

Leaders

Philip Precey Derbyshire Kieron Huston Derbyshire



Front: Pasque Flower. Above: Gorge du Tarn

A gallery of photos from the trip is at www.flickr.com/photos/wildlifetravel/albums/72177720308783405

Day One: 25th May. Travel to the Cevennes

A full day of train travel, taking us from the busy station at St Pancras, through Essex and Kent and down into the Channel Tunnel, 75 metres beneath the sea bed at 270 km per hour through to the French countryside, changing in Paris to our regional train down to Nimes.

From here, we drove across to the Cevennes, and through the winding roads to our final destination, where we arrived in time for a delicious evening meal.

Day Two: 26th May. La Combe des Cades

A leisurely start to the day, after our travels yesterday, saw us boarding the bus at the positively luxurious hour of 9.30, and heading the short way north up towards Mont Lozere, and the edge of the Causse de Sauveterre, where the granite and limestone bump into each other.

Our walk took us along the field edges and down into the pine woods, although initially we struggled to get much beyond the car park, with so many flowers distracting us from actually setting off on our walk, notably Snow-in-Summer *Cerastium tomensum*, Viper's Bugloss *Echium vulgare* and a trio of members of the Fabaceae family that would become very familiar to us by the end of the day: the lovely two-toned white and pink flowered form of Crimson Clover *Trifolium incarnatum* subsp *molineri*, bright pink spikes of Sainfoin *Onobrychis viciifolia*, and the sprawling Montpellier Milk-vetch *Astragalus monspessulanus*. Into the trees, and we found our first orchids, with a few lemon-yellow spikes of Elder-flowered Orchid *Dactylorhiza sambucina* and masses of not-yet-in-flower Twayblade *Neottia ovata*.

Birds during the morning included both Woodlark and Skylark singing overhead, a Red Kite low over the fields while several Black Kites circled in the distance, a family party of Coal Tits, singing Yellowhammer and the distinctive trill of Western Bonelli's Warblers amongst the trees.

Heading downhill, trackside flowers included our first Pasque Flowers *Pulsatilla vulgaris*, the surprisingly low-growing *Daphne cneorum*, the local goldendrop *Onosma fastigiata*, *Globularia bisnagarica*, plenty of Swallow-wort *Vincetoxicum hirundinaria* (a remedy against tonsillitis), the lovely lilac, salsify-like *Podospermum purpureum*, and another couple of orchids: plenty of Greenwinged Orchids *Anacamptis morio* and a single spike of Fly Orchid *Ophrys insectifera*. Finally making it down to the bottom of the slope, we found a suitably shady bank on which to have our lunch, near to several spikes of Burnt-tip Orchid *Neottia ustulata* and a couple of flowers of Poet's Narcissus *Narcissus poeticus*...

Sandwiches consumed, we took a short diversion down to a beautiful meadow which, it turned out, was absolutely full of the Narcissus, great swathes of them as far as the eye could see. Every step seemed to reveal more botanical delights: great clumps of Columbine *Aquilegia vulgaris*, slender Jersey Thrift *Armeria arenaria*, blue Meadow Clary *Salvia pratensis*, a mass of Western Marsh Orchids *Dactylorhiza majalis*, and much more besides, all with some pretty impressive scenery behind. A beautiful scene, and one we could have enjoyed for much longer.

Back to the main path, and the weather finally caught up with us, and the ascent back up to the bus was a rather damp one.

Day Three: 27th May. Nimes le Vieux

This morning's drive took us around the eastern edge of the Causse Mejean, where a short (is there ever such a thing?), impromptu roadside stop had us enjoying a particularly floriferous slope, with a large population of Military Orchids *Orchis militaris* the chief attraction, along with a few fresh spikes of Woodcock Orchid *Ophrys scolopax*, and some nicely flowering Twayblades. A male Cirl Bunting sang from down the slope, while a Yellowhammer sang from higher up.

Just round the corner, the road took us up onto the south eastern corner of the Causse Mejean, some 1,100 metres above sea level, and the limestone karst landscapes of the Nimes le Vieux, where we had another walk through some wonderful species-rich grasslands.

Carpets of various shades of yellow, with three species of rock-rose, Horseshoe Vetch *Hippocrepis comosa* and bird's-foot trefoils were dotted with Burnt-tip Orchid, Pasque Flower, Mountain Aster *Aster alpinus* and *Globularia bisnagarica*, along with some big creamy-white spikes of Crested Lousewort *Pedicularis comosa*.

Despite their best efforts, scuttling off at our approach, we all ended up with good views of both the local lizards, with numerous Common Wall Lizards amongst the rocks, and Western Green Lizards in the more vegetated areas.

Overhead, a hovering Short-toed Eagle was also on the look-out for reptiles, while the occasional Griffon Vultures drifting over were hoping for slightly larger fayre.

Back down amongst the rocks, and we found some nice rock-loving flowers: the white-flowered *Kernera saxatilis*, the seed heads of *Draba aizooides*, the lovely pink Fairy Foxglove *Erinus alpinus* and a real local speciality, the endemic Cevennes Saxifrage *Saxifraga cebennensis*, growing in one small cluster of rocky columns. Not far away, we found another local endemic, with a couple of very nice spikes of Aymonin's Orchid *Ophrys insectifera* subsp *aymoninii*, a plant we had seen in the rain yesterday.

Butterflies during the day included Silver-studded Blue, Small Blue, Green Hairstreak, Duke of Burgundy, and Heath, Glanville and Knapweed Fritillaries.

With the afternoon rain clouds threatening to do their worst again, we finished our walk, and made our way back to Florac, where we enjoyed an ice cream in the town marketplace, and visited the National Park visitor information centre, before making our way home.

The day wasn't quite at an end, as after dinner (and some rather delicious chocolate birthday cake) we had an evening stroll down to the bridge over the River Tarn. Leisler's Bats, a high-flying, relatively large, forest-dwelling bat, were feeding over the valley as dusk fell, with both Common and Soprano Pipistrelles picked out by the bat detector lower down amongst the trees. But better yet, a European Beaver was spotted from the bridge, first floating gently downstream, before disappearing behind a tree, only to reappear on the river bank a little further on, just as the light finally left us. An exciting end to an excellent day.

Day Four: 28th May. Causse Mejean

We set off south this morning, climbing from the riverside town of Florac, up the switch-back roads to the rolling steppe of the Causse Mejean: an expanse of silvery *Stipa pennata* grassland, with scattered pine plantations and patches of cereal farming in the little pockets of deeper soil.

Our first stop was at the little hamlet of La Villaret, where a project is underway to 're-wild' the original wild horse. Once found across the grassy plains of Eurasia, Przewalski's Horse was last seen in the wild in Mongolia in 1969. By the end of the 1950s, just 12 individuals were left, in a handful of zoos. Conservation work since the 1970s has increased the numbers in captivity to over 1500 animals by the 1990s, with several conservation projects looking to return the animals to the wild.

In 1993, eleven zoo-born horses were brought to Le Villaret, where they have formed free-ranging family groups, and been increasing in numbers ever since: the project now maintains a breeding population of around 40 animals. In 2004/05, 22 horses were returned to Mongolia from Le Villaret to the Khomyn Tal National Park in Mongolia: by 2020, the National Park held more than 100 wild horses.

Other re-introduction projects have followed, with populations now present in three Mongolian national parks, the Kalamaili Nature Reserve in Xinjiang, and the Orenburg steppe in Russia. In 2008, Przewalski's Horse was re-classified from 'extinct in the wild' to 'critically endangered', by the IUCN Red List, and further re-assessed in 2011, to 'endangered'.

We enjoyed great views of a large family group close to the road, a little party of bachelor males over on the hillside and, later on, a solitary old stallion. A conservation success story to start the day!

Horses apart, there were plenty of Red-billed Chough feeding out on the hillside, and we found some very nice spikes of Man Orchid *Orchis anthropophora* right by the bus.

Just around the corner, we came to the little hamlet of Hures, from where we started our day's walking, heading out across the grassy terrain, frosted silver by the *Stipa pennata*, and then down through an area of Maritime Pine plantation woodland and Box scrub to the even-more-sleepy hamlet of Le Bufre.

The typical steppe vegetation of the Causse was made up of rock-roses, trefoils and Horseshoe Vetch, along with Pasque Flowers, Felty Germander *Teucrium rouyanum*, the golden-drop *Ononis fastigiata*, Grass-leaved Ox-eye *Leucanthemum graminifolium* and both Cypress Spurge *Euphorbia cyparissias* and Steppe Spurge *Euphorbia seguieriana*. Orchids were present in large numbers, notably Burnt-tip, Early Purple and Aymonin's Fly Orchid, amongst which we found smaller numbers of Man Orchid, Twayblade and the rather handsome Small Spider Orchid *Ophrys sphegodes* subsp *araneola*.

Into the trees, and it was particularly good to find several plants of Yellow Pheasant's Eye *Adonis* vernalis, a plant which is more usually found flowering earlier in the spring, along with the similarly spring-flowering *Hepatica nobilis*.

In the sunny patches of Box scrub, we found plenty of the lemon-yellow Owly Sulphur *Libelloides* coccajus, a predatory distant-relative of the lacewings, including a pair who allowed a close approach, distracted as they were by procreating.

After our lunch, by a Cornflower-filled field on the edge of Le Bufre, most of us chose to risk the threatened thunder storms, and head back across the Causse.

Singing Quail, several pairs of Northern Wheatears and a posing Tawny Pipit rewarded our efforts, along with Crimson Clover *Trifolium incarnatum* and Hungarian Vetch *Vicia pannonica*, and more Pasque Flowers than you would have thought possible.

A few spots of rain may have fallen, but the deluge waited until we were firmly back on the bus and heading back Florac-wards, before the skies opened, as promised.

Day Five: 29th May. Causses and Gorges

Today we headed back up to the plateau of the Causse Mejean, pausing half way up the escarpment to appreciate the cloud-filled valley below us.

Passing by La Villaret and its horses again, we were soon at the Aven Armand, where the cable car took us down into a spectacular cave, filled with some extraordinary stalagmites: 110m long, 60m wide with an average height of 45m, the total volume of the space is over 300,000 m³, large enough to house Notre Dame Cathedral.

Back up on the surface, after our Jules Verne explorations, we had a coffee before setting off to the Gorges du Tarn, and the riverside village of La Malene.

We had our lunch by the river, before we were driven back onto the bus by the rain and changed our plans, heading down the Gorges du Tarn and around to the Gorges de la Jonte, where we visited the House of the Vultures, a visitor/interpretation centre focussing on the area's now-flourishing populations of vultures.

Having gone extinct from the entire region in the early 20th century, Griffon Vultures were reintroduced to the cliffs of the Gorges de la Jonte in the early 1980s: from 61 individuals released in 1981 and 1982, there are now over 1000 birds in the Grands Causses. Next came the Cinereous, or Black Vulture: extinct in the region for more than 120 years, following the removal of most of the forests that the bird nests in, the first release took place in 1992, with around 200 birds now present in the region, representing the largest European population outside of Iberia.

Egyptian Vulture, the smallest European vulture, returned of its own accord in the 1980s, but with the population right across Europe in decline, their position is still very precarious, with just 2 pairs currently in the Grands Causses. The latest reintroduction is the Lammergeier or Bearded Vulture, with 4 birds released in the Grands Causses in 2020, and a current population of 12 individuals, which have formed two pairs this year, although one of the pairs being a same sex couple is perhaps not the best start to the potential breeding population.

After learning plenty about the birds, their threats and the conservation work going on to protect and increase their populations, we headed up to the viewing platform to see the beasts themselves...

The weather still wasn't the greatest, but there were at least 10 rather desultory-looking Griffon Vultures perched up at various spots along the cliffs, visible through the telescopes. As the sun briefly came out, a single adult Egyptian Vulture soared up high above the cliffs, and one Black Vulture put in an appearance as it flew down the valley.

After dinner, some of us went for another walk down to the river, where we had some amazing views of three beavers, an adult and two very well grown 'kits', as well as numerous Kuhl's Pipistrelles feeding around the riverside trees and low over the water, with Soprano Pipistrelles around a rundown mill building, Leisler's Bats again high over the treetops, and a brief flit-by from a Brown Longeared Bat.

Day Six: 13th June. Gorges du Tarn and Mont Aigoual.

This morning we bade farewell to La Lozerette, and set off southwards, making a short stop first to visit the two churches in nearby Bédouès: the imposing and rather austere Notre Dame de l'Assomption church, originally built in the 14th century by Pope Urban V to house his parents' tomb and then rebuilt in the 17th century, having been destroyed during the 16th century religious wars; and the 12th century chapel of Saint Saturnin, with its 19th century painted wall decorations, where the future pope was baptised in 1309. As the guide books say, 'well worth a detour'.

Our next stop was a return to La Malene, where we boarded two flat-bottomed punts and gently floated down the River Tarn, enjoying the superb gorge scenery, passing Grey Wagtails, Dippers and the locally endemic Causses Butterwort *Pinguicula caussensis* growing on the wet cliffs, while Wrens sang from the wooded banks.

Nico picked us up 8 km along the river, from where the windy roads took us up onto and across the Causses Mejean, skirting the Gorges du Jonte, through the mixed pine/larch/beech forests up to the summit of Mont Aigoual, at 1567m, from where on a clear day you can see the Pyrenees, the Alps and the Mediterranean. The views were a little hazy for us, although we could certainly see across to Mont Lozere, the highest point in the Cevennes.

After lunch beneath the metrological station, we took a walk across the mountain turf and down into the woodland: Mountain Everlasting *Antennaria dioica*, Sequier's Pink *Dianthus sequieri* and Mountain Pansy *Viola lutea* were amongst the wild flowers found, while Tree Pipit and Firecrest were singing amongst the trees, but the real highlight of the mountain was the large number of Wild Tulips *Tulipa sylvestris*.

From here, we continued our journey south, arriving at our next hotel with time for a quick swim (for some) before dinner. After dinner, a short walk up onto the nearby Causse du Larzac revealed at least two churring Nightjars as dusk fell.

Day Seven: 31st May. Lapanouse de Cernon

With another sunny morning/rainy stormy afternoon forecast, we headed off to the Cernon valley, hoping to make the best of the weather.

On arrival, we were confronted (somewhat incongruously) by armed men in camouflage... the French army on training manoeuvres, complete with machine guns and hand grenades, albeit blanks. Luckily, they seemed quite content for a group of British botanists to go about their business, just so long as we didn't park our bus next to their hideout.

And on this occasion, our business was orchids, as we made our way slowly up the hillside through the meadows and dappled woodland.

Novelty for us came in the form of Violet Limodores *Limodorum abortivum*, Lesser Butterfly Orchids *Platanthera bifolia*, a few spikes of White Helleborine *Cephalanthera damasonium* and the lovely Aveyron Spider Orchid *Ophrys sphegodes* subsp *aveyronensis*, as well as a single spike each of Müller's Helleborine *Epipactis muelleri* and Small-leaved Helleborine *Epipactis microphylla*, both a good week or more away from flowering.

A quartet of blue flowers were amongst the other highlights: the short-stemmed blue 'knapweed' *Carthamus mitissimus*; numerous *Aphyllanthes monspeliensis* (the only member of its own subfamily, and a plant crying out for a decent English name); and two species of flax, the smaller-flowered Pale Flax *Linum bienne* and the large, brighter blue-flowered *Linum narbonense*.

Interesting invertebrates along the way included Cream-spot Tiger, Hummingbird Hawk-moth and Broad-bordered Bee Hawk-moth, all nectaring on the Meadow Clary flowers, Spotted Fritillary, Glanville Fritillary and Duke of Burgundy among the butterflies, a lovely flower mantis *Empusa pennata* and some entrancing Pantaloon Bees, busy around their nest burrows in the middle of the track.

After a short pit-stop at the hotel, we paid a visit to the Templar village of La Couvertoirade, where we walked the ramparts, visited the church and learned about the storage of rainwater while the rain fell heavily outside.

Day Eight: 1st June. Departure

One last wander across the Causse, with the beautiful orchid *Orchis x bergonii*, the hybrid between Man and Monkey Orchid; the smaller blue flax *Linum leonii*; and a big Tarantula Wolf Spider in her tunnel the highlights, and then it was time head back to Montpellier, and the cavernous new Sud de France train station, from where we made our way off, variously to more French explorations or up to Lille and the Eurostar home.

Philip Precey, Wildlife Travel. June 2023

SCIENTIFIC NAME	ENGLISH NAME Notes	First so
PTERIDOPHYTA: FERNS		
Aspleniaceae (spleenwort f		
Asplenium ceterach	Rustyback	27 th
Asplenium ruta-muraria	Wall-rue	29 th
Asplenium septentrionale	Forked Spleenwort	27 th
Asplenium trichomanes	Maidenhair Spleenwort	27 th
Dennstaedtiaceae (bracker	family)	
Pteridium aquilinum	Bracken	26 th
Ophioglossaceae (adder's t	ongue fern family)	
Botrychium lunaria	Moonwort	30 th
Polypodiaceae (polypody fa	amily)	
Polypodium vulgare	Common Polypody	29 th
Pteridaeae (maidenhair fer	n family)	
Adiantum capillus-veneris	Maidenhair Fern	30 th
PINOPHYTA: CONIFERS		
Cupressaceae (cypress fam	ily)	
Juniperus communis	Common Juniper	26 th
Pinaceae (pine family)		
Pinus maritimus	Maritime Pine. Eastern Cevennes, eg Combes des Cades	26 th
Pinus mugo	Mountain Pine. Mont Aiguoal	30 th
Pinus sylvestris	Scots Pine. eg Gorge du Tarn	30 th
MAGNOLIOPHYTA: FLOWER	RING PLANTS	
DICOTYLEDONS		
Apiaceae (carrot family)		
Conopodium majus	Pignut	30 th
Laserpitium gallicum		31 st
Meum athamanticum	Spignel	30 th
Scandix pecten-veneris	Shepherd's Needle	28 th
Trinia glauca	Honewort. Combes des Cades, trackside	26 th
Apocynaceae (dogbane fan	nily) (includes former Asclepiadaceae)	
Vincetoxicum hirundinaria	Swallow-wort	26 th
Aristolochiaceae (birthwork	family)	
Aristolochia clematis	Birthwort	30 th
Asteraceae (daisy family)		
Antennaria dioica	Mountain Everlasting	30 th
Anthemis cf cretica	The ox-eye daisy at Mont Aiguoal	30 th
Aster alpinus	Mountain Aster	26 th
Carlina acanthifolia	The big carline thistle, symbol of the Cevennes	26 th
Carthamus mitissimus	Small blue, stemless 'thistle'.	27 th
Catananche caerulea	Papery bracts	31 st
Centaurea cyanus	Cornflower	26 th
Crepis albida	Impressive buds, not yet in flower. Nimes le Vieux	27 th

SCIENTIFIC NAME	ENGLISH NAME Notes	First see
Doronicum sp	A leopard's bane	28 th
Helichrysum stoechas		28 th
Lactuca perennis	Blue Lettuce	29 th
Leucanthemum graminifoli	um Grass-leaved Ox-eye Daisy	26 th
Podospermum purpureum	Lilac-flowered 'salsify', Combe des Cades	26 th
Tragopogon crocifolius	Brick-red-flowered salsify, Causse du Larzac	1 st
Tragopogon porrifolius	Pink-flowered salsify, Causse du Larzac	1 st
Tragopogon pratensis	Goat's beard. Combe des Cades	26 th
Boraginaceae (forget-me-n	ot family)	
Buglossoides arvensis	Corn Gromwell	26 th
Echium vulgare	Viper's Bugloss	26 th
Onosma fastigiata	the Causses goldendrop	26 th
Brassicaceae (cabbage fami		
Alyssum serphyllifolium	Low-growing, yellow flowered brassica, near roadside at	26 th
	Combes des Cades	
Arabis glabra	Tower Mustard	26 th
Biscutella laevigata	Buckler-mustard	27 th
Capsella bursa-pastoris	Shepherd's Purse	26 th
Draba aizoides	Yellow Whitlow-grass. Nimes le Vieux	27 th
Kernera saxatilis	Nimes le Vieux	27 th
Lepidium cf campestre	Field Pepperwort	26 th
Lunaria annua	Honesty	31 st
Pseudoturritis turrita	Tower Cress Long seed pods	31 st
Buxaceae (box family)		
Buxus sempervirens	Box	28 th
Campanulaceae (bellflower	family)	
Phyteuma orbiculare	Round-headed Rampion	26 th
Legousia hybrida	Venus's Looking Glass	28 th
Caprifoliaceae (honeysuckle	e family) (includes former Dipsacaceae)	
Dipsacus fullonum	Common Teasel	27 th
Lonicera etrusca	Etruscan Honeysuckle	29 th
Lonicera xylosteum	Fly Honeysuckle	26 th
Valeriana calcitrapae	valerian at Nimes le Vieux	27 th
Valeriana lecogii	fine-leaved red valerian along roasides, heading south	1 st
Valeriana rubra	Red Valerian	26 th
Valeriana tripteris	Three-leaved Valerian	28 th
Valerianella sp	Cornsalad	26 th
Caryophyllaceae (carnation	family)	
Arenaria serpyllifolia	Thyme-leaved Sandwort	26 th
Cerastium arvense	Field Mouse-ear	28 th
Cerastium tomentosum	Snow in Summer. Combes des Cades	26 th
Dianthus deltoides	Maiden Pink	30 th

SCIENTIFIC NAME	ENGLISH NAME Notes	First see
Dianthus seguieri	Seguier's Pink. not yet in flower in the meadow at Combe	26 th
	des Cades; flowering at Mont Aiguoal	
Saponaria ocymoides	Rock Soapwort. Combe des Cades	26 th
Scleranthus perennis	Perennia Knawel. Combe des Cades	26 th
Silene conica	Sand Catchfly. Combe des Cades	26 th
Silene latifolia	White Campion	26 th
Silene nutans	Nottingham Catchfly. Combe des Cades	26 th
Silene otites	Spanish Catchfly. Nimes le Vieux	27 th
Silene vulgaris	Bladder Campion	26 th
Cistaceae (rock-rose family)	·	
Helianthemum apenninum	White Rock-rose	26 th
Helianthemum canum	Hoary Rock-rose	26 th
Helianthemum nummulariui		26 th
Crassulaceae (stonecrop fan	nily)	
Hylotelephium telephium	Orpine	29 th
Petrosedum sediforme	Pale Stonecrop	30 th
Sedum acre	Biting Stonecrop	30 th
Sedum album	White Stonecrop	30 th
Sedum dasyphyllum	Thick-leaved Stonecrop	30 th
Umbilicus rupestris	Navelwort	30 th
Cucurbitaceae (gourd family		
Bryonia alba	White Bryony	31 st
Dioscoreaceae (yam family)	, ,	
Dioscorea communis	Black Bryony	31 st
Ericaceae (heather family)		
Calluna vulgaris	Heather	30 th
Vaccinium myrtillus	Bilberry	30 th
Euphorbiaceae (spurge fami	,	
Euphorbia amygdaloides	Wood Spurge	30 th
Euphorbia cyparissias	Cypress Spurge	26 th
Euphorbia seguieriana	Steppe Spurge	28 th
Fabaceae (pea family)		
Anthyllis montana	Mountain Kidney Vetch	26 th
Anthyllis vulneraria	Kidney Vetch	26 th
Astragalus glycyphyllos	Wild Liquorice	1 st
Astragalus monspessulanus	Montpellier Milk-vetch	26 th
		26 th
Coronilla minima		27 th
Coronilla minima Cytisophyllum sessilifolium	Golden Banner, eg amongst the rocks. Nimes le Vieux	1/ /
Cytisophyllum sessilifolium	Golden Banner. eg amongst the rocks, Nimes le Vieux Pyrenean Broom	
Cytisophyllum sessilifolium Cytisus oromediterraneus	Pyrenean Broom	26 th
Cytisophyllum sessilifolium		

SCIENTIFIC NAME	ENGLISH NAME Notes	First so
Laburnum anagyroides	Laburnum	29 th
Lathyrus cicero	Red Grass Vetchling	26 th
Lotus dorycnium	Badassi	29 th
Lotus maritimus	Dragons Tooth	26 th
Onobrychis viciifolia	Sainfoin	26 th
Robinia pseudoacacia	Black Locust	27 th
Spartium junceum	Spanish Broom. Roadsides, heading south	1 st
Trifolium alpinum	Alpine Clover	26 th
Trifolium incarnatum	Crimson Clover	28 th
Trifolium incarnatum subs	o molinerii Long-headed Clover	26 th
Vicia onobrychoides	Sainfoin Vetch	26 th
Vicia pannonica	Hungarian Vetch	28 th
Vicia sativa	Common Vetch	26 th
Vicia tenuifolia	Narrow-leaved Vetch	26 th
Fagaceae (beech family)		
Castanea sativa	Sweet Chestnut	26 th
Fagus sylvatica	Beech	26 th
Quercus pubescens	Downy Oak.	26 th
Geraniaceae (geranium fai		
Erodium cicutarium	Common Stork's Bill	26 th
Geranium dissectum	Cut-leaved Crane's-bill	26 th
Geranium lucidum	Shining Crane's-bill	28 th
Geranium mole	Dove's-foot Crane's-bill	26 th
Geranium pyrencum	Hedgerow Crane's-bill	27 th
Geranium sanguineum	Bloody Crane's-bill	1st
Grossulariaceae (gooseber	ry family)	
Ribes alpinum	Mountain Currant	28 th
Ribes uva-crispa	Gooseberry	26 th
Hypericaceae (St John's-w		
Hypericum pulchrum	Slender St John's Wort	26 th
Lamiaceae (mint family)		
Ajuga genevensis	Blue Bugle. Nimes le Vieux	27 th
Lamiastrum galeobdolon	Yellow Archangel. Nimes le Vieux	27 th
Lamium garganicum	Large Red Dead-nettle. Nime le Vieux	27 th
Lavandula angustifolia	Common Lavender	28 th
Melittis melissophyllum	Bastard Balm	26 th
Origanum vulgarea	Wild Marjoram	30 th
Salvia pratensis	Meadow Clary	26 th
Teucrium chamaedrys	Wall Germander	26 th
Teucrium rouyanum		28 th
Thymus sp		26 th

SCIENTIFIC NAME	ENGLISH NAME Notes	First se
Lentibulariaceae (bladde	wort family)	
Pinguicula caussensis	Causses Butterwort	30 th
Linaceae (flax family)		
Linum bienne	Pale Flax. tall, pale blue	31 st
Linum campanulatum	yellow flax	26 th
Linum leonii	shorter, blue	1st
Linum narbonense	Perennial Flax. tall, rich blue	28 th
Linum salsoloides	pinky-white flax	26 th
Malvaceae (mallow famil	y)	
Malva parviflora	Small-flowered Mallow	28 th
Malva setigera	Rough Marsh Mallow	1 st
Malva sylvestris	Common Mallow	31 st
Moraceae (fig family)		
Ficus carica	Fig	27 th
Orobanchaceae (broomra	ape family)	
Pedicularis comosa	Crested Lousewort. Nimes le Vieux	27 th
Rhinanthus minor	Yellow Rattle	26 th
Rhinanthus cf pumilus	A large yellow rattle	26 th
Papaveraceae (poppy fan	nily)	
Papaver rhoeas	Corn Poppy	26 th
Plantaginaceae (plantain	family)	
Chaenorhinum origanifoli	ium On the wall at La Malene	29 th
Cymbalaria muralis	Ivy-leaved Toadflax. On the wall at La Malene	29 th
Digitalis purpurea	Foxglove	30 th
Erinus alpinus	Fairy Foxglove. Nimes le Vieux	27 th
Globularia bisnagarica		26 th
Plantago holosteum		26 th
Plantago lanceolata	Ribwort Plantain	26 th
Plantago media	Hoary Plantain	26 th
Veronica teucrium	speedwell, Nimes le Vieux	27 th
Plumbaginaceae (leadwo	rt family)	
Armeria arenaria	Jersey Thrift	26 th
Polygalaceae (milkwort fa	amily)	
Polygala calcarea	Chalk Milkwort	26 th
Polygala vulgaris		26 th
Primulaceae (primrose fa	mily)	
Lysimachia arvensis	Scarlet Pimpernel. The blue-flowered form	28 th
Primula veris	Cowslip	26 th
Ranunculaceae (buttercu	p family)	
Adonis vernalis	Yellow Pheasant's Eye	28 th
A :1 : 1 ·	Columbine. Combe des Cades	26 th
Aquilegia vulgaris	Columbine. Combe des Cades	20

SCIENTIFIC NAME	ENGLISH NAME Notes	First se
Helleborus foetidus	Stinking Hellebore	28 th
Helleborus viridis	Green Hellebore. Combes des Cades	26 th
Hepatica nobilis	Hepatica. Nimes le Vieux	27 th
Pulsatilla vulgaris	Pasque Flower	26 th
Ranunculus bulbosus	Bulbous Buttercup	26 th
Ranunculus gramineus	Grass-leaved Buttercup	26 th
Ranunculus cf peltatus	Pond Water Crowfoot the large-flowered water crowfoot in the pond	28 th
Ranunculus cf trichophyllus	Thread-leaved Crowfoot the small-flowered water crowfoot in the pond	28 th
Thalictrum aquilegifolium	Greater Meadow-rue	30 th
Thalictrum minus	Lesser Meadow-rue	31 st
Resedaceae (mignonette fai	mily)	
Reseda alba	White Mignonette	26 th
Reseda phyteuma	Corn Mignonette	30 th
Rosaceae (rose family)		
Alchemilla saxatilis agg.	Nimes le Vieux	27 th
Amelanchier ovalis	Snowy Mespilus	26 th
Crataegus monogyna	Common Hawthorn	26 th
Potentilla caulescens	Causses Cinqefoil.	27 th
Prunus mahaleb	St Lucie's Cherry	26 th
Prunus spinose	Blackthorn	26 th
Rosa canina	Dog Rose	26 th
Rosa pimpinelloides	Burnet Rose	26 th
Rubiaceae (madder family)		
Cruciata laevipes	Crosswort. Nimes le Vieux	27 th
Galium mollugo	Hedge Bedstraw	30 th
Galium verum	Lady's Bedstraw	29 th
Sherardia arvensis	Field Madder	26 th
Santalaceae (sandalwood fa	mily)	
Thesium divaricatum	Bastard Toadflax	27 th
Sapindaceae (maple family)		
Acer monspellanus		30 th
Saxifragaceae (saxifrage fam	nily)	
Saxifraga cebennensis	Cevennes Saxifrage	27 th
Saxifraga granulate	Meadow Saxifrage	26 th
Solanaceae (nightshade fam	-	
Hyoscyamus niger	Henbane	27 th
Thymeleaceae (daphne fam	ily)	
Daphne cneorum		26 th

SCIENTIFIC NAME	ENGLISH NAME Notes	First seen
Violaceae (violet family)		
Viola canina	Heath Dog Violet	30 th
Viola lutea	Mountain Pansy	30 th
Viola tricolor	Heart's-ease	26 th
MONOCOTYLEDONS		
Amaryllidaceae (daffodil fan	nily)	
Narcissus poeticus	Poet's Narcissus. Meadow full at Combes des Cades	26 th
Asparagaceae (asparagus fa	mily)	
Anthericum liliago	St Bernard's Lily	31 st
Anthericum ramosum	Road verges in Gorges du Tarn	29 th
Aphyllanthes monspeliensis	Road verges in Gorges du Tarn	29 th
Muscari neglectum	Grape Hyacinth	28 th
Muscari commosum	Tassel Hyacinth	26 th
Ornithogalum umbellatum	Garden Star-of-Bethlehem	26 th
Polygonatum multiflorum	Solomon's-seal	27 th
Polygonatum odoratum	Angular Solomon's-seal	31 st
Ruscus aculeatus	Butcher's Broom	31 st
Asphodelaceae (asphodel fa	mily)	
Asphodelus ramosus	Branched Asphodel	31 st
Iridaceae (iris family)		
Iris x germanica	Bearded Iris. A garden escape	26 th
Liliaceae (lily family)		
Tulipa sylvestris	Wild Tulip	30 th
Poaceae (grass family)		
Stipa cf pennata	Angel Hair Grass. Common across the Causses	26 th

Orchidaceae (orchid family)		26	27	28	29	30	31	1
Anacamptis morio	Green-winged Orchid	X	Χ	Χ			Χ	Х
Anacamptis pyramidalis	Pyramidal Orchid	X	Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ	X
Cephalanthera damasoniun	7 White Helleborine						Χ	
Cephalanthera longifolia	Sword-leaved Helleborine	X	Χ					
Dactylorhiza sambucina	Elder-flowered Orchid	X	Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ	
Dactylorhiza majalis	Western Marsh Orchid	X						
Epipactis atrorubens	Dark Red Helleborine	X						
Epipactis muelleri	Müller's Helleborine						Χ	
Epipactis microphylla	Small-leaved Helleborine						Χ	
Himantoglossum hircinum	Lizard Orchid	X		Χ	Χ	Χ		>
Limodorum abortivum	Violet Limodore						Χ	
Neotinea ustulata	Burnt-tip Orchid	Х	Χ	Χ			Χ)
Neottia ovata	Twayblade	X	Χ	Χ			Χ	Ī
<i>Ophrys insectifera</i> subsp	Aymonin's Fly Orchid	Х	Χ	Χ				
aymoninii								
Ophrys insectifera subsp	Fly Orchid	Х					Χ	
insectifera								
Ophrys scolopax	Woodcock Orchid		Χ				Χ	
Ophrys sphegodes subsp	Small Spider Orchid	Х		Χ)
araneola								
Ophrys sphegodes subsp	Aveyron Spider Orchid						Χ	
aveyronensis								
Orchis anthropophora	Man Orchid			Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ)
Orchis x bergonii	hybrid Man X Monkey Orchid)
Orchis mascula	Early Purple Orchid	X	Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ)
Orchis militaris	Military Orchid		Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ	Ī
Orchis simia	Monkey Orchid		Χ)
Platanthera bifolia	Lesser Butterfly Orchid						Χ	T
Platanthera chlorantha	Greater Butterfly Orchid			Χ				
Platanthera sp.	a butterfly orchid	Х	Χ	Х	Х	Х		Ť









Above (clockwise, from top left): Aveyron Spider Orchid *Ophrys sphegodes* subsp *aveyronensis;* Burnt-tip Orchid *Neottinea ustulata;* Aymonin's Fly Orchid *Ophrys insectifera* subsp *aymoninii;* hybrid Man x Monkey Orchid *Orchis x bergonii*

BIRDS

This checklist follows the taxonomy published in the HBW and BirdLife International Illustrated Checklist of the Birds of the World, as updated by www.birdsoftheworld.org

English names follow those used in the Collins Bird Guide (3rd edition).

ENGLISH NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	2	5 2	6 27	7 28	29	30	31
Family Anatidae (Duc	ks, Geese and Waterfowl)							
Mallard	Anas platyrhnchos	>					Χ	
Family Phasianidae (F	Pheasants, Grouse and allies)							
Common Quail	Coturnix coturnix			Н	Н			
Family Columbidae (F	Pigeons and Doves)							
Woodpigeon	Columba palumbus			Х				
Stock Dove	Columba oenas					Χ	Χ	
Collared Dove	Streptopelia decaocto)	(X	Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ
Family Cuculidae (Cu	ckoos)							
Cuckoo	Cuculus canorus		ŀ	Н	Н		Н	Н
Family Caprimulgidae	e (Nightjars)							
Nightjar	Caprimulgus europaeus						Н	
Family Apodidae (Sw	ifts)							
Common Swift	Apus apus)	(X	Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ
Family Laridae (Gulls,	, Terns and Skimmers)							
Yellow-legged Gull	Larus michahellis	>	΄.					
Family Ciconiidae (St	orks)							
White Stork	Ciconia ciconia	>	΄.					
Family Ardeidae (Her	ons, Egrets and Bitterns)							
Grey Heron	Ardea cinerea	>	(Χ	Χ	
Cattle Egret	Bubulcus ibis	>	΄.					
Family Accipitridae (H	lawks, Eagles and Kites)							
Egyptian Vulture	Neophron percnopterus					Χ		
Cinereous Vulture	Aegypius monachus					Χ		
Griffon Vulture	Gyps fulvus			Х	X	Χ	Χ	
Short-toed Eagle	Circaetus gallicus			Х		Χ	Χ	
Marsh Harrier	Circus aeruginosus						Χ	
Sparrowhawk	Accipiter nisus			Х		Χ		
Red Kite	Milvus milvus)	(X			Χ	
Black Kite	Milvus migrans	>	()	(Χ		Χ
Common Buzzard	Buteo buteo	>	()	< X		Χ		Χ
Family Picidae (Wood	dpeckers)							
Great Spotted Wood	pecker Dendrocopos major						Χ	
Green Woodpecker	Picus viridis				Х			

ENGLISH NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	25	26	27	28	29	30	3:
Family Falconidae (Fa	alcons and Caracaras)							
Kestrel	Falco tinnunculus	Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ	
Hobby	Falco subbuteo				Χ			
Family Laniidae (Shril	kes)							
Red-backed Shrike	Lanius collurio		Χ		Χ	Χ		
Family Corvidae (Cro	ws, Jays and Magpies)							
Magpie	Pica pica	Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ	Х
Jay	Garrulus glandarius	Χ	Χ		Χ		Χ	Х
Jackdaw	Corvus monedula				Χ	Χ	Χ	
Red-billed Chough	Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax			Χ	Χ			
Carrion Crow	Corvus corone				Χ	Χ	Χ	Х
Raven	Corvus corax		Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ	
Family Paridae (Tits)								
Blue Tit	Cyanistes caeruleus						Χ	
Coal Tit	Periparus ater		Χ		Χ		Χ	
Great Tit	Parus major		Χ		Χ	Χ		
Family Alaudidae (La	rks)							
Woodlark	Lullula arborea		Χ		Χ			
Skylark	Alauda arvensis		Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ	Х
Family Hirundinidae	(Swallows)							
Crag Martin	Ptyonoprogne rupestris		Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ	
Swallow	Hirundo rustica		Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ	Х
House Martin	Delichon urbica			Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ	
Family Phylloscopida								
	arbler Phylloscopus bonelli		Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ	Х
Chiffchaff	Phylloscopus collybita				Χ	Χ	Χ	Х
	iid Warblers and allies)							
Blackcap	Sylvia atricapilla		Χ	Χ	Χ		Χ	Х
Garden Warbler	Sylvia borin			Χ				<u> </u>
•	Varbler Curruca iberiae					Χ		<u> </u>
Whitethroat	Curruca communis			Χ	Χ			
Family Regulidae (Kir					1			
Firecrest	Regulus ignicapilla						Χ	Х
Family Sittidae (Nuth	·				1			
Nuthatch	Sitta europaea				Χ		Χ	
Family Troglodytidae								
Wren	Troglodytes troglodytes						Χ	
Family Cinclidae (Dip	•							
Dipper	Cinclus cinclus			Χ			Χ	
Family Sturnidae (Sta	- :							
Starling	Sturnus vulgaris		Χ	Χ		Χ		Х

ENGLISH NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1
Family Turdidae (Thrus	shes and allies)								
Mistle Thrush	Turdus viscivorus		Χ			Χ			
Song Thrush	Turdus philomelos						Χ		
Blackbird	Turdus merula		Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ	
Family Muscicapidae (Old World Flycatchers)								
Spotted Flycatcher	Muscicapa striata						Χ		
Robin	Erithacus rubecula		Χ				Χ		
Nightingale	Luscinia megarhynchos		Χ		Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ	
Common Redstart	Phoenicurus phoenicurus						Χ		
Black Redstart	Phoenicurus ochruros		Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ	
Common Stonechat	Saxicola torquata				Χ	Χ			
Northern Wheatear	Oenanthe oenanthe			Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ		
Family Passeridae (Old	World Sparrows)								
House Sparrow	Passer domesticus		Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ	
Rock Sparrow	Petronia petronia			Χ	Χ				
Family Motacillidae (W	/agtails and Pipits)								
Grey Wagtail	Motacilla cinerea			Χ		Χ	Χ		
White Wagtail	Motacilla alba alba		Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ	
Tawny Pipit	Anthus campestris				Χ				
Tree Pipit	Anthus trivialis		Χ				Χ	Χ	
Family Fringillidae (Fin	ches and allies)								
Chaffinch	Fringilla coelebs		Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ	
Linnet	Linaria cannabina			Χ	Χ		Χ		
Goldfinch	Carduelis carduelis		Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ	
Serin	Serinus serinus		Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ	
Family Emberizidae (Bu	untings)								
Corn Bunting	Emberiza calandra		Χ		Χ	Χ	Χ		
Yellowhammer	Emberiza citronella		Χ	Χ					
Cirl Bunting	Emberiza cirlus		Χ	Χ	Χ		Χ		

Cevennes 2023: trip report and species lists

ENGLISH NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1
MAMMALS									
Common Pipistrelle	Pipistrellus pipistrellus			Χ		Χ			
Soprano Pipistrelle	Pipistrellus pygmaeus			Χ		Χ			
Kuhl's Pipistrelle	Pipistrellus kuhlii					Χ			
Leisler's Bat	Nyctalus leisleri			Χ		Χ			
Brown Long-eared Bat	Plecotus auritus					Χ			
European Beaver	Castor fiber		1		3				
Common Vole	Microtus arvalis								2
Red Fox	Vulpes vulpes				1				
Beech Marten	Martes foina							S	
Przewalski's Horse	Equus ferus przewalskii				Χ	Χ	_		
Wild Boar	Sus scrofa						S		
Greater White-toothed	Shrew Crocidura russula				D				

HERPTILES								
Palmate Newt	Lissotriton helveticus			Χ				
Parsley Frog	Pelodytes punctatus		Χ					
Marsh Frog	Pelophylax ridibundus					Χ		
Western Green Lizard	Lacerta bilineata	Χ	Χ	Χ			Χ	
Common Wall Lizard	Podarcis muralis		Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ	Χ	





Above: European Beaver (Tarn River) and Parsley Frog (Causse de Mejean)

ENGLISH NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1
BUTTERFLIES									
Family Hesperiidae (skip	pers)								
Grizzled Skipper	Pyrgus malvae		Χ	Χ	Χ			Χ	
Family Papilionidae (swa			, ,		, ,				
Swallowtail	Papilio machaon			Χ	Χ		Χ		
Scarce Swallowtail	Iphiclides podalirius						Χ	Χ	
Family Pieridae (whites)									
Brimstone	Gonepteryx rhamni		Χ	Χ	Χ			Χ	
Large White	Pieris brassicae		Χ	Χ	Χ		Χ	Χ	
Small White	Pieris rapae		Χ	Χ					
Black-veined White	Aporia crataegi							Χ	
Orange-tip	Anthocharis cardamines		Χ	Χ	Χ				
Provence Orange-tip	Anthocharis euphenoides		Χ						
Clouded Yellow	Colias crocea		Χ						
Wood White	Leptidea sinapis		Χ						
Family Riodinidae (meta	lmarks)								
Duke of Burgundy	Hamearis lucina			Χ				Χ	
Family Lycaenidae (blue:	s, coppers and hairstreaks)								
Green Hairstreak	Callophrys rubi			Χ	Χ		Χ		
Small Copper	Lycaena phlaeas		Χ	Χ			Χ	Χ	
Purple-shot Copper	Lycaena alciphron				Χ				
Brown Argus	Aricia agestis				Χ			Χ	
Holly Blue	Celastrina argiolus		Χ		Χ				
Little Blue	Cupido minimus		Χ	Χ	Χ			Χ	
Green-underside Blue	Glaucopsyche alexis			Χ					
Common Blue	Polyommatus icarus		Χ	Χ	Χ		Χ	Χ	
Adonis Blue	Lysandra bellargus			Χ					
Silver-studded Blue	Plebejus argus			Χ					
Nymphalidae (nymphs, f									
Painted Lady	Cynthia cardui		Χ						
Small Tortoiseshell	Aglais urticae		Χ		Χ			Χ	
Queen of Spain Fritillary					Χ				
Pearl-bordered Fritillary	,				Χ			 	
Glanville Fritillary	Melitaea cinxia			Χ	Χ			Χ	
Knapweed Fritillary	Melitaea phoebe			Χ	Χ			\vdash	
Spotted Fritillary	Melitaea didyma				_			Χ	
Heath Fritillary	Mellicta athalia		Χ	Χ	Χ				
Speckled Wood	Pararge aegeria		Χ		Χ			<u> </u>	i
Wall Brown	Lasiommata megera		Χ	Χ	Χ				
Pearly Heath	Coenonympha arcania		_					Χ	
Small Heath	Coenonympha pamphilus		Χ	Χ	Χ			Χ	









Above (clockwise, from top left): Poet's Narcissus, *Narcissus poeticus;* Spotted Fritillary; Wild Tulip *Tulipa sylvestris;* Cream-spot Tiger

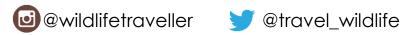
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01954 713575

wildlifetravel@wildlifebcn.org







The Manor House, Broad Street, Great Cambourne, Cambridge CB23 6DH