

French director red-faced after pink flamingo disaster

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species, saying the disruption of flamingos in the Camargue during the brooding season led one of every 10 pairs to abandon their nests

A French director said Monday he would abandon filming at a Mediterranean wetlands after a pilot sparked a panic among a huge flock of pink flamingos, causing hundreds of them to abandon their eggs.

The pilot of an [ultralight aircraft](#) was scouting locations for Nicolas Vanier's film "Give Me Wings" in the Camargues region this month when he zeroed in on the only wild [flock](#) of flamingos in France.

"A flight plan had indeed been given to the [pilot](#) indicating the precise areas to avoid," Vanier told AFP, adding that the operator was not directly employed by his production company.

"They wanted to have some fun by making the birds scatter—I was outraged," he said.

The France Nature Environnement association filed a complaint for damage to a protected species, saying the disruptions during the key brooding season led one of every 10 pairs to abandon their nests.

"The presence of this emblematic species... required the utmost precautions to be taken," the association said.

"Five hundred pairs of the 4,500 in the colony definitively abandoned their egg," it said.

Vanier, also a writer and adventurer known for [films](#) including "Wolf" and "The Last Trapper", offered to make amends by sponsoring a [flamingo](#) flock and inviting environmental groups to help present the

film and use it for educational purposes.

That apparently wasn't enough to settle the controversy, and Vanier said he would finish filming his new movie—about a scientist's passion for wild geese—in Norway.

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