



BirdLife Cyprus

Annual Report of Activities

2012



March 2013



Who we are

BirdLife Cyprus is a registered, non-profit, non-governmental organization (NGO) that works to conserve wild birds, their habitats and wider biodiversity, and maintain a healthy environment in which people on the island can prosper alongside nature in Cyprus, through research, monitoring, lobbying and conservation and awareness-raising actions. It was formed in 2003 through the merger of two Cyprus Ornithological Societies, and now has offices in Strakka, Nicosia.

BirdLife Cyprus is the official partner of BirdLife International in Cyprus. BirdLife International is a unique global partnership of national conservation organisations present in 121 countries/territories, and is the world leader in bird conservation. The BirdLife Partnership works locally to deliver long-term conservation for the benefit of nature and people.

BirdLife Cyprus Website: www.birdlifecyprus.org

BirdLife International Website: www.birdlife.org

Our Vision:

*An island with healthy ecosystems,
rich in biodiversity, where people
actively safeguard nature for a
sustainable future*

Our Mission:

*Protecting the wild birds of Cyprus, their
habitats, and wider biodiversity, through
monitoring, conservation and education
actions, and by developing people's
appreciation of nature*

Report on BirdLife Cyprus Activities 2012
As presented at the
BirdLife Cyprus AGM 2013
10 March 2013 at Thalassa Centre, Governor's Beach, Limassol

CONSERVATION

BirdLife Cyprus is a conservation organisation, and therefore its conservation efforts are essential to make sure the birds we all enjoy and care for, still have habitats to live, nest and winter in, and they are not illegally shot, trapped or otherwise killed. We also need to know how many birds are around, to be able to say if things are going well for them or not.

Throughout the year, BirdLife Cyprus reports on all these activities every month in its electronic newsletter, in English and Greek, and in the quarterly magazine.

Illegal Bird Trapping Campaign

- During 2012, we continued our **monitoring programme of illegal bird trapping activity** in spring, autumn and winter for the 11th year for autumn and less for other seasons. Unfortunately the trapping levels in 2012 again set a record high! However, the important change in 2012, was that thanks to new funding we gave new emphasis on campaigning which will continue into 2013.
- We took our campaign on **the radio waves and on the motorway billboards** for the first time and we plan to do more of that in 2013 as well as bring everyone together to draft a long term strategic plan. It is interesting that there is a new wave of funding interest around the subject from the MAVA Foundation,

through BirdLife International and the German Partner of BirdLife International, NABU, both of which confirmed new funding in 2013.



- *Unfortunately during 2012 the trapping levels set a record high, but we continued our campaign through radio and billboard announcements*
©BirdLife Cyprus

Site protection (Important Bird Areas)

- In 2012, we completed the new catalogue for the **Important Bird Areas in Cyprus (IBAs)**, the technical analysis at least. In order to finalise it, we organized three workshops to present the new inventory to staff, various experts and government agencies. We integrated their comments and finally submitted it to BirdLife International for approval before it can be finalised. We hope to have the approval soon in 2013, so as to finalise the new

inventory which will be an important additional tool for the protection of birds and their important sites in Cyprus.

- **During 2012**, as in previous years, we put much effort into better **protection of Sites**. For the first time since Cyprus entered the EU (in 2004) we saw the Environment Department using the application of the Birds and Habitats Directives in order to reject damaging projects, something which never happened before 2012. We can be proud that this change is largely thanks to pressure from us. Sites assessed in 2012



- *Akrotiri is one of Cyprus IBAs, and also a RAMSAR site*
© Claire Papazoglou

for big developments include the Pafos Forest, Ezousa Valley, Pentasxoinos River, Akamas, and others.

- We also participated in giving **input to management plans** for important sites like **Akrotiri**.

Monitoring of species

- During 2012, we continued our **monitoring programmes**: counting **waterbirds** each month, migrant **raptors** in Akrotiri in the autumn, **Audouin's gulls** nesting on Kleidhes Islands at Cape Andreas, Karpasia in May, **Eleonora's falcons** in September and **the Griffon Vulture** population in April and December. The volunteer based **Common Bird Monitoring Scheme** also continued in 2012, and we won a government tender in order to extend this scheme and cover more squares in 2013.

Policy

- Cyprus held the Presidency of the EU, during the 2nd half of 2012. Thanks to specialized funding that we received from the RSPB and from the MAVA Foundation through BirdLife Europe, we were able to employ an officer to work on Presidency issues, and specialized in particular on the Common Agricultural Policy reform. The Common Agricultural Policy is responsible for major declines in common birds across Europe and this policy comes up for reform once every 7 years. 2012 was such a year and we worked quite intensively on that, especially since the Cyprus Presidency had an important role to negotiate this reform. Unfortunately, the reform was not completed under the Presidency, and the Presidency itself did not do such a good job on it.
- We also actively participated in the drafting of the **National Strategy for Biodiversity** and we were later invited to a closed-doors preview and presentation draft strategy in December. We expect that the final strategy will be presented to

the public for comments and adopted sometime in 2013.

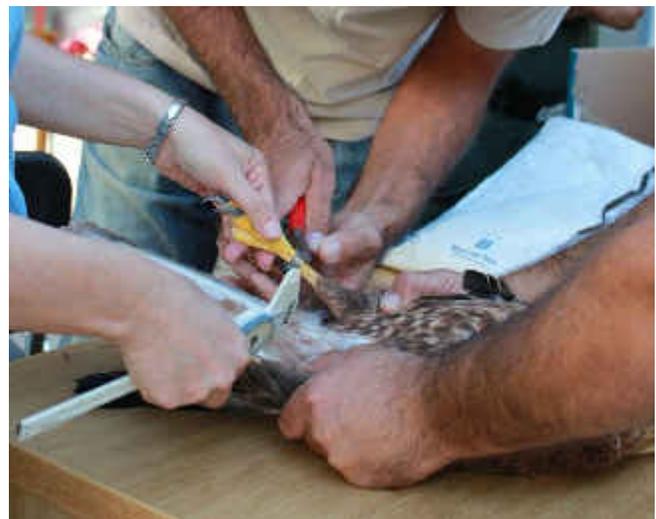
- Finally, we participated in the preparation of the **Cyprus National Strategy for Adaptation to Climate Change**. We expect to see the final strategy in 2013.

Bird Recording (Καταγραφές)

The Annual Report, the Annual Bird Checklist and the Monthly Checklist were produced during the year. A big thank you to Colin Richardson for all his time, effort and hard work he puts in producing the Annual Report and the Annual Checklist, and to Jane Stylianou for the Monthly Checklist.

Bird Ringing

- BirdLife Cyprus runs the **Ringing Scheme in Cyprus**, and during 2012 the ringing scheme was operational and more than 2400 birds were ringed. We now have 71000 records in the database from 11 different sites across the island. We had two ringing demonstrations, one in Pafos in spring and one in Pyla in the autumn, to coincide with the Eurobirdwatch event. The one in Pyla being notable in drawing a lot of 'new' people who had never watched ringing before. We also organised an additional ringing expedition at Pyla Range earlier in September. Finally, we ringed a few kestrel clutches and about 60 birds that were due to be released from the Game Fund Rehabilitation centre in Nicosia.



- *In 2012 we had two ringing demonstrations, one in Pafos in spring and one in Pyla in the autumn*
© BirdLife Cyprus

COMMUNICATION WITH MEMBERS AND MEMBER ACTIVITIES

Servicing our members, increasing our membership and organising publications for the members remains central to our strategy.

Members:

- At the end of 2012, **the number of paying members was 550**. This was an increase compared to the end of 2011 when we had 505 members and 2010 when we had 483. The steady rise in membership reflects how BirdLife Cyprus is becoming better known in Cyprus.
- Another indication of our profile is the number of **subscribers to our electronic newsletter**, which keeps rising. **In February 2013 we had 2138**, 400 subscribers more than this time last year when there were 1741 subscribers. A manifold increase since the 600 we started with in May 2010.
- We have completely **revamped our Monthly checklist**, with all the recent bird records and with many articles on bird identification, species to see, which also of course includes all the bird sightings of the previous month. This was sent electronically once a month to all members.
- We have also completely revamped and renamed **our quarterly magazine 'Cyprus Wheatear'**.
- During 2012, we put out **29 press releases** during the year, which resulted in 81 press clippings mentioning BirdLife Cyprus, and did more than 22 radio interviews.

- We also pumped up our school programme with talks in more than 12 schools and groups, reaching around 400 students and through the Gypas project alone we reached more than 1000 pupils.
- During 2012, apart from producing our own calendar with photos from Oroklini, we also helped with the organization of a really big exhibition under the aegis of UNESCO that took place in Paris during the Cyprus Presidency, with photos of birds and nature from Cyprus. The exhibition was organized by the A G Leventis Foundation and Mr Leventis personally provided lots of the photos. We worked with a consulting company Apios Metaxas for the labels and identification of the species.

During 2012 we organised a great number of **events for our members**, and also to raise our profile and meet more people.



© Lilia Kapsali

- We organised more than 36 field meetings, including the two three day trips to the Karpasia Peninsula.
- We organised the Bird Race on 7 April 2012.

- We organised the **Eurobirdwatch 2012** (1st weekend in October) a BirdLife International event we always join in. 2012 was a very successful year with more than 80 participants joining in.
- Participated in **the Spring Alive**, recording the first swallows and swifts for Europe.
- We organised many get togethers for our members.
- We also **participated in several fairs**, like the State Fair, an NGO fair, participated in the **'Let's do it Cyprus event'** and cleaned **Achna Dam**, we organised an event with a corporate in Trooditissa and an event before Christmas in Oktana.
- The **Birdline** was once again operational from early spring, thanks are due to June Neil who is doing an excellent job.



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PROJECTS AND FUNDRAISING

We continued implementing some important projects during 2012 and applied for more projects.

- Firstly, the GYPAS project, funded under the **Cross Regional cooperation between Greece and Cyprus (2007-2013) for the conservation of the Griffon Vulture in Cyprus**. The project started in September 2011 and continued during 2012. Lead partner was the Game and Fauna Service. The other project partners are BirdLife Cyprus, the Forestry Department, and two partners from Crete. As part of the project two big holding cages were built in

Cyprus, and 15 birds in total were transported from Crete to Cyprus. BirdLife Cyprus had an important role in communications, making the awareness raising materials and giving talks to schools. In 2012, we reached more than 1000 pupils mainly in Limassol and Pafos. The total

project budget is Euro 710,988 (and the BirdLife Cyprus part a little bit under 114,000 Euro). The co funding rate by the EU is 80%.

www.gypas.org

- The second major project that we started in 2012 was the **LIFE Oroklini Nature project, for the restoration and management of Oroklini Lake in Larnaca**. This is the first LIFE project BirdLife Cyprus

has ever been involved in. The project proceeded successfully during 2012 gaining praise from the Monitoring Team. Main actions in 2012 were the organization of a workshop on producing Favourable Reference Values and the production of target FRVs for Oroklini Marsh.



With the contribution of the LIFE financial instrument of the European Union



www.orokliniproject.org

- We also started participating in a project coordinated by the partner of BirdLife International in Spain, on **Ornithological Tourism in protected areas in the Mediterranean (IPOT)**, which is funded through the Leonardo Da Vinci programme of the EU.
- We **raised some modest funding from the Government** as reimbursed expenses, as Governments are seriously tightening their budgets now and have cut or drastically reduced funding. However, at the same time we raised some quite significant funding, nearly 10,000 euro from the Cyprus Human Resource Management Authority as a contribution for employing a recent university graduate (Vasiliki).



- Finally, during 2012 we raised more funds from the members through subscriptions which climbed again and surpassed the 2010 levels, which were around 11300 euros to 12500 euros reflecting the rise in

membership. We also continued to raise income from sales of products, which did quite well in 2012 due to the increased number of products we have.

Summary Income and Expenditure for the year ended 31 December 2012

Income	2012	2011
Contribution A P Leventis Conservation Foundation	161.674	163.384
Income from projects	179.493	29.618
Income from services rendered	26.727	0
Subscriptions from members	12.730	9.737
Subsidies	107.646	67.721
Other income	23.084	16.793
Total	511.354	287.253
Expenditure		
Payroll cost	238.894	189.688
Office Administration expenses	45.057	45.166
Project costs	124.709	15.550
Cost of services rendered		
Third party services	3.994	4.209
Printing and publications	12.835	13.696
Transportation and travelling expenses	16.080	19.197
Obsolete stock	878	
Finance cost	694	313
Total	443.141	287.819
Surplus for the year	68.213	(566)

GOVERNANCE

CONSTITUTION

During 2012, the Council proposed some changes to the Constitution, to be voted at the March 2013 AGM.

COUNCIL

During the 2012 AGM there were elections for a new Council.

In total the Council met five times in 2012, four in the new composition and one in the old in January 2012. The Council met shortly after the AGM on 26 March 2012 and allocated their roles. The Council was formed as follows. The Council composition was decided as follows:

Melis Charalambides, Chairman
Alan Crabtree, Vice Chairman and Ringing Officer
Stavros Christodoulides, Secretary
Christakis Charalambides, Treasurer
Loria Phylakti, Social Secretary
June Neal, Birdline Officer
Eugene Benjamin, Fundraising Officer
John Stapley, Field Trips Officer
Chris Stavrou, Council Member
Dan Rhoads, Co-opted Member

STAFF

The BirdLife Cyprus staff during 2012 were the following:

Foteini (Clairie) Papazoglou, Executive Director
Martin Hellicar, Campaigns Manager
Alan Tye, Research Coordinator (from June 2012)
Melpo Apostolidou LIFE Oroklini Coordinator
Chariklia Kapsali, Development Officer (from January 2012)
Tassos Shialis, Illegal Bird Killing Campaigns Officer
Vasiliki Anastasi, Natura 2000 Officer
Constantinos Charalambous, Presidency and Communications Officer (from April 2012)
Christian Christodoulou-Davies, Project Officer (June to October 2012)
Anastasia Patsalis, Office Administrator

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A number of people have helped BirdLife Cyprus during the year through their voluntary work. First and foremost the members of the Council with their hard work, offering their time and experience to BirdLife Cyprus.

BirdLife Cyprus depends a lot on volunteers, who give their time and expertise generously, and participate in the numerous surveys BirdLife Cyprus organises and also help in events. A big thank you is due to them.

The BirdLife Cyprus Recorder is also a volunteer. A big thank you to Colin Richardson for his dedication and valuable time in producing our 'bird' publications as Bird Recorder. Colin Richardson who recently handed over to Jane Stylianou (in February 2013) has done an excellent job over the years in collecting all the bird records from our members and friends and producing excellent reports and checklists. Colin Richardson produced the Annual Checklist and the Annual Bird Report in 2012, while Jane Stylianou took over the Monthly Bird Checklist. Both deserve a lot of thanks.

The work carried out during 2012, could not had been carried out without the valuable and fundamental support from our funders:

The Tasso Leventis Conservation Foundation

The RSPB (Royal Society for the Protection of Birds/BirdLife Partner in the UK)

NABU, our Partner in Germany and the Heinz Sielmann Foundation in Germany

The MAVA Conservation Foundation, through BirdLife International

The A.G. Leventis Foundation for their annual donation

The EU LIFE Instrument for the Environment (Oroklini Project),

The EU European Regional Development Fund (Gypas)

The EU Life Long Learning programme, Leonardo DaVinci

The Department of Agriculture for funding the Farmland Bird Index work

The Environment Department of the SBAA's for funding for Antenna Studies Overview Report

The Cyprus Human Resource Management Authority

Our members (in Cyprus and abroad) through the subscriptions

Smaller amounts were also received from the following funders:

The Bank of Cyprus

Charalambides/ Christis Ltd

The Republic Environment Department of the Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment

The Republic Vet Services

The European Commission, via Kuskor

BirdLife Cyprus

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