

Beaumonts' Birds – Recent reports: 2010

Sunday 3 January 2010, by [THORNS David](#) (Date first published: 31 December 2010).

This log, written by David Thorns, enters its fourth year. Other “recent reports” are posted in this section for (most of) 2007, 2008 and 2009. David also writes since 2008 an annual report.

December 29th

Pierre reported a **HAWFINCH** (grosbec) today. At dusk, Yves Fleury-Collet (who lives on the edge of the park) was lucky enough to see a **TAWNY OWL** (hulotte) perched at close range for a few minutes, the bird eventually spooking off and up to higher ground.

December 28th

Pierre had more of the **TREE SPARROW** (friquet) today and 3 **BRAMBLINGS** (pinson du nord) were on site, perching up nicely for once. Also noteworthy was a **NUTHATCH** (sitelle) (only the fourth this year), 6 **FIELDFARES** (litorne) and 34 **BLACKBIRDS** (merle noire).

December 27th

Incredible observation by Pierre this afternoon of a **CRESTED LARK** ! (cochevis huppé) which flushed up from the Savanna, flying right in front of his nose before continuing up and away and down behind the trees by the Danton entrance...ouch!

Pierre also had 3 **SISKINS** (tarin) and good numbers of **FIELDFARES** (litorne) - two flocks totalling 41 birds.

December 26th

Pierre had a **LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER** (pic épeichette) in the Savanna today and a **REED BUNTING** (bruant des roseaux) was at the Mare Perchée. A **TREE SPARROW** (moineau friquet) is still present.

December 19th

After the heavy snowfall this morning there were plenty of people out sledging down the slopes. Interesting to see that the hard weather is forcing birds in from the north: in the early afternoon several small flocks of **SKYLARKS** (alouette des champs) were bounding west and southwest, and a loose flock of 10 **GOLDEN PLOVER** (pluvier doré) dashed south through the sleet and snow, high over the Bois de Vincennes.

December 18th

I wish I could see these blasted **TREE SPARROWS**....I still need them for my Year List which, for anyone interested, is at 113. Pierre currently has his nose in front on 115. The total so far this year for the park is 125 - not bad.

Nice trudge around in the snow this morning. A **BUZZARD** (buse variable) flapped south, as did a group of 80 **LAPWINGS** (vanneau). A small band of **SERINS** (cini) is still on site in the Savanna.

December 17th

Pierre had a **PEREGRINE** (faucon pèlerin) early this afternoon which flew fairly low and purposefully eastwards. Also of note was a **COAL TIT** (mésange noire) and 2 **TREE SPARROWS** (moineau friquet) in the usual spot.

December 9th

There have been some sizeable movements of GULLS these last few days and Pierre had more of them today including 32 **LESSER BLACK-BACKS** (brun) heading southwest. Pierre also counted large numbers of **LAPWINGS** (vanneau) during the afternoon (549 to be precise), and 2 **TREE SPARROWS** (friquet) and a **HAWFINCH** (grosbec) were on site.

December 4th

Nice view of a **WOODCOCK** (bécasse des bois) which burst out of the snow early this morning.

November 30th

Pierre reports the first **TREE SPARROW** (moineau friquet) of the year - just a single bird in the traditional place at the south end of the recycling plant. Pierre also had a male **LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER** (épeichette) in the Parc Mabilles today, and a flock of 12 **LONG-TAILED TITS** (mésange à longue queue), none of which had a white head, unfortunately.

November 20th

A good skywatch today for Pierre who noted 6 more **GREYLAG GEESE** (oie cendrée), a **BUZZARD** (buse) and 148 **LAPWINGS** (vanneau).

November 16th

Pierre had 49 **GREYLAG GEESE** (oie cendrée) this afternoon during a skywatch. A **FIELDFARE** (litorne), a **BRAMBLING** (pinson du nord) and 3 **BULLFINCHES** (bouvreuil) were noted on site.

November 14th

Two good birds reported by Pierre this afternoon : a female/juvenile **MERLIN** (faucon émerillon) flying over the watertower and, a little later at 15h40, 2 **PINTAILS** (canard pilet) flying southwards, only the second ever record for the park.

November 12th

Pierre had a **CHIFFCHAFF** (véloce) and a female **BLACKCAP** (fauvette à tête noire) today. 8 **MOORHENS** (poule d'œu) currently at the Mare Perchée.

November 10th

Pierre had the first **GREYLAG GEESE** (oie cendrée) of the autumn this afternoon during a skywatch - 16 birds going south in 2 groups.

November 7th

Another dull, grey day. Me and Pierre were accompanied by visiting birders Didier Godreau and Michael Duffy, and between us we did rather well this morning before the rain set in. There was a pair of **REED BUNTINGS** (bruant des roseaux) at the Mare Perchée and the **COMMON REDSTART** (rougequeue à front blanc) is still present near the Mare de Milieu.

There's been a small band of 5 **BRAMBLINGS** (pinson du nord) on site recently and today they showed themselves well for the first time, perching up nicely on bare branches by the Cascade.

During a short skywatch a **BUZZARD** (buse variable) flapped past and a flock of 8 **WOODLARKS** (alouette lulu) bounded southwest.

November 6th

A grey and rainy day. Incredibly last week's rather odd and 'eastern'-looking **COMMON REDSTART** (rougequeue à front blanc) is still on site, although it has moved to the bushes just to the north of the bridge at the Mare de Milieu. Also in this area this morning were 2 **BLACKCAPS** (fauvette à tête noire) and a couple of **CHIFFCHAFFS** (véloce).

October 31st

Superb bright and sunny morning. Lots of migrants flying overhead including at least 4 **HAWFINCHES** (gros-bec) and a **WOODLARK** (lulu). A few **COAL TITS** (mésange noire) hurried low overhead and a **BRAMBLING** (pinson du nord) appeared to be on site, somewhere. A **YELLOWHAMMER** (bruant jaune) flew low over the Savanna and, much later in the afternoon, long lines of **LAPWINGS** (vanneau) were shifting south. Also moving the same way was another **HEN HARRIER** (busard St Martin), beating a straight and steady path.

October 30th



An eventful day. Grey and miserable early on with lots of rain and few birds, although this rather late **COMMON REDSTART** (rougequeue à front-blanc) was found darting around the bushes just inside the Savanna, close to the Mare Perchée. It spent the whole day in this area although was only rarely viewable from the perimeter fence. It was an interesting bird - pale and pallid-looking with a striking, pale wing-panel.

Later in the afternoon a skywatch with Pierre and Stéphane was interesting, although almost nothing was migrating overhead. In spite of a promising blue sky just the one raptor, a super **HEN HARRIER** (busard St Martin) to the northeast of the park. Curiously the bird checked its course and drifted back towards the north, as if something over there had caught its interest.

Operations were interrupted bizarrely at one point by a small passerine flying in from the east with an unfamiliar loud and piercing call, rather reminiscent of a Penduline Tit (remiz). The bird dropped behind the Cascade and into the reeds where, as luck would have it, yours truly just happened to be standing and could actually see what it was - a **RED MUNIA** (Bengali rouge) no less; a first for the park !

October 29th

Pierre had 2 **BARN SWALLOWS** (hirondelle de cheminée) during a skywatch today. A small bunch of 7 **WOODLARKS** (alouette lulu) dropped from the sky to land in a tree close to the Cascade.

October 24th

An early morning visit with Peter Hayman proved to be very interesting with the discovery of a **TREE PIPIT** (pipit des arbres) skulking in the grassland behind the Ditch - a very late date. The bird flushed on several occasions and offered some brief, fine views although it was frustratingly

silent. It was to call only once, on its last lift-off, which was of greater height and more purposeful than the others - the impression was that the bird was finally leaving the site.



The experience was all the more fascinating because it was a carbon copy of another late bird in exactly the same place, 2 years ago on 22nd October 2008. Of course it couldn't possibly be the same bird....could it?

Birds flying overhead early this morning included a few **WHITE WAGTAILS** (bergeronnette grise), a single **COMMON REDPOLL** (sizerin) and 2 **CROSSBILLS** (bec-croisé) (the first seen so far this year).

A skywatch with Pierre later in the day produced a couple of migrating **BUZZARDS** (buse variable), a few **CORMORANTS** and some distant **LAPWINGS** (vanneau huppé) - the first of the autumn.

October 23rd

A **BLACK WOODPECKER** (pic noir), the first I've ever seen at Beaumonts, flew across the Savanna early this morning and stayed at least 2 hours on site, calling infrequently from the woodland on the slope down to the college Jean Moulin. Apart from that not much apart from a male **BLACK REDSTART** (rougequeue noir), 4 **SERINS** (cini) and a small flock of 6 **WOODLARKS** (lulu) bounding overhead.

October 22nd

During a skywatch this afternoon Pierre had a **BUZZARD** (buse variable) and several **ROOKS** (freux) flying over, although the star bird was a **YELLOWHAMMER** (bruant jaune) which flew low past the Cascade towards the Bois de Bordure.

October 21st

Pierre made 2 visits today and had a few interesting things including 2 **GOLDEN PLOVERS** (pluvier doré), the first of the year, which flew high to the south during an early morning skywatch. The first **FIELDFARES** (litorne) of the autumn landed obligingly on site and in the afternoon 3 **COMMON REDPOLLS** (sizerin flamé) flew overhead.

October 20th

Pierre had a **RING OUZEL** (merle à plastron) and 3 **BARN SWALLOWS** (hirondelle de cheminée) during an afternoon skywatch. A **LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER** (pic épeichette) drummed in the Parc

October 18th

Pierre had another **RED KITE** (milan royal) moving south late this afternoon.

October 17th

The sudden cold weather and bitter north wind seems to have ushered in **GOLDCRESTS** (roitelet huppé) which appeared to be everywhere early this morning, although there was little else on site. A skywatch with Pierre and Stéphane later in the afternoon was cold and fairly birdless, although interesting to see 3 **YELLOW-LEGGED GULLS** (leucophee) lumbering low to the northeast. A **BARN SWALLOW** (hirondelle de cheminée) flew past, a **REED BUNTING** (bruant des roseaux) was briefly on site, and Pierre saw a **WATER PIPIT** (spioncelle) at the Mare Perchée.

October 16th

Not much today on site. A few **ROOKS** (freux) were moving through this afternoon but the best bird was a **NORTHERN WHEATEAR** (traquet motteux), only the second I've seen at Beaumonts, which lapped high across the sky to the southeast and flopped down to rest for several minutes on a large pipe on the rooftop of a distant building...luckily I had the trusty 60x Zoom.

October 15th

Although Pierre had nothing much during a skywatch today he reported a couple of interesting things on site; namely a **PIED FLYCATCHER** (gobemouche noir) at the Mare de Brie and a **MIDDLE SPOTTED FLYCATCHER** (pic mar), which is the first ever record of this species in October.

October 10th

Skywatch this afternoon with Stéphane: there were more **RED KITES** (milan royal), two of them, which circled together high overhead at 14h40 before gliding south. 2 more **MARSH HARRIERS** (busard des roseaux) were seen, along with some more flocks of **CORMORANTS**. Unlike yesterday there were almost no movements of passerines this afternoon, and not one hirundine.

October 9th

Huge numbers of passerines continue to bound overhead in the early mornings up until about 10h30.

A **BLACK REDSTART** (rougequeue noir) was on site near the Compost and during the afternoon there was a significant passage of **CORMORANTS** with 259 birds noted moving south. It proved to be another good day for raptors with 2 **BUZZARDS** (buse), 4 **MARSH HARRIERS** (busard des roseaux) and the first **RED KITE** (milan royal) of the year.

October 8th

3 **COAL TITS** (mésange noire) early this morning, and the first **REDWING** (mauvis) of the autumn.

October 7th

A fantastic day with significant movements of passerines in the early morning, followed in the afternoon by exceptional movements of larger raptors.

An early skywatch with Pierre was productive, although there were generally fewer birds than yesterday. Another **BRAMBLING** (pinson du nord), a distant **MARSH HARRIER** (busard des roseaux), a few **HAWFINCHES** (grosbec) and the first **HEN HARRIER** (busard St Martin) were the highlights.

Pierre went back in the afternoon and scored heavily with a superb **SHORT-TOED EAGLE** (circaète) which circled overhead at 14h40 and then moved away eastwards. It was an exceptional

afternoon for raptors with 12 **MARSH HARRIERS**, 2 more **HEN HARRIERS** and an **OSPREY** (balbu) all noted moving south.

October 6th

Excellent skywatching early this morning from the Cascade with a steady stream of passerines pouring southwards overhead in droves, the commoner species being **WHITE WAGTAILS** (bergeronnette grise), **MEADOW PIPITS** (farlouse), **SONG THRUSHES** (musicienne) and especially **CHAFFINCHES** (pinson des arbres). .

A few surprises included 3 **RING OUZELS** (merle à plastron) and the first **WOODLARKS** (alouette lulu) of the year - a tight little group of 14 birds. **SISKINS** (tarin), **REED BUNTINGS** (bruant des roseaux), a **HAWFINCH** (grosbec) and at least one **BRAMBLING** (pinson du nord) all put in their first appearances of the autumn.

September 30th

A very good day for Pierre who spent most of the afternoon skywatching and had the good fortune to see a **NORTHERN WHEATEAR** (motteux) drop from the sky and run briefly around the top of the Antenna Building. A good variety of species were migrating including the first **LINNETS** (linotte mélodieuse) of the autumn, a couple of **MARSH HARRIERS** (busard des roseaux) and a couple of **HOBBIES** (**hobereau**), the second of which appeared to be hunting dragonflies en route.

There was also a good passage of hirundines today with many **BARN SWALLOWS** (hirondelle de cheminee) and **HOUSE MARTINS** (hirondelle de fenetre). Presumably the same **COMMON REDSTART** is still nipping around the Cascade area.

September 25th

2 **MARSH HARRIERS** (busard des roseaux) this afternoon, and the first significant numbers of **CORMORANTS** (grand cormoran) flying southwards. A rather irritating **COMMON REDSTART** (rougequeue à front blanc) is zipping evasively around the Cascade, not allowing anyone a decent look.

September 24th

A complete dearth of activity in the Savanna early this morning, as if the many **BLACKCAPS** (fauvette à tête noire) and **CHIFFCHAFFS** (véloce) (which have recently been roaming around in a large, loose, flock) had just packed up and left overnight.

The first migrating **WHITE WAGTAIL** (bergeronnette grise) of the autumn flew south overhead.

Later in the afternoon Pierre had a **HOBBY** (hobereau) and several **BARN SWALLOWS** (hirondelle de cheminée) during a short skywatch before the rains came.

September 23rd

Faced with a completely blue and cloudless sky this afternoon Pierre quickly abandoned skywatching, concentrating instead on a search for **DRAGONFLIES** (libellules). Several species were darting around the Mare Perchée including a couple of mating **MIGRANT HAWKERS** (aeshne mixta). Pierre also found a fine **PRAYING MANTIS** (mante religieuse).

September 17th

Pierre had an interesting skywatch this afternoon seeing 6 **CANADA GEESE** (bernache du Canada) flying high to the south and the first **SKYLARKS** (alouette des champs) of the autumn. There were good numbers of raptors with 4 **HOBBIES** (hobereau) and 4 more **MARSH HARRIERS** (busard des roseaux) moving south, 3 of which were accompanied by a **HONEY BUZZARD** (bondrée).

September 16th

GREY WAGTAILS (bergeronnette des ruisseaux) appear to be on the move: 2 were seen early this morning, the first flying purposefully south very high overhead. The first of 2 **TREE PIPITS** (pipit des arbres) also flew over - the second was seen later in the morning by Pierre as it fell from the sky into Northern Fields (pelouse nord).

Pierre also saw perhaps the latest ever **CUCKOOS** (coucou gris) at Beaumonts - 2 of them flying around the tall trees along the Avenue des Marronniers before disappearing away towards the Savanna. It's been a very good year for this species.

Pierre's skywatch at midday was disappointing - just a couple of **BARN SWALLOWS** (hirondelle de cheminée).

September 13th

Nice view of a migrating **HOBBY** (faucon hobereau) early this morning as it dashed in from the northeast, skimming low across the Savanna and sweeping upwards to land on high bare branches behind the Coffee Dome. However the bird was only allowed a short rest by the local **MAGPIES** (pies) who quickly found it and harried it away from the park.

September 12th

Laurent reported a **CIRL BUNTING** (bruant zizi) this morning which was only the second seen this year - it's now a very uncommon bird at Beaumonts.

Excellent skywatching at the Cascade this afternoon with Pierre. 13 large raptors were seen migrating high overhead including no less than **10 MARSH HARRIERS** (busard des roseaux) between 14h15 and 16h45. The highlight, though, came at 15h35 with a well-organised squadron of 8 **WHITE STORKS** (cigogne blanche) sailing straight southwest.

Also noteworthy this afternoon was the first **MEADOW PIPIT** (farlouse) of the autumn, and the first **COAL TITS** (mésange noire) of the year bobbed south, landing en route in a big acacia.

September 11th

Lots of activity at the Mare perchée early this morning - birds included 3 **REED WARBLERS** (effarvatte), a **MARSH TIT** (mésange nonnette) and a super **FIRECREST** (roitelet triple-bandeau).

Later in the afternoon, during a skywatch with Pierre, an **OSPREY** (balbu) glided south. Among other things were 2 **HONEY BUZZARDS** (bondrée), another male **MARSH HARRIER** (busard des roseaux) and a lonely-looking **SWIFT** (martinet).

A **SPOTTED FLYCATCHER** (gobemouche gris) was at the Coffee Dome and there are at least 2 **COMMON REDSTARTS** (rougequeue à front blanc) on site.

September 10th

Phil was birding in the park today and found 3 **SPOTTED FLYCATCHERS** (gobemouche gris) and 1 **PIED FLYCATCHER** (gobemouche noir).

Later in the afternoon Pierre saw the first **ROOKS** (freux) of the autumn. He also had a **HONEY BUZZARD** (bondrée) during a short skywatch and saw the fourth **GOLDEN ORIOLE** (loriot) of the year flapping westwards across the Savanna !

Also of interest was another sighting of **THE RAT** (le rat), which may be seen occasionally scampering around the Mare Perchée. It may very well be the same one that Laurent photographed

last winter - here's his picture of the little rogue...



September 8th

At least 4 **WILLOW WARBLERS** (fitis), 2 **PIED FLYS** (gobemouche noir) and a **COMMON REDSTART** (rougequeue à front blanc) this morning.

September 5th

Laurent found this **WHINCHAT** (tarier des près) and a couple of **PIED FLYCATCHERS** (gobemouche noir) near the Cascade this afternoon.



A short skywatch produced, among other things, a **BUZZARD** (buse) and another 2 male **MARSH HARRIERS** (busard des roseaux) gliding overhead.

August 31st

Clear and cold early this morning. A short skywatch was eventful with another male **MARSH HARRIER** (busard des roseaux) beating steadily westwards above the urban scenery, and a few **YELLOW WAGTAILS** (printa) and a **TREE PIPIT** (pipit des arbres) flew overhead.

The most bizarre thing had happened just a short while earlier: just after daybreak some strange loud and melodic notes could be heard out by the flats on rue Paul Doumer and, seconds later, a **GREY PARROT !!!** (perroquet jaco) winnowed heavily in, descending in a circle over the Savanna as if to land but unfortunately continuing away southwest towards the Porte de Vincennes.

August 28th

Lots of warblers flitting around the Mare Perchée early morning including a singing **WILLOW WARBLER** (fitis), 3 **REED WARBLERS** (effarvatte) and a **SEDGE WARBLER** (phragmite des joncs) - perhaps the same bird that's been seen twice already this autumn. 2 **PIED FLYCATCHERS** (gobemouche noir) were at the Coffee Dome.

Perfect conditions for skywatching in the afternoon - nice and warm, slight breeze and lots of big white blobs of cumulus scattered everywhere. It was an excellent afternoon for **HARRIERS** (busards) with 4 **MARSH HARRIERS** (busard des roseaux) and 1 **MONTAGU'S HARRIER** (busard cendré) all gliding south, circling around a bit on the way. Just for the record this is the third **MARSH HARRIER**, going over at 16h00.



A few hirundines also moving overhead - 2 BARN SWALLOWS (hirondelle de cheminée), a SAND MARTIN (rivage) and 17 **SWIFTS** (martinet noir).

August 26th

A smart-looking **LESSER WHITETHROAT** (babillarde) was in the bushes near the Cascade early morning. Also in the same area were at least 4 **MELODIOUS WARBLERS** (hypolais), chattering away. They're not usually seen at this time of the year but this is an exceptionally late breeding pair, roaming around with their young.

August 22nd

A long skywatch this afternoon with Laurent - fewer birds than yesterday although 2 **HOBBIES** (hobereau) provided some good entertainment and Laurent photographed this fine **HONEY BUZZARD** (bondrée apivore) gliding overhead at 16h30.



Like yesterday's bird it went straight south, in contrast to the **BUZZARDS** (buse) that we've seen so far this month (and there were another 3 today). These have similarly appeared from the northeast but have looked less decisive, and wandered around rather aimlessly.

Fewer **SWIFTS** (martinet) today - around 50 or so.

August 21st

An interesting day with a few good birds. The warm sunny weather seemed to be encouraging several birds to sing early this morning, including a **FIRECREST** (roitelet triple bandeau) in the woodland along the Sentier des Vergers.

3 **SPOTTED FLYCATCHERS** (gobemouche gris) and 2 **PIED FLYCATCHERS** (gobemouche noir) were on site and the first **WHINCHAT** (tarier des près) of the year was found in the Savanna. In the Parc Mabilie a large flock of **TITS** (mésanges) fed quietly in the now very autumnal-looking trees along the Avenue des Marronniers - amongst them was at least one **CRESTED TIT** (mésange huppé), a good bird for Beaumonts.

A skywatch in the afternoon with Stéphane was quite eventful with at least one **BUZZARD** (buse variable), an early **MARSH HARRIER** (busard des roseaux) and the first **HONEY BUZZARD** (bondrée) of the autumn which sailed southwards at 17h00.

SWIFTS (martinet) were quite numerous today, migrating southwards high over the park. Perhaps not coincidentally a juvenile **HOBBY** (hobereau) put in an appearance late on, having a quick dash

at a small cloud of them before drifting away empty handed.

August 19th

Lots of activity early this morning, particularly on the sunny slope of the Coffee Dome where 2 **SPOTTED FLYCATCHERS** (gobemouche gris) and a **PIED FLYCATCHER** (gobemouche noir) flicked around the willows. A **TREE PIPIT** (pipit des arbres), the first of the autumn, flew high overhead.

August 18th

Yesterday's **PIED FLYCATCHER** (gobemouche noir) still present early this morning.

August 17th

The **BULLFINCHES** (bouvreuil) have bred successfully again this year, the adult male ushering the 2 juveniles around the Mare de Brie this morning. A **GREY HERON** (héron cendré) was at the Mare Perchée at first light and the first **PIED FLYCATCHER** (gobemouche noir) of the autumn was found in the Savanna.

August 9th

The first **YELLOW WAGTAIL** (bergeronnette printanière) of the autumn appeared early this morning, flying high overhead towards the south but soon doubling back and bounding away towards Romainville.

Pierre birded the park in the afternoon and managed to grip-back both **MIDDLE-SPOTTED WOODPECKER** (pic mar) (a juvenile near the Dinosaur) and **SEDGE WARBLER** (phragmite des joncs) at the Mare Perchée - the same bird that was seen last Friday ?

August 8th

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August 7th

Fortunately another wildly inaccurate weather forecast on behalf of French Television (the rain never arriving) which allowed an afternoon skywatch from the Cascade in the company of Pierre, Stephane and Alain Thellier. Generally not many birds about today, but there are signs that things have started to move south : steady low numbers of **SWIFTS** (martinet noir), a couple of **BARN SWALLOWS** (hirondelle de cheminée), a few **HOUSE MARTINS** (hirondelle de fenêtre) and 2 **SAND MARTINS** (rivage) zipping quickly through.

The **SEDGE WARBLER** (phragmite) has almost certainly gone - no sign of it today. A juvenile **BUZZARD** (buse variable) was seen wandering northwards.



Alain's presence was a bonus today - being more a plant and insect man he was able to relieve the

boredom by identifying things we have no idea about. This **LARGE CONE-HEAD** (conocéphale gracieux), for example, here on the left - a protected species no less.

August 6th

A **SEDGE WARBLER** (phragmite des joncs) was at the Mare Perchée early this morning.

August 5th

ROSE-RINGED PARAKEETS (perruche à collier) are currently appearing daily after a long absence - Pierre had another 12 flying overhead. Fewer and fewer **SWIFTS** (martinet)...just 5 today.

On the **DRAGONFLY** (libellule) front, Pierre noted a male **RUDDY DARTER** (sympêtrum rouge-sang) at the Mare de Brie, and a male **EMPEROR DRAGONFLY** (anax empereur) at the Mare Perchée.

August 4th

Excitement at 08h00 with a **MIDDLE SPOTTED WOODPECKER** (pic mar) inspecting the larger trees along the Sentier des Vergers, calling frequently. Seldom seen at Beaumonts this is a jolly good year-tick (and for anyone interested the list moves up to 108). This bird was probably a wandering juvenile from the Bois de Vincennes nearby.

A **WILLOW WARBLER** (fitis) was at the Coffee Dome and small numbers of **SWIFTS** (martinet) continue to fly over in dribs and drabs.

August 3rd

Pierre reports more flight manœuvres from the **MALLARDS** (colvert), flushed into action this time by a ba%^&*d dog which was running illegally off its leash (as they all do) and charging into the water. Thankfully it failed to find the fifth, flightless juvenile which was cowering in the reedbed (again).

Very few **SWIFTS** (martinet) flying overhead - the local populations have apparently left and these are migrants flying directly southwards.

August 2nd

A historic day with the first observation of the young **MALLARDS** (colvert) in flight. Pierre witnessed the adult female flying briefly around the Mare Perchée with 4 of the 5 juveniles, the fifth having been left back in the reeds. Pierre also saw a **ROSE-RINGED PARAKEET** (perruche à collier) perched in a tree by the Danton entrance - a rare event indeed.

August 1st

— Nice afternoon skywatching in the company of Pierre and Stephane. Interesting to watch **SWIFTS** (martinet noir) in active migration high overhead, groups of them occasionally bursting slowly into view from the east and moving on through.

At least one **BUZZARD** (buse variable) was on view today but the highlight was a **BLACK KITE** (milan noir) gliding high over our heads at 16h20, heading straight south.

July 31st

Although a **BUZZARD** (buse variable) flew south this afternoon the Bird of the Day Award went easily to one of the juvenile **MALLARDS** (colvert) which had somehow managed to catch hold of a small fish ! The duck appeared to not really quite know what to do in this situation, and scampered around the pond in startled fashion, the fish flapping wildly in its beak.

Visiting birder Bruno Walter managed to capture the action...



July 29th

Early morning...grey, windy and overcast, threatening rain. For the third time in recent weeks a streaky female **GOLDEN ORIOLE** (loriot) was seen flying over the Savanna - could it possibly be the same individual ? This morning's bird appeared to spring up from the trees behind the Mare de Milieu before lapping around overhead and flying away to the southwest.

A bit later, in the Parc Mabille, a **MARSH TIT** (mésange nonnette) feeding discreetly with a few **GREAT TITS** (charbonnière) was the first seen so far this year, and 2 **RED SQUIRRELS** (écureuil roux) were scampering around the large trees along the Avenue des Marronniers.

July 28th

Pierre was birding in the park this afternoon and had 2 **HOBBIES** (hobereau) over the southeastern corner of the park at 16h25.

Several **DRAGONFLIES** (libellules) were darting around the Mare de Brie and one of these appeared to be a **SOUTHERN MIGRANT HAWKER** (aeshne affine). This species, unlike its commoner cousin the **MIGRANT HAWKER** (aeshne mixta), doesn't appear on the 'official park dragonfly list', so quite a conundrum - we really need our local expert (Laurent) to stop his holiday and get over here, pronto.

July 27th

Pierre had 2 first-summer **COMMON GULLS** (goéland cendré) flying south this afternoon and also noted 8 **ALPINE NEWTS** (triton alpestre) (not **SWIFTS**, unfortunately) at and around the Mare Perchée.

July 26th

It's that time of year again when tatty-looking juvenile **CHIFFCHAFFS** (véloce) are busy practising their calls and coming up with wonky-sounding "weet" and "wink" notes which pipe out from the bushes. At the Coffee Dome early this morning a **WILLOW WARBLER** (fitis) joined in on the act, although this bird was calling just perfectly before going on to make a complete hash of the song.

Also of note were 3 **BARN SWALLOWS** (hirondelle de cheminée) dashing purposefully south (as if migrating) and at least 2 **NIGHTINGALES** (rossignol) and a **LESSER WHITETHROAT** (babillarde).

About 75 **SWIFTS** (martinets) were gliding around overhead - both me and Pierre have noticed fewer birds around this summer compared to previous years. Juvenile **SPARROWHAWKS** (épervier)

continue to call from the Bois de Bordure.

July 22nd

2 juvenile **SPARROWHAWKS** (épervier) were flying restlessly around the edge of the Bois de Bordure early this morning, calling frequently. This indicates successful breeding inside the park for the fourth consecutive year.

July 20th

Another hot day. Although silent these past few weeks the **NIGHTINGALES** (rossignol) are still with us - Pierre saw one in the usual place from the Sentier des Vergers this afternoon. Pierre also had 2 **BULLFINCHES** (bouvreuil) and reports a stable scene at the Mare Perchée where the 5 **MALLARD** (colvert) young are rapidly growing their wings. 5 **MOORHEN** chicks (poussins de Poule d'eau) were there today, one very much larger than the others.

Several **DRAGONFLIES** (libellules) were at the pond, notably the **LESSER EMPEROR** (Anax napolitain), 2 **COMMON DARTERS** (Sympétrums striés) and 2 **BLUE-TAILED DAMSELFLIES** (Agrion élégants).

July 17th

Lots of warblers seen and heard singing around the Savanna early this morning including a fine, fresh and very yellow **WILLOW WARBLER** (fitis), a non-breeding species unusual in summer. This one was all the more interesting for wearing a bright and new-looking silver ring on its right leg.

A juvenile **GREEN WOODPECKER** (pic vert) was feeding on the grassy verge of the Sentier de la Renardière.

July 14th

Silly season continues with a skulking adult female **ZEBRA FINCH** !! (Diamant mandarin) in the woodland just to left of (and at the top of) the entrance steps near the Dinosaur this morning.

A few minutes later I bumped into Alain Bloquet who mentioned that he had seen a male Zebra Finch earlier this year in another part of the park (on April 10th to be exact).



And here, better late than never, is Alain's fine pic of the boy - it was, after all, a first for Beaumonts !

July 13th

Pierre had a nice surprise this evening while skywatching from the Cascade with another **GOLDEN ORIOLE** (loriot) (the second so far this year) flapping overhead and away to the northeast.

At the Mare Perchée the 5 young **MALLARDS** (colvert) and the 4 **MOORHEN** chicks (poussins de poule d'eau) are still on fine form, and Pierre also confirms the presence of a **LESSER EMPEROR** dragonfly (Anax napolitain).

July 10th

A LESSER WHITETHROAT (babillarde) gave a short burst of song this afternoon and the 5 MALLARD (colvert) ducklings were paddling around the Mare Perchée under the watchful eye of the adult female. Although they still have to grow wings these rusty-breasted young ones are now about the same size as the adult and already look like proper ducks - how time flies...

July 7th

Pierre saw 3 REED WARBLERS (effarvatte) at the Mare Perchée today.

June 30th

Both pairs of MOORHENS (poule d'eau) have now had second broods - Pierre found a total of 6 chicks at the Mare Perchée this afternoon. A LESSER WHITETHROAT (babillarde) was heard singing.

June 26th

Pierre and Laurent saw a lot of warblers today including a **LESSER WHITETHROAT** (babillarde) and a REED WARBLER (effarvatte). They also had a **NIGHTINGALE** (rossignol) near the Mare de Brie and discovered that one of the pairs of MOORHENS (poule d'eau) has had a second brood - 4 new, tiny chicks were scooting around the Mare Perchée. The usual 2 juveniles (much bigger now) are still present and Roland reports seeing 5 MALLARD (canard colvert) chicks there recently.

Several DRAGONFLIES (libellulle) were also at the Mare Perchée - zooming around in the harsh summer heat, and SWIFTS (martinet noir) were winnowing around overhead, getting a good angle before racing down in straight lines and skimming the surface to drink. Laurent managed to get a couple of good shots...



June 7th

A big surprise at 07h00 this morning with a female **GOLDEN ORIOLE** (loriot d'Europe) lapping low across the Savanna and appearing to land somewhere near the Mare Perchée, although it couldn't be re-located moments later.

Also of note this morning was a **LESSER WHITETHROAT** (babillarde) - they stopped singing a long time ago and have been difficult to see over recent weeks. The other warblers continue to sing often, and juvenile WHITETHROATS (grisette) and BLACKCAPS (fauvette à tete noire) are already appearing in the Savanna.

SERINS (cini) have successfully bred in or near the park (2 juveniles were seen this morning) and at the Mare Perchée the MALLARDS (colvert) seem to have learned the lessons of last year and are

keeping the 7 chicks on a tight guard inside the reedbed, only rarely venturing out onto open water.

May 29th

Pierre reported a singing **WILLOW WARBLER** (fitis) near the Mare de Mileu today and there were also 2 REED WARBLERS (effarvatte) on site. At least one **NIGHTINGALE** (rossignol) continues to sing.

May 28th

Pierre reports the successful breeding of the pair of **MALLARDS** (colvert) - the proud parents were parading their 8 chicks for the first time today at the Mare Perchée.

May 24th

An extraordinarily early start for Pierre today (06h00 !) was rewarded with the second **PIED FLYCATCHER** (gobemouche noir) of the spring - this one a female at the Compost. There are still 2 MOORHEN (poule d'eau) chicks (poussins) at the Mare Perchée.

May 22nd

Interesting report from Pierre of a late **SAND MARTIN** (hirondelle de rivage) flying north over the Mare Perchée this evening.

May 20th

Looks like the GRASSHOPPER WARBLER (tachetée) has left already - not seen or heard today.

For the second time in recent days Pierre witnessed a **HOBBY** (hobereau) flying over the park with a SWIFT (martinet) in its talons. However on this occasion the poor swift was only half-dead, and when it was dropped by the falcon it flew around feebly, only to be clutched back seconds later.

May 19th

A **GRASSHOPPER WARBLER** (locustelle tachetée) was singing very early this morning close to the Mare Perchée. The bird was just a few metres to the northwest of it, in the big bushes before the bench and the rubbish bin.

Pierre was unable to relocate it in the late afternoon, although he did find a couple of TREE PIPITS (pipit des arbres) and 5 ROSE-RINGED PARAKEETS (perruche à collier) flying overhead - they've been decidedly uncommon so far this year.

May 15th

Nice and sunny for a change, although the cool northerly breeze still blows. A few migrants were moving overhead early morning: several SWIFTS (martinet), BARN SWALLOWS (hirondelle de cheminée), a few HOUSE MARTINS (hirondelle de fenêtre) and a couple of TREE PIPITS (pipit des arbres). A real surprise was this excellent singing male **RED-BACKED SHRIKE** (pie-grièche écorcheur) which was present in the Savanna up until at least 9h00 - only the fourth record for Beaumonts !





2 **SPOTTED FLYCATCHERS** (gobemouche gris), probably the same birds that were found on Thursday, were in the woodland bordering the Sentier de la Renardière (le bois de bordure).

A skywatch later in the day produced some more **HONEY BUZZARDS** (bondrée) - one of which flapped rather low overhead.



May 13th

Ascension - cold and cloudy. An interesting day for migrants with one or two PIPITS and YELLOW WAGTAILS (printa) flying overhead early, along with a female **RING OUZEL** (merle à plastron). No sign of yesterday's WILLOW WARBLERS (fitis) but what was presumably the same TREE PIPIT (pipit des arbres) was still present in front of the Coffee Dome. 2 **SPOTTED FLYCATCHERS** (gobemouche gris) were hawking insects in the woodland by the entrance gate opposite 66 rue des Quatre Ruelles.

A long and cold skywatch during the afternoon produced just 4 birds visibly migrating northwards but fortunately they were all worth watching: a **MARSH HARRIER** (busard des roseaux), another **OSPREY** (balbu) and 2 **HONEY BUZZARDS** (bondrée), one following just 10 minutes behind the other.

Incidentally, on the MOORHEN (poule d'eau) front, Roland has recently reported seeing a total of 5 chicks (poussins) - 3 belonging to one couple and 2 to the other. These numbers are rather on the low side, suggesting that the nests might well have been predated by the rats that people keep seeing around the pond these days...

May 12th

Another cold, grey, damp and windy morning. Apparently a small fall of **WILLOW WARBLERS** (fitis) overnight with at least 4 birds flitting silently around the Coffee Dome (butte sud). A TREE PIPIT (pipit des arbres) was also on site there this morning.

Later in the day Pierre had a very good skywatch from the Cascade: at 14h35 the second **OSPREY** (balbuzard pêcheur) of the year flew north-northeast and a little later 2 **BLACK KITES** (milan noir) drifted north.

May 8th

Interesting observation this morning by Pierre of a **HOBBY** (hobereau), which rose above the Parc Mabile clutching what was probably a SWIFT (martinet) which dangled from its talons. The bird

appeared to be looking for somewhere to land and Pierre's impression was that it would probably have done so, had one of the local SPARROWHAWKS (épervier) not harried it away from the park.

Pierre also noted 2 MEADOW PIPITS (farlouse) on site this morning along with 2 NIGHTINGALES (rossignol) and a REED WARBLER (effarvatte), which was singing by the Mare de Brie. There are now at least 3 MOORHEN (poule d'eau) chicks at the Mare Perchée.

During a skywatch in the afternoon Pierre saw, amongst other things, a nice **MARSH HARRIER** (busard des roseaux) moving north at 14h20.

May 2nd

Hats off to the pair of **MOORHENS** (poule d'eau) whose tiny black offspring appeared briefly for the first time today, probably under orders to keep their distance in the reedbed - being a Sunday afternoon in tadpole season there were hoards of people around the pond, in spite of the showery weather.



Pierre saw a **HOBBY** (hobereau) this afternoon, but that was about the only thing visibly migrating during a long skywatch - the weather no doubt to blame.

The bird of the day was a restless **WOOD WARBLER** (pouillot siffleur) which Pierre saw and heard in the Savanna in the early afternoon.

May 1st

For the second time in recent weeks a lone **HERRING GULL** (goéland argenté) has shown an interest in the park, circling around and dipping low over the Mare Perchée, most probably interested in that discarded drum of Pringles which has been bobbing about in there recently. Today's bird (below) was a fine and easy-to-identify adult bird.



Lots of warblers are singing on site at the moment; testament to the successful environmental policy of the authorities who have cleared away large areas of dense and tangled vegetation in the Savanna. **WHITETHROATS** (grisette) in particular are having a great time - there are at least 5 pairs on site at the moment.



Another **HOBBY** (faucon hobereau) was seen today flying high and directly northwards - probably another migrant.

April 30th

A late **REDWING** (grive mauvis) flew over the Savanna early this morning and Pierre saw a **HOBBY** (faucon hobereau) this afternoon.

April 29th

Not a great deal to report these days : the **RING OUZELS** (merle à plastron) and the **SEDGE WARBLER** (phragmite) have long gone and **PIPITS** and **YELLOW WAGTAILS** (printa) no longer fly overhead in the early mornings - it all seems a bit static at the moment.

Having said that there were 2 interesting things to note this morning: a calling **NIGHTINGALE** (rossignol) was seen along the Sentier de la Renardière, quite a distance away from the singing individual which was there again in the usual place, so we probably have 2 birds on site. Also of interest were 2 **HAWFINCHES** (gros-bec) bounding overhead towards the Parc Mabilie.

Pierre paid a visit in the late afternoon and noted much higher numbers of **SWIFTS** (martinet noir) flying around locally. He also had a **PEREGRINE** (pèlerin) to the south east and 2 brown **CUCKOOS** (coucou gris) flying from tree to tree around the Coffee Dome (butte sud).

April 25th

Yves Fleury-Collet reported hearing a **CUCKOO** (coucou gris) singing in the park at 08h10 this morning.

Nothing much during the afternoon between 13h25-16h40, although two **HOBBIES** (faucon hobereau), the first this year, dashed northwards together at 14h30 and were presumably migrants.

Pierre took my place at the Cascade just shortly afterwards and skywatched between 17h30-19h30. Interestingly he witnessed two flights of **MUTE SWANS** (cygne tuberculé) (surprisingly rare at Beaumonts) moving northwards - a group of 4 at 17h45 followed by 5 others just a couple of minutes later.

For anyone interested this brings the current yearlist total up to a whopping 100, and we're still only in April !

April 24th

The **SEDGE WARBLER** (phragmite des joncs) is still present and appeared to be the only warbler singing from the reeds at the Mare Perchée today - the recent **REED WARBLERS** may well have been migrants. A **RING OUZEL** (merle à plastron) was in the Savanna and the **NIGHTINGALE** (rossignol) was present and correct.

A skywatch in the afternoon in the company of Pierre, Stephane and Pierre Rivalin was nice for getting a suntan but lacking in birds – just a few SWIFTS (martinet noir) and one or two BARN SWALLOWS (hirondelle de cheminée) winging north.

2 KESTRELS (faucon crécerelle) looked rather odd as they abandoned hovering to take advantage of a sky full of insects, spending the afternoon making small swoops and tumbles high in the sky over the Bois de Vincennes.

April 23rd

The **SEDGE WARBLER** (phragmite des joncs) is still present at the Mare Perchée along with at least one (probably 2) REED WARBLERS (effarvate). Nothing new to report early morning – the **NIGHTINGALE** (rossignol) was there again, singing high up and easy to see in the usual place.

Olivier Laporte made a brief visit to the park at midday and saw a good array of species and observed the pair of MOORHENS (poule d'eau) nestbuilding. Olivier also became the first person to actually see a **MELODIOUS WARBLER** (polyglotte) this year !

A little later Pierre was skywatching at the Cascade; a bit of a come-down after the dizzy heights of yesterday, but he did find a nice **SPOTTED FLYCATCHER** (gobemouche gris) there, never an easy bird in spring.

April 22nd

An interesting morning with both **REED WARBLER** (rousserolle effarvate) and, more importantly, a **SEDGE WARBLER** (phragmite des joncs) singing from opposite ends of the reedbed at the Mare Perchée – the latter is a rare bird at Beaumonts. Several MEADOW PIPITS (farlouse) and LINNETS (linotte melodieuse) continue to fly overhead and 2 **RING OUZELS** (merle à plastron) were on site in the Savanna.

A corking male **YELLOW WAGTAIL** (bergeronette printainiere) interrupted its northward flight to land briefly, spending a few moments running along the edges of the Mare Perchée.

Much later, in the early afternoon, Pierre was skywatching from the Cascade and noted increased numbers of BARN SWALLOWS (hirondelle de cheminée), a JACKDAW (choucas) and a couple of SAND MARTINS (hirondelle de rivage) moving north. However THE bird of the day was an adult male **RED-FOOTED FALCON** !! (faucon kobez) which Pierre saw very well at 15h25 as it circled around overhead for some 3 minutes or so before moving away northwards.

April 21st

This rather nice **PIED FLYCATCHER** (gobemouche noir) was found at the beehive enclosure (les ruches) this morning.



Super views of the **NIGHTINGALE** (rossignol) - still present along the Sentier des Vergers, and a **SWIFT** (martinet noir) meandered overhead.

A wary GREY HERON (héron cendré) was easily flushed again from the Mare Perchée at first light.

April 20th

Another female **RING OUZEL** (merle à plastron) was seen by the Coffee Dome early this morning, and the first **GARDEN WARBLER** (fauvette des jardins) of the year was in the scrub nearby. There are now two (deux) singing **NIGHTINGALES** (rossignols) in the park - one in the usual place and a new one at the Danton entrance. There is still a late **REDWING** (mauvis) on site !

Phil was birding in the park later in the day and reported hearing the first **MELODIOUS WARBLER** (hypolais polyglotte) of the year. Perhaps of greater interest given current events surrounding Iceland's volcanic ash-cloud was his sighting of 3 **AEROPLANES** (avions), one of which, judging from the tail pattern, was definitely Air France.

April 17th

A female **RING OUZEL** (merle à plastron) was on site early this morning along with a superb male **COMMON REDSTART** (rougequeue à front blanc). In keeping with recent days, plenty of **PIPITS** and a couple of **YELLOW WAGTAILS** (bergeronnette printanière) migrating over early.

The **NIGHTINGALE** (rossignol) was still performing well (here below) and Alain managed to get a shot of it today (here on the left). 2 **LESSER WHITETHROATS** (babillarde) were in and around the Savanna.



A hot and sunny afternoon was spent at the Cascade skywatching with Alain, Benoit and Pierre (sunbathing supplied by Richard). A cloudless and hazy sky made things difficult and not much was seen apart from a single **SAND MARTIN** (hirondelle de rivage) migrating north and 2 **SWIFTS** (martinet noir), the first of the year, which flew high to the northeast.

A **PEREGRINE** (faucon pèlerin) was seen today drifting in the distance over Vincennes.

April 15th

At least 3 **RING OUZELS** (merle à plastron) were on site early this morning, along with a late **REDWING** (grive mauvis). A long skywatch this afternoon with Alain and Pierre was productive, the highlight being 4 **COMMON TERNS** (sterne pierregarin) flying northwards - a very rare bird at Beaumonts. Much later, at 17h00, 2 **BLACK KITES** (milan noir) were seen moving steadily north together, very high in the sky.

The **NIGHTINGALE** (rossignol) is still present.

April 14th

Cold and rather windy again this morning, with a misty, colourless sky. Not much flying over in these conditions – just a handful of PIPITS and a couple of **YELLOW WAGTAILS** (bergeronnette printanière). The **NIGHTINGALE** (rossignol) is still present and was singing on both sides of the Sentier des Vergers, just opposite the house at 108 rue des Quatre Ruelles. Also of note was a brown-coloured **CUCKOO** (coucou gris) flying low over the Savanna towards the Bois de Vincennes.

April 12th

Another cold, windy, early morning.

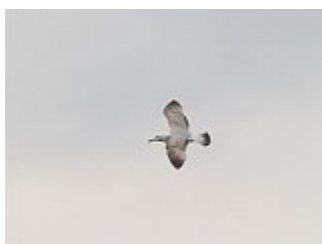
However a **NIGHTINGALE** (rossignol) was singing intermittently from the scrubby woodland on the south side of the park, at one point being quite easy to see from the fence along the Sentier des Vergers. Here's a photo of the bird making a rather poor attempt at hiding.



Also seen today was a washed-out-looking female **COMMON REDSTART** (rougequeue à front blanc), another first for the year, which was moving evasively around the bushes in the more open areas of the Savanna.

April 11th

Quite a few things migrating overhead early this morning, including a lost-looking **SKYLARK** (alouette des champs) which trickled southwards – amazingly this is the first one we've seen this spring ! (they're normally seen in good numbers from late March onwards). Also worth a mention was a second-summer **HERRING GULL** (argenté) which, very unusually, spent a long time on site, repeatedly circling low over the Mare Perchée and dipping down low for some mystery item (which I don't think it ever got). It was an interesting bird to boot, sporting a big, rich yellow, black-tipped bill...



April 10th

The first **LESSER WHITETHROAT** (fauvette babillarde) of the year was found in the Savanna early this morning. Small groups of PIPITS were flying overhead, and at least 2 TREE PIPITS (pipit farlouse) landed briefly on site.

Very little, though, during a long afternoon skywatch in the company of Phil and Pierre. However, just as we were leaving there was a real surprise when a male **CIRL BUNTING** (bruant zizi) began calling from the top of a bare tree near the Mare Perchée. The bird didn't stay long and promptly flew off, initially away to the north but then turning around and flying back towards the Bois de Vincennes. This is a now a very good year tick, the species having become much scarcer over recent years.

April 9th

The first **YELLOW WAGTAILS** (bergeronnette printanière) of the year flew overhead this morning.

April 8th

Another **RING OUZEL** (merle à plastron) seen briefly early this morning by the Cascade, and the first **WHITETHROAT** (fauvette grisette) of the year was skulking nearby.

April 7th

A male **RING OUZEL** (merle à plastron) on site early this morning, moving restlessly around the trees between the Coffee Dome and the Mare Perchée.

Phil arrived at the park a bit later and saw a **GREY HERON** (héron cendré) at the Mare Perchée, and also found the nests of both **BLUE** and **GREAT TITS** (mésanges bleue et charbonnière) at the Dinosaur. 2 **FIRECRESTS** (roitelet triple bandeau) were also seen today.

April 5th

A nice bright and sunny day, most of it spent skywatching from the Cascade in the company of Benoit, Laure, Laurent and Pierre. Small numbers of **BARN SWALLOWS** (hirondelle de cheminée) were flying northeast and the first **HOUSE MARTINS** (hirondelle de fenêtre) of the year were seen today. A male **RING OUZEL** (merle à plastron) perched briefly in a bush near the Compost but the best birds were raptors; a fine **OSPREY** (balbuzard pêcheur) moving high to the northeast and a **BLACK KITE** (milan noir) which circled aimlessly over the Bois de Vincennes before beating away steadily to the southwest.

April 2nd

April showers, and Pierre managed to choose the longest and heaviest of them all today to go birding. These heroics were eventually rewarded though with a fine **WRYNECK** (torcol) at the Mare de Brie - it's been a good week! Pierre also had a **REDWING** (mauvis) on site today - surely the last ?

April 1st

2 **BLACK REDSTARTS** (rougequeue noir) at the Compost today. Pierre was skywatching during the afternoon and had the first **SAND MARTIN** (hirondelle de rivage) of the year flying north, along with a nice adult **COMMON GULL** (goéland cendré) going the other way.

March 30th

Grey skies, wind and drizzle early morning - no sign of the **GROPPER** (tachetée). Still 2 **REDWINGS** (mauvis) on site.

Later in the day Roland and Rugby (his dog) reported a fine **GREY HERON** (héron cendré) at the Mare Perchée.

March 29th

Yesterday's **GRASSHOPPER WARBLER** (locustelle tachetée) is still present in the southern part of the Savanna. The bird sang briefly again this morning at 08h30, obligingly perching on top of a small bush to do so before diving back down into cover.

Also noted this morning was the first **TREE PIPIT** (pipit des arbres) of the year which landed briefly by the Cascade before continuing northwards. 4 **REED BUNTINGS** (bruant des roseaux) flew off together from the reedbed in the Mare Perchée and a **WILLOW WARBLER** (fitis) is singing often near the Compost.

March 28th

Excellent report by Laurent of a **GRASSHOPPER WARBLER** (locustelle tachetée) singing from the southern part of the Savanna early this morning - however not heard or located later on in the day.

March 27th

A **WILLOW WARBLER** (pouillot fitis) was moving restlessly around the park early this morning, singing intermittently, and the male **FIRECREST** (roitelet triple- bandeau) continues to sing in the ivy-clad trees around the Dinosaur. 2 **MEADOW PIPITS** (farlouse), a **LINNET** (linotte melodieuse) and a **REED BUNTING** (bruant des roseaux) were all on site this morning.

March 26th

2 **BLACK REDSTARTS** (rougequeue noir) by the Compost early this morning. In the afternoon Pierre had a **LINNET** (linotte melodieuse) and during a short skywatch he noted a **SISKIN** (tarin) and another **SPARROWHAWK** (épervier) visibly migrating. Of more interest were 2 smallish flocks of **LAPWINGS** (vanneau) hurrying along northwards as if to catch up - according to Laurent there are almost none left in the region.

March 25th

Great excitement this morning with the sighting of a **RED SQUIRREL** (écureuil roux) moving quickly through the trees by the entrance path, hurried along by the close attentions of a **MAGPIE** (pie bavarde). Its speedy path accounts for the rather trashy photo below but I'm putting it there anyway for the record, and just to continue the "red" theme see a better shot of a rather nice **ROBIN** (rougegorge) singing sweetly by the Mare de Brie this morning.



There are loads of **SONG THRUSHES** (grive musicienne) about at the moment - a mix of migrants passing through and local birds which sing from their song posts in the early mornings. For a second

consecutive day a **SERIN** (cini) has been jangling away from the conifers in the Northern Fields, and the pair of **FIRECRESTS** (roitelet triple bandeau) was seen again this morning near the Parc Mabilie. In the late afternoon Pierre saw 2 more **BARN SWALLOWS** (hirondelle de cheminée) flying north.

March 24th

Laurent was out there incredibly early this morning and had an interesting skywatch from the new observatory near the Mare de Brie, watching plenty of SONG THRUSHES (grive musicienne) and REDWINGS (mauvis) whizzing northwards overhead. Also noted was a flock of 42 CORMORANTS and, most amazingly, a **SHORT-EARED OWL** (hibou des marais) which spent some 10 minutes or so moving gradually southeast, mobbed now and again by the odd CARRION CROW (corneille). Incidentally this is the third time Laurent has witnessed exactly the same scenario - of course it couldn't possibly be the same bird, could it?

March 23rd

A good day for Pierre who had a female **STONECHAT** (traquet pâtre) near the Compost and the first **PEREGRINE** (faucon pèlerin) of the year (no doubt one of the birds currently residing at the Porte d'Ivry, relatively closeby). Pierre also had 3 **ROOKS** (corbeau freux) and another **MARSH HARRIER** (busard des roseaux) flying over.

March 22nd

A **WOODCOCK** (bécasse des bois) was in the Savanna this morning and a single GREY WAGTAIL (bergeronnette des ruisseaux) flew northeast. A restless flock of 14 FIELDFARES (litorne) landed briefly near the Mare de Brie.

In the afternoon Pierre reported another **STONECHAT** (traquet pâtre), this time a male, which made a brief appearance near the Compost before predictably disappearing quickly, never to be seen again. During an impressively long skywatch Pierre also had another **BARN SWALLOW** (hirondelle de cheminee) moving northeast and 3 MEADOW PIPITS (farlouse), one of which landed on site.

March 21st

A long skywatch from the Cascade this afternoon was productive with 2 sleek and immaculate-looking **BARN SWALLOWS** (hirondelle de cheminée), the first of the year, slipping quickly past almost unnoticed, and the odd flock of CHAFFINCHES (pinson des arbres) bounding over towards the northeast.

As grey and overcast skies gradually cleared in the late afternoon a single SPARROWHAWK (épervier) flew high and purposefully northeastwards - surely a migrant. Pierre saw a very distant **HEN HARRIER** (busard Saint-Martin) circling and gaining height away to the south of the park and later, at 16h45, a superb male **MARSH HARRIER** (busard des roseaux) beat its way northwards, flying low overhead.

March 20th

A **STONECHAT** (traquet pâtre) was in the Savanna first thing this morning, although true to form it promptly disappeared into thin air and couldn't be relocated. Quite a few birds about in spite of the heavy rain and the grim and dull conditions : another **BLACK REDSTART** (rougequeue noir) near the Compost, 2 REED BUNTINGS (bruant des roseaux), a small flock of **SISKINS** (tarin des aulnes) bounding overhead and a corking pair of **FIRECRESTS** (roitelet triple bandeau).

Still a few REDWINGS (mauvis) on site, and more CHIFFCHAFFS (véloce) today (at least 4). The pair of BULLFINCHES (bouvreuil) is still going steady - both birds were found alongside the rue des

Quatre Ruelles.

March 19th

Pierre saw another **WATER PIPIT** (spioncelle) today, this one flying over and around the Mare Perchée, calling frequently, before continuing away northwards.

March 18th

Many **SONG THRUSHES** (musicienne) and **REDWINGS** (mauvis) moving through early this morning, and a **GREY WAGTAIL** (bergeronnette des ruisseaux) bounded over the Mare Perchée. The first **BLACK REDSTART** (rougequeue noir) of the year was seen in the Savanna.

A second **BLACK REDSTART** (this time a superb male) was seen just a few hours later by Pierre who birded the park this afternoon. Pierre also had a **REED BUNTING** (bruant des roseaux) at the Mare Perchée and 3 **FIRECRESTS** (roitelet triple bandeau).

March 17th

Another **BLACKCAP** (fauvette à tête noire) this morning - this time a worn and tatty-looking female by the Mare de Brie. In rather dim first light, a lively **FIRECREST** (roitelet triple bandeau) was flitting around the tops of the willows in the Mare Perchée.

March 16th

The pair of **FIRECRESTS** (roitelet triple bandeau) was seen again this morning at the top of the entrance steps where the male is currently singing in the early mornings. Last year's breeding pair of **LONG TAILED TITS** (mésange à longue queue) is still present and they were dropping into the Petit Prairie this morning to collect small feathers to line this year's nest, wherever it may be. One of these birds has a silver ring on its left leg.

The first **BLACKCAP** (fauvette à tête noire) of the year was found singing an unfamiliar, subdued sub-song and a single **HAWFINCH** (gros bec) (also a first for the year) ticked low overhead.

March 13th

Drama overnight with the burning down of the new fence at the Coffee Dome. Word has it that 'kids' were seen running away from the scene of the crime late yesterday afternoon, the pompiers then duly arriving to put out the huge, high flames. Although no one will be very sorry to see the disappearance of the controversial high 'blinds', it's sad to see that major damage has been done to the very good, low, wooden barrier, which was very much appreciated by all.



On the birding front there was a **MEADOW PIPIT** (farlouse), a **SERIN** and a **REED BUNTING** (bruant des roseaux) all on site briefly today, and a **CHIFFCHAFF** (pouillot véloce) was heard singing. A **SPARROWHAWK** (épervier) was displaying over the Bois de Bordure and there are still about 10 **REDWINGS** (mauvis) on site.

March 11th

A **FIRECREST** (roitelet triple bandeau) was singing early this morning from the tall ivy-clad trees at

the top of the entrance steps, just near the Dinosaur, and there were at least 2 birds in this area. Still no action on the migration front - seems like this nagging, northerly wind is holding things up...

March 10th

7 **FIELDFARES** (litorne) on site this morning, and a solitary **MEADOW PIPIT** (farlouse) flicked feebly northeast, battling its way against this incessant cold wind.

March 6th

Another bright, clear, cold day with a strong northerly wind. A skywatch in the early afternoon in the company of Pierre, Stephane Chambris and (briefly) Pierre Delbove and Marie Christine was quite productive, with another super flock of **GREYLAG GEESE** (oie cendrée) flapping northwards at 14h20. A small group of **STOCK DOVES** (colombin) flew east and a **WATER PIPIT** (pipit spioncelle) fortunately called as it flew overhead northwards, nicely spotted by Stephane. Apart from that, not much else - just cold and wind...



March 5th

Pierre's good run of luck this week continues with a superb flock of 11 **COMMON CRANES** (grue cendrée) flying over northwards at 16h15. Also of note today were a **CHIFFCHAFF** (véloce), a **LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER** (pic épeichette) and a pair of **BULLFINCHES** (bouvreuil).

The group of 6 **MALLARDS** is still around and there are still a few **REDWINGS** (mauvis) on site. A **GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER** (pic épeiche) may be heard drumming at the moment.

March 4th

More bright and sunny clear skies today, although it was freezing cold early morning with a bitter strong wind from the northeast which probably put a stop to any migration. Almost nothing was seen moving overhead apart from a group of 4 **MALLARDS** (carnard colvert) which carreered around and around for ages before eventually landing in the Savanna, right in front of one of the new whacking great 'bird blinds' there (see rather poor photos below). Readers who know the park will rightly gasp in amazement at such a monstrosity, so clearly inappropriate it is for a small urban park like this one where an overall view is needed to spot birds either perched or flying around between bushes. Well, there are 3 of these things and they have all just recently been put up, at great expense, by the well-meaning authorities who, unfortunately, appear to have been ill-advised by incompetant and clueless people who know very little about observing wildlife.



Pierre went to the park later in the day and saw, amongst other things, a nice flock of 10 **GREYLAG GEESE** (oie cendrée) flying northwards, high overhead.

March 3rd

3 REED BUNTINGS (bruant des roseaux) and the first **CHIFFCHAFF** (pouillot véloce) of the year were found in the reeds at the Mare Perchée early this morning. A few more WHITE WAGTAILS (bergeronnette grise) and a single **GREY WAGTAIL** (bergeronnette des ruisseaux) flew northwards. Later in the day Pierre was to find the first **NUTHATCH** (sitelle) of the year.

March 2nd

An interesting day. The pair of MALLARDS (carnard colvert) was at the Mare Perchée again at first light, swimming around what is fast becoming a vast lagoon (someone's forgotten to turn the tap off). They were soon forced to fly off by the inevitable unleashed dog charging into the water, but they preferred to stay within the park and landed in the Savanna nearby where they spent a long time just walking around on the rough grass there - this area is blissfully devoid of people and dogs now that the authorities have put up a decent fence at last (and I wonder how long that will stay up?)

SONG THRUSHES (grive musicienne) were singing everywhere and the first migrating **WHITE WAGTAILS** (bergeronnette grise) of the year bounded over towards the northeast.

Later in the day Pierre was skywatching from the Cascade and had some good luck there, seeing 8 **WHITE STORKS** (cigognes blanche) drift in from the south and circle around overhead, gaining height, before moving away to the north. Also of note was a COMMON BUZZARD (buse variable) away to the south east and more large numbers of WOODPIGEONS (ramier) steadily streaming overhead - no doubt these are local movements rather than true migrants which will fly over in huge, single and much tighter flocks.

February 27th

The MALLARDS (carnard colvert) were paddling about in the pond again this morning, no doubt enjoying all the water (someone's turned the tap on). Several **ROOKS** (corbeau freux) and a distant flock of **LAPWINGS** (vanneau huppé) were moving eastwards and a **BUZZARD** (buse variable), 2 **JACKDAWS** (choucas) and a REED BUNTING (bruant des roseaux) were also seen today.

February 21st

A close-looking pair of MALLARDS (carnard colvert) was at the Mare Perchée early this morning, although there's not much water left in there for them at the moment.

LAPWINGS (vanneau huppé) were on the move - several bunches of them were hurrying eastwards along the river valley, very high in the sky and well to the south of the park. **WOODPIGEONS** (ramier) were also streaming overhead - at least 800 of them in the space of 2 hours this afternoon.

A small flock of **FIELDFARES** (litorne) flew northwards and there was a couple of them on site, along with a group of about 25 **REDWINGS** (mauvis). A male **REED BUNTING** (bruant des roseaux) and at least 2 **FIRECRESTS** (roitelet triple-bandeau) were also seen today.

February 20th

No sign of last week's **FIELDFARES** although there are still around 10 **REDWINGS** (mauvis) in and around the Savanna. **SPARROWHAWKS** (épervier) were very visible today and at one point there were 3 of them swooping around together in a high aerial battle over the Bois de Bordure where they nested last year.

The highlights today, though, involved big birds migrating north: 2 **GREYLAG GEESE** (oie cendrée) at 13h10 and, a little later at 14h50 (and just seconds after having packed away the telescope), 5 **WHITE STORKS** (cigogne blanche) !!

February 14th

Unusually there was quite a large, loose flock of winter thrushes on site today - about 25 **FIELDFARES** (litorne) (see one below) and 15 **REDWINGS** (mauvis) were rambling around the treetops, occasionally dropping down to feed on the rough grassland in the Savanna.



LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULLS (goéland brun) were moving northwards and one notable flock of 19 birds flew overhead, all but one of them adults.

The first larger raptor of the year was seen today - a distant **BUZZARD** (buse variable) moving slowly westwards, very high over the Bois de Vincennes.

February 4th

A sad day for the park: the **GREY HERON** (héron cendré) which has been seen daily for the past couple of months has unfortunately died. Roland found the body this morning in a bush near the Mare Perchée.

January 31st

Great weather today with clear skies and sunshine.

A skywatch with Laurent in the early afternoon was productive with the first **STOCK DOVES** (colombin) of the year flying high and eastwards. A lone **CORMORANT** flying high overhead was also a year tick.

Very unusually a 1st winter **BLACK-HEADED GULL** (rieuse) (here on the right) landed on site and spent a long time just standing about on the grass, oblivious to all the people, scooters and dogs passing closeby.



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Good also to see 2 **FIELDFARES** (litorne) today - the first one flew in purposefully from the north, landed briefly atop a small tree to have a look around, and then took off with a chack and carried on southwards.

The best birds today, though, were 2 distant **WHITE STORKS** (cigogne blanche) which circled slowly to the east of the park behind the flats on rue Paul Doumer. They spent many minutes gaining height before seemingly shifting a gear and moving off on a straight and steady path away to the northeast.

January 30th

A **REED BUNTING** (bruant des roseaux) is still present at the Mare Perchée and a **LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER** (pic épeichette) called once from the Savanna this morning. Otherwise, not a lot.

January 14th

Early morning at the Mare Perchée...no sign of the **HERON** there but a single **REED BUNTING** (bruant des roseaux) was in the reedbed and a mixed flock of thrushes, 7 **FIELDFARES** (litorne) and at least 9 **REDWINGS** (mauvis), was perched in the bare treetops at the Coffee Dome. However they didn't stay long, all taking off together and flying away eastwards.

January 13th

Roland reported the **HERON** flying away from the park this afternoon. With the pond still frozen over it's probably still hungry, but alive and well at least...

January 10th

Rather disturbing news on the **HERON** front: Pierre was birding in the park this afternoon and saw it there on the ice again, allowing people to walk right up to it before flapping feebly away a short distance. Apparently it lacks the strength to fly up onto its usual perch (atop a nearby tree) where it stands aloof and watches the world go by.

Pierre noted a big flock of **MAGPIES** (pie) today - 48 of them in the woodland along the Sentier de la Renardière.

January 9th

The **GREY HERON** (héron cendré) was standing on the ice again this afternoon with a rather angry expression. Completely immobile for minutes on end it seemed for a moment that it might even have got itself stuck there...



Although a few HERRING (argenté) and LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULLS (goéland brun) beat their way low overhead it was all generally a bit dead for birds today - just silence and snow.

January 8th

Pierre had another view of the **WOODCOCK** (bécasse des bois) this afternoon as it flew relatively high above the Northern Fields, heading down to the south of the park along its eastern edge. The GREY HERON (héron cendré) was again present at the Mare Perchée, standing obstinately on the ice.

January 7th

A very good afternoon for Pierre who braved the big freeze and flushed a **WOODCOCK** (bécasse des bois) from the Savanna. Although it's probably the same bird that's been seen a few times recently, word has it that there's currently some kind of 'invasion' going on of birds fleeing an ice covered Poland, some of them even ending up on Parisien balconies...

Additional good news today in the shape of a **CRESTED TIT** (mésange huppé) in the Northern Fields - a rare bird here this a fine year tick indeed. A fair sized flock of REDWINGS (mauvis) continues to roam around the site - Pierre had 18 today, and there are still 2 MOORHENS (poule d'eau) tucked up in the reedbed at the Mare Perchée in spite of all the snow and ice.

January 2nd

A HAPPY NEW YEAR !! to any readers out there reading...best of birding luck for 2010 !

Highlight today was a lovely FIRECREST (roitelet triple bandeau) near the Coffee Dome and a LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL (goéland brun) circled overhead. Little troops of BLACK-HEADED GULLS (rieuse) continue to move northwestwards and Pierre had a small flock of 8 SISKINS (tarin) flying north and 14 REDWINGS (mauvis) on site, in and around the Savanna.
