

## A Birding Trip report to Middle Atlas and EL GHARB area of Morocco

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18- 21, August 2008

### A. Summary

1. A total of 83 bird species was recorded. The most important sightings of the trip were the observation of a new breeding site of Egyptian vulture with 2 pairs at least near Oued Leben cliffs;



2. Also a small breeding colony of Gull-billed Tern was found north of Allal Tazi (40 north of Kénitra) area nearby paddy fields;



3. Moreover in the famous Ain Vitel springs 2 young Water Rail was observed attesting a successful nesting season despite the drought;



4. Finally two pairs of Bonelli's Eagles have been established in a cliffy area between Ifrane and Timahdit.

**B. Important sightings:**

☞ Day of 18 August 2008

**- CANAL MAJ'OUR**

*Tachybaptus ruficollis*

*Gallinula chloropus*

*Fulica atra*

*Acrocephalus scirpaceus*: not very common

*Rallus aquaticus*

**- PADDY FIELD IN THE AREA OF ALLAL TAZI**

Paddy fields are very attractive "wetlands" to water birds

1. *Ardeola ralloides*
2. *Egretta garzetta* (see photo)
3. *Bubulcus ibis* (see photo)
4. *Nycticorax nycticorax*

Breeding population of 4 heron species are nesting in the poplar trees of Sebou River.

Those herons are visiting very regularly rice cultivation area to feed.

Other species:

*Tachybaptus ruficollis* :

*Ardea cinerea* : 153 birds

*Ciconia ciconia* (see photo)

*Plegadis falcinellus* : at least 450 birds (see photo)

**One Bird was bearing white ring with the code AU8 in his left leg**

*Anas platyrhynchos* : 12 birds flying from paddy fields

*Circus aeruginosus*

*Elanus caeruleus* : 2 birds



*Circaetus gallicus*  
*Falco naumanni*  
*Himantopus himantopus* : pairs nesting in paddy field.  
Presence of young (see photos).  
*Burhinus oedicnemus* (see photo)  
*Glareola pratincola* : big populations  
in the area visited at the Gharb region.  
*Charadrius dibius*  
*Charadrius alexandrinus*  
*Calidris minutus*  
*Calodris alpina* (see photo)  
*Tringa nebularia*  
*Tringa totanus*  
*Numenius phaeopus*  
*Larus ridibundus* : 150 birds (76 young birds) (see photo)  
*Sterna nilotica* : have been seen in groups and pairs.  
Our presence has disturbed some birds  
what drove them to “attack” us which  
may attest the presence of young.  
*Sternula albifrons* : 16 birds.  
*Chlidonias hybridus* : 26 birds  
*Alcedo atthis*  
*Motacilla flava*: Very common  
*Saxicola torquatum*  
*Cisticola juncidis* : 2 families

✂ 19- 21 August :

**- OUM RBIA SPRINGS**

*Cinclus cinclus*  
*Motacilla cinerea* (see photo)  
*Coccythraustes coccythraustes*  
*Corvus corax* (see photo)

**- IFRANE AREA**

*Ciconia ciconia*  
*Hieraaetus pennatus*  
*Hieraaetus fasciatus*  
*Milvus migrans*  
*Buteo ruffinus* (see photo)  
*Falco naumanni*  
*Columba oenas*  
*Coracias garrulus*  
*Lululla arborea*  
*Calandrella brachydactyla*  
*Oenanthe seebohmi*  
*Turdus viscivorus*  
*Pretonia pretonia*  
*Sturnus unicolor*  
*Corvus corax* (see photo)



**- AIN VITEL**

- Gallinula chloropus* : young and adults (see photos)
- Rallus aquaticus* (see photos)
- Dendrocopos major*
- Columba palumbus*
- Picus vallantii* : Two birds
- Erithacus rubecula* : some young birds recorded (see photo)
- Troglodytes troglodytes* (see photo)
- Sitta europea* (see photo)
- Muscicapa striata* (see photo)
- Ficedula speculigera*: One bird only. Probably migration has already stated for this bird.
- Phylloscopus bonelli* (see photo)
- Sylvia atricapilla*
- Parus major*
- Parus ater*
- Cyanistes teneriffae ultramarinus* (see photo)

**AGUELMANE WIWANE**

- Anser anser*: domesticated birds (see photo)
- Accipter nisus*
- Fulica cristata*: 39 birds (see photo)
- Gallinula chloropus*
- Sitta europea*
- Parus ater*
- Garrulus glandarius* (see photo)
- Corvus corax*

**- TAZA AREA**

- Neophron aegyptus* (Breeding colony with flying young vultures  
Near cliffs of Oued Lben)
- Falco naumanni* (see photo)





*Fulica cristata* : Plan d'eau Zerrouka 1

*Gallinula chloropus* : Ifrane pond

*C. Himantopus himantopus* : Allal Tazi in rice fields

**C. Good spots**



D. Other Wildlife



*Maccaca sylvana* (Ain Kharzouza)



*Chamaeleo chamaeleon* (male)



*Sympetrum sanguin* (Paddy fields)



*Rana saharica* (Ifrane Pound)



*Acanthodactylus erythrurus*  
Mnasra dunes of Mnasra (Kenitra)

**E. Landscapes**



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