

Gran Paradiso National Park, Italy

April 17th 2023

Leo JR Boon



In April 2023 I had a short stay in Italy with my wife to celebrate her mother's 90th birthday in the small town of Caselle Torinese not far from Turin.

On the 17th I could go out for a day and I decided to visit the Gran Paradiso NP which is only 1,5 hours drive from the place we were staying. I visited the park shortly in October 2021 but did not see any mammals.

I drove up to Ceresole Reale which was easily accessible. An unfortunate Beech Marten did not survive the night and was killed by a car just East of Sparone. The first Alpine Marmots were seen near Chiapili di sopra, northwest of Ceresole Reale. Here were also three Ring Ouzels present of the *alpestris* subspecies.

About two third up from Ceresole Reale to Lago Serru the road was closed. I parked the car and walked further up towards Lago Serru.

Just after parking the car I saw the first four Alpine Chamois. A little further up a nice male Alpine Ibex. A couple of Souther Grizzled Skippers, a few Queen of Spain Fritillaries and two Small Tortoiseshells were the only butterflies seen.

In the meantime several Ravens, many Alpine Choughs and just two Red-billed Choughs were flying around as was just a single Crag Martin. Other birds seen were Waterpipits, White Wagtails, Black Redstarts, a Mistle Thrush and a single male Common Redstart. So far the best birds of the day was a nice pair of Rock Buntings.

In the first valley to the left (the river is called Torrente del Carro) 35 Alpine Chamois were grazing in the fields. I got excellent views and close encounters. I decided to walk back to the car since it started to snow a little and I did see my mammal targets.

Not far from the small carpark a group of Alpine Ibexes descended from the mountains at the Northside of the road, a total of 30 animals. They were far from shy and very active and I got some great photo's and video. They decided that the gras was indeed greener on the other side of the road.

I followed the group for a while until they disappeared downstream and out of view. While watching the Ibexes a very nice adult Lammergeier flew around for a little while. Far but nice views. That was the best bird of the day!

Here are my observations reported on observation.org

https://observation.org/users/3474/observations/?date_after=2023-04-17&date_before=2023-04-17&species_group=&country_id=&rarity=&search=&advanced=on&species=&sex=&life_stage=&activity=&method=&validation_status=





