

# Beaumonts' Birds – Recent reports: 2008

Friday 4 January 2008, by [THORNS David](#) (Date first published: 31 December 2008).

**Will last year's record-shattering total of 127 species be beaten this year??  
Surely not.... *[It did not.]***

**Anyway, this page is devoted to recounting all the thrills and spills on the exciting quest to beat last year's total. Yes, this is where you can find all the latest bird news from Paris's hottest migration hotspot...and if you see something, please let us know!**

**For 2007, see: [Beaumonts' Birds – Recent reports: 2007](#)**

**and for 2009: and for 2009: [Beaumonts' Birds – Recent reports: 2009](#)**

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## December 29<sup>th</sup>

Laurent found a male **CIRL BUNTING** (bruant zizi) at the Mare Perchée this morning. Interestingly they always seem to turn up there at the end of December and usually stay well into January. According to Pierre they have sadly become much rarer in the park over recent years. Up until quite recently we had 2 breeding pairs and around 8 birds present throughout the winter.

Today Laurent also reported 3 **REDWING** (mauvis), a **HAWFINCH** (gros-bec) and 9 **CORMORANTS** flying west.

## December 27<sup>th</sup>

Another cold and crisp winter morning with bright sunshine and blue skies. The resident **MOORHENS** have not been deterred by the iced-over pond and can be found walking and sliding about on it, feeding on scraps of bread thrown by well-meaning locals.

Pierre had 2 more **JACKDAWS** again today, along with a **COAL TIT** (mésange noire) near the Northern Fields – a rare find in winter. Along the Avenue de Maronniers Pierre also found a **MARSH TIT** (mésange nonnette) and a male **LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER** (pic épeichette).

Only a few more days to go now to the end of the year, and our chances of a record-breaking year-list seem remote indeed. I'm sorry to report that I got the figures wrong in an earlier report – we actually need one more species to equal (not beat) the record...

## December 26<sup>th</sup>

Pierre had just 3 **SERINS** today, along with a single **REDWING** (mauvis) in the Savanna. Also of note were 2 **JACKDAWS** (choucas des tours) flying westwards.

## December 20<sup>th</sup>

A cold grey morning - my last chance to find something good before heading off back to Blighty for Xmas. But it was not to be...just 4 HAWFINCHES, 4 BULLFINCHES and about 14 SERINS in and around the Savanna.

### **December 12<sup>th</sup>**

The highlight today was the very good view of a fine HAWFINCH, feeding on the ground with CHAFFINCHES and GREENFINCHES (verdier) near the concrete ping-pong tables behind the Collège Jean Moulin. Pierre also found a REDWING (mauvis) perched in the Northern Fields and a single REED BUNTING was seen flying away from the Savanna and into the reedbed.

### **December 10<sup>th</sup>**

Incredibly Pierre managed to *NOT SEE* a HAWFINCH today, although he had a few other things, notably a COAL TIT (mésange noire) in the conifers on the Northern Fields. In the same general area was a single SISKIN (tarin des aulnes) and Pierre also saw a BULLFINCH and 5 REDWING. The group of SERINS in the Savanna numbered about 22 birds today.

### **December 7<sup>th</sup>**

A cold, wintery morning. A ROBIN (rougegorge) was singing somewhere in the thin white mist which smothered the park. Pierre and Laurent nevertheless managed to find quite a few birds on site, including 3 HAWFINCHES, 20 REDWING (mauvis), a CHIFFCHAFF, a REED BUNTING, a **MEADOW PIPIT** (pipit farlouse) and 3 TREE SPARROWS.

At 11h50 a small group of **GREGLAG GEESE** (oie cendrée) flew low overhead, invisible behind the mist, their nasal cackling calls gradually fading away to the south

### **December 6<sup>th</sup>**

Lovely sunny day for a change...7 LESSER BLACK BACKED GULLS (goeland brun) made a nice image this morning as they moved slowly and steadily southwestwards, in an orderly line, high up against the blue. Also of note was a single CHIFFCHAFF (pouillot veloce), 4 ROSE-RINGED PARAKEETS (perruche à collier) winging quickly, low and noisily northeast, 2 TREE SPARROWS (moineau friquet) and 3 HAWFINCHES (gros-bec).

### **December 5<sup>th</sup>**

The little band of SERINS (serin cini) which can be seen daily amongst the low plants in the Savanna has increased in size - there were at least 25 birds there this morning. 4 restless HAWFINCHES were showing nicely again, and 2 FIELDFARES are still on site.

### **December 4<sup>th</sup>**

Pierre reported 4 TREE SPARROWS in the usual place early this afternoon. He also had a REDWING, a FIELDFARE and 12 SERINS.

### **December 2<sup>nd</sup>**

Nice views of a **WOODCOCK** (becasse des bois) late this morning flying low over the Savanna. A REED BUNTING is still at the Mare Perchée, and a HAWFINCH was seen flying over the Dinosaur. Plenty of GOLDCRESTS are on site at the moment (at least 7 seen today).

### **November 29<sup>th</sup>**

A GREY WAGTAIL (bergeronnette de ruisseaux) was at the Mare Perchée this morning. A single

REED BUNTING and 2 FIELDFARES were on site and 2 REDWINGS (mauvis) flew southwards overhead. A skywatch at midday was pretty fruitless, although a couple of HAWFINCHES (gros-bec) were seen perching in the treetops.

### November 27<sup>th</sup>

Laurent saw 3 **CHIFFCHAFFS** (pouillot veloce) in the park this morning. Also of note were 2 ROSE-RINGED PARAKEETS flying northeast, 3 FIELDFARES feeding with 2 REDWINGS (grive mauvis), at least 4 TREE SPARROWS and a HAWFINCH.

### November 26<sup>th</sup>

An interesting day. Most of the morning was spent creeping around the Savanna, trying in vain to get a decent view of a **TAWNY OWL** (chouette hulotte) which was flushed on a few occasions, offering brief flight views before disappearing into the dense vegetation.

4 ROSE RINGED PARAKEETS (perruche à collier) flew south at 09h30 and a bit later 12 CANADA GEESE (bernaches du Canada) flew heavily northwards, low overhead. Some more excellent views of HAWFINCHES today, perching for quite long periods in trees in and around the Savanna.

At least 4 FIELDFARES were on site today, plus a single REED BUNTING (bruant des roseaux) and a couple of BULLFINCHES (bouvreuil). At least 8 TREE SPARROWS (moineau friquet) are still in the usual place at the south end of the recycling plant.

### November 25<sup>th</sup>

Nothing today except a super view of a HAWFINCH (gros-bec) perched in a tree near the Cascade. 2 birds were present most of the morning in this area and appeared to be feeding low and discreetly on the wild berries adorning the slope between the Cascade and the Compost. Every now and again they were disturbed by dogwalkers and would either perch briefly in the open, or fly around the area in search of a bit of peace and quiet...

Pierre has just revealed the year-list situation and it's terribly exciting :- 125 species have been identified so far which equals last year's record with over a month to go !! (And incidentally the record would already be in the bag had we been able to identify that small parakeet/lovebird-thing on August 9<sup>th</sup> !!).

### November 23<sup>rd</sup>

Pierre discovered the Mare Perchée half-covered in ice this morning and even saw snow for a while at midday. At least the cold snap seems to be bringing in the birds because Pierre saw a lone **BUZZARD** (buse variable) drifting northwards at 10h30, followed shortly afterwards by a little flock of 8 **TEAL** (sarcelle d'hiver) winging quickly eastwards - a very good record for Beaumonts !

4 HAWFINCHES (gros-bec) were seen perched in the Savanna, along with a single FIELDFARE (litorne) which has been seen there on several occasions recently and would appear to be settled in the area. A REED BUNTING was noted again at the Mare Perchée and this too seems quite happy to hang around for a while.

In spite of the ice and the cold, the MOORHENS (poule d'eau) are refusing to budge and are still seen daily at the Mare Perchée...

### November 22<sup>nd</sup>

Some very good birds seen by Pierre today during a 2-hour skywatch from the Cascade, the highlight probably being the amazing sight of no less than 150 **CURLEW** (courlis cendré) flying south at 14h30. Shortly afterwards a **MERLIN** (faucon émerillon) was seen briefly dashing around the watertower, harried as it went by a CARRION CROW.

At 15h30 a superb (non-adult) male **HEN HARRIER** (busard Saint-Martin) also attracted the attention of the local corvids as it circled relatively low over the park before gliding away southwards – what a year it's been for this species !

At least one REED BUNTING (bruant des roseaux) is present on site at the moment and Pierre also saw 2 JACKDAWS (choucas des tours) swirling around the big block of flats to the north of the park.

### **November 20<sup>th</sup>**

Not a lot for Pierre today – just a REED BUNTING, 3 TREE SPARROWS and a MARSH TIT (mésange nonnette). Unusually a BLACK-HEADED GULL (mouette rieuse) seems particularly attracted to the park at the moment and is regularly seen swooping around low over the Mare Perchée, sometimes even landing there or nearby on the Northern Fields.

### **November 19<sup>th</sup>**

Pierre saw at least 30 CHAFFINCHES on site this afternoon, along with 3 REED BUNTINGS, a TREE SPARROW and a BRAMBLING. He also noticed quite large numbers of STARLINGS (étourneau), at least 350 of them, moving southwest in small flocks.

### **November 17<sup>th</sup>**

A CHIFFCHAFF (pouillot véloce) was seen flitting around the Mare Perchée this afternoon and at least 10 **TREE SPARROWS** (moineau friquet) are still present at the recycling-plant. A COMMON REDPOLL (sizerin flammé) and a FIELDFARE (litorne) were seen in the Savanna.

**HAWFINCHES** (gros-bec) continue to be found relatively easily in the park – a single bird perched briefly in a small tree on the edge of the Savanna and 4 birds were seen later flying northwards.

### **November 14<sup>th</sup>**

Laurent heard a HAWFINCH this morning and the GREY HERON (héron cendré) he found at the Mare Perchée was an unfamiliar, young and rather wary individual, rather than the usual fearless adult bird.

Later on, during a grey, misty and dreary afternoon, 2 COMMON REDPOLL (sizerin flammé) were found feeding quietly on low plants in the Savanna...quite rare to see them like this inside the park.

### **November 13<sup>th</sup>**

Laurent was skywatching early again this morning and had a single **YELLOWHAMMER** (bruant jaune) which flew over and landed in the Savanna, accompanying the SERINS (serin cini) there for a few minutes before flying off. Although the bird couldn't be relocated later in the day, it might still be in the area...

Amongst other things Laurent had a FIELDFARE (litorne), 47 BLACK-HEADED GULLS (mouette rieuse) heading east, 3 HAWFINCHES and a REED BUNTING.

Alain Bloquet and me were at the Cascade at midday and saw 2 LAPWINGS (vanneau huppé) flying south, along with 3 ROOK (corbeau freux), another HAWFINCH and 2 COAL TITS in flight. A nice

GREY WAGTAIL (bergeronnette ruisseaux) fed along the edges of the Mare Perchée.

At 12h35 the sun was out and the skies had cleared. A black line could be seen scribbled on the sky, high up and way out to the northeast and this slowly manifested itself into a superb flock of about 220 **GREYLAG GEESE** (oie cendrée), strung out in a long V-shape, flapping across the northern suburbs of Montreuil and onwards over Paris.

### November 12<sup>th</sup>

A short skywatch by Laurent early today revealed some of the usual migrants still coming through, albeit in much smaller numbers. Among them was a single SKY LARK, a WHITE WAGTAIL, 2 COAL TITS and 4 **HAWFINCHES** flying high overhead.

GREY WAGTAIL (bergeronnette ruisseaux), BRAMBLING and 2 REED BUNTINGS were also seen on site this morning.

### November 11<sup>th</sup>

Lovely bright and sunny day with clear blue skies and a cool wind gusting strongly from the south. The highlight during a skywatch was an excellent **MERLIN** (faucon émerillon) racing in towards the park from the north, climbing across the eastern skies behind the flats on rue Paul Doumer and continuing southwards before eventually disappearing as a distant speck over the Bois de Vincennes.

The sky was generally empty today and the movements of SKY LARKS and CHAFFINCHES seems definitely over. However there were a few other good birds around, notably a flock of 10 **WOODLARKS** (alouette lulu) which flew westsouthwest over the Cascade at 11h25. A distant flock of 70 **LAPWINGS** (vanneau huppé) went southwards and 4 **ROOKS** (corbeau freux) and a **BUZZARD** (buse variable) were also noted, the latter spending several minutes circling to the north of the park.

### November 9<sup>th</sup>

Very quiet today – just one SKY LARK, 1 SISKIN and 1 REED BUNTING flying south and hardly any CHAFFINCHES. However there were 10 **TREE SPARROWS** (moineau friquet) feeding on the waste ground at the recycling plant and 16 more **GOLDEN PLOVERS** (pluvier doré) were seen flying high and southwards in 2 small groups.

### November 8<sup>th</sup>

With unexpectedly cold weather and very few SKY LARKS and CHAFFINCHES passing overhead it all felt like the end of autumn. A solitary FIELDFARE (grive litorne) perched and surveyed the Savanna for a while before swooping down to join a BLACKBIRD feeding on the wild berries. Pierre had a small flock of 12 **JACKDAWS** flying southeast and a lone ROOK, 2 **ROSE-RINGED PARAKEETS** (perruche à collier), 2 FIRECRESTS, a **CHIFFCHAFF** and a **HAWFINCH** were also seen during the morning.

To the north, a frustratingly distant speck of a **BUZZARD** (buse variable) wound its way across the skies and was seen on several occasions. The highlight today though was a tight group of 10 **GOLDEN PLOVER** (pluvier doré), high in the sky and winging quickly southwestwards.

### November 7<sup>th</sup>

A **BUZZARD** (buse variable) was caught in a rather low aerial battle with 2 CARRION CROWS late this morning and was eventually forced away northwards. 2 **HAWFINCHES** (gros-bec) perched in

the tall bare trees by the recycling plant and a **COMMON REDPOLL** (sizerin flammé) flew around uncertainly, seemingly looking for somewhere to land. A small group of 3 MEADOW PIPITS (pipit farlouses) flying southwest, 1 FIRECREST (roitelet à triple bandeau), 3 REED BUNTINGS (bruant des roseaux) , 2 **CHIFFCHAFFS** (pouillot véloce) and 1 SKY LARK (alouette des champs) were also seen today.

### November 6<sup>th</sup>

A very foggy, gloomy day...not much about. Laurent had 5 BRAMBLING, a MEADOW PIPIT, a FIRECREST and a SISKIN early this morning. The weather cleared a bit at midday and uncovered lots of GOLDCRESTS (at least 8) in the woods, whilst 4 SKY LARKS flew overhead. As the fog began to drop again a lone REED BUNTING (bruant des roseaux) dropped into the reedbed for a few moments before flying out and on to the southwest.

### November 4<sup>th</sup>

More clear, sunny, warm weather and another very good day for raptors, with 6 big ones moving south during a half-hour period at midday.

BLACKBIRDS (merle noir) were on the move this morning, along with large numbers of STARLINGS (étourneau sansonnet), LAPWINGS (vanneau huppé) and WOODPIGEONS (pigeon ramier). A surprise was another **RED KITE** (milan royal), more distant than Sunday's bird, which flapped steadily south at 09h10.

At 13h20 2 **BUZZARDS** (buse variable) and 2 SPARROWHAWKS were found circling together, although the watching of these was briefly interrupted moments later by a male **HEN HARRIER** (busard Saint-Martin), flying quickly overhead and directly south towards the Bois de Vincennes. Amazingly, at 13h45, Laurent spotted 2 *more* **HEN HARRIERS** flying towards us. Upon reaching the park they obligingly spent several minutes circling overhead, harried along by perhaps the same pair of SPARROWHAWKS.

This incredible event was even captured by Laurent with his brand new, hugely expensive and big and heavy Nikon camera...just look at those beauts circling around in the blue there on the right ! (with the SPARROWHAWK in the middle) [See "skutchia" website]. Just 5 minutes later another **BUZZARD** came into view and drifted slowly eastwards, eventually disappearing over the flats on rue Paul Doumer. Also of note today were 2 (maybe 3) REED BUNTINGS (bruant des roseaux) on site around the Mare Perchée, and some nice flight views of HAWFINCHES (gros-bec).

### November 3<sup>rd</sup>

I never thought I could ever get excited about WOODPIGEONS (pigeon ramier), but they're migrating through in big numbers at the moment - Laurent and Pierre had 2700 going south this morning between 08h30-10h30, including one flock of 900 birds...not bad !

There were lots of other migrants taking advantage of another clear and sunny morning, including a lot more LAPWINGS (vanneau huppé), SKY LARKS and 2 **WOODLARKS** (alouette lulu) going south...(check out all the gory details under the "skywatching" section of the website J !! )

A COMMON REDPOLL (sizerin flammé) going north and landing on site was quite unusual, and at 14h20 today another BUZZARD (buse variable) glided southwards, high overhead.

### November 2<sup>nd</sup>

Nice to get some clear sunny weather again after all the recent rain. Excellent birding today with migrants pouring over in droves and raptors galore !

It was a very poor, late start by me and by the time I'd reached the Cascade at 09h40 Pierre had already scored a late **OSPREY** (balbuzard pêcheur) moving southwest at 09h05, and a super **SHORT-EARED OWL** (hibou des marais) which came in rather low from the northwest at 09h20 and meandered over the park a little before continuing away to the southeast.

The migration overhead was impressive with numerous high, scattered lines of **LAPWINGS** (vanneau huppé) hurrying generally southwest, and unusually large numbers of **WOODPIGEONS** (ramier) moving south in large flocks. 18 **ROOKS** (freux) and 11 **JACKDAWS** (choucas des tours) also flew over but the real highlight came at 10h30 when Pierre suddenly noticed a superb **RED KITE !!!** (milan royal) quite close to us, turning the skies to the northeast over the Watertower. After flapping bouyantly away from the attentions of a **CARRION CROW** it then circled several times before drifting away south and then southwest.

A little later at 11h30 a **BUZZARD** (buse variable) was found circling high to the north of the park, which then glided quickly south, directly overhead, on rigid wings. In the late afternoon Pierre returned to the park and had lots more of the same species moving through, most notably some 600 **WOODPIGEONS** in just 40 minutes !

### October 30<sup>th</sup>

At 10h00 this morning me and Laurent saw a male **STONECHAT** (traquet pâtre/tarier pâtre) just make it onto the park yearlist in last-gasp, dramatic style, popping up briefly on a bush at the Cascade and then disappearing for good, (much to the annoyance of Pierre who was climbing the entrance steps at the time)...

Autumn passage had been good during the preceeding two hours, with plenty of **CORMORANTS**, **REDWINGS**, **SKY LARKS**, **CHAFFINCHES** and even a couple of **WOODLARKS** (alouette lulu) moving south.

A few **ROOKS** and **HAWFINCHES** were also noted again today and a single **BLACK REDSTART** was seen near the Compost. At 11h20 a small flock of 8 **FIELDFARE** (grive litorne) flew purposefully westnorthwest and just a few moments later a rather lonely-looking **LAPWING** (vanneau huppé) lapped around against the grey sky high up over the park, eventually disappearing out to the southwest.

At 12h20 a single distant **BUZZARD** (buse variable) flew slowly south, spending several minutes circling high over the Bois de Vincennes.

### October 29<sup>th</sup>

The whole place was covered in cold fog today, with just a few bits of blue sky appearing briefly in the early afternoon. Consequently it was all rather grim and silent all morning, although Laurent got a **SISKIN** and 2 **SKY LARKS** and I flushed 4 **MEADOW PIPITS** from the bushes which had no doubt been grounded by the fog. A **CHIFFCHAFF** was at Middlemarsh and a single **COAL TIT** flew north but there was no sign of the **PIED FLYCATCHER** today, unless we just couldn't see it through the mist.

Just as I was thinking that surely, somebody had to see something, Pierre reported a **MIDDLE SPOTTED WOODPECKER** (pic mar), an extremely good bird for the park, which flew off and away after just 2 minutes in a tree at the entrance area opposite the Danton café. It was obviously his day because a bit later Pierre found a **RING OUZEL** (merle à plastron) perched in the Savanna, 3 **BLACK REDSTARTS** and, in the Northern Fields, another **COAL TIT** at the conifers along with a nice group of 3 **GREEN WOODPECKERS** (pic vert) feeding together on the grass nearby.

## October 28<sup>th</sup>

Lots of REDWINGS (grive mauvis) were flying low over the Savanna early this morning, and one or two dropped to the ground and fed on the flat open area of stubble where they were joined by a few CHAFFINCHES and an excellent **HAWFINCH** (gros-bec). A few moments later, at 08h24, a long line of **GREY GEESE** (oies grise) flew slowly, high over the Bois de Vincennes, in a westsouthwesterly direction.

Interestingly the **PIED FLYCATCHER** is still present near the recycling plant and a female BLACKCAP (fauvette à tête noire) and 8 **TREE SPARROWS** were also in the immediate area. 2 CHIFFCHAFF were seen this morning, along with a few **COMMON REDPOLL** (sizerin flammé) and 6 **COAL TIT** (mésange noire) which in characteristic fashion bobbed in low, perched for a few moments in a tree and hurried on westwards.

A skywatch at midday was very productive with lots SKY LARKS and other migrants going over. At 11h30 a pale **BUZZARD** (buse variable) circled high and to the north of the park, mobbed by a CARRION CROW.

Pierre arrived at the Cascade a little later, just in time to witness the highlight of the day, a superb female or juvenile **HEN HARRIER !!** (busard Saint-Martin) which was found out to the east, flapping strongly straight and southwards. It obligingly arrested its course somewhere over Fontenay, circling for 2-3 minutes and gaining height before continuing onwards.

## October 27<sup>th</sup>

Nice views of a HAWFINCH flying west and then east, low over the south side of the park this morning, the bird also perching briefly in a tree near Middlemarsh. The **PIED FLYCATCHER** is still present and was very obliging today, allowing itself to be both photographed and videod (so if anyone's interested they can see this bird elsewhere on the website !)

A **TREE SPARROW** was seen today, along with 3 ROOKS heading southwest and 3 **COMMON REDPOLL** flying over southwards.

## October 26<sup>th</sup>

Another cold and misty morning, but unlike yesterday there was an almost constant stream of passerines migrating overhead, the highlight probably being a **WOODLARK** (alouette lulu) which flew very low, calling, and almost landing.

Both the **PIED FLYCATCHER** (gobemouche noir) and the BLACKCAP seen yesterday were both still present this morning in and around the bushes at the south end of the recycling plant. Also of interest in the same area was a small flock of about 10 **TREE SPARROWS** (moineau friquet), and if last year is anything to go by these birds will probably hang around for a while.

## October 25<sup>th</sup>

Although a few SISKINS and BRAMBLINGS flew overhead this morning it felt as if autumn passage had been completely blocked by a hazy, colourless sky, and as the temperature gradually dropped, so did a blanket of white mist which slowly smothered the park and the surrounding area. It all felt very birdless, although a nice surprise was a rather tatty and tired-looking **PIED FLYCATCHER** (gobemouche noir), sallying for insects low down in the bushes by the recycling-plant. A single male BLACKCAP was also seen in this area and 3 BLACK REDSTARTS were still present around the Compost.

## October 24<sup>th</sup>

3 BLACK REDSTARTS (rougequeue noir), including a superb male, were moving together through the bushes near the Ditch this morning and a bit later 2 HAWFINCHES were seen perched again in the Savanna. The best bird today though was a single **RING OUZEL** (merle à plastron) which Pierre watched flying in from the north and then perching briefly in trees near the Mare Perchée.

A BLACK-HEADED GULL (mouette rieuse) (one of 15 seen today) flew unusually low around the site, actually landing for a few moments in the Northern Fields, and Laurent reported hearing **ROSE-RINGED PARAKEET** (perruche à collier) near the Coffee Dome.

A small group of about 13 SERINS are currently settled in the park and can be seen daily, feeding low amongst the weedy plants in the Savanna. 3 more **JACKDAWS** (choucas), 1 **ROOK** (freux) and 2 **COMMON REDPOLL** (sizerin flammé) were also seen this morning, but for the first day this autumn there were *no warblers* !!

## October 23<sup>rd</sup>

A cold, clear morning with water vapour steaming up from the Mare Perchée before sunrise. The Savanna was encrusted with frost and in the weak, orange-coloured light, 3 distant **HAWFINCHES** (gros-bec) made a nice image as they perched in tall bare trees by the Coffee Dome.

Lots of passage migrants flew overhead throughout the morning and the undoubted highlight was 2 **GOLDEN PLOVER** (pluvier doré) seen by Laurent. Another highlight today was the superb scope view of a **WOODLARK** (alouette lulu), which circled low around the Mare Perchée, calling as it went, before landing on the rough grass and standing motionless there for several minutes...it is very rare to see this species actually land at Beaumonts !

There were more REED BUNTINGS (bruant des roseaux) moving through today and on 3 occasions birds were watched flying in from the north and then pitching down into bushes near the Cascade. A single **COMMON REDPOLL** (sizerin flammé), 8 **ROOKS** (corbeau freux) and 8 **JACKDAWS** (choucas des tours) were also noted this morning.

In the evening Pierre scored big-time, seeing 9 **GREYLAG GEESE** (oie cendrée) moving south at 18h15. A little later, at 18h45, he saw a **TAWNY OWL** !! (chouette hulotte) flapping over the Mare Perchée and the Savanna, harrassed as it went by MAGPIES, and eventually disappearing behind a curtain of trees. What a week for owls !!!

## October 22<sup>nd</sup>

Rather quiet, with less passage than over recent days...only about 10 SKY LARKS, a single MEADOW PIPIT and the odd small group of CHAFFINCHES flying over. 2 GREY WAGTAILS (bergonerette ruisseaux) were at the Mare de Brie, a single BLACK REDSTART at the Compost, and 2 **HAWFINCHES** (gros-bec) and 1 **ROOK** (corbeau freux) flew southwards.

## October 20<sup>th</sup>

Still a steady passage of passerines overhead although rather fewer SKY LARKS and MEADOW PIPITS compared to yesterday, maybe because of the dull and overcast conditons early morning. Quite a few BRAMBLING were around, along with at least 10 REED BUNTINGS on migration, 3 **HAWFINCHES**, 1 **TREE PIPIT** (pipit des arbres) and yet more **ROSE-RINGED PARAKEETS** (3 of them)...these are being seen on a daily basis at the moment, which is very unusual.

Anne-Laure and Maxime were back again this morning with the mist-nets and they managed to bag a

lot more than on Saturday, including a lovely couple of female FIRECRESTS. One of these birds was actually found a little later nearby, desperately trying in vain to peck her new silverware off !

### October 19<sup>th</sup>

Similar conditions and similar birds to yesterday, although there were far fewer SISKINS bouncing nimbly overhead. **ROSE-RINGED PARAKEETS** appeared on 3 occasions (9 birds) and there were more **ROOKS**, 5 of them, which flew as one widely-spaced group towards the southwest. 12 **JACKDAWS** were also seen flying southwest this morning.

### October 18<sup>th</sup>

A similar morning to yesterday's with clear skies and lots of the usual migrants going overhead, in particular SKY LARKS, BRAMBLINGS and MEADOW PIPITS which were all more numerous today. The SKY LARKS were flying rather lower than usual and one individual swooped around low and eventually landed in the Northern Fields – a rare event indeed !

High numbers of thrushes gave a wintery feel to the morning and both REDWINGS (mauvis) and FIELDFARES (litorne) perched in trees on site. At 09h52 a fine male **RING OUZEL** (merle à plastron) flew in from the north and perched atop a tree at the Coffee Dome, calling loudly.

Francois Chiron, Anne-Laure Dussuchal and Maxime Zucca were in the park this morning for the purpose of bird-ringing and had strategically strung-up 9 mist nets. However they caught only 35 birds, far fewer than on October 11<sup>th</sup>, due partly to the real dearth of warblers on site at the moment (only 4 CHIFFCHAFFS and 4 BLACKCAPS were seen today).

Other notable birds today were 2 REED BUNTING (bruant des roseaux) on site, at least 15 **COAL TITS**, 4 **HAWFINCHES**, 7 **WOODLARK** (alouette lulu), 6 **ROSE-RINGED PARAKEETS**, 2 BLACK REDSTART, 2+ FIRECREST, 1 ROOK (corbeau freux) and, best of all, a total of 70 **JACKDAWS** (choucas des tours) tumbling southwards in 2 ragged flocks (27+43).

### October 17<sup>th</sup>

An excellent fresh and crispy morning with glowing, golden, autumn colours and a light frost on the ground...lots of finches, notably SISKINS and **BRAMBLINGS** (pinson du nord), were going overhead through clear skies. Two **COMMON REDPOLL** (sizerin flammé) flew obligingly into a small tree in the Savanna where they spent several minutes preening, and a little later 3 HAWFINCHES (gros-bec) also perched in trees nearby (neither of these two species land very often inside the park !)

Unfortunately yesterday's BARN OWL had deserted its position overnight and couldn't be found again this morning, although no doubt it's still around somewhere...

13 **WOODLARKS** (alouette lulu) flew westsouthwest at 10h02 and **ROSE-RINGED PARAKEETS** (perruches à collier) burst over the park on 3 occasions, one flock of 12 birds being particularly unusual. No less than 5 BLACK REDSTARTS (rougequeue noir) were hopping and flitting around the recycling plant this morning, and 4 **ROOKS** (corbeau freux) flew slowly southwestwards at 10h30. A skywatch at midday produced a fair amount of passage migrants, including some more COMMON REDPOLLS (a flock of 13) and 12 WHITE WAGTAILS.

### October 16<sup>th</sup>

A very good day with the amazing discovery of a **BARN OWL** !! (Chouette effraie ou Effraie des clochers) partially hidden inside a small bush in the Savanna. Although it could be approached closely, it was mainly just the wings, neck and feet that were visible, and just the very occasional

glimpse of the head...it really was doing a great job at hiding. This species is very rare at Beaumonts and this would appear to be the first confirmed record since the 1980s (although it was recently claimed by a non-birding local out walking the dog)...

Other birds seen today included 3 HAWFINCHES, 2 COMMON REDPOLL, a small group of 6 COAL TITS and a BLACK REDSTART.

### October 15<sup>th</sup>

Not much...another dull and cloudy day, although windier than yesterday. A lot more CHAFFINCHES were passing overhead in small groups and another 2 **COMMON REDPOLL** were seen, this time flying eastwards. Very few BLACKCAPS appear to be left on site at the moment, although there are still plenty of CHIFFCHAFFS.

### October 14<sup>th</sup>

A mild, still morning under a vast low roof of cloud. Hardly any CHAFFINCHES migrating today although interesting to see 3 small groups of **COAL TITS** (mésange noir) flying low overhead, along with 3 HAWFINCHES (gros-bec), 2 **BRAMBLING** (pinson du nord), some parties of SISKINS (tarin des alnes) and one (possibly 2) **COMMON REDPOLL** (sizerin flammé) stuttering over the Savanna.

3 BLACK REDSTARTS (rougequeue noir) found at the Compost were travelling around in close proximity to each other, perching in the same trees and bushes. Two REED BUNTING (bruant des roseaux) were at the Mare Perchée and a REED WARBLER there had a single silver ring on its right leg, (quite possibly ringed over the weekend ?).

### October 11<sup>th</sup>

Today was to be a repeat of last Saturday's 'national skywatch', with birders all over the country watching and counting the migrants heading south, although with me, Laurent and Pierre all away at the moment it was looking as if Beaumonts would miss out on the action. However Julien Birard, Benoit Fontaine, Philip Redman and Maxime Zucca came to the rescue and were promptly there at dawn, counting several SKY LARKS (alouettes des champs), SONG THRUSHES and WHITE WAGTAILS. Interestingly there were not many MEADOW PIPITS, and fewer CHAFFINCHES than over recent days. Also of note were several **BRAMBLING** (pinson du nord) (10-15), SISKIN (tarin des alnes) (15-20), SERINS and, most interestingly, 2 **YELLOWHAMMER** (bruant jaune), a very good year tick for the park (thanks lads)...

On site they also found several **REDWINGS** (grive mauvis) (which had apparently been rather more numerous the previous evening) along with a **COAL TIT** (mésange noire) and several GOLDCRESTS and FIRECRESTS. Interestingly at least one **REED WARBLER** (effarvatte) is *still* present !

### October 8<sup>th</sup>

Rather similar conditions to yesterday, but not quite as many CHAFFINCHES (206) going over. Several SISKINS and GOLDFINCHES went over early morning, and there were also 2 **BRAMBLING** and a single HAWFINCH on site today. During a skywatch from 11h00-13h00, the highlights were a single **MARSH HARRIER** (busard des roseaux) which flew steadily southwest and 12 **GREYLAG GEESE** (oie cendré) which flew in quickly from the north in 2 separated groups, the trailing group of 5 eventually catching up with the others somewhere over the Bois de Vincennes.

### October 7<sup>th</sup>

A damp, mild, autumnal morning under a blanket of grey cloud, which forced the migrating finches

and pipits lower down today and allowed most to be identified (unlike last Saturday). Large numbers of **CHAFFINCHES** (pinson des arbres) flew over throughout the morning and 427 were counted during a skywatch with Pierre from 10h55-13h30. This species probably made up the bulk of the 336 additional birds that were left unidentified.

The highlight this morning was a group of 7 **WOODLARKS** (alouette lulu) which we watched appearing from the eastnortheast over the blocks of flats on rue Paul Doumer, bounding in towards us and passing just overhead on their way towards Paris.

75 distant **CORMORANTS** were also seen late this morning as they meandered slowly over the river valley to the south of the park, and a single **HOBBY** flashed low and southwards at 09h25. Also of note today were 3 **BRAMBLING** (pinson du nord), one of which landed in the Northern Fields.

### October 4<sup>th</sup>

Today birders all over France were organised into collective skywatching, an annual event with the aim of collecting all the data and discovering more about migration patterns. So I duly did my bit on the Cascade this morning, noting everything that moved between 08h00-11h00, although the sky looked so promising that I ended up hanging around until 14h00. There seemed to be distant migrating birds almost constantly on view, with lots of **CHAFFINCHES** and **MEADOW PIPITS** in particular moving westsouthwards.

The first **WOODLARKS** (alouette lulu) of the autumn bounded over (6 of them) and a single **HAWFINCH**, probably a local bird, flew southwards at 9h15. It was a good day for exotics, with 2 **ROSE-RINGED PARAKEETS** (perruches à collier) flying south early morning and much later a single **COCKATIEL** (calopsitte élégante) flying around over the Savanna.

4 **BUZZARDS** (buse variable) were seen today, 2 of which offered some nice views, and a single **LESSER-SPOTTED WOODPECKER** (pic épeichette) which bounded westwards overhead, calling as it went ! Also noteworthy were 3 **BARN SWALLOWS** (hirondelle de cheminée) and 1 **HOUSE MARTIN** (hirondelle de fenêtre).

In the early morning Delbove counted 115 **WOODPIGEONS** (ramier) feeding on the Northern Fields, 54 of which were juvenile birds...this is quite a good number for a single group on site. Incidentally Delbove also reported 2 **BRAMBLING** (pinson du nord) today.

### October 2<sup>nd</sup>

Nice bright and sunny morning with quite a few **CHAFFINCHES** and **MEADOW PIPITS** going overhead. At 08h30 a **HAWFINCH** (gros-bec) was again seen flying around the same corner of the Northern Fields and 3 **GOLDCRESTS** were here as well. Later in the Parc Mabilie a **colour-ringed BLUE TIT** (mésange bleue) was seen briefly...this one had a white ring on the left leg and a yellow one on the right leg.

### September 30<sup>th</sup>

Miserable weather this morning with grey clouds and drizzle...looks like it will remain so for a few days. 2 **COMMON REDSTART** were present, the same male in the same place as yesterday plus another in the Savanna. Also of note was a **BLACK REDSTART** and 2 **HAWFINCH** (gros-bec) which flew northwestwards in the direction of the cemetery (again !).

### September 29<sup>th</sup>

Rather quiet, although brilliant views were had of one of the **COMMON REDSTARTS** still present in

the park as it perched for ages on a large rock in the Ditch this morning, not really knowing what to do.

23 BLACK-HEADED GULLS (mouette rieuse) flapped northwards early morning in 3 groups, and these were followed a little later by a single COMMON GULL (goéland cendré). Rather fewer BLACKCAPS on site today, but still lots of SONG THRUSHES flushed from the bushes. A single BLACK REDSTART (rougequeue noir) was found near the Compost and both GOLDCREST and FIRECREST were seen today.

### September 28<sup>th</sup>

Laurent was out early skywatching (07h40-09h10) and saw lots of commoner species in active migration including 18 MEADOW PIPITS (pipit farlouse), 17 WHITE WAGTAILS (Bergeronnette grise), 23 SONG THRUSHES (grive musicienne), 3 SISKINS (tarin des alnes), a **HAWFINCH** (grosbec), the first **SKY LARK** (alouette des champs) of the autumn and 28 JAYS (including one flock of 26 birds!!). On site, Laurent also had a REED BUNTING (bruant des roseaux) and 4 more COAL TITS (mésange noir), 3 of which were seen flying into the park (via his garden) from the south.

Guilhem Lesaffre and Jean-Noel Rieffel also birded the park this morning and had much of the same stuff, but were able to add a **HOBBY** (faucon hobereau), 8-10 **WOODLARK** (alouette lulu), a few more SISKINS (12-17 birds) and, most interestingly, 2 **SNIPES** !! (bécassine des marais) (a very rare bird at Beaumonts), one of which was seen on the ground and the other flying southwards.

A skywatch at midday (12h10-15h00) by Pierre and me produced 3 BUZZARDS (buse variable) and at least 23 BARN SWALLOWS. The **WHINCHAT** (tarier) and 2 COMMON REDSTARTS were still present around the Cascade.

### September 27<sup>th</sup>

The **WHINCHAT** and COMMON REDSTART were both still present this morning and 17 **CANADA GEESE** (bernache du Canada) flew briefly around the northern part of the park. A single **HAWFINCH** (grosbec) flew low, northwards towards the cemetery and 2 **SISKIN** (tarin des alnes) flew southwards. A MEADOW PIPIT landed near the Mare Parchée and several more of them were seen flying over southwards throughout the morning.

At around 11h00 in the Parc Mabilley, the 2 **MARSH TITS** described yesterday were found again in the same place whilst a male **LESSER-SPOTTED WOODPECKER** (pic épeichette) hitched around the upper branches of the high horse chestnuts.

At 12h00 a BUZZARD moved slowly from east to west and a little later a small flock of 10 HOUSE MARTINS (hirondelle de fenetre) flew purposefully *north* (what's going on there ?!!).

### September 26<sup>th</sup>

4 CORMORANTS flew unusually low (northwards) early morning, and a flock of 11 were seen later in the day. During a skywatch at midday (12h40-15h00) 3 BUZZARDS (buse variable) were noted, 2 at 13h40 and a single bird at 14h30. A COMMON REDSTART (rougequeue à front-blanc) and a **WHINCHAT** (tarier) were on view in the bushes nearby.

The same colour-ringed MARSH TIT (mésange nonnette) that was seen on Sept 1<sup>st</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> was found again in the same place along the Ave de Marronniers in the Parc Mabilley. Laurent recently solved the great mystery surrounding these colour-ringed birds (4 have been seen in the park since August 5<sup>th</sup>). He found out that a few Marsh Tits were trapped in a forest close to Paris (perhaps

Sénart) and then released in Montreuil, just up the road in the Parc des Guilands, so these 'introduced' birds haven't actually travelled very far. It will be interesting to see whether they stick around the area – today's individual is in the company of an unringed bird, and it seems quite settled in this part of the park.

A NUTHATCH (sitelle) and a PIED FLYCATCHER (gobemouche noir) were also found in the Parc Mabille this morning.

### September 25<sup>th</sup>

Laurent had a productive short visit this morning, finding a **NORTHERN WHEATEAR** (traquet motteux) and 2 **COAL TITS** (mésange noires) (the first recorded this year) which appeared to be moving purposefully across the park in a southwesterly direction, and might possibly have been in active migration.

A skywatch from the Cascade later in the day (11h55-14h45) was rather less productive for Pierre and me – just a single **HONEY-BUZZARD** (bondrée apivore) migrating southwards, mobbed on its way by a SPARROWHAWK (épervier). Quite a few MEADOW PIPITS (pipit farlouse) went overhead, CHAFFINCHES (pinson des arbres) went westwards in small numbers and 59 CORMORANTS (in three groups) were seen flying very high towards the south. At least 2 COMMON REDSTART continue to provide entertainment from the surrounding bushes.

At 11h55 2 **COMMON CROSSBILL** (bec-croisé des sapins) flew over northwards. Excitingly one of these birds dropped down low over the Northern Fields and perched on top of a small conifer there for a few seconds. This is a major event indeed...the species is usually indifferent to the park, flying over it and *never* landing !

### September 24<sup>th</sup>

A MEADOW PIPIT (pipit farlouse) landed in the Savanna this morning and a PIED FLYCATCHER was also seen in this area. At least 2 COMMON REDSTART are still quite easily seen around the Cascade, and 3 REED WARBLER are still in the reedbed at the Mare Perchée....shouldn't they be thinking of heading off soon?

A skywatch in the late afternoon (16h00-17h30) produced 2 BUZZARDS (buse variable) and 5 migrating BARN SWALLOWS. Later on in the evening Pierre had a WILLOW WARBLER (fitis) at the Mare Perchée and 2 MARSH TITS in the Savanna.

### September 22<sup>nd</sup>

A very good day with the first ever confirmed report of **MONTAGU'S HARRIER** !! (busard cendré) for the park. At 13h15 there was still a bright blue sky to the north from which the bird, a female possibly in 1<sup>st</sup> adult plumage, flapped in buoyantly before suddenly stalling and circling higher, gaining more and more height before continuing its steady flightpath towards the southwest. That the bird should readjust its flight like this over Beaumonts is probably more than just coincidence...quite a lot of the raptors seen in active migration here behave in a similar manner. It's quite likely that the rather abrupt drop in altitude from the park down to the Bois de Vincennes creates warmer thermals that the birds take advantage of...lucky us!

3 COMMON REDSTART were seen in close proximity to each other near the Cascade this morning. A FIRECREST (roitelet triple-bandeau) was present in the firs in the Northern Fields and 2 NUTHATCH (sitelle) were seen in the Parc Mabille. There appeared to be larger-than-usual numbers of SONG THRUSHES about today.

## September 21<sup>st</sup>

Although a single **HONEY-BUZZARD** (bondrée apivore) circled southbound this afternoon at 15h30, a skywatch beforehand (13h10-15h20) had been completely raptorless – not *even* a SPARROWHAWK ! The boredom had been alleviated by the odd flock of CORMORANTS, flying south in v-shaped groups of between 4 and 60 birds – a total of 169 was counted.

BLACKCAP numbers were back up again today and a single **LESSER WHITETHROAT** (babillarde) skulking in the Savanna late morning was rather unusual. Just the one COMMON REDSTART (rougequeue à front-blanc) seen today, showing well near the Cascade.

## September 20<sup>th</sup>

It seems that majority of BLACKCAPS (fauvette à tête noire) moved off in the night because only about 6 were seen this morning, and for the first time this autumn they were outnumbered easily by CHIFFCHAFFS (pouillot véloce).

3 COMMON REDSTART (rougequeue à front blanc) appear to be present – 2 in the Savanna and 1 in the bushes north of the Mare Perchée. Along the Ave de Maronniers in the Parc Marbille a tit-flock contained 2 **MARSH TITS** (mésange nonnette), one of which was the same ringed individual seen nearby on September 1<sup>st</sup>. This bird has a white ring on the left leg and 2 rings on the right leg (a dull reddish-brown one above a marginally smaller silvery-white one). Also in these big, orange-leaved trees was a single **SPOTTED FLYCATCHER** (gobemouche gris).

This area of the park was the obviously the place to be today...Pierre was there this evening and saw a **NUTHATCH** (sitelle) roaming around the area and inspecting many different trees, whilst a SHORT-TOED TREECREEPER (grimpereau des jardins), a GREAT-SPOTTED WOODPECKER (Pic épeiche) and a **LESSER-SPOTTED WOODPECKER** (pic épeichette) were all feeding quietly, in their own special ways, in the same spot.

## September 19<sup>th</sup>

At least 2 COMMON REDSTART were still on site today and 3 REED WARBLERS were in the reedbed early morning. A GOLDCREST (roitelet huppé) was at the Coffee Dome, along with nice views of a WILLOW WARBLER (fitis). A **WHINCHAT** (tarier), also offered nice views today, perched atop the small bushes by the Cascade. The sky looked promising at midday, but not a lot was seen between 12h50-16h20...just 2 BUZZARDS (buse variable), an unidentified larger raptor, a single SAND MARTIN and 48 BARN SWALLOWS. It would seem that the recent HONEY-BUZZARD passage is pretty much over now, mores the pity...

## September 18<sup>th</sup>

More sunny but cold weather...it feels like late autumn is upon us. The highlight today was a single **HEN HARRIER** (busard Saint-Martin) which flew steadily south at 14h00. 2 unidentified raptors seen beforehand, going westnorthwest, were probably BUZZARDS (buse variable). A nice distraction from the skywatching were 2 COMMON REDSTART which could be seen darting about together in the small trees by the Mare Perchée. Another bird seen in the Savanna late this evening by Pierre might possibly be a third ?

## September 17<sup>th</sup>

Another quiet and uneventful day, the cold windy weather not helping much. A single **HAWFINCH** (grosbec) flew low around the Savanna, briefly landing in a small tree there, and a single PIED FLYCATCHER was found in the reedbed at the Mare de Brie. A GOLDCREST was seen in a conifer in

the Northern Fields and a COMMON REDSTART was present in the Savanna today.

### September 16<sup>th</sup>

Rather quiet and uneventful, although there are still a few raptors moving through : 2 **HOBBIES** today, the second of which was gliding high, quickly and straight south, and appeared to be in active migration. 2 **HONEY-BUZZARDS** were seen gliding south, again very high, the first at 12h40 and the second at 13h25. 2 **BUZZARDS** (buse variable) (10h50, 12h04), going east and north respectively, were perhaps local birds?

A single **COMMON CROSSBILL** (bec-croisé des sapins) flew south late morning, and there was just one **PIED FLYCATCHER** seen today. A **REED WARBLER** is still present at the Mare Parchée. This evening Pierre saw 2 **COMMON REDSTART** (rougequeue à front-blanc) in the Savanna and 2 **TREE PIPITS** (pipit des arbres).

Some commoner species are appearing in larger numbers than usual these last few days, most notably **BLUE TITS** (mésange bleu), but also **BLACKBIRDS** (merle noir), **DUNNOCKS** (accenteur mouchet) and **SONG THRUSHES** (grive musicienne).

The breeding pair of **BULLFINCHES** (bouvreuil pivoine) are currently being seen (quite easily) with their juveniles on a daily basis around the Savanna.

### September 15<sup>th</sup>

Good day for **MARSH HARRIERS** (busard des roseaux) with 6 birds seen migrating south - 3 together at 12h00 and 3 others a little later (12h20, 12h50, 13h25). Interestingly the first of these, a female, stayed on site for almost 2 hours and was watched at length on 3 occasions quartering low over the Savanna, mobbed continuously by a **CARRION CROW**. In between times it appeared to land somewhere in the woodland on the western slope of the park. According to Pierre this observation changes its status somewhat at Beaumonts - it's been a strictly fly-over species up until now.

Just the one **HONEY-BUZZARD** (bondrée) today, at 10h05, another victim of marauding **CARRION CROWS**.

3 **PIED FLYCATCHERS**, 1 **SPOTTED FLYCATCHER**, 1 **COMMON REDSTART** (rougequeue à front-blanc) , at least 3 (possibly 5) **FIRECRESTS** (roitelet triple-bandeau), 1 **MARSH TIT** (mésange nonnette), 1 **TREE PIPIT**, 1 **GARDEN WARBLER** (fauvette des jardins) and at least 1 **LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL** (goéland brun) were seen today.

1 **MEADOW PIPIT** (pipit farlouse) and 1 **YELLOW WAGTAIL** flew south and a single **LINNET** (linotte mélodieuse), found perched at the Mare Perchée early morning, was rather unusual. Even more unusual was the bizarre sight of a powdery yellow **CANARY** ! (canari) which fluttered across the Savanna and landed in one of the trees there.

Interesting to see the active migration of **JAYS** (geai des chênes) at the moment...for the last few days small numbers (about 16 today) have been seen flying gingerly, generally in a westsouthwestly direction, high up above the park.

### September 14<sup>th</sup>

Lovely sunny day with cloudless blue skies. Lots of good birds were seen during a thoroughly enjoyable picnic/skywatch from the Cascade at midday (12h05-16h00) - so much nicer to watch raptors with melon and olives at hand ! 17 larger raptors were seen, including 2 that remained unidentified. The most unusual of these was *another* **OSPREY** (balbuzard pêcheur) (the fourth so far

this autumn), although the bird was annoying distant as it quartered the skies to the south of the park for many minutes.

9 **HONEY-BUZZARDS** (bondrée apivore) were seen moving south, including a superb group of five together in the binoculars, circling high overhead. Another species seen migrating in numbers was **MARSH HARRIER** (busard des roseaux), four birds moving south together at 12h15, and a single female was seen later at 15h05.

Unlike the past 2 days, hirundines were moving again - at least 72 **BARN SWALLOWS** (and at least 1 **SAND MARTIN**) twisted their way quickly overhead in small groups. Like yesterday, plenty of **CORMORANTS** were around (at least 94) - the biggest single group being of 50 birds. Also noteworthy were 2 **COMMON CROSSBILL** (bec-croisé des sapins) which chipped southeast, low overhead, at 15h20.

Just as we were all thinking of leaving, at 15h45, a final scan across the blue skies to the north produced the biggest surprise of the day - the amazing sight of 45 (yes, *fourty-five!*) **WHITE STORKS** !! (cigogne blanche) wheeling around in a flock, gradually gaining height on each turn and moving slowly towards us ! The birds came closer and closer, moving directly overhead and high over the Savanna before eventually dissolving into the bright afternoon sun over the Bois de Vincennes. This wonderful spectacle was seemingly enjoyed by other Montreuil folk, out on their Sunday afternoon stroll and wondering what all the fuss was about...

### September 13<sup>th</sup>

The first **MEADOW PIPITS** (pipit farlouse) of the autumn went sipping high overhead early this morning and a distant **MARSH HARRIER** (busard des roseaux) flew south at 08h45. 2 **BLACK REDSTARTS** (rougequeue noir) were seen today and there are still at least 2 **PIED FLYCATCHERS** in the park. From the berry bushes near the Cascade a **NIGHTINGALE** (rossignol philomèle) betrayed its presence throughout the morning with its characteristic grating calls, although it remained frustratingly out of sight.

Several groups of **CORMORANTS** were seen today, the biggest numbering 43 birds. 7 **HONEY-BUZZARDS** were seen from the Cascade, including 3 together at 13h45.

### September 12<sup>th</sup>

Rain and dark cloudy skies early this morning - hopeless migration conditions. However bird numbers are high in the park at the moment and **BLACKCAPS**, **BLACKBIRDS** (merle noir) and **DUNNOCKS** (accenteur mouchet) appeared to be everywhere. At least 3 **SPOTTED FLYCATCHERS**, at least 2 **PIED FLYCATCHERS** and 1 (maybe 2) **COMMON REDSTART** were seen. Also of note were a **NUTHATCH** (sittelle torchepot), at least 6 **WHITETHROATS** (grisette) and a single **REED WARBLER** (effarvatte) skulking in the reedbed.

A single **MARSH TIT** (mésange nonnette) feeding at the Mare de Brie late morning was the same colour-ringed individual seen on Wednesday - come to think of it we should really start giving them names to make things easier...

Xavier Japiot led an organised outing of 5 birders around the park and the highlights were a single **GARDEN WARBLER** (fauvette des jardins), a **NUTHATCH** (sittelle) and 4 (maybe 5) **FIRECRESTS** (roitelet triple-bandeau).

In the evening Laurent and Pierre had a real raptor bonanza from the Cascade, the undoubted highlight of which was a superb **PEREGRINE FALCON** !! (faucon pèlerin), a very rare bird at

Beaumonts, which flew in very quickly from the north and spent a couple of minutes circling above the park before eventually gliding away to the west.

At 18h30 a dark juvenile **HONEY-BUZZARD** (bondrée apivore) arrived overhead and was promptly mobbed by several CARRION CROWS (corneille noire). A bird in this plumage has been seen several times lately flying low over the park....could it possibly be the same local bird? Several minutes later 2 UNIDENTIFIED LARGER RAPTORS were seen, the first of which was probably a BUZZARD (buse variable).

It was an excellent evening for **MARSH HARRIERS** (busard des roseaux) with a bird at 18h20 coming in from the south and remaining in view for a long time before going away westwards. Later, at 19h20, no less than *five* of them, spaced widely apart, were watched simultaneously going slowly south in a long line...a nice end to the evening !!

### September 11<sup>th</sup>

Some visible migration early morning at the Cascade for Laurent and Pierre, including 41 BARN SWALLOWS, 15 HOUSE MARTINS, 1 SAND MARTIN, 5 TREE PIPITS, 16 YELLOW WAGTAILS and 1 **WHITE WAGTAIL** (bergeronnette grise). Interestingly they also had 5 **CANADA GEESE** (bernache du Canada) flying over, maybe the same birds which had apparently walked around in the neighbouring roads on Monday and brought traffic to a halt !

There are now two **COMMON REDSTARTS** (rougequeue à front-blanc) near the Mare Perchée and 2 **WHINCHATS** (tarier) were seen there this afternoon, perched atop a big acacia. At least 2 **PIED FLYCATCHERS** are still present in the park.

In spite of superb sunny skies again at midday relatively little was seen migrating overhead, perhaps because of the lack of any wind today. However, with an abundance of insects overhead, unusual things seemed to be happening in these still, hot conditions: instead of whirring around in tight flocks the STARLINGS (étourneau sansonnet) on site, around 100 of them, were dispersed high up and fluttering and sallying for insects like Asian woodswallows. KESTRELS (faucon crécerelle), instead of hovering individually, were now gathering in groups (at least 7 together at one point) and dipping and swooping in a similar manner.

4 decent raptors were nevertheless seen today, the best being an **OSPREY** (balbuzard pêcheur) which circled to the north and drifted westwards at 11h50. A juvenile **HOBBY** glided over at 12h10 and 2 **HONEY-BUZZARDS** were seen (13h15, 14h30), the first of which spent many minutes directly overhead in an entertaining aerial battle with a KESTREL, which stooped the larger bird several times, forcing it to twist and tumble in downward spirals, legs dangling...

### September 10<sup>th</sup>

Much quieter day today with fewer birds generally, and far fewer raptors – just 3 **HONEY-BUZZARDS** at widely spaced intervals (13h00, 16h20, 17h00). It was a significant passage day for hirundines with 348 BARN SWALLOWS, at least 44 HOUSE MARTINS and 2 SAND MARTINS, all piling over in dribs and drabs throughout the day.

Excellent close views of 2 **MARSH TITS** (mésange nonette) in the Savanna today, one of which was *another* ringed bird. This one had a single dull brown ring on the left leg and two rings on the right leg (a large orange ring above a smaller and tighter silver one).

The **COMMON REDSTART** is still present by the Cascade and a single **HAWFINCH** (grosbec) flew south late morning. Also of note were at least 2 SPOTTED FLYCATCHERS and 2 PIED

FLYCATCHERS.

### September 9<sup>th</sup>

Another productive day with 51 species seen, including 6 raptors (exactly as yesterday!). Laurent, Pierre and I were again at the Cascade early and the highlight here was undoubtedly more **TAWNY PIPITS** (pipit rousseline), 3 of them at 08h33, calling and bounding in from the north, and going much lower overhead than yesterday's birds.

Plenty of migrants went through today, including 50 **YELLOW WAGTAILS** (bergeronnette printanière), at least 47 **BARN SWALLOWS** (hirondelle de cheminée) and a few (not many) **TREE PIPITS**, one of which spent some time feeding on the ground by the Mare Perchée. Interestingly 2 **SWIFTS** were seen migrating through early - quite a late date, and perhaps the last?

4 **WILLOW WARBLERS** (fitis), 3 **WHINCHAT** (tarier), at least 2 **FIRECRESTS** (roitelet triple-bandeau), 1 **SPOTTED FLYCATCHER** and 1 **PIED FLYCATCHER** were seen on site today, and the long-staying **COMMON REDSTART** is still present.

The hot weather and clear sunny skies were again good for raptors : 2 **MARSH HARRIERS** (busard de roseaux) (12h20, 12h43), 6 **HONEY-BUZZARDS** (bondrée apivore) (12h40, 13h19, 13h55, 14h00), 1 **HOBBY** (13h35) and most interestingly 1 **OSPREY** !! (balbuzard pêcheur) at 14h30 which spent a long time wandering its way southwards, out to the east behind the flats on rue Paul Doumer. An **UNIDENTIFIED HARRIER SP.** which flew southwards at 13h05, gracefully like a giant tern, was most probably a **MONTAGUES HARRIER** (busard cendré).

### September 8<sup>th</sup>

A good day today - plenty of migration action with at least 51 species seen including 6 species of raptor. Two good birds were seen early morning at the Cascade, firstly a **NORTHERN WHEATEAR** (traquet motteux) which perched obligingly for several minutes atop a tree in the middle of the Northern Fields. A little later, at 08h50, Laurent was alerted to the flight calls of 2 **TAWNY PIPITS** (pipit rousseline) which then appeared overhead and flew in a southsouthwesterly direction high over the Savanna with absolutely no intention of landing (*drat*).

Although 7 **TREE PIPITS** (pipit des arbres) and 13 **YELLOW WAGTAILS** were also seen flying over like this during the course of the day, plenty of birds were also found on site including 2 **SPOTTED FLYCATCHERS** (gobemouche gris), 1 **PIED FLYCATCHER** (gobemouche noir), 2 **GARDEN WARBLERS** and a single **TURTLE DOVE** which alighted twice in bare trees in the Savanna, only to be immediately chased off by a pesky **MAGPIE**. The **COMMON REDSTART** (rougequeue à front-blanc) is still present in the red berry bushes on the ridge by the Cascade, although it continues to prove difficult to see.

At midday the skies cleared, the sun shone, and the bigger soaring birds started to appear. At 14h25 a superb **WHITE STORK** (cigogne blanche) appeared high to the north and it spent several minutes drifting south overhead and right over Laurent's house, who was unfortunately out at the time...

As already stated, a good raptor day with most things, strangely, coming in twos : 2 **BUZZARDS** (buse variable) (13h10, 13h45), 2 **HONEY-BUZZARDS** (13h50, 14h55) and 2 **MARSH HARRIERS** (busard des roseaux) which flapped in together and then spent a long time circling around to the southeast. Last but not least, a fine **HOBBY** flew in low from the north at 15h38.

### September 7<sup>th</sup>

More wind...a single **HOBBY** flew high in the sky to the south of the park at midday today and the **COMMON REDSTART** (rougequeue à front-blanc) is still present in the same area near the Cascade. Two REED WARBLER and 2 WHITETHROATS were also noted. Mystery surrounds the strange, sudden disappearance of an exciting storky-shape gliding south at 13h45, this in spite of the presence of five birders skywatching at the Cascade...surely a world record.

Also noted one YELLOW WAGTAIL in flight, 2 TREE PIPITS and a FIRECREST

### September 6<sup>th</sup>

Nice weather today, although a bit too windy for comfort. Pierre and Laurent had a good afternoon with the excellent sighting of an **OSPREY** (balbuzard pêcheur) which flew slowly southwards at 15h15.

Not much else around apart from this though...just a single STOCK DOVE (colombin), 1 HOUSE MARTIN and an unidentified larger raptor in low northward flight at 14h45.

### September 5<sup>th</sup>

Much the same story as yesterday, although there was no sign today of the SPOTTED FLYCATCHERS. Both the male **PIED FLYCATCHER** and the female **COMMON REDSTART** were still present in the same places. 2 REED WARBLERS were seen feeding together early morning in the Savanna, and a single GARDEN WARBLER is still present with the big flock of BLACKCAPS.

2 TREE PIPITS were also noted today, and Laurent had a FIRECREST (roitelet triple bandeau) at midday along the rue des Quatre Ruelles. In the early afternoon Pierre had a BLACK REDSTART, 2 WHITETHROATS and 4 BARN SWALLOWS.

### September 4<sup>th</sup>

The highlight today was a **COMMON REDSTART** (rougequeue à front-blanc) which Laurent found early this morning in bushes near the Cascade. It seems to have spent the whole day in the same small area, having been seen there again at 12h30 and at 17h00.

2 **PIED FLYCATCHERS** (gobemouche noir) and 3 **SPOTTED FLYCATCHERS** are still on site, and other birds today included a single MARSH TIT (mésange nonnette), 8 YELLOW WAGTAILS (Bergeronnette printanière) overhead, a GREY WAGTAIL (Bergeronnette des ruisseaux) and 3 migrating TREE PIPITS (pipit des arbres).

A lone **HOBBY** spent several minutes this afternoon patrolling the skies to the north of the park.

### September 3<sup>rd</sup>

More grim, grey, chilly weather...4 **SPOTTED FLYCATCHERS** were seen and a YELLOW WAGTAIL flew south at 07h40. There are still large numbers of BLACKCAPS on site, and with this weather I can't see them leaving in a hurry...

In the evening Pierre had 16 CORMORANTS flying northeast at 20h00, along with 4 BARN SWALLOWS and a HOUSE MARTIN.

### September 2<sup>nd</sup>

Another damp and cloudy morning - not much migrating overhead although quite a few birds were still around on site, including 3 **SPOTTED FLYCATCHERS** and 1 **PIED FLYCATCHER**. Still lots of BLACKCAPS around - about 25 were seen this morning.

## September 1<sup>st</sup>

A grey, cloudy, drizzly morning. A lot of migrants had fallen overnight in a large, loose flock which roamed around the bushes near the Cascade and as Laurent, Pierre and I desperately tried to keep up with them it felt for a few moments as if we were birding in the tropics...

The majority of the flock was made up of **BLACKCAPS** (fauvette à tête noire) (perhaps as many as 30 birds) but there were also a few **CHIFFCHAFFS**, a **LESSER WHITETHROAT** (babillarde), a **WHITETHROAT** (grisette), at least one **WILLOW WARBLER** (fitis), a **REED WARBLER** (effarvate), and at least one **GARDEN WARBLER** (fauvette des jardins). However the king of this crop was undoubtedly a **WRYNECK** (torcol fourmilier), well spotted by Laurent, which sat obligingly on a small branch before darting off. What was surely the same bird was heard calling several times from the Northern Fields at 13h50, so maybe it will hang around a few days?? Hope so...

At midday, on the edge of the Parc Mabilie, a small tit-flock contained 2 **MARSH TITS** (mésange nonnette), one of which had a large plastic white ring on its left leg and both dark red (upper) and silver (lower) rings on the right leg. We've now seen 3 different ringed individuals in the park recently...we *must* find out where they've come from !!

Other notable birds today were a single male **FIRECREST** (roitelet triple bandeau), at least 3 **SPOTTED FLYCATCHERS** (gobemouche gris), at least 2 **PIED FLYCATCHERS** (gobemouche noir), several **YELLOW WAGTAILS** (bergonerette printanière) overhead and 2 juvenile **HOBBIES**, one of which gave excellent views as it glided low over the Savanna.

Also 2 **HONEY BUZZARDS** today...one high on migration at 13h10 and the other circling low for several minutes over the park at 13h50. The latter bird was a very dark-looking juvenile and might possibly be the same bird that Pierre saw yesterday evening.

There was a much calmer scenario at the park this evening...no doubt most of the migrants took their chance to move off with the improved weather this afternoon. However Pierre still managed to see another **LESSER WHITETHROAT**, a newly arrived **BLACK REDSTART** (rougequeue noir) and a single **HAWFINCH** (grosbec) which perched in a tree not far from the Dinosaur.

## August 31<sup>st</sup>

Laurent was up early again (08h15-10h15) and counted no less than 27 **YELLOW WAGTAILS** (bergonerette printanière), 3 **TREE PIPITS** (pipit des arbres), 7 **CORMORANTS**, a **SAND MARTIN** and 67 **BARN SWALLOWS** moving through. Also of note were 2 **HOBBIES**, 3 **REED WARBLERS**, a **PIED FLYCATCHER** (gobemouche noir) and a **MARSH TIT**. The highlight, however, was an **unidentified HARRIER SP.**, most probably a **MONTAGUE'S HARRIER** (busard cendré) which has yet to be recorded at Beaumonts.

It's been a good day for **CROSSBILLS** (beccroisés des sapins), Laurent seeing 21 birds just outside the park over the rue des Quatre Ruelles at 12h45, and just a few minutes later a single bird bounded south over the Cascade.

In the afternoon (15h30-16h30) Laurent reported 2 **HONEY BUZZARDS** (bondrée apivore), 3 more **YELLOW WAGTAILS**, 2 more **SAND MARTINS** and a **TREE PIPIT**.

In the early evening Pierre counted 19 **HOUSE MARTINS** and, at 19.20, had excellent views of a low-flying **HONEY BUZZARD** which roamed around over the Parc Mabilie, no doubt looking for somewhere to get its head down for the night...

## August 30<sup>th</sup>

An interesting day for observing migration – hot with clear blue skies, completely different from yesterday.

Laurent was up heroically early and had 5 **YELLOW WAGTAILS** (bergonerette printanière), a **TURTLE DOVE** (tourterelle des bois), 9 GREY HERONS (heron cendré), 2 **SAND MARTINS** (hirondelle de rivage) and 3 **ROSE RINGED PARAKEETS** (perruches à collier) all flying over towards the westsouthwest. He also had 2 juvenile **HOBBIES** (faucon hobereau) and 2 REED WARBLERS (effarvatte).

A skywatch from 11h00-14h50 (accompanied for the most part by Pierre) produced 10 CORMORANTS wheeling around northwards, and a **WHINCHAT** (tarier des prés) was watched bobbing its way in from the south and then perching atop the small trees around the Cascade. 3 **TREE PIPITS** (pipit des arbres) were also present in the area.

A good raptor day with 5 **HONEY BUZZARDS** (bondrée apivore) moving southwest at well spaced intervals, one of which was harried by a **BUZZARD** (buse variable) which made for a nice comparison. A **HOBBY** was seen on two occasions, no doubt hawking dragonflies which were particularly numerous in the midday heat.

There was a notable passage of BARN SWALLOWS between 11h00-13h40, with 103 birds counted, all heading directly south. Also of note were a further 2 **SAND MARTINS**, 6 HOUSE MARTINS (in local flight) and 5 SWIFTS.

## August 29<sup>th</sup>

Dull, grey, still day...nothing much moving in the sky apart from 5 SWIFTS, 4 BARN SWALLOWS and at least 3 HOUSE MARTINS. Another (or the same?) GREY WAGTAIL bounded over the park at 11h00.

2 **MARSH TITS** (mésange nonnette) were seen in separate areas of the park around midday, although unfortunately neither bird was seen well enough to verify whether they were the same colour-ringed birds noted earlier in the month. On leaving the park a **SPOTTED FLYCATCHER** (gobemouche gris) was found perched high in a tree close to the Dinosaur.

## August 28<sup>th</sup>

A GREY WAGTAIL (bergonerette des ruisseaux) was seen twice this morning, bounding high over the park and around the blocks of flats....long time no see. What was presumably a **ROSE RINGED PARAKEET** (perruche à collier) was seen high up and flying northwards at 11h40 and a little later 2 **HONEY BUZZARDS** (bondrée apivore) circled for several minutes over the Cascade, gradually gaining height before drifting off to the southwest. A small flock of 6 SERINS flew around the site today, and in the afternoon Pierre had a single SWIFT.

## August 21<sup>st</sup>

Quite a good day today. At 10h40 a super cream-coloured **HONEY BUZZARD** (bondrée apivore) flew westwards, low over the southern end of the park, just above the rue de Quatre Ruelles and it was probably this bird which was seen again in the same area a little later at 12h50. From the Cascade a further 2 HONEY BUZZARDS were seen on migration, one at 11h50 and another at 12h20.

The bushes surrounding the Coffee Dome were leaping with birds this morning – 2 BLACKCAPS, 2

CHIFFCHAFFS, 2 ROBINS, a GARDEN WARBLER, a WHITETHROAT and a REED WARBLER (rousserolle effarvatte) were all flitting around in the same spot. The best of the bunch, however, was a single **PIED FLYCATCHER** (gobemouch noir), rather low and snapping insects.

### August 20<sup>th</sup>

Good report of a **SPOTTED FLYCATCHER** (gobemouche gris) which was found by Pierre at the Mare de Brie this afternoon. Warblers have been very discreet and difficult these last few weeks but the windless conditions made it a bit easier today, and Pierre got quite a few of them including 2 WHITETHROATS (grisette), 7 BLACKCAPS (fauvette à tete noir) and a single GARDEN WARBLER (fauvette des jardins). Also of interest were 5 SERINS and a small group of 7 LONG-TAILED TITS which included juveniles.

### August 19<sup>th</sup>

Another windy day. This morning a **LESSER WHITETHROAT** (babillarde) was found, tacking away in a bush near the Mare de Brie. Later from the Cascade a brief but good close view of a **HOBBY** flying in, low down and carrying a dead SWIFT - the bird looked as if it might possibly have landed somewhere in the park...

Also from the Cascade at midday another **HONEY BUZZARD**, a **SAND MARTIN**, 3 HOUSE MARTINS and 4 BARN SWALLOWS. There were increased numbers of SWIFTS today and interestingly the birds now all appear to be migrants flying more or less directly south - the local birds seem to have deserted the area.

Incidentally the family of MOORHENS (poule d'eau) is still in good shape at the Mare Parchée - still 2 adults and 5 juveniles, present and correct...

### August 18<sup>th</sup>

Dull and windy day with few birds...rather a shock to find empty skies, almost completely devoid of SWIFTS (only 6 today), although another **SAND MARTIN** was seen, migrating south. In the evening Pierre had a WILLOW WARBLER (fitis) and a couple of juvenile BLACK REDSTARTS (rougequeue noir) just outside the park on rue Francisco Ferrer.

The highlight today was the bizarre sight of a single **COCKATIEL** !! (calopsitte élégante) which flew briefly over and around the park at midday, calling persistently.

### August 17<sup>th</sup>

At 13h30 a superb observation of a **HOBBY** (faucon hobereau) which raced in from the north to hunt down one of the few remaining SWIFTS, winging its way underneath it and swooping upwards for the kill.

Another **HONEY BUZZARD** (bondrée apivore) was seen migrating at 14h20, in view for a long time as it circled around to the north of the park before eventually gliding away towards Paris, like most of the recent birds.

Also of note was a **SAND MARTIN** (hirondelle de rivage) zipping its way low and south, just like yesterdays birds. About 17 SWIFTS, 2 HOUSE MARTINS and a single BARN SWALLOW (hirondelle de cheminée) were also seen today.

### August 16<sup>th</sup>

Another productive skywatch from the Cascade at midday (12h-15h). 4 more **HONEY BUZZARDS** went through in similar fashion to yesterdays birds...nice view of one dark adult which drifted in low and directly overhead, turning its head left and right as if inspecting the area. 3 **HOBBIES** (falcon hobereau) were also seen, two of which were flying high together towards the southwest.

2 **SAND MARTINS** (hirondelle de rivage) flew quickly southwards and there are still a few SWIFTS around (about 20), along with a couple of HOUSE MARTINS.

### August 15<sup>th</sup>

A skywatch at midday with Pierre produced at least 10 (possibly 12) **HONEY BUZZARDS** (bondrée apivore) migrating overhead, most high and heading either south or southwestwards. 2 birds dropped quite low and offered some nice views.

Slightly more SWIFTS today (about 30), along with 3 HOUSE MARTINS and 2 BARN SWALLOWS.

### August 14<sup>th</sup>

The highlight today was a single **PIED FLYCATCHER** (gobemouche noir), hawking insects in the crowns of the large trees at the top of the entrance steps - always a good sign that autumn migration is underway....

A skywatch from the Cascade produced one (maybe 2) **BUZZARDS** heading southwest, and observations of a **SAND MARTIN** (hirondelle de rivage) and a **TURTLE DOVE** (tourterelle des bois) (which flew quickly northwards in local flight) were both interesting. Fewer SWIFTS (martinet noir) are around at the moment, with only about 15 seen daily.

### August 11<sup>th</sup>

Another **MARSH TIT** was found today along the entrance steps. Interestingly it was another ringed bird, with a large dark pink ring on the left leg and a smaller, tighter, silver ring on the right leg - clearly a different individual from that seen on August 5<sup>th</sup>.

Two **HOBBIES** were seen during a midday skywatch and a little later 3 SPARROWHAWKS were seen circling around together. At 14h15 a **BUZZARD** (buse variable) was found circling out to the east - the first ever sighting in August !

### August 10<sup>th</sup>

A good evening session for Pierre: at 19h55, after a skywatch from the Cascade, he began to walk back home when a **CUCKOO** (coucou) suddenly flew in low from the north and gave the impression of landing somewhere in the woodland behind the Mare Perchée. This is a bird rarely encountered at Beaumonts and a very good year-tick, (and incidentally the list now stands at 105). Pierre also saw a **HOBBY** again this evening, along with 2 HOUSE MARTINS and about 14 SWIFTS.

### August 9<sup>th</sup>

Lovely warm sunny day, completely birdless apart from a few SWIFTS. However a fruitless skywatch was made briefly exciting by the calls of a parakeet species emanating from the Savanna. Two very brief views were eventually had of the bird, certainly a first for the park, but we don't have a clue what it was. If there are any cagebird enthusiasts reading this that have lost a loved one then please get in touch...it was starling-sized, green (obviously), although with slightly browner-looking wings in flight, a short tail and a single disyllabic 'trillii' call.

## August 8<sup>th</sup>

A WILLOW WARBLER (fitis) and 3 STOCK DOVES today, along with yet *another* sighting of a **HOBBY**...no doubt these are local breeding birds, probably from the Bois de Vincennes.

## August 7<sup>th</sup>

More entertainment from another (or the same?) **HOBBY** which was drawn in again from the northwest on a thread of hunger looking for SWIFTS. However this afternoon's kill was rather more difficult than yesterday's, with the bird making several unsuccessful attempts before eventually striking...and it then drifted in a slow and straight line southeastwards over the Bois de Vincennes.

## August 6<sup>th</sup>

From the Cascade this evening, an excellent observation of a **HOBBY** (faucon hobereau) which drifted in idly from the west into a small cloud of SWIFTS and, seemingly just for something to do, suddenly dipped down behind one, chased it around in its slipstream and attacked upwards like a shark, plucking it from the air – a very nice manoeuvre...

Otherwise not much of note, the first WHITETHROAT (grisette) for ages being a highlight...like most things right now they're keeping very quiet, and the place seems pretty devoid of birds a lot of the time.

## August 5<sup>th</sup>

A **MARSH TIT** (mésange nonnette) was found early morning in the Savanna – interestingly the bird had a silver ring on its left leg (and possibly a reddish coloured ring on its right one, but difficult to be certain). At least 10 CHIFFCHAFFS were about this morning along with at least 1 WILLOW WARBLER (fitis), and a single warm and smart-looking REED WARBLER (effarvatte) skulking around in Middlemarsh was quite possibly a migrant. This is presumably the same bird that Laurent saw on July 30<sup>th</sup> and it looks quite different from the scruffy crowd up at the Mare Perchée (which was still active there again this morning, the juveniles getting more adventurous as they roam around the reedbed unaccompanied).

At around 09h00 a single **TURTLE DOVE** (tourterelle des bois) flew in from the west, turned and headed away northwards.

## August 3<sup>rd</sup>

A LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER (pic épeichette) was heard calling this morning near the Dinosaur – first one in a while...

Also of note today were at least 8 HOUSE MARTINS and a single **HOBBY**, high up and way out to the east.

## August 2<sup>nd</sup>

Pierre had 5 ROOK (corbeau freux) and another **SAND MARTIN** flying south this evening.

## August 1<sup>st</sup>

Pierre had another 3 **CROSSBILLS** (beccroisés des sapins) at midday - like the others seen over recent days, they flew low and south-eastwards towards the Parc Mabille.

A fine **HOBBY** (faucon hobbereau) flew around the Cascade at 14h05, and a little later 2 ROOK

(corbeau freux) flew across the park to the north-west.

Only about 20 SWIFTS were around today - a notable drop in numbers...

### July 31<sup>st</sup>

A single **HAWFINCH** (grosbec) flew south-west early this morning - the first July record for this species. Also of note were 4 REED WARBLERS (effarvatte) at the Mare Perchée and 2 juvenile WILLOW WARBLERS (pouillot fitis) flitting around the same area.

### July 30<sup>th</sup>

Quite a few hirundines about again...Pierre had 4 BARN SWALLOWS, 3 HOUSE MARTINS, and a single **SAND MARTIN** (hirondelle de rivage) in local flight.

In the evening Laurent saw at least 3 juvenile REED WARBLERS at the Mare Perchée, along with the 2 adults. He also had another individual nearby at Middlemarsh which he thinks is probably a migrant, given its much fresher plumage compared to the breeding birds.

### July 29<sup>th</sup>

Excitement at 14h10 as 2 unidentified larger raptors came into view, high to the north-east and gliding steadily southwards over and on towards the Bois de Vincennes. Looking suspiciously like BLACK KITES, they were just that bit too high up to be 100% sure, (drat!).

**SPARROWHAWKS** appear to have bred successfully in the park for the second year running. Just as last year, the begging calls of juveniles may be heard intermittently throughout the day, emanating from the woodland on the south-west rim, quite close to the Parc Mabille.

Not much else today apart from a single **HOBBY** (faucon hobbereau).

### July 28<sup>th</sup>

Another hot day...3 more **CROSSBILLS** (beccroisés des sapins) were seen at 13h43, flying low, southbound over the Savanna towards the Parc Mabille, in identical fashion to yesterday's birds. 2 HOUSE MARTINS and 2 BARN SWALLOWS were also around today, and REED WARBLERS are still managing to feed at least one juvenile at the Mare Perchée, in spite of all the unleashed dogs charging around in the water.

### July 27<sup>th</sup>

A **MARSH TIT** (mésange nonette) was a good find early this morning along the entrance steps - the first record for the year. Later on, 6 BARN SWALLOWS and 3 more **SAND MARTINS** (hirondelle de rivage) were observed in active southward migration. Also of note were 3 STOCK DOVES, 2 REED WARBLERS, a WHITE WAGTAIL and a single HOUSE MARTIN.

In the afternoon Pierre and Laurent observed a BUZZARD (buse variable) flying low around the site at 13h45 and a little later had 2 **HOBBIES** (faucon hobbereau) together in the sky which made several nice aerial manoeuvres overhead before eventually drifting away southwards at 15h00.

At around 15h30, an excellent observation of a small party of 4 **CROSSBILLS** (beccroisés des sapins), containing at least one male, seen flying low across the park - another 'first' for the year !

Also of note this afternoon were 2 juvenile BULLFINCHES (bouvreuil), in the company of a male, near the Mare de Brie - this confirms breeding success for this species which has been seen

regularly throughout the summer in this area.

Pierre and Laurent also observed 3 more HOUSE MARTINS, 4 more BARN SWALLOWS, and about 100 SWIFTS (fewer than had been present early morning).

### **July 24<sup>th</sup>**

The presence of at least 4 **SAND MARTINS** (hirondelle de rivage) flying high around the park with reduced numbers of SWIFTS was particularly interesting – this is the first July record for this species, although this could be down to a lack of coverage at this time of year. Nevertheless it's an uncommon bird at Beaumonts, with only one or two reports annually.

Also of note was a single WILLOW WARBLER (pouillot fitis).

### **July 23<sup>rd</sup>**

At 12h30, 4 unidentified larger raptors (almost certainly HONEY BUZZARDS) drifted northwards, very high overhead. Also of note were 2 HOUSE MARTINS, 2 BARN SWALLOWS and larger numbers of SWIFTS (at least 400).

### **July 19<sup>th</sup>**

Pierre had 7 HOUSE MARTINS today.

### **July 14<sup>th</sup>**

Laurent observed a REED WARBLER (rouserolle effarvatte) feeding 2 juveniles at the Mare Perchée today which confirms successful breeding this year. One of the adults continues to sing intermittently.

### **July 13<sup>th</sup>**

Pierre reported a LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL (Goéland brun) going north today. Also a STOCK DOVE and a BARN SWALLOW.

### **July 12<sup>th</sup>**

Pierre saw a **BUZZARD** (buse variable) circling over the park this afternoon at 16h30, before it drifted away eastwards – this is the first July record for this species at the park. Also of note were 2 adult YELLOW-LEGGED GULLS (Leucophées) and 9 MOORHENS (poule d'eau) – 2 adults and 7 juveniles.

Not many SWIFTS about at the moment, although Laurent had very large numbers (up to 1000) of them on several dates last month...were these birds already migrating away from their summer quarters?

### **July 11<sup>th</sup>**

Pierre reported a low-flying YELLOW-LEGGED GULL, 2 BULLFINCHES, a BARN SWALLOW and a SPARROWHAWK carrying prey.

### **July 6<sup>th</sup>**

Pierre had another NUTHATCH and a single WILLOW WARBLER today.

### **July 1<sup>st</sup>**

Pierre reported a **NUTHATCH** near the Dinosaur and 2 **BARN SWALLOWS** today. The family of **MOORHENS** (poule d'eau), an adult and 4 juveniles, were seen gathering at the edge of the Mare Perchée to vigorously dispute over the remains of a dead fish.

### June 28<sup>th</sup>

Good report from Laurent of 108 **YELLOW-LEGGED GULLS** (Leucophées) going over this evening, in 4 groups, between 20h00-21h30.

### June 25<sup>th</sup>

Not much to report of late...birds are just busy getting on with things. The pair of **MELODIOUS WARBLERS** (hippolaïs polyglotte) nesting near the Compost are busily feeding young in the nest, whereas the pair in the Savanna have already produced at least one tail-less, scruffy juvenile which can be seen perching unsteadily amongst the low weeds.

Excitement on the plant front with the discovery of a super **LIZARD ORCHID** (*orchis bourc*) near the Mare Perchée, and there are quite a few butterflies fluttering around these days, such as **LARGE WHITE** (Piéride du chou), **COMMA** (Robert le diable) and **MARbled WHITE** (Demi-deuil).

### June 22<sup>nd</sup>

Pierre had 4 **HOUSE MARTINS** (hirondelle de fenêtre) this evening.

### JUNE 20<sup>th</sup>

Another **NUTHATCH** today, this time in the trees by the Dinosaur, and a few minutes later a male **FIRECREST** was found singing in the same area - the third time this spring that it's been found singing in the park, although unfortunately on no occasion has it displayed behaviour indicative of breeding,.

### JUNE 17<sup>th</sup>

A small personal triumph today, finally finding a female **NUTHATCH** (sitelle torchepot) feeding discreetly on the edge of the Parc Mabille. This bird is inexplicably rare at Beaumonts, although Pierre says they were reasonably common here about 15 years ago.

Although no **MARSH WARBLERS** were seen today, there would appear to be a pair currently present in the Savanna and probably nesting there.

### JUNE 15<sup>th</sup>

Laurent heard the **LESSER WHITETHROAT** today and also had a single **TREE SPARROW**. He was also able to confirm the successful breeding of **GOLDCRESTS** (roitlet huppé) in the park this year with the sighting of an adult (probably female) with 4 juveniles.

### JUNE 14<sup>th</sup>

A (the?) **MARSH WARBLER** (rousserolle verderolle) was still present this morning, easy to see as it sang regularly atop a bush in the middle of the Savanna. Other good news is the presence of 3 **REED WARBLERS** (rousserolle effarvate) (probably 2 males and a female) in the reedbed at the Mare Perchée.

Another piece of news is that the resident pair of **MOORHENS** (poule d'eau) are now rearing 5 chicks - our congratulations go to them....

## **JUNE 11<sup>th</sup>**

Laurent had more YELLOW-LEGGED GULLS today - 7 immatures going east at 21h00 this evening.

## **June 8<sup>th</sup>**

Laurent witnessed the pair of **LESSER WHITETHROATS** (babillarde) feeding a juvenile this morning near the Mare Perchée - so this confirms successful breeding again this year. He also found at least 2 **REED WARBLERS** (effarvatte) there this morning, one of which was singing from the reedbed, and during a skywatch from the same area he had a single TREE SPARROW (moineau friquet) going over, 1 imm YELLOW-LEGGED GULL (Goéland leucophée) and 3 unidentified large gulls. The **MARSH WARBLER** (verderolle) was still present today.

## **May 31<sup>st</sup>**

In the evening Pierre had 2 singing **MARSH WARBLERS** (verderolle) and a singing REED WARBLER (effarvatte).

## **May 30<sup>th</sup>**

An interesting (but rather frustrating) afternoon for Pierre and Laurent who had a probable RED-FOOTED FALCON (faucon kobez) flying slowly northwards at 14h10 and another unidentified (larger) raptor at 15h05. Pierre also reported a single REED WARBLER (effarvatte).

## **MAY 25<sup>th</sup>**

More HONEY BUZZARDS again today...Laurent saw 3 of them migrating north around 11am along with a TURTLE DOVE (tourterelle des bois) in local flight. Between 12h00 - 14h30 he and Pierre had 5 more HONEY BUZZARDS, making it 8 for the day.

In the evening, the **MARSH WARBLER** was still present singing in the Savanna.

## **MAY 23<sup>rd</sup>**

At 13h05 today Pierre was alerted to the jizz of a falcon flying high amongst a flock of swifts. As it approached more closely it revealed itself as a **RED-FOOTED FALCON** (faucon kobez) - only the third record for Beaumonts, although given the exceptionally large numbers of them knocking around France this spring it's a little surprising that we haven't had more. The bird, a male in probably second year plumage, flew around the park for around 25 minutes before disappearing to the west at 13h30. The bird spent most of the time flying high up with the swifts, hovering and stooping on several occasions. At 13h15 a HOBBY appeared and flew close to the red-foot and this, along with two kestrels also present today, made for some nice comparisons.

At 20h30 this evening Laurent had a fly-over **YELLOW WAGTAIL** (bergonerette printainière) going north-east.

## **May 22<sup>nd</sup>**

2 **HONEY BUZZARDS** (bondrée apivore) were seen from the Cascade at around 12h50 today.

## **May 20<sup>th</sup>**

Great report from Pierre of a **MARSH WARBLER** (rousserolle verderolle) near the football pitch, singing in the late afternoon sun. A little later he found the first **REDSTART** (rougequeue à front blanc) for the year - the bird, a female, was seen moving through the Savanna near the Mare Perchée.

## May 19<sup>th</sup>

Cold and windy weather again early morning. At 06h55 a **HOBBY** (faucon hobereau) rose up over the wooded western slope and winnowed south-eastwards over the pond. Almost immediately afterwards 2 **TURTLE DOVES** (tourterelle des bois) dashed south and a little later a **SPOTTED FLYCATCHER** (gobemouche gris) was found in the Savanna. At 08h20, excellent views of a female **MARSH HARRIER** (busard des roseaux) which flapped in low from the southwest and continued over the Cascade and the Northern Fields before turning and flying away to the southeast - hassled all the way by a pesky crow.

## May 18<sup>th</sup>

Pierre went bravely birding into the wind and rain this afternoon and was rewarded at 16h20 with 2 more **HONEY BUZZARDS** (bondrée apivore) which appeared east of the park and circled low and lazily overhead before eventually drifting away westwards. Interesting that these birds, unlike Laurent's yesterday, did not seem to be in active migration.

## May 17<sup>th</sup>

Good report from Laurent of a male **HONEY BUZZARD** flying north, low over the park, at 17h00.

There are now 3 singing **MELODIOUS WARBLERS** (hippolaïs polyglotte) in the park. A pair of them are now busy nesting in the Savanna.

## May 15<sup>th</sup>

Cooler weather...grey skies and drizzle. 2 **TREE SPARROWS** (moineau friquet) (presumably the same pair as seen on Tuesday) were found again along the north-western boundary of the park, in the trees close to the cemetery. The first **REED WARBLER** (rouserolle effarvate) of the year was heard singing very discreetly in bushes by the path up to the Coffee Dome.

Of particular interest today was the sighting of a **WILLOW WARBLER** (pouillot fitis), moving quickly and silently around the Parc Mabille. This species has been worryingly absent from Beaumonts this year - no sign of them apart from just the odd snatch of song on a couple of dates early in the month. This Willow Warbler crash remains a mystery....could it be perhaps that Garden Warblers (which are much commoner this year, with possibly 4 breeding pairs) have displaced the late-arriving Willow Warblers from their traditional breeding sites??? Comments welcome...

## May 13<sup>th</sup>

2 **TREE SPARROWS** (moineau friquet) and a single **TREE PIPIT** (pipit des arbres) were seen in the Northern Fields this morning.

## May 12<sup>th</sup>

Laurent reported a **WHITE WAGTAIL** (bergonerette grise) today at the pond - a species we haven't seen much of lately.

## May 11<sup>th</sup>

Pierre found a **WOOD WARBLER** (pouillot siffleur) at 11h00 this morning singing from woodland near the Dinosaur at the top of the entrance steps. This is an excellent record for the park of a species rarely seen on migration. Today's bird even looked as if it might hang around a while - it appeared quite settled in this area and was still singing there at 13h45.

## May 10<sup>th</sup>

Not much today apart from 2 ROOKS (corbeau freux) flying east at midday.

## May 9<sup>th</sup>

The highlight today was a male **WHINCHAT** (tarier des près), found at 10h30 between the Ditch and the Mare Perchée. It was still present at 14h00. Also of note today was another BUZZARD, gliding over eastwards at 12h10.

## May 8<sup>th</sup>

A skywatch at lunchtime produced two BUZZARDS (buse variable), one going north at 13h05, and another a little later going north-east. Three very high and distant raptors circling around together and moving northwards were probably HONEY BUZZARDS (bondrée apivore).

There are currently two singing MELODIOUS WARBLERS (hippolais polyglotte) in the park – one in the Savanna and another by the Compost.

A pair of TREE SPARROWS (moineau friquet) have been seen just outside the park on a couple of occasions recently, and would appear to be nesting near the entrance to the cemetery on rue Galilée

## May 7<sup>th</sup>

Another **BLACK KITE** (milan noir) today, circling relatively low over the Mare perchée at 11h15 and then moving higher and drifting off eastwards. Not much else apart from that...it's been pretty quiet these last few days.

## May 3<sup>rd</sup>

Nice and hot sunny day with plenty of good birds about. A male FIRECREST (roïtlet triple bandeau), was singing at 08h30 from bushes bordering the Chemin des Jardins (presumably the same bird that was seen on April 28<sup>th</sup>) and a little later a female **PIED FLYCATCHER** (gobemouche noir) was found near the small pond in the south-eastern corner of the park. Very much an autumn bird at Beaumonts, this is a very good record– the last spring sighting was way back in 2000!

At about 10h35, brilliant views of a **HOBBOY** (faucon hobereau) which flew low around the Coffee Dome, and a single **SAND MARTIN** (hirondelle de rivage), a vital year-tick, flew quickly over there southwards at 11h34, as if heading for the Bois de Vincennes. Other hirundines were gracing the skies with large numbers of SWIFTS continually present, whereas a single HOUSE MARTIN and at least 20 BARN SWALLOWS were clearly migrating northwards.

At about 12h00 I was joined at the Coffee Dome by Philip Redman who had just arrived at the park on the off chance of some raptor passage. Almost immediately, at 12h05, he spotted a superb **BLACK KITE** (milan noir) coming towards us from the north and we proceeded to watch it drift overhead and away south-westwards. This is only the second record of this species at Beaumonts and Philip has had incredible luck with this species here – it was he who found the first one on August 28<sup>th</sup> last year!

## May 1<sup>st</sup>

Pierre found the first **MELODIOUS WARBLER** (hypolais polyglotte) of the year early this morning, singing rather discreetly in bushes near the Compost. Little else of note today apart from a perched TREE PIPIT (pipit des arbres) in the Savanna.

## April 30<sup>th</sup>

More bad weather, and not much about this morning. The best bird by far was a **SPOTTED FLYCATCHER** (gobemouche gris) which was found at 07h50 hawking for insects in the trees just above the Dinosaur and was still present there two hours later.

## April 29<sup>th</sup>

Another cold and rainy morning, although the steely grey skies were brightened considerably at 08h35 by a superb male **GOLDEN ORIOLE** (loriot d'Europe) flying along above the treetops bordering the Chemin de la Lisère. The bird lapped its way further and further away northwards (damm), gaining height before turning around and flying back towards the park (great!!), only to shortly turn back again, as if thinking that, no, it was better to head north after all...and it was probably high over Romainville when it eventually disappeared from view as a butterfly-like speck in the distance.

There was less birdsong this morning, what with the cold and the wind and the rain, although all the usual warblers sung a little bit at some point including 2 **WILLOW WARBLERS** (fitis) – the first real sign of our breeding birds this year – a much later date than last year.

The only other thing of note was a pair of **HAWFINCHES** (surely not the same 2 as yesterday ?) flying southwards – no doubt on their way to the Bois de Vincennes.

## April 28<sup>th</sup>

Grim, grey, cold and miserable morning...single **MEADOW** and **TREE PIPITS** were seen very early near the pond and, a little later at 07h20, a **TURTLE DOVE** (tourterelle des bois) was inadvertently flushed from a small tree on the slope near the rubbish dump – nice views of it flying round eastwards and then up and over the blocks of flats nearby.

Later in the morning a flock of about 10 migrating **BARN SWALLOWS** angled their way north-east and 2 **HAWFINCHES** (grosbec) bounded off northwards away from the Parc Mabille. The highlight of the morning, however, was undoubtedly a singing male **FIRECREST** (roitlet triple bandeau) in the woodland near the Avenue des Maroniers. This species, although easily and frequently seen during winter, is seldom reported in the spring and summer, and whilst breeding has been suspected in past years it has never been confirmed for the park. Affaire à suivre....

## April 26<sup>th</sup>

A rather quiet morning after all the cuffuffle of yesterday...**SERINS** were songflighting and 2 **ROOKS** (corbeau freux) flew over at 10h25. Although a pair of **BULLFINCHES** (bouvreuil) seem to be quite settled in the park, a lone male continues to roam around the place calling mournfully from the treetops – good luck to him I say.

**SWIFTS** are now soaring silently over the park in much larger numbers. However, although the sky looked just perfect for a raptor today, absolutely nothing was seen during a skywatch between 10h30 and 12h45 (much like yesterday).

It is worth mentioning that Pierre saw a female **REED BUNTING** early yesterday morning :- although the male has stopped singing from the reedbed (and hasn't been seen for a while), perhaps he hasn't left the park after all, and maybe this explains it ??

## April 25<sup>th</sup>

Incredible day today with the amazing discovery at 09h44 of a **RED-RUMPED SWALLOW** !!! (hirondelle rousselline) flying low over bushes in the south-eastern corner of the Savanna. The day had started well with what was fortuitously a late start -09h00. It was obvious that I had arrived during one of those magic 'windows' of active migration that happen from time to time at Beaumonts, when the park seems to be teeming with birds. Several SWIFTS and BARN SWALLOWS were flying overhead and three **HOUSE MARTINS** (hirondelle de fenêtre) (the first this year) raced northwards. A female **RING OUZEL** (merle à plastron) perched high in a bare tree near the pond, as if surveying the surroundings. She flew to 3 or 4 other trees before flying off strongly northwards.

A little later, having checked the small pond which lies low in the south east corner of the park, I was walking back towards the main trail when I reached the top of the little rise which offers an elevated view over the bushes in the Savanna. I could see a swallow low down over this area, meandering along steadily northwards and I put my binoculars on it, expecting to see another BARN SWALLOW. However, my heart suddenly started racing with the shock : the bird had a large cream-coloured rump - it was obviously a **RED-RUMPED SWALLOW** but, damm, it had disappeared, and I had only seen its upperparts! I frantically ran on a couple more metres and, yes, thank God, there it was again, twisting back the other way towards me. I could now easily check all the other bits I needed to see - black undertail coverts, uniform pale orange-rufous underparts and a dark cap - there was no doubt. But it had gone again, where? I frantically scrambled for my telephone and fumbled a call to Pierre who had left the park at 08h50 and now risked missing a real rarity, and a first for Ile-de-France. Having exploded a word which cannot possibly be repeated on a webpage which might be read by children he said he was coming, although after a few minutes I called him back and told him not to bother- the bird hadn't reappeared and, much as I hated to say it, looked to have disappeared for good.

So, quite an eventful morning...not much else of note today, in spite of 2 hours skywatching at lunchtime from the Coffee Dome.

### April 24<sup>th</sup>

A nice warm and sunny day for skywatching from the Coffee Dome. At 12h48 a superb observation of a **BLACK STORK** (cigogne noir) which suddenly appeared high up to the south, drifting steadily towards the park on rigid wings. The bird was in view for at least 3 minutes as it clung to a current of warm air and sailed slowly and surely north north-eastwards, without a single flap, before disappearing behind distant trees.

During the hour that followed 2 BUZZARDS also drifted high over the park, along with a few BARN SWALLOWS and 2 SWIFTS.

### April 22<sup>nd</sup>

A few bits and bobs this morning - the first **GARDEN WARBLER** (fauvette des jardins) for the year was found singing near the Coffee Dome and 2 **COMMON REDPOLL** (sizerin flammé) flew over simultaneously (although heading in different directions) at 07h20. Just one TREE PIPIT today, perched in the Savanna, and a male BULLFINCH (bouvreuil) called throughout the morning. 3 BARN SWALLOWS meandered their way northwards and at about 09h30 a small cloud of SWIFTS (martinet noir), the first for Beaumonts this year, suddenly appeared out of nowhere and drifted around over the park for several minutes. No sign of the singing male REED BUNTING this morning - maybe he's given up and is trying his luck elsewhere?

### April 21<sup>st</sup>

A dull, grey and drizzly morning - the first **LESSER WHITETHROAT** (babillarde) of the year was

found skulking in the Ditch at 09h30 and it was perhaps this same bird which began singing from various points around the park later in the morning when the sun came out. Otherwise not much else to report today apart from 3 TREE PIPITS and a BARN SWALLOW.

### **April 20<sup>th</sup>**

No sign of the owl today. The REED BUNTING (bruant des roseaux) continues to sing around the pond and the scratchy song of WHITETHROAT (grisette) could be heard from the Savanna throughout the morning. A single MEADOW PIPIT flew north at around 09h30.

### **April 19<sup>th</sup>**

A good day today, in spite of the dull, grey and listless conditions. At around 11h30 nice long views of a single **WOODCOCK** (bécasse des bois) roaming over the site, seemingly looking for somewhere safe and quiet to land. A little later, around 12h10, a spectacular observation of a **SHORT-EARED OWL** (hibou des marais) flying over the Savanna before dropping and perching low in trees near the Coffee Dome. The bird was seen in flight on two further occasions and at no time showed any sign of leaving the site. In spite of being mobbed and forced high by magpies and carrion crows, the bird kept its flight confined to the Savanna area and eventually landed back in the same place as had been visited previously.

Other good news today was a singing **NIGHTINGALE** (rossignol), the continued presence of the male REED BUNTING singing from the reedbed, a singing WHITETHROAT (grisette) in the Savanna and 3 TREE PIPITS (pipits des arbres) perched in trees near the Coffee Dome.

### **April 18<sup>th</sup>**

Very quiet this afternoon - a single **TREE PIPIT**, perched in trees by the Coffee Dome, was the highlight.

### **April 13<sup>th</sup>**

Laurent found the first **WHITETHROAT** (grisette) of the year today along with another TREE PIPIT, 3 MEADOW PIPITS (farlouse) and single LESSER BLACK-BACKED and HERRING GULLS. He also saw a **NUTHATCH**, a very good bird these days, flying over the Savanna on 2 occasions.

### **April 12<sup>th</sup>**

A good day for Pierre who saw the the first **TREE PIPIT** (pipit des arbres) of the year, along with 3 perched **HAWFINCHES** (grosbec) and a nice **MARSH HARRIER** (busard des roseau) going through at 12h20. Also of note in the afternoon were the rather late reports of a perched SISKIN and a REDWING (mauvis).

### **April 11<sup>th</sup>**

Pierre reported the first **WILLOW WARBLER** (pouillot fitis) this morning, flitting around the pond. Also noted were 2 **HAWFINCHES** and 5 SISKINS flying north

### **April 10<sup>th</sup>**

One BARN SWALLOW and one LINNET (linotte mélodieuse) seen flying north today.

## **9 APRIL**

Laurent saw the REED BUNTING (bruant des roseaux) singing again this morning - not much else

apart from a SERIN and 3 KESTRELS.

## 6 APRIL

In the morning Pierre and Laurent saw 2 **HAWFINCHES** (grosbecs), 1 YELLOW WAGTAIL (bergeronnette printanière), 11 LINNETS (linottes), 5 SISKINS (tarins) and 22 MEADOW PIPITS (farlouses).

At midday Laurent scored a **COAL TIT** (mésange noire) on the rue des 4 Ruelles - a fairly rare, but annual, visitor to Beaumonts.

The REED BUNTING was singing again today from the reedbed (where else?).

## 5 APRIL

Laurent observed a REED BUNTING singing at the reedbed early morning. At midday Pierre reported 23 SISKINS (tarins) migrating through, along with a BLACK REDSTART (rougequeue noir) and another **BUZZARD** (buse variable).

In the evening the pair of MALLARDS were joined at the pond by 3 more males.

## 4 APRIL

Great migration conditions, and another good day for Pierre and Laurent who at 14h40 had 2 raptors appearing overhead - a **MARSH HARRIER** (busard des roseaux) along with an unusual **BUZZARD** that circled over their heads and showed plumage characteristics of 'STEPPE BUZZARD' (buse des steppes), although unfortunately the upperparts were not seen clearly.

Having passed overhead, 5 raptors suddenly became visible at the same time - the 2 aforementioned birds being joined by a second (totally normal) BUZZARD and 2 SPARROWHAWKS (éperviers) circling high above the others. Since a third SPARROWHAWK and 3 KESTRELS were seen later, a total of 9 different individual raptors were noted today- not bad!

Also seen today were a SWALLOW (hirondelle de cheminée), a BLACK REDSTART and a first **YELLOW WAGTAIL** (bergeronnette printanière).

## 3 APRIL

A very good day today, with a distinct migration feel about it: Pierre saw a **HOBBOY** (hobereau) winnowing quickly northwards at 1pm along with 2 BRAMBLING (pinson du nord) and a **YELLOWHAMMER** (bruant jaune) - a vital year tick indeed.

Slightly later, at 14h30, he and Laurent had the wonderful sight of 4 **WHITE STORKS** (cigognes blanches) suddenly appearing and circling slowly higher and higher before drifting off north-westwards. Always a good bird of course, 4 together is a particularly rare sight at Beaumonts.

A **BUZZARD** (buse variable) was also seen today, along with 2 **SWALLOWS** (the first since the first!).

## 29 MARCH

Tension amongst the MOORHENS...Pierre witnessed 3 of them having a violent 30 minute pitched battle this morning. Also of note were 2 **ROOKS** (freux), a **JACKDAW** (choucas) flying over and 2

FIELDFARES (litornes) on migration.

## 24 MARCH

Not much around at the moment - why doesn't this bad weather bring in something interesting? The REED BUNTINGS have still been around these last few days, and there were 6 at the pond this morning. 2 CORMORANTS and 2 SKYLARKS were also seen today.

## 20 MARCH

Pierre reported a perched **HAWFINCH** (grosbec) in the park at midday. Also noted were 2 BLACK REDSTARTS (rougequeue noir), 4 STOCK DOVES (colombin) and 6 REED BUNTINGS (bruant des roseaux). Of interest is the continued presence, since February, of the pair of MALLARDS (colvert) at the pond.

## 19 MARCH

A good day for Pierre who at 17h50 watched an **OSPREY** !! (balbuzard) fly the length of the river valley.

He also observed the first singing **BLACK REDSTART** of the year and the 9 REED BUNTINGS are still present around the pond.

## 18 MARCH

Laurent and Pierre had 3 groups of CORMORANTS totalling 70 birds today, along with a MEADOW PIPIT (farlouse), a STOCK DOVE, a WHITE WAGTAIL (bergeronnette grise) and a SPARROWHAWK (épervier).

Of particular interest is the small group of **REED BUNTINGS** which feeds on the ground at the edges of the pond and is regularly flushed into the neighbouring bushes - the group has recently increased from 5 to 9 birds.

## 16 MARCH

1 ROOK (freux), 4 CORMORANTS, 5 REED BUNTINGS feeding around the pond, 2 FIRECREST (roitelet triple bandeau).

## 15 MARCH

An outstanding day for Pierre and Laurent who watched a **LONG-EARED OWL** !!! (hibou moyen-duc) fly in low from the south at 09h45. The bird appeared to land briefly in conifers bordering the park before taking off and circling over them and then drifting away westward....boy do I hate doing these reports when I'm not around!

Anyway the owl was not enough - there were pretty good numbers of commoner birds flying northwards today : 1 **ROOK** (freux), the first **BARN SWALLOW** (hirondelle de cheminée) of the year, 2 BRAMBLING (which landed briefly before continuing on), 9 WHITE WAGTAILS, 1 **LINNET**, 158 CORMORANTS, 64 CHAFFINCHES and 22 SKYLARKS (one of which landed).

Also of note was a singing **CIRL BUNTING**, (bruant zizi), 2 FIRECREST, 4 GOLDCRESTS (roitelet huppé), 4 REDWINGS and 5 REED BUNTINGS feeding around the pond.

## 14 MARCH

Quite a few bits and pieces flying over for Laurent today : 1 **BRAMBLING** (pinson du nord) along with 12 CORMORANTS, 1 GREY HERON flying high, 6 REDWING (5 of which perched on site), 1 SKYLARK and 2 WHITE WAGTAILS.

2 SPARROWHAWKS were on site, along with at least 2 singing CHIFFCHAFFS and 2 WHITE WAGTAILS.

## 13 MARCH

Pierre reported 14 **GREYLAG GEESE** (Oies cendrées) going north at 09h05, along with 2 STOCK DOVES, a REDWING and a SPARROWHAWK. A group of 10 JAYS (geais) on site was rather unusual.

## 9 MARCH

Pierre saw a YELLOW-LEGGED GULL and the first **COMMON GULL** (Goéland cendré) of the year this morning. Also of note were 3 CIRC BUNTINGS (bruant zizi), 2 FIRECREST and a perched MEADOW PIPIT.

Later in the day he and Laurent observed 14 more **COMMON CRANES** (grues cendrées) at 15h50, and 4 groups of CORMORANTS totalling 92 birds. They also saw 2 REED BUNTINGS, 3 STOCK DOVES, 2 SPARROWHAWKS and 1 LESSER BLACK-BACKED and 3 HERRING GULLS.

## 8 MARCH

A very good day for Pierre and Laurent who saw 16 **COMMON CRANES** (grues cendrées) going north-east at 12h40, and then 5 more at 17h25. The first **MEADOW PIPIT** (farlouse) of the year was noted today, migrating north north-east, and a CHIFFCHAFF was heard singing on two occasions - ah, spring is in the air....

Also of note were 2 SKYLARKS going north, a probable **BUZZARD**, 3 BLACKCAPS and 72 CORMORANTS flying north.

## 6 MARCH

Pierre had another REED BUNTING today.

## 5 MARCH

Laurent reported a REED BUNTING and 2 migrating WHITE WAGTAILS.

## 2 MARCH

Not much around today - 1 FIRECREST (roitelet triple bandeau), 3 SKYLARKS high overhead and a male SPARROWHAWK were the highlights.

## 29 FEBRUARY

Another excellent day for Laurent who had the pleasure of watching 22 **BLACK-TAILED GODWITS** (barge à queue noire) flying north at 08h45. This is the first observation of this species migrating over Beaumonts, the preceding 2 records concerning individuals in lower, more local flight.

2 female SPARROWHAWKS were also seen circling high over the Parc Mabilie.

### February 24<sup>th</sup>

A very good day for Laurent with the reappearance of the possible **SIBERIAN CHIFFCHAFF** (pouillot véloce de type *tristis*), active between the Coffee Dome and the pond. This bird (assuming it is one and the same) first appeared at Beaumonts on the 17<sup>th</sup> February last year and settled for a short period before disappearing until November 24<sup>th</sup>, and it has curiously not re-surfaced until now.....

The first signs of spring passage were there today with 3 **WOODLARKS** (alouette lulu), 10 **SKYLARKS** (allouette des champs), 3 **SISKINS** (tarin), a **LINNET** (linotte) and 3 **WHITE WAGTAILS** (bergeronnette grise) going through.

3 SPARROWHAWKS (éperviers) were also around, along with a **REED BUNTING** (bruant des roseaux) and single **LESSER BLACK-BACKED** (goéland brun) and **HERRING GULLS** (goéland argenté) .

### February 23<sup>rd</sup>

Significant gull movements noted by Laurent - 7 **HERRING** and 1 **LESSER BLACK-BACKED**, along with 58 unidentified large ones.....

### February 22<sup>nd</sup>

Excellent observation by Laurent of 35 **GOLDEN PLOVER** (pluviers dorés) flying south - a rare event indeed. 1 **REDWING** (mauvis) also noted today.

### January 20<sup>th</sup>

A single **CIRL BUNTING** (bruant zizi) again, and several **HERRING GULLS** going over. During the walk up to the park this morning 2 very annoying **JACKDAWS** (choucas) sat smugly atop a building at the junction of the rues Galilee and Eugene Varlin, only to escape the yearlist by then flying off before I could reach the park entrance and get a decent view back towards the rooftop - damm them both !

### January 19<sup>th</sup>

A disturbingly warm January morning...just the one **CIRL BUNTING** there today, skulking in the large bushes around The Overlook (the highest point of the park). 5 **TREE SPARROWS** also present, but not much else apart from a SPARROWHAWK.

### February 17<sup>th</sup>

First record of the year of **STOCK DOVE** (pigeon colombin) today, seen flying over by Laurent. He also reported a single **REDWING** and 20 large gull species going over, just to remind us that it's still winter....

### February 16<sup>th</sup>

Pierre noted 2 **BLACKCAPS** singing today, along with 4 **TREE SPARROWS** (moineau friquet) and the continued presence of the pair of **MALLARDS**. Oh and by the way, also of interest is the conclusive identification of the **LONG EARED OWL** (hibou moyen duc) reported last month :- good photographs of the bird reported on JAN 23<sup>rd</sup> have just been published in the local paper, the Montreuil Dépêche (n° 466 / 13-19 February 2008).

### **February 13<sup>th</sup>**

Worth noting today was an adult BLACK HEADED GULL (mouette rieuse) feeding on worms on the Northern Fields....it's a rare event for a gull to land at Beaumonts!

### **February 10<sup>th</sup>**

2 LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULLS (goéland brun) went north today and 7 SISKINS and 1 REDWING (mauvis) were also reported. The BLACKCAP is still singing....

### **February 9<sup>th</sup>**

The pair of MALLARDS are still present at the pond. Pierre also reported 6 SISKINS and a SPARROWHAWK today, along with an interesting product of the warm and sunny weather - a RED ADMIRAL butterfly (Vulcain).

### **February 8<sup>th</sup>**

Incredibly we have 2 (yes two) singing male **BLACKCAPS** (fauvette à tête noire) alongside the entrance steps by Jean Moulin College. 4 SISKINS (tarin), 2 male CIRL BUNTINGS (brunat ziz) and a pair of MALLARDS (canard colvert) were also reported today.

### **February 7<sup>th</sup>**

Another warm and sunny day - the wintering BLACKCAP was still present, singing along the entrance steps by the Jean Moulin College. SISKINS (tarin des aulnes) appear to have settled in the park and may be seen in alder trees behind the college, and in the vicinity of the Dinosaur - at least 4 birds were observed feeding there this afternoon. Pierre also had 3 REDWINGS (mauvis) in this area. 2 SPARROWHAWKS (épervier) and a single male FIRECREST (roitelet triple-bandeau) were also seen today.

### **February 6<sup>th</sup>**

The 2 male CIRL BUNTINGS were still present today. A single FIRECREST and a SPARROWHAWK were also noted.

### **January 30<sup>th</sup>**

Pierre saw a **GREY WAGTAIL** (bergeronnette des ruisseaux) in local flight this morning.

### **January 27<sup>th</sup>**

Nice warm weather - dry, sunny, clear skies. A male **BLACKCAP** (fauvette à tête noire) sang throughout the morning, reinforcing an odd feeling of springtime. Pierre had a couple of SISKINS (tarins des aulnes) perched in the alders behind the college buildings and the 2 male CIRL BUNTINGS were still present in the bushes surrounding the pond. Lunchtime at the Coffee Dome produced 5 LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULLS (goéland brun), lumbering south-west in an orderly line, and a single **COMMON REDPOLL** (sizerin flammé) jittered overhead towards the Parc Mabilley.

### **January 23<sup>rd</sup>**

Early morning (first light)....no sign of LEO.

### **January 22<sup>nd</sup>**

Exciting news today of what is presumably a **LONG EARED OWL** (hibou moyen duc), reported by Vincent van de Bor who, in the company of 2 others, observed and photographed an 'owl with ears' perched in trees bordering rue Doumer, close to the small pond in the south-eastern corner of the park. The bird was easy to see but looked unsettled, being continually harassed by 2 **CARRION CROWS**.

### January 20<sup>th</sup>

A single **CIRL BUNTING** (bruant zizi) again, and several **HERRING GULLS** going over. During the walk up to the park this morning 2 very annoying **JACKDAWS** (choucas) sat smugly atop a building at the junction of the rues Galilee and Eugene Varlin, only to escape the yearlist by then flying off before I could reach the park entrance and get a decent view back towards the rooftop - damm them both !

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### January 17<sup>th</sup>

Pierre had 2 male **CIRL BUNTINGS** today in the usual area between the pond and the rubbish dump, which means we have at least 3 wintering birds now because a female was observed here yesterday. **SERINS** are also wintering on site, with 9 noted today near the park entrance on rue des 4 Ruelles.

### January 12<sup>th</sup>

A male **CIRL BUNTING** (bruant zizi) was seen near the rubbish dump late morning. Also of note were 2 **LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKERS** (pic epeichette), a male and female in 2 different areas of the park, giving excellent prolonged views as they fed conveniently in trees bordering the paths. On neither occasion were the birds heard to vocalise - you just have to be lucky with this one. Pierre spotted a **YELLOW-LEGGED GULL** (goéland leucophaée) flying over in the afternoon.

### January 6<sup>th</sup>

Not much about, although at midday a single **REED BUNTING** (bruant des roseaux) was seen to fly over and drop into the reedbed, where it skulked invisibly for several minutes before flying out, up high and away from the park, against a backdrop of distant buildings - a typical show from the species. Briefly seen again (the same?) the following day.

### January 1<sup>st</sup>

Wow, what a start.....the very first bird in the bins this morning was a male **BLACKCAP** (fauvette à tête noire), scrabbling about in the viney trees by the entrance steps - a good omen indeed. Later, a pair of **CIRL BUNTINGS** (bruant zizi) perched in a small tree on the slope behind the pond and 2 **TREE SPARROWS** (moineau friquet) were found in their usual place, in bushes alongside the fence bordering the rubbish dump.

Also of note was a flock of 5 **FIELDFARES** (litorne) flying north, and later in the day Pierre had a **REDWING** (mauvais) feeding on the grass and a single **SPARROWHAWK** (épervier).