



BirdLife Cyprus

Annual Report of Activities

2013



March 2014



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 2013 As presented at the BirdLife Cyprus AGM 2014 30 March 2014 at Classic Hotel, Nicosia.

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.

Monitoring of species

- **Common Bird Monitoring Scheme:** during 2013, with funding from the Department of Agriculture, BirdLife Cyprus upgraded its work on monitoring of bird populations through expanding the **Common Bird Monitoring Scheme**, in order to produce for the first time an index of Farmland Birds for the government of Cyprus to meet various EU obligations. During 2013 we carried out transects in more than 100 1km² and performed analysis on the results.
- **Breeding Bird Atlas and Article 12 Report (Birds Directive):** during 2013, with funding from the Game and Fauna Service we started work on the distribution of the breeding birds of Cyprus, in order to

contribute with data to the second European Breeding Bird Atlas in 2017. The data collected during 2013 was used for completing the data report and database for the Article 12 report under the Birds Directive, which BirdLife Cyprus won the tender to prepare for the Game and Fauna Service.

- **Waterbird Census:** during 2013 BirdLife Cyprus also continued and intensified the waterbird monitoring scheme, especially emphasizing improved coverage during most important months.
- It also continued some long running programmes of **monitoring, such as migrant raptors** in Akrotiri in the autumn and some more sites in spring, the **Audouin's gull nest count** in Kleidhes Islands at Cape Andreas, Karpasia in May, **the Griffon Vulture** population of Cyprus



- *Through our monitoring schemes and the help of our volunteers we gather data on several species ©Melpo Apostolidou*

(in April and December) and the **Eleonora's falcons** survey in Sep.

- **Data from birdwatchers:** apart from the systematic surveys, BirdLife Cyprus continued to collect a lot of records from birdwatchers, which are also extremely important for giving us a picture of what's happening to Cyprus birds. During 2013 we had a change of bird Recorder, as Colin Richardson retired from the role and Jane Stylianou took over the role. Our database of records now has hundreds of thousands of records.
- www.birdlifecyprus.org/en/html-6-Species_work.html

Site protection (Important Bird Areas)

- **Important Bird Areas in Cyprus:** During 2012, BirdLife Cyprus completed the technical part of the new inventory for the **Important Bird Areas in Cyprus**, and that was approved by BirdLife International in **August 2013**. The new IBA Catalogue for Cyprus now includes 34 sites, up 15 sites from the 19 previously identified. The new inventory will be an important additional tool for the protection of birds and their important sites in Cyprus.
- **Site protection:** during 2013, BirdLife Cyprus participated actively in the Republic Ad hoc Committee for Appropriate Assessment, which examines studies about projects that might affect Natura 2000 areas. We participated and offered our views and expertise on projects that could potentially affect the



- *The precipitous, coastal, chalk cliffs of Cape Aspro are a small site of great importance as one of only two nesting sites for Eleonora's Falcon (*Falco eleonorae*) in Cyprus ©BirdLife Cyprus*

Ezousa Valley IBA, the Ayia Thekla IBA, the Pafos Forest IBA, Akamas IBA, and other sites. We also commented informally on the Akamas Management Plan which is expected to be adopted in 2014.

- www.birdlifecyprus.org/en/html-8-Habitats_and_Sites.html

Illegal Bird Trapping Campaign

- During 2013, **BirdLife Cyprus continued its campaign against illegal bird**, an issue which is close to the heart of its members, with funding from the RSPB, the MAVA Foundation, NABU, our Partner from Germany, and the Heinz Sielmann Foundation. During 2013, we continued **our monitoring programme of illegal bird**

trapping activity in spring, autumn and winter for the 12th consecutive



- *Illegal trapping with mist nets is one of Cyprus major problems @BirdLife Cyprus*

year. Unfortunately the trapping levels in 2013 were still very high, almost as high as 2012. For the first time we analysed our data using TRIM software the index showed that trapping levels in the autumn (the main trapping season) were 54% higher than the starting year of 2002.

- During 2013, with funding from MAVA, we also organized two workshops for putting together a **Strategic Action Plan against illegal bird trapping** which we hope will be adopted by Competent Authorities during 2014 and we produced a new brochure on illegal bird trapping, which highlights the full extent of the problem.
- **During 2013**, with funding from MAVA we also continued our awareness raising campaign about illegal bird trapping. With radio messages, billboards and plenty

more activities planned for 2014. There was also a lot of press reporting.

- **BirdLife Cyprus** gave numerous interviews during the year on the issue of illegal bird trapping in Cyprus and there followed numerous press clippings.
- During 2013, BirdLife Cyprus received significant help from the RSPB, our Partner in the UK, in advocating against illegal bird trapping in the British Bases and against development pressures in Akrotiri, the Western Sovereign Base.
- www.birdlifecyprus.org/en/html-7-Illegal_Bird_Trapping.html

Bird Ringing

- BirdLife Cyprus runs the **Ringing Scheme** in Cyprus, and during 2013, we continued also our Ringing programme. With help from visiting ringers around **3000 birds** were ringed and now our database of records includes more than 73000 records from 11 different sites across the island. We organised two ringing demonstrations



- *Under our ringing scheme in 2013, around 3000 birds were ringed @BirdLife Cyprus*

for members and the public, one in Pafos in spring and one in Pyla, in the autumn.

Policy

- **Common Agricultural Policy:** BirdLife Cyprus was active during 2013 in the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy. BirdLife Cyprus actively participated in submitting proposals and lobbying MEPs and officials for changes in the policy, and pushing for increased greening measures. It was also very active during 2013 in submitting detailed proposals to the Department of Agriculture proposing specific measures for Rural Development for the period 2014-2020.
 - BirdLife Cyprus also tried to influence the identification of **High Nature Value areas in Cyprus**, which can be an important component for the new **Agricultural policy** implementation.
 - BirdLife Cyprus was also active in influencing the **Structural Funds**
- Partnership Agreement** and the allocation of funding to nature and biodiversity. It had meetings with the Planning Bureau, the Environment Department and the Game and Fauna Service, and actively lobbied for a lot more **funding for Natura 2000 and biodiversity for the period 2014-2020**.
- BirdLife Cyprus also participated in the preparation of the **Cyprus National Strategy for Adaptation to Climate Change**, which will be finalised during 2014, putting particular emphasis on the importance of ecosystem based adaptation and protection of biodiversity.
 - Finally, BirdLife Cyprus actively engaged with an **NGO Coalition in Cyprus** working on the **reform of the NGO law in Cyprus**, and the adoption of a **new legislative framework for Charities** for Cyprus. The NGO law group is called NGO Initiative Cyprus. [www.ngoinitiativecyprus.org]

COMMUNICATION WITH MEMBERS AND MEMBER ACTIVITIES

Servicing and communicating with the members, remained an important activity during 2013. Unfortunately during 2013, BirdLife Cyprus saw a drop in its membership which seems to be related to the economic crisis which hit Cyprus suddenly in March 2013, and which caused many of the members not to renew and lapse.

Members:

At the end of 2013, **the number of members was 487**, compared to the end of 2012 when they were 547, so a drop of 60 members. This seems to be related to the economic crisis and the effect it had on peoples' incomes and psychology.

- However, during 2013 the number of **subscribers** to the BirdLife Cyprus **electronic newsletter**, continued to rise steadily. We now have **2574**, so 400 subscribers more than this time last year when there were 2138 subscribers. The newsletter started in May 2010 with 600 subscribers. So numbers keep climbing all the time.
- During 2013, BirdLife Cyprus **published regularly** the completely revamped **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.
- BirdLife Cyprus also produced **the quarterly magazine 'Cyprus Wheatear'**.



- During 2013, we also put out **15 press releases** during the year and that resulted in many press clippings mentioning BirdLife Cyprus.
- Through our collaboration with the **Cyprus Community Media Centre** during 2013 we started our own **Radio Show on my CY Radio** once a month around the end of each month.
- We also pumped up our **school programme** with talks in more than **20 schools and groups** and **this** is something we plan to give much more emphasis on this year. Especially now that Oroklini Marsh has the facilities to welcome schools in the field.
- Finally, like every year during 2013, we produced **our Calendar with birds from Europe** and photos from our different BirdLife Partners across Europe.

During 2013, like every year:

- We organised more than **36 field meetings**, including the two 3 day trips to the Karpasia Peninsula and a new

weekend trip to Akamas, combined with the Boat Trip that proved very successful.

- We organised the **Bird Race on 6 April 2013**.
- We organised the **Eurobirdwatch 2013** (1st weekend in October). During 2013 we organised four events, with 41 participants joining in.
- We participated in the **Spring Alive**, recording the first swallows and swifts for Europe.
- Thanks to our Social Secretary, we had many get togethers (End of season in May, Akamas weekend and Boat Trip in September, Dinner Dance in November, new year get together in January). I would like to thank Loria for doing an excellent job organising the get togethers.
- The Birdline was kept operational throughout the year thanks to June Neil

10th Anniversary-BirdLife Cyprus celebrates 10 years since foundation

- 10 years ago the Chairmen of the Cyprus Ornithological Society (1957) and the Chairman of the Cyprus Ornithological Society (1972) came together to found BirdLife Cyprus. In 2013, BirdLife Cyprus celebrated 10 years of existence and celebrated how much it achieved during those years. The event took place on **15 October 2013** at the Leventis Museum in Nicosia. **The same day we also inaugurated an exhibition called 'From the World of Cyprus Birds'** in collaboration with the Leventis Museum in Nicosia. The exhibition included bird photos and bird artefacts from the museum and run through to March 2014.

- On the day of the Anniversary, BirdLife Cyprus had the honour of having **as guests of honour** at the event, **Mr Leventis our President**, and very important funder and supporter, the **General Secretary of the Ministry of Interior, Mr Assiotis, the Environment Commissioner, Mrs Ioanna Panayotou, the Director of Network and Programmes, Dr Hazell Shokellu-Thompson from BirdLife International**. It was a very successful event, drawing more than 300 people at the Leventis Museum. A highlight of the event was the screening of a celebratory video wonderfully produced by Silvio Rasmigo,



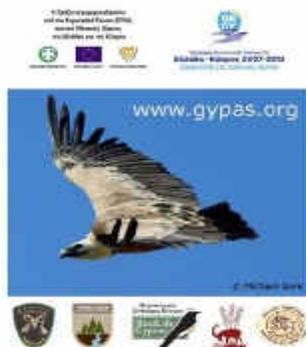
- *Our 10th Anniversary event brought together people who care for the environment and support our cause @BirdLife Cyprus*

Vasiliki Anastasi and Lilia Kapsali, that moved everyone to tears.

PROJECTS AND FUNDRAISING

We continued implementing some important projects during 2013 and applied for more funding.

- 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 finished in January 2014. 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 have been built in Cyprus, and 25 birds in total have been transported from Crete. BirdLife Cyprus had an important role in communications, making the awareness raising materials and giving talks to schools and farmers in the area. In 2013, we released 5 vultures which are now flying freely in the Cyprus skies, and a further eight have been released early in



2014. Meanwhile the Cyprus population appears stable at 10-12 birds, with two successful nesting pairs each year.

www.gypas.org

- The second major project that we continued running in 2013 is 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 2013 gaining praise from the External Monitoring Team and the European Commission.

Most importantly during 2013 BirdLife Cyprus carried out the water management works at the site, thereby transforming the site for the benefit of birds. The project ends in 2014 and BirdLife Cyprus' priority for 2014 will be to find funding so that management can continue.

www.orokliniproject.org

- We also completed a project coordinated by the partner of BirdLife International in



Spain, on Ornithological Tourism in protected areas in the Mediterranean, which was funded through the Leonardo Da Vinci programme of the EU. Through this project we produced a brochure on birdwatching in Cyprus, which has attracted the interest of **the Cyprus**

Tourism

Organisation, which on the basis of this, **decided to fund BirdLife Cyprus' participation in the British Birdwatching Fair in 2014 for the first time.**

<http://www.birdlifecyprus.org/en/html-131-Mediterraves.html>

- During 2013, our project funding from the RSPB continued, mainly focused on monitoring illegal bird trapping and site protection.
- Additionally, a new funding project, funded by our Partner in Germany, **NABU, and the Heinz Sielmann Stiftung Foundation** stepped in to cover the running costs of the illegal bird trapping monitoring programme!
- **During 2013**, we advanced on sampling for a project called **Barcoding**, which is funded by the Tasso Leventis Foundation and which has made significant progress in looking at the DNA of possible species in Cyprus, such as the endemic



subspecies, as well as building a database with the DNA of all commonly occurring migrants and residents so that they can be used in identifying confiscated birds.

- During 2013, we also **won a tender** together with consultants IACO **to draft the management plans for all Special Protection Areas in Cyprus and to produce Favourable Reference Values for them.** This project will run the next three years.
- During 2013, we also raised some funding from the British Bases in Cyprus, for producing **a bibliographical review of all studies that have been done about the Antennas in Akrotiri** in Cyprus.
- We raised the significant amount of 9600 euros from the **Cyprus Human Resource Management Authority** for employing Lilia Kapsali as a new graduate in 2012.
- We raised **somewhat less funds through membership** due to the decline in membership as described earlier.
- Finally, **BirdLife Cyprus received a bequest during 2013, from ex-member Mrs Nancy Collins.** The Bequest was 15,000 EUR during 2013, but more is expected to be received in 2014. The Council decided to use part of these funds in order to pay for the advance purchase of the Greek Field Guide (the Collins Field Guide) which is expected to be published during 2014/5 and a part to build a birdwatching hide in Oroklini marsh.

Summary Income and Expenditure for the year ended 31 December 2013

Income	2013	2012
Contribution A P Leventis Conservation Foundation	163.909	161.674
Income from projects	154.066	179.493
Income from services rendered	65.317	26.727
Subscriptions from members	10.688	12.730
Subsidies	75.806	107.646
Other income	35.472	23.084
Total	505.258	511.354
Expenditure		
Payroll cost	266.877	238.894
Office Administration expenses	40.734	45.057
Project costs	113.447	122.419
Cost of services rendered	25.524	2.290
Third party services	4.480	3.994
Printing and publications	11.761	12.835
Celebration costs for the 10 th year Anniversary	2.539	0
Transportation and travelling expenses	20.036	16.080
Obsolete stock	459	878
Diminution in value of shares	4.304	0
Finance cost	652	694
Total	490.813	443.141
Surplus for the year	14.445	68.213

GOVERNANCE

CONSTITUTION and STRATEGY

During 2013, the changes to the Constitution, voted at the March 2013 AGM were approved by the Ministry of Interior. During 2013, the Council also adopted the BirdLife Cyprus Strategy for 2013-2020.

<http://www.birdlifecyprus.org/upload/PDFs/BirdLife%20Cyprus%20Strategy%20EN.pdf>

COUNCIL

The BirdLife Cyprus Council met four times during 2013. In January, April, July and October, the 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th meetings of the 2012-2015 term. The Council members remained unchanged 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 2013 were the following:

Foteini (Clairie) Papazoglou, Executive Director
Martin Hellicar, Campaigns Manager
Alan Tye, Research Coordinator (till June 2013)
Melpe Apostolidou, LIFE Oroklini Coordinator
Lilia Kapsali, Development Officer (till October 2013)
Maria Christodoulou, Development Officer (from November 2013)
Tassos Shialis, Illegal Bird Killing Campaigns Officer
Vasiliki Anastasi, Natura 2000 Officer
Constantinos Charalambous, Communications Officer
Andy Simpkin, Project Scientific Officer (February 2013)
Elliana Vayanou, Project Assistant (June-September 2013)
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. Colin Richardson retired from the position and Jane Stylianou took over in February 2013. A big thank you to both of them for their dedication and valuable time in producing our 'bird' publications.

The work carried out during 2013, could not had been carried out without the valuable and fundamental support from our funders:

The following were the main BirdLife Cyprus funders during 2013:

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 Game Fund Service of the Republic for funding for the Article 12 Report and for producing Management Plans for SPAs in Cyprus

The Department of Agriculture for funding the Farmland Bird Index work

The Environment Department of the SBAs 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 Republic of Cyprus Vet Services

The Bank of Cyprus

Charalambides/ Christis Ltd

BirdLife Cyprus

Office Address: Strakka, Arch. Makarios Avenue, Kato Deftera, Strakka, Nicosia 2340, Cyprus

Postal Address: P.O.Box 28076, 2090, Nicosia, Cyprus

Tel: +357-455072

Fax: +357-455073

Email: birdlifecyprus@birdlifecyprus.org.cy

Website: www.birdlifecyprus.org

Registered Society number: 4



<https://www.facebook.com/BirdLifeCyprus>



<https://twitter.com/birdlifecyprus>