

# **La Brenne**

## **17<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2008**

### **Tour Leader**

Mike Read

### **Daily Diary**

#### **Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> May**

Mike and Liz met the group at Limoges airport and we were soon on the way towards la Brenne. After a stop for a late lunch, we drove onwards through rolling countryside and saw at least 8 Common Buzzards, 2 male Hen Harriers and a Black Kite as we went. Occasional hefty rain showers marred the journey somewhat and perhaps kept bird numbers down but as we arrived at our hotel the sun began to shine and after a brief time for settling in and unpacking, we took a walk down towards the nearby etang. Golden Orioles were singing in 2 or 3 woodland areas, a female Black Redstart was on a stack of old railway sleepers just beyond the farm buildings and a female Pheasant walked along the track for a while. An unseen Cirl Bunting frequently sang from a hedgerow where a pair of Long-tailed Tits fed and the field of maize leading towards the lake held many Wood Pigeons, Turtle Doves and Mallards. Other sightings included numerous Barn Swallows and a Cuckoo. We returned to the hotel and were soon enjoying a fine evening meal.

#### **Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> May**

Before breakfast a few of the group walked towards the etang and as we left the hotel area a Golden Oriole was singing in the poplars beyond the field. At the farm buildings a male Black Redstart was perched on the chimney and further along a Nightingale and a Melodious Warbler were singing. As we reached the furthest point of our walk, a Woodlark was singing in flight just above us and a Cirl Bunting perched for a while in a dead tree. As we walked back towards the hotel a couple of Honey Buzzards were seen in the distance.

After breakfast we headed into Le Blanc and then out past Ruffec. Here we paused at a sand quarry and immediately found another Melodious Warbler and a Black Redstart perched on overhead wires. Numerous Sand Martins were nesting in the banks of the excavation; a Kestrel was hovering nearby and then 2 Honey Buzzards flew past at close range with the second one giving us excellent views. We then drove to Ciron where a drive along a track took us to a couple of etangs. On the way along the track, a Hoopoe flew up from just in front of the minibus and disappeared over the football pitch. Here we took a gentle stroll along a winding track between the lakes and had a good quantity of birds. The woods held Blackcap, Chiffchaff, Nightingale, Long-tailed Tits, Golden Oriole and Short-toed Treecreeper while along various hedgerows were a few Turtle Doves purring their typical summery song. Both etangs produced good birds and these included Grey Heron, Cattle and Great White Egrets, Whiskered Terns, Great Crested Grebes, various ducks and a rather elusive Kingfisher. After a brief pause for a refreshing cuppa and another good view of a Hoopoe we drove to the etangs de l'Hardouine and Rochefort. Whiskered Terns were very numerous at this location and immediately after our arrival a Black-crowned Night Heron flew by at close quarters. Grey and Purple Herons stalked the margins, Reed and Cetti's Warblers sang unseen and a couple of Great-spotted Woodpeckers flew into the same area of trees. The predators were represented by Marsh Harrier drifting over the reed beds and a Short-toed Eagle flying high in the distance. We then drove to St Michele-en-Brenne for our lunch and we were grateful of the shelter of a couple of trees as rain began to fall. The wet weather soon passed and we were able to head off to the Etang de Puichevraux where a Common Sandpiper was the first bird seen. Apart from a few ducks water birds seemed in short supply but here we did see another Marsh Harrier, Black Kite and two more Honey Buzzards. We then drove passed the Etang de l'Gabriere and the Etang de Gabrieau and found a good number of orchids on the roadside, these included a few tall

spikes of Bee Orchid and Lizard Orchid but unfortunately the latter were not yet open. The etangs held nothing new so we drove on to a couple of un-named etangs where we found a group of Cormorants nesting, numerous Whiskered Terns and Great-crested Grebes and a few more Pochards and Tufted Ducks. The biggest surprise of all though was to see an Osprey perched on a dead tree and this bird was in possession of a recently caught carp. Black-headed gulls tried to dislodge it from its lofty perch but in the end it stayed there and enjoyed its meal. However, it was time for us now to head back to the hotel to prepare for our evening meal.

### **Monday 19<sup>th</sup> May**

For our pre-breakfast walk this morning we walked through the woodlands bordering the entrance road to our hotel. As before, Golden Orioles were singing in the trees and a little further down the road a couple of Short-toed Treecreepers were located. We saw a Great-spotted Woodpecker or two and we also heard a Black Woodpecker giving its flight call but unfortunately we did not see this bird.

Later, at the Etang de Cistude a cool breeze was blowing across the water and into the hide. This lessened our resolve to hang on for the Little Bittern which failed to appear during our stay but we did see Purple and Grey Heron, Whiskered Tern, Black-headed Gull, Great-crested and Little Grebes. We then drove to near Azay-le-Ferron to search for farmland birds and were somewhat surprised when our first finds, in a puddle in the middle of a field, were Common Greenshank and Little Ringed Plover. Other waders noted in this area included lone Lapwings and Stone Curlew. Our main quarry here was Montagu's Harrier and in the end we had excellent views of two males and a female and this was added to when a short distance along the road we saw a male Hen Harrier. We paused for lunch at the same location as the previous day and here we noted, in much better weather, Black Redstart, Green Woodpecker, Swifts and Swallows.

Afterwards we drove to the starting point of the walk of Beauregard. Skylark sang over the meadow while in the trackside scrub Garden and Melodious Warblers, Chiffchaff and Nightingale were all singing. Loose-flowered and Tongue Orchids were found in good numbers and on reaching the lake there were a few Gadwall and Mute Swan to be found as well as Black-necked and Great-crested Grebes and lots of Whiskered Terns nesting among the Greater Yellow-cress. Other birds noted during the walk were Black Kite, Marsh Harrier, Purple Heron, Little Egret and Fan-tailed Warbler (AKA Zitting Cisticola). Once this walk was completed we took a slightly detoured route back to our hotel and saw some good birds on the way. On the Etang de Gabriau we saw a pair of Red-crested Pochards amongst many other things but the biggest surprise was reserved for later as we approached Lingé. Here beside some fishing lakes a couple of raptors flew up almost from the roadside and close inspection revealed these to be 2 Red-footed Falcons. Unfortunately they didn't linger but they were watched heading off over one of the nearby woodlands. We then made our way back to the hotel for another fine evening meal.

### **Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> May**

A Golden Oriole was once again singing as we took a drive towards the hotel's etang for our early morning walk. As we approached the field above the lake a group of perhaps 20 Mallard flew up along with a few Turtle Doves and Woodpigeons. At the bottom of the field a group of 7 Greylag Geese was a new species for *Travelling Naturalist* in La Brenne. As we walked towards the lake Blackcaps and Woodlarks were singing and a Redshank flew up as we gazed over sunlit mist rising from the water. A Grasshopper Warbler sang nearby and this was soon located and enjoyed by those present.

After breakfast we drove to an area of grassland close to Rosnay and took a walk here for a while. Corn Buntings and Whitethroats were common and there were a few Melodious Warblers. A pair of Red-backed Shrikes moved about over much of the area whilst on the ground there were three species of orchids to be seen, namely Tongue, Loose-flowered and Greater Butterfly. As we made our way back towards the vehicle a Honey Buzzard could be seen circling nearby and a Black-crowned Night-heron flew past. After a break for coffee in Migné we drove to the Forêt de Lancosme to search for birds and other wildlife. Yet another species of orchid was our first find and this was the attractive

Burnt Orchid or Orchis Brulé as the French call it. Deep within the woodland we could hear Great Spotted Woodpecker drumming almost constantly, a Common Buzzard flew past while Great Tits and Starlings seemed to be feeding young in nearby nests. The final prize here was a Bonelli's Warbler that we saw during an after lunch walk and along the trail we noted Common Frog and Western Emerald Damselfly. As we left the area we paused a few kilometres down the road to view a fabulous stand of Lady and Monkey Orchids and here we also found Early Spider and Common Spotted Orchid. Again Whitethroats and Melodious Warblers could be heard nearby.

As we drove towards the Cherine Reserve we found a few good birds on roadside etangs. These included Mallard, Gadwall and Northern Shoveler ducks, a Black-winged Stilt and 3 Greenshanks and a good sized group of Black-headed Gulls. Along the roadside hedgerows we fairly frequently saw Red-backed Shrikes as well as a pair of Linnets.

Having made an appointment with the warden we then visited the private hides at the 'back' of the Cherine Reserve. The viewing here was really good with lots of Whiskered Terns and Black-headed Gulls from both hides and at the first location we also noted a passing Hobby in the distance and a couple of Pond Terrapins/ Tortoises hauled out on logs in the water. At the second hide there was much more of the same with lots of herons to be seen too but perhaps best of all here was more than 30 occupied nests of Black-necked Grebes. This figure represents approximately 1/30<sup>th</sup> of the entire French population; and this was just on one etang! As we headed out of the area a Sparrowhawk flew by and driving back towards La Blanc, a Short-toed Eagle completed our days watching.

### **Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> May**

After a quick dash in the minibus we again did our pre-breakfast walk at the nearby etang. Before we set off Golden Oriole and Hoopoe were seen and a flycatcher was 'Spotted' on the top of an oak tree. Down by the lake the Grasshopper Warbler was in full voice in the shrubbery and Woodlark sang overhead. At the water's edge Reed Warblers chattered away in the reeds, Cetti's burst their song from the willows while Mallards and half a dozen Greylag Geese drifted on to the misty water.

After breakfast a brief stop in La Blanc had most of the folks viewing Serins and Blackcap from the Leclerc car park. From here we drove west along the Creuse river to a small village where a formerly large Bee-eater colony had dwindled to just 2 or 3 pairs. At this location Cetti's Warbler and Blackcap were heard singing and Golden Oriole gave its fluty song from trees across the river. The Bee-eater situation was something of a disappointment to say the least. Growing under a walnut tree we found the unusual looking Purple Toothwort which is parasitic mainly on willows. From here we drove to Lureuil and Linge seeing at least half a dozen Common Buzzards on the way. At the Etang de Lerignon 2 male Red-crested Pochards were involved in an aerial chase with a female while on the water below Common Pochard, Tufted Duck, Mallard, Gadwall and Great Crested Grebe could be seen. Whiskered Terns flew around searching for insects and fish and a Marsh Harrier drifted over the reed beds beyond the lake no doubt searching for a meal or two.

We had our picnic lunch on the roadside overlooking part of the Cherine Reserve. Whiskered Terns were numerous flying from one lake to another and a Common Buzzard that passed low overhead was instantly mobbed by 3 or 4 Lapwings. Other species noted here included passing Night-herons, Cattle Egrets, Grey and Purple Herons and a couple of Reed Buntings were also seen. After lunch a walk beside the Etang Miclos produced good views of 3 Black Terns, more Whiskered Terns and a few Black-necked Grebes while a Bonelli's Warbler sang from the nearby trees.

Later we drove to a drained etang near Le Guillaumeries where a couple of Greenshank and a Redshank were feeding close to a lone Black-winged Stilt. Five Grey Herons took off as we arrived and a group of Black-headed Gulls were still present when we left. From here we drove to Les Foucault where again water levels were quite low, this produced some good though distant sightings of at least 3 Black-winged Stilts and a few Lapwings while a few Canada Geese could be seen feeding on the grassy banks. Hobby and Black Kite flew past while Purple and Grey Herons fed amongst the waterside vegetation. Near Blizon we found a good specimen of Lizard Orchid in almost full flower

which was photographed and admired by the group. This almost completed our watching for the day but on the way back towards La Blanc we had an amazingly close encounter with a Honey Buzzard. Along one of the narrow La Brenne roads there it was, on the roadside verge! As we stopped it took off and a quick bit of reversing gave us excellent but brief views of it perched in an oak tree. After dinner we ventured out close to the hotel and hoped to find owls in particular. However, our first good sighting was of a nightjar that flew very close to us and then sat on a dead branch at the top of an oak tree giving its lovely churring song for some time. As we made our way back towards the hotel we felt the owl hunt had been in vane only to have a Barn Owl fly past us just a few feet away. Sadly it didn't linger but those that saw it were well pleased. Another super end to another excellent La Brenne day.

#### **Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> May**

Before breakfast we again visited the area of the hotel's etang and saw many of the usual species including Grasshopper Warbler, Woodlark, Turtle Dove and lots of Mallard. One of the group saw a passing Hobby.

After breakfast and the usual supermarket stop for picnic items (Serins, Black Redstart and Blackcap seen from the car park) we drove to the Cherine reserve and went directly to the Etang Cistude hide. Here we were treated to excellent views of 2 male Little Bitterns that seemed to be involved in some kind of territorial dispute. Certainly one male had a pink/red beak indicating full breeding 'plumage'. The female was not seen during our stay. Other birds noted included Little, Great-crested and Black-necked Grebes, Mallard, Pochard, Tufted Ducks and Gadwall, Black-headed Gulls including some with chicks and a few Whiskered Terns.

From here, we drove the short distance to Mezieres-en-Brenne for a coffee break and a quick look around the market. Following that, we drove across the northern part of La Brenne passing numerous etangs on the way. Soon we were taking a walk in the Forêt de Lancosme in the hope of adding to our woodland birds tally. Nuthatch and Marsh Tit were early finds and a short distance along the track we encountered a pair of Spotted Flycatchers that were nest building. A pair of Club-tailed dragonflies were seen mating and was that a Pine/Beech Marten that we saw the tail end of? We shall never know unfortunately. Along the trackside were numerous Monkey Orchids. Cuckoo, Chiffchaff, Bonelli's Warbler and Mistle Thrush were seen as well as a couple of Blackcaps and another Spotted Flycatcher. Great Spotted was the only species of Woodpecker we saw and one of the group saw a Roe Deer. We again had our picnic lunch at the Chapelle St Sulpice where a great Spotted Woodpecker was drumming a short distance away.

As we drove towards the Maison du Parc at le Bouchet, we again encountered many of La Brenne's usual birds including Black-winged Stilts and some excellent views of Red-backed Shrikes. At le Bouchet we enjoyed ice creams out by the lake and we received some information about a new Bee-eater colony. The decision was quickly made to visit it and a little over half an hour later we were watching a dozen or more of these stunningly beautiful and colourful birds. We stayed for about 20 minutes before making the journey back to our hotel. Later, we enjoyed another fine l'Etape meal, our last before heading homewards the following day.

#### **Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> May**

There was no pre-breakfast walk to allow for packing and as we loaded the cases into the minibus prior to departure a Golden Oriole could be heard singing and a Tawny Owl strangely hooted its defiance at the daylight. As a couple of Jays squawked in alarm at the owl one member of the group walked across and was able to see the Tawny Owl before it flew off.

During a rather leisurely drive towards Limoges another pair of Golden Orioles was seen flying across the road and off towards some oak woodland and raptors encountered included many Common Buzzards, a couple of Kestrels and a Black Kite. Brief though it was, THE sighting of the drive had to be the Beech Marten that crossed the road a short distance in front of us. After a couple of attempts we eventually found the gothic bridge we were aiming for (it was not dressed in black!) and here we took a break for a few minutes. A Cetti's Warbler called from the river bank, a couple of White Wagtails

flitted about collecting food for young and numerous Banded Demoiselle damselflies were noted. On the roadside banks was a lovely display of wild flowers, which included Cornflower, Poppy, Oxeye Daisies and Common Spotted Orchids. We then completed the journey to Limoges airport and soon the clients were checked in for their respective flights homewards.

## SPECIES LIST:

### BIRDS

<b>Red-legged Partridge</b>	<i>Alectoris rufa</i>	A pair were seen close to Azay-le-Ferron on 19 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Common Pheasant</b>	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>	Small numbers noted every day including at our hotel.
<b>Greylag Goose</b>	<i>Anser anser</i>	Seen on a couple of mornings during pre breakfast walks; 7 on 20 <sup>th</sup> & 6 on 21 <sup>st</sup>
<b>Canada Goose</b>	<i>Branta canadensis</i>	5 seen at les Fou*** on 21 <sup>st</sup> and a couple seen the following day during our journeys across the northern part of La Brenne
<b>Mute Swan</b>	<i>Cygnus olor</i>	Seen every day from 18 <sup>th</sup> . Over recent years this bird has become increasingly numerous in La Brenne to the detriment of rarer birds.
<b>Gadwall</b>	<i>Anas strepera</i>	Seen in small numbers on 5 successive days from 18 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Mallard</b>	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	Seen every day
<b>Northern Shoveler</b>	<i>Anas clypeata</i>	1 on 18 <sup>th</sup> near Ciron then 3 on 20 <sup>th</sup> on a couple of etangs in the northern part of La Brenne
<b>Red-crested Pochard</b>	<i>Netta rufina</i>	A pair on 19 <sup>th</sup> on Gabriau lake and then an aerial chase involving a female and 2 males was seen at the Etangs Lerignon
<b>Common Pochard</b>	<i>Aythya ferina</i>	Widely seen in La Brenne on 5 successive days from 18 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Tufted Duck</b>	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>	Widely seen on 5 successive days from 18 <sup>th</sup> but less numerous than the previous species
<b>Little Grebe</b>	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	Noted in small numbers on 5 successive days from 18 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Great Crested Grebe</b>	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>	Widely seen on various etangs throughout La Brenne
<b>Black-necked (Eared) Grebe</b>	<i>podiceps nigricollis</i>	Noted on 4 successive days from 19 <sup>th</sup> with approximately 33 pairs seen from one hide on 20 <sup>th</sup> . This quantity amounts to a little more than a thirtieth of the French population.
<b>Little Bittern</b>	<i>Ixobrychus minutus</i>	2 males seen at the Cistude hide on 22 <sup>nd</sup> . They seemed involved in a territorial battle and were often seen in flight across the water.
<b>Black-crowned Night-heron</b>	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>	At least 3 seen on 18 <sup>th</sup> , 1 on 20 <sup>th</sup> and 3 on 21 <sup>st</sup> in flight in various parts of la Brenne
<b>Cattle Egret</b>	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>	Good numbers seen on the 5 full days in la Brenne mostly in the company of cattle (strangely enough!) where they would be feeding on insects disturbed by the animals
<b>Grey Heron</b>	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	Noted on every full day in the Brenne
<b>Purple Heron</b>	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>	Noted on every full day in the Brenne
<b>Great White Egret</b>	<i>Egretta alba</i>	2 on 18 <sup>th</sup> near Ciron and at la Gabriere then singles noted on 19 <sup>th</sup> & 21 <sup>st</sup>
<b>Little Egret</b>	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	Small numbers seen on each of the 5 full days in La Brenne
<b>Great Cormorant</b>	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	Seen on 18 <sup>th</sup> , 19 <sup>th</sup> , 21 <sup>st</sup> and 22 <sup>nd</sup> with a breeding group noted in dead trees by a small etang just outside the actual Park boundary

<b>Osprey</b>	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	A single bird seen just outside of the western part of the Parc Naturel boundary on 18 <sup>th</sup> was a first for <i>Travelling Naturalist</i> in La Brenne.
<b>Common (Eurasian) Kestrel</b>	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	Seen every day
<b>Red-footed Falcon</b>	<i>Falco vespertinus</i>	2 seen near Linge on 19 <sup>th</sup> ; a good record for this species
<b>Eurasian Hobby</b>	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>	Singles noted on 20 <sup>th</sup> , 21 <sup>st</sup> an 22 <sup>nd</sup> with the latter seen during the pre breakfast walk
<b>European Honey Buzzard</b>	<i>Pernis apivorus</i>	At least 6 seen on 18 <sup>th</sup> in various locations then smaller numbers seen on each of the next 3 days. The closest encounter was our final bird (on 21 <sup>st</sup> ) when one had landed on a roadside verge. We stopped, once we had gone past it, reversed as it flew up into the trees, and had good but brief views before it flew off.
<b>Black Kite</b>	<i>Milvus migrans</i>	Small numbers noted every day with perhaps the best sightings around the Cherine Reserve.
<b>Short-toed (Snake) Eagle</b>	<i>Circaetus gallicus</i>	Two seen on 18 <sup>th</sup> at the Etang de l'Hardouine and another seen on 20 <sup>th</sup> as we left the Cherine Reserve.
<b>Western Marsh Harrier</b>	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	Small numbers seen on four days of the tour.
<b>Hen (Northern) Harrier</b>	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>	Two males seen on 17 <sup>th</sup> as we drove towards La Blanc from the airport and a male was also seen near Azay-le-Ferron on 19 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Montagu's Harrier</b>	<i>Circus pygargus</i>	Two males and a female seen near Azay-le-Ferron on 19 <sup>th</sup> , with 1 male giving really good views.
<b>Eurasian Sparrowhawk</b>	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	Just a single sighting as we walked away from the Cherine hide on 20 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Common (Eurasian) Buzzard</b>	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	Our most frequently encountered raptor with at least 8 during the drive from the airport to La Blanc and then noted every day after that.
<b>Common Moorhen</b>	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	Small numbers seen on 4 successive days from 19 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Eurasian Coot</b>	<i>Fulicaq atra</i>	Common. Seen on most of the etangs in La Brenne on 5 successive days from 19 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Eurasian Stone-curlew</b>	<i>Burhinus oediconemus</i>	Just a single bird heard calling and then seen near Azay-le-Ferron on 19 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Black-winged Stilt</b>	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>	Two seen beside the D21 on 20 <sup>th</sup> & 22 <sup>nd</sup> and 1 seen further on the same road on 21 <sup>st</sup> . At the Etang de Foulques**** there were at least 5 on 21 <sup>st</sup> .
<b>Northern Lapwing</b>	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	Noted in small numbers every day from 18 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Little Ringed Plover</b>	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>	Just a single bird seen on 19 <sup>th</sup> near Azay-le-Ferron.
<b>Common Redshank</b>	<i>Tringa totanus</i>	One seen during the pre-breakfast walk on 20 <sup>th</sup> at the Etang de la Chennerie and another seen near Le Guillaumeries on 21 <sup>st</sup> .
<b>Common Greenshank</b>	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>	Small numbers noted on 4 successive days from 18 <sup>th</sup> , with the first being beside the D21 on 18 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Common Sandpiper</b>	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	One on 18 <sup>th</sup> at the Etang Puichevraux and then a couple seen on each of the next 2 days.
<b>Black-headed Gull</b>	<i>Larus ridibundus</i>	Noted every day.
<b>Whiskered Tern</b>	<i>Chlidonias hybridus</i>	Noted every day except 17 <sup>th</sup> , with a large breeding colony amongst the yellow flowers of Greater Yellowcress beside the Beauregard on 19 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Black Tern</b>	<i>Chlidonias niger</i>	Three seen at the Etang Miclos on 21 <sup>st</sup> .

<b>Rock Dove (Feral Pigeon)</b>	<i>Columba livia</i>	Noted every day.
<b>(Common) Wood Pigeon</b>	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	Noted every day.
<b>European Turtle Dove</b>	<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>	Noted every day.
<b>Eurasian Collared Dove</b>	<i>Streptopelia decacocto</i>	Noted every day.
<b>Common Cuckoo</b>	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>	Noted every day.
<b>Barn Owl</b>	<i>Tyto alba</i>	Heard most nights at the hotel with a bird actually being seen during our nocturnal wanderings on 21 <sup>st</sup> .
<b>Tawny Owl</b>	<i>Strix aluco</i>	Heard on 3 days close to the hotel and then just before we were leaving on 23 <sup>rd</sup> a bird was heard calling in broad daylight and was seen by one member of the group who ventured in search of this usually nocturnal species.
<b>European Nightjar</b>	<i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>	A single bird was well seen close to the hotel late on 21 <sup>st</sup> .
<b>Common Swift</b>	<i>Apus apus</i>	Common. Seen every day.
<b>Common Kingfisher</b>	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	Just a single bird seen close to Ciron on 18 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>European Bee-eater</b>	<i>Merops apiaster</i>	Three seen at the usual breeding site near Neons-sur-Creuse and then at least a dozen seen at a new colony on 22 <sup>nd</sup> .
<b>Eurasian Hoopoe</b>	<i>Upupa epops</i>	Two seen on 18 <sup>th</sup> near Ciron and also seen the following day during our various journeys around La Brenne. Also heard close to the hotel and in other areas on the next 3 days.
<b>Great Spotted Woodpecker</b>	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>	Noted on 5 successive days from 18 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Black Woodpecker</b>	<i>Dryocopus martius</i>	Heard close to the hotel on 19 <sup>th</sup> & 20 <sup>th</sup> but sadly not seen.
<b>(European) Green Woodpecker</b>	<i>Picus viridus</i>	Noted on 6 successive days from 18 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Red-backed Shrike</b>	<i>Lanius collurio</i>	Good numbers seen on 5 successive days from 19 <sup>th</sup> . The lack of sightings on 18 <sup>th</sup> may be put down to the somewhat inclement weather.
<b>(Eurasian) Golden Oriole</b>	<i>Oriolus oriolus</i>	Seen or heard every day in a wide variety of locations but with the best records coming from close to the hotel where there seemed to be a pair nest building.
<b>Eurasian Jay</b>	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	Noted every day.
<b>Eurasian Magpie</b>	<i>Pica pica</i>	Noted every day.
<b>(Western) Jackdaw</b>	<i>Corvus monedula</i>	Noted every day.
<b>Rook</b>	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	Noted every day.
<b>Carrion Crow</b>	<i>Corvus corone</i>	Noted every day.
<b>Marsh Tit</b>	<i>Parus palustris</i>	Two seen during a walk in the Forêt de Lancosme on 22 <sup>nd</sup> .
<b>Great Tit</b>	<i>Parus major</i>	Noted every day from 18 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Blue Tit</b>	<i>Parus caeruleus</i>	Seen on 18 <sup>th</sup> , 19 <sup>th</sup> & 22 <sup>nd</sup> .
<b>Sand Martin</b>	<i>Riparia riparia</i>	Seen close to Ciron on 18 <sup>th</sup> and also noted on 21 <sup>st</sup> & 22 <sup>nd</sup> .
<b>Barn Swallow</b>	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	Seen every day.
<b>(Common) House Martin</b>	<i>Delichon urbica</i>	Seen every day.
<b>Long-tailed (Bush) Tit</b>	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>	Three seen during our walk at the hotel on 17 <sup>th</sup> and then noted on each of the following 4 days.
<b>Woodlark</b>	<i>Lullula arborea</i>	Noted on 4 days with the most sightings close to the hotel during the pre-breakfast walks.
<b>(Eurasian) Skylark</b>	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	Noted on 6 days from 18 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Zitting Cisticola (Fan-tailed Warbler)</b>	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>	At least 2 seen during the Beaugard walk on 19 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Cetti's Warbler</b>	<i>Cettia cetti</i>	Heard every day from 18 <sup>th</sup> with just a couple of sightings on 21 <sup>st</sup> .

<b>(Common) Grasshopper Warbler</b>	<i>Locustella naevia</i>	Noted on 3 successive mornings from 20 <sup>th</sup> during the pre-breakfast walk.
<b>Sedge Warbler</b>	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>	First noted on 18 <sup>th</sup> beside the Etang de l'Hardouine and also noted on 21 <sup>st</sup> & 22 <sup>nd</sup> .
<b>Eurasian Reed Warbler</b>	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>	First heard on 18 <sup>th</sup> near Ciron and then noted on a further 3 days.
<b>Melodious Warbler</b>	<i>Hippalais polyglotta</i>	Noted on 5 successive days from 18 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Common Chiffchaff</b>	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	Seen or heard every day.
<b>Western Bonelli's Warbler</b>	<i>Phylloscopus bonelli</i>	First encountered close to the Chapelle St Sulpice on 20 <sup>th</sup> then also noted on the next 2 days.
<b>Blackcap</b>	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	Seen or heard every day.
<b>Garden Warbler</b>	<i>Sylvia borin</i>	Seen or heard on 18 <sup>th</sup> , 19 <sup>th</sup> & 20 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Common Whitethroat</b>	<i>Sylvia communis</i>	Noted every day.
<b>(Winter) Wren</b>	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	Seen or heard everyday
<b>(Eurasian) Nuthatch</b>	<i>Sitta europaea</i>	Heard at the hotel on 20 <sup>th</sup> where it was seen on 21 <sup>st</sup> & 23 <sup>rd</sup> . Also seen in the Forêt de Lancosme on 22 <sup>nd</sup> .
<b>Short-toed Treecreeper</b>	<i>Certhia brachydactyla</i>	At least 4 encountered on the 18 <sup>th</sup> with the first 2 being close to Ciron. Also heard during the pre-breakfast walk on 19 <sup>th</sup> and during our walk in the Forêt de Lancosme on 22 <sup>nd</sup> .
<b>Common Starling</b>	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	Noted every day.
<b>(Common) Blackbird</b>	<i>Turdus merula</i>	Noted every day.
<b>Song Thrush</b>	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	Noted every day.
<b>Mistle Thrush</b>	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	Noted every day from 18 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>(European) Robin</b>	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	Noted every day except 23 <sup>rd</sup> .
<b>Common Nightingale</b>	<i>Luscinia megarhynchos</i>	Heard just about everywhere in the area including close to a roundabout at the edge of La Blanc on a few occasions! This is a very common species throughout La Brenne but having said that we only saw it on 2 or 3 occasions.
<b>Black Redstart</b>	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>	A female was seen during our walk at the hotel on 17 <sup>th</sup> and then also noted in various towns and villages on 18 <sup>th</sup> , 19 <sup>th</sup> , 21 <sup>st</sup> & 22 <sup>nd</sup> .
<b>Eurasian Stonechat</b>	<i>Saxicola torquata</i>	Noted every day.
<b>Spotted Flycatcher</b>	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>	First noted during the pre-breakfast walk on in the Forêt de Lancosme on 22 <sup>nd</sup> where 1 pair was actually nest building.
<b>House Sparrow</b>	<i>Paser domesticus</i>	Noted every day.
<b>Dunnock</b>	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	Heard close to the hotel on 17 <sup>th</sup> and also encountered on 18 <sup>th</sup> , 21 <sup>st</sup> & 22 <sup>nd</sup> .
<b>(Western) Yellow Wagtail</b>	<i>Motacilla flava</i>	Just a single individual seen near Azay-le-Ferron on 19 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Grey Wagtail</b>	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	One seen on the River Creuse at La Blanc on 22 <sup>nd</sup> .
<b>White Wagtail</b>	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	Noted every day.
<b>Tree Pipit</b>	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>	Just a single bird noted in the Forêt de Lancosme on 22 <sup>nd</sup> .
<b>Common Chaffinch</b>	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	Noted every day.
<b>European Serin</b>	<i>Serinus serinus</i>	Small numbers seen on 4 successive days from 19 <sup>th</sup> mostly from the Leclerc car park in La Blanc!
<b>(European) Greenfinch</b>	<i>Carduelis chloris</i>	Heard on 17 <sup>th</sup> then seen on 4 successive days from 20 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>(European) Goldfinch</b>	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	Noted every day.
<b>Common Linnet</b>	<i>Carduelis cannabina</i>	Two during the Beauregard walk on 19 <sup>th</sup> , then noted the following day in the northern part of La Brenne.

<b>Corn Bunting</b>	<i>Miliaria calandra</i>	Noted on 6 successive days from 18 <sup>th</sup> . One on 19 <sup>th</sup> during the Beauregard walk and then seen on 20 <sup>th</sup> & 21 <sup>st</sup> .
<b>Yellowhammer</b>	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>	
<b>Cirl Bunting</b>	<i>Emberiza cirlus</i>	Seen or heard every day in small numbers. Two seen on the Cherine Reserve on 21 <sup>st</sup> .
<b>(Common) Reed Bunting</b>	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>	

**MAMMALS**

<b>Red Fox</b>	<i>Vulpes vulpes</i>	A single individual dashed across the road to the north of La Blanc on 18 <sup>th</sup> . Sadly it was not seen by everyone in the bus.
<b>Beech Marten</b>	<i>Martes foina</i>	A possible individual was glimpsed in the Forêt de Lancosme on 22 <sup>nd</sup> and then as we drove towards the airport the following day one crossed the road ahead of us.
<b>Wild Boar</b>	<i>Sus scrofa</i>	Tracks seen during the pre-breakfast walk on 20 <sup>th</sup> & 21 <sup>st</sup> .
<b>Roe Deer</b>	<i>Capreolus capreolus</i>	Tracks seen on 20 <sup>th</sup> & 21 <sup>st</sup> and one seen in the Forêt de Lancosme on 22 <sup>nd</sup> .
<b>Red Squirrel</b>	<i>Sciurus vulgaris</i>	Noted at the hotel on a few occasions and also seen on 21 <sup>st</sup> near Mezieres-en-Brenne where an individual tried to cross the road carrying a large pine cone but decided that discretion was the better part of valour. It dropped the pine cone and dashed back to the original side of the road.
<b>Muskrat</b>	<i>Ondatra zibethicus</i>	Just noted on 21 <sup>st</sup> and 22 <sup>nd</sup> . This introduced species is very common around La Brenne, however we only saw it on 18 <sup>th</sup> close to Ciron.
<b>Coypu</b>	<i>Myocastor coypus</i>	
<b>Brown Hare</b>	<i>Lepus europaeus</i>	First noted on 18 <sup>th</sup> during our journeys around La Brenne, then 2 on 19 <sup>th</sup> near Azay-le-Ferron and 2 the following day.

**AMPHIBIANS**

<b>Natterjack Toad</b>	<i>Bufo calamita</i>	Just a single individual seen on the Cherine Reserve on 20 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Common Frog</b>	<i>Rana temporaria</i>	One seen in the Forêt de Lancosme on 20 <sup>th</sup> . Noted most days especially close the hotel. Only positively identified during the pre-breakfast walk on 18 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Marsh Frog</b>	<i>Rana ridibunda</i>	
<b>Pool Frog</b>	<i>Rana lessonae</i>	

**REPTILES**

The following species were noted:

<b>Common Wall Lizard</b>	<i>Podarcis muralis</i>
<b>Green Lizard</b>	<i>Lacerta viridis</i>
<b>European Pond Terrapin</b>	<i>Emys orbicularis</i>

**BUTTERFLIES**

<b>Swallowtail</b>	<i>Papilio machaon</i>
<b>Scarce Swallowtail</b>	<i>Iphiclides podalirius</i>
<b>Large White</b>	<i>Pieris brassicae</i>
<b>Small White</b>	<i>Artogeia rapae</i>
<b>Green-veined White</b>	<i>Artogeia napi</i>
<b>Brimstone</b>	<i>Gonepteryx rhamni</i>
<b>Wood White</b>	<i>Leptidea sinapis</i>
<b>Small Blue</b>	<i>Cupido minimus</i>
<b>Holly Blue</b>	<i>Celastrina argiolus</i>

<b>Common Blue</b>	<i>Polyommatus icarus</i>
<b>Southern White Admiral</b>	<i>Limenitis reducta</i>
<b>Small Heath</b>	<i>Coenonympha pamphilus</i>
<b>Speckled Wood</b>	<i>Pararge aegeria</i>
<b>Wall Brown</b>	<i>Lasiommata megera</i>
<b>Dingy Skipper</b>	<i>Erynnis taes</i>

**DRAGONFLIES**

<b>Black-tailed Skimmer</b>	<i>Orthetrum cancellatum</i>
<b>Broad-bodied Chaser</b>	<i>Libellula depressa</i>
<b>Blue Emperor</b>	<i>Anax imperator</i>
<b>Club-tailed Dragonfly</b>	<i>Gomphus vulgatissimus</i>
<b>Banded Demoiselle</b>	<i>Calopteryx splendens</i>
<b>Western Demoiselle</b>	<i>Calopteryx xanthestoma</i>
<b>Azure Damselfly</b>	<i>Coenagrion puella</i>
<b>Common Blue-tail</b>	<i>Ischnura elegans</i>

**PLANTS**

The reference book used for this list was Wild Flowers of Britain & Northern Europe by Richard Fitter, Alastair Fitter & Marjorie Blamey

26	<b>White Willow</b>	<i>Salix alba</i>
26	<b>Goat Willow/Pussy Willow</b>	<i>Salix caprea</i>
30	<b>Grey Poplar</b>	<i>Populus canescens</i>
30	<b>Alder</b>	<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>
30	<b>Silver Birch</b>	<i>Betula pendula</i>
32	<b>Hornbeam</b>	<i>Carpinus betulus</i>
32	<b>Beech</b>	<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>
32	<b>Hazel</b>	<i>Corylus avellana</i>
32	<b>Sweet Chestnut</b>	<i>Castanea sativa</i>
32	<b>Pedunculate Oak</b>	<i>Quercus robur</i>
32	<b>Sessile Oak</b>	<i>Quercus petraea</i>
34	<b>Sycamore</b>	<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>
34	<b>Field Maple</b>	<i>Acer campestre</i>
35	<b>Horse Chestnut</b>	<i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i>
36	<b>Common Lime</b>	<i>Tilia europaea</i>
36	<b>Ash</b>	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>
38	<b>Mistletoe</b>	<i>Viscum album</i>
38	<b>Common Nettle</b>	<i>Urtica dioica</i>
44	<b>Common Sorrel</b>	<i>Rumex acetosa</i>
44	<b>Sheep's Sorrel</b>	<i>Rumex acetosella</i>
44	<b>Broad-leaved Dock</b>	<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>
44	<b>Curled Dock</b>	<i>Rumex crispus</i>
54	<b>Greater Stitchwort</b>	<i>holostea</i>
54	<b>Lesser Stitchwort</b>	<i>Stellaria graminea</i>
62	<b>Bladder Campion</b>	<i>Silene vulgaris</i>
64	<b>White Campion</b>	<i>Silene alba</i>
64	<b>Red Campion</b>	<i>Silene dioica</i>
64	<b>Ragged Robin</b>	<i>Lychnis flos-cuculi</i>
68	<b>Carthusian Pink</b>	<i>Dianthus carthusianorum</i>
70	<b>Yellow Water-lily</b>	<i>Nuphar lutea</i>
72	<b>Creeping Buttercup</b>	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>
72	<b>Meadow Buttercup</b>	<i>Ranunculus acris</i>
72	<b>Bulbous Buttercup</b>	<i>Ranunculus bulbosus</i>
72	<b>Lesser Celandine</b>	<i>Ranunculus ficaria</i>
72	<b>Lesser Spearwort</b>	<i>Ranunculus flammula</i>
74	<b>Celery-leaved Buttercup</b>	<i>Ranunculus sceleratus</i>
74	<b>Water-crowfoot</b>	<i>Ranunculus aquatilis</i>
78	<b>Columbine</b>	<i>Aquilegia vulgaris</i>

84	<b>Common Poppy</b>	<i>Papaver rhoeas</i>
84	<b>Greater Celandine</b>	<i>Chelidonium majus</i>
90	<b>Great Yellowcress</b>	<i>Rorippa amphibia</i>
94	<b>Garlic Mustard</b>	<i>Alliaria petiolata</i>
94	<b>Lady's Smock/Cuckoo Flower</b>	<i>Cardamine pratensis</i>
98	<b>Hairy Bittercress</b>	<i>Cardamine hirsuta</i>
108	<b>Meadow Saxifrage</b>	<i>Saxifraga granulata</i>
112	<b>Salad Burnet</b>	<i>Sanguisorba minor</i>
112	<b>Dropwort</b>	<i>Filipendula vulgaris</i>
114	<b>Dog Rose</b>	<i>Rosa canina</i>
114	<b>Field Rose</b>	<i>Rosa arvensis</i>
114	<b>Burnet Rose</b>	<i>Rosa pimpinellifolia</i>
114	<b>Bramble</b>	<i>Rubus fruticosus</i>
116	<b>Wild Strawberry</b>	<i>Fragaria vesca</i>
116	<b>Herb Bennet/Wood Avens</b>	<i>Geum urbanum</i>
118	<b>Tormentil</b>	<i>Potentilla erecta</i>
118	<b>Creeping Cinquefoil</b>	<i>Potentilla reptans</i>
118	<b>Hoary Cinquefoil</b>	<i>Potentilla argentea</i>
120	<b>Hawthorn</b>	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>
122	<b>Blackthorn</b>	<i>Prunus spinosa</i>
122	<b>Bullace</b>	<i>Prunus domestica ssp.insititia</i>
122	<b>Wild Cherry</b>	<i>Prunus avium</i>
128	<b>Common Gorse</b>	<i>Ulex europaeus</i>
128	<b>Broom</b>	<i>Sarothamini scoparius</i>
128	<b>False Acacia</b>	<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>
130	<b>Tufted Vetch</b>	<i>Vicia cracca</i>
130	<b>Bush Vetch</b>	<i>Vicia sepium</i>
130	<b>Common Vetch</b>	<i>Vicia sativa</i>
130	<b>Hairy Tare</b>	<i>Vicia hirsuta</i>
132	<b>Meadow Vetchling</b>	<i>Lathyrus pratensis</i>
134	<b>Sickle Medick</b>	<i>Medicago sativa ssp falcata</i>
136	<b>Black Medick</b>	<i>Medicago lupulina</i>
136	<b>Spotted Medick</b>	<i>Medicago arabica</i>
136	<b>Birdsfoot Trefoil</b>	<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>
136	<b>Horseshoe Vetch</b>	<i>Hippocrepis comosa</i>
138	<b>Red Clover</b>	<i>Trifolium pratense</i>
138	<b>Sulphur Clover</b>	<i>Trifolium ochroleucon</i>
138	<b>White Clover</b>	<i>Trifolium repens</i>
140	<b>Pale Flax</b>	<i>Linum bienne</i>
142	<b>Hedgerow Cranesbill</b>	<i>Geranium pyrenaicum</i>
142	<b>Cut-leaved Cranesbill</b>	<i>Geranium dissectum</i>
142	<b>Herb-Robert</b>	<i>Geranium robertianum</i>
144	<b>Cypress Spurge</b>	<i>Euphorbia cyparissias</i>
144	<b>Caper Spurge</b>	<i>Euphorbia lathyris</i>
144	<b>Sun Spurge</b>	<i>Euphorbia helioscopia</i>
146	<b>Common Milkwort</b>	<i>Polygala vulgaris</i>
154	<b>Heath Dog Violet</b>	<i>Viola canina</i>
158	<b>White Rock-rose</b>	<i>Helianthemum apenninum</i>
158	<b>Hoary Rock-rose</b>	<i>Helianthemum canum</i>
158	<b>White Bryony</b>	<i>Bryonia dioica</i>
160	<b>Great Willowherb</b>	<i>Epilobium hirsutum</i>
164	<b>Ivy</b>	<i>Hedera helix</i>
164	<b>Dogwood</b>	<i>Thyelycrania sanguinea</i>
166	<b>Cow Parsley</b>	<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>
170	<b>Hogweed</b>	<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>
172	<b>Tubular Water Dropwort</b>	<i>Oenanthe fistulosa</i>
184	<b>Cowslip</b>	<i>Primula veris</i>
186	<b>Water Violet</b>	<i>Hottonia palustris</i>
188	<b>Wild Privet</b>	<i>Ligustrum vulgare</i>
196	<b>Hedge Bedstraw</b>	<i>Galium mollugo</i>

196 Cleavers  
196 Crosswort  
198 Tuberos Comfrey  
200 Field Forgetmenot  
200 Narrow-leaved Lungwort  
202 Bugloss  
206 Bugle  
206 Wood Sage  
208 Ground Ivy  
212 Meadow Clary  
214 Water Mint  
216 Bittersweet  
224 Germander Speedwell  
224 Heath Speedwell  
228 Common Cow-wheat  
228 Crested Cow-wheat  
230 Knapweed Broomrape  
230 Common Broomrape  
228 Yellow Rattle  
230 Purple Toothwort  
232 Greater Plantain  
234 Marsh Valerian  
234 Elder  
234 Honeysuckle  
236 Teasel  
236 Field Scabious  
238 Rampion Bellflower  
244 Daisy  
250 Yarrow  
252 Oxeye Daisy  
252 Corn Marigold  
258 Meadow Thistle  
260 Common Knapweed  
260 Cornflower  
264 Nipplewort  
272 Kerry Lily  
278 Black Bryony  
278 Tassel Hyacinth  
280 Butcher's Broom  
280 Solomon's Seal  
284 Yellow Iris  
312 Common Reed-mace  
312 Bulrush

Lady Orchid  
Monkey Orchid  
Greater Butterfly Orchid  
Lizard Orchid  
Bee Orchid  
Early Spider Orchid  
Burnt Orchid  
Common Spotted Orchid  
Tongue Orchid  
Loose-flowered Orchid

**Also noted**

Pyrenean Oak  
Austrian Pine  
Walnut  
Common Asphodel

*Galium aparine*  
*Galium cruciata*  
*Symphytum tuberosum*  
*Myosotis arvensis*  
*Pulmonaria longifolia*  
*Anchusa arvensis*  
*Ajuga reptans*  
*Teucrium scorodonia*  
*Glechoma hederacea*  
*Salvia pratensis*  
*Mentha aquatica*  
*Solanum dulcamara*  
*Veronica chamaedrys*  
*Veronica officinalis*  
*Melampyrum pratense*  
*Melampyrum cristatum*  
*Orobanche elatior*  
*Orobanche minor*  
*Rhinanthus minor*  
*Lathraea clandestina*  
*Plantago major*  
*Valeriana dioica*  
*Sambucus nigra*  
*Lonicera periclymenum*  
*Dipsacus fullonum*  
*Knautia arvensis*  
*Campanula rapunculus*  
*Bellis perennis*  
*Achillea millefolium*  
*Chrysanthemum leucanthemum*  
*Chrysanthemum segetum*  
*Cirsium dissectum*  
*Centaurea nigra*  
*Centaurea cyanus*  
*Lapsana communis*  
*Simethis planifolia*  
*Tamus communis*  
*Muscari comosum*  
*Ruscus aculeatus*  
*Polygonatum multiflorum*  
*Iris pseudacorus*  
*Typha latifolia*  
*Schoenoplectus lacustris*

*Orchis purpurea*  
*Orchis simia*  
*Platanthera chlorantha*  
*Himantoglossum hircinum*  
*Ophrys apifera*  
*Ophrys sphegodes*  
*Orchis ustulata*  
*Dactylorhiza fuchsii*  
*Orchis lingua*  
*Orchis laxiflora*

*Quercus pyrenaica*  
*Pinus nigra*  
*Juglans regia*  
*Asphodelus aestivus*

<b>Tree Heath</b>	<i>Erica arborea</i>
<b>Common Rush</b>	<i>Juncus conglomeratus</i>
<b>Reed</b>	<i>Phragmites communis</i>
<b>Cocksfoot</b>	<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>
<b>Timothy</b>	<i>Phleum pratense</i>
<b>Quaking Grass</b>	<i>Briza media</i>
<b>Annual Meadow-grass</b>	<i>Poa annua</i>

*La Brenne remains one of my favourite tour destinations. The wetlands combine well with the woodlands and farmland to produce a wide range of wildlife as can be seen by the total of 115 bird species plus numerous flowers and many other things too. We encountered 3 'firsts' for Travelling Naturalist groups in Brenne, namely Red Fox, Greylag Goose and a feeding Osprey. There were also many new plant species.*

*Highlights include the food views of Red-back Shrikes, Little Bittern and various other heron species, constantly singing nightingales and Golden Orioles, Mute Swans, Black-necked Grebes and Whiskered Terns nesting amongst the massed yellow flowers of Great Yellowcress plus lots of orchid species.*

*The hotel provided excellent food and, typical of a Mike Read tour, there was much good humour (although perhaps your leader could do with finding a few new, 'bad' jokes!)*

*I look forward to sharing many more super wildlife experiences with you on some future Travelling Naturalist tour. I am sure we will have another excellent time as well as lots more laughs.*

*Mike Read  
May 2008*

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