italy, but it seems like it was much more prevalent in ancient times given the large number of paintings featuring it. It is walking on the strip of grass between the two fences.

Cat. 65 Golden Oriole

Figures 29, 135

Panel VI, Bird 6

Gabriel's Identification: Golden Oriole

Author's Identification: Golden Oriole (*Oriolus oriolus*): Summer (May-Aug)

This panel has suffered destruction, and this bird's inconsistent coloring may be a result of attempted repairs. The most problematic elements are the dark head and back. Its bright, uniformly-yellow belly and breast, black wings, dark tail, and pointed red beak are all characteristic of the Golden Oriole. However, the back and head are not at all in keeping with a Golden Oriole. The dark portions are on one cracked patch of plaster, and it is possible this portion was repainted during a repair. The bird is standing above a clump of myrtle, eyeing a pomegranate.

Cat. 66 No Identification

Figures 20-21, 136

Panel VI, Bird 7

Gabriel's Identification: Nightingale

Author's Identification: No Identification

This bird could be Cetti's Warbler because of its small size and clean contrast between its brown back and white underbelly, but it may have crown and eye-stripes, which would eliminate the Cetti's Warbler identification. It, like most of the birds in this panel, has become somewhat destroyed with time, making it difficult to discern distinguishing characteristics. It is perched on a high pomegranate branch.

Figures

Unless indicated otherwise, the photographs of the Garden Room birds are by the author. The identification images are all from the *Birds of Europe* guide by Svensson et al. 2010 and the photographs of the entire panels are from *La Villa di Livia: Le Pareti Ingannevoli* by Settis 2008 and were modified by the author.

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- 15: Song Thrush. House of the Golden Bracelet (IV.17.42). In Settis 2008 p. 63
- 16: Panel I, Bird 3: Pigeon
- 17: White Pigeon. House of the Golden Bracelet (IV.17.42). In Settis 2008 p. 61

- 18: Pigeon (*Columba livia*): Permanent
- 19: Panel I, Bird 4: Cetti's Warbler or Nightingale
- 20: Cetti's Warbler (*Cettia cetti*): Permanent
- 21: Nightingale (*Luscinia megarhynchos*): Summer (Apr-Sep)
- 22: Warbler, recognizable by its "pointed" posture. House of the Golden Bracelet (IV.17.42). In Settis 2008 p. 64
- 23: Panel I, Birds 5-7: No Identification
- 24: Treecreeper (*Certhia familiaris*): Permanent
- 25: Lesser Spotted Woodpecker (*Dendrocopos minor*): Permanent
- 26: Bird hanging upside-down. From the House of Marine Venus (II.3.3). Photo: S. Jashemski. In Jashemski 1979 p. 64, fig. 103
- 27: Panel II, Bird 1: Pigeon
- 28: Panel II, Bird 2: Golden Oriole
- 29: Golden Oriole (*Oriolus oriolus*): Summer (May-Aug)
- 30: Male Oriole. House of the Golden Bracelet (IV.17.42). Photo: S. Jashemski. In Jashemski 2002 p. 386, fig. 321
- 31: Female Oriole. House of the Fruit Orchard (I.9.5). Photo: S. Jashemski. In Jashemski 2002 p. 387, fig. 322
- 32: Panel II, Bird 3: Song Thrush or Tree Pipit
- 33: Panel II, Bird 4: Nightingale
- 34: Panel II, Bird 5: Blackbird
- 35: Blackbird (*Turdus merula*): Permanent
- 36: Panel II, Bird 6: European Robin
- 37: European Robin (*Erithacus rubecula*): Permanent
- 38: Panel II, Bird 7: Quail

- 39: Quail (*Coturnix coturnix*): Summer
- 40: Grey Partridge (*Perdix perdix*): Permanent
- 41: Quail and Millet. Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli, Inv. 8750. Photo: S. Jashemski. In Jashemski 2002 p. 137, fig. 120
- 42: Panel II, Bird 8: Garden Warbler, Nightingale, or Cetti's Warbler
- 43: Garden Warbler: (*Sylvia borin*): Summer (Apr-Sep)
- 44: Ortolan Bunting (*Emberiza hortolana*): Summer
- 45: Black-headed Bunting (*Emberiza melanocephala*): Summer
- 46: Panel II, Bird 9: Golden Oriole
- 47: Panel II, Bird 10: Song Thrush
- 48: Panel II, Bird 11: House Martin
- 49: House Martin (*Delichon urbica*): Summer (Apr-Oct)
- 50: Swallow, which unlike the House Martin, has a red throat. House of the Golden Bracelet (VI.17.42). In Ciarallo 2001 p. 8, fig. 5
- 51: Panel II, Birds 12-14: No Identification
- 52: Panel III, Bird 1: Magpie
- 53: Magpie (*Pica pica*): Permanent
- 54: Panel III, Bird 2: Blackbird
- 55: Panel III, Bird 3: No Identification
- 56: Black Lark (*Melanocorypha yeltoniensis*)
- 57: Range of the Black Lark. It never travels west of the Black Sea. Map from Svensson 2010
- 58: Panel III, Bird 4: Blackbird
- 59: Panel III, Bird 5: Eurasian Jay
- 60: Eurasian Jay (*Garrulus glandularius*): Permanent
- 61: Jay and Song Thrush. House of the Fruit Orchard (I.9.5). In Ciarallo 2006 pl. 8

- 62: Jay in an arbutus. House of the Golden Bracelet (IV.17.42). In Settis 2008 p. 62
- 63: Panel III, Bird 6: Pigeon
- 64: Panel III, Birds 6 and 7: Pigeons
- 65: Panel III, Bird 7. Pigeon
- 66: White Pigeon with purple collar. House of the Golden Bracelet (IV.17.42). Photo: S. Jashemski. In Jashemski 2002 p. 374, fig. 306
- 67: Panel III, Bird 8: Spotted Flycatcher, Pied Flycatcher, or Cetti's Warbler
- 68: Spotted Flycatcher (*Muscicapa striata*): Summer
- 69: Pied Flycatcher (*Ficedula hypoleuca*): Summer
- 70: Panel III, Bird 9: Red-throated Pipit
- 71: Red-throated Pipit (*Anthus cervinus*): Summer (Apr-Jun, Aug-Nov)
- 72: Panel III, Bird 10: Golden Oriole, Melodious Warbler, or Icterine Warbler
- 73: Panel III, Bird 11: Italian Sparrow
- 74: Italian Sparrow (*Passer italiae*): Permanent
- 75: Panel III, Bird 12: Rock Partridge
- 76: Rock Partridge (*Alectoris graeca*): Permanent
- 77: Partridge with grapes. Fragments from Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli. In Ciarallo p. 57, fig. 7
- 78: Partridge. House of the Golden Bracelet (IV.17.42). In Settis 2008 p. 63
- 79: Partridge pulling a mirror out of a basket. Mosaic, House of the Labyrinth (VI.11.10). Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli Inv.9980. In De Caro 2015 p. 26
- 80: Panel III, Bird 13: No Identification
- 81: Panel III, Birds 14 and 15: Pigeons
- 82: Panel IV, Bird 1: Golden Oriole

- 83: Panel IV, Bird 2: Wood Pigeon
- 84: Wood Pigeon (*Columba palumbus*): Permanent
- 85: Wood Pigeon. House of the Golden Bracelet (IV.17.42). Photo: S. Jashemski. In Jashemski 2002 p. 374, fig. 307
- 86: Panel IV, Bird 3: Cetti's Warbler or Nightingale
- 87: Panel IV, Bird 4: Great Reed Warbler or Orphean Warbler
- 88: Great Reed Warbler (*Acrocephalus arundinaceus*): Summer (May-Aug)
- 89: Orphean Warbler (*Sylvia crassirostris*, *S. hortensis*): Summer
- 90: Panel IV, Bird 5: Italian Sparrow
- 91: Panel IV, Bird 6: Song Thrush
- 92: Panel VI, Bird 7: No Identification
- 93: Panel IV, Bird 8: Pigeon or Reef Egret
- 94: Reef Egret (*Egretta gularis*): Current range outside of Italy, but has been greatly affected by human interference
- 95: Panel IV, Bird 9: Italian Sparrow
- 96: Panel IV, Bird 10: Pied Flycatcher or Orphean Warbler
- 97: Same bird. Photo from Gabriel 1955, Plate 23
- 98: Plate IV, Bird 11: Pigeon
- 99: Panel IV, Bird 12: Blackcap
- 100: Blackcap (*Sylvia atricapilla*): Permanent
- 101: Linnet (*Linaria cannabina*): Permanent
- 102: Panel IV, Bird 13: No Identification
- 103: Panel V, Bird 1: Pigeon
- 104: Panel V, Bird 2: Song Thrush

- 105: Panel V, Bird 3: Cetti's Warbler
- 106: Dunnock (*Prunella modularis*): Permanent
- 107: Panel V, Bird 4: Goldfinch
- 108: Goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*): Permanent
- 109: Panel V, Bird 5: Wood Pigeon or Pigeon
- 110: Panel V, Bird 6: Egret
- 111: Cattle Egret (*Bilbilcus ibis*): Permanent
- 112: Little Egret (*Egretta garzetta*): Permanent
- 113: Cattle Egret. House of the Fruit Orchard (I.9.5) atrium Photo: S. Jashemski. In Jashemski 2002 p. 370, fig. 302
- 114: Cattle Egret. House of the Golden Bracelet (IV.17.42). In Settis 2008 p. 61
- 115: Egret fighting a snake. House of Adonis (V.7.18) peristyle. Photo: S. Jashemski. In Jashemski 2002 p. 337, fig. 284
- 116: Panel V, Bird 7: Orphean Warbler
- 117: Panel V, Bird 8: Italian Sparrow
- 118: Panel V, Bird 9: Eurasian Jay
- 119: Panel V, Bird 10: Rock Partridge
- 120: Panel V, Bird 11: Golden Oriole
- 121: Panel V, Bird 12: Blackbird
- 122: Panel V, Bird 13: Common Rosefinch
- 123: Common Rosefinch (*Carpodacus erythrinus*): Summer (May-Aug)
- 124: Panel VI, Bird 1: Stonechat or Reed Bunting
- 125: Stonechat (*Saxicola torquata*): Permanent
- 126: Reed Bunting (*Emberiza schoeniclus*): Permanent

127: Panel VI, Bird 2: Song Thrush or Great Reed Warbler

128: Panel VI, Bird 3: Blackbird

129: Panel VI, Bird 4: No Identification

130: Same bird. Photo from Gabriel 1955, Plate 36

131: Panel VI, Bird 5: Purple Gallinule

132: Purple Gallinule/Swamphen (*Porphyrio porphyrio*): Permanent

133: Purple Gallinule: House of the Golden Bracelet (IV.17.42). In Settis 2008 p. 67

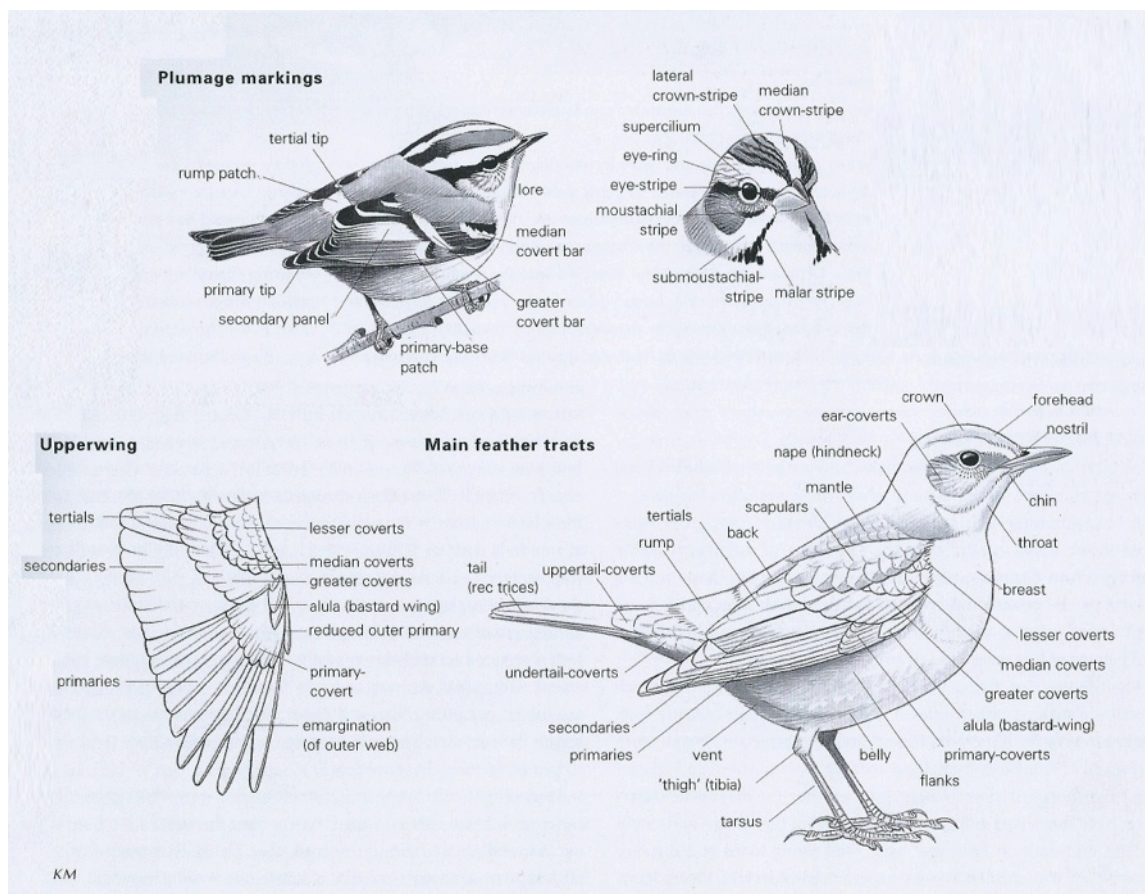
134: Purple Gallinule. Herculaneum. Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli Inv. 8644. In Ling 1991 p. 154, fig. 162

135: Panel VI, Bird 6: Golden Oriole

136: Panel VI, Bird 7: No Identification

Figures

Unless indicated otherwise, the photographs of the Garden Room birds are by the author. The identification images are all from the *Birds of Europe* guide by Svensson and the photographs of the entire panels are from *La Villa di Livia: Le Pareti Ingannevoli* by Settis and were modified by the author.



Plumage Key. From Svensson 2010

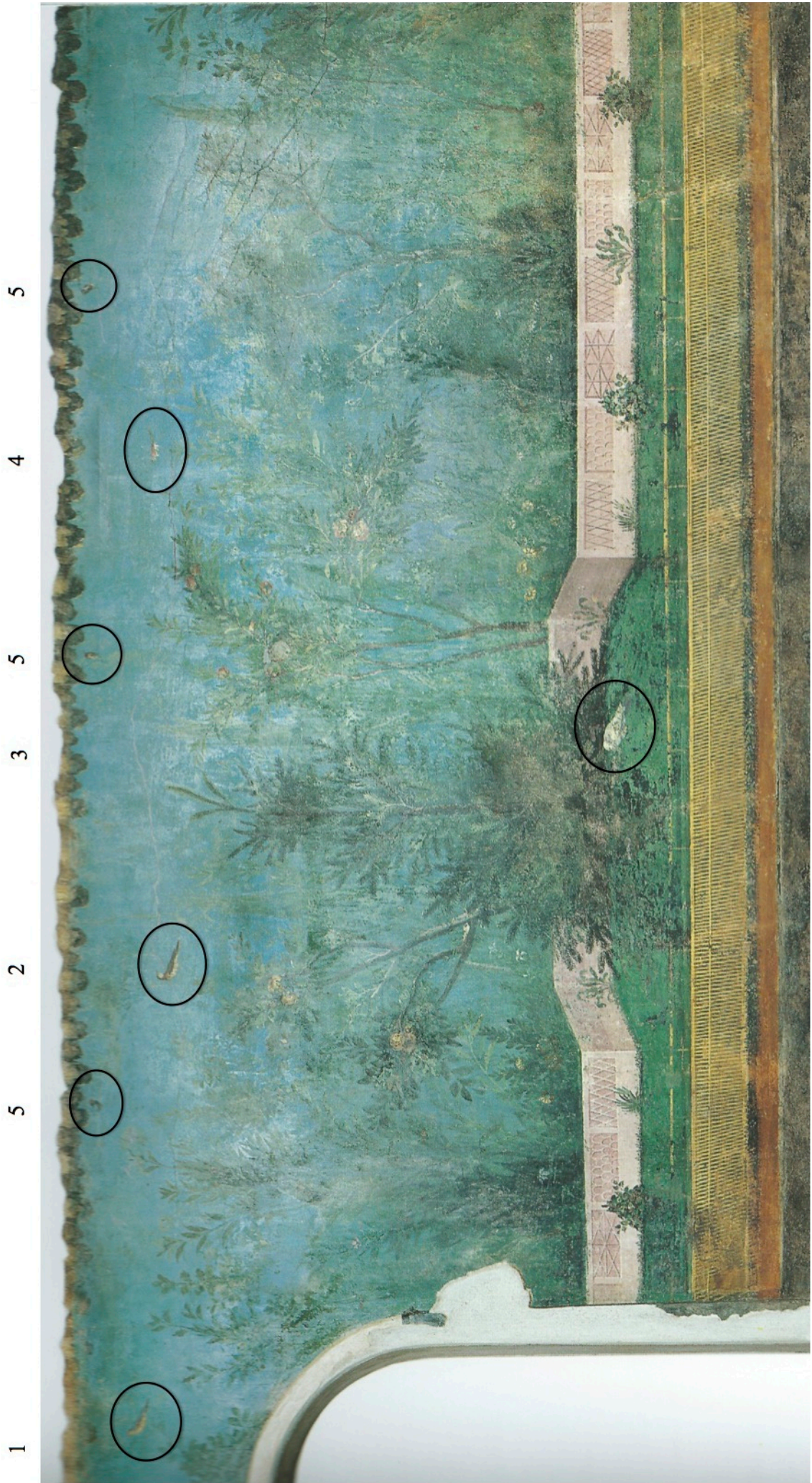


Figure 1: Panel I

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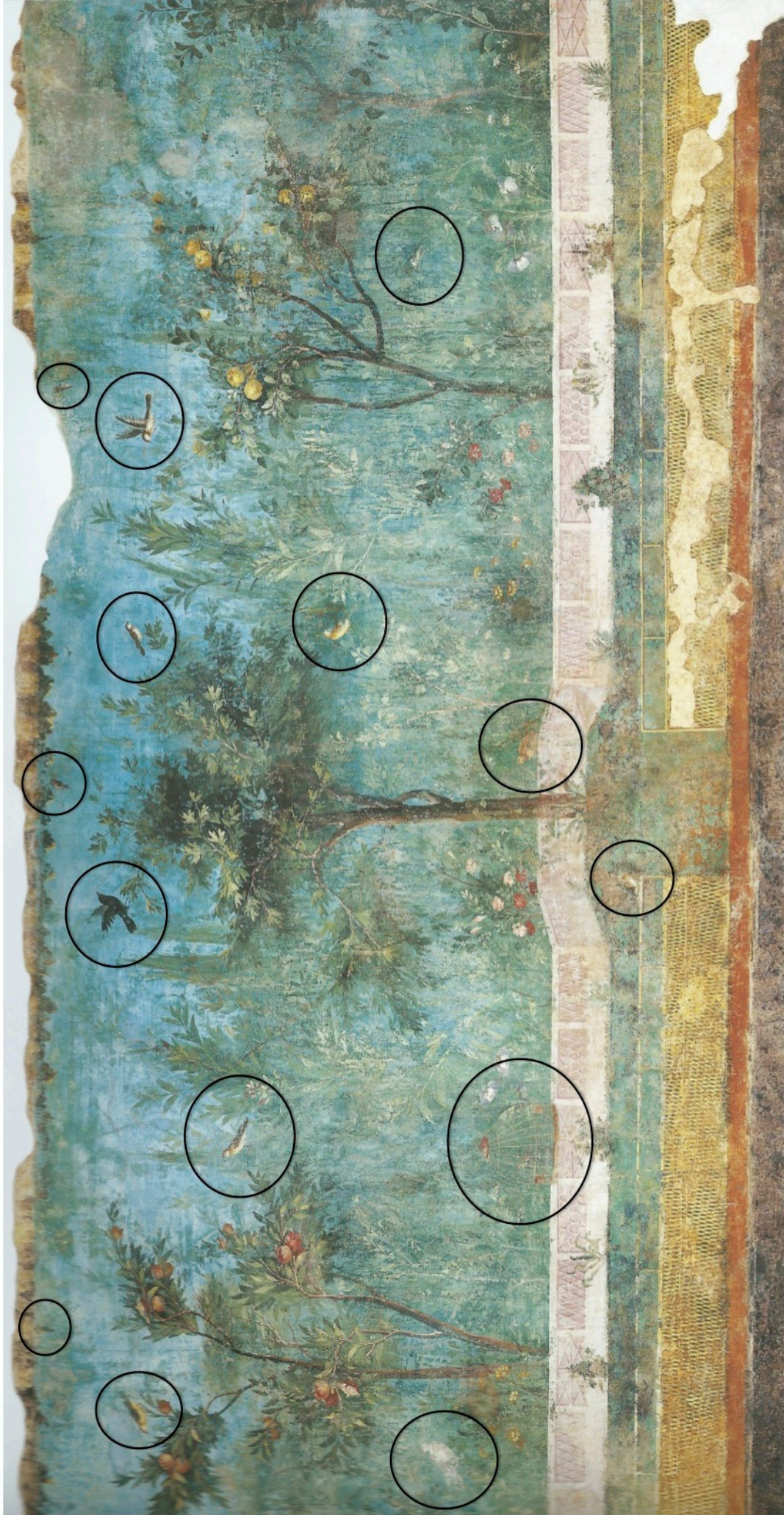


Figure 2: Panel II

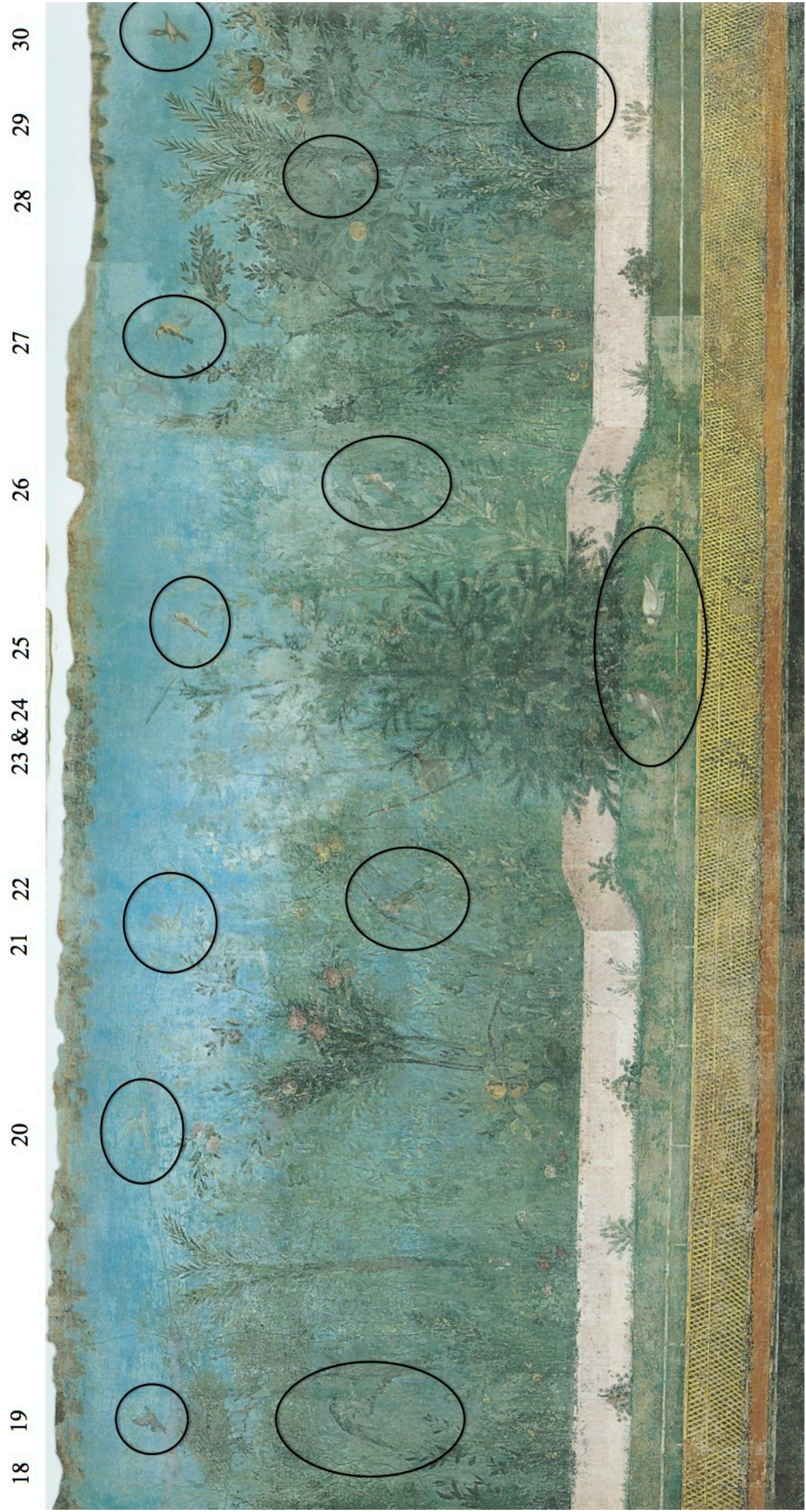


Figure 3: Panel III

33 34 35 36 37 38 39? 40 41 42 43 44 45?



Figure 4: Panel IV

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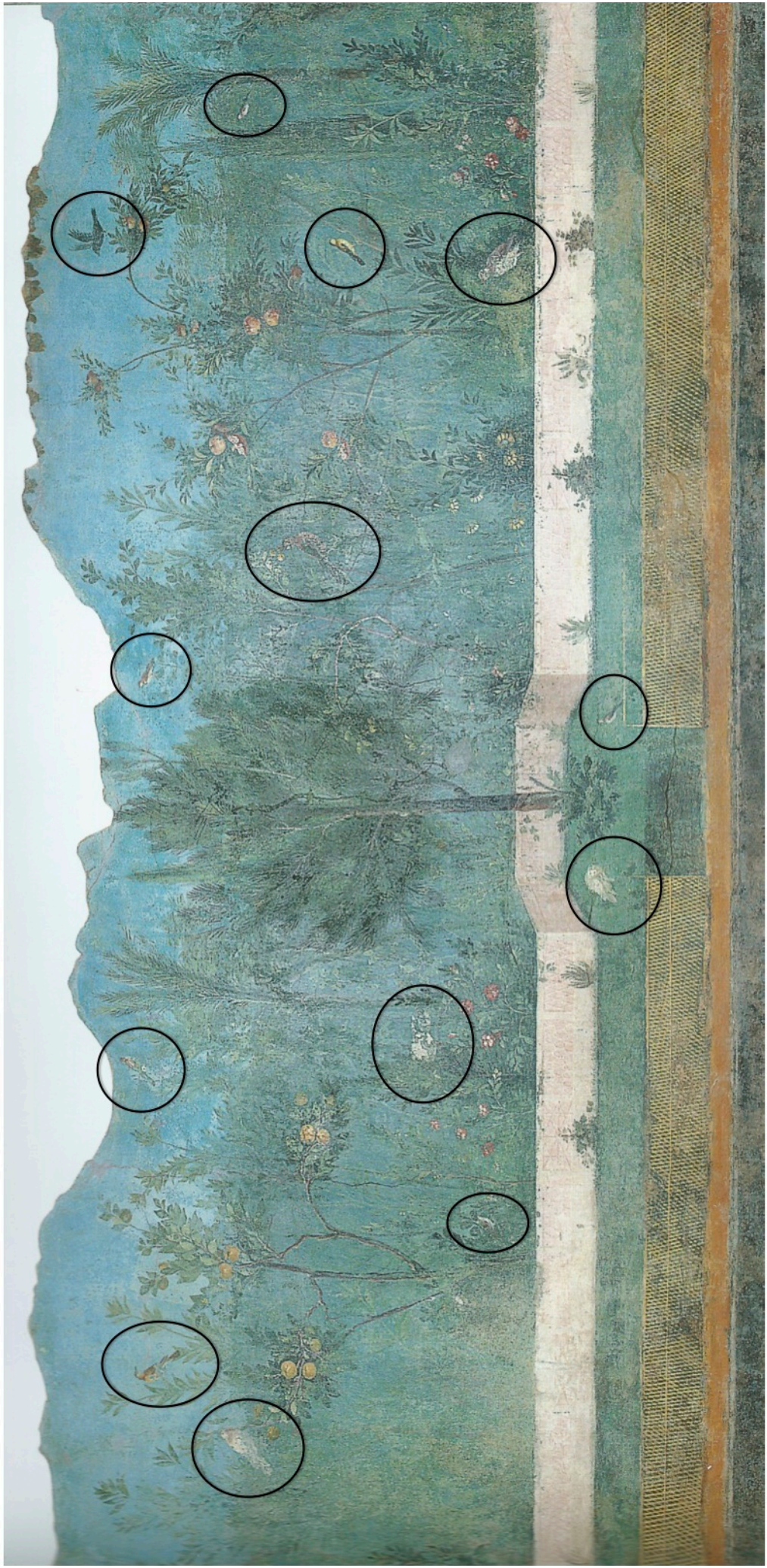


Figure 5: Panel V

60 61 62 63 64 65 66

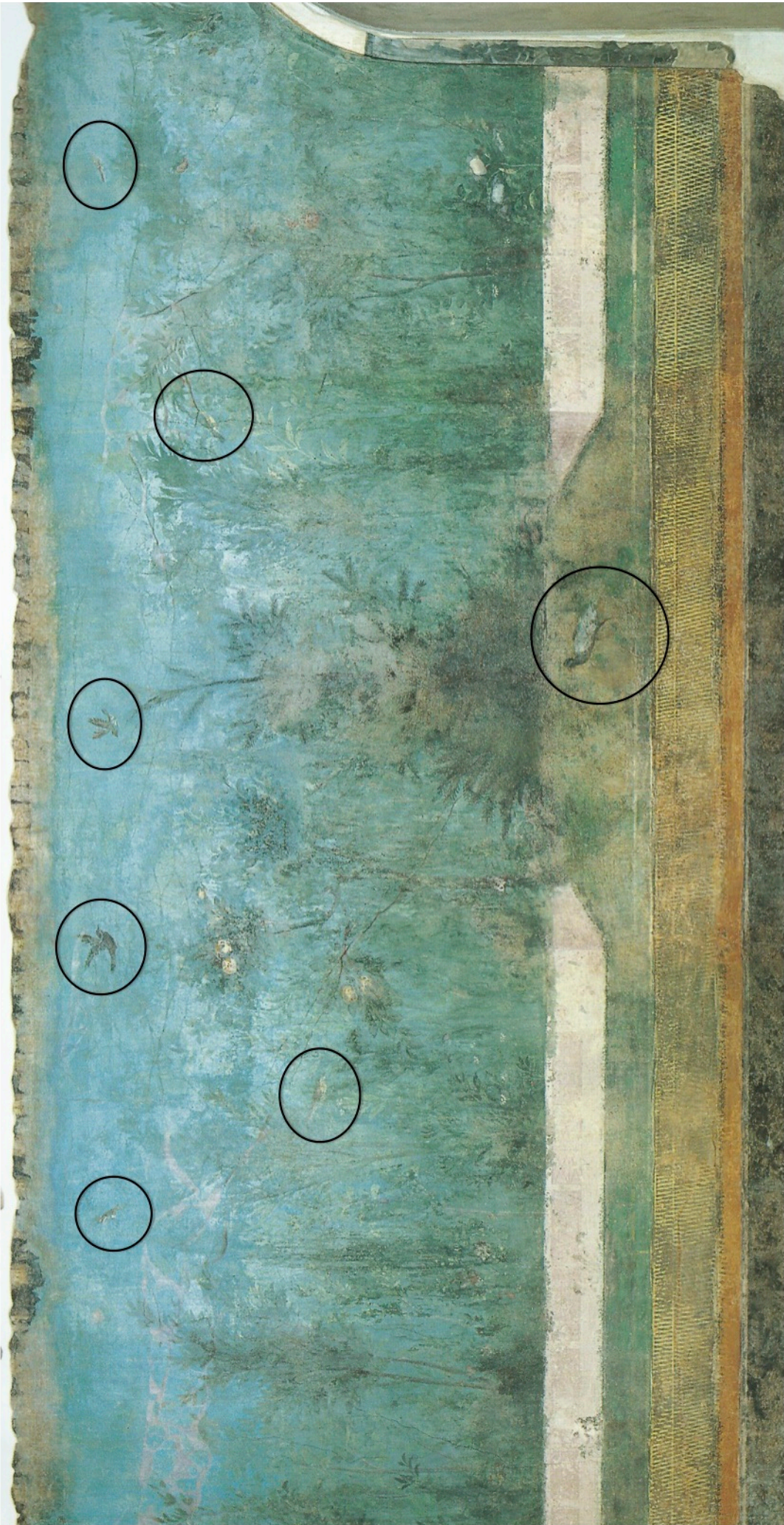


Figure 6: Panel VI



Figure 7: Panel I, Bird 1: Melodious Warbler, Icterine Warbler, or Yellow Wagtail

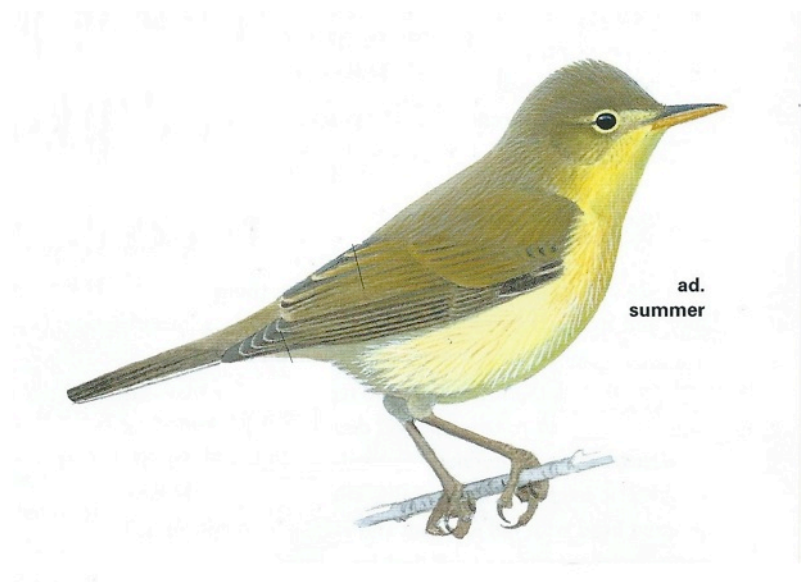


Figure 8: Melodious Warbler (*Hippolais sp.*): Summer (Aug-Oct, few in spring)



Figure 9: Icterine Warbler (*Hippolais sp.*): Summer (Aug-Oct, few in spring)

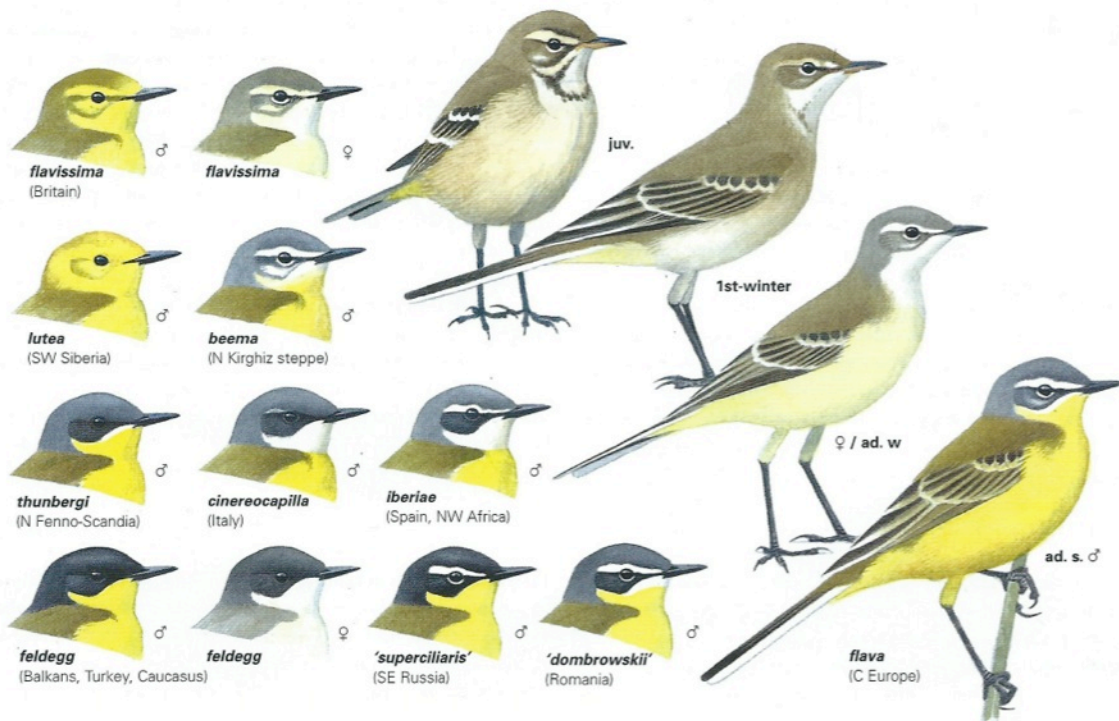


Figure 10: Yellow Wagtail (*Motacilla flava*): Summer (Apr-Sep / early Oct)



Figure 11: Panel I, Bird 2: Song Thrush



Figure 12: Tree Pipit (*Anthus trivialis*): Summer



Figure 13: Meadow Pipit (*Anthus praetensis*): Winter



Figure 14: Song Thrush (*Turdus philomela*): Permanent



Figure 15: Song Thrush. House of the Golden Bracelet (IV.17.42). In Settis 2008 p. 63



Figure 16: Panel I, Bird 3: Pigeon



Figure 17: White Pigeon. House of the Golden Bracelet (IV.17.42). In Settis 2008 p. 61



Figure 18: Pigeon (*Columba livia*): Permanent



Figure 19: Panel I, Bird 4: Cetti's Warbler or Nightingale



Figure 20: Cetti's Warbler (*Cettia cetti*): Permanent



Figure 21: Nightingale (*Luscinia megarhynchos*): Summer (Apr-Sep)



Figure 22: Warbler, recognizable by its “pointed” posture. House of the Golden Bracelet (IV.17.42). In Settis 2008 p. 64



Figure 23: Panel I, Birds 5-7: No Identification



Figure 24: Tree Creeper (*Certhia familiaris*): Permanent

climbs quietly on
underside of thick
branches like a large
tree-creeper



Figure 25: Lesser Spotted Woodpecker (*Dendrocopos minor*): Permanent

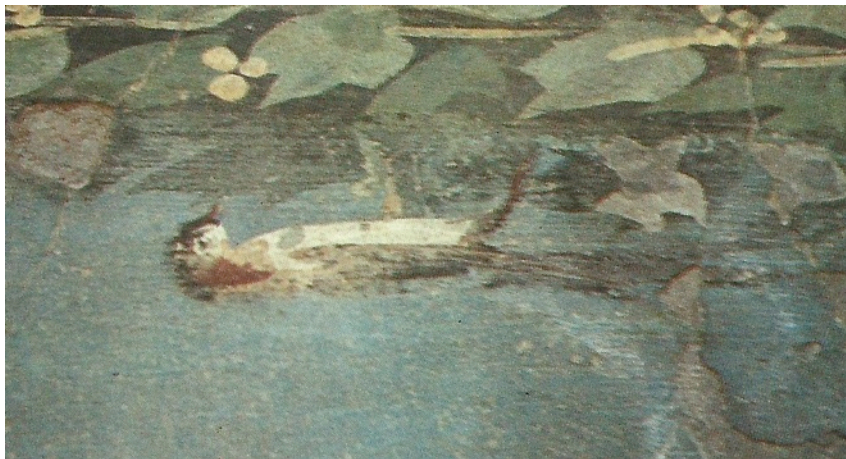


Figure 26: Bird hanging upside-down. From the House of Marine Venus (II.3.3). Photo: S. Jashemski. In Jashemski 1979 p. 64, fig. 103



Figure 27: Panel II, Bird 1: Pigeon



Figure 28: Panel II, Bird 2: Golden Oriole



Figure 29: Golden Oriole (*Oriolus oriolus*): Summer (May-Aug)



Figure 30: Male Oriole. House of the Golden Bracelet (IV.17.42). Photo: S. Jashemski. In Jashemski 2002 p. 386, fig. 321



Figure 31: Female Oriole. House of the Fruit Orchard (I.9.5). Photo: S. Jashemski. In Jashemski 2002 p. 387, fig. 322



Figure 32: Panel II, Bird 3: Song Thrush or Tree Pipit



Figure 33: Panel II, Bird 4: Nightingale



Figure 34: Panel II, Bird 5: Blackbird

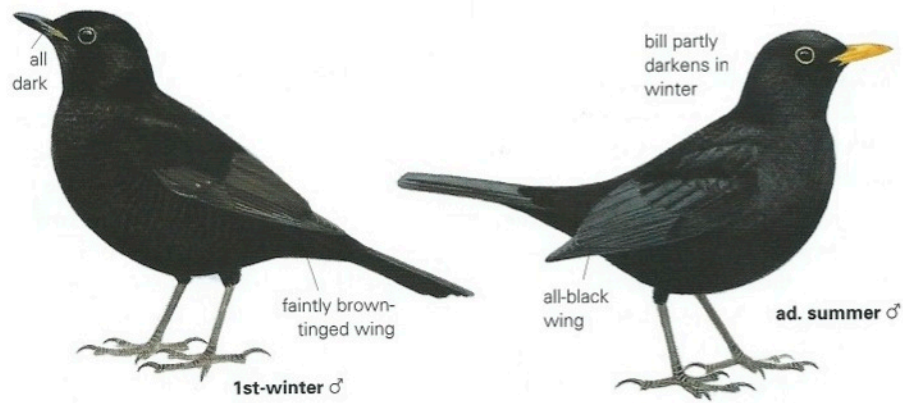


Figure 35: Blackbird (*Turdus merula*): Permanent



Figure 36: Panel II, Bird 6: European Robin



Figure 37: European Robin (*Erithacus rubecula*): Permanent



Figure 38: Panel II, Bird 7: Quail

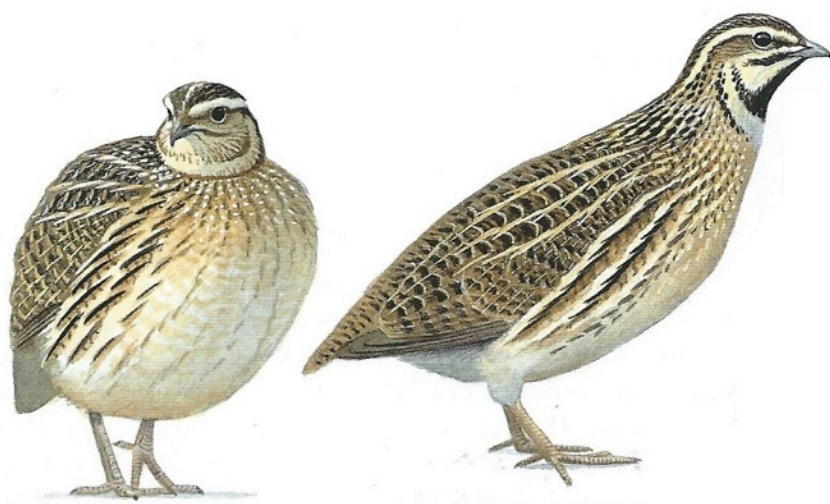


Figure 39: Quail (*Coturnix coturnix*): Summer



Figure 40: Grey Partridge (*Perdix perdix*): Permanent

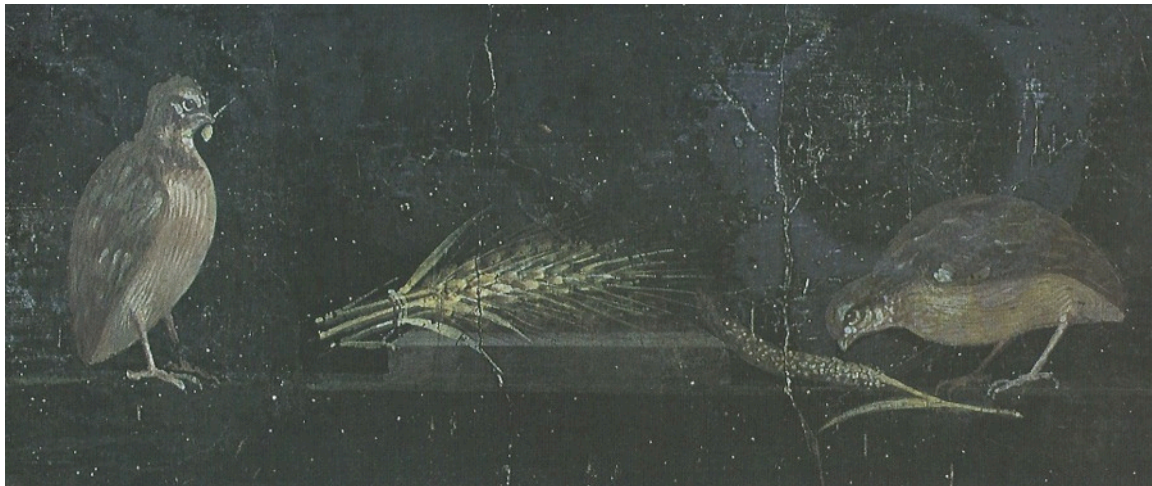


Figure 41: Quail and Millet. Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli, Inv. 8750. Photo: S. Jashemski. In Jashemski 2002 p. 137, fig. 120



Figure 42: Panel II, Bird 8: Garden Warbler, Nightingale, or Cetti's Warbler



Figure 43: Garden Warbler: (*Sylvia borin*): Summer (Apr-Sep)



Figure 44: Ortolan Bunting (*Emberiza hortolana*): Summer



Figure 45: Black-headed Bunting (*Emberiza melanocephala*): Summer



Figure 46: Panel II, Bird 9: Golden Oriole



Figure 47: Panel II, Bird 10: Song Thrush



Figure 48: Panel II, Bird 11: House Martin

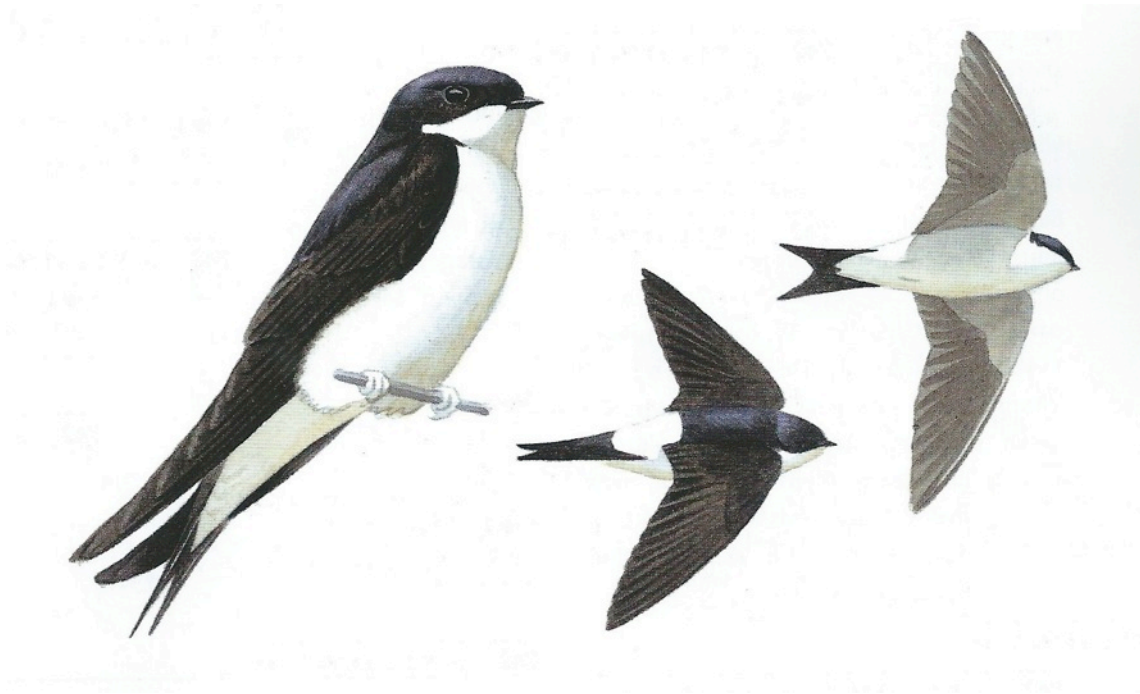


Figure 49: House Martin (*Delichon urbica*): Summer (Apr-Oct)



Figure 50: Swallow, which unlike the House Martin, has a red throat. House of the Golden Bracelet (VI.17.42). In Ciarallo 2001 p. 8, fig. 5



Figure 51: Panel II, Birds 12-14: No Identification



Figure 52: Panel III, Bird 1: Magpie



Figure 53: Magpie (*Pica pica*): Permanent



Figure 54: Panel III, Bird 2: Blackbird



Figure 55: Panel III, Bird 3: No Identification



Figure 56: Black Lark (*Melanocorphyra yeltoniensis*)

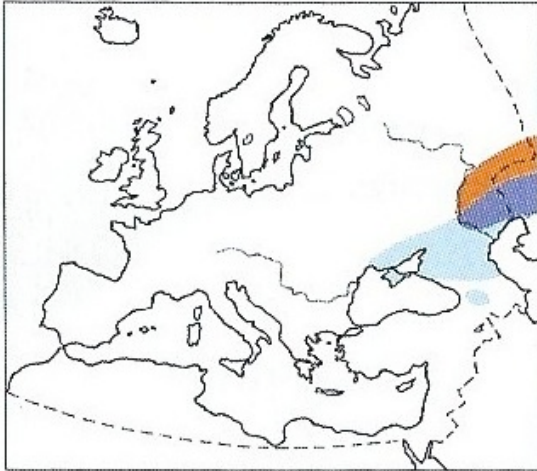


Figure 57: Range of the Black Lark. It never travels west of the Black Sea. Map from Svensson 2010



Figure 58: Panel III, Bird 4: Blackbird



Figure 59: Panel III, Bird 5: Eurasian Jay



Figure 60: Eurasian Jay (*Garrulus glandularius*): Permanent

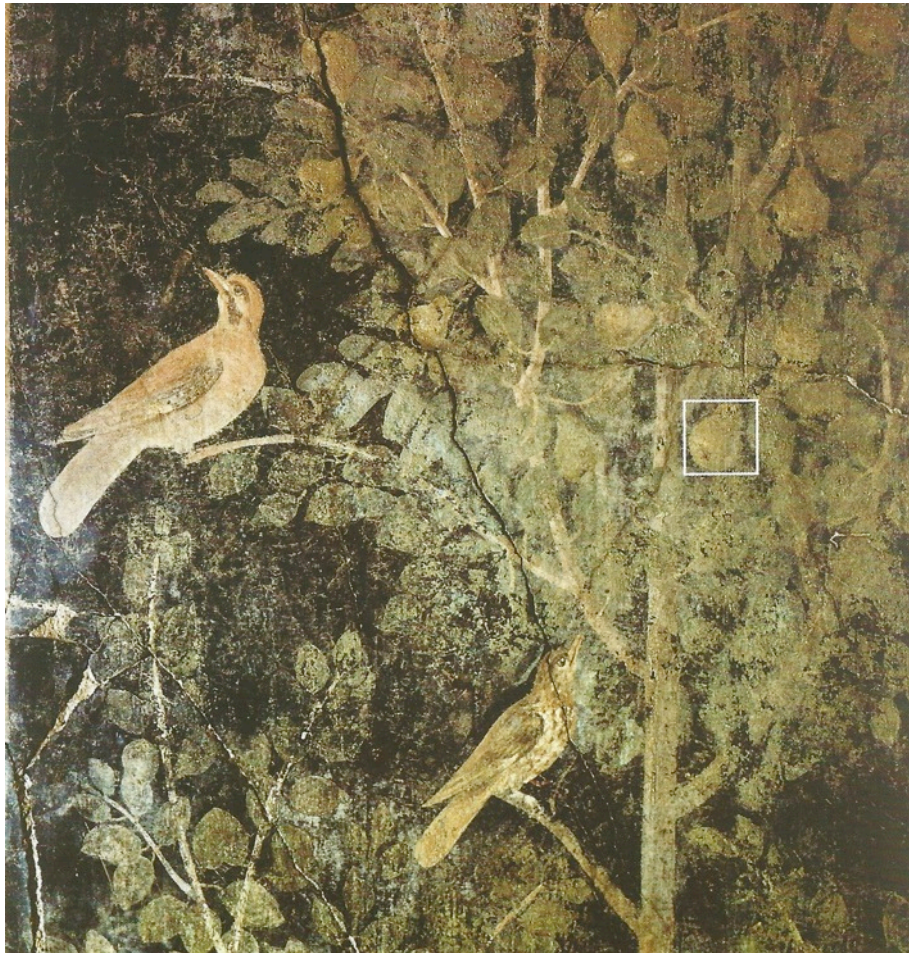


Figure 61: Jay and Song Thrush. House of the Fruit Orchard (I.9.5). In Ciarallo 2006 pl. 8



Figure 62: Jay in an arbutus. House of the Golden Bracelet (IV.17.42). In Settis 2008 p. 62



Figure 63: Panel III, Bird 6: Pigeon



Figure 64: Panel III, Birds 6 and 7: Pigeons



Figure 65: Panel III, Bird 7. Pigeon



Figure 66: White Pigeon with purple collar. House of the Golden Bracelet (IV.17.42). Photo: S. Jashemski. In Jashemski 2002 p. 374, fig. 306



Figure 67: Panel III, Bird 8: Spotted Flycatcher, Pied Flycatcher, or Cetti's Warbler



Figure 68: Spotted Flycatcher (*Muscicapa striata*): Summer

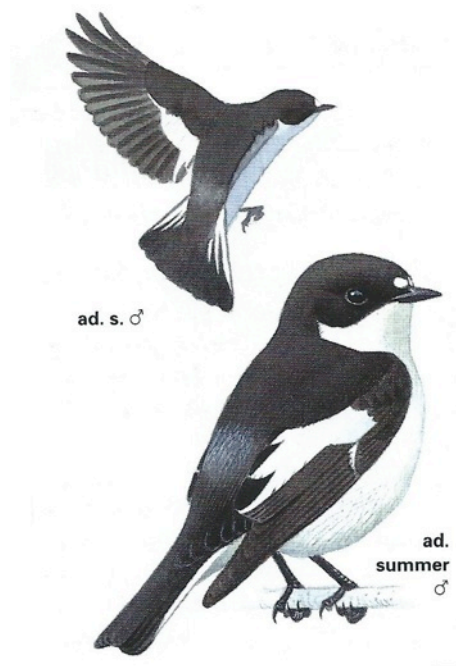


Figure 69: Pied Flycatcher (*Ficedula hypoleuca*): Summer



Figure 70: Panel III, Bird 9: Red-throated Pipit



Figure 71: Red-throated Pipit (*Anthus cervinus*): Summer (Apr-Jun, Aug-Nov)



Figure 72: Panel III, Bird 10: Golden Oriole, Melodious Warbler, or Icterine Warbler



Figure 73: Panel III, Bird 11: Italian Sparrow



Figure 74: Italian Sparrow (*Passer italiae*): Permanent



Figure 75: Panel III, Bird 12: Rock Partridge



Figure 76: Rock Partridge (*Alectoris graeca*): Permanent

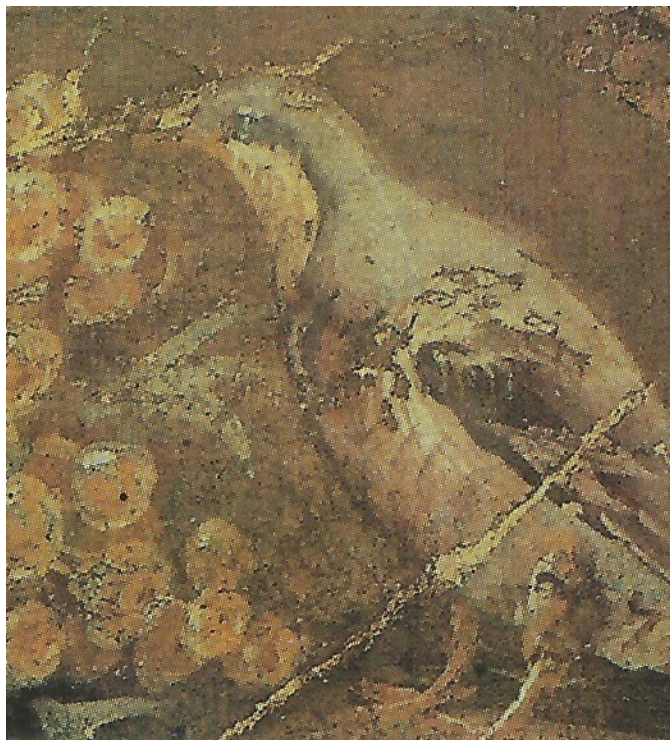


Figure 77: Partridge with grapes. Fragments from Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli. In Ciarallo p. 57, fig. 7



Figure 78: Partridge. House of the Golden Bracelet (IV.17.42). In Settis 2008 p. 63



Figure 79: Partridge pulling a mirror out of a basket. Mosaic, House of the Labyrinth (VI.11.10). Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli Inv.9980. In De Caro 2015 p. 26



Figure 80: Panel III, Bird 13: No Identification



Figure 81: Panel III, Birds 14 and 15: Pigeons



Figure 82: Panel IV, Bird 1: Golden Oriole



Figure 83: Panel IV, Bird 2: Wood Pigeon

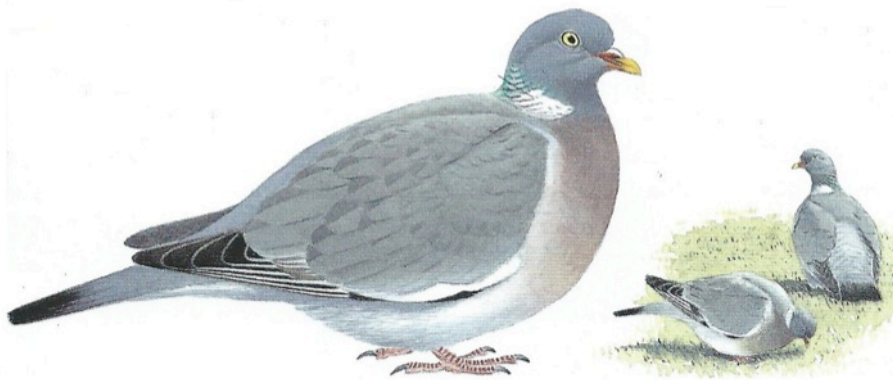


Figure 84: Wood Pigeon (*Columba palumbus*): Permanent



Figure 85: Wood Pigeon. House of the Golden Bracelet (IV.17.42). Photo: S. Jashemski. In Jashemski 2002 p. 374, fig. 307



Figure 86: Panel IV, Bird 3: Cetti's Warbler or Nightingale



Figure 87: Panel IV, Bird 4: Great Reed Warbler or Orphean Warbler

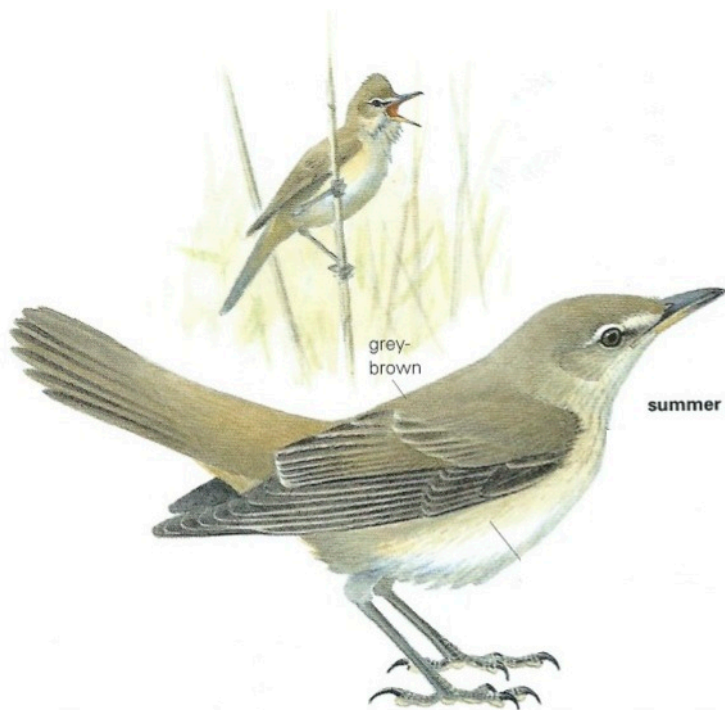


Figure 88: Great Reed Warbler (*Acrocephalus arundinaceus*): Summer (May-Aug)

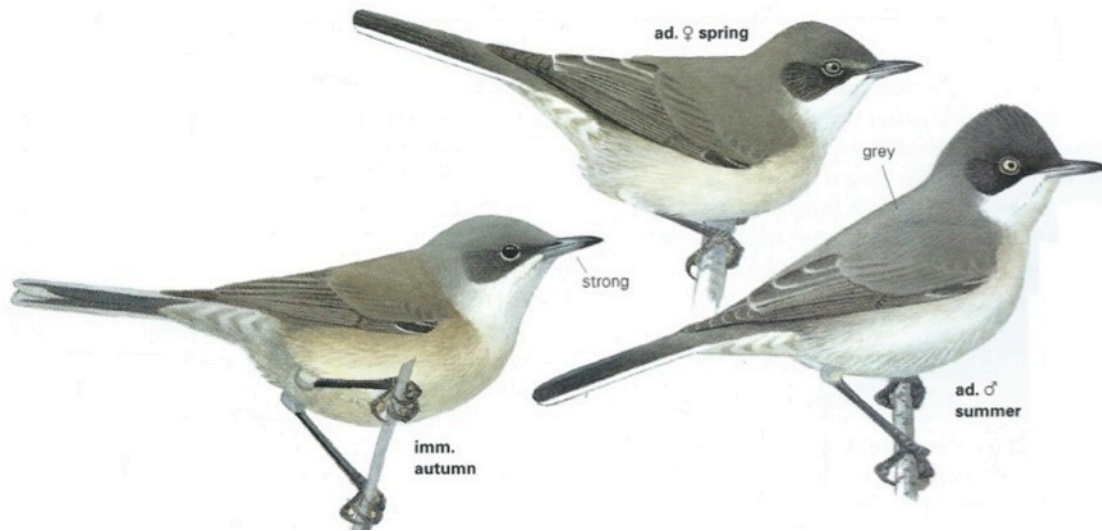


Figure 89: Orphean Warbler (*Sylvia crassirostris*, *S. hortensis*): Summer



Figure 90: Panel IV, Bird 5: Italian Sparrow



Figure 91: Panel IV, Bird 6: Song Thrush



Figure 92: Panel VI, Bird 7: No Identification



Figure 93: Panel IV, Bird 8: Pigeon or Reef Egret

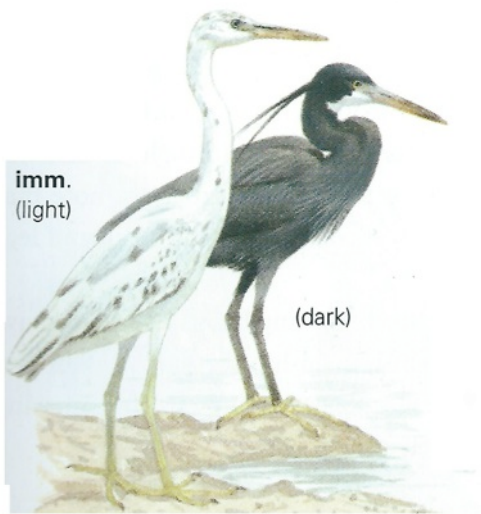


Figure 94: Reef Egret (*Egretta gularis*): Current range outside of Italy, but has been greatly affected by human interference



Figure 95: Panel IV, Bird 9: Italian Sparrow



Figure 96: Panel IV, Bird 10: Pied Flycatcher or Orphean Warbler



Figure 97: Same bird. Photo from Gabriel 1955, Plate 23



Figure 98: Plate IV, Bird 11: Pigeon



Figure 99: Panel IV, Bird 12: Blackcap



Figure 100: Blackcap (*Sylvia atricapilla*): Permanent



Figure 101: Linnet (*Linaria cannabina*): Permanent



Figure 102: Panel IV, Bird 13: No Identification



Figure 103: Panel V, Bird 1: Pigeon



Figure 104: Panel V, Bird 2: Song Thrush



Figure 105: Panel V, Bird 3: Cetti's Warbler



Figure 106: Dunnock (*Prunella modularis*): Permanent



Figure 107: Panel V, Bird 4: Goldfinch



Figure 108: Goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*): Permanent



Figure 109: Panel V, Bird 5: Wood Pigeon or Pigeon



Figure 110: Panel V, Bird 6: Egret



Figure 111: Cattle Egret (*Bulibulcus ibis*): Permanent

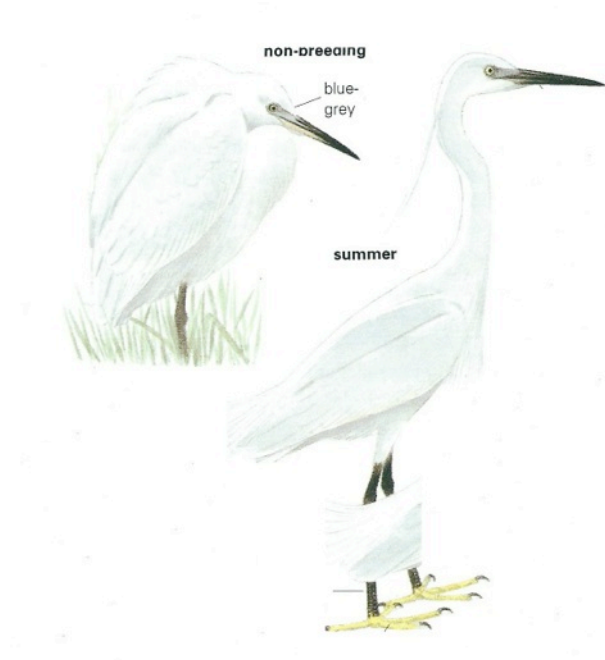


Figure 112: Little Egret (*Egretta garzetta*): Permanent



Figure 113: Cattle Egret. House of the Fruit Orchard (I.9.5) atrium Photo: S. Jashemski. In Jashemski 2002 p. 370, fig. 302



Figure 114: Cattle Egret. House of the Golden Bracelet (IV.17.42). In Settis 2008 p. 61



Figure 115: Egret fighting a snake. House of Adonis (V.7.18) peristyle. Photo: S. Jashemski. In Jashemski 2002 p. 337, fig. 284



Figure 116: Panel V, Bird 7: Orphean Warbler



Figure 117: Panel V, Bird 8: Italian Sparrow



Figure 118: Panel V, Bird 9: Eurasian Jay



Figure 119: Panel V, Bird 10: Rock Partridge



Figure 120: Panel V, Bird 11: Golden Oriole



Figure 121: Panel V, Bird 12: Blackbird



Figure 122: Panel V, Bird 13: Common Rosefinch



Figure 123: Common Rosefinch (*Carpodacus erythrinus*): Summer (May-Aug)



Figure 124: Panel VI, Bird 1: Stonechat or Reed Bunting



Figure 125: Stonechat (*Saxicola torquata*): Permanent



Figure 126: Reed Bunting (*Emberiza schoeniclus*): Permanent



Figure 127: Panel VI, Bird 2: Song Thrush or Great Reed Warbler



Figure 128: Panel VI, Bird 3: Blackbird



Figure 129: Panel VI, Bird 4: No Identification



Figure 130: Same bird. Photo from Gabriel 1955, Plate 36



Figure 131: Panel VI, Bird 5: Purple Gallinule



Figure 132: Purple Gallinule/Swamphen (*Porphyrio porphyrio*): Permanent



Figure 133: Purple Gallinule: House of the Golden Bracelet (IV.17.42). In Settis 2008 p. 67



Figure 134: Purple Gallinule. Herculaneum. Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli Inv. 8644. In Ling 1991 p. 154, fig. 162



Figure 135: Panel VI, Bird 6: Golden Oriole



Figure 136: Panel VI, Bird 7: No Identification