

Honeyguide

WILDLIFE HOLIDAYS

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The Cévennes
3 – 12 June 2011

**Holiday participants
from the Salisbury & District Natural History Society**

David and Diana Melzack
Rosemary and Gerald Nicholls
Donald and Rita Scarfe
Joan Tripp
Elisabeth Richmond

Grace Hickman
Ailsa McKee
Barbara Carter
Ted Sansby
Ray Witt

Leaders

Rachel and Robin Hamilton

Daily diary by Rachel and Robin, plant list by Rachel, other lists by Robin.

All photos in this report were taken during the holiday, those edged green by Rachel or Robin, edged blue by Diana or David, edged red by Donald and edged yellow by Ailsa.

Front cover – the Cirque de Navacelles.

Below – the group on the Causse de Campestre.

Our hosts at La Gare aux Anes – <http://lagareauxanes.free.fr>



This holiday, as for 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 towards the protection of vultures and other wildlife of the Grands Causses was supplemented by gift aid through the Honeyguide Wildlife Charitable Trust. It was combined with the contribution from the groups in the Dordogne, the Camargue and the French Pyrenees, making a total this year of €2630 (£2390) given to La Ligue pour la Protection des Oiseaux (LPO, the French Bird Protection League), which was presented to Gwenaëlle Plet from the LPO during the French Pyrenees holiday.

This brings the total given to LPO since 1991 to £16,496 and the total conservation contributions from all Honeyguide holidays since 1991 to £72,591 as at August 2011.

Daily Diary

Day 1: Friday 3 June

Arrival, the Millau Viaduct and la Gare aux Ânes

A band of thirteen from the Salisbury & District Natural History Society emerged from Rodez airport into the warm sunshine, the unaccustomed heat softened by a gentle breeze. They were met by Robin and Rachel, and speedily gathered up and into the minibuses for the drive to our hotel. The 'tame' countryside around Rodez soon gives way to less familiar scenes, and as we went along sharpening eyes were spotting buzzards and black kites, and a single red kite ranging along the hillside beside us. The great plateau of the Grands Causses stretched before us, picked out by rocky cliff faces. Then, rounding the graceful curves of the *autoroute*, we caught glimpses of the famous, and always impressive, Millau Viaduct. We slowed down for the crossing to savour the experience of being higher than the Eiffel Tower but we were soon over it and on to the Causse du Larzac and the last leg of our journey. Leaving the main road we wound our way along the lanes, through the stone villages and among the rocky hillsides, a brilliant pattern of green and silver, yellow and blue.



The first greeting at la Gare aux Ânes (*left*) was from the nightingale, now in residence just a few yards from the front door. Serins and linnets were singing from the trees in the drive and slightly further away we could hear a girl bunting.]

It was nearly dinner time, so after our welcome from Sylvain and his brother and sister-in-law we were shown to our rooms, sorted ourselves out and returned to the dining room for drinks and to enjoy our first taste of Sylvain's cooking: plates of Parma ham and slices of melon, home-made *confit de canard*, then an exciting array of cheeses with strawberries and home-made ice-cream to finish. The nightingale was in full song as we said goodnight; the Salisbury party had had to make a very early start.

Day 2: Saturday 4 June

Exploring the Causse du Larzac to the south, around la Gare aux Ânes, la Couvertoirade and la Pezade

We had a warm welcome from Gregory, Sylvain's brother, at breakfast time, with cereals and yoghurt, bread, fresh croissants, home-made jams, a selection of teas and excellent coffee. The nightingale had regaled us for most of the night to the delight of nearly everyone; Gerald reported both a heart-and-dart and a wood tiger moth in his bedroom. We loaded a huge picnic hamper into the minibus and set off, trying to pretend that it wasn't actually raining.

Our aim on this first day was to explore something of the countryside around us. A couple of miles down the road to the south we turned onto a rough track up the hill through the rocky grassland. By the time we came to a stop the rain had eased off and the sky was quickly brightening. We opened the minibuses and were assailed by the scent of the thyme crushed under our wheels. It was *Thymus vulgaris* – a shrubby thyme, with pale mauve flowers, very common there but new to most of us in spite of its name, 'common thyme'. As we arrived, a Cleopatra flew by and we heard the songs of Bonelli's warbler, blackcap and cuckoo. There was plenty of interest for everyone so we spread out to see what we could find among the box and juniper: Pyrenean flax, pyramidal orchids, the bright yellow daisy of hairy viper's grass, Montpellier milk-vetch, the little dwarf blue knapweed, *Carduncellus*; the list kept growing. Gerald went after butterflies and soon found a small heath, a large grizzled skipper and a brown argus. A beautiful white plume moth obligingly perched for general admiration and Ailsa and Ray found some of the striking green forester moths and a heart-and-dart moth as well as a pearly heath. Cuckoos were calling continually and blackbird, song thrush and woodlark songs all echoed round the valley. We examined the intricately woven larval tents of pine processionary moths on the pine trees and Ailsa caught and photographed a treble bar moth. The day was warming up and more and more butterflies appeared: black-veined whites with their delicate, translucent wings, a small blue which posed for photos, and the startlingly intense colour of an Adonis blue shining against the dark green of the box bushes. Elisabeth called us over to where she had found a lovely specimen of a fragrant orchid, and while we listened to a chiffchaff calling we noticed about a dozen griffon vultures gathering and circling overhead, gaining height in a thermal and then drifting away in line astern into the distance. We drove on up the hill and at the top found the purpose of the track we had followed: a large mobile phone mast somewhat disguised as a pine tree. The display of brilliant blue flax there was irresistible to the photographers,

The sky was looking very unsettled so we decided to head for our picnic spot and hold in reserve the visit to la Couvertoirade in case of rain later. We drove 'off-road' again to find a sheltered and secluded corner among the rocks and wild flowers, where we ate our lunch – a wonderful beetroot, tomato and rice salad, with eggs, followed by cheese and fruit. A Bonelli's warbler sang repeatedly but proved impossible to see; we could hear a red-legged partridge calling from a nearby field and a distant woodlark was singing. The swifts were flying very low; did they have some knowledge about the weather to come?

The rain began as we were packing up our picnic. Several people in the group had been asking about the possibility of buying useful large-scale maps of the area, so we decided to stay out of the rain and make a short detour to le Caylar, an exceptionally well equipped service station on the A75 with an excellent regional information centre and shop. Laden with maps and local produce we were still faced with torrential rain, so another adjustment to the timetable took us to the beautifully restored and charming Templar village of la Couvertoirade (*below*).



There is a magical mix of local crafts and produce, tasteful touristy commerce, opportunities for refreshment and fascinating natural history to be found among the tiny stone houses and the maze of narrow streets. Some people headed for coffee, others for local pottery, jewelery and hand-made soap, and when at last the rain stopped the black redstarts came out to sing from the rooftops and chimneys while the swifts swooped down to their nests under the eaves. Everyone was captivated by the miniature rockeries that had formed in the stone garden walls and stone outside staircases: saxifrages, geraniums, speedwells, ferns, sandworts and snapdragons, all flowering in profusion and glistening with raindrops (*above*).

At last the weather looked more promising. We gathered beneath the stone portico and then strolled round to visit a famous feature of the Cévennes agricultural landscape, a stone-lined dewpond or '*lavogne*'. Every settlement would have had one for watering the sheep night and morning, though few are so cherished and sensitively preserved as the one at la Couvertoirade. While we were looking at the *lavogne* and admiring the dragonflies darting over the water and the butterflies 'salting' in the mud at the edge, we were treated to an amazing and repeated fly-past by a pair of hoopoes; they circled round and round us, among the trees and rocks, occasionally perching briefly before continuing their circuit.

The day's final stop was at la Pezade. As we arrived, a male Montagu's harrier flew past and we watched it follow the hedge and then fly across the valley and along the wooded hillside opposite. The butterflies scattered in front of us as we walked through the grass and we had excellent views of common and Adonis blues, Glanville fritillaries and many chimney sweeper moths. We heard a nuthatch calling from the woods and watched a yellowhammer singing from a treetop; the croaking call of a raven alerted us and two flew over the trees. The meadows here are renowned worldwide for their orchids, so we spread out to see what we could find. Military orchids, past their best (it was an incredibly early season) could be found in profusion, occasionally, a 'late' lady orchid stood out, and twayblades, man and frog orchids were in good flower in the shade of the bushes. Rita and Rosemary found a good specimen of fly orchid (*right*) and the delicate scent of fragrant orchids which covered the banks was easily caught.



We found a wood ants' nest, and showed how the formic acid sprayed by the ants, when we disturbed the surface with a spike of meadow clary flowers, would turn the flowers from blue to red, just like litmus paper.

Sylvain was worried that we had had a cold wet day so he had prepared a special, warming vegetable soup to help us recover – a delicious extra starter. This was followed by a plate of *chacuterie*. Then, for our main course we had a '*feuilletée*' of veal in a creamy mushroom sauce, with home-made *choucrouste*, and after the cheese, a wonderful mango and apricot tart. As we parted for the night it was still damp, and rather chilly, but the nightingale was undeterred.

Day 3: Sunday 5 June

The Causse Noir and the vultures of the Gorges de la Jonte

It was cloudy but much brighter and more promising as we took an early walk along the track opposite. The nightingale was still singing lustily (had he had any sleep?), serins were singing in the treetops in the garden, a few linnets were twittering and feeding by the gate and a skylark fluttered up ahead of us and began singing as it climbed high up into the sky. We strolled along the sandy track and a cuckoo flew across the field on our right and settled on a branch long enough for Gerald to get a good look and confirm its identification as a great spotted cuckoo. We had brief telescope views of a male red-backed shrike and a male stonechat perching on bushes. The time went fast and we found ourselves having to 'step it out' to be back in time for breakfast, which was interrupted when a snake-fly settled on Rachel's sleeve, letting us all see its strange 'long necked' appearance (*photo on p18*).

Today we were heading further afield and we set off in sunshine for the Causse Noir, soon adding a jay to the bird list for the week. Driving down the Dourbie valley, we enjoyed the breathtaking views of the ribbon of blue sky with the cliffs rising above us in the gorge. At la Roque Ste Marguerite we climbed up the valley side and onto the Causse Noir. This flat limestone plateau, very different in appearance from the Causse du Larzac of the previous day, is characterised by dense areas of dark pines – hence its name. Our first stop was in the heart of the pine woods where a '*toit-citerne*' (*right*), an underground stone tank with a beautiful stone roof designed for rainwater harvesting has been expertly preserved; it stands as a relic of former land uses where the isolated plateaux were more densely populated and water for livestock and living was at a high premium.



We parked beside the road and our first excitements were butterflies: two scarce swallowtails fluttering by and a little further off the road, a female silver-washed fritillary. Ailsa found some tiny long-stalked puffballs, and impressed us all by identifying them as *Tulostoma brumale* (*photo on p28*). A yellow crab-spider, despite being poorly camouflaged on a blue viper's bugloss flower, had caught a fly and ignored a forester moth that settled there, oblivious of its narrow escape.

The flowers flourished in the shade of the pines. A fine tussock of swallowwort was in good flower, there were majestic umbels of sermountain, little groups of birdsnest orchids lurked under the low branches. We heard a firecrest calling and watched a vulture overhead. But it was the insects that really captured our attention: ascalaphids *Libelloides longicornis* were impressively flying about hunting after other insects and also at rest on grass stalks and allowing themselves to be photographed; the dramatic shield bug *Syromastes rhombeus* was crawling slowly over some bramble leaves; there were ant-lion pits in the shelter of a rocky overhang and a green tiger beetle scuttled away in the sand. As we strolled back to the minibuses a short-toed eagle glided over, closely followed by a pair of honey buzzards, circling low overhead, and finally we caught sight of a pair of common buzzards soaring together further away over the tree tops.

A mile or so further on we turned into a grassy meadow where parking is allowed for visitors to the ruined *prieuré* of St Jean des Balmes. We arrived to the sound of chaffinches, great tits, a firecrest and a wren all singing and then caught a snatch of a crested tit's contact call as well as the jaunty song of a short-toed treecreeper. These last two led us quite a dance, and aching necks amongst the tall trees, before giving a few good views. When we spared a moment to look beneath our feet we found birdsnest orchids again as well as red helleborine and green wintergreen, all emerging from a soft, dense carpet of moss. A robin, not such a common bird in this region, sang sweetly nearby during our picnic lunch of cold chicken, tomato salad, baguettes, cheese and fresh fruit.

We drove on after lunch and stopped briefly to look down on the wonderful spectacle of the junction of two great gorges, the Gorges du Tarn and the Gorges de la Jonte, and across towards the plateaux of the Causses Méjean and Sauveterre. Then we pressed on to our two o'clock appointment at the belvedere and information centre for the Griffon Vulture Reintroduction Programme in the Gorges de la Jonte. (This is run by the LPO, the recipient of the Honeyguide contribution resulting from the French holidays.) Up on the belvedere, telescopes were trained on a griffon vulture at its nest site on the cliff, with two choughs in attendance, and then our telescopes were directed to an excellent view of two black vultures – an adult and an enormous juvenile – on their nest in a pine tree across the gorge. After a little while we were taken inside to watch a very informative video presentation about the successful reintroduction of griffon vultures to the area, followed by live pictures of an adult griffon vulture with a young bird on the nest. Back on the viewing terrace we were delighted to pick out an Egyptian vulture, a rarity here, among the soaring griffons.

As we returned to the minibuses a nightjar churred briefly from the hillside, a surprising sound to hear in broad daylight. Beside the path we found an ilex hairstreak and a small skipper. Before the return drive we stopped for coffee on a bar terrace overlooking the gorge and watched crag martins circling around. A fan-tailed warbler called overhead and a jay flew across the gorge. Gerald, ever on the lookout for butterflies, added red admiral and small tortoiseshell to the week's list.

The return trip over the Causse Noir and down through the Trévezel Gorges was uneventful, though very picturesque, but just after Cantobre we glanced up at the cliff on our left and saw a raptor soaring above it. We pulled in to the side of the road, expecting a short-toed eagle, but it was closer than we had realised and in the excellent light it was clearly a Bonelli's eagle, a very exciting moment for some!

Day 4: Monday 6 June

Mont Aigoual and the schist and granite hills of the true Cévennes

A fairly long drive lay ahead so we had decided against an early walk in favour of an early breakfast and a prompt start. The sun was shining but the sky was looking unsettled. It was worth making sure of the best of the day near the summit of Mont Aigoual – so only one stop *en route*. And that a fairly unusual one. The cause landscape is predominantly Jurassic in origin, a limestone derived from a shallow sea where, on the muddy shoreline, dinosaurs roamed. Some of these left footprints (*right*) that have been preserved over the intervening millennia and are now being rediscovered as the rocks of the hillside above Sauclières are quarried. Many of the finds are important and are taken to museums and universities; lesser finds are cherished by the quarrymen and stonemasons who work there, and are displayed at the workshop for the public to look at. Indeed, the men delight in talking about them and showing them off. We stopped briefly to see what was on display and the low light made for some effective photography.



We followed the valley of the River Dourbie along the south side, climbing through the chestnut woods along the hillside, then out into a vista of grassland and broom-covered slopes, through the wooded upper slopes and finally on to the alpine meadows on the summit. For the latter part of the journey we were tantalised and charmed by glimpses of a delicate little blackish butterfly. They were quite plentiful, fluttering over the road and in the hedgerows. At last we were able to get a good look and some photos: Piedmont ringlets.

The song of skylarks filled the air at the summit car park where we escaped from the minibuses to stretch our legs and enjoy the fresh mountain air. We were being teased by low cloud and only occasionally had patchy glimpses of the awesome view around us. A male wheatear was very visible though, and we watched it for a while, singing in flight and perching and showing off on trees and rocks. There was a yellowhammer singing as well from a nearby tree and, as a useful comparison, Gerald and Rosemary found us a girl bunting.

There is a state-of-the-art meteorological station in an eccentric nineteenth century castle on the top of the mountain, equipped with the usual tourist facilities as well as an excellent exhibition of the work there and some magnificent live images of weather patterns. We spent a little time absorbing some of the information, stocking up on books, maps and cards, and giving the weather time to clear a little. Then, back at the minibuses, we spread the picnic on the grass and enjoyed the 360° view in intermittent sunshine.

After lunch we scabbled among the grasses for some of the alpine flowers: the alpine lady's mantle *Alchemilla alpina* with its delicate silver leaves and pale gold flowers, the improbable deep pink flowers of alpine clover *Trifolium alpinum*, the fascinating dioecious mountain everlasting *Antennaria dioica*, familiar bilberry *Vaccinium myrtillus* and the bright blue flower heads of globe-headed rampion *Phyteuma hemisphaericum* all caught our attention. Crawling among them, beautiful dung beetles with metallic blue elytra and legs struggled with rabbit droppings. Setting off back, we stopped several times to make up for the 'dash for the summit' on the way up. The first was close to the top where the elderflower orchids – both pink and yellow forms (*right*) – were still in good condition in contrast to the extremely past-their-best wild tulips. White blobs in the field by the road were the disappointingly inedible mosaic puffball. We stopped again a little further down the road where a tree pipit was singing; some of us watched it fly several song-flights while others followed the pretty Piedmont ringlets (*below right*). Ailsa tracked down a wall brown and a small copper and Donald found a silver-studded blue (*photo on p18*). A goldcrest and a robin were singing in the woods beside the road when we stopped to photograph a fine plant of St Bruno's lily and also came upon a paper wasp on its nest. Gerald went on a fern hunt and found narrow buckler and lady ferns in the wood.



The Cévennes National Park has a very interesting information centre a mile or two below the summit where there is also an excellent regional produce shop. We stopped there, below a hillside covered in yellow gentian *Gentiana lutea*; one or two determined photographers struggled up to get a close view while the rest of us admired the spectacle of yellow gentians *en masse*, from a distance. A dead pine tree opposite was the perfect songpost for a yellowhammer and on a clump of viper's bugloss by the shop Diana found a bee-beetle and a hummingbird hawkmoth.

We took the northerly route along the Dourbie Valley back to la Gare aux Ânes and gave ourselves a brief break before meeting in the bar for a drink and to review the day's events and sightings. The weather was clearing and the breeze had dropped, so after dinner we took the telescopes outside to have a look at the only planet that was in evidence at the time – Saturn, showing its rings beautifully. And, to round off the evening, glow-worms were shining brightly in the grass around the old signal box.

Day 5: Tuesday 7 June
The heart of the Causse du Larzac

We woke to light haze with scattered high cloud; the weather looked promising. Inevitably there are echoes of the history of la Gare aux Ânes around the hotel and the line of the old railway track can be seen leading off in both directions. In fact the route has recently been made more accessible and we were tempted eastwards along the secluded pathway for our early morning walk. We passed lizard and pyramidal orchids on the lawn and in the field at the end of the garden, disturbing sleepy butterflies in the jumble of vetches, false sainfoin and brambles in the cutting. A nightingale's croaking anxiety call warned us to keep away from its territory and we watched a whitethroat singing both on a wire and in flight. There were turtle doves and cuckoos calling and we couldn't resist testing the power of the acid in a wood ants' nest to change the colour of some meadow clary flowers again.

On the way to our destination up on the Causse du Larzac we stopped briefly by the town park in Nant; some hurried to 'la Poste' for stamps and the rest watched the resident black redstart family about its business in the park, the male singing from the back of a park bench and the young demanding food. There were serins high in the trees and house martins, swallows, swifts and crag martins all circling above. On reaching the causse we took our bearings at the viewpoint on the cliff top by the radio mast and enjoyed the view. We could make out the silhouette of Mont Aigoual on the horizon and trace our route up to it. A tree pipit and a Bonelli's warbler were singing from valley-side woods below. There was an exclamation and we turned to look along the cliff edge as, one by one, in graceful procession, an amazing succession of griffon vultures slowly glided past us, following the cliff top no more than twenty metres away. Some were at our

level, and turned their heads to look at us as they effortlessly floated by. Others had failed to take advantage of the updrafts and were struggling to gain height, flapping determinedly, dangerously close to the treetops below. Others – perhaps the more experienced birds – soared above, catching the thermals. Eventually at least thirty had passed us; we lost count – it was an extraordinary spectacle. Finally, when the last vulture had gone, we turned our attention to other matters. A fine sermountain plant was bedecked with about a dozen of the black and red 'Millwall' bugs *Graphosoma italicum* and a couple of seven-spot ladybirds, and we spotted a pair of mating chimney sweeper moths. We admired a small heath and then Ailsa called us excitedly to where a green lizard had disappeared down a rabbit hole, closely followed by a common toad. We waited and watched but they didn't reappear. There were more butterflies: marbled white (*photo on p11*) and Adonis blue. Further along the track we came to a little *lavogne*, always attractive to birds. We heard a coal tit there and a dunnoek, the first of the week, and had a brief view of a crested tit. Further still along the path an Orphean warbler was singing continually but was reluctant to show itself. More insects caught our attention: a Mother Shipton moth and a very smart black and orange striped beetle *Mylabris polymorpha*. A Berger's clouded yellow allowed itself to be examined closely enough for a positive identification and we had a good look at a spotted fritillary on a yellow rattle flower (*photo on p18*). The heyday of the orchids was over for this year; there were withering flowers and seed-heads in abundance but it had been a strange, early season. The bonus was the lizard orchids, and Ray found a very impressive clump, smelling disgusting, in accordance with the French familiar name of *orchis bouc*, Billy-goat orchid.

We were in danger of being late for lunch, so we hurried back to the minibuses only to be delayed by an excellent view of a woodlark singing on a wire, obligingly sitting still long enough for everyone to catch a good look of it in the telescope. It then flew off, singing, and as we drove away Barbara spotted a rabbit – not an uncommon species here but apparently more secretive than at home and rarely seen. There was more delay when we spotted another woodlark on a bush and then several of everyone's favourite, red-backed shrikes, showing nicely on telegraph wires beside the road.

We were made very welcome at the *Ferme Auberge Jassenove* where we broke from the normal routine of a Honeyguide holiday to enjoy a traditional Aveyronnaise lunch in an ancient farmhouse setting. Everything is home-grown and home-made as well as traditional, and brought to the table by members of the family. We began with slices of meatloaf with delicious salad. This was followed by huge fluffy bowls of the lightest soufflé imaginable, made with the famous cheese of the region – Roquefort. Then came slices of succulent roast lamb with a *gratin* of potatoes cooked to their own recipe, '*pommes de terre Jassenove*'. A selection of cheeses came next – all local, and including Roquefort, of course, and then the meal was rounded off by a choice of home-made tarts: chocolate and plum from fresh local *mirabelle* plums. Afterwards, we strolled round the garden where Grace spotted a grizzled skipper and Gerald found a violet carpenter bee. A track leads downhill from the edge of the garden and out onto the rocky *cause* grassland which forms much of the Jassenove estate. We were able to explore at will, and followed the path into the wood to admire a beautifully constructed ancient *citerne* with an extraordinary vaulted roof made of flat stones on edge and 'cemented' together with earth. We found patches of the tiny *cause* endemic Gerard's thrift, a few flowers still in good condition, globularia, Solomon's seal, blue aphyllanthes, rock candytuft and mountain alyssum. There were some active butterflies: an Essex skipper, several black-veined whites, another spotted fritillary and a small tortoiseshell; a southern white admiral circled round us several times and then posed on a bush to be photographed (*p11*). We all had a close look at the activity at a huge wood ants' nest and we had the best ever view of a serin as it sang, moving from one perch to another and at last settling in full view and bright sunlight.

We said our goodbyes to the Galtiers and drove to the next little hamlet, les Baumes. Here, we were able to spend a few minutes exploring an ancient fortified troglodyte house (*right*), roughly crafted centuries ago from a deep recess in the limestone rock that towers over the farmstead. There were a few good birds too: a couple of griffon vultures, a short-toed eagle and a pair of ravens. Leading from les Baumes to the neighbouring village of St Martin du Larzac is another ancient artefact, a *buissière*, or hollow double hedge, predominantly of box. It encloses a footpath and would have been an important sheltered route for people and livestock travelling from one settlement to the other during periods of extreme weather.



We set off for home, delayed only by the sight of a big flock of choughs. After briefly reviewing our day we sat down to a light supper of *charcuterie*, green salad, quiches and *crêpes*.

Day 6: Wednesday 8 June

The Causse Méjean: caves and steppes

The day was overcast but not actually raining when we met for breakfast. The promise of another longish day had persuaded us again to make an early start rather than take an early walk. We set off promptly, down the Dourbie valley to la Roque Ste Marguerite. This time we took the direct route – up a tiny side valley onto the Causse Noir, then straight down into the Jonte valley and up onto a new cause, the Causse Méjean. Our destination was the famous cave, Aven Armand, one of the richest natural underground spectacles in Europe. We had a few minutes for coffee, to appreciate the views and the area around and to find a little wildlife: a yellowhammer and a stonechat were singing by the car park.

The moment for our descent into the cavern arrived and we crowded into the train that saves the modern visitor a 400-step flight of stairs. Our English-speaking guide entertained us with the narrative of the cave's discovery and exploration, fascinating statistics about the features of the cave and clear science about its formation. The best bit, though, is the breathtaking sight, and we took the steady route down and up again, among the bewildering and beautiful array of stalactites and stalagmites (*right*). Emerging into the daylight, we spent a little time stocking up on postcards and souvenirs. The natural depression in the ground which was the original point of discovery in 1897 is well worth a look, so we peered down through the secure wire fence and, in the shade of the rocks at the entrance to the *aven*, we were amazed to see a very large patch of hepatica *Hepatica nobilis* – normally a plant of the damp shade of woodland. It would be a beautiful sight in the early spring. We strolled back to the minibuses, pausing to examine a patch of sandy soil riddled with the burrows of solitary wasps. As we left, we had a nice view of a tawny pipit and two crested larks on the road.



We drove over the great steppe landscape of the Causse Méjean, with silver angel's hair grass shimmering in the changing light (*below*). The tiny stone hamlets are widely separated, with ancient tracks connecting them, making for excellent walking. We stopped for our picnic lunch at one of these hamlets, Hûres, celebrated for its colony of elusive rock sparrows. They were as elusive as ever, though we had a leisurely lunch with telescopes and binoculars on full alert. We did hear stone-curlew calling and Ray's quick call drew our attention to a short-toed eagle which flew quite close to us in good light. Over a distant hill a large group of griffon vultures was congregating, probably homing in on one of the animal carcasses that the farmers are now permitted to leave for them.



A well-marked footpath leads up the hill towards the village of le Buffre. The ground is well-grazed, stony steppe, typical of many square miles of the countryside here. The flora is rich and diverse and was at its prettiest, a great profusion of fragrant herbs: thymes, lavenders, sages and germanders, as well as tunic flower, hawkweeds, vetches and trefoils. We walked up to the top of the hill to the north for a wonderful view over the Causse Méjean to where it dips down to the lip of the famous Gorges du Tarn. The air was full of the song of skylarks. On the way up, Ray had found an elephant hawkmoth resting on a rock and we caused some surprise when we all stopped to look at it on the way down as its rock had been appropriated by a couple of walkers to use as a pillow while they snoozed in the sun! Exploring around the village had proved very productive for the botanists in the group too, with a very species-rich patch of disturbed ground full of arable weeds – a fine display of long-headed poppy *Papaver dubium* and Venus's looking-glass *Legousia speculum-veneris*.

We drove a little further on to the hamlet of le Villaret which is the centre of a complex rehabilitation and reintroduction programme for the primitive and endangered Przewalski's horse, originally native to China and Mongolia. They wander freely over an enormous area of the *causee* and, sadly, remained unusually out of sight for us. On one of our stops to search for the horses we were thrilled by not one but two ortolan buntings singing beautifully, perhaps challengingly, at one another across the road. We had a good opportunity to look at a dolmen too, and enjoyed some wonderful dramatic views as impressive storms ranged round the horizon. We headed for home, dropping down to Meyrueis at the head of the Jonte and then over the *Causee Noir*. We had a brief moment of excitement as we drove down through the steep wood into Trèves when we were overtaken by a goshawk which burst out of the woodland beside the road and shot past us at high speed.

Sylvain was again concerned that we might have been caught in one of the rainstorms so he had decided once more that we deserved to start our dinner with bowls of steaming vegetable soup – comfort food! But this was an 'extra' course, and was followed by a starter as usual, a sweet pepper pâté. Then came grilled ling, with mixed vegetables, then cheese, and to finish, glasses of fresh strawberries infused with a secret liqueur. After dinner the storms had passed, and both air and sky were crystal clear and there was a bright half-moon. We set up the telescopes and did a little moongazing and then turned our attention to Saturn. Its largest moon, Titan, was clearly visible in the dark sky beyond the curve of the rings.

Day 7: Thursday 9 June Nant, the river Dourbie and Cantobre

There was a good band of early risers ready for a pre-breakfast walk across the road and down the track on to the *causee*. It was fine and sunny and the nightingale was still serenading us. Two corn buntings were singing vigorously from opposing bushes and we had a good view of them in the telescope. A white wagtail flew over, calling, and a very busy pair of stonechats flitted about and shouted from the hedgerow. One or two elusive red-backed shrikes appeared several times but always perched too briefly for a telescope view.

After breakfast we stopped in Nant once more, this time with leisure to explore. We began with the park where the adult male black redstart was again sitting on the bench, giving us all superb views. The serins were bobbing around the pond where crag martins and house martins were coming down to drink, and swifts screamed overhead. The female black redstart appeared with a young bird and we saw collared doves, a magpie and heard the call of a nuthatch – all in a tiny 'urban' park.

There is a redundant church in Nant that has been converted into an information centre which deals in great detail with the history and natural history of the surrounding area, so we spent a little time there. The complex geology is graphically explained; there are photographic displays of some of the characteristic plants; many of the local industries and land uses are discussed, with interesting collections of artefacts; there are also photographs of significant local landmarks. There was a temporary display which covered the history of the now defunct railway line of which la Gare aux Ânes is a part. There was a collection of photographs of the old station as well as others along the line. The great viaducts and tunnels on the route were well illustrated and there were awesome accounts of the construction of the line.

We dispersed to explore the little medieval town. The Romanesque church is an important and well-known example of its kind, and for birdwatchers it is a great delight to watch swifts, house martins and crag martins



swooping up to their nests under the eaves. There was another crag martin's nest under an archway along a pretty back alley behind the museum. A perfect place for coffee is under the medieval arches of the old market hall (*left*); and while we were there a griffon vulture flew over.

We drove down to the old bridge over the river Dourbie where we had very nice views of a dipper feeding in the river, walking under water, and grey wagtails bobbing on the stones and feeding. There were crag martins flying over the river and under the bridge and great tits with a nest-hole in the masonry of the bridge itself. We looked over the parapet at the alders and willows where serins and a coal tit were feeding. We had just decided that we had had our fill when a kingfisher flew by.

Time was getting on so we drove downstream to the next river bridge, crossed it and followed a track that leads to the edge of the great expanse of valley-side woods. We parked in a glade at the edge of the wood and began to explore. There were huge great green bush-crickets (one bit Gerald) crawling about; a Niobe fritillary and a marbled white flew across the clearing; small coppers, common blues, meadow browns, a small blue and an Adonis blue were all in evidence on the scabious and bramble flowers. Blackcap, chiffchaff and nuthatch were singing and we heard, and some saw, a green woodpecker. We took the narrow path into the wood where we could hear a great spotted woodpecker drumming and calling. There was the distant call of a short-toed treecreeper, several firecrests singing around us, the constant song of a blackcap, and we watched chiffchaffs singing and calling in the trees overhead.

The red helleborine was looking very good along the path side and on the ivy-covered banks but the broad-leaved helleborine was well past its best and the autumn crocuses had grotesquely shaped ripening fruit. There were several tantalizing broomrapes in flower and a wonderful clump of nettle-leaved bellflower. We spent a little time watching the enchanting courtship flight of a pair of speckled woods.

Back in the clearing for lunch it was impossible not to be distracted by the wildlife. Ray found an ilex hairstreak and Diana found and photographed a hoverfly *Volucella zonaria*, a very convincing bee mimic. A beautiful demoiselle *Calopteryx virgo* fluttered about, perching occasionally on the bushes around us. We heard a jay; chiffchaff and Bonelli's warbler sang throughout lunch and a buzzard circled low overhead. Just as we drove away, a painted lady flew by. Stopping by the bridge to see what was about, we had good views of both grey and white wagtails and there were serins in the trees overhanging the river. Then Ray looked over a nearby garden and found a large fritillary moving leisurely among the sweet William. It kindly allowed us to examine it through telescopes and confirm its identity as a cardinal, a new species for several people. We were able to watch it for a long time, working its way along the lines of flowers.

(Cardinal, below left; southern white admiral, centre; marbled white, right).



We then drove up towards the village of Cantobre, and on the way stopped to look at a short-toed eagle. It flew along the hilltop, then perched on a tree, giving us superb views of its large head and fierce yellow eyes.

Cantobre is one of the most attractive and spectacularly situated of all the medieval villages in the area. We had driven past it several times and now we had our chance to explore. It is unspoilt and, though not neglected, the gardens and paths in the village are relatively untended and allow a great deal of natural wildlife to find a home there. Joan quickly called our attention to a clouded yellow; another cardinal settled on the path, giving us a rare view of the red patches under the forewing that give it its name; a scarce swallowtail flew slowly by, followed by a large white – a fresh specimen, bright creamy-white underneath. We watched the short-toed eagle again, characteristically hovering with dangling feet, and three choughs flew by, glossy black in the bright sunshine. We stopped to admire a plant of salad burnet with particularly red leaves and spotted a tiny wall lizard basking on the cliff face in the sunshine, and we found two hummingbird hawkmoths feeding on the viper's bugloss by the church. As we left the village we found a small white, a small copper and a Spanish gatekeeper by the old gateway; quite a tally of butterflies for the day.

We hurried back to la Gare aux Ânes for an early supper because we were returning to Cantobre, to the river below the village, in the hope of seeing one of the most special creatures of the area – a European beaver. Arriving soon after sunset, we stationed ourselves in sight of an area of open river. The beavers use the far bank and we hoped to pick them out as they swam out under the overhanging vegetation. We did not have to wait very long. Ripples spread across the water from under a low branch. Gradually, movement became clear and we could make out the shape of one, and then a second animal. We watched for half an hour as up to four beavers fed, groomed, swam about, and groomed again in the river below us and on the opposite bank. Everyone eventually had a good view in the telescopes and we watched until the light finally failed us and we tore ourselves away.

Day 8: Friday 10 June

West across the Causse du Larzac to Lapanouse and the Roquefort caves: orchids, cheese and Templars

The morning was dry with thin cloud. After our late night the vote was against an early walk, so we set off after breakfast in a new direction to explore the Causse du Larzac to the west. We paused on the way to photograph flocks of the typical *brebis* of the causses, and watched a grey heron feeding in the river Cernon. The day brightened even further as we arrived at Lapanouse de Cernon and parked beside the derelict station at Lapanouse, an almost exact copy of la Gare aux Ânes.

There is an open area around the old station and we began by ranging over the rough, flower-rich turf to search for butterflies and other insects, and orchids. Elisabeth caught an adult ant-lion *Euroleon nostras*, like a dainty dragonfly, a far cry from the fierce carnivorous larva whose pitfall traps we saw up on the Causse Noir. We all had a look at it and watched it fly delicately away. There was real warmth in the sun and the butterflies were out and about in number. Glanville fritillaries were nectaring on the thyme, a spotted fritillary sunned itself on some dead leaves and we had a good view of an ascalaphid at rest on a grass stem. There were two or three purple-shot coppers; Joan spotted a freshly emerged marbled white; a beautiful southern white admiral flew around us and settled to give us superb views. A woodlark was singing very nicely and Joan saw it parachuting down to its songpost. This area is known as a stronghold for a very rare endemic orchid: the Aveyron orchid *Ophrys aveyronensis*. Unfortunately, there had been some clumsy scrub clearance so we were disappointed not to find any in their regular spot. In any case, the season was an incredibly early one and wherever we had been all the *Ophrys* species had been more or less over.

We crossed the railway line – now used only for the curious touristy activity of ‘vélo-rail’, pedalling a pedal car along the rails. (Judging by the merriment of the participants it is clearly an extremely jolly activity, and takes the pedaller and friends through some beautiful scenery.) A green woodpecker flew across the meadow opposite and alighted on a tree-trunk in full view, and as we walked along we disturbed a mistle thrush that flew up and away over the trees. In a hollow beside the track we found a single specimen of the orchid we were hoping for, a single floret remained, looking as it should on the top of the spike, with nicely ripening fruit below.

The track continues up the hill and is well used by walkers. Unusually today we encountered a much rarer phenomenon: a group of French botanists who had come all the way from Grenoble. We chatted and compared notes on what we had found and what we were looking for. The flora there is diverse and rich and very colourful. The great umbellifer sermountain was spectacular, and as always, covered in insects. Yellow woundwort *Stachys recta* was in good flower; deep in the grass the little carduncellus was looking pretty, as was the alpine aster, especially with a knapweed fritillary resting on it (*photo on p18*); ‘beautiful’ flax *Linum narbonense* drew us over to admire its intense colour; there were geraniums, asphodel, field eryngo, butterfly orchids and both species of pasque flower *Pulsatilla vulgaris costeana* and *P. rubra serotina*, both of which subspecies are endemic to the causse, though the pasque flowers were well past their best and only distinguishable by their leaves.

We had our picnic lunch back at the old station where a redstart was singing from a tree close by; it seemed reluctant to give us a good view. However we did get a good view of a Bonelli’s warbler singing from a bush at the edge of the clearing, and a solitary griffon vulture flew over.

The valley of the Cernon continues westwards and eventually flows into the Tarn. The road follows the bottom of the valley through one or two tiny hamlets but long before it reaches the Tarn it joins the main road to Roquefort. This was our next destination – we were booked on a tour of the Caves of the Roquefort producer, *Papillon*. We had a charming English-speaking guide, though we had to be firm with her as the group was predominantly French and it would have been easier for her to give us the shortened version. The whole story is very interesting though, and the details are worth hearing. So we watched a video which showed us the history and detail of the manufacturing process and then went on a tour of the caves to see, and feel for ourselves, the cold atmosphere, the ancient chestnut storage shelves, the loaves of bread black with the fungus *Penicillium roqueforti*, critical for the blue veining, and the *fleurines*, great cracks in the rock through which the all important air is drawn deep into the caves. We heard about the different types of Roquefort cheese and then had an opportunity to taste and buy, coming out with smart insulated bags full of cheese!

On the way home over the top of the causse a shout from the back of the tailing bus brought us to a halt and we had a good view of a harrier. It ranged over the grassy slopes which were silver with angel’s hair grass and came close enough and stayed around long enough to be identified as a young male hen harrier. We then diverted to pay a visit to the Templar village of Ste Eulalie de Cernon where a succession of Templar commanders had held sway over the movement for much of the middle ages and constructed an impressive

fortified town. Charming lanes and quaint buildings crowd into a tiny walled *cité* surrounding a spacious square with a church and an all important (on this occasion) bar.

We refreshed ourselves with coffee, tea and ice-creams and then drove the last few kilometres back to our hotel. We had arranged to meet in the bar for a leisurely review before dinner. First though, shortly after we got back, David and Diana took a stroll in the garden and got a good view of a hobby chasing a small bird. Then there was a real buzz of excitement as several griffon vultures appeared from the east and approached. We sent an SOS round to everyone to come and watch. The vultures came down nearby, descending rapidly feet first, no doubt having found a tempting carcass. More and more followed them, including one black vulture. The stream of vultures went on and on until about 60 must have arrived and joined a feast that was, sadly, just out of sight behind a hillock – so near and yet so far! Our dinner called, and we left them in peace to enjoy their evening meal and settle down for the night.

Day 9: Saturday 11 June

Another Causse: the Causse de Blandas and the Cirque de Navacelles and the Causse de Campestre

We set out purposefully through the garden before breakfast. We were distracted by a good view of a female blackcap and a family of great tits: an adult with two demanding young, perched side by side on a branch. At the far end of the garden a gate opens out onto the road and a route leads through some fields and on to the *causse*. We had the idea that we might be able to see evidence of last night's vulture feast. There were two or three still about, looking rather full and lazy, though we still couldn't see what they had been feeding on. We decided not to approach any closer for fear of disturbing them and just enjoyed our walk across the *causse* back to the hotel for breakfast.

Another *causse* lies to the east, new to us: the Causse de Blandas. We drove eastwards to Alzon and then south, up onto the plateau, a gently undulating landscape on a smaller scale than our previous experience of *causses*.

At the heart of the Causse de Blandas lies an extraordinarily dramatic feature, the Cirque de Navacelles (*photo on front cover*). Here, a giant meander in the River Vis has cut a huge crater-like hollow in the limestone, with the river winding through it and a hamlet nestling in the bottom. Two precipitous and narrow roads hairpin their way down, one on each side of the Cirque. We decided to admire it from the top where a viewpoint gives a panoramic view of the whole and a perfect opportunity for spectacular photographs. We looked about us. A party of choughs played with the updrafts on the cliff edge. There were arbutus bushes on the cliff below us and where they had been cleared to preserve the view, mallow and giant fennel were growing and were in full flower. A Cleopatra and a Spanish gatekeeper were flying in the sunshine and a rose chafer hovered over one of the clumps of mallow.



There is a restaurant strategically placed at the point where the road begins its descent and we sat on the bar terrace in the shade of a substantial small-leaved lime tree (*left*), in full flower and covered in myriads of insects: half a dozen or so southern white admirals, a few ilex hairstreaks, dozens of rose chafers and other beetles, and thousands of bees. The smell of the lime flowers was sweet and dense and the humming of the insects was the loudest noise to be heard. Then, as the sun got warmer, a cicada started singing nearby and when we walked back to the minibuses we heard a serin singing and a marbled white and another Cleopatra appeared.

In the village of Blandas we saw that our road home was due to be closed in an hour or so for a motor rally so we decided to set off homewards early and explore a new corner of the Causse du Larzac. Accordingly we retraced our tracks to Alzon and

turned towards home and then south again on to the Causse de Campestre and drove through the lanes and villages towards Campestre and Sorb.

We found a sheltered corner for lunch where we could find fairly comfortable rocky seats among the rich *causse* flowers. Diana called 'raptor' and two short-toed eagles hovered, then glided low overhead giving us superb views of their elegant plumage. There were lovely displays of spurges and vetches and fantastic numbers of lizard orchids. We gathered together after lunch and Donald took a group photograph.

There was a group request to be fulfilled: somewhere to gather some angel's hair to take home. There are square miles of grassland dominated by this beautiful silver grass; every restaurant has displays of it, shop windows are decorated with it and the sheep-grazing is no longer keeping abreast with its increase. We decided to stop where there was a group of apparently newly built stone buildings. Information boards showed that we had stumbled on a project to recreate some of the traditional buildings using the original techniques, and two or three different styles of tiny shepherds' shelters had been constructed. Beside the road we passed a bush covered with little white moths, many dead or dying but some fluttering about even in the warm afternoon. It was hard to photograph a representative one but Ailsa managed it and had them identified as light magpie moths, or ash loopers, *Abraxas pantaria* (photo on p18). It was an excellent spot to collect some angel's hair, which was carefully rolled up in newspaper to preserve it for the journey home.

Rosemary found an emperor moth caterpillar beside the road and there were plenty of butterflies about: small blue and Adonis blue, a spotted fritillary, a Spanish gatekeeper, a grizzled skipper and several black-veined whites. A little further on we stopped to look at a large fritillary beside the road. It flew a short distance then settled long enough for us to get out of the minibuses for excellent views – another cardinal. Ahead, a hare was sitting bolt upright in the middle of the road, its long ears erect. It assessed us for quite a long time before lolloping off into a cornfield.

We stopped on a sheltered hillside, hoping for more butterflies, and were not disappointed. There were large and small whites, small heath, a mating pair of holly blues and a marbled fritillary. We explored a little and found ourselves in the middle of another *buissière*. It was much more fragmented than the one we saw on the Causse du Larzac but had clearly served the same purpose. On that note of discovery it was time to make our way back for dinner.

Highlights

As always on Honeyguide holidays we like to know what everyone's 'best bits' have been. The numbers of highlights got a little out of hand. Members of the group are listed in alphabetical order:

Ailsa	The vulture fly-past along the cliff; all the butterflies, especially new fritillaries and particularly the cardinal; the beavers; all the fantastic gorges; the lizard orchids; the lunch at Jassenove.
Barbara	The scenery: "If I could pick it up and take it home, I'd be happy for the rest of my life"; the vultures coming in waves along the cliff edge; the lizard orchids on the Causse de Blandas.
David	The vulture flypast; the ortolan bunting ("my first"); the nightingales – "I've never heard the like of them"; the flowers, especially the viper's bugloss <i>en masse</i> covered with insects; the evening of glow-worms and Saturn; the butterflies in general – "by far the richest place for butterflies that we've ever seen".
Diana	"I could say the nightingale; I could say the vultures' fly-past, but I will say the southern white admiral and the medieval villages."
Donald	"All of those things, and as well, the fantastic cave – Aven Armand."
Elisabeth	The absolutely stunning scenery and landscape: each gorge with its own character, but all magnificent; the beavers; the special meal at Jassenove.
Gerald	The lime tree loaded with flowers and insects; the first cardinal.
Grace	The griffon vultures flying by so low along the cliff edge that you could see the colour of their backs and how big they are; the honeysuckles everywhere.
Joan	The vultures flying past along the cliff; the pink convolvulus on the roadsides; the winding roads with wonderful views.
Ray	The wonderful scenery; <i>Ophrys aveyronensis</i> at Lapanouse.
Rita	The trip onto the Causse du Larzac on the very first day; the sheer diversity of colour and wild flowers on the roadsides and everywhere; the beavers; "I've never been to this region before – never even heard of it – I think it's absolutely marvellous!"
Rosemary	The general countryside altogether; the smell of the thyme; the lack of traffic and the quietness; the beavers.
Ted	The vultures flying past the cliff edge in line astern, "like a thousand-bomber raid!"; the pleasure of people's company.
Rachel	The vulture fly-past was wonderful, but it was trumped by the vultures coming down to our patch, just behind la Gare aux Ânes; the cardinal; the amazing scent of two plants, especially the thyme wherever we go on the cause, and the lime tree at the top of the Cirque de Navacelles.
Robin	The vultures' fly-past along the cliff edge; the first cardinal: "my first encounter with this iconic species".

Day 10: Sunday 12 June
Departure: Millau Viaduct and Sévérac le Chateau

Our last morning dawned fine and sunny. There was an overwhelming interest among the group in the magnificent Millau viaduct (*below*) so we decided that we would use the spare time we had on the day we left to give ourselves some worthwhile time at the Information Centre at the *Aire du Viaduc* on the A75. This proved a good choice for many reasons: it was certainly on our way; it provided a very full and clear picture of the process of choosing and constructing the viaduct, including models of the unsuccessful options, with showings of the famous video covering the building and completion itself; there was good coffee to be had; it provided lovely views of the structure itself; and the landscaped surroundings are proving to be very attractive to butterflies! Even so, the tally of peacock, Cleopatra, small white, black-veined white, meadow brown, small heath, painted lady, hummingbird hawkmoth and hornet was pretty impressive. And we saw at least two buzzards along the A75.]



We stopped for our picnic lunch at Sévérac le Chateau, driving up the steep hill to the car park under the chateau with its commanding views back over the Grands Causses. It was sunny and very hot but the butterflies did not object. There were small tortoiseshells, a painted lady, large whites, small whites, a meadow brown, a pearly heath, a marbled white and two hummingbird hawkmoths. Rosemary found a large skipper and Ray found a southern white admiral. Crag martins were nesting in the chateau building and two griffon vultures and a short-toed eagle flew overhead.

The drive to the airport was uneventful but we were still looking out for birds: three more buzzards, four black kites and a green woodpecker.

Even at the airport the flood of wildlife interest continued. Black redstart and nightingale were both heard singing and three black kites flew overhead. Most surprisingly though, when we returned the minibuses to the car park we happened to glance down at flowerbeds covered in geotextile to suppress the weeds, and they were dotted with healthy plants of the elusive blue pimpernel *Anagallis foemina*. We took a specimen and made a slight exhibition of ourselves in the departure lounge making sure that everyone (in the Honeyguide group) had peered through a hand lens and seen the defining petals, lacking any glandular hairs.

Rodez Airport is still a rather charming small regional airport but the new facilities have made the wait considerably more comfortable than in the past and the flight was prompt and efficient. The hullabaloo at Stansted was quite a contrast though, and the English spring weather could hardly have been less welcoming. We were soon reunited with our luggage and parted, in search of our various onward transport, after nine days in most enjoyable company.

Species Lists

Birds

Grey heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	Occasional individuals by the R Dourbie and one by the R Cernon
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	One on the R Dourbie near Cantobre
Griffon vulture	<i>Gyps fulvus</i>	Seen almost every day throughout the region
Black vulture	<i>Aegypius monachus</i>	Two birds on the nest near Le Truel; one near La Gare aux Ânes
Short-toed eagle	<i>Circaetus gallicus</i>	Good views almost every day
Bonelli's eagle	<i>Aquila fasciata</i>	One near Cantobre
Honey buzzard	<i>Pernis apivorus</i>	A pair on the Causse Noir
Black kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>	Several between Rodez and Sévérac and on the Causse du Larzac
Red kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>	One near the Millau Viaduct
Hen harrier	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>	A young male near Ste Eulalie
Montagu's harrier	<i>Circus pygargus</i>	A male at La Pezade
Egyptian vulture	<i>Neophron percnopterus</i>	One flying over the observatory at Le Truel
Common buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	Occasional individuals on Causses du Larzac and Noir
Goshawk	<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>	One overtook our minibuses near Trèves
Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	Widespread but scarcer than in previous years
Hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>	One near la Gare aux Ânes
Red-legged partridge	<i>Alectoris rufa</i>	Heard and occasionally seen all over the region
Quail	<i>Coturnix coturnix</i>	Heard calling on the Causse du Larzac
Stone-curlew	<i>Burhinus oedichnemus</i>	Heard on the Causse Méjean and in the Dourbie valley
Rock dove/feral pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>	Seen occasionally in towns and villages
Woodpigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	Occasional in wooded areas
Collared dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	Frequently seen in villages
Turtle dove	<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>	Two on the Causse du Larzac and one calling near Ste Eulalie station
Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>	Seen or heard almost daily
Great spotted cuckoo	<i>Clamator glandarius</i>	One near la Gare aux Ânes
Tawny owl	<i>Strix aluco</i>	Heard near la Gare aux Ânes
Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>	Heard by day in the Gorges de la Jonte near le Truel
Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>	Several seen every day
Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	One on the river Dourbie at Nant
Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>	Occasionally seen and heard, mostly on the Causse du Larzac
Green woodpecker	<i>Picus viridis</i>	Odd individuals in the Dourbie and Cernon valleys
Great spotted woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>	One in the Dourbie valley
Crested lark	<i>Galerida cristata</i>	A pair near Aven Armand
Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	Several seen every day
Woodlark	<i>Lullula arborea</i>	Seen or heard almost every day
Crag martin	<i>Ptyonoprogne rupestris</i>	Small numbers in gorges and occasionally in villages
Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	Several seen every day
House martin	<i>Delichon urbica</i>	Small numbers seen almost daily
Tawny pipit	<i>Anthus campestris</i>	One near Aven Armand
Tree pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>	Two singing males on My Aigoual
White wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba alba</i>	Commonly seen by rivers and at La Gare aux Ânes
Grey wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	Occasionally seen on the Dourbie and Jonte
Dipper	<i>Cinclus cinclus</i>	One in the R Dourbie at Nant
Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	Seen or heard on most days
Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	Occasionally seen or heard on the Causse du Larzac
Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	Occasionally heard or seen in wooded areas
Nightingale	<i>Luscinia megarhynchos</i>	Abundant and ubiquitous, though seldom seen

Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>	One holding territory at Lapanouse station
Black redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>	A few in every town and village
Stonechat	<i>Saxicola torquata</i>	Occasionally seen in open habitats
Northern wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	One on the Causse Méjean and one or two on Mont Aigoual
Song thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	Seen or heard nearly every day
Mistle thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	One on the Causse Méjean and one above Lapanouse
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	One or two seen almost every day
Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	Abundant and widespread in causses and gorges
Orphean warbler	<i>Sylvia hortensis</i>	One on the Causse du Larzac above les Cuns
Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>	Odd birds on Causses du Larzac, de Blandas and Noir
Subalpine warbler	<i>Sylvia cantillans</i>	One on the Causse de Campestre
Fan-tailed warbler	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>	One in the Gorges de la Jonte
Bonelli's warbler	<i>Phylloscopus bonelli</i>	Seen or heard almost every day
Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	Seen or heard on most days
Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>	A few on the Causse Noir and Mt Aigoual
Firecrest	<i>Regulus ignicapillus</i>	Occasionally seen or heard in wooded areas
Great tit	<i>Parus major</i>	A few seen every day
Coal tit	<i>Parus ater</i>	Seen or heard on most days
Blue tit	<i>Parus caeruleus</i>	One on the Causse du Larzac
Crested tit	<i>Parus cristatus</i>	One or two heard and glimpsed on the Causses Noir and du Larzac
Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>	One beside the Dourbie near Cantobre; one on the Causse du Larzac
Short-toed treecreeper	<i>Certhia brachydactyla</i>	One seen on the Causse Noir; one heard by the river Dourbie
Red-backed shrike	<i>Lanius collurio</i>	A few seen almost daily on the causses
Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	Several seen every day
Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	One or two seen almost every day
Jackdaw	<i>Corvus monedula</i>	Commonly seen in gorges and villages
Red-billed chough	<i>Pyrrhonorax pyrrhonorax</i>	Several flocks seen in gorges and causses
Carrion crow	<i>Corvus corone corone</i>	Common and widespread
Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>	Ones and twos almost daily in causses and gorges
Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	One or two on the Causse de Blandas
House sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	Small numbers in towns and villages
Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	Common and widespread
Linnet	<i>Carduelis cannabina</i>	Small flocks seen every day
Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	Common and widespread
Greenfinch	<i>Carduelis chloris</i>	Occasionally seen near villages
Serin	<i>Serinus serinus</i>	Seen every day at la Gare aux Ânes and elsewhere near villages
Ortolan bunting	<i>Emberiza hortulana</i>	Two singing males on the Causse Méjean near le Villaret
Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>	Occasional individuals in causses and gorges
Cirl bunting	<i>Emberiza cirlus</i>	A few seen every day on the causses
Corn bunting	<i>Miliaria calandra</i>	Several seen every day on the causses

87 species

Mammals

Pipistrelle sp	Rabbit	Beaver	Wild boar (rootings)
Mole (hills)	Brown hare	Fox	Roe deer

Reptiles, Amphibians and Fish

Common wall lizard	Green lizard	Common toad	Brown trout
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Butterflies

Scarce Swallowtail	Little (Small) Blue	Glanville Fritillary	Piedmont Ringlet
Black-veined White	Holly Blue	Knapweed Fritillary	Small Heath
Large White	Silver-studded Blue	(<i>middle, on alpine aster</i>)	Pearly Heath
Small White	(<i>below left</i>)	Spotted Fritillary	Speckled Wood
Clouded Yellow	Brown Argus	(<i>below right</i>)	Wall Brown
Berger's Clouded Yellow	Adonis Blue	Marbled Fritillary	Meadow Brown
Brimstone	Common Blue	Cardinal	Spanish Gatekeeper
Cleopatra	Painted Lady	Silver-washed Fritillary	Grizzled Skipper
Ilex Hairstreak	Southern White Admiral	Niobe Fritillary	Large Grizzled Skipper
Small Copper	Small Tortoiseshell	Marbled White	Small Skipper
Purple-shot Copper			Essex Skipper



Moths

White plume moth	Pine processionary
Forester	Cream-spot tiger
Six-spot burnet	Silver Y
Emperor	Four-spotted
Giant peacock	Heart and dart
Small elephant hawkmoth	Mother Shipton
Spurge hawkmoth	Chimney sweeper
Hummingbird hawkmoth	Treble-bar
Broad-bordered bee hawkmoth	Light magpie



Other insects

Beautiful demoiselle	Hornet
Green bush-cricket	Paper wasp
Bush-cricket <i>Metrioptera</i> sp	Dung beetle
Field cricket	Cockchafer
'Millwall bug' <i>Graphosoma italicum</i>	Rose chafer
Ant-lion <i>Euroleon nostras</i>	Bee beetle
Ascalaphid <i>Libelloides longicornis</i>	Beetle <i>Mylabris polymorpha</i>
Snake fly (<i>right</i>)	Green tiger beetle
Robber fly	7-spot ladybird
Wood ant	
Violet carpenter bee	



Other Invertebrates

Crab spider <i>Misumenia vatia</i>	Roman snail <i>Helix pomatia</i>
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Plants Recorded in the Cévennes and Grands Causses 2011

indicates first recorded by Honeyguide in 2011. * indicates Cévennes endemic.

Where a location is given it indicates where a species has been found on a Honeyguide Holiday; it does not suggest that that is the only locality for that species in the area.

PTERIDOPHYTES: Horsetails, Clubmosses and Ferns		
Aspleniaceae: Spleenwort Family		
<i>Asplenium ruta-muraria</i>	Wall Rue	f: on walls especially where sheltered and damp
<i>Asplenium trichomanes</i>	Maidenhair Spleenwort	f: on walls especially where sheltered and damp
<i>Ceterach officinarum</i>	Rustyback Fern	f: on walls, often where dry and exposed
Blechnaceae: Hard Ferns		
# <i>Blechnum spicant</i>	Hard Fern	o: roadsides below summit of Mont Aigoual
Dennstaedtiaceae: Bracken		
<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>	Bracken	f: in humid places on schistic, acid soils
Dryopteridaceae: Male-ferns and Buckler-ferns		
# <i>Dryopteris carthusiana</i>	Narrow Buckler-fern	o: in woodland below summit of Mont Aigoual
# <i>Dryopteris felix-mas</i>	Male-fern	o: in woodland below summit of Mont Aigoual
Polypodiaceae: Polypodies		
<i>Polypodium vulgare</i>	Common Polypody	f: on shady rocks; a: in Cantobre
CONIFERS		
Cupressaceae: Cypresses and Junipers		
<i>Juniperus communis</i>	Common Juniper	f: component of cause scrub
<i>Juniperus phoenicea</i>	Phoenician Juniper	o: component of cause scrub
Pinaceae: Pines, Spruces, Firs and Larches		
<i>Picea abies</i>	Spruce	ld: woodland below summit of M Aigoual
<i>Pinus nigra</i>	Austrian, Black or Corsican Pine	o: – ld: woodland on Causse Noir
<i>Pinus sylvestris</i>	Scots Pine	f: widespread on causses
Taxaceae: Yew		
<i>Taxus baccata</i>	Yew	r: usually near habitation and often planted
FLOWERING PLANTS – DICOTYLEDONS		
Aceraceae: Maples		
<i>Acer monspessulanum</i>	Montpellier Maple	f: widespread in scrub and deciduous woodland on limestone
<i>Acer campestre</i>	Field Maple	o: in deciduous woods; riverside woodland between Nant and Cantobre
<i>Acer opalus</i>	Italian Maple	In open woodland below viewpoint above le Rozier
<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>	Sycamore	r: in deciduous woods
Anacardiaceae: Pistacio Family		
<i>Cotinus coggygria</i>	Smoke-tree	lf: in limestone scrub in sheltered gorges
Apiaceae (Umbelliferae): Umbellifers		
<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>	Cow Parsley	r: riverside grassland beside Dourbie at Laupies
<i>Athamanta cretensis</i>	Cretan Athamanta	r: under rocks at Vulture Information Centre, Gorges de la Jonte
<i>Conopodium majus</i>	Pignut	o: meadow beside R Dourbie amongst Narcissus on
<i>Eryngium campestre</i>	Field Eryngo	f: in dry cause grassland
<i>Ferula communis</i>	Giant Fennel	r: Causse Blandas near Cirque de Navacelles
<i>Heraclium sphondylium</i> ssp <i>sibiricum</i>	Hogweed (greenish-flowered form)	f: in damp roadside ditches; widespread
<i>Laserpitium gallicum</i>	French Sermountain	o: on rocky hillsides and scree
<i>Laserpitium siler</i>	Common Sermountain	f: among rocks and in light woodland
<i>Meum athamanthicum</i>	Spignel	o: in alpine grassland on summit of M Aigoual
<i>Trinia glauca</i>	Honewort	o: in dry stony cause grassland
Araliaceae: Ivy Family		
<i>Hedera helix</i>	Ivy	f: on rocks, trees and old walls especially in shade
Aristolochiaceae: Birthwort Family		
<i>Aristolochia clematitis</i>	Birthwort	o: waysides and woodland in Dourbie valley near Nant
Asclepiadaceae: Milkweeds		
<i>Vincetoxicum hirundinaria</i>	Swallow-wort	f: among rocks in grassy places and roadsides
Asteraceae (Compositae): Composites		
<i>Achillea millefolia</i>	Yarrow	la: grassland
<i>Achillea odorata</i>	Cream-flowered Sneezewort	la: on hilltop opposite la Gare aux Ânes
<i>Antennaria dioica</i>	Mountain Everlasting	f: in alpine grassland on summit of M Aigoual
<i>Arctium minus</i>	Burdock	o: in ditches in farmland; by farm at la Gare aux Ânes; roadside below summit of Mont Aigoual

<i>*Aster alpinus cebennensis</i>	Alpine Aster	f: in rocky cause grassland, among rocks and scree
<i>Bellis perennis</i>	Daisy	f: widespread in grazed pasture
<i>Carduncellus mitissimus</i>	Carduncellus	f: in rocky cause grassland
<i>Carduus nigrescens</i>	A Thistle	o: in grassland at Lapanouse
<i>Carduus nutans</i>	Musk Thistle	o: in pasture on Causse Méjean
<i>Carduus tenuifolius</i>	A Thistle	o: Cantobre
<i>Carlina acanthifolia</i>	Cardabelle, Acanthus-leaved Carline Thistle	f: in rocky cause grassland
<i>Carlina vulgaris</i>	Carline Thistle	O: in grassland at la Pezade
<i>Catananche caerulea</i>	Blue Catananche	f: in rocky cause grassland
<i>Centaurea cyanus</i>	Cornflower	o: cornfield weed
<i>*Centaurea pectinata</i> ssp <i>supina</i>	Crested Knapweed	o: on dry sandy limestone soils and scree
<i>Cichorium intybus</i>	Wild Chicory	o: beside roads throughout
<i>#Cirsium acaule</i>	Dwarf Thistle	o: in rocky grassland Lapanouse
<i>Cirsium eriophorum</i>	Woolly Thistle	r: in rocky grassland Causse Blandas
<i>Doronicum austriacum</i>	Austrian Leopard's-bane	Beside Dourbie at Laupies
<i>Helichrysum stoechas</i>	Everlasting Flower	f: on dolomitic rocks and scree
<i>Hieracium alpinum</i>	Alpine Hawkweed	o: in alpine grassland on summit of M Aigoual
<i>Hieracium pilosella</i>	Mouse-ear Hawkweed	o: in cause grassland
<i>Inula montana</i>	Mountain Fleabane	o: in cause grassland
<i>Lactuca perennis</i>	Mountain Lettuce	o: in cause grassland
<i>Leucanthemum</i> <i>graminifolium</i>	Grass-leaved Ox-eye (or Dog) Daisy	r: in cause grassland
<i>Leuzia conifera</i>	Leuzia	r: in cause grassland
<i>Phagnalon sordidum</i>	Phagnalon	la: in crevices on rock faces in Cantobre and elsewhere
<i>Scorzonera austriaca</i>	A Viper's-grass	o: rocky grassland near la Couvertorade
<i>Scorzonera hirsuta</i>	Hairy Viper's-grass	o: in cause grassland
<i>Scorzonera purpurea</i>	Purple Viper's-grass	o: in rocky grassland on Causse du Larzac
<i>Tragopogon crocifolius</i>	Crocus-leaved Salsify	r: in cause grassland; Lapanouse
<i>Tragopogon pratensis</i>	Goat's-beard	o: on roadsides and in pasture
<i>Tussilago farfara</i>	Coltsfoot	Roadside in Laupies
<i>Urospermum dalechampii</i>	Urospermum	o: pasture near Hûres on Causse Méjean
<i>Xeranthemum inapertum</i>	Xeranthemum	o: dry, sandy cause grassland; la on hilltop near la Gare aux Ânes

Betulaceae: Birches, Alders, Hazels and Hornbeams

<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>	Alder	f: riversides and damp woodland
<i>Carpinus betulus</i>	Hornbeam	f: in deciduous woodland on limestone
<i>Corylus avellana</i>	Hazel	f: in deciduous woodland on limestone

Boraginaceae: Borage Family

<i>Echium vulgare</i>	Viper's Bugloss	o: on dry limestone hillsides and in cause grassland
<i>Lithospermum arvense</i>	Corn Gromwell	r: waysides; track between wood and Cantobre campsite
<i>Onosma fastigiatum</i>	Golden-drop	o: in cause grassland; near radio mast Causse du Larzac; Causse Blandas
<i>*Pulmonaria longifolia</i> ssp <i>cevennensis</i>	Cevennes Lungwort	o: in riverside woodland and grassland

Brassicaceae (Cruciferae): Crucifers

<i>Alyssum montanum</i>	Mountain Alyssum	lf: on rocks and scree Jassenove
<i>Arabis turrita</i>	Towercress	f: on rocky cliffs especially in villages
<i>Biscutella laevigata</i>	Buckler Mustard	o: cause grassland on Causse Blandas
<i>Capsella bursa-pastoris</i>	Shepherd's Purse	o: on pathway among rocks, Jassenove
<i>#Iberis saxatilis</i>	Rock Candytuft	r: rocky grassland and scree Jassenove

Buxaceae: Box

<i>Buxus sempervirens</i>	Box	a-ld: component of cause scrub; buissière
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Campanulaceae: Bellflower Family

<i>Campanula persicifolia</i>	Peach-leaved Bellflower	o: on roadsides and in open woodland
<i>Campanula rapunculus</i>	Rampion Bellflower	f: on roadsides and uncultivated ground
<i>#Campanula speciosa</i>	Pyrenean Bellflower	r: rocky roadside above Trèves
<i>Campanula trachelium</i>	Nettle-leaved Bellflower	o: in riverside woodland
<i>Jasione laevis</i>	Perennial Sheep's-bit	o: on schist near Dourbias
<i>Legousia hybrida</i>	Small Venus's Looking Glass	Roadside outside la Gare aux Ânes
<i>Legousia speculum-veneris</i>	Venus's Looking-glass	f: weed of arable fields on light soils
<i>Phyteuma hemisphericum</i>	Globe-headed Rampion	o: in grassland near Hûres on Causse Méjean and Pezade on Causse du Larzac
<i>Phyteuma orbiculare</i>	Round-headed Rampion	r: alpine grassland Mont Aigoual
<i>Phyteuma spicatum</i>	Spiked Rampion	o: grassland beside R Dourbie at Laupies

Caprifoliaceae: Honeysuckle Family

<i>Lonicera etrusca</i>	Etruscan Honeysuckle	a: widespread on causses
<i>Lonicera implexa</i>	Evergreen Honeysuckle	
# <i>Lonicera periclymenum</i>	Common Honeysuckle	f: on siliceous soils
<i>Lonicera xylosteum</i>	Fly Honeysuckle	o: in riverside woodland between Nant and Cantobre
<i>Viburnum lantana</i>	Wayfaring Tree	f: in riverside woodland between Nant and Cantobre; la: on cause

Caryophyllaceae: Chickweeds, Pinks and Campions

<i>Agrostemma githago</i>	Corn-cockle	In arable field near Drigas on Causse Méjean
<i>Arenaria aggregata</i>	Cluster-flowered Sandwort	Stony cause grassland near la Couvertoirade, Causse du Larzac
# <i>Arenaria controversa</i>	A Sandwort	On walls in la Couvertoirade
<i>Arenaria montana</i>	Mountain Sandwort	Rocks beside Dourbie at Laupies
<i>Cerastium arvense</i>	Field Mouse-ear	Meadow in Dourbie Valley above Laupies
<i>Cerastium tomentosum</i>	Snow in Summer	la: around rocks and buildings at summit of M Aigoual; o: la Couvertoirade
<i>Dianthus deltoides</i>	Maiden Pink	la: in meadows in Dourbie Valley Laupies and grassland below summit of Mont Aigoual
<i>Dianthus graniticus</i>	Granite Pink	Causse grassland near le Buffre, Causse Méjean
# <i>Dianthus monspessulanus</i>	Fringed or Montpellier Pink	r: cause grassland nr telephone mast, Causse du Larzac
<i>Dianthus subacaulis</i>	A Pink	o: Causse Blandas
<i>Petrorhagia prolifera</i>	Tunic Flower, Proliferous Pink	f: scattered on limestone grassland throughout
<i>Saponaria ocymoides</i>	Rock Soapwort	o: on rocks and scree
<i>Silene conica</i>	Sand Catchfly	o: on sandy and calcareous soils
<i>Silene italica</i>	Italian Catchfly	Meadow in Dourbie Valley above Laupies
<i>Silene nutans</i>	Nottingham Catchfly	o: on sunny banks on heavier soils
<i>Silene otites</i>	Spanish Catchfly	o: in cause grassland at Jassenove; Causse Méjean near Hûres
<i>Silene vulgaris</i>	Bladder campion	Meadow beside Dourbie at Laupies
<i>Stellaria holostea</i>	Greater Stitchwort	Riverside grassland beside Dourbie at Laupies

Celastraceae: Spindles

<i>Euonymus europaeus</i>	Spindle	o: in hedges and deciduous woodland understorey on limestone; buissière at St Martin du Larzac
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Cistaceae: Cistuses and Rockroses

<i>Cistus laurifolius</i>	Laurel-leaved Cistus	f: in woodland understorey on acid soils
<i>Cistus salvifolius</i>	Sage-leaved Cistus	f: in woodland understorey on acid soils
<i>Fumana ericoides</i>	Heath Fumana	o: in rocky cause grassland
<i>Helianthemum appeninum</i>	White Rockrose	a: in cause grassland throughout
<i>Helianthemum canum</i>	Hoary Rockrose	f: in cause grassland throughout
<i>Helianthemum nummularium</i>	Yellow Rockrose	a: in cause grassland throughout

Clusiaceae (Hypericaceae): St John's-worts

<i>Hypericum androsaemum</i>	Tutsan	Cantobre, probable garden escape
# <i>Hypericum hyssopifolium</i>	Hyssop-leaved St John's-wort	r: rocky grassland on Causse du Larzac
<i>Hypericum perforatum</i>	Common St John's-wort	o: in rough grassland between wood and Cantobre campsite

Convolvulaceae: Bindweeds

# <i>Calystegia sepium</i>	Hedge Bindweed	o: hedgerows on Causse Blandas
<i>Convolvulus arvensis</i>	Field Bindweed	o: on roadsides on Causse du Larzac; field margins on Causse Méjean and Blandas
<i>Convolvulus cantabrica</i>	Pink Bindweed	la: on rocky roadside cliffs in Cernon valley and Dourbie valley near Dourbias

Cornaceae: Dogwoods

<i>Cornus mas</i>	Cornelian Cherry	f: in scrub and woodland on limestone
<i>Cornus sanguinea</i>	Dogwood	a: in scrub and woodland on limestone

Crassulaceae: Stonecrop Family

<i>Sedum acre</i>	Biting Stonecrop	a: on roofs, rocks, walls
<i>Sedum album</i>	White Stonecrop	f: on roofs, rocks, walls
<i>Sedum dasyphyllum</i>	Thick-leaved Stonecrop	f: on rocks, old walls
<i>Umbilicus rupestris</i>	Pennywort, Navelwort	f: on rocks and old walls

Cuscutaceae: Dodder Family

<i>Cuscuta</i> sp	Dodder	o: on grasses at la Pezade on Causse du Larzac; on legumes near Hûres on Causse Méjean
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Dipsacaceae: Scabious Family

<i>Dipsacus fullonum</i>	Teasel	Along track onto cause from la Gare aux Ânes
<i>Knautia arvensis</i>	Field Scabious	o: on waysides and grassy banks
<i>Knautia dipsacifolia</i>	Wood Scabious	f: on waysides and in damp grassland
<i>Scabiosa columbaria</i>	Small Scabious	o: in rocky grassland in Cantobre

Ericaceae: Heath

<i>Arbutus unedo</i>	Strawberry Tree	o: in woodland on acid soils
<i>Arctostaphylos uva-ursi</i>	Bearberry	la: on rocks under pines on Causse Noir
<i>Calluna vulgaris</i>	Heather	ld: on open hillsides on acid soils M Aigoual
<i>Erica arborea</i>	Tree Heath	o: in woodland on acid soils
<i>Erica cinerea</i>	Bell Heather	la: on open hillsides on acid soils M Aigoual
<i>Vaccinium myrtillus</i>	Bilberry	f: in alpine grassland on summit of M Aigoual

Euphorbiaceae: Spurge Family

<i>Euphorbia amygdaloides</i>	Wood Spurge	f: in woodland beside River Dourbie between Nant and Cantobre; Lapanouse
<i>Euphorbia characias</i>	Mediterranean Spurge	o: Cantobre; Causse Noir near Trèves
<i>Euphorbia exigua</i>	Dwarf Spurge	o: on light, disturbed soils, Jassenove
<i>Euphorbia helioscopia</i>	Sun Spurge	o: on light, disturbed soils, Jassenove
<i>Euphorbia nicaeensis</i>	Nice Spurge	o: cause grassland on Causse Blandas
<i>Euphorbia cyparissias</i>	Cypress Spurge	o: in limestone grassland Causse du Larzac
<i>Euphorbia seguierana</i>	Seguier's Spurge	f: on calcareous, free-draining soils on causses
<i>Mercurialis perennis</i>	Dog's Mercury	o: in damp woodland edges, Dourbie valley; damp grassland at la Pezade; woodland at Jassenove

Fabaceae (Leguminosae): Pea Family, Legumes

<i>Anthyllis montana</i>	Mountain Kidney-vetch	a: widespread in causses grassland
<i>Anthyllis vulneraria</i>	Common Kidney-vetch	a: widespread in causses grassland
<i>Argyrolobium zanonii</i>	Argyrolobium	o: widespread in causses grassland
<i>#Astragalus glycyphyllos</i>	Wild liquorice	o: waysides; Lapanouse
<i>Astragalus monspessulanus</i>	Montpellier Milk-vetch	f: widespread in causses grassland
<i>#Chamaespartium sagittale (= Genista sagittalis)</i>	Winged Greenweed	o: near Information Centre below Mont Aigoual
<i>Chamaecytisus hirsutus</i>	Hairy Broom	f: widespread in causses grassland
<i>Colutea arborescens</i>	Bladder Senna	By Pine Telephone Mast; near Vulture Information Centre
<i>Coronilla emerus</i>	Scorpion Vetch or False Senna	f: in woodland beside River Dourbie between Nant and Cantobre
<i>Coronilla minima</i>	Dwarf Scorpion-vetch	o: in stony cause grassland
<i>Cytisus purgans (=C. oromediterraneus)</i>	Pyrenean or Purging Broom	ld: on free-draining acid soils
<i>Dorycnium pentaphyllum</i>	Five-leaved Dorycnium, Five-fingered False Fenugreek	f: on rocky slopes
<i>Genista hispanica</i>	Spanish Gorse	r: near telephone mast of Causse du Larzac
<i>Hippocrepis glauca</i>	Glaucous Horse-shoe Vetch	o: in cause grassland; Causse du Larzac below telephone mast
<i>Lathyrus pratensis</i>	Meadow Vetchling	r: riverside grassland beside Dourbie at Laupies
<i>Lathyrus sylvestris</i>	Everlasting Pea	o: in waysides
<i>Medicago minima</i>	Bur Medick	o: cause grassland on Causse Blandas
<i>Onobrychis supina</i>	Sainfoin	f: in grassland on clayey/calcareous soils
<i>Ononis natrix</i>	Large Yellow Restharrow	r: wayside at Lapanouse
<i>Ononis repens</i>	Restharrow	o: waysides, stony grassland
<i>Spartium junceum</i>	Spanish Broom	f: on embankments and in woodland edges
<i>Tetragonolobus maritimus</i>	Dragon's Teeth	o: in cause grassland; Causse du Larzac below Pine mast
<i>Trifolium alpinum</i>	Alpine Clover	f: in alpine grassland on summit of M Aigoual
<i>Trifolium rubens</i>	Red Trefoil	o: in woodland beside River Dourbie between Nant and Cantobre
<i>Trifolium stellatum</i>	Starry Clover	o: stony grassland on Causse Méjean near le Buffre; rough ground above Cirque de Navacelles
<i>Vicia cracca</i>	Tufted Vetch	la: on railway line at la Gare aux Ânes
<i>Vicia onobrychoides</i>	False Sainfoin	o: in hedgerows on causses
<i>Vicia tenuifolia</i>	Fine-leaved Vetch	o: on banks and old walls on Causse Méjean
<i>Vicia villosa</i>	Fodder Vetch	f: tracks and waysides, railway embankments

Fagaceae: Oaks, Beech and Chestnut

<i>Castanea sativa</i>	Sweet Chestnut	ld: in woodland on acid soils on schist
<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>	Beech	a: widespread in damp woodland
<i>Quercus petraea</i>	Sessile Oak	f: in woodland on the heavier soils
<i>Quercus pubescens</i>	Downy Oak	a: in deciduous woodland on calcareous soils

Fumariaceae: Fumitory Family		
<i>Fumaria sp</i>	Fumitory	r: rocks in Cantobre
Gentianaceae: Gentian Family		
<i>Blackstonia perfoliata</i>	Yellow-wort	Causse du Larzac near radio mast above Nant; la Pezade
<i>Gentiana lutea</i>	Yellow Gentian	la: in meadow below summit of M Aigoual
Geraniaceae: Crane's-bills and Stork's-bills		
<i>Geranium columbinum</i>	Long-stalked Crane's-bill	o: hedgerow on the Causse Noir; beside stream in Nant
<i>Geranium lucidum</i>	Shining Crane's-bill	f: shady walls in villages; la Couvertoirade; <i>buissière</i> at les Baumes
<i>Geranium molle</i>	Dove's-foot Crane's-bill	f: dry grassland
<i>Geranium nodosum</i>	Knotted Crane's-bill	o: in woodland beside River Dourbie between Nant and Cantobre
<i>Geranium pratense</i>	Meadow Crane's-bill	Riverside grassland beside Dourbie at Laupies
<i>Geranium purpureum</i>	Little-Robin	On damp rocks beside Dourbie at Laupies; Causse du Larzac near radio mast
<i>Geranium pyrenaicum</i>	Hedgerow Crane's-bill	o: riverside grassland beside Dourbie at Laupies; agricultural areas around Jassenove
<i>Geranium robertianum</i>	Herb Robert	f: hedgerows, damp grassland, rocky grassland and villages throughout
<i>Geranium rotundifolium</i>	Round-leaved Crane's-bill	o: sunny walls in villages: la Couvertoirade
<i>Geranium sanguineum</i>	Bloody Crane's-bill	o: widespread in causses grassland
Globulariaceae: Globularias		
<i>Globularia punctata</i>	Common Globularia	o: in cause grassland throughout
Grossulariaceae: Currant Family		
<i>Ribes alpinum</i>	Mountain Currant	o: in old walls near le Buffre on Causse Méjean
<i>Ribes uva-crispa</i>	Gooseberry	o: in old walls near le Buffre on Causse Méjean
Lamiaceae (Labiatae): Deadnettle Family, Labiates		
<i>Ajuga chamaeepytis</i>	Ground-pine	r: car park at Vulture Information Centre
<i>Ajuga genevensis</i>	Blue Bugle	o: in dry grassland and open woodland; Lapanouse; Jassenove
<i>Ajuga reptans</i>	Common Bugle	f: in woodland beside River Dourbie between Nant and Cantobre
<i>Clinopodium vulgare</i>	Wild Basil	On dry, rocky path in Dourbie valley near Nant
<i>Lamium maculatum</i>	Spotted Dead-nettle	r: riverside grassland beside Dourbie at Laupies
<i>Lavandula angustifolia</i>	Common Lavender	On dry, rocky path near le Buffre, Causse Méjean
<i>Mellitis melissophyllum</i>	Bastard Balm	f: in woodland beside River Dourbie between Nant and Cantobre; la Pezade
<i>Mentha suaveolens</i>	Apple Mint	On dry, rocky path in Dourbie valley near Nant
<i>Origanum vulgare</i>	Wild Marjoram	On dry, rocky path in Dourbie valley near Nant
<i>Phlomis purpurea</i>	Purple Jerusalem-sage	Near le Buffre, Causse Méjean
<i>Prunella grandiflora</i>	Large-flowered Self-heal	In grassland at Lapanouse
<i>Prunella laciniata</i>	Cut-leaved Self-heal	Causse grassland Causse Blandas
<i>Salvia pratensis</i>	Meadow Clary	f: in dry moderately fertile grassland
<i>Salvia verbenaca</i>	Wild Clary	F: dry grassland on Causse Begon
<i>Sideritis hyssopifolia</i>	Sideritis, Hyssop-leaved Ironwort	o: among limestone rocks
<i>Stachys recta</i>	Perennial Yellow Woundwort	Near Troglodyte house, les Baumes; Trévezel valley near Cantobre
<i>Stachys sylvatica</i>	Hedge Woundwort	o: in woodland beside River Dourbie between Nant and Cantobre
<i>Teucrium aureum</i>	Golden Felty Germander	f: in cause grassland throughout
<i>#Teucrium chamaedrys</i>	Wall Germander	f: in cause grassland
<i>Teucrium rouyanum</i>	Rouyan's Felty Germander	o: widespread in causses grassland
<i>*Thymus nitens cebennensis</i>	Cevennes Thyme	r: on schistic rocks below M Aigoual
<i>Thymus pulegioides</i>	Larger Wild Thyme	o: widespread in causses grassland
<i>Thymus vulgaris</i>	Common Thyme	a: widespread in causses grassland throughout
Linaceae: Flaxes		
<i>Linum bienne</i>	Flax	o: on rocky hillsides
<i>Linum campanulatum</i>	Yellow Flax	f: widespread among rocks and in grassland on calcareous soils
<i>Linum catharticum</i>	Purging Flax	f: dry grassland
<i>Linum narbonense</i>	Beautiful Flax	In grassland at Lapanouse; Causse Blandas
<i>Linum strictum</i>	Upright Yellow Flax	Causse grassland on Causse Blandas
<i>Linum suffruticosum</i>	White Flax, Pyrenean Flax	f: widespread among rocks and in grassland on calcareous soils

Malvaceae: Mallows		
<i>Althaea hirsuta</i>	A Mallow	r: lush cause grassland near la Couvertoirade; near Campestre
<i>Malva sylvestris</i>	Common Mallow	o: on disturbed ground
Moraceae: Mulberries and Fig		
# <i>Ficus carica</i>	Fig	f; near habitation, waysides planted
Oleaceae: Olive Family		
# <i>Fraxinus angustifolia</i>	Narrow-leaved Ash	o: rocky woodland & waysides; commoner in the south
<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	Common Ash	f: widespread component of deciduous woodland on cause
<i>Ligustrum vulgare</i>	Privet	f: in damp woodland understorey
# <i>Olea europea</i>	Olive	o: escape from cultivation
<i>Phillyrea media</i>	Mock Privet	o: on rocky hillsides in the gorges
Onagraceae: Willowherb Family		
<i>Chamerion angustifolium</i>	Rosebay Willowherb	o: on disturbed ground; in railway cutting at Gare aux Ânes
Orobanchaceae: Orobanches		
<i>Orobanche</i> ssp	Broomrape	o: in woodland and grassland
Papaveraceae: Poppy Family		
<i>Chelidonium majus</i>	Greater celandine	o: on pathside in Cantobre and Nant
# <i>Papaver argemone</i>	Prickly Poppy	r: arable fields Lapanouse; Campestre
# <i>Papaver dubium</i>	Long-headed Poppy	r: waste ground near church in Hûres
<i>Papaver rhoeas</i>	Common Poppy	a: on waysides and in arable fields
Plantaginaceae: Plantains		
<i>Plantago holosteum</i>	Grass-leaved Plantain	o: in alpine grassland on summit of M Aigoual
<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	Ribwort Plantain	f: in fertile grasslands and waysides
<i>Plantago media</i>	Hoary Plantain	f: in calcareous grassland throughout
<i>Plantago sempervirens</i>	Shrubby Plantain	o: on rocky hillsides
Plumbaginaceae: Plumbago, Sea Lavender and Thrifts		
* <i>Armeria girardii</i>	Gerard's Thrift	la: on Causse du Larzac near la Couvertoirade and at Jassenove; generally rare
<i>Armeria plantaginea</i>	Plantain Thrift	la: on sandy roadsides near Laupies
Polygalaceae: Milkworts		
<i>Polygala calcarea</i>	Chalk Milkwort	Among rocks near la Couvertoirade
Polygonaceae: Dock Family		
<i>Persicaria bistorta</i>	Bistort	la: in damp meadows below summit of M Aigoual; in riverside grassland beside Dourbie at Laupies
Primulaceae: Primrose Family		
<i>Primula elatior</i>	Oxlip	o: in woodland beside River Dourbie between Nant and Cantobre
# <i>Primula veris</i>	Cowslip	o: woods beside the Dourbie near Nant; la Pezade
Pyrolaceae: Wintergreens		
<i>Moneses uniflora</i>	One-flowered Wintergreen	On pinewood edge near le Buffre, Causse Méjean
<i>Orthilia secunda</i>	Nodding Wintergreen	Under pines, St Jean des Balmes, Causse Noir
<i>Pyrola chlorantha</i>	Green Wintergreen	Under pines, St Jean des Balmes, Causse Noir
Ranunculaceae: Buttercup Family		
<i>Anemone nemorosa</i>	Wood Anemone	o: in alpine grassland on summit of M Aigoual
<i>Caltha palustris</i>	Marsh Marigold	f: beside Dourbie at Laupies
<i>Clematis vitalba</i>	Traveller's Joy, Old Man's Beard	f: woodland and hedgerows on calcareous soils
<i>Consolida ajacis</i>	Common Larkspur	In arable field near Drigas on Causse Méjean
<i>Helleborus foetidus</i>	Stinking Hellebore	o: in woodland beside River Dourbie between Nant and Cantobre; among rocks on Causse Méjean
<i>Helleborus viridis</i>	Green Hellebore	r: among rocks near Hûres on Causse Méjean; la Pezade and Lapanouse on Causse du Larzac
<i>Hepatica nobilis</i>	Hepatica, Liverleaf	o in woodland beside River Dourbie between Nant and Cantobre; near the original entrance to Aven Armand; Lapanouse
# <i>Pulsatilla rubra serotina</i>	Dark-red Pasque flower	r: in causes grassland at Lapanouse
<i>Pulsatilla vulgaris costean</i>	Pasque flower	o: widespread in causes grassland
<i>Ranunculus aconitifolius</i>	Aconite-leaved Buttercup	Beside bridge over the Dourbie at Laupies; roadside ditches in woodland below Mont Aigoual
<i>Ranunculus bulbosus</i>	Bulbous Buttercup	f: in grazed grassland at Jassenove
<i>Ranunculus ficaria</i>	Lesser Celandine	f: pathside in Laupies
<i>Ranunculus gramineus</i>	Grass-leaved Buttercup	o: widespread in causes grassland
<i>Thalictrum minus</i> ssp <i>majus</i>	Meadow Rue	Lapanouse
<i>Trollius europeus</i>	Globeflower	Riverside at Laupies

Resedaceae: Mignonettes		
<i>Reseda lutea</i>	Wild Mignonette	o: among rocks and in grassland on calcareous soils
Rhamnaceae: Buckthorns		
<i>Rhamnus alaternus</i>	Mediterranean Buckthorn	f: component of cause scrub
<i>Rhamnus catharticus</i>	Purging Buckthorn	f: in hedgerows and in woodland beside River Dourbie between Nant and Cantobre
Rosaceae: Rose Family		
<i>Alchemilla alpina</i>	Alpine Lady's-mantle	ld: in alpine grassland on summit of M Aigoual
<i>Amelanchier ovalis</i>	Snowy Mespilus	f: component of cause scrub
<i>Filipendula vulgaris</i>	Dropwort	o: in grassland on deeper soils near radio mast Causse du Larzac
<i>Fragaria vesca</i>	Wild Strawberry	f: woodland by R Dourbie between Nant & Cantobre
<i>Geum urbanum</i>	Wood Avens	o: woodland beside R Dourbie
# <i>Potentilla neumanniana</i>	Spring Cinquefoil	r: Jassenove
# <i>Potentilla rupestris</i>	Rock Cinquefoil	o: among rocks on cause
# <i>Prunus mahaleb</i>	St Lucie's Cherry	o: component of cause scrub; Lapanouse
<i>Prunus spinosa</i>	Blackthorn	f: component of cause scrub; hedges; along railway line at la Gare aux Ânes
<i>Rosa arvensis</i>	Field Rose	f: waysides; beside Dourbie near Laupies
<i>Rosa pimpinellifolia</i>	Burnet Rose	o: component of cause scrub; Lapanouse
<i>Rosa rubiginosa</i>	Sweet Briar	o: widespread in cause grassland
<i>Rubus spp</i>	Bramble (several species)	f: widespread on waysides, in woodland edges and in cause scrub
<i>Sorbaria sorbifolia</i>	False Spiraea	Beside river Vis in the Cirque de Navacelles
<i>Sorbus aria</i>	Whitebeam	o: in deciduous woodland on calcareous soils and component of cause scrub
<i>Sanguisorba minor</i>	Salad burnet	o: damp grassland on alkaline soils
Rubiaceae: Bedstraws		
<i>Asperula cynanchica</i>	Squinancywort	o: widespread in causes grassland
<i>Cruciata laevipes</i>	Crosswort	in riverside grassland beside Dourbie at Laupies
<i>Galium aparine</i>	Goosegrass	f: in waysides and waste places
<i>Galium mollugo</i>	Hedge Bedstraw	f: in waysides and hedgerows
<i>Galium pusillum</i>	A Bedstraw	o: cause grassland near la Couvertoirade
<i>Galium verum</i>	Lady's Bedstraw	In grassland at Lapanouse
<i>Rubia peregrina</i>	Wild Madder	f: cause scrub and in woodland beside Dourbie between Nant and Cantobre
Santalaceae: Bastard Toadflax and Sandalwood Family		
<i>Thesium divaricatum</i>	Bastard Toadflax	o: widespread among rocks and in grassland on calcareous soils
Saxifragaceae: Saxifrages		
<i>Chrysosplenium oppositifolium</i>	Opposite-leaved Golden-saxifrage	o: among rocks beside Dourbie at Laupies
<i>Saxifraga granulata</i>	Meadow Saxifrage	o: in meadow below summit of M Aigoual
<i>Saxifraga tridactylites</i>	Rue-leaved Saxifrage	f: walls in la Couvertoirade
Scrophulariaceae: Foxgloves, Toadflaxes and Speedwells		
<i>Anarrhinum bellidifolium</i>	Daisy-leaved Toadflax	
<i>Antirrhinum majus</i>	Snapdragon	Roadside near la Gare aux Ânes
<i>Asarina procumbens</i>	Creeping Snapdragon	o: on rocks and buildings Cantobre and Nant
<i>Chaenorhinum origanifolium</i>	Malling Toadflax	o: roadsides; driveway at la Gare aux Ânes
<i>Digitalis lutea</i>	Yellow Foxglove	o: in woodland beside River Dourbie between Nant and Cantobre
<i>Digitalis purpurea</i>	Foxglove	f: roadsides and woodland edges acid soils
<i>Erinus alpinus</i>	Fairy Foxglove	o: shady rock crevices and walls: beside railway at Lapanouse; Cantobre
<i>Linaria chalapensis</i>	White Toadflax	o: meadows on light soils and as an arable weed
<i>Linaria repens</i>	Pale Toadflax, Striped Toadflax	o: rocky hillsides on alkaline soils
<i>Linaria supina</i>	Prostrate or Pyrenean Toadflax	r: sandy dolomitic soils at Jassenove; Causse grassland near la Couvertoirade
<i>Melampyrum cristatum</i>	Crested Cow-wheat	o: roadsides in Dourbie valley
<i>Melampyrum pratense</i>	Field Cow-wheat	r: sandy dolomitic soils at Jassenove
<i>Rhinanthus mediterraneus</i>	Mediterranean Yellow-rattle	la: in grassland on deeper soils
<i>Rhinanthus minor</i>	Lesser Yellow-rattle	o: in grassland on deeper soils
<i>Scrophularia canina</i>	French Figwort	o: in grassland near le Buffre on Causse Méjean
<i>Verbascum lychnitis</i>	White Mullein (yellow-flowered form)	On roadside below summit of M Aigoual
<i>Verbascum thapsus</i>	Aaron's Rod	o: waysides and disturbed ground

<i>Veronica cymbalaria</i>	Cymbalaria-leaved Speedwell	La Couvertoirade
<i>Veronica persica</i>	Common Field Speedwell	La Couvertoirade
<i>Veronica prostrata</i>	Prostrate Speedwell	o: in grassland on deeper soils near radio mast on Causse du Larzac
Solanaceae: Nightshade Family		
<i>Hyoscyamus niger</i>	Henbane	la: near Radio Mast, Causse du Larzac
<i>Solanum dulcamara</i>	Woody Nightshade	Near Vulture Information Centre, Gorges de la Jonte
Thymeliaceae: Daphne Family		
<i>Daphne alpina</i>	Alpine Mezereon	Among rocks near la Couvertoirade
<i>Daphne laureola</i>	Spurge Laurel	o: in woodland by R Dourbie between Nant & Cantobre
Tiliaceae: Limes		
<i>Tilia cordata</i>	Small-leaved Lime	Lapanouse
<i>Tilia tomentosa</i>	Silver-leaved Lime	o: ornamental in towns and villages`
Ulmaceae: Elm Family		
<i>Ulmus glabra</i>	Wych Elm	Gare aux Ânes; Lapanouse
<i>Ulmus minor</i>	Small-leaved Elm	f: in hedgerows
Urticaceae: Nettle Family		
<i>Urtica dioica</i>	Stinging Nettle	a: waysides, hedgerows and disturbed ground
<i>Parietaria judaica</i>	Pellitory-of-the-Wall	o: old walls and rocks
Valerianaceae: Valerian Family		
<i>Centranthus calcitrapae</i>	A Valerian	r: on dolomitic rocks at Jassenove; Cantobre
<i>Centranthus lecoqii</i>	Lecoque's Red Valerian	f: on cliffs and among rocks in the gorges
<i>Valeriana dioica</i>	Marsh Valerian	In riverside grassland beside Dourbie at Laupies
<i>#Valerianella dentata</i>	Broad-fruited Cornsalad	r: grassland on Causse Noir
Violaceae: Violets and Pansies		
<i>Viola riviniana</i>	Common Dog Violet	f: in alpine grassland on summit of M Aigoual
<i>Viola tricolor</i>	Wild Pansy	f: in riverside grassland beside Dourbie at Laupies
Vitaceae: Vines		
<i>Vitis vinifera</i>	Vine	o: In scrub and on walls in sheltered gorges
MONOCOTYLEDONS		
Araceae: Arum Family		
<i>Arum italicum</i>	Italian Arum	o: damp woodland
<i>Arum maculatum</i>	Wild Arum	o: damp woodland
Cyperaceae: Sedge Family		
<i>#Carex caryophyllea</i>	Spring Sedge	f: alpine grassland at the summit of Mont Aigoual
<i>Carex flacca</i>	Glaucous sedge	f: in calcareous grassland on deeper soils; la Pezade
<i>Carex sylvatica</i>	Wood Sedge	o: woodland beside R Dourbie at Nant
Dioscoreaceae: Black Bryony		
<i>Tamus communis</i>	Black Bryony	o: in hedgerows; beside track between woodland and campsite in Dourbie valley
Iridaceae: Iris Family		
<i>Gladiolus italicus</i>	Field Gladiolus	o: in cornfield near Nant
<i>Iris lutescens</i>	Crimean Iris	la: dry, rocky grassland. Causse Blandas
Juncaceae: Rush Family		
<i>#Juncus articulatus</i>	Jointed Rush	r: lavogne near radio mast, Causse du Larzac
<i>Luzula nivea</i>	Snowy Wood-rush	o: in riverside grassland beside Dourbie at Laupies and near Nant; ditches below the summit of Mont Aigoual
Liliaceae: Lily Family		
<i>Anthericum liliago</i>	St. Bernard's Lily	o: among rocks & bushes in grassland on calcareous soils
<i>Aphyllanthes monspeliensis</i>	Blue Aphyllanthes	ld: steep banks and rocky hillsides on calcareous soils
<i>Asphodelus albus</i>	White Asphodel	o: in rocky grassland on causses
<i>Asphodelus cerasiferus</i>	Asphodel	o: cause grassland at Lapanouse
<i>Muscari comosum</i>	Tassel Hyacinth	f: widespread in causses grassland
<i>Narcissus poeticus</i>	Pheasant's-eye Daffodil	f: in meadow below summit of M Aigoual
<i>Ornithogalum pyrenaicum</i>	Bath Asparagus	o: in damp ditches and waysides; along railway line near la Gare aux Ânes
<i>Ornithogalum umbellatum</i>	Star-of-Bethlehem	o: widespread among rocks and in grassland on calcareous soils
<i>#Paradisea liliastrum</i>	St. Bruno's Lily	r: roadside bank below summit of Mont Aigoual
<i>Polygonatum odoratum</i>	Angular Solomon's-seal	Lapanouse; Jassenove
<i>Ruscus aculeatus</i>	Butcher's Broom	o: in woodland beside River Dourbie between Nant and Cantobre; above Cirque de Navacelles
<i>Tulipa sylvestris</i> ssp <i>australis</i>	Wild Tulip	o: in roadside grassland below summit of M Aigoual
<i>Veratrum album</i>	White False-helleborine	In riverside grassland beside Dourbie at Laupies; damp wayside below summit of Mont Aigoual

Orchidaceae: Orchids

<i>Aceras anthropophorum</i>	Man Orchid	la: widespread in causses grassland on deeper soils; a: at la Pezade
<i>Anacamptis pyramidalis</i>	Pyramidal Orchid	la: widespread in causses grassland, becoming more evident during the month
<i>Cephalanthera damasonium</i>	White Helleborine	r: single specimen on Causse du Larzac in pinewood near radio mast above Nant
<i>Cephalanthera longifolia</i>	Narrow-leaved Helleborine, Sword-leaved Helleborine	o: under pines on Causse Noir
<i>Cephalanthera rubra</i>	Red Helleborine	o: under pines on Causse du Larzac and Causse Noir; riverside woodland near Cantobre
<i>Coeloglossum viride</i>	Frog Orchid	lf: at la Pezade; o: in grassland elsewhere
<i>Dactylorhiza fuchsii</i>	Common Spotted Orchid	o: grassland
<i>Dactylorhiza maculata</i>	Heath Spotted Orchid	r: streamside below summit of Mont Aigoual
<i>Dactylorhiza sambucina</i>	Elder-flowered Orchid	lf: in roadside grassland below summit of M Aigoual
<i>Epipactis atrorubens</i>	Dark-red Helleborine	r: single specimen at la Pezade
<i>Epipactis helleborine</i>	Broad-leaved Helleborine	r: single specimen on causee near la Couvertoirade; near <i>toit-citerne</i> on Causse Noir
<i>Gymnadenia conopsea</i>	Fragrant Orchid	lf: at la Pezade; in ditches on Causse Noir
<i>Himantoglossum hircinum</i>	Lizard Orchid	f: widespread in grassland and waysides on calcareous soils
<i>Limodorum arbortivum</i>	Violet Birdsnest Violet Limodore	o: on Causse du Larzac near radio mast above Nant and occasionally elsewhere
<i>Listera ovata</i>	Common Twayblade	o: scattered in grassland at la Pezade; near <i>toit-citerne</i>
<i>Neottia nidus-avis</i>	Birdsnest Orchid	o: under pines near <i>toit-citerne</i> and near radio mast on Causse du Larzac
<i>Ophrys apifera</i>	Bee Orchid	r: single plant at la Pezade; single plant on roadside below Cantobre
<i>Ophrys araneola</i>	Small Spider Orchid	r: single plant at la Pezade
<i>Ophrys aveyronensis</i>	Aveyron Orchid	r: a few specimens remaining in shelter of bushes at Lapanouse station
<i>Ophrys aymoninii</i>	Aymonin's Orchid	r: mixed stand with <i>O. insectifera</i> near le Buffre, Causse Méjean; few specimens near <i>toit-citerne</i>
<i>Ophrys insectifera</i>	Fly Orchid	r: mixed stand with <i>O. aymoninii</i> near le Buffre, Causse Méjean; few specimens near <i>toit-citerne</i>
<i>Ophrys passionis</i>	Passiontide Orchid	r: near telephone mast, Causse du Larzac
<i>Ophrys scolopax</i>	Woodcock Orchid	r: single individual near radio mast above Nant
<i>Ophrys sphegodes</i> (= <i>O. aranifera</i>)	Early Spider Orchid	r: single individuals near radio mast above Nant' on causee opposite la Gare aux Ânes, la Pezade
# <i>Ophrys sulcata</i>	Furrowed Orchid	single plant at la Pezade
<i>Orchis coriophora</i>	Bug Orchid	r: single specimen near la Couvertoirade
# <i>Orchis laxiflora</i>	Lax-flowered Orchid	single plant near telephone mast
<i>Orchis mascula</i>	Early Purple Orchid	o: several at la Pezade
<i>Orchis militaris</i>	Military Orchid	lf: a few specimens still recognisable on Causse du Larzac near radio mast above Nant and at Lapanouse
<i>Orchis purpurea</i>	Lady Orchid	o: a few specimens still recognisable on Causse du Larzac at la Pezade, near radio mast above Nant and at Lapanouse
<i>Orchis simia</i>	Monkey Orchid	o: a few specimens still recognisable on Causse du Larzac near radio mast above Nant and at Lapanouse
<i>Orchis ustulata</i>	Burnt Orchid, Burnt-tip Orchid	lf: at Lapanouse; o: on Causse du Larzac near radio mast above Nant
<i>Platanthera bifolia</i>	Lesser Butterfly Orchid	Lf: on Causse du Larzac: near la Couvertoirade, near radio mast above Nant and at Lapanouse
<i>Platanthera chlorantha</i>	Greater Butterfly Orchid	lf: on Causse du Larzac: near la Couvertoirade, near radio mast above Nant and at Lapanouse

Poaceae (Gramineae): Grasses

<i>Aegilops</i> sp	Aegilops	f: causee grassland, Causse Blandas
<i>Agrostis capillaris</i>	Common Bent	f: grassland
<i>Aira caryophyllea</i>	Silver Hair Grass	In meadow below summit of M Aigoual
<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>	False Oat	ld: roadsides and waste places
<i>Brachypodium pinnatum</i>	Tor-grass	ld: patch-forming in causses grassland
<i>Briza media</i>	Quaking Grass	f: widespread in causses grassland
<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	Cock's Foot	f: on waysides and in rough grassland
#* <i>Festuca christianii-bernardii</i>	Christian Bernard's Fescue	f. causee grassland
<i>Festuca heterophylla</i>	A Fescue	o: Causse Blandas

<i>Festuca marginata</i>	Timbal's Fescue	In riverside grassland beside Dourbie at Laupies
<i>Festuca paniculata</i>	Panicle Fescue	la: Mont Aigoual
<i>Festuca rubra</i>	Red Fescue	f: grassland
<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	Yorkshire Fog	o: grassland
<i>Festuca vivipara</i>	Viviparous Fescue	e: Mont Aigoual
<i>Lolium perenne</i>	Perennial Rye Grass	f: cultivated grassland
<i>Melica uniflora</i>	Wood Melick	o: in woodland beside River Dourbie between Nant and Cantobre
<i>Nardus stricta</i>	Matt Grass	ld: in alpine grassland on summit of M Aigoual
<i>Poa annua</i>	Annual Meadow Grass	a: grassland and waste places
<i>Trisetum flavescens</i>	Golden Oat Grass	a: meadows at la Pezade; Causse Blandas
<i>Stipa pennata</i>	Feather Grass, Angel's Hair, <i>Cheveu d'Ange</i>	ld: widespread in causses grassland

Fungi

Tulostoma brumale

Handkea (Calvatia) utriformis

Long-stalked Puffball (*photo below*)

Mosaic Puffball



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