

Beaumonts' Birds – Recent reports: 2011

Sunday 2 January 2011, by [THORNS David](#) (Date first published: 18 December 2011).

This log, written by David Thorns, enters its fifth year. It will be regularly completed during the whole year. David also writes since 2008 an annual report.

December 18th

Another bright, crisp and sunny day. Seems like it's a great time to find LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKERS (pic épeichette) - this is the male-half of a pair on the edge of the Parc Mabilie early this morning.



2 CHIFFCHAFFS (véloce) were on site along with a couple of female BULLFINCHES (bouvreuil). A couple of hours skywatching from the Cascade was unexpectedly successful with 3 high, distant lines of **GREYLAG GEESE** (oie cendrée) moving southwestwards between 12h30-13h30.

December 17th

Not much about these days. All three woodpeckers were seen this morning though, including this fine LESSER SPOTTED (épeichette). Other birds on site included a SERIN, a REDWING (mauvis) and a CHIFFCHAFF (véloce). 3 ROSE-RINGED PARAKEETS (perruche a collier) flew south.



December 10th

A **PEREGRINE** (pèlerin) performed very well today, spending a while wandering around over the Porte de Bagnolet, steadfastly refusing to move closer for that ever elusive photo...

There was a male **BLACKCAP** (fauvette a tête noire) and a CHIFFCHAFF (véloce) on site, and Pierre had 6 **GREYLAG GEESE** (oie cendrée) flying over in the late afternoon.

December 5th

Pierre had a flock of 74 **GREYLAGS** (oie cendrée) moving south this afternoon.

December 2nd

Pierre had a **PEREGRINE** (pèlerin) and 29 **LAPWINGS** (vanneau huppé) today. 8 **MOORHENS** (poule d'eau) present.

November 19th

A productive skywatch again for Pierre who had a **MARSH HARRIER** (busard des roseaux) and 2 **BUZZARDS** (buse) in the early afternoon. 2 **WOODLARKS** (lulu) were also noted today.

November 17th

Pierre's good run continues with a **BARN SWALLOW** (rustique) from the Cascade during a skywatch this afternoon. The bird flew northwards and, like the **HOUSE MARTIN** just recently, gave the impression of being in local flight.

November 14th

Another excellent afternoon's work by Pierre who had another 34 **COMMON CRANES** (grues) flying south. However the highlight was probably a very late **HOUSE MARTIN** (hirondelle de fenêtre) which flew around overhead in what looked like 'local' flight. Pierre also saw a **MARSH HARRIER** (busard des roseaux) flying south today, along with 73 **CORMORANTS**.

November 13th

Fantastic observation by Pierre this afternoon of a V-shaped group of 87 **COMMON CRANES** (grue cendrée) moving south. Pierre also had 3 **BUZZARDS** (buse), a couple more **ROOKS** (freux), another **COMMON GULL** (goéland cendré) and 7 **CORMORANTS**.

A **CHIFFCHAFF** (véloce) was on site and a distant **BLACK REDSTART** (rougequeue noir) flitted along the rooftops of buildings outside the park.

November 9th

During a skywatch this afternoon Pierre had a female **MERLIN** (faucon émerillon) and 47 **LAPWINGS** (vanneaux) moving south. A couple of **ROOKS** (freux) and a **COMMON GULL** (goéland cendré) were also noted.

November 5th

Grey and dull conditions this afternoon but thankfully no rain. Me and Pierre were joined at the Cascade by visiting US birder Bill Link. Quite a lot of birds flying south including **LAPWINGS** (vanneau), **CORMORANTS** and a small flock of **WOODLARKS** (lulu). More **JACKDAWS** (choucas) were on the move today, one small group of 8 birds flying south with a **ROOK** (freux).

Unfortunately for Bill the best birds arrived a few minutes after his departure - an impressive long line of **GREGLAGS** (oie cendrée) which wriggled south at 16h00. At distance the birds had initially been taken for **CORMORANTS** and so it was quite reassuring to discover later, looking at photographs, that a fair number of this species had indeed mingled in with the geese...



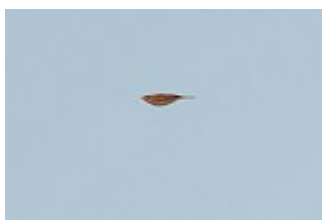
November 4th

A **YELLOWHAMMER** (bruant jaune) flew over at first light this morning. Later in the day Pierre found a **RING OUZEL** (merle a plastron) at the Compost and saw small numbers of **LAPWINGS** (vanneau) flying south.

October 31st

A short skywatch early morning was interesting as **WOODPIGEONS** (ramier) were clearly on the move, with a few big groups swarming over in a generally southwesterly direction. There were also more flocks of **REDWINGS** (mauvis) and **STARLINGS** (étourneau).

This flyover **CORN BUNTING** (bruant proyer) was a good tick for the Yearlist which now stands at 122 (not far off the record)...



Pierre was birding in the park during the afternoon and managed to pull off an astonishing grip-back with 3 **GREAT EGRETS** (grande aigrette) flying slowly south at 15h35. Another good bird today was

a TAWNY OWL (hulotte) - Pierre witnessed the bird being tormented terribly by 8 CARRION CROWS (corneille), high over Vincennes.

October 30th

Bright and sunny early this morning and the large numbers of ROBINS (rougegorge) on site at the moment were singing everywhere. The highlights were a late BARN SWALLOW (rustique) and about 30 JACKDAWS (choucas) which appeared suddenly as a tight flock, bursting over the treetops and rushing south.

The afternoon was as dull and cloudy as yesterday. Nothing extraordinary during a skywatch with Pierre and Stéphane, although 4 BRAMBLINGS (pinson du nord) flew over and long broken lines of LAPWINGS (vanneau) flapped southwest, very high overhead.

October 29th

A dull and cloudy day. Fittingly for Halloween this large BAT (chauve-souris) winnowed erratically around the gloomy sky this afternoon.



Many migrants were on the move today, most notably REDWINGS (mauvis) and STARLINGS (etourneau), large flocks of which flew overhead early in the morning along with a steady trickle of migrating SKYLARKS (alouette des champs).

Also seen early morning was a group of 3 YELLOWHAMMERS (bruant jaune) flying south.

The afternoon was spent skywatching from the Cascade. I was joined there at 15h20 by Stéphane who, moments earlier, had helpfully phoned on the mobile to point out that a **WHITE STORK** (cigogne blanche) was circling high to the west of the park. Fortunately the bird was preparing for a long straight glide to the southeast and a little later passed directly overhead en route for Fontenay.



Other birds seen from the Cascade included a LESSER-SPOTTED WOODPECKER (epeichette), a small flock of migrating **WOODLARKS** (lulu) and a very distant flock of 45 **LAPWINGS** (vanneau) hurrying southwest in a strung-out bunch.

Much whooping and cheering at 16h25 when a distant flock of **GREAT EGRETS** (grande aigrette) was spotted over the watertower, lumbering slowly southwards in a straight and orderly line. This is still a jolly rare bird in Seine St Denis, and a first for the park. Here are a couple of poor photos which capture the moment, if nothing else...



October 23rd

More **ROOKS** (freux), **SKYLARKS** (alouette des champs) and **CHAFFINCHES** (pinson des arbres). A distant female **HEN HARRIER** (busard St Martin) flapped eastwards late this afternoon.

October 22nd

ROOKS (freux) are great birds aren't they ? Especially so I think when they're migrating high overhead in loose groups, as they were this afternoon.



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CHAFFINCHES (pinson des arbres) and **SKYLARKS** (alouette des champs) continue to fly over and very early this morning Laurent had a **YELLOWHAMMER** (bruant jaune). Surprisingly just one raptor today, a **BUZZARD** (buse) flying south.

October 20th

Good skywatching again for Pierre this afternoon : an **OSPREY** (balbuzard pêcheur) flew southeast, as did 3 **BUZZARDS** (buse) and a **MARSH HARRIER** (busard des roseaux). Fairly large numbers of **CHAFFINCHES** (pinson des arbres) and **MEADOW PIPITS** (farlouse) but the best passerine was a **LESSER REDPOLL** (sizerin).

October 17th

Pierre saw a female **RING OUZEL** (merle a plastron) this afternoon. He also had a fair few migrants moving overhead including a **MARSH HARRIER** (busard des roseaux), a **BUZZARD** (buse), 5

HOUSE MARTINS (hirondelle de fenêtre), 3 ROOKS (freux) and a couple of **BRAMBLINGS** (pinson du nord), one of which landed on site. 2 more YELLOW-LEGGED GULLS (leucopnée) were also seen - they appear to be moving south in small numbers at the moment.

October 16th

A good skywatch again this afternoon: another excellent **RED KITE** (milan royal) moved south and a lone **WHITE STORK** (cigogne blanche) circled high out to the east and slowly dissolved into the haze. 4 **BUZZARDS** (buse variable) and a **MARSH HARRIER** (busard des roseaux) migrated overhead but there were relatively few passerines - the odd sprinkle of SKYLARKS (alouette des champs), a few **WOODLARKS** (alouette lulu), some WHITE WAGTAILS (bergeronnette grise) and larger-than-usual numbers of GOLDFINCHES (chardonneret).

In the late afternoon a distant **PEREGRINE** (pèlerin) glided west towards Paris.

October 15th

Not much on site this morning and it was even blissfully devoid of people and dogs thanks to the ruggers World Cup semi-final between France and Wales. Later in the afternoon an agreeable long skywatch in the company of Quentin and Stéphane produced a super **RED KITE** (milan royal) moving south along with 7 **BUZZARDS** (buse). Other migrants included a ROOK (freux), a few YELLOW-LEGGED GULLS (leucopnée), several SKY LARKS (alouette des champs), 4 **HOUSE MARTINS** (hirondelle de fenêtre) and 7 BARN SWALLOWS (rustique).

October 14th

Pierre had a very productive short skywatch this evening. A **BUZZARD** (buse) went over and at 18h55 a small flock of 5 **BLACK-TAILED GODWITS** (barge a queue noire) flew purposefully south.

October 13th

A very good afternoon for Pierre who managed to grip-back **MUTE SWAN** (cygne tuberculé) in style - a fine group of 6 birds beating high to the west. Lots of migrants were passing overhead including a **HEN HARRIER** (busard St Martin), a **MARSH HARRIER** (busard des roseaux) and the first **WOODLARKS** (alouette lulu) of the autumn.

There were also good numbers of CORMORANTS and **LAPWINGS** (vanneau huppé) today.

October 8th

Cold weather with grey skies and showers : the first **REDWINGS** (mauvis) of the autumn and a **MARSH HARRIER** (busard des roseaux) flew south.

October 7th

A very good afternoon for Pierre who braved the showers and skywatched for most of the afternoon, seeing a **COMMON TERN** (pierregarin) and a **RED KITE** (milan royal) moving south. A good supporting cast included 2 **MARSH HARRIERS** (busard des roseaux), 2 **HOBBIES** (hobereau), a TURTLE DOVE (tourterelle des bois) and a **LESSER REDPOLL** (sizerin flammé).

Pierre also saw the first SISKINS (tarin) and BRAMBLING (pinson du nord) of the autumn and had good numbers of CORMORANTS flying south.

October 2nd

Pierre Delbove reported the first **SKYLARKS** (alouette des champs) of the autumn early this morning, along with a migrating **TURTLE DOVE** (tourterelle des bois). The heatwave continues and the sky was again hazy and cloudless this afternoon: a skywatch with Corentin was pretty birdless with nothing much apart from a small bunch of BARN SWALLOWS (rustique) and a **BUZZARD**

(buse) moving south.

October 1st

2 **COMMON REDSTARTS** (rougequeue à front blanc) and a **PIED FLY** (gobemouche noir) on site this morning. Fair numbers of **LINNETS** (linotte mélodieuse) going over, and during the afternoon a **MARSH HARRIER** (busard des roseaux) and a **BUZZARD** (buse) flew south.

September 30th



This fine **ROOK** (corbeau freux) flew south early this morning. Plenty of **SONG THRUSHES** (grive musicienne), **WHITE WAGTAILS** (bergeronnette grise) and **MEADOW PIPITS** (farlouse) were also moving southwards overhead.

ROSE-RINGED PARAKEETS (perruche à collier) are quite easily seen these days - much later in the afternoon Pierre had no less than 35 of them in small groups, one of them landing on site.

September 24th

This rather ferocious-looking **FIRECREST** (roitelet à triple bandeau) was one of at least 3 on site early this morning.



Two **COMMON REDSTARTS** (rougequeue a front blanc) were near the Cascade and a few **LINNETS** (linotte mélodieuse) and a couple of **MEADOW PIPITS** (farlouse) flew overhead - things were clearly happening...

A bit later Laurent paid a short visit at midday and from the Cascade had a **PEREGRINE**, a couple of **BUZZARDS** (buse) and a **HONEY BUZZARD** (bondrée).

In the afternoon a fairly long skywatch with Pierre produced a couple of more **BUZZARDS** and another **HONEY BUZZARD**, and towards evening **BARN SWALLOWS** (rustique) began slinking high overhead in small groups. At one point operations were interrupted spectacularly by a **WRYNECK** (torcol), only the second I've ever seen at Beaumonts, which flew into a nearby bush and wryed its neck right around as it appeared to survey the odd surroundings. Visibly unsettled it didn't stay long but the subsequent search for it revealed a nice **WHINCHAT** (tarier des près). Fortunately the **WRYNECK** reappeared a bit later in a bush near the Cascade and, although partly hidden by leaves, gave some corking close views.



September 20th

The first migrating **WHITE WAGTAIL** (bergeronnette grise) and **CHAFFINCHES** (pinson des arbres) of the autumn bounded overhead early this morning.

In the afternoon Pierre had a couple of **MARSH HARRIERS** (busard des roseaux) and 2 **HONEY BUZZARDS** (bondrée), one of which circled very low over the park and was pestered no end by an angry **SPARROWHAWK** (épervier).

September 17th

Another **GREY WAGTAIL** (bergeronnette des ruisseaux) and a couple more **TREE PIPITS** (pipit des arbres) flew overhead this morning. 2 **MARSH HARRIERS** (busard des roseaux) flew slowly south, one bird apparently stalling and circling for a few minutes to allow a more distant bird to catch up.

September 16th

Pierre was skywatching for a long time today but it was only very late in the afternoon when things started to happen: a **HONEY BUZZARD** (bondrée), a **MARSH HARRIER** (busard des roseaux) and a flock of **LAPWINGS** (vanneaux) flying south.

September 15th

Pierre had an **OSPREY** (balbu) moving south this afternoon.

September 14th

Panic stations early this morning when a migrating **MERLIN** (faucon émerillon) appeared as a distant speck to the north and hurtled headlong towards the park at top speed. Just enough time to heave up the camera and get these rather blurry shots as the bird dashed over the Cascade, the Bois de Bordure and away towards Vincennes, having a brief scrap with a **SPARROWHAWK** (épervier) *en route*.





September 11th

Rain all day. Things brightened up at the end of the afternoon and a short skywatch with Pierre was productive - he'd already seen a **HEN HARRIER** (busard St Martin) by the time I arrived, and several minutes later a superb **OSPREY** (balbu) flapped south, circling for a rather long time out to southeast before continuing onwards.

September 9th

A **NUTHATCH** (sitelle) was the highlight today. It's still very uncommon here, for some unknown reason.

September 7th

Excitement early this morning in the shape of a **BAR-HEADED GOOSE** (oie a tête barée), the first ever recorded at Beaumonts, which was in amongst a line of 13 **CANADA GEESE** (bernache du Canada) honking eastwards overhead.



Interestingly the funny-sounding **CHIFFCHAFF** (véloce) is still present and was vocalising often around the Cascade for the third consecutive morning. **HOUSE MARTINS** (hirondelle de fenêtre) are currently migrating in numbers: yesterday Pierre and Laurent had 47 and this afternoon Pierre had another 71 heading south, along with a **HONEY BUZZARD** (bondrée) and a **MARSH HARRIER** (busard des roseaux).

September 5th

A pretty ordinary-looking **CHIFFCHAFF** (véloce) was flitting around the willows at the Mare Perchée very early this morning, although there was nothing ordinary about its call - anyone interested in this new "beaumontii" taxon can hear it here:

<http://www.skutchia.com/sounds/20110905.chiffchaff.mp3>

Not much else apart from a **GARDEN WARBLER** (fauvette des jardins) and another **SWIFT** (martinet) winging southwards.

Laurent paid an afternoon visit and had 14 more **WHITE STORKS** (cigogne blanche) flying southwest, along with a **HOBBY** (hobereau) and a **HONEY BUZZARD** (bondrée).

September 4th

Nothing much today - a lone **SWIFT** (martinet noir) flying south was the highlight.

September 3rd

Brilliant view of a **GRASSHOPPER WARBLER** (locustelle tachetée) early this morning which really did hop out of the grass and into a small bush where it twitched agitatedly back and forth on the spot, not really knowing what to do next.

Actually it was a good morning for warblers: a large roving flock of **BLACKCAPS** (fauvette à tête noire) contained at least one **REED WARBLER** (effarvatte) and a smart-looking **LESSER WHITETHROAT** (babillarde), the only one I've seen this year. 2 **WILLOW WARBLERS** (fitis), 3 **SPOTTED FLYCATCHERS** (gobemouche gris) and 4 **PIED FLYCATCHERS** (gobemouche noir) were also on site this morning.

Later at midday I bumped into Laurent at the Cascade and almost immediately he spotted a group of 5 **WHITE STORKS** (cigogne blanche) soaring towards the park; these were followed fifteen minutes later by another 5 birds.



Laurent had seen several raptors and small groups of **BARN SWALLOWS** (hirondelle de cheminée) were migrating south. He had also photographed one of the many **RATS** (rat) which are currently scurrying around the Mare Perchee and clambering around the bushes - the authorities have got to act fast to get rid of the little blighters.



Another skywatch later in the afternoon was very good with large numbers of **BARN SWALLOWS**, another **BUZZARD** (buse variable) and 3 **MARSH HARRIERS** (busard des roseaux). The highlight, though, was a super **BLACK STORK** (cigogne noire) which took an almost identical flight path to the one last weekend, appearing east of the park at 14h35 and continuing straight south, by-passing the urban sprawl of Paris.

September 1st

Interesting to see **GREY HERONS** (héron cendré) on the move this morning - a single flew over very early and a little later a very distant flock of 10 birds lumbered southwest.

August 31st

Clear, crisp and bright early this morning. A pale, watery sky was etched all over with white lines

from planes heading in and out of Roissy, which made it easier to track this male **MARSH HARRIER** (busard des roseaux), the first of the autumn, as it beat steadily southwest, very high overhead.



Otherwise not a huge amount migrating apart from a small party of SAND MARTINS (rivage) and a YELLOW WAGTAIL (printa).

August 28th

Another grey and cloudy day. A long skywatch this afternoon from the Cascade with Corentin and Stéphane was very good indeed with 16 large raptors noted on migration. They were almost all **HONEY BUZZARDS** (bondrée) - 14 moved south including a spectacular group of 6 birds at 15h10. A **BUZZARD** (buse variable) moved northeast and this **OSPREY** (bulbuzard pecheur) drifted slowly south at 17h05.

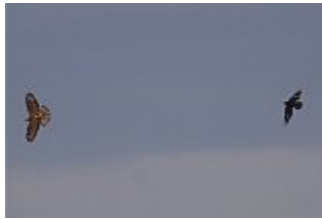


At least 3 **HOBBIES** (hobereau) were very visible and could often be seen dashing around high overhead for insects - unfortunately there weren't many **SWIFTS** (martinet noir) for them to chase (just 3 were noted today).

August 27th

A grey day with frequent showers. Early in the morning this **HONEY BUZZARD** (bondrée) loomed above the Bois de Bordure (where it might possibly have roosted overnight) and quickly incurred the wrath of the local crows which suddenly poured into the area to shift it away. Much later more **HONEY BUZZARDS** appeared to be taking advantage of the bright, sunny gaps in the weather, with 5 birds soaring overhead in a 45 minute period as the first heavy, dark clouds rolled in.





Plenty of warblers on site including 2 **REED WARBLERS** (effarvatte) at the Mare Perchée, at least 2 **GARDEN WARBLERS** (fauvette des jardins) and a smart **WILLOW WARBLER** (fitis). A **REDSTART** (rougequeue a front-blanc), 2 **SPOTTED FLYCATCHERS** (gobemouche gris) and at least 2 **PIED FLYCATCHERS** (gobemouche noir) were all on site today.

The highlight, though, was a distant **BLACK STORK** (cigogne noire) which Stéphane spotted circling way out to the east behind the watertower at 16h35. The bird was surprisingly low in the sky and was lost for a while behind the flats on rue Paul Doumer, eventually reappearing in the southeast as it flapped its way slowly over Fontenay and the Bois de Vincennes.

August 24th

HONEY BUZZARDS (bondrée) are seen regularly migrating overhead here but they're never early risers - very much an afternoon bird. So this one here was a major surprise as it flapped steadily low over the park at 08h00 this morning.



There wasn't much else around although **BLACKCAP** (fauvette a tête noir) numbers appear to be increasing and a fine **HOBBY** (hobereau) came in from the east, drifted around for a while and went back again.

August 23rd

Phil reported a **PIED FLYCATCHER** (gobemouche noir) this morning. Pierre was skywatching later in the afternoon and had a **BLACK KITE** (milan noir) flying west-southwest, along with a couple of **SWIFTS** (martinet noir) and a **HOBBY** (hobereau).

August 21st

Another hot afternoon. Not much moving in the heat apart from this superb flock of 10 **WHITE STORKS** (cigogne blanche) which took a long time to drift in from the north, circling high over the Cascade before continuing on over the Bois de Vincennes.





A nice **WHINCHAT** (tarier des prés) was found near the Compost and Pierre Delbove reported a **REDSTART** (perhaps the same bird as yesterday).

August 20th

Quite an eventful day with plenty of migrants moving through. Early in the morning a brown-coloured **CUCKOO** (coucou), a **SPOTTED FLYCATCHER** (gobemouche gris), a **PIED FLYCATCHER** (gobemouche noir) and this fine **REDSTART** (rougequeue a front-blanc) were all found around the edges of the Savanna.



Hot and sunny all afternoon and a skywatch with Phil and Pierre was quite productive with a loose group of 4 **WHITE STORKS** (cigogne blanche) sailing high to the southwest.

A few hirundines were migrating overhead including 9 **SWIFTS** (martinet) and 2 **SAND MARTINS** (rivage). A **HONEY BUZZARD** (bondree) flapped in steadily from the northeast and was eventually lost from view after it spiralled upwards to an incredible height.

August 19th

At this time of the year it's almost guaranteed to find **NIGHTINGALES** (rossignol) (presumably migrants), present in the bushes near the Cascade and, sure enough, there were at least two there at first light this morning.



However the highlight today was finding the elusive and much talked-about **RABBIT** (lapin) which one or two dogwalkers have seen near the Compost area recently.

August 16th

The first **YELLOW WAGTAILS** (printa) of the autumn bounded southwest early this morning and a **HOBBY** (hobereau) flew west.

August 9th

Interesting negative news: not a single **SWIFT** (martinet) nor **SWALLOW** (hirondelle) was to be seen

this morning!

August 7th

Small numbers of SWIFTS (martinet) were idling their way south this afternoon and up to 15 HOUSE MARTINS (hirondelle de fenêtre) were drifting around the antenna building. A lone **PEREGRINE** (pèlerin) spent several minutes wandering high in the sky to the north of the park at around 15h30.

August 4th

Things are moving already: early this morning 3 high-flying BARN SWALLOWS (hirondelle de cheminée) moved southeast and, moments later, 3 low-flying **SAND MARTINS** (rivage) zipped southwest. This is one of them here on the right (a juvenile by the looks of it).



The other bird is one of the two MOORHEN chicks (poussins) at the Mare Perchée - both of them are now boldly swimming around as if they own the place...



August 2nd

Philip confirms a second brood of **MOORHENS** (poule d'eau) at the Mare de Brie with one tiny chick (no more than a couple of days old) present there this afternoon.

August 1st

For the first time in ages a **BULLFINCH** (bouvreuil) was heard calling early this morning and this juvenile was eventually found munching away quietly in a bush at the Compost, confirming successful breeding this year.



A **ROSE-RINGED PARAKEET** (perruche a collier) landed briefly on a tree near the Cascade and a **LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER** (pic épeichette) was also seen this morning. The 2 MOORHEN chicks (poussins de poule d'eau) are still present and correct (and getting bigger by the day) and doing very well it seems, maybe thanks to the adults which can be seen chasing off the many rats that seem to have reappeared in force.

July 31st

Interesting skywatch this afternoon with 3 HONEY BUZZARDS (bondrée apivore) moving over in various directions - this one here went northwest.



A HOBBY (hobereau) could also be seen on occasions quartering the skies to the north of the park, no doubt interested in the much larger numbers of SWIFTS (martinet noir) around today - at one point about 200 of them shifted southwards together in a huge bunch.

Must also mention that the MOORHENS (poule d'eau) at the Mare Perchée have very recently had a second brood, and 2 tiny black chicks can be seen along with the much larger juveniles.

July 27th

At least 2 **WILLOW WARBLERS** (fitis) were at the re-cycling plant early this morning, one of which was having a go at singing. Its performance was rudely interrupted by a SPARROWHAWK (épervier) which suddenly crashed through the foliage and tried to grab it, narrowly missing and then chasing it around the bushes before the warbler escaped - just. All these youngsters have a lot to learn...

July 23rd

Excitement this morning with a **GRASSHOPPER WARBLER** (locustelle tachetée) singing briefly in the Savanna. Several short bursts of song were heard just before 08h00 and it was seen well but briefly from the same bush favoured by the bird present in early May - could it possibly be the same bird?

July 20th

SPARROWHAWKS (épervier) have bred successfully for the fifth consecutive year in the Bois de Bordure from where the whining, mewling cries of the juveniles could be heard early this morning. Up to 4 birds were seen flying around together over this area. A **HOBBY** (hobereau) flew south.

July 11th

2 **ROOKS** (freux) flew south this morning.

July 4th

After a worryingly long silence at least one **REED WARBLER** (effarvatte) is now singing from the Mare Perchée. The highlight this evening though was a juvenile **NIGHTINGALE** (rossignol) near the Cascade, which confirms breeding in the park for the first time.

June 25th

A nice hot and sunny day. Although a **HONEY BUZZARD** (bondrée) meandered high over the Bois de Vincennes at one point there wasn't a lot to look at apart from the large swarms of SWIFTS (martinet noir) speckling the sky.



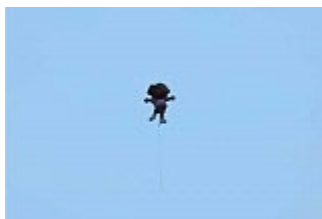
A few of the swifts would sometimes winnow low overhead to find an angle before racing down to skim the surface of the Mare Perchée.



Quentin spotted a temporary profusion of FLYING ANTS (fourmis ailées) which seemed all of a sudden to be seeping out of the earth and spreading all over the long grass at the Cascade - a phenomenon apparently witnessed in many other places this afternoon.

June 23rd

Thick grey clouds, wind and rain early this morning. And just as it began to clear a little this slightly frightening BALLOON drifted slowly, silently and eerily overhead.



But it wasn't all doom and gloom : there was excellent news on the MOORHEN (poule d'eau) front with 2 fairly large chicks (poussins) at the Mare de Brie and another 2 at the Mare Perchée, signalling successful breeding by both pairs this year.

Plenty of warblers are still singing and a **HOBBY** (hobereau) beat quickly southwards. 2 **HERRING GULLS** (argenté) put in an unusual appearance, flapping around over the Mare Perchée and loudly calling and honking as if they were at the seaside.

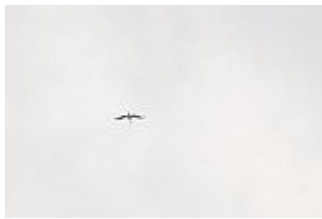


June 5th

4 **HONEY BUZZARDS** (bondrée apivore) this afternoon.

June 4th

Just a 'for the record' shot here of a **WHITE STORK** (cigogne blanche) sailing slowly into the distance over Romainville this afternoon, having gone right over our heads a few moments previously. It's actually the first ever photo taken on my brand new camera, which is quite pleasing really...



3 **HONEY BUZZARDS** (bondrée) also went over this afternoon.

June 3rd

Just in case anyone might be wondering what's happened to the **MALLARD** ducklings (cannetons), I can report that all is well at the Mare Perchée. They now look like proper ducks and, although not yet able to fly, have started a few exercises in preparation - here they were early this morning...



Also of note today was a single **SAND MARTIN** (rivage) zipping past and a brilliant view of a **HOBBY** (hobereau) flying east.

June 1st

Nothing particularly interesting these past couple of days although, off the subject of birds for a minute, I really must mention these amazing white webs which have completely smothered several trees alongside the Jean Moulin entrance path. According to André (our resident insect expert) thousands of caterpillars have spun them to protect themselves from predators; and fairly soon they'll crack out of their cocoons as **SPINDLE ERMINE MOTHS** (*Yponomeuta mahalebella*) and disappear into the night.



Apparently "mahalebella" is derived from their chosen tree - the **MAHALEB CHERRY** (Cerisier de Sainte-Lucie).

May 29th

An excellent day with the first sighting of a **NIGHT HERON** (bihoreau gris) at the park ! At 15h00 the bird was spotted high in the sky, and me and Pierre watched it beat a long, straight and steady path to the north. This was bit of a disaster for Laurent who at that moment was on family picnic duties away from the Cascade and out of earshot. However he was to have some slight compensation later with a couple of roaming **CRESTED TITS** (mésange huppé), an adult with a juvenile no less - a very uncommon bird at Beaumonts !

It was a good raptor day with a **BLACK KITE** (milan noir) and a **HONEY BUZZARD** (bondrée), along with one or two unidentifieds. **HOBBIES** (hobereau) are pretty much guaranteed at the moment and I wouldn't be surprised if there was a pair breeding in the nearby Bois de Vincennes.

May 28th

Pretty good skywatch this afternoon with Pierre and Stéphane. A couple of **HONEY BUZZARDS** (bondrée) were seen migrating overhead and a single **MARSH HARRIER** (busard des roseaux) and a pair of **ROOKS** (freux) were also noted. 'Bird of the Day Award', however, has to go to a small group of 3 **MUTE SWANS** (cygne tuberculé), the first I've ever seen at Beaumonts, which flapped low and laboriously overhead this morning.

May 26th

Unfortunately no sign of the **MARSH WARBLER** (verdrolle) early this morning although it was grey, cold and windy and nothing much was singing anyway.

Another interesting **HAWFINCH** (gros-bec) sighting though - a single bird bounding quickly overhead, aiming apparently for the Parc Mabilille area.

2 **CANADA GEESE** (bernache du Canada) beat steadily eastwards over the blocks of flats on rue Paul Doumer, and the pair of **MELODIOUS WARBLERS** (hypolais polyglotte) were on fine form at the Compost, allowing Quentin to get a few nice shots later on in the morning when the sun came out.

May 25th

Excellent news this morning - an extremely hard-to-see **MARSH WARBLER** (verderolle) is singing intermittently on the bushy slope just east of the Coffee Dome (Butte Sud).

May 22nd

Another rather disappointing skywatch this afternoon with Pierre - all had looked set for a few **HONEY BUZZARDS** (bondrée) but only one distant bird was seen. However our efforts were rewarded with a super female **RED-BACKED SHRIKE** (pie-grièche écorcheur) which was noticed low down in a bush between the Cascade and the Compost. The bird allowed some excellent scope views before suddenly shooting off somewhere (not to be noticed again).

May 21st

2 **HAWFINCHES** (gros bec) flew overhead this morning, and yet another **BLACK KITE** (milan noir) drifted southwest. Later in the afternoon a skywatch was disappointing with just a single **BUZZARD** (buse) to report.

May 12th



Excitement at first light this morning when a **COMMON SANDPIPER** (chevalier guinette) fluttered up from the margins of the Mare Perchée and fortunately landed closeby. It's a rare bird here actually - the last one was seen 5 years ago, almost exactly to the day! And if you've got a magnifying glass handy you might just get a good view of it standing on the mud, here on the right.

After a worrying absence a **MELODIOUS WARBLER** (hippolais polyglotte) has now taken up territory at the Compost. However there's less good news about the park's 'flagship warbler', the **LESSER WHITETHROAT** (babillarde) - they're just not here this year !

May 10th

The wonderful song of a **GOLDEN ORIOLE** (loriot d'Europe) was emanating from the treetops in the Parc Mabilie early this morning. However, true to form, the bird was a right bugger to see. When eventually it did show itself it rather surprisingly proved to be a female.

At the Mare Perchée the 4 **MALLARD** ducklings (cannetons) are rapidly growing in size and the pair of **MOORHENS** (poule d'eau) has produced at least one chick (poussin) which was treading gingerly about the reedbed with the parents.

May 8th

3 **BLACK KITES** (milan noir) seen during a skywatch this afternoon - they're getting almost common ! Great entertainment was also provided by a pair of **HOBBIES** (hobereau) which, for the second time in a week, were patrolling the skies high over Montreuil and actively hunting the local **SWIFTS** (martinets), masses of which now swarm high overhead. They were certainly successful at least once this afternoon because at one point they glided around together (almost touching each other at times) with one of them clutching something dead and dangling.

May 6th



STOCK DOVES (colombin) are reasonably common at Beaumonts - they fly over in small numbers every day. However it's pretty rare for them to land here and so this one was quite a sight this morning, perching in a tree by the Mare Perchee with another bird before descending to stand briefly at the water's edge.

Sadly it appears that the **GRASSHOPPER WARBLER** (locustelle) may have left the site - not seen or heard today.

Pierre had two **BLACK KITES** (milan noir) during a skywatch this afternoon.

May 5th

GROPPER (locustelle) still present this morning...

May 3rd



Although this looks slightly like a goldfish it is, in fact, the **GRASSHOPPER WARBLER** (locustelle tachtée) which was singing again in the Savanna early this morning.



Pretty quiet otherwise with just a couple of **YELLOW WAGTAILS** (printa) and a **TREE PIPIT** (pipit des arbres) flying over. The 4 **MALLARD** ducklings (cannetons) are doing nicely.

May 2nd

The **GRASSHOPPER WARBLER** (locustelle) still present early this morning, although it wasn't singing much in the grey, cool and drizzly conditions. Pride of place, though, went to a flyover **TURTLE DOVE** (tourterelle des bois) heading north - incredibly the first seen at the park in over 2 years !

May 1st

The **GRASSHOPPER WARBLER** (locustelle tachetée) is still here - it could just be heard singing on and off throughout the afternoon from the Cascade, from where the whole afternoon was spent skywatching.

It was a very good day for raptors with the first **HONEY BUZZARD** (bondrée) of the year, 2 **HEN HARRIERS** (busard St Martin), 1 **MARSH HARRIER** (busard des roseaux), 2 **BLACK KITES** (milan noir) and a couple of **BUZZARDS** (buse) all moving north or east.

April 30th



A great start to the day with a wonderful **GRASSHOPPER WARBLER** (locustelle tachetée) in the Savanna. At one point it obligingly flipped up on top of a bush and sang for ages, offering corking scope views for me and Corentin Festoc who was birding the park for the first time today - talk about beginners luck !

A skywatch later on with Quentin and Pierre was good with a couple of **MARSH HARRIERS** (busard des roseaux) going northeast and this super **OSPREY** (balbu) shooting straight over north at 15h00 - Quentin managed to grab this "for the record" shot as it disappeared into the distance.

A **WHINCHAT** (tarier) was present in the Savanna today.

April 29th

Sadly just 4 **MALLARD** ducklings (cannetons) at the Mare Perchée early this morning.

April 28th

A good afternoon for Pierre who found a male **PIED FLYCATCHER** (gobemouche noir) and, at the Cascade, a super male **COMMON REDSTART** (rougequeue à front-blanc) which was darting around the bushes there, even popping down at one point for a quick bath at the water's edge. Pierre also had a singing **CUCKOO** (coucou) which perched briefly in the Bois de Bordure.

Much earlier in the day there had been several **TREE PIPITS** (pipit des arbres) migrating overhead, along with a **YELLOW WAGTAIL** (printa).

April 27th



This excellent **MARSH HARRIER** (busard des roseaux) lapped low overhead this morning and continued on towards the Porte de Bagnolet, apparently slowed by the strong, cold, northerly wind.



The first **REED WARBLER** (effarvatte) of the year was at the Mare Parchée and a **TREE PIPIT** (pipit des arbres) was on site.

Later in the day Olivier Laporte found the first **MELODIOUS WARBLERS** (polyglotte) of the year and noted just 5 **MALLARD** ducklings (cannetons), so we would appear to have lost one during the morning !

April 26th

A **SPOTTED FLYCATCHER** (gobemouche gris) was in the woodland along the Sentier des Vergers this morning.

April 24th

3 **BUZZARDS** (buse) and a **HEN HARRIER** (busard St Martin) were seen migrating this afternoon. 2 **HAWFINCHES** (gros bec) were on site early morning.

April 23rd



Long skywatch with Pierre and Stéphane this afternoon was rather disappointing birdwise...the best thing we saw was probably this magnificent **CLOUD** (nuage) that loomed over the Cascade for several minutes. However a couple of **BUZZARDS** (buse) were seen, along with a small group of **SAND MARTINS** (rivage), and today marked the first 'big day' for **SWIFTS** (martinet noir) with at least 163 swarming slowly north at high altitude.



4 **NIGHTINGALES** (rossignol) were singing on site this morning, a record number. The **MALLARD** (colvert) situation has thankfully stabilised - 6 ducklings (cannetons) are still present and correct.

April 20th



Thought I'd better hurry up and get a photo before they all disappear. Now sadly down to just 6 MALLARD ducklings (cannetons) after only 2 days - that's a loss of 50% already. Really must do something about these blasted rats...anyone got a gun?



Another fruitless skywatch this evening - nothing moving apart from a few BARN SWALLOWS (hirondelle de cheminée) and SWIFTS (martinet noir).

April 19th

Almost nothing during a short evening skywatch. Sadly the MALLARDS (colvert) have already lost 5 ducklings (cannetons) overnight because there were just 7 there this evening paddling around the female. Presumably the rats are to blame ??

April 18th

Hats off to the pair of **MALLARDS** (colvert) which has bred successfully for the third consecutive year - Pierre saw the female with 12 ducklings at the Mare Perchee this evening. It's quite amazing actually how they manage this feat, given all that they have to put up with here: the constant charges by dogs 'off-leash', men wearing wellies wandering around the reedbed and stone-throwing kids - not to mention the small hoard of resident rats.

A skywatch this evening with Pierre was very interesting with a few **SWIFTS** (martinet noir) racing through, and a pale **BUZZARD** (buse) circled around before gliding straight east.

The highlight, though, was a small party of 3 **BLACK KITES** (milan noir) which beat a steady and purposeful path northwards at 19h15, circling a little on the way. This was interesting behaviour because it's the first time we've seen them clearly migrating north in spring, (the few spring birds observed up until now have drifted rather aimlessly southwards and are, presumably, non-breeding birds just wandering around the region ?).

April 17th

Warm and sunny again. Pleasant afternoon skywatching from the Cascade with Stéphane, Suzanne and Pierre. Small numbers of BARN SWALLOWS (hirondelle de cheminée) were migrating through, and larger-than-usual numbers of STOCK DOVES (colombin) might well have been migrants (all heading east).

The highlights were a single **RING OUZEL** (merle à plastron) flying indecisively over and around the Savanna, a fine **PEREGRINE** (pèlerin) moving northeast, a **HOBBY** (hobereau) dashing north and 2 **MARSH HARRIERS** (busard des roseaux).

April 16th



This is the **NIGHTINGALE** (rossignol) which I finally managed to get a decent view of this morning as it sang from a high branch. The first **GARDEN WARBLER** (fauvette des jardins) was singing in the Savanna and, interestingly, 2 **HAWFINCHES** (gros bec) flew low overhead.

Much later in the afternoon a skywatch was hot and birdless, although a **BLACK KITE** (milan noir) glided southeast at 15h30, finding a thermal over the Bois de Vincennes and spending a few minutes spiralling upwards before continuing on.

At one point a **CUCKOO** (coucou gris) was heard singing briefly (probably from the Parc Mabilille).

April 15th

Cool and cloudy again early this morning. The highlight was a **SNIPE** (becassine des marais) which spent over 5 minutes careering around the airspace surrounding the park. It was no doubt highly interested in the Mare Perchée below - these days it's full of water and has lush, marshy fringes which must make for a tempting target. Sure enough it eventually winnowed in much closer and dive-bombed down to land momentarily on the muddy edge, although it was unfortunately flushed immediately by an arriving man and dog. Could this possibly be the same bird that was seen last Saturday ?

Other birds included at least 1 singing **WILLOW WARBLER** (fitis) and a couple of **RING OUZELS** (merle a plastron).

April 14th

Cold and overcast early this morning. A group of 5 **RING OUZELS** (merle a plastron) flew twice around the Savanna as if looking for somewhere to land before eventually disappearing southwards. Just a few minutes later a lone **FIELDFARE** (litorne) chacked high overhead and meandered around in a similar fashion; like the other thrushes it ended up flying south towards the Bois de Vincennes. The **NIGHTINGALE** (rossignol) continues to sing.

April 13th

Pierre reports the first **LESSER WHITETHROAT** (fauvette babillarde) of the year. He also had a couple of **MARSH HARRIERS** (busard des roseaux) during a skywatch this afternoon.

April 12th

Grey skies and a strong and cool northwesterly early morning. Several **MEADOW PIPITS** (farlouse) had apparently spent the night in the grass and scrub around the Mare Perchée because at daybreak they were springing up into the feeble light and flitting off to the northeast. Many others (89 at the very least) sipped over the Cascade during the next hour or so, brought down lower this morning by

a roof of cloud.

April 10th

Another hot and sunny day. A long skywatch late this afternoon with Stéphane produced quite a lot including the first **SWIFTS** (martinet noir) and **HOUSE MARTINS** (hirondelle de fenêtre) of the year.

There were a few raptors on show : 3 **BUZZARDS** (buse) were seen and 2 very high **RED KITES** (milan royal) glided eastwards together at 16h20. The highlight, though, was surely a solitary **COMMON CRANE** (grue cendrée) which flapped slowly northwards, obligingly circling en route.

April 9th

There were two singing **NIGHTINGALES** (rossignol) on site this morning and small numbers of **PIPITS** were flicking steadily overhead. Very unusually a **TREE PIPIT** (pipit des arbres) was found singing near the Mare de Milieu.

Skywatching was difficult in the early afternoon with a blue, cloudless sky and heat haze. Very little was moving - just the odd **MEADOW PIPIT** (farlouse) and **LINNET** (linotte). However things were salvaged by a **SNIBE** (bécassine des marais) which flew south over the Cascade before veering west and dropping down behind the Bois de Bordure.

April 8th

The first **NIGHTINGALE** (rossignol) of the year was singing early this morning from the usual spot along the Sentier des Vergers.

April 6th

No sign, unfortunately, of the **GRASSHOPPER WARBLER** (locustelle tachetée) this morning.

April 5th

A **GRASSHOPPER WARBLER** (locustelle tachetée) was singing by the bee-hive enclosure in the Savanna early this morning.

Hardly anything migrating over - a solitary **COMMON REDPOLL** (sizerin flammé) jinking north was the only thing of note.

April 2nd

A nice warm and sunny day with migrants moving - at least 4 **MARSH HARRIERS** (busard des roseaux) and 3 **BUZZARDS** (buse) moved north and east respectively. There were a few 'firsts' for the yearlist, namely a **YELLOW WAGTAIL** (bergeronnette printanière), 2 **TREE PIPITS** (pipit des arbres), a **SAND MARTIN** (rivage) and a singing **WHITETHROAT** (grisette). Lastly a super male **RING OUZEL** (merle à plastron) interrupted its strong northward flight with a rather long pit-stop, perching atop a bare tree in the Savanna for several minutes and seemingly just surveying the surroundings.

Laurent took some more fine photos again today including this **SPARROWHAWK** (epervier) which was apparently migrating northwards, and a **BRAMBLING** (pinson du nord).



March 27th

A long and fairly productive skywatch this afternoon in the company of Stéphane and (more briefly) Laurent, Laure and Anahi. Small numbers of FINCHES (pinsons) were moving overhead and these included a small group of 4 **HAWFINCHES** (grosbec) and a few **LINNETS** (linotte mélodieuse). A **BUZZARD** (buse) wandered high in the sky in the late afternoon but the highlight was an impressive party of 3 **MARSH HARRIERS** (busard des roseaux) moving slowly northeast at 17h45, circling often.

March 26th

Rather unspectacular migration early morning : just a handful of PIPITS and WAGTAILS, and rather more THRUSHES.

Laurent's visits are sadly few and far between these days but he was there this morning and took some fine shots of your commoner species - here's a **MALLARD** (colvert) and a **LONG-TAILED TIT** (mésange à longue queue). Interestingly the latter is ringed and is most probably one of the birds that bred successfully last year - still surviving nicely it seems...



March 24th

Excellent skywatching early this morning with a **MARSH HARRIER** (busard des roseaux) moving northeast, followed just 5 minutes later by a **HEN HARRIER** (busard St Martin) going roughly the same way.

The first **BARN SWALLOWS** (hirondelle de cheminée) appeared and a **COMMON REDPOLL** (sizerin flammé) flew eastwards at first light. Large numbers of **SONG THRUSHES** (grive musicienne) were flying north and a small group of **LINNETS** (linotte mélodieuse) landed on site.

In the afternoon Pierre found a spanking male **BLACK REDSTART** (rougequeue noir) by the Compost, although he was to see little during a skywatch, thanks to one of those all-too-familiar hazy skies.

March 23rd

Another bright, sunny and cloudless morning with a cold northeasterly. Mixed flocks of passerines continue to fly overhead and **BRAMBLINGS** (pinson du nord) were particularly numerous today - one large flock even did an about-turn and scattered into the treetops for a few seconds.

Quentin was also at the Cascade this morning and managed to get a couple of photos of one of these **BRAMBLING** flocks, although there seem to be a few bigger-looking birds in there - dont ask me what they are.



Later in the morning Quentin noted a couple of **ROSE-RINGED PARAKEETS** (perruche a collier) and two **CANADA GEESE** (bernache du Canada) flying overhead towards Paris.

March 19th

Mist, grey clouds and an incessant cold northerly wind. However a skywatch this afternoon was interesting with a solitary **CURLEW** (courlis cendré) flapping floppily overhead at 15h05, heading directly north. This is such a rare sight here that I'm putting my photographic record of the event here on the left, quite possibly the worst ever photo ever taken of this species. However it does, at least, "capture the moment" as the bird flies towards the park.



It was a moment that made me realise that I absolutely must get a decent camera, a feeling further enforced when Quentin Dubost turned up just a few minutes later (with a much better one) and shot this fine **GREY HERON** (héron cendré) here on the right. Unless I'm mistaken this documents the first ever landing of a heron on site this year !



March 18th

Major news today...Pierre had an adult female **GOSHAWK** (autour) circling close to site this afternoon, the bird then shifting away towards the northeast. This is only the second ever record for the park. But, apart from that, absolutely nothing all day.

March 15th

Some excellent early morning sky situations at the moment - this is the view eastwards towards Fontenay (I think)



Fabulous spectacle of visible migration today with heaps of **THRUSHES** (grives), **FINCHES** (pinsons) and even **BUNTINGS** (bruants) piling overhead in droves.

Birds included 3 **HAWFINCHES** (gros-bec) bounding fiercely eastwards, and a **YELLOWHAMMER** (bruant jaune) was in amongst a bunch of passerines - rather a rarity at Beaumonts !

March 12th

A **WOODCOCK** (bécasse des bois) was flushed from the Savanna this morning.

Skywatching was difficult in the afternoon with a strong southwesterly wind, grey skies and specks of rain, but a fair few birds were migrating overhead. There were steady small flocks of **CHAFFINCHES** (pinson des arbres) bounding eastwards and 3 **FIELDFARES** (litorne) flew high to the north. A group of about 25 **REDWINGS** (mauvis) appeared from the west and tumbled down into trees for a quick breather before heading onwards.

March 10th

Small numbers of **BRAMBLINGS** (pinson du nord) were moving north early morning. In the afternoon Pierre had a fine **PEREGRINE** which approached the park from the northeast, circled and then powered on in the direction of Porte d'Ivry.

March 8th

You'll just have to believe me when I say this is a **HAWFINCH** (gros-bec). The recent flock of them seems to have disappeared and this was a rather lonely-looking thing, zipping restlessly around the Cascade at first light and perhaps wondering where all its mates had gone.

By the way the sky really is this colour in the early mornings !



In spite of good, clear conditions there was little about although a **FIELDFARE** (litorne) chacked high overhead and several **SONG THRUSHES** (musiciennes) were migrating northwards. A **REED BUNTING** (bruant des roseaux) was at the Mare Perchee.

Later in the day Olivier Laporte found a fine male **STONECHAT** (traquet pâtre) near the Compost. He also had a couple of **FIRECRESTS** (roitelet triple bandeau) and a male **BLACKCAP** (fauvette à tête noire), which was half-heartedly singing and struggling to find the right notes.

March 6th

Nice and sunny again with thankfully less mist than yesterday. The cold northerly wind still blows. Quite a long skywatch from the Cascade this afternoon produced the first large group of **CORMORANTS** flying east, and the first migrating raptor of the spring, a distant **BUZZARD** (buse variable), crossed the sky in the same direction. Pierre found the first **BLACKCAP** (fauvette à tête noire) of the year today and there is still at least one **HAWFINCH** (gros-bec) on site.

March 5th

Although sunny and cloudless it was hopeless for skywatching this afternoon with an annoying hazy, misty sky which smothered even the buildings in downtown Montreuil just a few hundred metres away.

However a few passerines were migrating anyway, notably 3 **MEADOW PIPITS** (farlouse) (the first this year) and 3 rather nice **WHITE WAGTAILS** (bergeronnette grise), one of which dropped down to feed on the margins of the Mare Perchée.



February 27th

A long skywatch with Pierre from the Cascade early this afternoon produced rather few birds - the highlight was this flock of 14 **GREYLAG GEESE** (oie cendrée) which flew in perfect formation, high overhead to the east-northeast at 13h25.



The first **CORMORANTS** of year appeared today and several **HAWFINCHES** (grosbec) are still offering excellent views from the Cascade, often perching obligingly atop the bare trees in the Compost area opposite.

February 26th

More **JACKDAWS** (choucas) early this morning before the rains came - a loose flock of 27 clipped their way eastwards across the sky, disappearing behind the flats on rue Paul Doumer.

By the early afternoon the rain had stopped and a skywatch from the Cascade was very productive: at 14h15 a distant flock of 7 **COMMON CRANES** (grue cendrée) , the first I've ever seen at Beaumonts, wheeled over the Bois de Vincennes and spent some 15 minutes or so beating their way eastwards. A bit later this single bird suddenly loomed into view and flapped slowly into the northwesterly wind.



The first **CHIFFCHAFF** (véloce) of the year appeared today and a single **SKYLARK** (alouette des champs) passed rather low overhead, revolving slowly over the Cascade and most probably landing on site somewhere. Also of note was a single **ROOK** (freux) and a flock of 37 **LAPWINGS** (vanneau) flying northwards.

February 25th

For the last few days a few **BLACK-HEADED GULLS** (rieuse) have been moving north in the early mornings, but today there were greater numbers: several bunches of about 30 birds beat overhead through the grey and more than 200 passed in just an hour. A few small parties of **CHAFFINCHES** (pinson des arbres) were also migrating overhead.

A few **HAWFINCHES** (grosbec) are still on site and there were 3 **REED BUNTINGS** (bruant des roseaux) at the Mare Perchée. Much later in the afternoon Pierre had the first **JACKDAW** (choucas) of the year flying north.

A pair of LONG-TAILED TITS (mésange à longue-queue) is already building a nest !

February 23rd

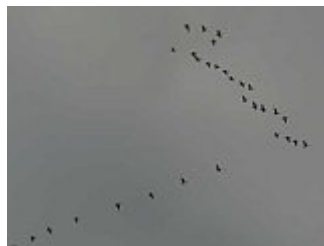
A group of 7 **HAWFINCHES** (grosbec) on site this morning. Very aggressive battles going on between the MALLARDS (carnard colvert) at the Mare Perchée, where the settled pair is having to regularly chase off a pesky team of 3 invaders.

February 22nd

4 **HAWFINCHES** (grosbec) and a **FIRECREST** (roitelet triple-bandeau) at the Cascade early this morning.

February 6th

An excellent bright and sunny day - feels like spring already ! Spent a couple of hours skywatching with Pierre from the Cascade this afternoon. At 14h40 Pierre spotted a spectacular long and strung-out line of 84 **GREGLAG GEESE** (oie cendrée) high in the distance over the Bois de Vincennes. Fortunately they were moving steadily towards us, although they were deceptively fast and it was a mad scramble to get the camera out in time. Just moments later we could hear the birds' honking calls as they powered high overhead and away northwards. Later in the afternoon another 13 birds were seen flying east north-east.



Otherwise not much - the odd SISKIN (tarin) flew over, and a REED BUNTING (bruant des roseaux) and at least one **HAWFINCH** (gros-bec) is still on site.

January 30th

It's been a bumper month for **BUZZARDS** (buse variable) with several sightings of local-looking birds wandering around the place, sometimes even landing on site. Late yesterday afternoon, for example, as the dull light was fading this bird suddenly appeared overhead and circled briefly through the dingy grey, as if looking for somewhere to drop down for the night. Laurent was on hand to get the photo.



And today there was another, although this one behaved very differently, beating a strong and steady path to the northeast - clearly going places. Not much else today apart from a single **GREY WAGTAIL** (bergeronnette des ruisseaux) and larger-than-usual numbers of **SISKINS** (tarin) which bounced regularly overhead in small groups.

January 22nd

A **BUZZARD** (buse), presumably the same bird that Pierre saw yesterday, has landed again on site and was flushed from a small tree in the Savanna this morning.

January 21st

An exciting few moments for Pierre this afternoon when he heard a **BUZZARD** (buse variable) calling from the wooded slope above the Dinosaur. The bird shortly burst into view as it flew off from its perch and away from the park, chased along by three marauding **CARRION CROWS** (corneille). It's only the second time this species has been recorded landing on site.

Pierre also had the first **NUTHATCH** (sitelle) of the year, and the second **FIRECREST** (roitelet triple-bandeau).

January 20th

Pierre reported exceptional numbers of **LONG-TAILED TITS** (mésange à longue queue) today - 37 birds in total ! 9 **BRAMBLINGS** (pinson du nord) were feeding on the ground near the Danton entrance and these, along with several **REDWINGS** (mauvis) and at least 1 **HAWFINCH** (gros-bec), seem to be pretty well settled on site at the moment.

January 19th

Roland and his dog Rugby report the first **LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER** (pic épiechette) of the year.

January 15th

_ A few **ROBINS** (rougegorge) were singing this morning, and 3 **REED BUNTINGS** (bruant des roseaux) were in the reeds early - I reckon they'd roosted overnight at the Mare Perchée. A **HAWFINCH** (grosbec) and 6 **BRAMBLINGS** (pinson du nord) were flying around the Savanna.

January 9th

Interesting to see a couple more **BUZZARDS** (buse) and **SKYLARKS** (alouette des champs) flying over today - birds we don't normally see in winter. There's a small flock of 11 **GOLDFINCHES** (chardonneret élégante) on site and 9 **SISKINS** (tarin) occasionally bounce overhead. We had a nice **HAWFINCH** (gros-bec) near the Cascade which perched in the open briefly before disappearing down into the daunting mass of tangled, bare bushes by the Compost. However Laurent was not to be put off and heroically entered the area (risking a serious scratch or two) and found it hiding here on the right. A little later he got this corking shot of a juvenile **KESTREL** (crécerelle) in the same area.



Hawfinch



Kestrel (juv)

January 2nd

It's been an exceptionally good start to the year : Pierre had a few top draw year-ticks today, the best being a **LONG-EARED OWL** (hibou moyen-duc) which flew westwards across the sky, harried all the way by 3 **CARRION CROWS** (corneille). Also of note were a **CRESTED TIT** (mésange huppée), a **PEREGRINE** (pèlerin) flying southwest, a **FIELDFARE** (litorne), a **GREY WAGTAIL** (bergeronnette des ruisseaux) and 2 **BUZZARDS** (buse variable).

This is certainly a better January than usual. Large numbers of birds are flying around the area and plenty are landing and feeding on site - these included 5 **HAWFINCHES** (grosbec), 3 **BULLFINCHES** (bouvreuil) and a flock of 14 **BRAMBLINGS** (pinson du nord) today.

January 1st, 2011

HAPPY NEW YEAR ! (Bonne Année), dear reader. Off to a fairly good start today with a pair of **HAWFINCHES** (grosbec) on site, along with at least one **BRAMBLING** (pinson du nord).