

Provence over New Year

Naturetrek Tour Report

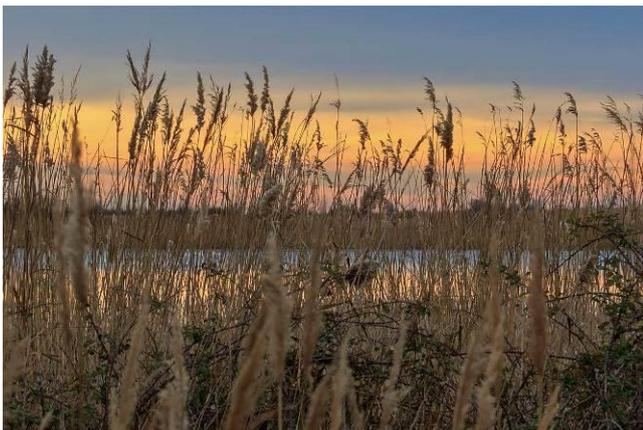
28 December 2017 - 4 January 2018



Crested Tit by Bob Saxton



Glossy Ibises by Jim Sutherland



Morning Light in the Camargue by Jim Sutherland



Greater Flamingoes by Bob Saxton

Report compiled by Jessica Turner
Images courtesy of Bob Saxton and Jim Sutherland



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Summary

Provence in the winter offers some wonderful wildlife spectacles, and this year was no exception. The numbers of Flamingoes, Cranes and Glossy Ibises were a joy, together with the views of Greater Spotted Eagle and, of course, the beautiful Wallcreepers at Les Baux and Pont du Gard, where the combination of Roman architecture and iconic birds made the visit particularly special. Weather-wise, we encountered all the seasons, with some strong winds (not always the Mistral – the Provençal have names for winds from all directions) being less than ideal, especially for passerines, but we still managed some excellent, close views: Crested Tit and Firecrest being memorable. The quality of the light and the vast landscapes of the Camargue, the delicious food and generous hospitality of Marie-Jo and Bruno, the good company, and plenty of laughter all contributed to a most enjoyable New Year's break.

Day 1

Thursday 28th December

Marseille Airport to Hotel des Granges, Arles. Sunny but very cold wind

Twelve group members met with Jessica at Heathrow Terminal 3 for our 11.10am flight to Marseille, some having negotiated the snow of the previous day to reach the airport – we were glad that we had not been due to fly on the Wednesday. The flight was smooth and arrived in Marseille on time, and we soon met with Chris who had travelled independently, and Luca, who had flown in from Venice. It was sunny, but the wind was strong and cold. We sorted the vehicles, loaded up and headed north-west towards Arles. Red Kite, Sparrowhawk, Common Buzzard, and Cattle, Great and Little Egrets were among the birds spotted en route. We reached our base for the week, the Hotel des Granges on the north side of Arles, about 4.15pm, and received a very warm welcome from Marie-Jo and Bruno. We checked in and were shown to our rooms.

As the light was fading fast, we dropped our bags and went out again for a short walk near the hotel. Linnet, Chaffinch and House Sparrow were seen, and Sardinian Warbler and Robin heard, but most birds were hunkered down. We enjoyed the beautiful apricot hues of the sunset, but most of the group soon returned to our rooms, leaving a hardy trio to explore further. They later reported Red-legged Partridge and also saw a Black Redstart, probably going to roost under the hotel roof.

We met again at 6.30pm to introduce ourselves properly, and Jessica outlined plans for the week. We then repaired to the dining room, where we admired the Christmas scene of a whole village with tiny figures – including a Flamingo and a Hoopoe given by a previous Naturetrek group! We then enjoyed a delicious meal with local wines, before retiring for an early night, ready for our first full day in the Camargue.

Day 2

Friday 29th December

Camargue. Cold, mainly 2°C; some sun with light wind

After a 7.30am breakfast we left at 8.30, in the early sunlight, to head down into the Camargue, the old delta of the river Rhône. Many of the old marshes have been converted to agriculture, but there are still large areas of natural habitat. We took a minor road leading to Mas d'Agon, seeing numerous Great and Little Egrets, Grey Herons and Common Buzzards as we went. Little groups of passerines in the reeds and fields adjoining the road

included Chaffinch, Goldfinch, House Sparrow, Reed Bunting, Linnet and Skylark, while a Kingfisher showed well at a bridge. The area was very dry, as a result of very little rainfall through the summer and the first part of the winter, and there was less water visible than usual, so very few ducks. Lines of Cranes flying over, bugling, were always a joy, as were the flocks of Glossy Ibis, of which we saw about 80 in the day. Five Tundra (Bewick's) Swans were seen in flight, but could not be relocated, although Mute Swans were clearly seen. Cetti's Warbler and Water Rail were heard, while raptors included good views of Red Kite and Marsh Harrier. A stop at a viewpoint gave us another Kingfisher, a Kestrel and a couple of Fieldfares alongside a Blackbird. A Cetti's Warbler gave good views.

We stopped briefly to admire our first Flamingoes on the Étang de Vaccarès, the large saline lagoon which dominates the centre of the Camargue. We were amused to see one Flamingo, head down, with both its legs paddling out behind; apparently, this enables it to feed at greater depths. A little further on, a field held six White Storks amongst numerous egrets, mainly Great but also Little and a couple of Cattle Egrets, plus Grey Herons and Lapwing. Back on the lake shore, we noted a good number of Black-necked Grebes scattered over the Étang; an Avocet and a Spotted Redshank flew past, while Mallard, a pair of Shelduck and a single Shoveler were the only ducks visible. On the 'marsh' side of the road were a Green Sandpiper, another three White Storks and a large flock of Coots.

We moved on to the visitor centre at La Capelière, where we were very grateful when we were invited to have our picnic in the beautifully warm meeting room. The trail was very quiet apart from a couple of Water Rails, one of which showed well. The lake shore in this area supported a number of feeding waders, including Grey Plover, good numbers of Dunlin, three Little Stints, two Common Snipes, Common Sandpiper and Common Redshank. Passerines were flitting around on the shore, including Meadow Pipit, Great Tit and a nice female Sardinian Warbler. The sun made a brief appearance and the temperature had risen to a balmy 6°C!

The Marais de Grenouillet was very quiet, apart from Common Buzzard and more Cranes in flight, so we decided to head further south to the salt pans of Salin de Giraud. We had some excellent views of Common Cranes in a field by the road, and saw more in flight. The pans were also very quiet, with a flock of Shelduck, gulls and a Grey Heron being the only birds seen on them. A group of Corn Bunting were in a tree and three Great Crested Grebes were on the Rhône. The sun was setting and the light fading, so we decided it was time to head for home, a relatively easy drive back up alongside the Rhône. We met to complete our checklists before enjoying another delicious meal of traditional Provençal cooking, after a very enjoyable and full day in the Camargue.

Day 3

Saturday 30th December

La Crau. Initially cloudy, then some sun; mild, up to 14°C, light wind

Today we headed for the grassy plains of La Crau, the ancient floodplain of the River Durance. The course of the Durance was redirected over 10,000 years ago as Les Alpilles were formed, and a huge, stony plain was the result. Although much of it has been lost to agriculture and industry, this is still an ideal habitat for a number of species that are otherwise rare in France. It can be a difficult site to bird in winter as the birds tend to congregate into flocks which can be elusive, but it is also an interesting location.

Overnight rain had left large puddles, and the sky was grey, but it was dry as we left the hotel after breakfast. We drove eastwards towards Salon de Provence, turning off the autoroute to take the old road. Our first stop was the road leading to La Jasse. We soon stopped for a field with some 85 Cattle Egrets standing in the grass. White Wagtail and Black Redstarts were flitting around them. We moved on to park in a more open area, but were warned that there was hunting going on ahead, so we explored the more immediate environs. A fine male Cirl Bunting was singing from the top of a Phoenicean Juniper, and a Rock Bunting showed briefly. A Dartford Warbler was heard, and seen by some, as it skulked in a bramble. We noted the stunted trees of Holm Oak (*Quercus ilex*) and bushes of False Olive (*Phillyrea angustifolia*), the sculptural dead heads of Field Eryngo, and the scented clumps of Thyme, Oregano and Sweet Alison.

Moving on to Mas de Chauvet, we encountered large flocks of Goldfinch, Linnet and Skylark, and a number of Meadow Pipits, Stonechats and Reed Buntings in the open plain habitat, scruffy fields and hedgerows. A male Rock Bunting gave some beautiful views but was then elusive. We returned to St. Martin de Crau, in order to get permits to visit the reserve area of Peau de Meau, only to be informed that the area was closed due to a recent, illegal, 'rave' party of many thousands of people, which necessitated cleaning the area of glass and other debris. We were told that we could, however, visit the south of the reserve area, by Istres Airport.

We had our picnic at the Étang des Aulnes, enjoying the mild weather as well as the local pâtés, cheeses and wines. Replete, we then walked down to the lakeside, hearing Water Rail and Cetti's Warbler and seeing three species of Grebe: Little, Black-necked and Great Crested, together with Red-crested and Common Pochards, and Gadwall, amongst other species. A Marsh Harrier was over the reeds.

We then drove south, finding the track across the plain. In general, it was very quiet on the bird front. Chris spotted a Peregrine Falcon, probably a sub-adult as it was very dark, which perched for some time on a distant boulder, giving good scoped views. He also glimpsed the heads of four Little Bustards, but they disappeared, never to be seen again, despite intensive scanning. A corvid perched near a house was a hybrid Carrion x Hooded Crow. Jessica glimpsed a male Hen Harrier, but it quickly dropped below a ridge before anyone else saw it, never to reappear, although a Fox was seen walking away, and Luca earlier saw a Hare. As the sun was setting, we decided to head back to the hotel, enjoying the beautiful sunset as we drove.

After a break, we met to complete our lists before another delicious meal and a relatively early night, in readiness for New Year's Eve.

Day 4

Sunday 31st December

Les Alpilles. Initially misty, then sunny; calm and warm, 14°C

Today we visited Les Alpilles, the chain of limestone hills, rising to just under 500 metres, that stand impressively above the Crau plain. We drove through Fontveille, turning north-east and by-passing Les Baux to reach La Caume car park. A Coal Tit was calling as we set off along the access road for the communications mast that winds gently uphill. The first part was mainly through Aleppo Pine with Kermes Oak understorey, then Atlantic Cedar; the open rocky areas held fragrant species such as Rosemary (some with a few flowers) and Lavender. A Short-toed Treecreeper showed quite well and we had excellent views of four Firecrests. Crested Tit was also seen and heard well. Moving on up the road, we enjoyed the warm sun and the magnificent scenery. Unfortunately, we were unable to locate the resident Bonelli's Eagles, despite much scanning, although we did

add a distant Sparrowhawk. From the TV mast, we walked a short way along the plateau, encountering a Sardinian Warbler, before retracing our steps. We enjoyed our excellent picnic in the sun.

Refreshed, we drove down to the village of Les Baux, which stands atop a limestone outcrop, surrounded by cliffs and boulders. Parking outside the village, we prepared to take the path round the outside, under the cliffs. Luca, with some of the group, spotted a large, very distant raptor, which may well have been a Bonelli's Eagle, but it was just too far away to be sure. Looking up from the path we searched the rock face, and Margaret first spotted a Wallcreeper, feeding on the cliff above us. Although it was generally rather mobile, most people eventually got good views of this iconic species, seeing its grey body with pale throat, long bill and the magnificent crimson flashes of its wings as it flitted around on the rock face. A Blue Rock Thrush, noted at the same time but in the other direction, received rather less attention! We carried on with our exploration, walking round the south side of the cliffs until we reached the path up into the village from the west. Sadly, we could not locate an Alpine Accentor today.

We had time to explore the busy village with its maze of narrow streets with old buildings and little shops. Several Black Redstarts were seen, including at least three feeding on black olives under a courtyard Olive tree, while a single Crag Martin swooped low overhead. Some of the cafés were closing early for New Year's Eve, but we found one open for hot drinks. We then returned to the vehicles and drove a short way down to olive groves facing a cliff, where we stopped to listen for Eagle-Owls. This used to be the best site in the area, but over recent years, the increase in human disturbance on the cliffs seems to have driven the birds away; although there were no climbers today, neither could we hear any owls. When it was quite dark, we returned to the vehicles for our journey home.

Marie-Jo and Bruno had prepared a special, delicious meal to mark New Year's Eve, starting with aperitifs, and finishing with the 13 desserts, which are all symbolic for the season, and a New Year toast. In fact, all the group members retired before midnight, after our long and active day in the field.

Day 5

Monday 1st January

West side of the Camargue. Mild, 11°C, sunny am, rain later

After another continental breakfast, we headed out into the Camargue, heading this time mainly for the west side. However, initially we drove back down to the Marais de Romieu, close to La Capelière, where Tundra (Bewick's) Swans had been reported. We saw several on the water amongst the Mute Swans, along with Shoveler, Gadwall and Coot. Then we found a large bird of prey perched in a tree, and it was quickly identified as the Greater Spotted Eagle that is wintering in the area. As it is rather pale, some observers have suggested that it is a hybrid Greater x Lesser Spotted Eagle, but it is impossible to be certain; Greater Spotted do winter in Europe whereas Lesser Spotted move to Africa. Anyway, we all had fairly distant but excellent scoped views as it remained perched for a long time. A Sparrowhawk and a Great Spotted Woodpecker were seen closer to hand, and we also added good views of Kingfisher. While half the group had driven the short distance to La Capelière to use the facilities, the Bewick's Swans took off, and about 60 were counted; meanwhile, they saw a Water Rail run across the road.

We then drove along the northern side of the Étang de Vaccarès, stopping to admire a large group of Common Cranes in a roadside field, with more flying in, and a beautiful male Hen Harrier that flew across in front of us.

As we reached Mas de Mejanès, a Coypu was sitting on a stream bank, feeding, and gave excellent views before it slipped into the stream and swam off. As it was now after midday, we decided to drive directly to Pont de Gau bird reserve, via main roads, going on to Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer later and returning across the saltmarsh. We arrived at the reserve and set up our picnic in the warm sunshine. We then had time to explore, seeing and hearing the many hundreds of Greater Flamingoes at close quarters. Cattle and Little Egrets, perched side by side, gave a useful comparison. Further afield in the reserve, Teal, Snipe and Kingfisher were among the other species noted.

We then drove down to Saintes-Maries, where we drove along the front to the eastern end, to explore the beach and the edges of the Étang d'Imperial. A flock of Turnstones on the beach were seen well, plus Great Crested and Black-necked Grebes on the sea. Walking across the saltmarsh, we saw large numbers of Dunlin, plus had good views of Grey, Ringed and Kentish Plovers, Redshank and Avocet, all feeding on the mud and in the shallow water. Further out were Shelduck and Shoveler, and we became aware of about a dozen hunched-up Grey Herons lined up along the shore. The weather was deteriorating, and the first raindrops fell as we returned to the vehicles. We took the unpaved roads along the west side of Vaccarès, seeing at least two Water Rails, and having good views of two Redpolls in a roadside Tamarisk, and a Green Sandpiper. As the light faded and the rain fell more heavily, we completed the drive, being aware of the wilderness that is still Camargue, before rejoining main roads for our journey home.

Jane, having opted for a day near the hotel, reported Serin and Grey Wagtail, new for the trip, among the other species she had seen.

Day 6

Tuesday 2nd January

Mont Ventoux and Pont du Gard. V cold wind on Mt Ventoux, 0°C; milder and calmer later

We had an early breakfast this morning, leaving the hotel by 8am to make the journey north to Mont Ventoux. Passing through Avignon and round Carpentras, we soon reached the foothills of this Alpine outlier which reaches 1,900 metres in height. We stopped for a short leg-stretch above Ste. Colombe, where all was very quiet, but a cold wind was blowing. We then started the main ascent, driving up through the Black Pine and Beech trees. We stopped to try for Black Woodpecker, but without success. We reached the level of lying snow, and stopped again just below the Chalet Reynard, where there are a number of holiday chalets among the pine trees. Here, we encountered a mixed tit party with other species. Nuthatch was perched on the top of a tree, giving beautiful views in the morning sun, while Marsh Tit showed well alongside Blue Tit and Great Tit. The stars of this show were, however, the Crested Tits, which gave excellent views. One of the chalets has a fat ball tied to the balcony, and a Crested Tit was making full use of this bounty.

Moving on with caution, as fresh snow had obviously fallen overnight, we stopped at the Chalet Reynard for warming drinks, the wind being strong and very cold. We then walked up the road a short way, having good views of a party of Crossbills in a Mountain Pine. Little else was moving, so we decided to return to the vehicles. We drove down to a lay-by with large trees, where it seemed slightly more sheltered, but was still blustery and cold, and we prepared the picnic in the somewhat challenging conditions, and most of the group sought the shelter of the vehicles. We then walked up the road, again listening for Black Woodpecker but hearing nothing. We decided to give up and drive back down, stopping briefly in the pretty village of Bédoin, from where we could see the snowy summit glistening white against a dark sky.

Our afternoon destination was Pont du Gard, so we retraced our route to Avignon, taking the road along the bank of the Rhône, from where we could see the famous bridge as well as the castle and city walls. We then crossed the river, driving west, and taking the route to the Rive Droite, or southern side of the River Gardon, where we parked. A highlight in the car park was a Hawfinch perched in a bare tree, showing very well and giving extended views as it moved around us. We later saw two in flight. Jessica bought the tickets and we made our way into the site. In trees by the river, we found Greenfinches with Goldfinches, and a female Cirl Bunting was noted. A Kingfisher was a delight for some. This impressive Roman aqueduct, which was built in the First Century as part of a system to carry water from Uzès to Nîmes, drops in height by only one inch as it crosses the gorge of the River Gardon. As we were admiring the arches, we soon found a Wallcreeper feeding on the stonework, and Chris and Jane, at a viewpoint offering a differently angled view, saw two birds. Rock Sparrows landed on the top before diving in to tiny holes to roost, and about a hundred Crag Martins appeared, many clinging onto the side of the Pont, as they too prepared to roost. A Firecrest showed its vivid orange crest, almost glowing in the fading light. As we walked back, we could see the sunset behind the arches of this iconic structure.

Day 7

Wednesday 3rd January

The east side of Camargue. Very mild, 20°C, but very windy

Chris, out early, recorded two Little Owls on a barn near the hotel, and about 500 Jackdaws flew over, leaving their roost. After breakfast, we gathered for our last full day, revisiting the Camargue, and spending the whole day in the field. We started at Mas d'Agon, where we searched, unsuccessfully, for Penduline Tit. Luca's sharp ears picked out occasional calls, but the birds were too distant and remained hidden in the strong wind. Large flocks of Glossy Ibis were flying round, with some being chased by gulls; Cetti's Warbler was heard, and seen briefly, and several Marsh Harriers were quartering the reeds.

Moving on, we turned east to drive towards Salin de Giraud, where a Pallid Harrier had been sighted the previous day. En route, we saw two Black Storks flying distantly. We failed to locate the harrier, and the salins we visited were exceptionally quiet, so we returned to the little town, where we got permission to eat our picnic in the shelter of a bar. We celebrated Jane's birthday with a tarte aux pommes, before venturing out into the wind again, to drive to the coast at Plage de Piemanson. Here it was even windier but, sheltered by a small building, we could see Gannets out to sea. A group of waders included four Sanderlings with the Dunlin, and on the Rhône were more Black-necked Grebes, as well as Great Crested Grebe, large numbers of Mute Swans, and a number of Flamingoes.

We then drove to Étang de Fangassier and the Digue de la Mer, where after some searching, Water Pipit was added to the list. On the way, we passed enormous flocks of Cranes, taking off and flying round; about 900 were counted as we watched and listened to their bugling calls. Leaving La Digue, some of the group saw 70-80 Avocets on the far side of the étang. As we drove back north, the evening sun on the marshes and the Étang de Vaccarès was beautiful, and the colours glowed. We stopped briefly at the Marais de Romieu, where we saw Common Pochard and Shoveler with the Coots and Mute Swans and, as we drove home, a Merlin flashed across in front of the first minibus.

We met later to complete our lists and enjoy a final dinner of Camargue beef served with Camargue rice. Afterwards, we thanked Marie-Jo and Bruno for their kind and welcoming hospitality, before retiring to pack in preparation for our journey home.

Day 8

Thursday 4th January

Arles; journey home. Some sun, warm, 20°C, breezy

We had some time this morning before we had to leave for Marseille airport. Most of the group opted to explore Arles for a couple of hours. We parked up and walked through the town gate towards the Arena, although it was not open to visitors until 10am. Two Black Redstarts were seen around the magnificent Roman remains. We wandered along alleys and explored some of the churches, and indulged in café culture, drinking coffee and watching the world go by. The remaining group members went with Luca to visit some ponds and small lakes just off the Arles ring road. They reported Redwing, Song Thrush, six Little Grebes, Blackcaps, Tree Sparrows and a Pallas's Squirrel, a species introduced to the area.

We met back in the parking area in Arles and returned to the hotel to sort ourselves out and pack the vehicles. With fond farewells to Marie-Jo and Bruno, we left at 11.15am. Our journey was uneventful, with a few Buzzards, Kestrels and a kettle of thermalling gulls noted. We reached the airport in good time, said our farewells to Chris who was flying home the next day, and Luca, who had a flight home to Venice. The rest of us checked in, and had plenty of time for a snack in the nearly deserted departure area, before a straight-forward flight back to London and our onward journeys home.

Jessica and Luca would like to thank the group for their part in such a good week, and hope we meet again on further Naturetrek adventures!

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Species Lists

Birds (✓=recorded but not counted; H = heard only)

	Common name	Scientific name	December / January								
			28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	
1	Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>						2		2	
2	Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>		X				X		X	
3	Tundra (Bewick's) Swan	<i>Cygnus columbianus</i>		5				60+			
4	Common Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>		30				20+		2	
5	Gadwall	<i>Mareca strepera</i>			5			50+			
6	Eurasian Wigeon	<i>Mareca penelope</i>						2			
7	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>		100+	10			X		100+	
8	Northern Shoveler	<i>Spatula clypeata</i>		1				30+		<10	
9	Eurasian Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>						6+H			
10	Red-crested Pochard	<i>Netta rufina</i>				32					
11	Common Pochard	<i>Aythya ferina</i>			100+			50+		4	
12	Red-legged Partridge - I	<i>Alectoris rufa</i>	8								
13	Common Pheasant - I	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>	LO					2	1		
14	Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>			3						6
15	Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>		4	c25			6		3	
16	Black-necked Grebe	<i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>		c50	10			7		20	
17	Greater Flamingo	<i>Phoenicopterus roseus</i>		00's				1000+		X	
18	Black Stork	<i>Ciconia nigra</i>								2	
19	White Stork	<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>		9				17		2	
20	Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>		c80						150	
21	Western Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>	10	2	130			10+			
22	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	c10	c100	1			50		X	
23	Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>	1	100+	5			X	1	10+	
24	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	10	100+	100			20+	1	20+	
25	Northern Gannet	<i>Morus bassanus</i>								4	
26	Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	20	100+	X			X	X	X	
27	Greater Spotted Eagle	<i>Clanga clanga</i>						1			
28	Bonelli's Eagle	<i>Aquila fasciata</i>					Poss				
29	Eurasian Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	1				1	1	1		
30	Western Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>		5	1			3		8	
31	Hen Harrier	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>			LO			1			
32	Red Kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>	1	4							
33	Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	4	c30	c20	2		24	2	19	3
34	Little Bustard	<i>Tetrax tetrax</i>			4						
35	Water Rail	<i>Rallus aquaticus</i>		2+H	H			4		1+H	
36	Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>						10+		3+H	
37	Eurasian Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>		00's	X			00's		100+	
38	Common Crane	<i>Grus grus</i>		c200	25			c75		c950	
39	Pied Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>		2				25		100+	
40	Northern Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>		c40	10						
41	Grey Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>		15				15	2	2	
42	Common Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>						2			
43	Kentish Plover	<i>Charadrius alexandrinus</i>						4			
44	Common Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>		5				14	1	1	
45	Eurasian Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>		c5				20+		5	
46	Spotted Redshank	<i>Tringa erythropus</i>		1							
47	Common Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>		3				10			

	Common name	Scientific name	December / January								
			28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	
48	Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>		1	H			1		1	
49	Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>		2				1		1	
50	Ruddy Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>						7+			
51	Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>								4	
52	Little Stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>		3							
53	Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>		c30				500+	c100	c100	
54	Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	X	c10	X	X		X	X	X	
55	Mediterranean Gull	<i>Ichthyaetus melanocephalus</i>						1			
56	Yellow-legged Gull	<i>Larus michahellis</i>	X	X	X	X		X	1	X	X
57	Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>						2			
58	Sandwich Tern	<i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>						2			
59	Rock Dove	<i>Columba livia feral</i>	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
60	Common Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	1	3	80	H			10+	3	
61	Eurasian Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	10+	100	1			X	10	X	
62	Little Owl	<i>Athene noctua</i>								2	
63	Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>		5	1			4	1	4	
64	Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>		2				2	H		
65	European Green Woodpecker	<i>Picus viridis</i>			1+H						
66	Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	1	5	7	3		4		4	
67	Merlin	<i>Falco columbarius</i>								1	
68	Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>			1						
69	Eurasian Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>			5	3+H			3		
70	Eurasian Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
71	Western Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>	X	X	X	X		X	X	500+	X
72	Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	X								
73	Carrion Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
74	Northern Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>				6			3		
75	Coal Tit	<i>Parus ater</i>				1+H			5+		
76	European Crested Tit	<i>Lophophanes cristatus</i>				5			5		
77	Marsh Tit	<i>Poecile palustris</i>							2		
78	Eurasian Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	1	5+	X	2		X	3	2	
79	Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>		1	X	1			1+H		
80	Eurasian Penduline Tit	<i>Remiz pendulinus</i>									LOH
81	Woodlark	<i>Lullula arborea</i>			5						
82	Eurasian Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>		>100	c50			100+		50+	
83	Crested Lark	<i>Galerida cristata</i>						3		5+	
84	Eurasian Crag Martin	<i>Ptyonoprogne rupestris</i>				1			c105		
85	Cetti's Warbler	<i>Cettia cetti</i>		3+H	H			H		1+H	
86	Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>		1	H	3		H	5		
87	Common Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>		H	1+H			2	3	1	
88	Eurasian Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>			1	H					X
89	Dartford Warbler	<i>Sylvia undata</i>			1	LOH		LOH			
90	Sardinian Warbler	<i>Sylvia melanocephala</i>	H	1+H	H	2+H		2+H	3	H	
91	Common Firecrest	<i>Regulus ignicapilla</i>				5			4	LOH	
92	Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>		3		2					
93	Eurasian Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>		H	H			H			
94	Eurasian Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>							2		
95	Wallcreeper	<i>Tichodroma muraria</i>				1			2		
96	Short-toed Treecreeper	<i>Certhia brachydactyla</i>				5					
97	Common Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	X	X	X	3		X	X	X	X
98	Common Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>		3	3	H		3	10	1	

	Common name	Scientific name	December / January								
			28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	
99	Fieldfare	<i>Turdus pilaris</i>		2	1						
100	Redwing	<i>Turdus iliacus</i>									1
101	Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>				H					1
102	European Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	H	3	5	2	2	4			
103	Black Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>	1	1	5	7		5	2	2	
104	Blue Rock Thrush	<i>Monticola solitarius</i>				2					
105	European Stonechat	<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>		5	6					2	
106	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	c20	X	X	H	X	X	X	X	X
107	Eurasian Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>								5+	X
108	Rock Sparrow	<i>Petronia petronia</i>						12			
109	Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>				H					
110	Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>					1				
111	White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	1	2	20		X	4	1		
112	Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>		30	20+		50+	1	100+		
113	Water Pipit	<i>Anthus spinoletta</i>								3	
114	Common Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
115	Hawfinch	<i>Coccothraustes coccothraustes</i>								2+	
116	European Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>			LO					5	
117	Common Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>	2	50+	X		H			5	
118	Common Redpoll	<i>Acanthis flammea</i>					2				
119	Red Crossbill	<i>Loxia curvirostra</i>				3		7			
120	European Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	1	30	X			X	50+		
121	European Serin	<i>Serinus serinus</i>					1				
122	Eurasian Siskin	<i>Spinus spinus</i>					1	1			
123	Corn Bunting	<i>Emberiza calandra</i>		10	LOH		2			4	
124	Rock Bunting	<i>Emberiza cia cia</i>			2						
125	Cirl Bunting	<i>Emberiza cirlus</i>			1			1			
126	Common Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>		10+	5		X			c10	

Mammals

1	European (Brown) Hare	<i>Lepus europaeus</i>			1						
2	Red Fox	<i>Vulpes vulpes</i>			1		dead		dead		
3	Coypu	<i>Myocastor coypus</i>					1				
4	Pallas's Squirrel	<i>Callosciurus erythraeus</i>									1
5	Red Admiral	<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>				1					

Plants

Scientific Name

Common Name

Location

GYMNOSPERMS

Cupressaceae

Cupressus sempervirens

Juniperus communis

Juniperus oxycedrus

Juniperus phoenicea

CONIFERS

Juniper family

Italian Cypress

Common Juniper

Spiny Juniper

Phoenicean Juniper

Often pencil-shaped; scattered

Mt. Ventoux

Pont du Gard

Les Alpilles

Pinaceae

Cedrus atlantica

Pinus halpensis

Pinus pinea

Pinus uncinata

Pine family

Atlantic Cedar

Aleppo Pine

Stone (Umbrella) Pine

Mountain Pine

Les Alpilles

Common

Usually coastal; umbrella-shaped

Mt. Ventoux

Scientific Name	Common Name	Location
ANGIOSPERMS		
Dicots		
Adoxaceae		
<i>Viburnum tinus</i>	Moschatel family Viburnum (or Laurustinus)	Les Baux, a few flowers
Amaranthaceae		
<i>Atriplex portulacoides</i>	Pigweed family Sea Purslane	Salt steppe; low shrub with grey oval lvs
<i>Sarcocornia fruticosa</i>	Shrubby Glasswort	Salt steppe and marsh, often red
<i>Suaeda vera</i>	Shrubby Sea-blite	Salt steppe; low shrub with 'bobbly' lvs
Apiaceae		
<i>Bupleurum fruticosum</i>	Carrot family Shrubby Hare's-ear	Les Baux (dead heads on green shrub)
<i>Eryngium campestre</i>	Field 'Sea Holly'	La Crau, dried stems
<i>Eryngium spinalba</i>	Silver 'Sea Holly'	Mt. Ventoux, dried stems
Araliaceae		
<i>Hedera helix</i>	Ivy family Ivy	Scattered
Boraginaceae		
<i>Echium vulgare</i>	Borage family Viper's Bugloss	La Crau, leaves
Brassicaceae		
<i>Lobularia maritima</i>	Cabbage family Sweet Alison	La Crau & Les Alpilles; fragrant tiny white flowers
Buxaceae		
<i>Buxus sempervirens</i>	Box family Box	Les Alpilles
Cistaceae		
<i>Cistus albidus</i>	Cistus family Grey Cistus	Les Alpilles, grey-leaved shrub
Compositaceae (Asteraceae)		
<i>Bellis perennis</i>	Daisy family Daisy	Scattered in flower
<i>Hyoseris radiata</i>	Hyoseris	Les Alpilles, yellow Dandelion-like flowers
<i>Limbarda (Inula) crithmoides</i>	Golden Samphire	Salt steppe; shrub with yellow flowers
<i>Jacobaea maritima</i>	Silver Ragwort	Les Baux, grey leaves
Euphorbiaceae		
<i>Euphorbia characias</i>	Euphorbia family Mediterranean Spurge	Widespread, large, greyish shoots
<i>Euphorbia cyparassias</i>	Cypress Spurge	La Crau, looks like Pine seedlings
Fagaceae		
<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>	Oak and Beech family Beech	Mt. Ventoux
<i>Quercus coccifera</i>	Kermes Oak	Les Alpilles, shrub with small holly-like lvs
<i>Quercus ilex</i>	Holm Oak	Widespread, evergreen tree
<i>Quercus pubescens</i>	Downy Oak	Widespread
Geraniaceae		
<i>Erodium cicutarium</i>	Geranium family Stork's-bill	Les Alpilles, single pink flower
Lamiaceae		
<i>Lavendula angustifolia</i>	Dead-nettle family Lavender	Les Alpilles
<i>Origanum vulgare</i>	Marjoram	La Crau, fragrant leaves

Scientific Name	Common Name	Location
<i>Rosmarinus officinalis</i>	Rosemary	Les Alpilles, some in flower
<i>Thymus vulgaris</i>	Thyme	La Crau, fragrant leaves
Lauraceae	Bay family	
<i>Laurus nobilis</i>	Bay Tree	La Capelière
Leguminosaeae	Pea family	
<i>Genista scorpius</i>	Scorpion Broom	Les Alpilles; spiny
<i>Spartium junceum</i>	Spanish Broom	Widespread, long green stems without leaves
<i>Ulex parviflorus</i>	Small-flowered Gorse	La Crau in flower (yellow)
Oleaceae	Olive family	
<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	Ash	Étang des Aulnes
<i>Olea europaea</i>	Wild Olive	Scattered throughout
<i>Phillyrea angustifolia</i>	False Olive	Scattered throughout
Platanaceae	Plane family	
<i>Platanus orientalis</i>	Oriental Plane	Widespread as street tree
Plumbaginaceae	Thrift family	
<i>Limonium cf narbonense</i>	A sea lavender	La Capelière, dead flowerheads
Ranunculaceae	Buttercup family	
<i>Helleborus foetidus</i>	Stinking Hellebore	Mt. Ventoux, leaves
Salicaceae	Willow family	
<i>Populus alba</i>	White Poplar	Widespread in Camargue, pale bark
<i>Populus tremula</i>	Aspen	Widespread in Camargue, pale grey bark
Scrophulariaceae	Figwort family	
<i>Verbascum sinuatum</i>	Wavy Mullein	La Crau, wavy-leaved, grey-green rosettes
Tamariscaceae	Tamarisk family	
<i>Tamarix sp.</i>	Tamarisk	Widespread tree in Camargue, esp coastal
Urticaceae	Nettle family	
<i>Parietaria judaica</i>	Pellitory of the Wall	Les Baux, walls
<i>Urtica dioica</i>	Nettle	Widespread
Monocots	Monocotyledons	
Araceae	Arum family	
<i>Arum italicum</i>	Italian Arum	New lvs, Étang des Aulnes
Asparagaceae	Asparagus family	
<i>Ruscus aculeatus</i>	Butcher's Broom	Pont du Gard
Orchidaceae	Orchid family	
<i>Himantoglossum robertianum</i>	Giant Orchid	Leaf rosettes, occ bud, Étang des Aulnes
Poaceae	Grass family	
<i>Arundo donax</i>	Giant Reed	Common
<i>Phragmites australis</i>	Common Reed	Very common

Scientific Name	Common Name	Location
Smilacaceae	Smilax family	
<i>Smilax aspera</i>	Smilax ('vicious ivy')	Les Baux, a spiny creeper
Xanthorrhoeaceae	Asphodel family	
<i>Asphodelus fistulosus</i>	Hollow-stemmed Asphodel	La Crau, tufts of fine lvs only