



DEPARTMENT
OF ANTIQUITIES
CYPRUS

PRESS RELEASE

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'153 birds' flock to Kato Pafos

With nature coming into bloom and spring migration underway, the '153 birds' exhibition makes its way to the archaeological site of Kato Pafos, one of the 34 Important Bird Areas of Cyprus, but there is a sad twist to the story...

Following the great success of the '153 birds' drawing and photography exhibition in Nicosia last December, BirdLife Cyprus in collaboration with the Department of Antiquities is taking the exhibition to Pafos, to give people the opportunity to enjoy and learn about birds and the wonder of migration. The area of Kato Pafos Lighthouse is one of the birdwatching hotspots of the island as well as a spring migration 'hub', making this celebration of birds at this location and time of the year all the more pertinent.

The '153 birds' exhibition was the artistic result of BirdLife Cyprus' '153 birds' campaign. The starting point of the campaign and drawing competition was a successful event organised by BirdLife Cyprus last spring at Famagusta Gate Moat, where more than 200 people of all ages gathered to listen to fairy tales and songs about birds and to draw pictures of birds. Within the two months that followed, BirdLife Cyprus received more than 300 drawings from children, teens and adults, the pick of which are presented in the exhibition.

The sad twist to this story lies behind the number 153. Over 400 bird species have been recorded in Cyprus. Of these, 280 are regularly occurring species, and 153 of these are affected by illegal bird trapping, being caught in nets or on limesticks. This sad tally gave the title to the '153 birds' campaign. Unfortunately, the number 153 is anything but static. In the two months after the '153 birds' campaign ended, two additional species were found trapped and were added to this deadly list. As a result, the number of bird species affected by illegal trapping has now climbed to 155, proving once more the non-selective nature of industrial scale illegal bird trapping in Cyprus. Each year hundreds of thousands of birds are killed in Cyprus as a result of this illegal activity, with the worst year recorded to date being 2014 when it is estimated that over 2.5 million birds were killed.

Making people aware of the beauty of our birds and the wonder of migration can go a long way towards helping halt illegal bird killing. The hosting of the exhibition at Kato Pafos creates a perfect opportunity for both young and old to enjoy drawings and photographs of Cyprus' birds at this fascinating historical and bird rich site.

The exhibition will be on view from 10 March 2017 until 11 May 2017 at the Visitors Centre at the archaeological site of Kato Pafos and is open to the public Monday – Sunday. For the opening hours please visit the [Department of Antiquities' website](#).

Funding for this project was from the Champions of the Flyway Bird Race, organized jointly by BirdLife International and SPNI (BirdLife in Israel).

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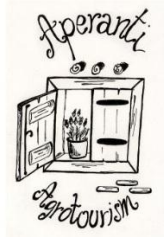
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Notes to the editors:

1. **BirdLife Cyprus** is a registered, non-governmental, not for profit organisation (NGO) that dedicates itself to the conservation of wild birds and their habitats in Cyprus. It was formed in 2003 through the merge of the two Cyprus Ornithological Societies and now has offices in Strakka, Nicosia comprised by professional staff. <http://www.birdlifecyprus.org/>
2. For more information on the campaign '**153 birds**' www.birdlifecyprus.org/153birds