

The High Alps Through Ornithology



Duration: 7 days - 6 nights

Best time : May – October

Number of people (min/max): 8 to 12

Day 1 : EMBRUN

Arrival at **Marseille Provence airport**.

Your driver will take care of you.

Road to the **Hautes Alpes**.

Arrival in your cottage.

Installation in the room. Presentation of the program by your guide, **Olivier**.

You will go for a first ornithological walk, not far from the cottage to start getting to know the local mountain birds (forest passerines and open environments, birds of prey). It will also be an opportunity to admire the surrounding landscapes: the valley, the mountains, lakes.

Back to your cottage.
Dinner and overnight stay.

- Vertical drop Plus : 150 meters
- Vertical drop Minus : 150 meters

Number of walking hours: 1 hour

Day 2 : UBAYE VALLEY



Breakfast.

Departure for a hike in the **Ubaye Valley**, you will discover sumptuous landscapes, with a panorama at an altitude of nearly 2,000m on the **Serre-Ponçon lake**.

You will have the opportunity to observe rare animals hidden in the undergrowth such as the Wood Grouse.

On another path, you will discover a lake, where the Alpine Triton, the Red Frog and the Grey Heron live together.

After a final ascent, you will arrive at a second lake for a picnic lunch.

The opportunity to hear and see birds from these environments such as the Pipit spioncelle and the Pipit des arbres, the Traquet motteux, the Bulletin board Warbler, the seven species of chickadees, the Cassenoix moucheté, the Grimpereau des bois, the Venturon montagnard, the Bouvreuil pivoine...

Olivier will explain all these different names of birds, (etymology, species).

Return to your cottage at the end of the day.
Dinner and overnight stay.

- Vertical drop Plus : 450 meters
- Vertical drop Minus : 450 meters

Number of walking hours: 3 hours

Day 3 : REALLON – NATIONAL PARK OF ECRINS

Breakfast.

Departure for a hike in the heart of the beautiful **glacial valley of the Réallon** torrent, through meadows, larch trees, rocks and streams. Our morning departure will aim to contact the Tétralyre at the right time, whose males are parading around cooing. We will be looking for the Ladder Tichodrome, Rock Swallow, Rooty Trail, Rock Monticulture, Rock Shrike, Red-billed Shrike, Red-billed Crab and other Melodious Linnet and Sparrows, that all nest in the area. The Cincle plongeur, an extraordinary and unique aquatic passerine, will also be prospected at the Réallon stream where it nests. We may observe the emblem of the Alps: the nesting Golden Eagle.

Picnic lunch.

Return to your cottage at the end of the day.
Dinner and overnight stay.

Day 4 : ICE VALLEY

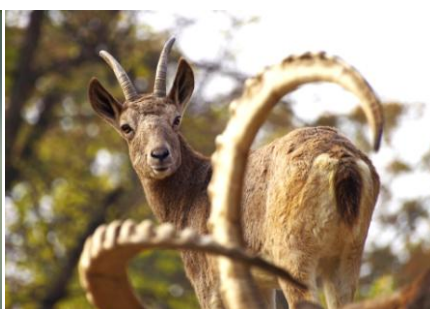
Breakfast.

Departure for a hike on a mountainside trail and also in the middle of the subalpine forest: morning search for the black grouse that parades here and for the magnificent and rare little owl that can sometimes be seen and heard in broad daylight; the Tengmalm owl also lives here. Other subalpine birds will be along our forest trail and at its upper limit, such as the Bartavelled Partridge, woodpeckers, Boreal Chickadee, the Woodchuck, the Fir Crossbill and the remarkable Spotted Cassenoix, a nester. The Chamois is regularly observed as well as the Deer, Fox and Alpine Marmots (giant ground squirrels).

Return to your cottage at the end of the day.
Dinner and overnight stay.

- Vertical drop Plus : 350 meters
- Vertical drop Minus : 350 meters

Number of walking hours : 2.5 hours



Day 5 : DURANCE VALLEY

Breakfast.



This day will offer you magnificent views of the surrounding mountains and the **Serre-Ponçon lake**. We will identify birds by song and sight, most of them nesting, dry and sunny hills and rocky environments such as the Red-backed Shrike, the Mountain Venturon, the Yellow, Mad and Ortolan Sparrows. The Golden Eagle may be seen at the area or in search of groundhogs. Other birds of prey such as the Circaète Jean-le-Blanc regularly hunt here. There may also be the opportunity to observe the incubation of young depending on the season. The strange European Nightjar can be admired at times when it is suitable for observation, as can the Great Horned Owl that nests in its cliff. Mammals will be sought, such as the European Hare. You can explore some particularly favourable areas (Shepherd's weed, Meadow weed, Red-crested Warbler, Common Whitethroat and gardens, Red-backed Shrike...) and also observe the nesting Peregrine Falcon or other birds of prey (depending on the location of the pairs and the reproduction observed during the surveys prior to this stay).

Picnic lunch.

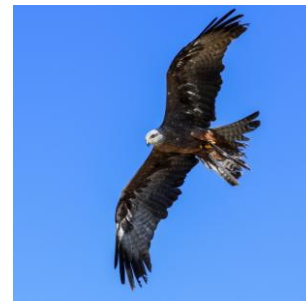
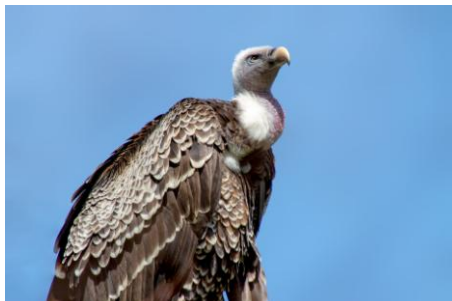
Return to your cottage at the end of the day.

Dinner and overnight stay.

- Vertical drop Plus : 150 meters
- Vertical drop Minus : 150 meters

Number of walking hours : 1 hour

Day 6 : FOREST AND HIGH ALTITUDE CIRCUS



Breakfast.

The start of the hike is at the end of an access trail in the **Boscodon forest**, above the abbey of the same name (the most important in the region, dating from the 12th century). After having crossed the pre-alpine floor, domain of a coniferous forest, we will cross the alpine lawns, in the heart of the Morgon circus where we will have a picnic lunch break above a lake. We will be looking for raptors (vultures, golden eagles, kestrels, kestrels, variable hawkbill), white-bellied swifts, rock mountaineers, moths, corvids (red-billed crabs, yellow-billed chickens, ravens, speckled crows), ravens. Again, a magnificent landscape, a rich and colourful flora and the many local groundhogs that can be photographed closely.

Return to your cottage at the end of the day.

Dinner and overnight stay.

- Vertical drop Plus : 500 meters
- Vertical drop Minus : 500 meters

Number of walking hours : 3.5 hours

Day 7 : DEPARTURE

Breakfast.

Departure.