

# Morocco, Middle Atlas, 1- 8 May 2023

*Imouzzer Kandar, Ifrane, Dayet Aoua, Azrou, Reserve Naturelle de Cedres, Ben Smim and Col du Zad*

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Levaillant's Woodpecker and Atlas Flycatcher, Dayet Daoua

## Introduction

During our family holiday in Morocco my wife and I, our two sons and Tom's girlfriend stayed in an Airbnb home in Imouzzer Kandar at the foot of the Middle Atlas, a half an hour drive away from Fez airport and less than 25 minutes from Ifrane, Azrou is another twenty minutes to the south.

At the airport we picked up our seven seater Dacia Lodgy Stepway (450 euros), our rental car for this week. A local SIM card was obtained for a few euros at the little shop next to the Sixt car rental office in the airport main hall, it gave access to the Internet all week. My wife and I both took 250 euros in Dirham from the ATM and although we had all our meals en route or in our favourite restaurant Génie d'ôr 300 metres away from our home in Imouzzer Kandar, we still had 25 Dirham left when we returned the car on May 8th.

The region is not heavily visited by tourists, certainly not this time of year and the relaxed atmosphere was completely different from the hassle I have experienced in and around Marrakech on a previous visit to Morocco. No aggressive sales practices, but friendliness all around; a visit to **Meknès**, one of the four royal cities of Morocco, was highly appreciated by all members of the family.

For nature lovers like Tom and myself **Imouzzer Kandar** was the perfect base, especially since **Dayet Aoua** was only ten minutes to the south, a place where I successfully targeted my lifers *Maghreb Owl*, *Levaillant's Woodpecker*, *Atlas Flycatcher* and *African Chaffinch* (recently split by IOC). Dayet (or Lac) Aoua is certainly the most productive lake in the area, even when it has been completely dry for several years now. The woods around the western shore (near the picnic areas) produced the targets I was looking for, the east side of the lake is much drier and stonier, adding more species to the mix, so driving the good road that circles the lake gives a wide variety of habitats and bird species (check coordinates and species info in the *Day to day account*).

The cedar and oak woods around **Ifrane** and **Azrou** have *Atlas Flycatchers* and *Maghreb Owls* but also many interesting races of widespread species like *Short-toed Treecreeper*, *Coal Tit* en *Red Crossbill*. My fifth target species was Dupont's Lark and during my stay I discovered a new site for this species op zo'n twintig minuten van Ifrane. On the beautifully forested P7231 out of Ifrane you take the R707

right into the stony desert of **Guigou** (gps 33.435, -4.933). Start at first light when *Dupont's Larks* are easy to find here, we heard at least four singing on the extensive sandy plain dotted with dwarf shrubs. Their preferred habitat is easy to find, to see one of the larks is indeed quite a challenge. *Atlas Wheatear* is very conspicuous here and *Black Wheatear*, *Red-rumped Wheatear*, *Moussier's Redstart*, *Greater Short-toed Lark*, *Thekla Lark* and *Rock Sparrow* are also easily found. *Atlas Horned Lark* may take a little more effort, but is also there.



Atlas Wheatear, Guigou

I secretly hoped to add a sixth lifer to my birding list, *Tristram's Warbler* however was not nearby, the nearest site this time of year, takes over four hours from Imouzzer Kandar, and using a complete day for one species in a family holiday of seven days is just a little too far-fetched.

Not only birds were on our radar, we also went for a good list of butterfly goodies and saw almost all species we set out for. The immediate surroundings of our home in **Imouzzer Kandar** gave several new species, but the best areas were **Reserve Naturelle de Cedres**, **Ben Smim** beyond **Azrou** and **Col du Zad**.

A little stream near **Lac Zerrouka**, just north of Ifrane hosted four species of dragonfly, a fresh *Glittering Demoiselle* was a very good find here. Col du Zad also produced a rare dragonfly in the shape of a *Barbary Featherleg*.



Glittering Demoiselle, Lac Zerrouka, Ifrane

With sunny days and daily temperatures around 25 degrees it was a great week. Police checks were plentiful, but we never had any problems. One officer decided not to fine us after we exceeded the speed limit with more than twenty kilometers somewhere in the mountains between Azrou and Col du Zad, we were let off with a warning. All my observations are uploaded to *observado.org*.

## Day to day account

### 1 May

We reached our Airbnb home in Immuzer Kandar at 6pm, flying in from Eindhoven into Fez. The home needed some proper plumbing, towels, toiletpaper, Wifi and a whole lot more, but the restaurant nearby was nice, so we settled in after a good evening meal.

### 2 May

**Dayet Aoua** was only ten minutes away from our home in Imouzzer Kandar and that was where we started our Middle Atlas adventure and what a start it was. There were birds everywhere when we parked the car in the southwest corner of the lake coming in off the N8 motorway. Noisy parties of *Eurasian Jay* welcomed us here and we heard a distant *Levaillant's Woodpecker*. One of the first birds we heard singing here at GPS 33.653, -5.044 was a male *Atlas Flycatcher*, one that showed brilliantly. *Mauretanic Short-toed Treecreepers*, *African Blue Tits*, *buvryi Hawfinches*, *Rock Sparrows* and *African Chaffinch* proved very common along the well-maintained road around the lake and *Mistle Thrush*, *Golden Oriole* and *Eurasian Hoopoe* even so, a *Booted Eagle* and an *Atlas Long-legged Buzzard* came overhead.

At least five pairs of colourful *European Rollers* brightened up the dry lake and when we reached the east side of the dry lake the area it started getting more stony and now *Thekla* and *Wood Lark* started to appear. Several *Lesser Kestrels* hunted the area, we also saw them over our home when we got back.



Rock Sparrow and European Roller, Dayet Aoua

A big take-away breakfast was obtained from our nearby restaurant in **Imouzzer Kandar** and enjoyed at our home before I walked the stony overgrown area behind our house finding *Southern Brown Argus*, lots of *Wall Brown* and four *Greek Tortoise*. Birds were there too: *Spotless Starling*, *Common Bulbul*, *African Chaffinch*, *African Blue Tit* and *mauretanicus Backbirds* were all common. At noon we left for **Azrou**, for a visit to the Tuesday market; a lively and colorful introduction to Moroccan life. We left the market with fresh strawberries and bananas and drove up the mountain to the new visitor's centre **Maison de la Cedraie** where *Barbary Macaques* lined the winding road through the forest, waiting for tourists to feed them, and they did in numbers.

We walked the trail to the south at GPS 33.419, -5.177 which was said to be good for *Spanish Fritillary*. That turned out to be true, we easily found twelve of them with *Moroccan Marbled White*, *Rosy Grizzled Skipper* and *Mountain Argus* as supporting cast. *Broad-bordered Bee Hawkmoth* and

*Spurge Hawkmoth* were also common here and I photographed a *Western Orphean Warbler* up close, an *Atlas Long-legged Buzzard* flew up from a tree really close to us. At 6.30 pm we were home again where I scanned the area behind the house from our garden adding *Corn* and *Cirl Bunting* and *Moussiers Redstart* to our trip list.



Spanish Fritillary and Moroccan Marbled White

### 3 May

We revisited **Dayed Aoua** the next morning and this time we also saw a female along with the male *Atlas Flycatcher*, both allowed wonderful pictures, the bright male singing its heart out. A second singing male was also found in roadside trees a few kilometers ahead.



Here halfway the lake a gorgeous *Desert Little Owl* perched on a tree stump very close to the road and a Ruddy Duck flew over. After our visit to Dayed Aoua we drove fifteen minutes to nearby **Ifrane**. Just to the north of this wintersports town we spotted a little stream flowing towards **Lac Zerrouka** and we decided to go and check the stream (GPS 33.549, -5.098), finding several *Spanish Pond Turtle* and four species of dragonfly (*Iberian Bluetail* in three lifers *Mercury Bluet*, *Mediterranean Bluet* and a fresh and rare *Glittering Demoiselle*), but no new birds or butterflies. The lake itself held an assortment of ducks and twelve pairs of showy *Red-knobbed Coot*. *Little Grebes* noisily kept to the reeds and two *Grey Wagtails* worked the sandy shore.

After brunch I checked the area around our home and found *Moroccan Hairstreak* and *Portuguese Dappled White*, both lifers. The five of us then drove back to green and fresh **Ifrane** that had a certain Aspen or Garmisch Partenkirchen feel to it, Lac Ifrane also hosting *Red-knobbed Coots*. After a visit to the daily Souk and a sunny terrace we drove to **Ras Elma** east of Ifrane looking for Levillant's Woodpecker, bumping into several family parties of *Barbary Macaques* instead. Here we also found

singing *Atlas Flycatcher*, *Common Redstart*, *Bonelli's Warbler* and several noisy *Eurasian Nuthatch*. On the way back to Imouzzar Kandar stony areas produced two *Moussier's Redstarts*.



Desert Little Owl, Dayet Aoua and Red-knobbed Coot, Lac Zerrouka

#### 4 May

Today we spent the entire day in **Meknès**, one of the four imperial cities of Morocco. Unfortunately Meknès was heavily under construction, the famous Bab el Mansour wall hidden behind unattractive scaffolding. We did however enjoy the city tour with horse and carriage ending at the Masoleum near Bab el Mansour. We worked the busy souk and streets that was also home to a singing *House Bunting* with *Alpine Swifts* hawking the air, low overhead, screaming towards their nest in the big city centre walls.



House Bunting, Meknès

In the evening we went owling around **Dayet Aoua**, and heard both Maghreb and Scops Owl. The *Maghreb Owl* was heard by Tom and Maud first, then a few minutes later by the three of us, after which it was quiet again; the *Scops Owl* called far more frequently.

#### 5 May

Tom and I started in the dark, after waking up at 5 am. We reached **Ben Smim**, just south of Ifrane at 5.30, a place that had a Maghreb Owl a few days ago, according to eBird. It was still dark when we reached the spot at GPS 33.487, -5.144, but we found nothing. We then decided to go to **Guigou**, a place that was said to host Dupont's Lark. This site is a lot closer from Ifrane than the Dupont's Lark stronghold at Zaida, so we decided to give it a go at first light. We drove from Ifrane on forest road P7231, then on R707 into stony desert where there is a dirt road on the right hand side leading into prime Dupont's Lark habitat at GPS 33.435, -4.933, a landscape dotted with low bushes.



Atlas Wheatear

Apart from at least ten singing *Sky Larks* the area hosted at least four singing *Dupont's Larks*. They allowed a close approach, but they were playing with us, as they remained invisible in dwarf vegetation changing direction unseen all the time.



Greater Short-toed Lark, Guigou

From a distance a few glimpses were obtained, other lark species like *Thekla* and *Short-toed Lark* were far more cooperative, although a lark found by Tom was a bit painful. He showed me a picture of the lark after we met again having walked the extensive plains more than a 100 meters apart from each other. The picture showed an Atlas Horned Lark, a new species for me. I walked back to the area but could not relocate the bird.



Atlas Horned Lark and Red-rumped Wheatear, Guigou

*Atlas (Seeböhm's) Wheatears* were very common with at least five males and two female birds, we also enjoyed a pair of confiding *Red-rumped Wheatear*.

In the afternoon we visited **Ben Smim** forest again. We walked the forest with several singing *Atlas Flycatcher*, (they were a lot higher in the trees here compared to the birds at Dayet Aoua) and high densities of *mauretanicus* Short-toed Treecreeper. Tom saw a *Levaillant's Woodpecker* flying over, I had an *Atlas Crossbill* overhead, we both heard a singing *Bonelli's Warbler*, but neither of us found a roosting Maghreb Owl.

In the afternoon we went cultural in **Azrou** after which we had dinner at the main square before driving back to **Ben Smim** forest again at 9.15 pm, hopefully at the right time to connect with a Maghreb Owl. We walked the forest again the five of us, taped the bird a few times, but it stayed quiet.

## 6 May

I did not have a choice, I also wanted to find an Atlas Horned Lark and so I went to **Guigou** again. This time I reached the spot at 7am, trying for *Levaillant's Woodpecker* in the big trees around the Royal Palace in Ifrane first. Tom stayed home this time, his girlfriend did not want to wake up to an empty bed again. Maybe it was because I was an hour later compared to yesterday, but the *Dupont's Larks* were far less vocal than yesterday, although I again glimpsed a bird. I still had not seen my target species, but in the car again, I drove back a few hundred meters where I finally found my *Atlas Horned Lark* in the rocky desert, bingo! *Atlas Wheatears* were again common, *Red-rumped* and *Black Wheatear* showed well and this time a male *Moussier's Redstart* posed on a stone wall.

Back at 9 am and our breakfast again brought in from the nearby restaurant we drove the two hour stretch to **Zaida**. Not for the Duponts anymore, now with a good site for the species a lot closer to Ifrane, but for the magnificent scenery, driving over the Middle Atlas mountain chain into the desert. We all loved it, what a trip.



The real destination however was **Col du Zad**, at GPS 33.005, -5.074, probably the most species rich butterfly site in the area. We worked the open area and found some good butterflies but we had to work hard for them. We enjoyed a male *False Baton Blue*, a male *Martin's Blue*, female *Spotted Blue Adonis* and a handful of *Algerian Fritillaries*, but Col du Zad was certainly not the mountain meadow filled with butterflies that I hoped for. We also had a dragonfly here, a *Barbary Featherleg* was a very good find. Other shorter stops yielded some nice birds like *Temminck's Lark*, *Western Olivaceous Warbler*, *Western Black-eared Wheatear*, quite a few *Moussier's Redstarts*, *Corn Buntings* and *Tawny Pipit* and a toilet stop for Brent near Ifrane finally produced *Maghreb Magpie*, a group of three.



Algerian Fritillary and Spotted Adonis Blue, Col du Zad

## 7 May

I still had not seen a *Levaillant's Woodpecker* and opted for another visit to **Dayet Aoua** at 7.30. Tom could not come because he was suffering from food poisoning that previous evening, spending most of the night in the bathroom. When I got out of the car I immediately heard a *Levaillant's Woodpecker* in a big tree right above me. This was a female, soon joined by the male. The pair was interacting and showing really well, working the trees lined between the lake and the road, often giving great pictures against the blue sky. The *Atlas Flycatcher* was active again at the same spot and driving the complete circle around the lake I obtained good pictures of one of three singing *Turtle Doves*. Driving almost full circle there was another *Atlas Flycatcher* singing, being very photogenic and eventually seen flying into an old woodpecker tree hole. A calling *Common Cuckoo* here was new to the trip list, a *Tawny Pipit* also frequented the area and an *Atlas Long-legged Buzzard* came low overhead.



Atlas Long-legged Buzzard and Atlas Flycatcher, Dayet Aoua

After breakfast the overgrown areas around the house delivered *Andalusian Wall Lizards* and a confiding *atlas Coal Tit*. *Lesser Kestrels* hawked the air, a *Cardinal* butterfly rushed by.

Brent was into trilobites and ammonite fossils and so we visited a market near **Ifrane** on our final afternoon to help him to some interesting examples of what was life about 200 million years ago. After that and after spending some money on drinks and food in Ifrane a *Eurasian Sparrowhawk* that came over in last light was a new bird to the trip, the many *Common Swifts* and *Lesser Kestrels* were not. I spent some time making pictures of one of the male *African Chaffinches* in our garden before we ended our trip to Morocco at our favourite restaurant Genie d'Or near our home.



## 8 May

We flew at 7.50 am back to Eindhoven, returned our rental car at Fez airport at six, and arrived in Eindhoven, the Netherlands at 12.05, ending a very enjoyable, successful, trouble free holiday.

**Species lists**, listers in **bold** print.

**Birds, list follows IOC (or in parentheses: Dutch Birding taxonomy)**

Ruddy Shelduck, *tadorna ferruginea*; flying over Dayet Aoua.

Gadwall, *mareca strepera*; six at Lac Zerrouka, Ifrane.

Mallard, *anas platyrhynchos*; two pairs at Lac Zerrouka and several at Lac d'Ifrane, Ifrane.

Common Pochard, *aythya ferina*; eight pairs at Lac Zerrouka, Ifrane.

Helmeted Guineafowl, *numida meleagris*; (1) two at Imouzzer Kandar.

Alpine Swift, *tachymarptis melba tuneti*; common over Meknès, nesting in the famous Bab el Mansour wall. They were also nesting at Fez airport, coming right overhead while we were standing on the airplane stairs waiting to board the plane.

Common Swift, *apus apus*; five at Imouzzer Kandar and six at Fez airport.

Pallid Swift, *apus pallidus brehmorum*; two at Ifrane.

Common Cuckoo, *cuculus canorus*; singing at Dayet Aoua.

Common Wood Pigeon, *columba palumbus excelsus*; two at Dayet Aoua.

European Turtle Dove, *streptopelia turtur*; several singing at Dayet Aoua.

Eurasian Collared Dove, *streptopelia decaocto*; common.

Common Moorhen, *gallinula chloropus*; one at Lac Zerrouka, Ifrane.

Red-knobbed Coot, *fulica cristata*; twelve at Lac Zerrouka, Ifrane; one at Lac d'Ifrane.

Little Grebe, *tachybaptus ruficollis*; nine at Lac Zerrouka, Ifrane.

Common Sandpiper, *actitis hypoleucos*; two at Lac Zerrouka, Ifrane.

White Stork, *ciconia ciconia*; common.

Glossy Ibis, *plegadis falcinellus*; one over Lac d'Ifrane, Ifrane.

Western Cattle Egret, *bubulcus ibis*; common.

European Honey Buzzard, *pernis apivorus*; one over Ben Smim forest, just south of Ifrane.

Booted Eagle, *hieraaetus pennatus*; one over Dayet Aoua.

Eurasian Sparrowhawk, *accipiter nisus*; one over Imouzzer Kandar.

Black Kite, *milvus migrans*; one migrating over Guigou, early morning following the road several more seen during our holiday, widespread (migrant?).

Atlas Long-legged Buzzard, *buteo (rufinus) cirtensis*; one over Dayet Aoua on two occasions and one at the Maison de la Cedraie, Reserve Naturelle de Cedres.

Desert Little Owl, *athene noctua glaux*; an early morning roadside bird at Dayet Aoua.

Eurasian Scops Owl, *otus scops*; singing at Dayet Aoua.

**Maghreb Owl**, *strix mauritanica*; singing at Dayet Aoua, gps 33.6480, -5.0229.

Eurasian Hoopoe, *upupa epops*; common.

European Roller, *coracias garrulus*; at least four pairs around Dayet Aoua; two south of Ifrane.

Great Spotted Woodpecker, *dendrocopos major maritanus*; several at Dayet Aoua and Ben Smim, Ifrane.

**Levaillant's Woodpecker**, *picus vaillantii*; one heard at Dayet Aoua on our first morning and another heard at Ben Smim, a pair showing really well on the west side of Dayet Aoua on my last morning.

Lesser Kestrel, *falco naumanni*; many roadside birds seen in the wider Imouzzer Kandar to Azou area, often hunting from roadside poles and wires. One seen in the centre of Azrou where I had expected to see more.

Common Kestrel, *falco tinnunculus*; a female at Dayet Aoua.

Eurasian Golden Oriole, *oriolus oriolus*; several singing at Dayet Auoua and at Lac Zerrouka,

Woodchat Shrike, *lanius senator*; one along the A2, Fez to Meknès.

Maghreb Magpie, *pica mauritanica*; three along the R707 just southeast of Ifrane.

Western Jackdaw, *coloeus monedula*; common.

Brown-necked Raven, *corvus ruficollis*; one over Dayet Aoua.

Northern Raven, *corvus corax tingitanus*; common.

Eurasian Jay, *garrulus glandarius minor*; very common at Dayet Aoua and several seen and heard at Ben Smim, Ifrane.



African Blue Tit, *cyanistes teneriffae ultramarinus*; common.

Coal Tit, *periparus ater*; common, showing even in our Imouzzer Kandar backyard.

Great Tit, *parus major excelsus*; common.

Thekla's Lark, *galerida theklae*; widespread, e.g several at the east side of Dayet Aoua.

Crested Lark, *galerida cristata*; two along the A2 to Meknès.

Woodlark, *lullula arborea*; common at the east side of Dayet Aoua.

**Atlas Horned Lark**, *eremophila (alpestris) atlas*; in stony desert at Guigou, gps 33.4388, -4.9390, Tom photographed one nearby in the same dwarf shrub habitat as Dupont's Lark.

Temminck's Lark, *eremophila bilopha*; one en route Azrou to Zaida, near Timahdite.

**Dupont's Lark**, *chersophilus duponti duponti*; at least four singing on the extensive sandy plains of Guigou (gps 33.4351, -4.9331). Birds were very hard to see in the dwarf shrubs, even when they were singing very close to you. Singing activity dwindles after the first hour of day.

Greater Short-toed Lark, *calandrella brachydactyla arubiginsa*; two in the same habitat as the Dupont's Larks at Guigou.

Mediterranean Short-toed Lark, *alaudala rufescens*; one at Guigou.

Eurasian Skylark, *alauda arvensis*; common at Gigou and several seen and heard on our trip Azrou to Zaida.

Common Bulbul, *pycnonotus barbatus*; common.

Eurasian Crag Martin, *ptyonoprogne rupestris*; one just south of Imouzzar Kandar.

Barn Swallow, *hirundo rustica*; common.

Western House Martin, *delichon urbicum meridionale*; one over Imouzzar Kandar.

Western Bonelli's Warbler, *phylloscopus bonelli*; singing at Lac Zerrouka, Ifrane, at camping Ras El Ma, at Ben Smim forest just south of Ifrane and at the forest road R707 southeast of Ifrane.

Western Olivaceous Warbler, *iduna opaca* one singing along the N8 just south of Imouzzar Kandar and one singing en route Azrou to Zaida near Timadite, gps 33.1601, -5.0665.

Western Orphean Warbler, *curruca hortensis*; one near the Maison de la Cedraie driving uphill from Azrou to the top.

Common Whitethroat, *curruca communis*; singing at the same spot as where I saw the Western Orphean Warbler.

Common Firecrest, *regulus ignicapilla balearicus*; one at Dayet Aoua.

Eurasian Wren, *troglodytes troglodytes kabyloorum*; singing along forest road RR707 southeast of Ifrane.

Eurasian Nuthatch, *sitta europaea hispaniensis*; one at Dayet Aoua, common in Ifrane and Azrou in forests with oak.

Short-toed Treecreeper, *certhia brachydactyla mauritanica*; three singing at Dayet Aoua, west side; common around Ifrane and Azrou.

Spotless Starling, *sturnus unicolor*; common.

Mistle Thrush, *turdus viscivorus deichleri*; nine at Ayed Daoua.

Common Blackbird, *turdus merula mauritanicus*; common.

European Robin, *erithacus rubecula*; heard singing at at least three sites at Ben Smim forest.

Common Nightingale, *luscini megarhynchos* one en route Azrou to Zaida near Timahdite.

**Atlas Flycatcher**, *ficedula speculigera*; three pairs at Dayet Aoua: a pair at gps 33.6525, -5.0435, another singing male at 33.6481, -5.0236 and a pair at a nest hole at 33.6472, -5.0162. All these birds showed well, at Ben Smim and Ras El Ma near Ifrane birds were more difficult to see, singing high up in tall oak trees.

Common Redstart, *phoenicurus phoenicurus*; one at Camping Ras El Ma, one at Col du Zad and one at the forest road R707 southeast of Ifrane.



Moussier's Redstart, *phoenicurus moussieri*; common.

Atlas Wheatear, *oenanthe seebohmi*; common at Guigou, along the R707, several pairs at 33.4540, -4.9755, but common along the entire road, at least 7 seen. We also saw a male en route Azrou to Zaida, close to Timahdite.

Western Black-eared Wheatear, *oenanthe hispanica*; one near Meknès, one near Guigou, along the R707 and one at ben Smim along the P7231.

Red-rumped Wheatear, *oenanthe moesta*; four at Guigou along the R707, where the Atlas Wheatears are.

Black Wheatear, *oenanthe leucura syenitica*; a pair driving to Guigou along the R707, gps 33.4661, -5.0044 and one along the N3 to Zaida.

Rock Sparrow, *petronia petronia barbara*; common, especially around Dayet Aoua and at Guigou.

Spanish Sparrow, *passer hispaniolensis hispaniensis*; eight in Meknès.

House Sparrow, *passer domesticus tingitanus*; common.

Grey Wagtail, *motacilla cinerea*; two at Lac Zerrouka, Ifrane and one at Lac d'Ifrane in Ifrane.

Moroccan Wagtail, *motacilla (alba) personata*; one at Imouzzer Kandar.

Tawny Pipit, *anthus campestris*; one at Dayet Aoua and one en route Azrou to Zaida near Timadite.

European Greenfinch, *chloris chloris voousi*; at Imouzzar Kandar and Dayet Aoua.

**African Chaffinch**, *fringilla spodiogenys*; common, e.g. many birds singing in Imouzzar Kandar and at Dayet Aoua.



Hawfinch, *coccothraustes coccothraustes buvryi*; two at Imouzzar Kandar and common at Dayet Aoua.

Common Linnet, *linaria cannabina mediterranea*; at Imouzzar Kandar and Dayet Aoua.

Atlas Red Crossbill, *loxia curvirostra poliogyna*; one over good forest at Ben Smim, halfway Ifrane to Azrou at gps 33.4861, -5.1439.

European Serin, *serinus serinus*; common.

Corn Bunting, *emberiza calandra*; one at Imouzzar Kandar and two en route Azrou to Zaida, close to Timahdite.

Cirl Bunting, *emberiza cirlus*; two at Imouzzar Kandar.

House Bunting, *emberiza sahari*; one singing in Meknès, one singing in Azrou and one singing along the road just south of Fez airport.

## Mammals

**Barbary Macaque**, *macaca sylvanus*; 42 lined the road to the Maison de la Cedraie driving uphill from Azrou and at least 25 at Camping Ras El Ma near Ifrane.

**Fat Sand Rat**, *psammomys obesus*; two along the R707 at Gigou.



## Reptiles

Greek Tortoise, *testudo graeca*; four at Imouzzar Kandar.

Spanish Pond Turtle, *mauremys leprosa*; seven at Lac Zerrouka, Ifrane.

**North African Rock Lizard**, *agama bibronii*; two at Imouzzar Kandar.

Andalusian Wall Lizard, *podarcis vaucheri*; a male at Imouzzar Kandar.

**Moroccan or North African Eyed Lizard**, *timon tangitanus*; Col du Zad.

## Butterflies

Rosy Grizzled Skipper, *pyrgus onopordi*; one at Col du Zad, west of the RN13, gps 33.0062, -50763.

Sage Skipper, *muschampia proto*; one at Maison de la Cedraie, Azrou, check site info Spanish Fritillary.

Iberian Scarce Swallowtail, *iphiclides feisthamelii*; Imouzzar Kandar.

Swallowtail, *papilio machaon*; Imouzzar Kandar.

**Moroccan Orange-tip**, *anthocharis belia*; a female at Tizguite, gps 33.487, -50552.

Black-veined White, *aporia crataegi*; one at Maison de la Cedraie, Azrou, check site info Spanish Fritillary.

Large White, *pieris brassicae*; common.

Small White, *pieris rapae*; common.

Bath White, *pontia daplidice*; Imouzzar Kandar and Col de Zad.

**Western Dappled White**, *euchloe crameri*; one at Fez airport, one in Meknès and one ssp *rifensis* at Imouzzar Kandar (confirmation through Michel Tarrier).

**Portuguese Dappled White**, *euchloe tagis*; one Imouzzar Kandar.

Clouded Yellow, *colias crocea*; common.

Brimstone, *gonepteryx rhamni*; one at Imouzzar Kandar, two at Ben Smim, Ifrane.

Cleopatra, *gonepteryx cleopatra*; three in Ifrane, two at Ben Smim, Ifrane.

Small Copper, *lycaena phlaeas*; common.

**Moroccan Hairstreak**, *tomares mauretanicus*; one Imouzzar Kandar.

Long-tailed Blue, *lampides boeticus*; common.

African Grass Blue, *zizeeria knysna*; one at Fez airport.

Lorquin's Blue, *cupido lorquini*; Imouzzar Kandar.

**Martin's Blue**, *kretania martini*; a male at Col du Zad, west of the RN13, gps 33.0062, -50773.

Southern Brown Argus, *aricia cramera*; at Imouzzar Kandar and at Dayet Aoua.

**False Baton Blue**, *pseudophilotes abencerragus*; a male at Col du Zad, west of the RN13, gps 33.0062, -50773.



**Mountain Argus**, *aricia montensis*; two at Maison de la Cedraie, Azrou, check site info Spanish Fritillary.

Southern Common Blue, *polyommatus celina*; two at Maison de la Cedraie, Azrou, check site info Spanish Fritillary.

**Spotted Adonis Blue**, *lysandra punctifera*; two at Col du Zad, west of the RN13, gps 33.0063, -50764.

Cardinal, *argynnis pandora*; one at Ben Smim, Reserve Naturelle de Cedres, Azrou and one at Imouzzer Kandar.

Queen of Spain Fritillary, *issoria lathonia*; one Col du Zad and one Ben Smim Forest south of Ifrane.

**Spanish Fritillary**, *euphydryas desfontainii*; at least twelve at a mountain meadow just south of the parking lot of the new visitor centre Maison de la Cedraie, Ben Smim, Reserve Naturelle de Cedres, southeast of Azrou, gps 33.4186, -5.1773.

**Algerian Fritillary**, *melitaea punica*; four at Col du Zad, west of the RN13, gps 33.0062, -50763.

Painted Lady, *vanessa cardui*; widespread in low numbers.

Comma, *polygonia c-album*; one Col du Zad.

Speckled Wood, *pararge aegeria*; one at Lac Zerrouka, Ifrane and one near Camping Ras El Ma, Ifrane.

Wall Brown, *lasioommata megera*; common Imouzzer Kandar.

Small Heath, *coenonympha pamphilus*; four at Ben Smim, Reserve Naturelle de Cedres,, Azrou.

**Moroccan Marbled White**, *melanargia lucasi*; eight at Maison de la Cedraie, Azrou, check site info Spanish Fritillary.

## Dragonflies

**Glittering Demoiselle**, *calopteryx exul*; a fresh female at a stream at Lac Zerrouka, Ifrane, gps 33.5491, -50967.

**Mediterranean Bluet**, *coenagrion caerulescens*; one at a stream at Lac Zerrouka, Ifrane.

**Mercury Bluet**, *coenagrion mercuriale*; eight at a stream at Lac Zerrouka, Ifrane.

Iberian Bluetail, *ischnura graellsii*; one at a stream at Lac Zerrouka, Ifrane.

**Barbary Featherleg**, *platycnemis subdilatata*; one at Col du Zad, gps 33.0025, -50738.

## **Moths**

Isle of Wight Wave, *idaea humiliata*; one at Imouzzer Kandar.

Broad-bordered Bee Hawk-moth, *hemaris fuciformis*; three at Maison de la Cedraie, Ben Smim, Reserve Naturelle de Cedres, Azrou.

Spurge Hawk-moth, *hyles euphorbiae*; seven at Maison de la Cedraie, Ben Smim, Reserve Naturelle de Cedres, Azrou.

**Bordered Straw**, *heliopsis peltigera*; two at Maison de la Cedraie, Ben Smim, Reserve Naturelle de Cedres, Azrou.

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Guigou





Zaida