



Honeyguide

WILDLIFE HOLIDAYS

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Camargue
13 – 20 May 2015

Participants

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Leaders

Robin and Rachel Hamilton

We stayed at the Hôtel Robinson www.hotel-robinson.fr

Report and lists by Robin and Rachel Hamilton.

Photos by Andrew (AE), Sue (SLJ), Robin (RMH) and Rachel (RFLH), all taken during the holiday week.

Cover picture: Flamingos at the Étang du Fangassier and *Guardians des Taureaux* (both SLJ).

Below – presenting the Honeyguide cheque to Amine from the LPO (SLJ).



This holiday, like every Honeyguide holiday, also puts something into conservation in our host country by way of a contribution to the wildlife that we enjoyed. The conservation contribution this year of £40 per person went towards Lesser Kestrel protection, and our contribution of 1000€ to the LPO's project to conserve la Crau's vulnerable breeding population of Lesser Kestrels was presented to Programme Manager Amine Flitti during the holiday. A letter of thanks is at the end of this report.

Including a donation in June this year to the LPO in the Pyrenees, this gives us a running total for donations to the LPO since 1991 of £22,733.

As at June 2015, the total for all conservation contributions through Honeyguide since 1991 was £101,743.

DAILY DIARY

Day 1: Wednesday 13 May – Arrival at the Hôtel Robinson

It was as if the holiday were starting early – so many of us met over breakfast at the Corner House Hotel at Gatwick to be squeezed into the minibus and driven to the airport. And for once it was a warm and sunny spring morning as our flight took off, a slightly frustrating half-hour late. We arrived in Montpellier on time (how does that so often happen?), with some lovely views of France on the way. Taxiing in, we were greeted, as if to order, by a large flock of Flamingos on the lagoon beside the runway.

We were very pleased to find Robin M, all the way from Australia, waiting for us at the arrivals gate, and the leaders had a pleasant encounter with efficient and friendly Europcar staff as they handed over our almost new minibuses. There was a very Mediterranean feel to the afternoon and we were still unused to the temperature, struggling to cram the luggage into the buses; we were glad of the air conditioning as we headed eastwards along the autoroute. The Provençal landscape unfolded beside us: Maritime Pines and Italian Cypresses, Giant Reeds and olive groves, glimpses of the sea on our right and misty hills rising on our left, a Roller on a telegraph wire and a Black Kite in the sky.

Leaving the motorway at Nîmes we were immediately plunged into a more leisurely world, and a chance to enjoy French village scenes, picture-book stone cottages covered in roses, neat vineyards, fields of poppies. Just before Beaucaire we turned north and, skirting an enticing scrubby limestone outcrop yellow with Spanish Broom, we turned in to the Hôtel Robinson drive, to a welcoming chorus of Blackcaps and Nightingales. We sorted our luggage, settled into our rooms, and came down to be welcomed by Marie-Jo, who was managing the hotel while Nadine was away, with glasses of kir and fresh orange juice on the terrace.

There was a little time before dinner, so we walked up the hill through the extensive hotel grounds. It was shady, and the heat had gone out of the afternoon, but beside the track the sun lit up patches of bright Pitch Trefoil, and the spectacular dandelion-like *Urospermum* flowers. Wild Madder scrambled stickily through Box bushes and Ursula found a fresh and perfect Woodcock Orchid. There were some majestic clumps of Mediterranean Spurge, a very pretty spike of Broomrape – always mysterious looking – and then, on the bank we were captivated by several fine spikes of Violet Limodore.

At the top of the hill, (part of the limestone outcrop that we had driven around just before we arrived) a huge view opens out, across the Gardon and the Rhône, with their hydro-electric systems, and over the fertile Rhône valley to another limestone outcrop, the Alpilles; we could identify some of the places we were due to explore during the holiday. The hilltop is covered in a fragrant, flowery, dwarf-shrub community: *Phlomis*, *Helichrysum*, Rockroses, Cistuses and Bugloss. We watched a procession of tiny ants carrying yellow petals along their well-worn track and disappearing with them among some loose earth. There was a Black Kite above us and Swifts soaring and screaming overhead; for some of us, they were the precious first Swifts of the summer. We could hear a Collared Dove and a Great Tit calling and a Nightingale singing down in the valley towards the river. Beyond the river, a Wood Pigeon flew over the trees; we caught a glimpse of a Green Woodpecker and a distant Black Kite. Ian drew our attention to a singing Redstart whose song David swiftly recognised and several people watched it performing on the top of a chimney. Then, on the way down David shouted "Sparrowhawk!" in time for several of us to spot it shooting overhead.

It was dinner time. We were directed into the elegant dining room where a long table had been prettily laid out for us, and we dined contentedly on *œufs en cocotte au purée de petits pois*, *filet de loup* (sea bass) and *île flottante*, with a plentiful supply of local wines.

It was a warm evening so after dinner some of us went out onto the terrace to listen to Nightingales – two or three of them were singing nearby. They continued all night, joined occasionally by a Tawny Owl.

Day 2: Thursday 14 May - A first taste of the Camargue: the Western Camargue

A cloudy, still day greeted us, but the cloud was thin and the light good. Several of us had been tempted out of bed early so before breakfast we strolled up the hill, eyes and ears alert principally for birds, though we paused to pay our respects to a Common Toad that lay dead beside the track. The Redstart was singing again, holding territory centred on the chimney and we had a very good view of a Serin singing from the high branches. The song of Nightingales came to us from the little scrubby valleys all around. We arrived at the same hilltop as the evening before, and saw our first Carrion Crow, and also the first butterfly of the holiday – a Painted Lady. Blackcap and Collared Dove song accompanied our speedier descent to breakfast where the rest of the group was already tucking in to coffee and juice, cereals and cheese, toast and croissants and homemade preserves.

We packed two huge cold-boxes into the minibuses and retraced the last few miles of our arrival. On the road outside the hotel, we saw a very dark-furred Red Squirrel; sadly, it was dead. Instead of turning back towards Nîmes we headed south across the rich agricultural plains, covered in *Costières de Nîmes* vineyards, towards the little town of St Gilles, the easiest way to access the Camargue from the west.

Dozens of Swifts swirled and screamed in the air above the town. Just after St Gilles we crossed the Rhône-Sète Canal, and half a kilometre further on, a bridge over the Petit Rhône took us into the true Camargue. There are main roads leading south, along the Petit Rhône to les Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer, and eastwards across the northern edge of the Camargue towards Arles. We ignored these for the time being and wove our way along tiny lanes, among paddyfields and dusty salty scrub with the famous white horses and black bulls. Fan-tailed Warblers called and we had brief glimpses of Bee-eaters beside the road.

Our first stop was among flooded rice fields where Black-winged Stilts and Glossy Ibises were feeding. A Night Heron flew by and a distant Reed Warbler was singing. A colony of House Sparrows twittered around a nearby farmstead and a sleepy female Common Blue crawled onto Rachel's hand – useful to see its characteristic features. Reeds and Yellow Flag Irises filled the ditches and from deep in a hedgerow beside a ditch, a Moustached Warbler was singing persistently, though refusing to show itself to confirm its identity. Ian spotted three Shelducks flying overhead. A Clouded Yellow posed to be photographed and we identified Broad-bodied Chasers and Scarlet Darters among the miscellany of dragonflies and damselflies to be seen.



Yellow Flag Irises, Clouded Yellow and Sea Irises (all SLJ)

We continued slowly along the lane, looking out for excitement. Quite unconscious of our cameras, a distant group of horsemen and women (*guardians des taureaux*) were preparing horses for moving some bulls. We stopped several times briefly for Bee-eaters, watched a distant White Stork, listened to Nightingales and Cetti's Warblers singing, watched Blue-headed Wagtails with a herd of black bulls. Patches of bright blue Bugloss and pink Reversed Clover decorated the verges with great clumps of Yellow Flags in the ditches.

After this leisurely progress, the main Arles to les Saintes-Maries road was an unwelcome contrast, but we soon covered the 30 or so km southwards to reach the shore of the great group of *étangs* that form the heart of the Camargue. We turned to the north at Cacharel, along the rough track that follows the shore of the Étang dit l'Impérial. Here we had our first close encounters with Flamingos; there were little flocks flying over, and groups wading in the water and feeding. Yellow-legged and Lesser Black-backed gulls were standing around and flying about, we watched a Little Tern and David spied some distant cormorants towards the Étang de Vaccarès.

We found a clear area to park and picnic, with a little bit of shade. The opening of the cold-boxes revealed a feast: individual trays with meats, cheeses, salads and preserves. There was cold water and wine, cakes and fruit. (We resolved to ask for a little less tomorrow – but it was delicious.) We enjoyed watching a Great Crested Grebe and a Blue-headed Wagtail, and Susi found a smart cock Linnets perched on a Shrubby Seablite bush. We were having a closer look at some of the saltmarsh plants – the specialised salt-tolerant plants of the *sansouire*, some of which, Samphire, Sea Lavender, Shrubby Seablite, Sea Aster, were familiar from the UK. But they were no match for the two Spoonbills that Ian spotted flying over! Then we drove on northwards along the track. Sardinian warblers lurked in Tamarisk bushes; brilliant blue splashes of Sea Iris lit up the green of the *sansouire*; we saw clusters of Flamingos in the shallows and fields with picturesque groups (*manades*) of bulls and horses.

After about 12 km, we rejoined the proper road and headed for the newly refurbished *Ecomusée de la Camargue* at the *Mas du Pont de Rousty*. Time was short but even a brief visit to this graphic and well-presented exhibition gives a clear insight into the cultural history and development of this unique region. But we had to hurry on because the last visit of the day was to the *Ecomusée de la Crau* in St Martin de Crau, the other side of Arles, where we had to collect permits for the following day's visit to the reserve at la Crau. We arrived just in time to collect the permits but our great hopes of coffees and ice creams before the drive back to the hotel were dashed – it was Ascension Day, and everything except the museum was closed.

Back at the Hôtel Robinson, we had a little time to get ready for dinner and then met, with a drink, to review the day. Dinner began with *salade de foie de volaille*, followed by braised chicken with roasted vegetables and then *entremets aux framboises*, all accompanied by all shades of the local wine. And still the nightingales sang gloriously.

Day 3: Friday 15 May – La Crau

We were greeted by bright sunshine, but only a light wind despite the mistral being forecast for later in the day. We didn't plan a walk before breakfast, but a few early risers had enjoyed some of the sights and sounds of the early morning. Our plan was to leave earlier than usual to give us as long as possible before any heat-haze over la Crau made distant birdwatching difficult. We had a rendezvous with Amine Flitti of LPO (Ligue pour la Protection des Oiseaux), the recipients of the Honeyguide conservation donation for this trip; Amine, as Programme Manager for LPO is one of the key staff responsible for conservation projects on la Crau.

We met at the car park for the Réserve Naturelle Coussouls de Crau, on the northern edge of the vast stony desert, which extended into the misty distance in front of us. After a brief introduction to the area and to their work from Amine, we presented a cheque for 1000€, our contribution to the LPO's project to conserve la Crau's vulnerable breeding population of Lesser Kestrels.

Amine talked about the birds to look out for, including an unusual abundance this year of Red-footed Falcons on passage, usually a scarce species here. Then he led us in convoy right into the heart of the stony desert, way beyond the normal access areas, with several stops to admire its extraordinary scenery and unique wildlife.

There were moments when we could spare our attention from the birds to look at the flowers: clumps of Hollow-stemmed Asphodel, great drifts of pale mauve Galactites, a Milk Thistle, the lime-green patches of Steppe Spurge. Lynn was thoroughly enjoying herself rummaging in the dwarf sward finding tiny plants of *Evax pygmaea*, Common Thyme, Starry Clover, spuries, tiny grasses; enough to occupy a botanist for days.



Galactites (AE)

There were larks all round us the whole time: Short-toed, Crested and Skylarks. When we paused we could distinguish their distinctive songs and we were able to have some excellent close views as we bumped along the track. The people in Rachel's bus saw a Tawny Pipit on the ground in front, and then it flew away to disappear among the matching stones at the side. At the next stop Julie called our attention to a falcon – a female Red-footed, our first. Suzanne spotted a White Stork flying by; it was followed by a Great Egret high overhead, a surprising sight in such an arid place. Perhaps the approaching mistral was influencing their movements. At our next stop, we caught sight of an adult male Red-footed Falcon in flight. It then perched on a pile of stones, where we could watch it through telescopes and see its red feet!

We were getting deeper and deeper into the less accessible area and Amine warned us to be alert to exciting possibilities. We drove on, but soon came to an abrupt stop as Amine pointed animatedly through the window of his car to where two Little Bustards were flying away to our left. They landed some distance away, but we could still just see their heads above the tall vegetation, and with telescopes, we watched for a while as they potted around, apparently feeding.



Calandra Lark (SLJ)

The next stop was in the heart of a colony of Calandra Larks. They were all around, on the ground and in the air, charming us with their song. One sang just over our heads, hovering so that we could clearly see its dark wings with their pale trailing edges – altogether unforgettable. Then Amine's sharp ears caught the sound of a Little Bustard, and it was just visible some way off, throwing back its head as it uttered its bizarre call.

We drove a little further on, passing a shepherd with his dog, leading an enormous flock of sheep, accompanied by a few goats and also by several Cattle Egrets. It was a very photogenic scene and an echo of the great tradition of summer sheep-grazing and 'transhumance' upon which the unique habitats and wildlife of la Crau depend.

We arrived at a group of buildings, an old stone sheep barn and some other newer buildings dating from the German occupation during the Second World War. These buildings are the focus of the Lesser Kestrel project which our donation is supporting. There we were introduced to Philippe Pilard, the project's principal scientist, and we heard him describe how the species has been brought back from near extinction by the construction of nesting sites secure from predation by snakes.

Some predation still goes on and just before our arrival, Philippe had found a casualty which he was able to show us – a sad privilege to be able to examine the beautiful rare creature. The population has grown from 3 pairs in the 1980s to 237 last year, but fallen to 165 this year, owing mainly to drought in their wintering area in West Africa. They need to produce at least two young per pair to sustain the population in the face of such losses, but in the past, they nested mainly close to the ground in piles of stones, and predation by snakes reduced their fledging success to around 1.5 per pair. Nowadays, most of the nests are in the roofs of buildings, where a pair rears an average of 2.5 young.

Philippe took us to a viewing point where we set up telescopes and we could see the Lesser Kestrels at their nests among rocks placed on the flat roof of an abandoned building. There was a great deal of activity, with birds coming and going with food. As we watched, another Red-footed Falcon flew by, and then yet another, and some of the group watched as one of the falcons challenged a Lesser Kestrel as it approached its nest cavity and stole its catch – skua behaviour! We ate our lunch – another delicious, though more moderate, feast – in the shelter of the stone buildings and watched as this extraordinary colony went about its business.



Lesser kestrel on the nesting roof (SLJ)



Roller (RMH)

We said our grateful ‘goodbyes’ to Amine and Philippe and then realised with some trepidation, that we had to find our own way back across the featureless expanse of desert. The sun had gone in and the wind was getting up, and the distant landmarks were very indistinct. Nevertheless, we saw some good things on the way back: Western Marbled Whites, occasionally stopping to be identified (and photographed); everyone had a good view of a Tawny Pipit, we saw two more Little Bustards and, more surprisingly, an Egyptian Vulture.

Eventually we found ourselves at one of the usual access points to la Crau and could locate ourselves on the map. There was a recently cut hayfield, so we stopped to watch; they are often a good place for birds feeding on insects killed or disrupted by the mowing. There were Jackdaws and Starlings and two Black Kites whirling around, but the ‘show stopper’ was a pair of Rollers; these gave an excellent performance: on the ground, perched picturesquely in the trees and taking short flights up after insects. We were so captivated by the Rollers that we didn’t notice a Montagu’s Harrier flying behind us; sadly only Ian saw it well.

We had been in a hurry in the morning and used the autoroute. The more rural route home took us along the old road back to Arles, through long avenues of Plane trees, so evocative of old Provence. We had time to prepare for dinner and then met again, with our drinks, for the daily review. Dinner began with a pizza salad, followed by deliciously tender *côte d’agneau* (with the usual debate when the British are asked how ‘rosé’ they like their lamb – most of us gaining the approval of the staff by preferring it lightly cooked, in the French style), – and finally *financière aux fraises*, a meltingly light strawberry gâteau, layered with almond and pistachio cream.

Day 4: Saturday 16 May – The Eastern Camargue

There was a stiff, chilly wind from the north. The early walk took us up the hill again, Serins and a Cirl Bunting singing near the tennis court and further on a Sardinian Warbler showing nicely and giving us the best demonstration so far of its persistent scratchy song. An early-rising Black Kite flew low overhead and the Redstart at the top of the hill was still singing from the chimney. We walked a little further along the track where we found a stand of the charming and improbable ‘Brown Bluebell’, *Dipcadi serotinum*, and heard another Cirl Bunting singing in the valley beyond.

The Eastern Camargue, our destination for today’s exploration, was a fortunate choice for a mistral day – many of the places we were to visit are well protected from the fiercest of the wind. Our first stop was by the shore of the Étang de Vaccarès where there were two Flamingos feeding, a handful of Mallards, a dozen Great Crested Grebes and at least five Black-necked Grebes further offshore bobbing up and down in the choppy water. Very close in, a Little Egret and a family of Coots occupied themselves in a sheltered bay.

Just before we reached the reserve at la Capelière we pulled off the road again for a big flock of Flamingos feeding in the shallows. A female Red-crested Pochard flew by, then a Cormorant, and finally a Cattle Egret, following the shore just in front of us, their speeds boosted by the brisk following wind.

A converted farmhouse at la Capelière houses the administrative headquarters of the Réserve Nationale de Camargue. There is a well-stocked shop selling books, maps, cards etc as well as a permanent exhibition depicting the wildlife of the Camargue. It is also the starting point for a clever 1.5 km nature trail which covers good examples of many of the key landscapes of the Camargue. It is easy underfoot and there are several well-placed hides, and it enables the visitor to get into otherwise inaccessible habitats without causing serious damage or disturbance.

The trail begins in the wet woodland carr habitat: several willows, Alder and French Tamarisk, with Blackcaps and Cetti's Warblers singing. The first hide overlooks a long sheltered lake with willow and tamarisk scrub around it. We could see three Little Egrets preening themselves and a Night Heron roosting in the tamarisk on the far side, and a Coypu swam across the lake towards us and disappeared into the reeds. From time to time Coots and a pair of Mallards showed themselves and a strange movement amongst some weed resolved itself into a Pool Frog. Black-winged Stilts squabbled noisily and there were lots of Swallows hawking over the water, a pair of which had their nest on a beam just above our heads in the hide. It was change-over time while we were there and the two chattered, unconcerned, as they swapped duties.

Further along the path Speckled Wood butterflies were basking on Ivy leaves in the pools of sunlight and we admired a fine clump of Birthwort, the flowers almost luminously yellow in the dappled shade. Then, we had another look at the lake from a second hide and a different viewpoint, and picked out several more Night Herons. The Black-winged Stilts were still squabbling.

We left the shade of the woodland and walked on, out into the bright sunshine and the open damp brackish grassland – a habitat known there as *pelouse* – and the low salty scrub, the *sansouire*. There were startling pink patches of Reversed Clover, a fine Salsify plant, the flower just going over, luxuriant Thrift and Sea Aster just coming out. The *sansouire* is dominated there by bushes of Perennial Glasswort, Shrubby Seablite and Sea Purslane. David spotted a Bee-eater and a pair of Long-tailed Tits. Goldfinches were flying to and fro in the tamarisk scrub and when Ian called "heron!" we looked up to see the first Purple Heron of the week, struggling to make headway against the strengthening wind. Then another Purple Heron flew over, closely followed, to our surprise and delight, by a Collared Pratincole.

Some of the group diverted to another hide and, before they reached it, saw a Black Kite and yet another Purple Heron, though nothing new from the hide itself. We paused by a ditch where some bright green Pool Frogs and a European Pond Terrapin were floating in the shallow water. Further on, a Red Admiral was sunning itself beneath a raised platform overlooking the Étang de Vaccarès, and we climbed up onto the platform just in time to see a Hobby speeding past with the wind behind it. Some of the group stopped to bask in the extraordinary potent scent of an Oleaster *Eleagnus angustifolia* tree that has been planted by the track – looking perfectly natural here though far from its native home in central Asia.



Lunch at la Capelière (AE)



Salt production near Salin de Giraud (SLJ)

We spread lunch on a shady table in the garden of the museum and enjoyed another, slightly more modest, feast with Nightingales, Blackcaps and Cetti's Warblers serenading us.

After lunch we headed south again, getting a good view of a Great Egret by the Étang de Vaccarès on our way. We drove to the end of the made-up road and then followed the track that winds its way amongst the salt lagoons – the *salins* – to the pumping station and the lighthouse (and then interruptedly across the bottom of the Étang de Vaccarès, as far as les Saintes-Maries).

There was a scattering of gulls on the edge of the *salins*: Black-headed, Yellow-legged and a few Slender-billed, and we paused to distinguish their characteristics. Eventually we decided we had gone far enough and parked at the western end of the Étang du Fangassier. The mistral had cleared the air, giving us an unusually clear view of the distant Flamingo breeding colony at the far end of the *étang*: a distinct but fuzzy pink ribbon, made up of thousands of Flamingos, massed across at the edge of the water.

There were plenty more Flamingos about. Some were feeding on their own, or in small groups, some were in the air, with a following wind, making good progress. The best sights, though, were several small flocks flying past, low above the water and very close to us, barely making progress against the wind, and giving us super views and photo opportunities in the bright sunshine. Everything after that was a bit of an anti-climax, even the Spoonbill and Avocets that flew past. As we drove away, we could see a small flock of Dunlins with a few Ringed Plovers and a Kentish Plover darting among the Shrubby Seablite bushes and feeding at the water's edge.

We returned to the main road and turned right, southwards towards the sea. A large Montpellier Snake had recently been killed on the road and Robin nobly retrieved it to show everyone; he held it up and it was well over a metre long. We continued south on the main road towards the little town of Salin de Giraud, close to the mouth of the Rhône. Salin de Giraud is remarkable for being devoted to salt production, having been established in the mid nineteenth century for the industrial salt and soda production for the chemical industry. There is now also a tourism aspect to salt production and we stopped beside a huge salt hill which has been turned into a viewpoint, with good views over the south eastern *salins*, and where tourists can buy salt of all levels of refinement.

After a brief stop there we set off towards the sea, and our final scheduled stop of the day. We scanned the gulls on the lagoons as we passed and were rewarded with a nice Mediterranean Gull close beside the road. We parked at the end of the road, behind the sand dunes at the Plage d'Arles and beside a large lagoon with a very satisfactory mixed flock of Slender-billed Gulls and Common and Sandwich Terns, and as we left there was a long line of Slender-billed Gulls in the shallow water close by the road, so everyone had the chance of an excellent view.

We paused briefly on our way back towards Arles to look at a squashed corpse on the road, and added Hedgehog to our week's list! Then we returned to the hotel along the west bank of the Rhône to Beaucaire so that we could drop Peter and Robin M at an antiquarian book fair in the grounds of Beaucaire Castle, abandoning them to find their own way home. We had a fairly short time to prepare for dinner and then a brief résumé of the day before being called in for yet another excellent meal.

Day 5: Sunday 17 May – Les Baux and the Alpilles

The wind had lessened a little but the mistral had not blown itself out completely. That meant that it was likely to stay clear and sunny, and for today's expedition we would expect to find enough shelter. The early walkers decided it was time to embark on the full circuit, so we set off briskly down the drive and along the road. Several Nightingales and Blackcaps were singing and we looked out for other small songsters, but the breeze was perhaps a bit stiff. A magical patch of *Orlaya* *Orlaya grandiflora* brought even the most single-minded bird-watchers to a standstill in admiration. We turned into the hotel grounds at the far end of our familiar track and enjoyed the closeness of the fragrant limestone flora, and the early-rising butterflies warming themselves in patches of sunlight. The Redstart was singing as usual and a few more people were introduced to the Brown Bluebell.



L–R: *Orlaya* (SLJ); *Urospermum* with *Aphyllanthes* and *Dorycnium* (AE); *Linum campanulatum* (AE)

We were just finishing breakfast, rather delayed by our long walk, when Marie-Jo ran in to say that Suzanne had fallen over on her way back to her room. Poor Suzanne, enormously stoical, she was clearly in a lot of pain. With wonderful French efficiency, charming paramedics and an ambulance appeared and, accompanied by Susi, Suzanne was whisked off in a bright red ambulance to the hospital in Nîmes.

Those of us that remained gathered, rather subdued, to carry on with the planned day, an exploration of the Alpilles, that engaging little group of hills lying to the east of us, that we had frequently observed from a distance.

After only about 20 minutes driving-time the character of the landscape changed abruptly. We began to climb; arable fields gave way to olive groves and pine woods, and then to rocky outcrops. We followed the steep road past signs to les Baux (for later) and evidence of ancient quarries. We left most of the people behind and turned onto a forest road that led up to a magnificent viewpoint.

We parked in a shady clearing and continued on foot. Immediately, the interest and diversity of wildlife became obvious. Over the hills above les Baux we could see three Alpine Swifts – our first; a beautiful bug *Anthaxia hungarica* with an iridescent green carapace and green and terracotta thorax was feeding on the flower of a Blue Lettuce. Julie spotted a Scarce Swallowtail, a Chaffinch was singing and David found a Subalpine Warbler singing, and then just showing itself. There were several Chalkhill Blues and lots of Painted Ladies, one posing spectacularly on a Yellow Horned Poppy.

It was an easy walk on a well-made forest track. The banks on either side were as colourful as any rock garden: pink *Cistus albidus*, the yellow flax *Linum campanulatum*, rockroses, crown vetches and Urospermum and a fine plant of Yellow Horned Poppy. There was the intensely blue Beautiful Flax, and the softer blue Pale Flax and Blue Aphyllanthes. White was contributed by White Rockrose, bedstraws, catchflies and Dorycnium. There was Shrubby Hare's-ear, the evergreen Honeysuckle *Lonicera implexa* and a surprise plant of *Senecio bicolor*, possibly a garden throw-out, but looking very at home there.

We followed the track up to the viewpoint where, beyond les Baux, with binoculars we could make out to the south the distant blurred line of the Mediterranean, some of the cranes and factory chimneys at the mouth of the Rhône and the huge expanse of the Étang de Vaccarès. The hills above Beaucaire were more visible to the west and Mont Ventoux stood out clearly to the north. The wind was dropping and the warm sunshine brought out the insects. Squadrons of Ascalaphids *Libelloides coccajus* were on the hunt for butterflies. There were lots of both Common and Scarce Swallowtails, and we watched a Common Swallowtail showing surprising aggression and flying up and harrying any Scarce Swallowtails that flew into its territory. We found Rose Chafers on some of the Shrubby Hare's-ear. Coming down we heard several snatches of Subalpine Warbler song and scolding notes, but still only caught brief glimpses. Ian spotted a Long-tailed Tit and David's surprise shout of "Crested Tit!" enabled several of us to get brief but clear views of it in a pine tree.



Les Baux panorama (RFLH)

Back at the minibuses we laid out the picnic – a perfect compromise today between the French desire to celebrate the midday meal and our need to retain some energy for the afternoon. So – no snoozing, but a chance to explore the little fortified town of les Baux, and probably the best opportunity of the week for holiday purchases. Several members of the group decided to walk and the rest went in the minibuses to meet the challenge of finding spaces in the car park. Eventually we succeeded and then, having agreed a return time, we set off in groups to follow individual interests: the town history and the Chateau for some, coffee or ice creams for others, locally made silk clothes, Provençal herbs, soap, pottery, hand-made jewellery. We encountered one another from time to time and remarked on the Alpine and Common Swifts, the Crag Martins and Black Redstarts, the wonderful view down onto the fertile patchwork of vineyards and olive groves beneath the Chateau wall and the colourful natural rock-garden on the stony summit.

We had news from Susi that Suzanne had in fact broken her femur, and would need surgery and therefore be staying in Nîmes. So, when we got back, after a quick cup of coffee on the terrace, Rachel drove off to Nîmes with Peter to collect Susi while Robin reviewed the day and then had dinner with the group. Today, *vol au vent à la brandade de morue* (cod mousse) was followed by *bavette de bœuf avec frites* and then *fromage blanc au coulis de framboises*. The kitchen had very kindly held food for the Nîmes party who arrived just in time to enjoy it before everyone retired for the night.

Day 6: Monday 18 May – The Pont du Gard and an Evening Excursion

We didn't have a formal early walk but Ian came in to breakfast delighted with news of a good view of two Red Squirrels in the hotel grounds.

It was fine and sunny, and windless at last. We loaded the lunch into the minibuses and prepared to depart. Just before we set off, a Red Kite flew over the hotel showing its colours in the morning sun, and banking obligingly to demonstrate its deeply forked tail.

Our destination today was the Pont du Gard, the iconic Roman aqueduct that spans the river Gard (or Gardon) some 18 km north of the hotel. So we followed the river, briefly admired the massive dams and hydroelectric schemes near the confluence with the Rhône, and arrived in the enormous nearly empty car park. Before we had even left the car park, we heard a Wryneck, a Bonelli's Warbler and a Golden Oriole.

We looked at the big demonstration map of the area and devised a plan: we would walk together up to the bridge and see what was about, and then probably split into three or four groups according to preferences.

Passing Red and White Mulberry trees, Hornbeam and Montpellier Maple, we paused at the breathtaking view of the magnificent Pont du Gard itself. From the terrace wall we could look up at it, and watch Swifts and Crag Martins hawking over the river below, and House Sparrows were visiting their nest holes under the tiles of the building behind us. Then Pat's sharp eyes noticed that there were some similar but larger sparrows on the rocks and brambles on the riverside and we were delighted to see several Rock Sparrows. We had excellent views as they hopped about, feeding, and we watched them for some time. Nearby, a Painted Lady perched by the path below us and there was a White Wagtail on a bank of shingle in the river. We trained the telescopes on to the aqueduct and watched Crag Martins and Alpine Swifts flying around the arches and Crag Martins going up to their nests on the stonework. David heard a Redstart and Ian spotted a Subalpine Warbler and then a male Black Redstart showed itself nicely on the rocks below us. There were Long-tailed Tits calling and a Blackcap singing in the woods. Peering over the parapet of the bridge we could see fish holding their ground elegantly in the current.



Rock Sparrow (SLJ)



Pont du Gard from the north (AE)

We crossed the bridge and went various ways. Some of us went along the path that led upstream on the left bank; eight big carp were lying in the shallows. Andrew found a perfect viewpoint and took a lovely photograph of the aqueduct from upstream. A Spotted Flycatcher perched above us and we heard a Great Spotted Woodpecker, a Blackcap singing and then a couple of brief snatches of Firecrest song. Julie, who had been down below the bridge, rejoined us with news of a Golden Oriole in full song in the woods on the left bank, and Susi had seen a Firecrest singing and had been watching Scarlet Darters. Others stepped out and reached the extensive visitor information centre and bought maps and guidebooks, and even an ice cream, and watched a Black Redstart singing. Yet others climbed the steps to the top level of the bridge to admire the view, the prospect of walking across the narrow path (no longer permitted), the fragrant Mediterranean scrub and the Nightingales' song.

We found some shade around the minibuses and during lunch we heard the Wryneck and Bonelli's Warbler again, and attempted unsuccessfully to track down the Bonelli's Warbler. A Southern White Admiral flew close by, but didn't stop to be admired. Julie heard another Golden Oriole, then she caught the song of a Melodious Warbler, and we followed the sound more successfully this time, until it showed itself well on a nearby tree.

Some people decided to walk part of the way back to the hotel, so we dropped them, armed with a map, in the village of Comps. The rest of us diverted across the hydroelectric dam and stopped to have a look at the awesome spectacle of the vast volumes of water passing through. Ursula spotted a Grey Heron flying down the river, and while our attention was focussed on that, she found us a Swallowtail. We pottered on the bank for a little while, lazily admiring the flowers in the heat of the afternoon.

Then, returning to the minibuses, while Rachel was beginning to wonder where her *Flowers of the Mediterranean* had got to, another Melodious Warbler started singing in the tree beside where we had parked, and performed beautifully for us.

The walkers returned and joined us on the terrace. Ian arrived back first, delighted to have seen a Lesser Spotted Woodpecker and a Hoopoe. David's report of a Greenfinch was less exciting, but nevertheless a new bird for the week's list. Andrew had found and photographed a spectacular patch of Narrow-leaved Crimson Clover. The news of Suzanne was that she had been moved from Nîmes to the hospital in Arles and would be operated on tomorrow.

For this evening we had asked for an early, light dinner, so that we could go out again in the hope of seeing an Eagle Owl. The hotel is used to this request, and produced a delicious two-course meal, and promised to leave drinks for the drivers for after our return! So we sat down to *gratin de coquilles St Jacques* followed by *clafoutis aux cerises*, then we sallied forth again to a rocky valley on the edge of the Alpilles, where Eagle Owls can sometimes be seen.

We arrived in good time and watched the sunset sky colouring the surrounding hills. Nightingales were singing all around and a beautiful Blackbird joined the chorus. We set up our telescopes and trained our binoculars on the rock face – and waited. Sadly, no Eagle Owl appeared, but we had a wonderful unexpected view of a pair of Goshawks. First, a single bird flew swiftly along above the cliff and disappeared, then a pair appeared and flew together across the valley above us in their beautiful undulating display flight. As it got darker a Wild Boar slipped quietly across the lane to our right and, as the darkness deepened, we heard a Nightjar calling. We turned our telescopes up towards two planets; Jupiter and Venus were setting soon after the sun and we were able to see the crescent of Venus and four moons of Jupiter – a first for several of the group. Just as we were about to get back into the buses, we found a solitary Glow-worm, shining on the dark bank beyond the lane, a very exciting new experience for Len and several others.

When we got back, we had a fruitless search in the dark in the minibuses for Rachel's lost book.

Day 7: Tuesday 19 May – Petite Camargue and les Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer

For the first time in the week, we woke to a cloudy sky and cool temperatures, and even the threat of rain. After last night's late excursion, most of us chose to forgo a walk before breakfast, but Ian and Andrew were out early, and were rewarded with a good view of a male Golden Oriole in flight.

Fairly sure by now that Rachel had, in the excitement of the Rock Sparrows, left her *Flowers of the Mediterranean* on the parapet at the Pont du Gard, a telephone search for it was begun by Marie-Jo from the hotel. Nothing had been handed in so far, but we hoped.

For our last full day, we had a whole area of the Camargue left to explore – that to the west of the Petit Rhône – the Petite Camargue; we had swiftly driven across the top of the Petite Camargue on our first morning. We took the main road to St Gilles and this time it was rich with excitement; we made several stops to look at Bee-eaters and Rollers on wires beside the road, always worth savouring.



Sea plane (SLJ)

Once we were in the Petite Camargue, our first excitement was a Red Squirrel running along the side of the road. Soon we were surrounded again by rice fields; in some there were Black-winged Stilt colonies and one bird was sitting on its nest on a muddy hummock in the middle of the flooded field, somehow folding its long legs out of the way. Ray found a Squacco Heron lurking by the reeds at the edge of the field, then another flew in to join it and a Night Heron flew by. Across the road and down a track, there was another paddyfield with more Stilts and Glossy Ibises and with lots of Mediterranean gulls, occasionally flying over and giving their characteristic 'posh' greeting: "eoh, eoh". We heard the roar of an engine and turned, in surprise, to see a bright yellow Catalina flying boat (*Sécurité Civile* No 39!) flying low over the flooded fields. It caused considerable excitement amongst the Stilts and the Med. Gulls, as well amongst the Honeyguide group.

We drove on towards our destination, the exciting and relatively new reserve at Scamandre. We passed a Stork on its nest, fairly recently built on a platform attached to the top of a telegraph pole beside the road, and while we watched it, we were distracted by a Turtle Dove – sadly, an uncommon sight for us all – and beside it, a Bee-eater perched on a wire.



White Stork on the nest (SLJ)

Just before we reached Scamandre we stopped for a particularly enormous and photogenic Stork's nest on top of a stone tower, where an adult bird was tending two young birds. Beneath them, in the tangle of twigs, several pairs of House Sparrows had built their own nests, enjoying the shelter of the larger nest, although apparently within easy reach of the Storks' beaks.

We were expected at Scamandre and while we introduced ourselves, we spent a little time taking advantage of the well-stocked information and souvenir supply in the visitor centre. Then we headed out across the excellent boardwalk which enabled us to penetrate deep into the tamarisk and reed beds that flank the lagoon. Reed, Great Reed and Moustached Warblers were all singing nearby, though only the first two showed themselves. A Gull-billed tern flew over – a

clear contrast to the other terns we had seen during the week. There were several large Carp spawning in the shallows, rolling on their sides and breaking the surface with their noisily flapping tails.

We paused for a minute to let everyone catch up; a Grey Heron flew by, a Dabchick trilled in the distance, a Turtle Dove purred nearby and a Reed Warbler simultaneously sang and showed itself well on the edge of the reedbed.

A hectic few minutes followed; a Purple Heron flew very near to us, then a Great Egret and a Little Egret appeared flying close together, clearly showing the size difference. Glossy Ibises were flying around in all directions (why? we wondered), then a Cattle Egret passed us and two more Great Egrets, flying with slower wingbeats, then a Purple Heron, then a Grey, then a Little Egret again, then a Squacco Heron, a drake Red-crested Pochard, a Night Heron, a Black Kite, and finally another Purple Heron. Everything calmed down for a moment and we caught our breath, and then a Gull-billed Tern flew by, closely followed by a Mediterranean Gull and another Squacco Heron. All the time a Dabchick was whinnying in the distance.

We followed the boardwalk out to the furthest hide in the middle of a lagoon where three Red-crested Pochards were swimming. A Reed Bunting sang nearby and Susi spotted some Dabchicks; eventually we counted five. A pair of Mallards swam close to an unconcerned Night Heron and two Shelducks flew by.

As we walked back, we surprised another Night Heron, which flew up from reeds beside the track just ahead of us. A small flock of Sand Martins flew around, twittering and hunting for insects, and at last a Moorhen, a bird that had eluded us all week, croaked from the pool beside the path. Lynn found a fine plant of Squirting Cucumber, at perfect ripeness to demonstrate its squirting prowess.

We had lunch on the picnic tables under the trees outside the information centre and then drove further south for the last stage of the day's excursion.

There had been a request for a white horses photo opportunity. It soon presented itself where a large group of horses, keen to drink in the canal, looked in danger of falling in amongst the Yellow Flags! A Corn Bunting was singing across the road, and it was soon joined by a Cetti's Warbler and a Melodious Warbler.

We took a by-road towards the Bac du Sauvage, the little chain ferry that crosses the Petit Rhône. The brief, quiet crossing gave us a chance of some lovely views up and down the river. We carried on towards les Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer and just before we turned onto the main road we were treated to the sight of a male Red-footed Falcon perched on a small tree beside the road, where it remained for long enough to give us excellent views. A very short distance further on, a Hoopoe flew across the road in front of us and perched on a fence nearby. And then, as we rejoined the main road, a Spoonbill flew overhead.

We had scheduled a brief stop in les Saintes-Maries for last minute shopping and for anyone who was interested to visit the famous church. In the summer, even in May, les Saintes-Maries is almost perpetually *en fête* and parking is almost always a nightmare. We drove round and round, looking for somewhere to leave two minibuses, but then decided to drop the group and pick them up again in half an hour. A few cards and souvenirs were acquired and one or two people satisfied their curiosity about the church, the legend of the *Saintes Maries*, the Black Madonna and the Gipsy connection.

We headed for home for the last time. A falcon hovering above the road was almost dismissed as a Kestrel, but as we got close we could see that it was yet another Red-footed Falcon. We made one more brief stop at a roadside farm shop to stock up on *Produits Régionaux* to take home: *herbes de Provence*, *terrine de taureau*, salt, Camargue rice and local wine.

We arrived back at the hotel in time to get ready for our last dinner and finally wrap up the records for the holiday over a drink. That was a worry for Rachel because there was still no news of her book – fairly essential for report writing, and sad because it had been a present from the author – but Robin M very kindly insisted that she should take the copy of the French edition that she had bought in Montpellier just before meeting us at the airport. We heard from the hospital that Suzanne had had her operation and was doing well, and we promised to visit her on our way to the airport tomorrow. Dinner was as fine as ever: *espadon* (swordfish) with a delicious shrimp sauce and salad, then *gardianne de taureau* (braised beef) followed by a spectacular *gateau* – a beautiful baked Alaska with a magnificent firework on top to celebrate our last evening.



Dinner on the last evening (RFLH)

As is traditional on Honeyguide holidays, we concluded the meal with an account from everyone of what, for them, had been particular highlights of the holiday.

Highlights

(more or less verbatim and in order as we were sitting round the table)

Rachel introduced our Highlights session by reading Suzanne's best moment from her last Honeyguide Camargue trip in 2011:

"Today on the Petite Camargue, at Scamandre which would have been an Air Traffic Controller's nightmare: Grey Heron on the left, Great White Egret below on the left, Grey Heron from the right, Purple Heron coming in – no, lost him! Flamingo – no, it wasn't! Glossy Ibis straight above, Night Heron zooming straight at us! Oh help!!"

- Peter Flamingos flying in slow motion into the wind; Lesser Kestrels; a glimpse of a Nightingale before it disappeared into a hedgerow; the green frog that flopped out of the watercourse.
- David One of my favourite moments was hearing the Crested Tit in a pine tree, my first for a long time, it was lovely to hear it again; the Orlaya along the track; Purple Herons today; and the Catalina flying boat; the Goshawks last night; thinking back over the week, I remember watching Calandra Larks up in the sky and thinking this was a highlight, but then there have been so many more since then...
- Ian The Crested Tits, thanks to David; the Goshawks last night – the combination of the place, time of day and the light.
- Susi The company was wonderful; what I always like about Honeyguide holidays is going to such different environments; the Flamingos were, of course, fantastic, and I enjoyed the Blue-headed Wagtails and the Linnet; I like seeing insects and looking at flowers with Rachel, but birds move, so I look at them first; the Little Bustards; it's been a great trip.
- Julie I enjoyed the overview of the whole area, which I'd expected to be desolate; I'm new to birds, so many were unfamiliar; the highlight was the Redstart on the barn door with the morning sun bringing out its brilliant colours.
- Pat I especially liked the Flamingos flying into the wind; the day at les Baux – the flowers and butterflies, sitting on a terrace drinking coffee and relaxing; my favourite bird at the end was the Hoopoe.
- Andrew Six magic days that I'd compare to six movements of a symphony; particular highlights are the flypast of Flamingos; the extraordinary rock garden of plants above les Baux; the most abiding memory of all was the singing of Nightingales around the hotel and above the Pont du Gard.

- Ursula I wouldn't pick out a particular highlight because the whole thing has been so good; the joy of seeing hardened birdwatchers getting so excited over seeing something new; everybody has been so good at sharing their expertise – experts on so many things at every scale; last night – no Eagle Owl, but it didn't matter – we saw Jupiter and its moons.
- Ray The Eagle Owl experience, even though there was no Eagle Owl; Rollers and Stilts and Squacco Herons – seeing them well, not just peering into a bush for ten minutes.
- Robin M Seeing Lesser Kestrels so close and in the hand - such a beautiful little thing, killed by a snake, but no external sign of damage; serried ranks of pink Flamingos and pink salt pans; blue and yellow flaxes – absolutely lovely; the leafy environment of the Hôtel Robinson.
- Lynn As a child, I had a book about the white horses of the Camargue; I always wanted to see it with Rachel and Robin, and I'm sure it will survive for at least a few more years.
- Len I haven't seen all the birds, but I've seen many, and the rest don't matter; Flamingos in bright sunshine, going backwards against the wind; those chaps on la Crau building nests on roofs – I didn't know the French did that; going all over la Crau; the wonderful rock garden in the Alpilles; les Baux – seeing the French enjoying themselves with their medieval reconstruction of a catapult; the serious thing was seeing Glowworms – I've lived all this time and never seen one before.
- Rachel Flamingos – I've seen them so many times in the Camargue, but never so close, so well lit and moving so slowly for our benefit; those Milk Thistles on la Crau; we were so lucky to be taken so deep into the protected area; it's a privilege to be able to make a financial contribution to local conservation – few other companies contribute in the same way, or realise what an appropriate and ethical thing it is.
- Robin H The privilege of being taken right into the heart of la Crau; experiencing the best and the worst of the mistral; an exceptionally jolly and understanding group, especially when one of us had to be taken to hospital.

Day 8: Wednesday 20 May – Arles and Home

We gathered promptly for breakfast so that we could be ready for a fairly speedy departure. The Nightingales were faithful to us to the end and serenaded us as we packed the minibuses again. We bade our farewells to the hotel staff and set off for Arles. We had decided that we should take a more southerly route to Montpellier so that we could visit Suzanne in hospital before we left.

We parked in an enormous car park, under the shade of some pines, and Susi, Robin and Rachel trundled Suzanne's luggage up to her room. She was remarkably cheerful and chatty so soon after surgery, and keen to hear what we had been doing, and also pleased to report frequent fly-pasts from two Black Kites that she could see from her window. Family were joining her later in the day, to oversee her return to the UK, so we felt easy about leaving her; she was in good hands.

The group had been birdwatching, of course, in our absence, and reported Black Kites and Serins.

We were in good time for the flight at Montpellier, which in any case was delayed by an hour, so we were able to enjoy our last Robinson picnic at our leisure, laid out on a table in the incongruous setting of Montpellier Airport! We said Goodbye to Robin M, who was off to Malta, and a huge thankyou to her too for the loan of *Toutes les Fleurs de Méditerranée* – a life-saver for Rachel.

A strange week was drawing to a close: The leaders will always be grateful to the group for the support, understanding, patience, consideration and kindness that everyone showed. Inevitably, there was some disruption to the holiday, especially for some, and we do apologise for that. It was heartening too, to meet with such insight and efficiency in the French emergency services and amongst the hotel staff.

POST SCRIPT:

Suzanne: Suzanne was flown back to the UK the following week, to a hospital near her home in Monmouth. Eight weeks after her accident, she went home and, with the aid of friends, neighbours and a Zimmer frame, she is getting mobile again, and hopes to be with us on a holiday again soon.

Rachel's Book – a message from Rachel: A couple of weeks after we got home, I received a phone call. A German voice introduced herself, and hesitantly said that she believed she might have a book belonging to Rachel Hamilton – was that me? We became instant friends! She had found it on the wall when she arrived at the Pont du Gard just after lunch. She expected that it would be retrieved, so left it, but when she returned a couple of hours later it was still there. She looked at it and decided that she could trace the owner. She was staying with bird-watching friends in Avignon, with no internet, so had to wait until she returned to Berlin. In the meantime, they had visited Mont Ventoux, and the Alpilles, and she hoped that I didn't mind, but she had taken the book with her and thoroughly enjoyed using it to identify what she was seeing. We exchanged e-mails, and the book is beside me at this moment.

SPECIES LISTS

BIRDS – 116 species

Black-necked Grebe	Five on the Étang de Vaccarès near la Capelière
Little Grebe	Half a dozen at Scamandre
Great Crested Grebe	Several on the Étang de Vaccarès
Cormorant	A few on each Camargue day
Night Heron	Several at Scamandre; a few elsewhere in the Camargue
Squacco Heron	Several in the Petite Camargue, mostly at Scamandre
Cattle Egret	Common on grazing land, especially with cattle and sheep
Little Egret	Seen almost every day in wet habitats
Great White Egret	Single birds on most wetland days; one flying over la Crau
Grey Heron	Seen almost every day in wet habitats
Purple Heron	Several at la Capelière and at Scamandre
White Stork	Several nests in the northern half of the Camargue
Glossy Ibis	Frequent in rice fields and in and around Scamandre
Spoonbill	One or two on each Camargue day
Greater Flamingo	Abundant around the Étang de Vaccarès and Fangassier
Mute Swan	A large flock near the Plage d'Arles; occasional elsewhere
Shelduck	Two or three on each Camargue day
Mallard	Seen frequently by fresh water
Red-crested Pochard	Several at Scamandre; one at la Capelière
Egyptian Vulture	One seen well flying over la Crau
Red Kite	One flying over Hotel Robinson
Black Kite	Several seen every day
Short-toed Eagle	One near l'Étang de Vaccarès
Montagu's Harrier	One near la Crau
Common Buzzard	Occasional odd individuals on farmland
Sparrowhawk	One in the hotel grounds
Goshawk	A pair displaying over a valley near les Baux
Lesser Kestrel	A large nesting colony on la Crau
Common Kestrel	Widespread. Seen almost every day
Red-footed Falcon	Several migrating individuals in la Crau and the Camargue
Hobby	One at la Capelière
Peregrine	One hunting above the hill by Hotel Robinson
Pheasant	One near Beaucaire
Moorhen	One heard at Scamandre
Coot	Occasional on larger water bodies
Little Bustard	Several at la Crau
Oystercatcher	Occasional individuals on sandy shores
Black-winged Stilt	Common in flooded rice fields and other shallow water
Avocet	A pair by Étang de Fangassier
Collared Pratincole	One flying over la Capelière
Ringed Plover	Several around Étang de Fangassier
Kentish Plover	One or two around Étang de Fangassier
Dunlin	A small flock by Étang de Fangassier
Mediterranean Gull	Occasionally seen in rice fields
Black-headed Gull	Common and widespread in the Camargue
Slender-billed Gull	Several small flocks in the eastern Camargue
Yellow-legged Gull	Common and widespread; seen every day
Lesser Black-backed Gull	Small numbers on most Camargue days
Gull-billed Tern	A few at Scamandre
Sandwich Tern	A few by the Étang de Vaccarès and the Plage d'Arles
Common Tern	Widespread by fresh and salt water habitats
Little Tern	Occasionally seen by brackish and salt water habitats
Rock Dove/Feral Pigeon	Common in towns and villages
Wood Pigeon	One or two seen on most days
Collared Dove	Several seen every day
Turtle Dove	A handful of migrating individuals
Cuckoo	Heard often; one apparently seeking a nest at la Capelière
Tawny Owl	One heard from the hotel
Nightjar	One heard in the valley near les Baux
Swift	Seen every day throughout the area
Alpine Swift	Several at les Baux and the Pont du Gard
Bee-eater	Frequently seen in the drier parts of the Camargue
Roller	Occasional on roadside wires; two seen well near la Crau
Hoopoe	Heard occasionally; one seen well near les Stes Maries
Green Woodpecker	Odd individuals in wooded areas
Great Spotted Woodpecker	Heard in the woods by the Pont du Gard
Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	One seen in the hotel grounds

Wryneck	One heard near the Pont du Gard
Skylark	Common and widespread
Crested Lark	Common on la Crau; occasional in dry places elsewhere
Short-toed Lark	Several seen and heard on la Crau
Calandra Lark	Several singing on la Crau
Sand Martin	A few at Scamandre
Crag Martin	Frequently seen in the Alpilles
Swallow	Common and widespread
House Martin	Seen almost every day
White Wagtail	A pair by the river at the Pont du Gard
Blue-headed Wagtail	Occasional birds around the Étang de Vaccarès
Robin	Regularly seen in the hotel grounds
Nightingale	Many heard every day throughout the area
Black Redstart	Occasionally seen in villages and rocky places
Redstart	A male singing every day near the Hotel Robinson
Blackbird	Occasionally seen in woodland and gardens
Blue Rock Thrush	A female seen well at les Baux
Cetti's Warbler	Frequently heard and occasionally seen in damp places
Fan-tailed Warbler	Widespread and frequent
Moustached Warbler	Heard twice in reedbeds in the western Camargue
Reed Warbler	Often seen or heard in reed beds
Great Reed Warbler	Occasionally seen or heard in reed beds
Melodious Warbler	Singing males on three occasions, generally near rivers
Spectacled Warbler	One by the Étang de Fangassier
Subalpine Warbler	A few singing males near les Baux; one at Pont du Gard
Sardinian Warbler	A few by the Étang de Vaccarès; one near Hotel Robinson
Blackcap	One or two singing at the Pont du Gard and near the hotel
Bonelli's Warbler	Heard singing near the Pont du Gard
Spotted Flycatcher	One near the Pont du Gard
Crested Tit	One seen well in hills above les Baux
Blue Tit	Occasionally seen in the hotel grounds
Great Tit	Commonly seen in the hotel grounds and elsewhere
Long-tailed Tit	Two at la Capelière and at the Pont du Gard
Golden Oriole	Heard at the Pont du Gard; one seen in the hotel grounds
Jay	A few in the Alpilles and other wooded areas
Magpie	Widespread and abundant
Jackdaw	Common: seen every day
Carrion Crow	Common: seen every day
Starling	Common and widespread
House Sparrow	Common around buildings; several nests in a stork's nest
Rock Sparrow	Several seen well at the Pont du Gard
Chaffinch	Occasionally seen in suitable habitats
Serin	Commonly seen around towns and villages
Linnet	A few in scrub by the Étang de Vaccarès
Greenfinch	Seen once in the hotel grounds
Goldfinch	Common and widespread
Cirl Bunting	At least two singing males in the hotel grounds
Reed Bunting	Occasional in reedy areas in the Camargue
Corn Bunting	Occasional singing birds throughout the area

MAMMALS

Millet's Shrew (dead)	Hedgehog (dead)	Rabbit	Red Squirrel	Coypu	House Mouse	Wild Boar
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REPTILES

European Pond Terrapin	Common Wall Lizard	Green Lizard	Montpellier Snake (dead)
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AMPHIBIANS AND FISH

Pool Frog	Common Toad (dead)	Carp
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BUTTERFLIES

Common Swallowtail	Scarce Swallowtail	Small White	Clouded Yellow
Common Blue	Chalkhill Blue	Red Admiral	Southern White Admiral
Painted Lady	Western Marbled White	Speckled Wood	Wall Brown
Spanish Gatekeeper			

OTHER INSECTS

Banded Demoiselle	Scarlet Darter	Broad-bodied Chaser	Great Green Bush-cricket
Blue-winged Grasshopper	Praying Mantis (egg cases)	Ascalaphid	Fire Bug
Hornet	Violet Carpenter Bee	Bee Hawk Moth	Pine Processionary Moth
Cream-spot Tiger	Rose Chafer	Glow-worm Beetle	Seven-spot Ladybird

A Record of the Plants of the Camargue and the Area Around: May 2015

General locations are given in the third column according to where the species have been recorded during recent Honeyguide holidays. Locations are **in bold** where species were particularly noted during the holiday 13 - 20 May 2015. This is not a record of distribution.

Hotel = Hôtel Robinson, Beaucaire; W/N/E = western/northern/eastern part of the Camargue wetland.

* = species is known or believed to be an introduction.

LOWER PLANTS		
Pteridophyta: Ferns etc.		
<i>Asplenium trichomanes</i>	Maidenhair Spleenwort	Hotel grounds
<i>Azolla filiculoides</i>	Water Fern	W Camargue
<i>Ceterach officinarum</i>	Rustyback Fern	Hotel grounds; Pont du Gard
CONIFERS		
Cupressaceae: Cypresses and Junipers		
<i>Cupressus sempervirens</i> var. <i>pyramidalis</i>	Italian Cypress	Scattered near habitations
<i>Juniperus oxycedrus</i>	Prickly Juniper	Hotel grounds; Alpilles; Pont du Gard
<i>Juniperus phoenicea</i>	Phoenicean Juniper	Alpilles
<i>Pinus halepensis</i>	Aleppo Pine	Alpilles
<i>Pinus nigra</i>	Austrian Pine	Hotel grounds; Alpilles
<i>Pinus pinaster</i>	Maritime Pine	Widespread in suitable habitat
<i>Pinus pinea</i>	Umbrella Pine	Widespread in suitable habitat
<i>Pinus sylvestris</i>	Scots Pine	Hotel grounds
FLOWERING PLANTS – DICOTYLEDONS		
Aceraceae: Maples		
<i>Acer monspessulanum</i>	Montpellier Maple	Pont du Gard
Anacardiaceae: Pistacio Family		
<i>Pistachia terebinthus</i>	Turpentine Tree	Hotel grounds; Alpilles
<i>Pistacia lentiscus</i>	Lentisc	Hotel grounds; Alpilles
Apiaceae (Umbelliferae): Umbellifers		
<i>Bupleurum fruticosum</i>	Shrubby Hare's Ear	Alpilles
<i>Conium maculatum</i>	Hemlock	Waste places Arles
<i>Eryngium campestre</i>	Field Eryngo	Hotel grounds; la Crau; NW Camargue; Alpilles; Pont du Gard
<i>Eryngium maritimum</i>	Sea Holly	Sand dunes
<i>Foeniculum vulgare</i>	Fennel	Hotel grounds; Pont du Gard
<i>Oenanthe silaifolia</i>	Narrow-leaved Water Dropwort	E Camargue
<i>Orlaya grandiflora</i>	Orlaya	Pont du Gard; Hotel Grounds
Araliaceae: Ivy Family		
<i>Hedera helix</i>	Ivy	Hotel grounds; E Camargue; Alpilles
Aristolochiaceae: Birthwort Family		
<i>Aristolochia clematitis</i>	A Birthwort	E Camargue
Asclepiadaceae: Milkweeds		
<i>Vincetoxicum hirsutum</i>	Swallow-wort	Hotel grounds; Pont du Gard
Asteraceae (Compositae): Composites		
<i>Anthemis maritima</i>	Sea Chamomile	Sand dunes
<i>Aster tripolium</i>	Sea Aster	Camargue sansouire; Scamandre
<i>Bellis sylvestris</i>	Southern Daisy	la Crau
<i>Carduus pycnocephalus</i>	A Thistle	Hotel grounds; Alpilles
<i>Centaurea aspera</i>	Rough Star-thistle	Alpilles
<i>Centaurea solstitialis</i>	Yellow Star-thistle	la Crau
<i>Dittrichia graveolens</i>	Stink Aster	Scamandre; E Camargue
<i>Evax pygmaea</i>	Dwarf Evax	la Crau
<i>Galactites tomentosa</i>	Galactites, a Milk Thistle	la Crau
<i>Hedypnois cretica</i>	Hedypnois	la Crau
<i>Helichrysum stoechas</i>	Curry Helichrysum	Hotel grounds
<i>Hypochaeris maculata</i>	Spotted Cat's-ear	Alpilles
<i>Lactuca perennis</i>	Mountain or Blue Lettuce	Hotel grounds; Alpilles; Pont du Gard
<i>Leuzia conifera</i>	Leuzia	Pont du Gard
<i>Matricaria recutita</i>	Mayweed	Sand dunes
<i>Onopordum illyricum</i>	Illyrian Thistle	la Crau
<i>Pallenis spinosa</i>	Spiny Pallenis	la Crau
<i>Senecio vulgaris</i>	Groundsel	Camargue arable
<i>Silybum marianum</i>	Milk Thistle	Widespread in suitable habitat
<i>Sonchus</i> sp.	A Sow Thistle	E Camargue
<i>Taraxacum</i> sp.	A Dandelion	la Crau
<i>Tragopogon porrifolius</i>	Salsify	E Camargue; Alpilles
<i>Urospermum dalechampii</i>	Urospermum	Widespread in suitable habitat
<i>Volutaria lippi</i>	Volutaria	Hotel grounds
Boraginaceae: Borage Family		
<i>Anchusa arvensis</i>	Bugloss	Hotel grounds; E Camargue
<i>Cynoglossum creticum</i>	Blue Hound's Tongue	Hotel grounds; Pont du Gard
<i>Cynoglossum officinale</i>	Hound's Tongue	la Crau
<i>Echium plantagineum</i>	Purple Viper's Bugloss	Alpilles

<i>Echium vulgare</i>	Common Viper's Bugloss	Hotel grounds; la Crau; E Camargue; Alpilles; Pont du Gard
Brassicaceae (Cruciferae): Crucifers		
<i>Biscutella didyma</i>	Biscutella, Buckler Mustard	Hotel grounds; Pont du Gard
<i>Bunias erucago</i>	Bunias	Alpilles
<i>Cakile maritima</i>	Sea Rocket	Sansouire; Sand dunes
<i>Cardaria draba</i>	Hoary Cress	Scamandre
<i>Cheiranthus cheiri</i>	Wallflower	Alpilles (naturalised)
<i>Lepidium latifolium</i>	Dittander	Scamandre
<i>Lobularia maritima</i>	Sweet Alison	Hotel grounds; la Crau; Pont du Gard
<i>Matthiola sinuata</i>	Sea Stock	Sand dunes
Buxaceae: Box Family		
<i>Buxus sempervirens</i>	Box	Hotel grounds; Alpilles; Pont du Gard
Caprifoliaceae: Honeysuckle Family		
<i>Lonicera implexa</i>	A Honeysuckle	Hotel grounds; Alpilles
<i>Sambucus ebulus</i>	Danewort	Widespread in suitable habitat
<i>Sambucus nigra</i>	Elder	la Crau (margins)
<i>Viburnum tinus</i>	Laurustinus	Hotel grounds; Pont du Gard
Caryophyllaceae: Chickweeds, Pinks and Campions		
<i>Kohlruschia prolifera</i>	A Kohlruschia	la Crau (Aulnes)
<i>Kohlruschia velutina</i>	Kohlruschia	Alpilles
<i>Silene alba</i>	White Champion	Hotel grounds; Camargue arable; Pont du Gard
<i>Silene conica</i>	Sand Catchfly	Pont du Gard
<i>Silene gallica</i> var. <i>quinquevulnera</i>	Small-flowered Catchfly	la Crau
<i>Silene italica</i>	Italian Catchfly	Hotel grounds; Alpilles
<i>Silene nocturna</i>	Mediterranean Catchfly	Alpilles
<i>Silene vulgaris</i>	Bladder Champion	la Crau - Aulnes
<i>Spergularia marina</i>	Lesser Sand Spurrey	E Camargue
<i>Spergularia media</i>	Greater Sea-Spurrey	E Camargue sansouire
<i>Spergularia rubra</i>	Sand Spurrey	la Crau
Chenopodiaceae: Goosefoot Family		
<i>Arthrocnemum perenne</i>	Perennial Glasswort	Camargue sansouire
<i>Atriplex halimus</i>	Shrubby Orache	Camargue sansouire
<i>Atriplex portulacoides</i>	Sea Purslane,	Camargue sansouire
<i>Salicornia europaea</i>	Glasswort, Samphire	Camargue sansouire
<i>Salsola kali</i>	Prickly Saltwort	Camargue sansouire
<i>Suaeda maritima</i>	Herbaceous Seablite	Camargue sansouire
<i>Suaeda vera</i>	Shrubby Seablite	Camargue sansouire
Cistaceae: Cistuses and Rockroses		
<i>Cistus albidus</i>	Grey-leaved Cistus	Hotel grounds; Alpilles
<i>Fumana ericoides</i>	Fumana	Hotel grounds; Alpilles
<i>Helianthemum appeninum</i>	White Rockrose	Alpilles; Pont du Gard
<i>Helianthemum canum</i>	Hoary Rockrose	Alpilles
Convolvulaceae: Bindweeds		
<i>Calystegia sepium</i>	Great Bindweed	Camargue; la Crau (margins)
<i>Convolvulus cantabrica</i>	Pink Convolvulus	Hotel grounds; la Crau; Alpilles
<i>Cuscuta epithymum</i>	Common Dodder	Alpilles (on Spartium)
Cornaceae: Dogwoods		
<i>Cornus sanguinea</i>	Dogwood	la Crau; E Camargue
Crassulaceae: Stonecrop Family		
<i>Sedum acre</i>	Biting Stonecrop	Alpilles
<i>Sedum dasyphyllum</i>	Thick-leaved Stonecrop	Pont du Gard
<i>Sedum sediforme</i>	Pale Stonecrop	Hotel Grounds; Alpilles; Pont du Gard
Cucurbitaceae: Cucurbits		
<i>Bryonia cretica</i>	White Bryony	Hotel grounds; Camargue
<i>Ecballium elaterium</i>	Squirting Cucumber	Scamandre
Dipsacaceae: Scabious Family		
<i>Dipsacus fullonum</i>	Wild Teasel	Camargue; la Crau (Aulnes)
<i>Knautia arvensis</i>	Field Scabious	W/N Camargue
<i>Scabiosa columbaria</i>	Small Scabious	Hotel grounds; Alpilles
Elaeagnaceae: Oleaster Family		
* <i>Eleagnus angustifolia</i>	Russian Olive, Oleaster	E Camargue (planted)
Euphorbiaceae: Spurge Family		
<i>Euphorbia characias</i>	Large Mediterranean spurge	Hotel grounds; Alpilles
<i>Euphorbia cyparissias</i>	Cypress Spurge	la Crau; Alpilles
<i>Euphorbia exigua</i>	Dwarf Spurge	la Crau
<i>Euphorbia paralias</i>	Sea Spurge	Sand dunes
<i>Euphorbia pithyusa</i>	A Spurge	Sand dunes
<i>Euphorbia segueiriana</i>	Steppe Spurge	W/N Camargue; la Crau
<i>Euphorbia serrata</i>	A Spurge	Hotel grounds
<i>Euphorbia</i> sp.	A Spurge	Scamandre

Fabaceae (Leguminosae): Pea Family, Legumes		
<i>*Amorpha fruticosa</i>	False Indigo	Camargue ditch sides; Scamandre
<i>Astragalus monspeliensis</i>	Montpellier Milk-vetch	Alpilles
<i>Coronilla emerus</i>	Scorpion Senna	Alpilles; Pont du Gard
<i>Coronilla valentina</i>	Valentine's Scorpion-vetch	Alpilles
<i>Coronilla varia</i>	Crown Vetch	Alpilles
<i>Dorycnium hirsutum</i>	A Dorycnium	Hotel grounds; Alpilles
<i>Dorycnium pentaphyllum</i>	Five-Leaved Dorycnium	Hotel grounds; Alpilles; Pont du Gard
<i>Genista</i> sp.	A Gorse	Alpilles
<i>Hippocrepis ciliata</i>	A Horseshoe Vetch	Hotel Grounds
<i>Hymenocarpus circinnatus</i>	Disc Trefoil	Hotel Grounds
<i>Lathyrus aphaca</i>	Yellow Vetchling	Pont du Gard
<i>Lathyrus nissolia</i>	Grass Vetchling	la Crau (Aulnes); Pont du Gard
<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>	Common Bird's-foot Trefoil	Pont du Gard
<i>Lotus pedunculatus</i>	Greater Bird's-foot Trefoil	Camargue
<i>Medicago littoralis</i>	Shore Medick	Sand dunes
<i>Medicago lupulina</i>	Black Medick	Alpilles
<i>Medicago marina</i>	Sea Medick	Sand dunes
<i>Medicago minima</i>	Small Medick or Bur Medick	Pont du Gard
<i>Medicago sativa</i>	Alfalfa, Lucerne	Pont du Gard
<i>Melilotus</i> sp.	Melilot	E Camargue
<i>Ononis striata</i>	A Rest Harrow	Alpilles; Pont du Gard
<i>Psoralea bituminosa</i>	Pitch Trefoil	Hotel grounds; E Camargue; Alpilles; Pont du Gard
<i>Robinia pseudacacia</i>	False Acacia	Hotel grounds; Pont du Gard
<i>Spartium junceum</i>	Spanish Broom	Widespread in suitable habitat
<i>Trifolium angustifolium</i>	Narrow-leaved Crimson Clover	Near hotel
<i>Trifolium incarnatum</i>	Crimson Clover	Camargue pasture
<i>Trifolium repens</i>	White Clover	Camargue
<i>Trifolium resupinatum</i>	Reversed Clover	Damp grassland Camargue
<i>Trifolium scabrum</i>	Rough Clover	la Crau; Pont du Gard
<i>Trifolium squamosum</i>	Sea Clover	E Camargue
<i>Trifolium stellatum</i>	Star Clover	Hotel grounds; la Crau
<i>Trifolium tomentosum</i>	Woolly Clover	la Crau
<i>Ulex parviflorus</i>	Small-flowered Gorse	la Crau
<i>Vicia laxiflora</i>	Slender Tare	la Crau (Aulnes)
<i>Vicia lutea</i>	Yellow Vetch	Camargue pasture
<i>Vicia sativa</i>	Common Vetch	la Crau (Aulnes)
Fagaceae: Oaks, Beech and Chestnut		
<i>Quercus coccifera</i>	Kermes Oak	la Crau (Aulnes); Alpilles
<i>Quercus ilex</i>	Holm Oak	Hotel grounds; W/N Camargue; la Crau (Aulnes); Alpilles; Pont du Gard
<i>Quercus pubescens</i>	Downy Oak	Pont du Gard
Fumariaceae: Fumitory Family		
<i>Fumaria bicolor</i>	A Fumitory	Hotel grounds
<i>Fumaria</i> sp.	A Fumitory	Camargue arable
Gentianaceae: Gentian Family		
<i>Blackstonia perfoliata</i>	Yellow-wort	E Camargue
Geraniaceae: Crane's-bills and Stork's-bills		
<i>Erodium ciconium</i>	A Stork's-bill	E Camargue
<i>Erodium cicutarium</i>	Common Stork's-bill	la Crau; Pont du Gard
<i>Erodium malacoides</i>	Mallow-Leaved Stork's-bill	N/W Camargue: la Crau; Alpilles
<i>Geranium columbinum</i>	Long-stalked Crane's-bill	Hotel grounds; Pont du Gard
<i>Geranium dissectum</i>	Cut-leaved Crane's-bill	Camargue
<i>Geranium molle</i>	Dove's-foot Crane's-bill	N/W Camargue: la Crau
<i>Geranium purpureum</i>	Little Robin	Hotel grounds
<i>Geranium rotundifolium</i>	Round-leaved Crane's-bill	Camargue; Pont du Gard
Globulariaceae: Globularias		
<i>Globularia alypum</i>	Shrubby Globularia	Alpilles
Lamiaceae (Labiatae): Deadnettle Family, Labiates		
<i>Lavandula augustifolia</i>	Common Lavender	la Crau
<i>Lycopus europaeus</i>	Gipsywort	Scamandre
<i>Mentha aquatica</i>	Water Mint	la Crau (ditch)
<i>Origanum vulgare</i>	Common Marjoram	la Crau
<i>Phlomis lychnitis</i>	Iberian Jerusalem Sage	Hotel grounds; la Crau
<i>Rosmarinus officinalis</i>	Rosemary	Alpilles
<i>Salvia verbeneca</i>	Wild Clary	Hotel grounds; la Crau
<i>Sideritis hirsuta</i>	A sideritis	Hotel grounds
<i>Sideritis romana</i>	Simplebeak Ironwort	la Crau; Alpilles; Pont du Gard
<i>Teucrium chamaedrys</i>	Wall Germander	la Crau; Alpilles
<i>Teucrium polium</i>	Felty Germander	la Crau; Alpilles
<i>Thymus vulgaris</i>	Thyme	Hotel grounds; la Crau; Alpilles
<i>Vitex agnus-castus</i>	Chaste Tree	Pont du Gard

Lauraceae: Laurel Family		
<i>Laurus nobilis</i>	Bay	Hotel grounds
Linaceae: Flaxes		
<i>Linum bienne</i>	Pale Flax	Hotel grounds; Alpilles
<i>Linum campanulatum</i>	A yellow flax	Alpilles
<i>Linum narbonense</i>	Beautiful Flax	Alpilles
<i>Linum strictum</i>	Upright Yellow Flax	Alpilles
Lythraceae: Loosestrifes		
<i>Lythrum salicaria</i>	Purple Loosestrife	la Crau (ditch)
Malvaceae: Mallows		
<i>Althaea officinalis</i>	Marsh Mallow	Scamandre; E Camargue
<i>Lavatera arborea</i>	Tree mallow	Alpilles
<i>Malva sylvestris</i>	Common Mallow	Hotel grounds; la Crau; Alpilles; Pont du Gard
Meliaceae: Mahogany Family		
* <i>Melia azedarach</i>	Indian Bead Tree	Hotel grounds, (planted)
Moraceae: Mulberries and Fig		
<i>Ficus carica</i>	Fig	Hotel grounds; la Crau; Widespread in suitable habitat
* <i>Morus</i> sp.	Mulberry	Hotel grounds; Pont du Gard; (planted)
Oleaceae: Olive Family		
<i>Fraxinus angustifolia</i>	Narrow-leaved Ash	Widespread in suitable habitat
<i>Fraxinus ornus</i>	Manna Ash	Pont du Gard
* <i>Ligustrum lucidum</i>	Privet	E Camargue (planted)
<i>Olea europea</i>	Olive	la Crau; Alpilles
<i>Phillyrea angustifolia</i>	False Olive	Hotel grounds; la Crau; Alpilles; Pont du Gard
Orobanchaceae: Orobanches		
<i>Orobanche</i> sp.	Broomrape	Alpilles
<i>Orobanche minor</i>	Common Broomrape	Hotel Grounds
Papaveraceae: Poppy Family		
<i>Glaucium flavum</i>	Yellow Horned-Poppy	Alpilles
<i>Papaver rhoeas</i>	Common Poppy	Hotel Grounds; Alpilles
Pittosporaceae: Pittosporums		
* <i>Pittosporum tobira</i>	Pittosporum	Scamandre (planted)
Plantaginaceae: Plantains		
<i>Plantago bellardii</i>	A woolly Plantain	la Crau
<i>Plantago coronopus</i>	Buck's-horn Plantain	la Crau; Scamandre; Pont du Gard; E Camargue
<i>Plantago lagopus</i>	Hare's-foot Plantain	la Crau
<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	Ribwort Plantain	Pont du Gard
<i>Plantago sempervirens</i>	Shrubby Plantain	la Crau; Alpilles
Platanaceae: Plane		
<i>Platanus</i> sp.	Plane	Widespread in suitable habitat; street trees
Plumbaginaceae: Plumbago, Sea Lavender and Thrifts		
<i>Limonium narbonense</i>	Narbonne Sea-lavender	Camargue sansouire
Primulaceae: Primrose Family		
<i>Anagallis arvensis</i>	Scarlet Pimpernel (blue form)	la Crau
<i>Anagallis arvensis</i>	Scarlet Pimpernel (scarlet form)	Scamandre
<i>Coris monspeliensis</i>	Coris	Hotel grounds; Alpilles; E Camargue
Ranunculaceae: Buttercup Family		
<i>Clematis flammula</i>	Fragrant Clematis	Alpilles
<i>Clematis vitalba</i>	Old Man's Beard	Widespread in suitable habitat
Resedaceae: Mignonette Family		
<i>Reseda phyteuma</i>	Corn Mignonette	Hotel grounds; la Crau
<i>Reseda</i> sp.	A Mignonette	la Crau; Alpilles
Rhamnaceae: Buckthorn Family		
<i>Rhamnus alaternus</i>	Mediterranean Buckthorn	Pont du Gard
Rosaceae: Rose Family		
<i>Amelanchier ovalis</i>	Snowy Mespilus	Alpilles
<i>Crataegus</i> sp.	A Hawthorn	E Camargue
<i>Eriobotrya japonica</i>	Japanese Loquat	Hotel grounds
<i>Mespilus germanica</i>	Medlar	Alpilles (naturalised)
<i>Potentilla reptans</i>	Creeping Cinquefoil	Scamandre
<i>Poterium verrucosum</i>	Mediterranean Salad Burnet	Pont du Gard
<i>Prunus spinosa</i>	Blackthorn	Hotel Grounds
<i>Prunus</i> sp.	A Wild Plum	E Camargue
<i>Rosa sempervirens</i>	A Rose	Widespread in suitable habitat
<i>Rubus sanctus</i>	Bramble	Hotel grounds; Scamandre
<i>Rubus</i> sp.	A Bramble	Widespread in suitable habitat
Rubiaceae: Bedstraws		
<i>Galium mollugo</i>	Hedge Bedstraw	Hotel grounds
<i>Rubia peregrina</i>	Wild Madder	Hotel grounds; Alpilles; E Camargue
<i>Sherardia arvensis</i>	Field Madder	la Crau
<i>Valantia hispida</i>	Valantia	Hotel grounds; la Crau; Alpilles

Rutaceae: Rues		
<i>Ruta chalepensis</i>	Fringed Rue	Hotel grounds
Salicaceae: Willows and Poplars		
<i>Populus alba</i>	White Poplar	Widespread in suitable habitat
Santalaceae: Bastard Toadflax and Sandalwood Family		
<i>Osyris alba</i>	Osyris	Alpilles; Pont du Gard
Scrophulariaceae: Foxgloves, Toadflaxes and Speedwells		
<i>Verbascum sinuatum</i>	Mullein	la Crau; Alpilles; E Camargue
<i>Veronica persica</i>	Common Field Speedwell	Camargue roadsides
Solanaceae: Nightshade Family		
<i>Solanum dulcamara</i>	Bittersweet, Woody Nightshade	Scamandre; E Camargue
Tamaricaceae: Tamarisk Family		
<i>Tamarix gallica</i>	French Tamarisk	Camargue; la Crau (margins); Scamandre
Thymeliaceae: Daphne Family		
<i>Daphne gnidium</i>	Mediterranean Mezereon	Alpilles
Ulmaceae: Elm Family		
<i>Ulmus</i> sp.	Elm	Widespread in suitable habitat
Urticaceae: Nettle Family		
<i>Parietaria judaica</i>	Pellitory of the Wall	Pont du Gard
Valerianaceae: Valerian Family		
<i>Centranthus calcitrapa</i>	A Valerian	Hotel Grounds; Alpilles
<i>Centranthus ruber</i>	Red Valerian (Red & white forms)	Hotel grounds; Alpilles; Pont du Gard
MONOCOTYLEDONS		
Araceae: Arum Family		
<i>Arum italicum</i>	Large Cuckoo-Pint	
Cyperaceae: Sedge Family		
<i>Carex otrubae</i>	False Fox Sedge	Scamandre
<i>Cladium mariscus</i>	Great Fen-sedge, Saw Sedge	la Crau (ditch); Scamandre
<i>Cyperus difformis</i>	Small-flowered Umbrella Sedge	la Crau (ditch)
Iridaceae: Iris Family		
<i>Iris pseudacorus</i>	Yellow Flag	Camargue
<i>Iris spuria</i> ssp. <i>maritima</i>	Sea Iris	W Camargue sansouire
Juncaceae: Rush Family		
Juncus acutus	Sharp Rush	la Crau (ditch); Scamandre
<i>Juncus gerardii</i>	Gerard's Rush	E Camargue
<i>Juncus maritimus</i>	Sea Rush	Camargue
Liliaceae: Lily Family		
<i>Anthericum liliago</i>	St Bernard's Lily	Pont du Gard
<i>Aphyllanthes monspeliensis</i>	Blue Aphyllanthes	Alpilles
<i>Asparagus acutifolius</i>	Spiny Asparagus	Hotel grounds; Pont du Gard
<i>Asphodelus albus</i>	White Asphodel	Hotel grounds; Pont du Gard
<i>Asphodelus fistulosus (ayardii)</i>	Hollow-stemmed Asphodel	la Crau
<i>Dipcadi serotina</i>	Brown Bluebell	Hotel grounds
<i>Muscari comosum</i>	Tassel Hyacinth	Hotel grounds; Pont du Gard
<i>Ruscus aculeatus</i>	Butcher's Broom	Hotel grounds; Pont du Gard
<i>Smilax aspera</i>	Smilax	Hotel grounds; Alpilles
Orchidaceae: Orchids		
<i>Limodorum abortivum</i>	Violet Bird's-nest Orchid	Hotel grounds
<i>Ophrys scolopax</i>	Woodcock Orchid	Hotel grounds; E Camargue
Poaceae (Gramineae): Grasses		
<i>Aegilops geniculata</i>	Aegilops	Widespread in suitable habitat
<i>Aira cupaniana</i>	An Aira	la Crau
<i>Ammophila arenaria</i>	Marram Grass	Sand Dunes
<i>Arundo donax</i>	Giant Reed	Camargue; la Crau (margins); Scamandre
<i>Avena</i> sp.	Wild Oat	Widespread in suitable habitat
<i>Bromus madritensis</i>	Compact Brome	Alpilles; Pont du Gard; E Camargue
<i>Bromus rubens</i>	Fox-tail Brome	la Crau
<i>Catapodium rigidum</i>	Fern Grass	la Crau
<i>Cynosurus echinatus</i>	Rough Dog's-tail	Hotel grounds; Pont du Gard
<i>Dactylis glomeratum</i>	Cock's Foot	Widespread in suitable habitat
<i>Hordeum marinum</i>	Sea Barley	E Camargue sansouire
<i>Hordeum murinum</i>	Wall Barley	Pont du Gard
<i>Hordeum secalinum</i>	Meadow barley	la Crau - Aulnes
<i>Lagurus ovatus</i>	Hare's-tail	la Crau; Alpilles; Sand dunes
<i>Parapholis incurva</i>	Curved Hardgrass	E Camargue sansouire
<i>Phragmites australis</i>	Common Reed	Widespread in suitable habitat
<i>Stipa capensis</i>	Mediterranean Needle-grass	la Crau
Typhaceae: Bulrushes		
<i>Typha angustifolia</i>	Lesser Reedmace	E Camargue
<i>Typha latifolia</i>	Great Reedmace; Bulrush	Camargue



AGIR pour la
BIODIVERSITÉ

Amine Flitti - LPO

Jun 18

To 'Robin and Rachel Hamilton'

Dear Rachel and Robin

Did you enjoy your trip in Provence ? I hope so !
Thank you again for your help in Nature Conservation.

Best regards

Amine FLITTI

Ornithologue

Responsable de programme

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Site : <http://paca.lpo.fr>

Base de données collaborative en ligne : <http://www.faune-paca.org>

ABC PACA : <http://abc.faune-paca.org/>

♻️ *Participez au Développement Durable. Merci de n'imprimer ce courriel que si nécessaire.*