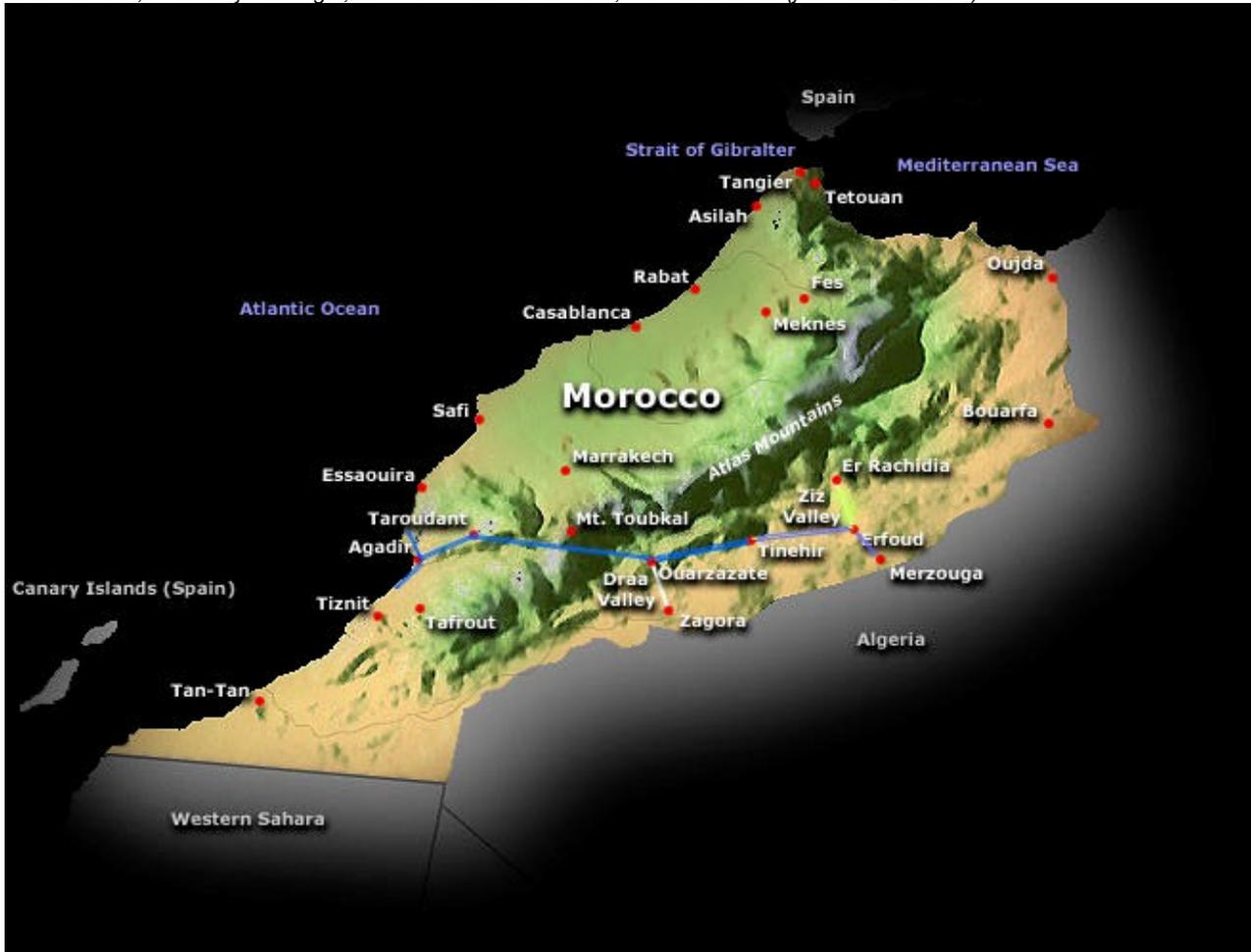


# Morocco 25 January tot 1 February 2004

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During a week we did some bird watching in the south of Morocco, mainly because Max Berlijn was lacking Desert Sparrow and African Desert Warbler on his list! Due this reason we left from Brussels to Casablanca and from Casablanca to Agadir for a week bird watching. Ran Schols and Karel Lemmens made the 4 of us complete, and they concentrated on photography mainly. See for their result on: [www.karellemmens.com](http://www.karellemmens.com) and [http://www.pbase.com/ranschols/aa\\_marokko/](http://www.pbase.com/ranschols/aa_marokko/)

## Road conditions

We drove about 2.000 kilometres in a week time. And road conditions were good until Tinehir, we took then the B road to Erfoud and the first part was still ok, few kilometres before Erfoud in some village's it is partly graded roads. From Erfoud the track to Merzouga is still bitumen, but the road is bad, drive slowly. The sandy tracks are okay, but also careful driving is required, and watch the small sticks on the side of the road. Stick to the small sticks otherwise you lose the way.

## **Warning**

Don't drive at night, and be always prepared to change a tire, we where lucky to flatten just one! At night driving is dangerous as many people cycle ore walk on the streets without carrying lights, and streets are not lighten. And don't expect in Morocco to drive long distances, as the road situation (cars, trucks, road deck, curves and uphill situation) not allowed making long runs. And the technical problems by our air travel company Royal Air Maroc where also not very pleased collected by us, so be prepared to have delay ore .....

## **Site descriptions**

Underneath are two descriptions of places where it is well worth to put in some efforts.

### **Dupont's Lark**

We recorded once the rather skulking birdspecies on a spot 48 kilometre west of Tazeknah ore 148 kilometre west of Taroudannt. This spot at Tizi-n-Taghatine, is situated at 1,500 metres high and its physiognomy matches with the breeding habitat of Dupont's Lark in Eastern Morocco, although it is rocky. It's one of four observations made in this region. A sighting by van Scheepen en Meijer was done 3 kilometres east of our sighting on 7 January 1994 and further sightings where done on 17 April 1985 at Taliouline and 2 May 1986 at Tamelakout.

The site is roughly described as followed: it's situated in a short of valley, where coming from the west you'll stop just before a small streams flows under the road, and a white pole sign that you are 48 kilometre east of Tazeknah. A small hill is situated on the south side of the road, while on the north side some agricultural activity have been taking place and no notable hills can be found. At the small hill there is a small wasted building present. We recorded the 2 birds – a pair - on the top of the small hill on the East Side part of the top. It's the only notable small hill in the valley, and while climbing up it you can overlook the whole valley!

A early stop along the P 32 in the very early morning ore night can produce this birds singing, but remember this birdfamily stops just before dawn.....

Also we saw here Thick-billed Lark and it is also worth to try for!

### **African Desert Warbler**

The place can be described as followed. Drive from Kasbah Said to the south to Aubergine Kasbah Derkaoua. Take the road from Aubergine Kasbah Said that directly runs along the walls of the Kasbah from

the entrance of the Aubergine Kasbah Said. Follow it for about 400 metres until you have a dip in the road. Over here is on the right hand side a large wadi with covered dunes visible parallel and horizontal on the road, also on the left hand side there is a small part of the wadi with covered sand dunes. We had the African Desert Warbler directly in first part of the dune on the right-hand side where it gets parallel with the road until the road cut's trough the dunes (a part is as earlier described on the left hand side). A good mark is a very vocal and active pair of Hoopoe Larks here, and a Berber family is living on the left-hand side. The dunes have a sort of L shape!

## Trip Diary

### 25<sup>th</sup> January – Brussels to Taroudannt

Our daylight flight to Casablanca arrived well over schedule (due technical problems) and our connecting flight had also technical problems so well over time we arrived at the customs in Agadir (already dark outside). After some trouble with the tripod from Max we stepped into the car and drove the 65 kilometres to Taroudannt for our first stay during the night. After a lot of driving around at Taroudannt we found our hotel "Hotel Le Soleil" (048.55.17.07)(about 200 dirham a night). It was on the outside of the city walls on the West Side of the city! After we dropped our stuff down, we went into the city to have some dinner and went after it to bed!

### 26<sup>th</sup> January – Taroudannt to Boumalne du Dadès

We got up early as there was a lot of singing outside from the mosques. And still dark outside we sat ourselves down for a small breakfast at the hotel. When light appeared directly the songs of **Common Bulbuls** could be heard and some **House Sparrows** started to tjirping. After breakfast we went on the roof to have the first sight of what was going on. Soon we where watching a broad scale on birds. The **House Buntings** where busy to imitate Cetti's Warbler in song, a scale on swifts where flying overhead, including some dark swifts what could well be Plain Swift. We attentively identified them as **Common Swifts**. No remarkable differences where encountered however, ore it must be a slightly paler throat and a butter fly type of flight (resemble Little Swift). No less then 3 of these swifts where found in some larger concentrations of **Pallid Swifts**. Also a lone **Little Swift** hovered overhead. Also other nice birds like **Chaffinch** of the *africana* race appeared and gave us some opportunity to study them. **Barn Swallows** and a **Blackcap** gave us some spring feelings. Some **Cattle Egrets** and **Little Egrets** where flying above the city. Also **Crested Lark**, **Greenfinch**, **Collared Dove** and **Sardinian Warbler** gave some nice appearances. After some more watching we packed our stuff and went on the roads to try to get as far as Quarzazate!

Directly outside Taroudannt we found the first **Southern Grey Shrike's** and a female **Common Kestrel** flew by! To repack some things we had a stop at 223 kilometre before Quarzazate! Some scanning produced **Thekla Larks**, a *algerensis* **Southern Grey Shrike**, **Common Chiffchaff**, **Sardinian Warblers**, **Corn Bunting** (singing), **Serins**, **Common Stonechat**, **Greenfinch** and **Common Bulbul**. The star of the show was however an excellent male **Moussier's Redstart!**

A scan through the landscape from the car produced once in a while some nice birds as was the case when I spotted a first year **Lanner Falcon** sitting on a pylon (185 kilometre from Quarzazate). This bird gave a nice opportunity to study it up closely as it was devouring an indeterminate prey item. And gave the photographers a chance to make some actions. Some scanning by Max and I produced an other few **Moussier's Redstarts**, **Common Stonechat**, **Lesser Short-toed Larks**, **Crested Lark**, **White Wagtail** (*alba*) and some **Southern Grey Shrike's**.

During driving some smaller flocks of **Rock Pigeon's** were seen once in a while and sometimes an **European Linnet** was on the roadside as many **White Wagtails** (all *alba*).

A few stops during driving produced a female type **Northern Wheatear** and the first of many **Black Wheatears!**

Due a small lark perched along the roadside we stopped at a site 48 kilometre west of Tazaknah. This turned out to be our first **Bar-tailed Lark** of the trip. Some walking around here on the south side of the road produced some nice things like a flock of 2 or 3 **Thick-billed Larks** in flight only seen by me and very briefly by Max. Further scanning produced a flock from up to 100+ **Corn Buntings** and 25 **Lesser Short-toed Larks**. A short stop at the hill of Tiri N Backhoun produced a few **Crested Larks** and 4 **Desert Larks**.

A stop at a green bush spot in the hills near a small channel 50 kilometre before Quarzazate produced 2 nice juvenile **Long-legged Buzzards**, notably smaller than the Long-legged Buzzards from Kazakhstan I saw in September 2003! Also here very few migrants only few **Meadow Pipits**, **Blackcap**, **Green Sandpiper**, **Common Bulbul**, **Moussier's Redstart**, **House Sparrow** and **Chaffinch** were found.

During driving still some **Black Wheatears** and a few **House Buntings** were sighted!

When we entered Quarzazate we decided to head for Boumalne du Dadès to spend the night there, and after a quick telephone call everything was arranged!

Just passed Quarzazate I noticed a perched male **Mourning Wheatear** along the roadside and a stop halfway between Quarzazate and Boumalne du Dadès produced a nice male **Desert Wheatear** and few **Desert Larks**. Also in a broad river on the north side of the road we saw 5 **White Storks** feeding.

An hour before sunset we arrived in the rubbish dump of the Tadgilt Track just east of Boumalne du Dadès to have a quick scan over here. In short time finally our first **Red-rumped Wheatear** was seen and soon we were enjoying crippling views of a pair of **Temminck's Larks**. A scan around produced a **Long-legged Buzzard** and few **Lesser Short-toed Larks**.

After some trouble we finally found our place for the night at Boumalne du Dadès the "Soleil Blue" (about 200 dirham a night). We had some chicken as food and went early to bed.

## 27<sup>th</sup> January Boumalne du Dadès – Kasbah Said

Directly after sunset we packed up our gear and went to a place Arnoud van den Berg mentioned the previous night during a phone call at the Tadjilt Track. This spot was about 6 kilometres past the Shell Petrol Station outside Boumalne du Dadès. This was a new bitumen track to Iknoun and it headed to the Jbel Sarhro. Over here was already for a time a sighting done of a Dupont's Lark and recently also some Houbara Bustards were found here by some sheep herds. To be honest after several hours walking here and even crossing the plane to the rubbish dump on the outskirts of Boumalne du Dadès I was a bit disappointed in the Tadjilt Track as it must be one of the world's best tracks to do bird watching! But anyway it produced about 16 **Temminck's Larks**, 20+ **Red-rumped Wheatears**, **Lesser Short-toed Lark**, **Desert Lark** and few **Hoopoe Larks**. For the last the wonderful displaying flights were unforgettable. A lone migrating **White Stork** headed slowly to the west!

After a few hours we decided to head for the toughest part of the trip to Erfoud. Just 25 kilometres away from Boumalne du Dadès we found a nice soaring **Long-legged Buzzard**! Some 142 kilometres before Errachida we found a nice male **Mourning Wheatear** (on the way back again on the same spot on the north side of the road at the telegraph wire) and few **Southern Grey Shrike's** (including some pale birds with some white supercillium resembling *elegans*), **Common Stonechats** and **Common Kestrels**. Finally we entered **White-tailed Wheatear** territory and now every few kilometres we found one!

After getting quick through Erfoud where we collected some money we headed for the first **African Desert Warbler** spot 6 kilometres south of Erfoud on the road to Merzouga. The road which is bitumen but very worst goes past a rubbish dump and then directly along Jbel Erfoud (mountain ridge that gets near to the road), here we searched various patches of dry wadi's covered with vegetation, but didn't encounter except for **Hoopoe Lark** nothing worth mentioning. Only nice was a splendid **Long-legged Buzzard** circling above our heads that provided photographic opportunities. A stop just past the hill produced in some pine trees on the east side of the road a bit south of a boutique on the west side of the road a lone first year male **Tristram's Warbler**.

We headed further as we understand from an e-mail from Arnoud van den Berg that there was a good site of African Desert Warbler north of Aubergine Kasbah Derkaoua, but intensive searching produced nothing more than at **Tristram's Warbler** and a **Moussier's Redstart**. Further telephonic correspondence with Arnoud proved that we were on the wrong site. A conversation was now going on to where we should head as the Aubergine Kasbah Derkaoua was closed. And Max decided we should head back to Erfoud to search for accommodation here. A brief stop at a new built Aubergine Kasbah Said (250 dirham a night including dinner and breakfast, excellent place with very nice beds) turned out that we could stay, and after throwing our gear in the rooms, we decided to have a check at Arnoud's African Desert Warbler site with the new info

we had now. In no less than two minutes we located a fine **African Desert Warbler** and had wonderful views of this stunning bird. The calling and feeding **Hoopoe Larks** around proved also very nice!

When we head back to the Aubergine Kasbah Said we located some **White Wagtails** (again all *alba*) and a male **Sardinian Warbler**.

After some food and yes finally beer we went to bed early!

## **28<sup>th</sup> January Kasbah Said – Erg Chebbi – Kasbah Said**

In the early morning we left the hotel and headed for the spot where we saw yesterday the African Desert Warbler. This gives the chances to the photographers to complete the file African Desert Warbler. Max and I headed for Aubergine Kasbah Derkaoua to search for the Fulvous Chatterers again! We managed only to see so commoner birds like **Collared Dove** and **Sardinian Warbler** although a nice female and first year male **Tristram's Warbler** stole the show!

When we head back to Karel and Ran they just located the **African Desert Warbler** and we had crippling views of it at close distant and heard it like yesterday singing, once we saw it in a scope view with a **Tristram's Warbler** male! Also we had nice views again of **Hoopoe Larks** and their amazing displaying flights! Then we headed on our way to Merzouga for the Desert Sparrow, after Aubergine Kasbah Derkaoua we turned right to Merzouga (not left on the sandy track to Café Yasmina) but to the right and we followed the signpost to Merzouga and after 2 kilometres we came on a full (new) bitumen road to Merzouga! After few kilometres on the new bitumen road we turned left on a sandy track to Café Yasmina!

After a 14-kilometre stroll over the sandy rocky roads we rolled into the property of Café Yasmina. In the lee of the wonderful huge golden sand dunes of the Erg Chebbi we enjoyed our time here to the fullest as there where several **Desert Sparrows** performing well for us, **Tristram's Warblers** where singing for us and some other species made the visit very special. Other species where **Thekla** and **Crested Larks**, **Bar-tailed Lark** and **Hoopoe Larks**! And of course the unforgettable **House Sparrows**!

We then headed back over the sandy and rough track to the main bitumen road and with well over 80 kms/ph we entered Merzouga over the new excellent road!

We stopped at a restaurant on the left-hand side where the bitumen road stopped in the middle of Merzouga near a small square and had our lunch here. During our time some village people where fighting for guarding our car, and we amused – but with mixed feelings - looked to the scenery!

After lunch we backed out Merzouga to the north to find a way to the lakebed of Dayet Sri. Still stunned by the landscape we set target to find a new WP species around the lake!

A stroll on the western side, south side and north side produced many *alba* **White Wagtails**, **Ruddy Shelducks** 200+, 300+ **Greater Flamingo's**, 11 **Marbled Ducks**, 8 **Little Grebe's**, 40 **Northern Shovelers**, 2 **Little Egrets**, 1 **Kentish Plover**, 1 **Little Ringed Plover**, 4 **Black-winged Stilts**, 1 **Short-**

**toed Lark**, 2 **Crested Larks** and a female **Mourning Wheatear** at close distant (wrongly identified as a female Black-eared Wheatear in the field!).

Finally at the third attempt we found a small flock of 4 **Fulvous Chatterers** at the side at Aubergine Kasbah Derkaoua. We watched them for some time as they worked their way from one palm clump to the next in typically busy babbler fashion! We found them near the shaft with a generator on the east side of the road between the walls of Aubergine Kasbah Derkaoua and the wadi in front of the Kasbah (north side). Also a female **Black Redstart** and **Blackbird** could be added to the day list!

Just before sunset we arrived back at Aubergine Kasha Said and had a nice dinner. A pre-dinner walk produced a **Sardinian Warbler**, **White Wagtails** (*alba*) and the always present **Hoopoe Lark** and **White-tailed Wheatear**!

## 29<sup>th</sup> January Kasbah Said – Taroudannt

We drove after breakfast with pancakes straight ahead to make as many kilometres this day and try to reach Taroudannt!

During driving we saw the male **Mourning Wheatear** on exact the spot as 27 January and also a **Whinchat** and some **Hoopoe Larks**!

A stop at the Tadjilt Track at the bitumen road (where we birded on the 26<sup>th</sup>) produced a migrating **Barn Swallow**, 6 **Red-rumped Wheatears** and 7 **Temminck's Larks**. A scan in the wide surroundings produced nothing although a sheep herd mentioned that he saw sometimes Houbara Bustards on the north side of the road!

On the same spot on the 26<sup>th</sup> January we recorded 3 **White storks** again. And a change started from White-tailed Wheatears in Black Wheatears after Quarzazate! During driving some smaller flocks of **Rock Pigeon's** where seen once in while.

A stop at the spot where I saw the Thick-billed Larks on 26 January 48 kms west of Tazaknah (ore 148 kilometres east of Taroudannt) produced surprisingly nothing of the birds seen before, but even better we where rewarded with superb views of a pair of **Dupont's Larks**! After the right documentation had be done we drove further to arrive just before complete darkness at Taroudannt where we stayed at the rather expensive Hotel Palais Salam (500 dirham each for the night only). By the way during driving we recorded several **Black Wheatears**. After a good dinner we came to the discover that a **House Bunting** has chosen our balcony as sleeping spot!

## 30<sup>th</sup> January Taroudant – Tamri – Qued Massa

When we woke up due the singing outside the various mosques we walked to dinner (off course we first looked to the still awakening **House Bunting** who was still there when we got up). After some brief watching

in the garden of Palais Salam. Where we encountered **Common Kestrel**, a **Peregrine Falcon**, **Chaffinch**, **Spotless Starling**, **Blackcap**, **Common Swift**, **Pallid Swift** and **House Bunting** we where on our way to a spot just outside Taroudannt to the bridge over de Qued Sous. This was the choice for the previous evening as in the dead coniferous part here Red-necked Nightjars gives a nightly performance, but as we where too late we skipped this part!

Birding the almost dried up Sous river produced however a nice amount of species: **Brown-throated Sand Martin** (1), **Yellow Wagtail** (*iberiae* race), **Black-billed Magpie**, **Great Tit**, **Blue Tit**, **Greenfinch**, **Pallid Swift** (two migrating north), **Laughing Dove** (3), **Blackcap**, **Cirl Bunting**, **Goldfinch**, **Song Thrush**, **Chiffchaf**, **Moussier's Redstart**, **Green Sandpiper**, **Barn Swallow**, **White Wagtail**, **Blackbird**, **Little Egret**, **Thekla Lark** and **Sardinian Warbler**.

During driving to Agadir we recorded several **Rock Dove**, **Black Wheatears**, **Southern Grey Shrike's**, **Moussier's Redstarts** and 15 kilometres before Agadir a flock of 30+ **White Storks**.

While driving out of Agadir towards Tamri we noted at Taghazoute a flock of three **Waldrapps**! Birds could be seen well in the bino's and we where ready to find more at the mouth of the river Qued Tinkert at Tamri where they where observed regularly bating around noon. Also noted between Agadir and Tamri where several **Common Ravens**, **Audouin's Gull**, **Lesser Black-backed Gull**, **Blue Rock Thrush (male)**, **Sandwich Tern**, **Meadow Pipit**, **Barn Swallow**, **Great Tit**, **Blue Tit** and migrating **Barn Swallows**.

At the mouth of the Qued Tinkert we noted finally a *moroccanus* **White Wagtail** and a *moroccanus* race **Great Cormorant**. Other nice things here included **Ruddy Shelduck**, **Gray Heron**, **Zitting Cisticola**, **Northern Gannet**, **Sandwich Terns** and few **Audouin's Gulls**.

Some searching around could not produced any more Waldrapps even not the new roosting spot 8.5 kilometre north of Tamri (to be precise we could not find the spot at all!).

A quick and short seawatch at Cape Rhir produced two nice juvenile **Red-throated Divers** (on the same site was in the week previous to our visit a Great Northern Diver!), a **Whimbrel**, many **Northern Gannets**, **House Bunting** and several **Thekla Larks**.

By the we decided to head back to Agadir to find somewhere accommodation around the airport. But we failed completely. We decided to drive to the south in the direction of Qued Massa.

We finally found a place to stay along the P30 on the exit to "massa" on the 7128. Here is a small village with a cafe/restaurant and you can also stay here.

## **31<sup>st</sup> January Qued Massa**

After waking up we headed quickly to Qued Massa. We recorded no less then 78 species today including a nice variety of species.

While entering Qued Massa where the bitumen stops while driving to the mouth of the river we noticed in a flock of **Barn Swallows**, few **House Martins** and **Bank Martins**! A singing **Eurasian Thick-knee** was nice

to hear at the same site. Few stops were made to the mouth of the Qued Massa and this produced some very nice **Black-crowned Tchagra's**. The birding by then concentrated around the mouth of the Qued Massa and we did some birding around Sidi-Rbat in search for some Waldapps that were mentioned to us that they were feeding behind the hotel. Birding produced as highlights: **Great Cormorant** (two all black cormorants at the mouth was either *sinensis* or *lucidus*), **Richard's Pipit** (flew over the mouth), **Sanderling**, **Kentish Plover**, **Dunlin**, **Bar-tailed Godwit**, **Audouin's Gull**, **Yellow Wagtail** (*iberiae*), **Common Crane** (51), **Moussier's Redstart**, **Common Bulbul**, **White Wagtail** (*morrocanus*), **Eurasian Lapwing**, **Mediterranean Gulls**, **Black-headed Gulls** and **Yellow-legged Gulls**.

A half-hour sea-watch produced a probably Puffin, a bit too far out to confirm the ID, and a **Great Skua** to north. Many **Northern Gannets** and **Sandwich Terns** were also passing by! The scans between the large concentrations of gulls at the mouth of the Qued Massa sadly produced no rarities.

After this trip we went into Massa to have a lunch. We stopped just east of Sidi-Binzaren to have another look at the Qued Massa and found in short time **Common Snipe**, **Eurasian Spoonbill**, **Glossy Ibis**, **Cetti's Warbler**, **Common Redshank**, **Squacco Heron**, **Blue Rock Thrush**, **Marsh Harrier** and 3 **Greater Flamingo's**. After an excellent lunch we went out to bird in the surroundings from Massa along the Qued Massa. Some general birding along the edges of the river produced **Brown-throated Sand Martin** (5), **Eurasian Reed-warbler**, **Peregrine Falcon**, **Yellow Wagtail**, **Common Wood pigeon**, **Eurasian Sparrowhawk** and **Laughing Dove**.

By then we drove via an alternative route to Sidi-Rbat and birded the surroundings of the hotel along the coast. A nice sight was a perched **Lanner falcon** on the GSM pylon. And some watching along the cliffs at sunset produced 3 fly by **Waldrapps**. Despite much trouble putting the whole day in locating Waldrapps these were the only bird to be located.

After an weary action to get back to our "hotel" we found the place and had a short but good sleep.

## 1<sup>st</sup> February Qued Massa– Broekhuizenvorst

In the midst of the night we woke up to get out to drive to Agadir. After roughly 40 minutes we were at the airport where we could check in. At the parking we noticed two singing and wandering **Eurasian Thick-knee's**. Due to experience during the flight into Morocco we experienced to day the same, both flight Agadir-Casablanca and Casablanca- Brussels were both delayed by technical problems. At the airport at Casablanca we could spotted a single **Pallid Swift** flying around.

## Specieslist

For me an excellent trip with 17 new species and about 29 new subspecies recorded!

1. **Red-throated Diver** *Gavia stellata* 2 juveniles swimming in front of Cape Rhir on 29 January.
2. **Little Grebe** *Tachybaptus ruficollis ruficollis* recorded on two spots at Merzouga lake 8 birds and few birds at Qued Massa.
3. **Northern Gannet** *Morus bassanus* saw many birds off shore at either Cape Rhir, Tamri and Qued Sous.
4. **Great Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo moroccanus/lucidus* \*\* some all black birds seen at Qued Massa could well be either *lucidus* or *sinensis*, but due geographical variation in *lucidus* where some birds can be all black (Cramp et al) most probably they were *lucidus*. Few *moroccanus* where recorded at Tamri and at Qued Massa.
5. **Cattle Egret** *Bubulcus ibis ibis* few birds where seen on several spots along the coast. Best spot was however in the early morning of the 26<sup>th</sup> at Taroudannt!
6. **Squacco Heron** *Ardeola ralloides* only one bird seen at Qued Massa on 31 January.
7. **Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta garzetta* seen at Merzouga as odd place, further along the various coastal sites present and a some inland locations!
8. **Gray Heron** *Ardea cinerea cinerea* seen at Tamri and Qued Massa.
9. **White Stork** *Ciconia ciconia ciconia* three times seen including a flock of 30 birds 15 kms east of Agadir on 30<sup>th</sup> January.
10. **Glossy Ibis** *Plegadis falcinellus* about 40+ birds where seen at Qued Massa on 31 January. Most birds where colour ringed with white rings!
11. **\*Waldrapp** *Geronticus eremita* twice a flock of 3 birds seen once on 30<sup>th</sup> January at Taghazoute and 31<sup>st</sup> January at Qued Massa.
12. **Eurasian Spoonbill** *Platalea leucorodia leucorodia* 4 birds including 2 colour ringed birds from Holland is Guess (no scope with me at that time) at Qued Massa.
13. **Greater Flamingo** *Phoenicopterus ruber roseus* recorded 300 at Merzouga and 3 at Qued Massa.
14. **Ruddy Shelduck** *Tadorna ferruginea* recorded twice once up to 200+ birds at Merzouga and 2 birds at Tamri.
15. **Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos platyrhynchos* few birds seen at Qued Massa (5+ birds).
16. **Northern Pintail** *Anas acuta* few birds seen at Qued Massa (10+ birds).
17. **Northern Shoveler** *Anas clypeata* few birds seen at Qued Massa (20+ birds).
18. **Marbled Duck** *Marmaronetta angustirostris* on the lake at Merzouga 11 birds where seen on 28 January.
19. **Common Teal** *Anas crecca* seen at Qued Massa (about 20 birds) .
20. **Common Pochard** *Aythya farina* only seen at Qued Massa (400+ birds).
21. **Tufted Duck** *Aythya fuligula* a small flock seen at Qued Massa (8 birds).
22. **Western Marsh Harrier** *Circus aeruginosus harterti* \*\* two resident birds, and adult female and a juvenile female where at Qued Massa on 31 January!

23. **Long-legged Buzzard** *Buteo rufinus cirtensis* \*\* in total 5 birds were seen, the first two juveniles at 50 kilometre west of Quarzazate on 26 January, a bird at the Taghilt Track on 26 January, 25 east of the Boumalne du Dadès on 27 January and a single bird 5 kms south of Erfoud on 27 January!
24. **Eurasian Sparrowhawk** *Accipter nisus punicus* \*\* a single female was seen hunting at Qued Massa on 31 January.
25. **Common Kestrel** *Falco tinnunculus tinnunculus* about 10 birds seen the whole trip. Most "common" around Qued Massa on 31 January (4 birds).
26. **Peregrine Falcon** *Falco peregrinus minor* \*\* two birds seen of a small race peregrine at Tarroudant on 30 January and a bird at Qued Massa on 31 January.
27. **\*Lanner Falcon** *Falco biarmicus erlangeri* two birds seen one at a telegraph pole on 26 January 185 west of Quarzazate and one at the GSM pole at Qued Massa on 31 January.
28. **Common Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus* only recorded at Qued Massa.
29. **Eurasian Coot** *Fulica atra atra* common at Qued Massa.
30. **Common Crane** *Grus grus* a flock from 51 seen at Qued Massa.
31. **Black-winged Stilt** *Himantopus himantopus* seen at Merzouga and Qued Massa.
32. **Eurasian Thick-knee** *Burhinus oedicephalus saharae* \*\* one heard at Qued Massa and two seen and heard at Agadir Airport.
33. **Little Ringed Plover** *Charadrius dubius* a single bird was present on the shore of Lake Merzouga on 28 January.
34. **Kentish Plover** *Charadrius alexandrinus* a single bird was at Merzouga and some birds at Qued Massa.
35. **Northern Lapwing** *Vanellus vanellus* a single bird was at Qued Massa.
36. **Common Snipe** *Gallinago gallinago gallinago* up to 5 flushed at Qued Massa on 31 January!
37. **Sanderling** *Calidris alba* few birds present at the mouth of Qued Massa (8 birds).
38. **Dunlin** *Calidris alpina schinzii* up to 3 birds seen at Qued Massa, and most probably belong to this taxon (schinzii)!
39. **Green Sandpiper** *Tringa ochropus* recorded 50 kms west of Quarzazate and at Qued Massa.
40. **Common Sandpiper** *Actitis hypoleucos* recorded at Merzouga and Qued Massa.
41. **Common Redshank** *Tringa totanus totanus* up to 30 at Qued Massa.
42. **Common Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia nebularia* present at Merzouga (2) and Qued Massa.
43. **Bar-tailed Godwit** *Limosa lapponica lapponica* about 30+ birds at Qued Massa.
44. **Eurasian Curlew** *Numenius arquata* 3 birds at Qued Massa.
45. **Whimbrel** *Numenius phaeopus phaeopus* a single bird at Cape Rhir and 4 birds at Qued Massa.
46. **Great Skua** *Catharacta skua* one bird flying to north at Qued Massa on 31 January.

47. **Black-headed Gull** *Larus ridibundus* surprisingly about 20 birds at Qued Massa on 31 January (it's more southerly than depicted in field guides).
48. **Mediterranean Gull** *Larus melanocephalus* about 5 birds roosting at the mouth of Qued Massa on 31 January.
49. **Yellow-legged Gull** *Larus michahellis michahellis* about 40+ birds at Qued Massa on 31 January further nowhere encountered.
50. **Lesser Black-backed Gull** *Larus fuscus intermedius* several hundreds between Tamri and Qued Massa. One bird read between Agadir and Tamri on 30 January right red/green and left white/metal (adult bird). All the real checked birds showed characters of *intermedius* no birds seen with *graellsii* characters.
51. **Audouin's Gull** *Larus audouinii* several hundreds noted between Tamri and Qued Massa. Many birds colour ringed. Despite lack of time just two read at Qued Massa on 31 January left white ring C15 and left white ACH7 (last bird a second year bird, first adult).
52. **Sandwich Tern** *Sterna sandvicensis sandvicensis* few scattered groups between Tamri and Qued Massa. In total up to 400+ birds seen, including several metal ringed birds!
53. **Rock Dove** *Columba livia livia* seen almost daily in variable groups!
54. **Common Wood-Pigeon** *Columba palumbus excelsa* \*\* only seen at Qued Massa on 31 January up to 20+ birds.
55. **Eurasian Collared-Dove** *Streptopelia decaocto* seen daily during the whole trip near civilisation!
56. **Laughing Dove** *Streptopelia senegalensis phoenicophila* \*\* only recorded at Qued Massa on 31 January (up to 20 birds in total)!
57. **Little Owl** *Athene noctua saharae* \*\* a single bird seen well at Qued Massa on 31 January.
58. **Common Swift** *Apus apus* about 3+ birds seen on 26 January at Taroudannt where in size like Pallid Swift and had an all black plumage and were initially identified as Common Swift. Noted differences with Pallid Swift where the flight (more buffer fly like), a darker throat (some paler colouration) and the overall black plumage. There was no notable difference in size! Due to the wintering of Common Swift south of the equator it is unlikely that these birds were Common Swifts, due to recent knowledge of the wintering grounds of Plain Swifts (Chantler & Driessens) we consider it also could be Plain Swifts what was flying around. But still some hard work has to be done to establish whether darker swifts are in winter in Morocco!
59. **Pallid Swift** *Apus pallidus brehmorum* several birds flying at Taroudannt, up to several 10's! On 26 and 30 January and a single bird on the airport of Casablanca!
60. **Little Swift** *Apus affinis galilejensis* only one or two birds seen at Taroudannt on 26 January.
61. **Crested Lark** *Galerida cristata randonii & riggenbachi* \*\* birds seen around Merzouga belonged to the *randonii* race and birds seen around Agadir belonged to the *riggenbachi* race. Due to problems with identification of Crested and Thekla many larks left unidentifiable.

62. **Thekla Lark** *Galerida theklae aguirrei* \*\* really tough together with Crested Lark, we noted birds at Cape Rhir, Qued Massa, Boumalne du Dadès and Merzouga for sure, and many unidentified birds!
63. **Greater Short-toed Lark** *Calandrella brachydactyla rubiginosa* \*\* a single bird was seen on 28 January at Merzouga lake!
64. **Lesser Short-toed Lark** *Calandrella rufescens minor* \*\* recorded at various spots. Best spot was however the Tadjilt Track! Also recorded at the Dupont's Lark site and at Café Yasmina (20+ birds seen).
65. **Desert Lark** *Ammonanes deserti payni* recorded daily in the desert regions. For example at Café Yasmina, near Quarzazate, Tadjilt Track and Kasbah Derkaoua (50 + birds seen).
66. **\*Bar-tailed Lark** *Ammomanes cincturus arenicolor* recorded at the Dupont's Lark site on 26 January and at Café Yasmina on 28 January (about 4 birds seen).
67. **\*Thick-billed Lark** *Ramphocoris clothey* on 26 January I was the only one to recorded 2 or 3 birds at the Dupont's Lark site. Despite intensive searching no other birds encountered during the whole trip.
68. **\*Temminck's Horned Lark** *Eremophila bilopha* only seen at the Taghilt Track, most birds were paired. Seen on 26, 27 and 29 January (up to 30+).
69. **Hoopoe Lark** *Alaemon alaudipes alaudipes* \*\* seen at the Taghilt Track and commonly between Erfoud and Merzouga! Very attractive displaying flight! Up to 50+ birds seen.
70. **\*Dupont's Lark** *Chersophilus duponti duponti* luckily two birds seen well at a site 48 kilometre from Tazaknah on 29 January.
71. **Bank Martin** *Riparia riparia riparia* about 4 birds seen at Qued Massa on 31 January! Very heavy wear in their plumage and resemble Plain Martin in flight!
72. **\*Plain Martin** *Riparia paludicola mauretana* a single bird seen on 30 January 6 kms west of Taroudannt and 5 birds at Qued Massa on 31 January!
73. **Barn Swallow** *Hirundo rustica rustica* seen daily, and a slight migration to north! Seen for example at Tadjilt Track, Taroudannt, Qued Massa and Tamri.
74. **House Martin** *Delichon urbica urbica/merionalis* one of these two subspecies where the 3 birds seen at Qued Massa.
75. **Richard's Pipit** *Anthus richardi richardi* a single bird flew over the mouth of Qued Massa on 31 January in northern direction.
76. **Meadow Pipit** *Anthus pratensis pratensis* single birds noted on few locations including a site 50 kms west of Quarzazate and Qued Massa (seen 10+ birds).
77. **White Wagtail** *Motacilla alba alba & subpersonata* \*\* of the first 100's of birds found, of the latest 3 birds found. One at Tamri and 2 at Qued Massa.
78. **Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla flava iberia* recorded at Qued Massa and at Tamri (5+ birds)!

79. **\*Common Bulbul** *Pycnotus barbatus barbatus* seen daily at the coast, as far east as 50 kms for Quarzazate.
80. **Common Redstart** *Phoenicurus phoenicurus phoenicurus* a single bird on 30<sup>th</sup> January 6 kms west of Taroudannt at the river over the Sous.
81. **Black Redstart** *Phoenicurus ochruros gibraltariensis* a single bird at Kasbah Derkoua.
82. **\*Moussier's Redstart** *Phoenicurus moussieri* seen daily with up to 10 a day.
83. **Northern Wheatear** *Oenanthe oenanthe* ssp a single large female was seen on 26<sup>th</sup> January during driving along the P 32.
84. **Desert Wheatear** *Oenanthe deserti deserti* \*\* only a single bird was seen between Quarzazate and Boumalne du Dadès on 26 January.
85. **Mourning Wheatear** *Oenanthe lugens halophila* \*\* 3 birds seen one male before Quarzazate, one male 142 kilometre west of Errachida and one female on the shores of Lake Merzouga.
86. **White-tailed Wheatear** *Oenanthe leucopyga aegra* \*\* about 50 + birds seen roughly from Quarzazate to Merzouga!
87. **\*Black Wheatear** *Oenanthe leucura syenitica* about 50+ birds seen roughly between Agadir and Quarzazate.
88. **\*Red-rumped Wheatear** *Oenanthe moesta moesta* about 30 birds recorded at the Tadgilt Track on the 3 dates we visited it.
89. **Whinchat** *Saxicola rubetra* a male perched on a wire just west of Tinehir.
90. **Common Stonechat** *Saxicola torquata rubicola* daily seen in variable numbers.
91. **Blue Rock Thrush** *Monticola solitarius solitarius* 2 birds seen one south of Tamri and one at Qued Massa.
92. **Song Thrush** *Turdus philomelos philomelos* a single bird seen at the river Sous west of Taroudannt.
93. **Blackbird** *Turdus merula mauritanicus* \*\* many seen during driving, like east of Taroudannt. As far as Merzouga seen.
94. **Blackcap** *Sylvia atricapilla atricapilla* few birds seen during the trip.
95. **Sardinian Warbler** *Sylvia melanocephala melanocephala* almost daily seen, up to 10 a day.
96. **\*African Desert Warbler** *Sylvia deserti* a single bird seen near Kasbah Said on 27 and 28th January.
97. **\*Tristram's Warbler** *Sylvia deserticola maroccana* about 10 birds where recorded between Erfoud and Merzouga!
98. **Zitting Cisticola** *Cisticola juncidis cisticola* only seen and heard at Tamri and Qued Massa.
99. **Eurasian Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus scirpaceus scirpaceus* a single bird at Qued Massa.
100. **Cetti's Warbler** *Cettia cetti cetti* few birds at Qued Massa.
101. **Common Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus collybita collybita* all birds observed where *collybita*

type bird no birds seen that remembered *brehmii*.

102. **Great Tit** *Parus major excelsus* \*\* seen at several locations on 30 and 31st January from Taroudannt to Qued Massa.
103. **Blue Tit** *Cyanistes caeruleus ultramarines* \*\* seen at several locations on 30 and 31st January from Taroudannt to Qued Massa.
104. **Southern Grey Shrike** *Lanius meridionalis algeriensis* \*\* few variable birds seen and some indicated elegans in a way.
105. **\*Black-crowned Tchagra** *Tchagra senegala cucullata* only recorded on 31 January at Qued Massa. Up to 4 birds where seen well!
106. **\*Fulvous Chatterer** *Turdoides fulvus maroccanus* after a hard search spread over two days 4 birds where found in the garden at Kasbah Derkaoua on 28 January.
107. **Black-billed Magpie** *Pica pica mauretanicus* \*\* seen at several locations on 30 and 31st January from Taroudannt to Qued Massa.
108. **Brown-necked Raven** *Corvus ruficollis* 3 birds seen in the area of Café Yasmina on 28 January.
109. **Common Raven** *Corvus corax tingitanus* \*\* recorded at Tamri and Cap Rhir.
110. **Spotless Starling** *Sturnus unicolor* seen at Taroudannt, Tamri and Qued Massa.
111. **House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus tingitanus* \*\* seen daily in sometimes large numbers.
112. **\*Desert Sparrow** *Passer simplex saharea* up to 7 birds seen very well around Aubergine Yasmina on 28 January. Most plumages where seen and allowed a close study!
113. **Chaffinch** *Fringilla coelbes africana* \*\* recorded only near the coast, to the east we saw this race at a site 50 kilometre west of Quarzazate.
114. **Eurasian Linnet** *Carduelis cannabina cannabina* few seen while driving and at Qued Massa.
115. **Common Goldfinch** *Carduelis carduelis parva* \*\* seen at Qued Massa.
116. **European Greenfinch** *Carduelis chloris aurantiiventris* seen various along the coast and inland locations. Taroudannt and Qued Massa where good spots!
117. **European Serin** *Serinus serinus* seen on 26, 29,30 and 31 January in sometimes good numbers.
118. **Cirl Bunting** *Emberiza cirlus cirlus* about 5 birds seen on 30<sup>th</sup> January at the river sous west of Taroudannt.
119. **\*House Bunting** *Emberiza striolata sahari* seen almost daily, best area however Taroudannt for us!
120. **Corn Bunting** *Emberiza calandra* few single birds seen on various dates a group of 100+ birds at the Dupont's Larks site on 26<sup>th</sup> January.

