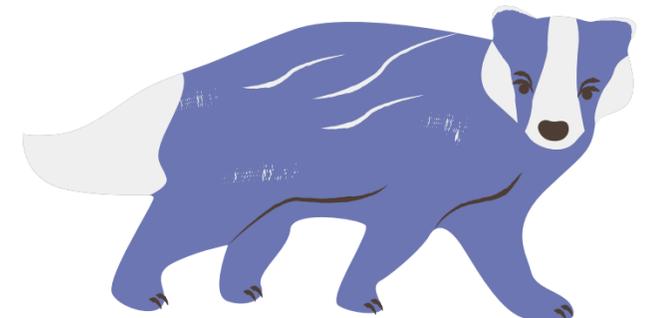
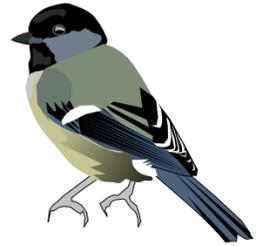


# CHÂTEAU MARIUS



## A diverse wildlife





# Château Maris & wildlife

## General information



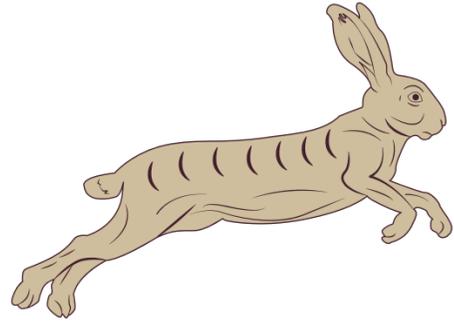
**Our Biodiversity study was carried out by Aude Nature between June 2020 and March 2022, a great wealth of species and diversity was observed on our land. 4 areas were studied and following the results, Château Maris created an action plan to help increase and maintain the richness that is present.**

### The birds :

The total number of species amounts to 68 species of birds which represents a good diversity. This ornithological richness, despite the absence of large wetland habitats, is due to the variety of natural, semi-natural and anthropized habitats present, to which are added around thirty elements/micro-environments which diversify the habitats as a place of nesting and/or food.

### The Odonata :

The odonates are well represented in and around the 4 study areas. They use the 4 zones as a feeding zone, for sexual maturation, reproduction. Based on 11 field trips spread between 2018 and 2021, 31 taxa were contacted, which represents 40% of the taxa present in the Hérault. That's a very good number !



# Château Maris & wildlife

## General information



### The mammals :

Mammals are present, however they generally have nocturnal habits and a discreet behavior. They are therefore very often detected by their fingerprints and traces. 13 species were observed in the 4 areas studied.

### Reptiles :

The majority of reptiles seek heat (direct sun, hot substrate, etc.) to thermoregulate. All are predatory and play a fundamental role in controlling pests and parasites. In production, wine and cereal areas, this service provided is invaluable. Although this list is not exhaustive, there are no less than 11 species observed in this territory out of the 39 species present in France, including Corsica.

### Amphibians :

This group is clearly less well represented than that of the reptiles. The main reason is the lack of favorable water points. Almost all of them gather in Sector A. Nevertheless in this sector, the densities present are interesting as well as the diversity of species.

# Bird species present



- Alouette Calandrelle *Calandrella brachydactyla* :

Small discreet lark linked to open and thermophilic environments. Highly threatened in France, the French population could be less than 600 pairs, including more than 40 in the Minervois. In 2021, only one singer is detected near zone A. It is unlikely that this species nested on the grounds of Château Maris in 2021. However, between 2018 and 2020, between 4 and 6 pairs were present there. The bad weather conditions of spring 21 could be the explanation. In May 2022, more outings will be organized in order to take stock of this population in the area studied but also in neighboring territories.

- Bruant ortolan *Emberiza hortulana* :

Migratory. Lives in a wide variety of habitats, but in general frequents open areas, dotted with trees, grasslands and cereal crops. Present mainly in viticulture in the Minervois. Its populations have fallen throughout Europe following changes in agricultural practices and the closure of habitats in former extensive grazing areas.

# Bird species present



- Oedicnème criard *Burhinus oedicanus* :

Rare and declining species almost everywhere. It is a bird native to hot and dry open areas. In France, it lives in sunny stony limestone soils (pseudo-steppes). Observed in flight in zone B and annual nester in the meadows and low vineyards of sector A (1 or 2 pairs). This particular wader with nocturnal and twilight habits, has a flute cry reminiscent of that of the curlews.

- Pie-grièche à tête rousse (*Lanius senator*) :

Migratory. Local species of dry and open common in areas, dotted with trees and shrubs, sometimes lives in wooded areas. This species and this family of birds is often used as a bioindicator of agricultural environments. The data on the areas studied are therefore very positive. 3 to 4 couples present and certainly double on the surrounding land. A very good number !



# Bird species present



- Pipit rousseline *Anthus campestris* :

Migratory. Relatively common locally in open, dry, sandy landscapes with sparse vegetation. Species to watch because it is in regression on many territories of France. Maximum 3 pairs for this endangered species throughout Europe. Maintaining areas of bare vines would be beneficial.

- Rollier d'Europe :

This magnificent tropical-looking species is a bird that breeds regularly in the Minervois. It needs cavities in the trees to reproduce there and sometimes uses isolated buildings taking advantage of the available cavities. On the grounds of Château Maris, and to our knowledge, this species has never reproduced due to the lack of available cavities and especially by the presence of pines which offer only a few cavities and when there are any, these are filled with resin. Nevertheless in autumn it is frequent to see between 2 and 6 Rollers in postnuptial dispersal which gain strength before their return to tropical Africa. In order to promote their return as breeding birds, 4 nesting boxes were installed on April 15, 2022 by EPOPS in 4 places chosen by Aude Nature. Monitoring will be organized regularly by Aude Nature to find out if these nesting boxes will be occupied and if so by which species.

# "Odonata" species

**Agrion Jouvencelle**



- The odonates are well represented in and around the 4 study areas. They use the 4 zones as a feeding zone, for sexual maturation, and reproduction. Based on 11 field trips spread between 2018 and 2021, 31 taxa were contacted, which represents 40% of the taxa present in the Hérault. Very good number.

- Species mainly associated with running water (low to moderate) and the presence of numerous aquatic micro-environments (gravel pit, mud, aquatic grass beds, riparian forest, marsh vegetation, etc.). The Ognon River is a perfect habitat for these species.



**Ischnure naine**



# "Odonata" species



**Leste Barbare**



- This species mainly frequents damp places that dry out quickly in summer. Eurasian, it occupies all of Europe except the north where it is expanding (reached England in 2002); in Asia, as far as Mongolia. Also in the North of the Maghreb.



# Mammal species



- Fox :

Foxes have an important role in regulating rodents in the countryside, such as voles, field mice, mice, or even rats. They consume thousands of them each year, making them effective crop aids for farmers, limiting the damage these rodents do to crops. They also have an important role in the fight against Lyme disease by consuming rodents on which live ticks that can transmit this disease, such as voles and mole rats. Their presence also makes it possible to limit the number of contaminated rodents by reducing their movements.



- Badger :

The badger aerates and mixes the soils it uses. The badger also enriches certain soils with nutrients: it marks its territory with plots where it urinates, which is a constantly renewed source of nitrogen for the soil, appreciated by elderberry and other nitrophilous plants. Like other berry eaters, it rejects the seeds in its excrement, which promotes their germination, dissemination and genetic diversity. It increases biodiversity. Its abandoned or periodically unused burrows can be temporary refuges for other species. Field mice and voles can enter it and add their own side galleries in the tunnels of the burrow<sup>1</sup>. Through its feeding activity, the badger regulates the populations of certain other species and plays a role in natural selection.

# Mammal species



- The Weasel:

The Weasel (*Martes foina*) is a species of carnivorous mammals from Europe and Asia, with a gray-brown coat, short legs and nocturnal habits. It is opportunistic and feeds, depending on the season, on small mammals, fruits, birds, eggs, waste found near dwellings.



# The reptiles



- Western green lizard. Large, bright green lizard. The male has a pale blue head and throat. A large predator of invertebrates, it is present in most habitats in the territories. Not very fearful, it can easily be observed and in case of danger it is able to climb trees.

- Lézard ocellé

The largest lizard in France, up to 70 cm for males. Easily recognizable by its size, its green colors (less bright than the L. Vert) and the well-defined blue ocelli on these sides. Large predator, it has small teeth. Feeds on small rodents, young birds, amphibians etc. It is also frugivorous. Good population in the Minervois unlike many regions of France where it is in sharp decline. Present on the 4 sectors.



# The reptiles



- Couleuvre de Montpellier :

Very large snake that can exceed 2.5 meters.

The only poisonous snake in France, fortunately its fangs located far in the mouth do not represent a threat in the event of a bite. Common throughout the territory. It is a large mammal and reptile predator. It would seem that this species excludes vipers from its distribution area, which could explain the virtual absence of vipers in the Minervois.



# The reptiles



- Couleuvre vipérine :

Small snake that searches for wetlands, water points and rivers. Called viperine, because when it is threatened, it puts its head in the shape of a triangle, its body in the shape of "S" and the drawings of the mantle then recall a Viper. Unfortunately, this resemblance (which keeps some predators away), can be confusing and detrimental to the species as some people kill them mistaking them for vipers.



# Amphibians



- Triton marbré :

*Triturus marmoratus* Magnificent newt with a marbled coat. The male has a broad dorsal crest. The female in her "terrestrial" form has a bright orange line on her back. Not easily observed under the flat stones of the embankment that runs along the horse meadows of Zone A

