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Σύνδεσμος Κύπρου

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UPDATE on illegal bird trapping activity in Cyprus

Covering the spring 2014 findings of BirdLife Cyprus' continuing monitoring programme for illegal bird trapping in Cyprus and providing an overview of the latest developments regarding the problem

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Περίληψη

Η παρούσα αναφορά παρουσιάζει τα τελευταία ευρήματα του συνεχόμενου και συστηματικού προγράμματος παρακολούθησης της παράνομης παγίδευσης πουλιών του Πτηνολογικού Συνδέσμου Κύπρου για την άνοιξη 2014, ενώ παράλληλα κάνει και μια ανασκόπηση της κατάστασης που επικρατεί για αυτό το θέμα στο νησί. Επισημαίνεται ότι η αναφορά αυτή έχει ως κύριο στόχο τους υπεύθυνους στα κέντρα λήψης αποφάσεων και τους πολιτικούς, με σκοπό την ενημέρωση, την ευαισθητοποίηση και την κινητοποίηση για πιο αποτελεσματική δράση για αντιμετώπιση αυτού του χρόνιου οικολογικού προβλήματος, το οποίο έχει αυξηθεί δραματικά τα τελευταία χρόνια.

Η ανάλυση των καταγραφών από την έρευνα πεδίου με το πρόγραμμα TRIM έδειξε μια μείωση της τάξης του 57% για την παγίδευση με δίχτυα για την άνοιξη 2014, σε σύγκριση με την άνοιξη 2007. Αυτή η τάση μειωμένων ανοιξιότικων επιπέδων παγίδευσης, σε σύγκριση με τα επίπεδα όταν ξεκίνησε η ανοιξιότικη παρακολούθηση της παγίδευσης, έχει παρατηρηθεί τα τελευταία χρόνια. Ωστόσο, αυτά τα ενθαρρυντικά χαμηλά ανοιξιότικα επίπεδα παγίδευσης έχουν καταγραφεί και προηγουμένως, όπως έγινε το 2012 και το 2013, αλλά ακολούθως καταγράφηκαν δυστυχώς πολύ ψηλά επίπεδα παγίδευσης και για τα δύο έτη κατά την φθινοπωρινή αποδημία, η οποία αποτελεί και την κύρια περίοδο παγίδευσης. Παράλληλα, καταγράφηκε και αυτήν την άνοιξη η μεγάλη διαφορά των τελευταίων χρόνων στα επίπεδα παγίδευσης με δίχτυα μεταξύ των Βάσεων και της Δημοκρατίας, ενώ η Δημοκρατία έχει να αντιμετωπίσει την έξαρση που παρατηρείται στη χρήση ξοβέργων (πάνω από 2,600 ξοβέργα εντοπίστηκαν από περιβαλλοντικές ΜΚΟ – δείτε το κεφάλαιο 'Αποτελέσματα' της αναφοράς) και τα εστιατόρια που σερβίρουν παράνομα *αμπελοπούλια*.

Συμπερασματικά, οι ανοιξιότικες καταγραφές και η αναλύση τους έδειξαν σχετικά χαμηλά επίπεδα παγίδευσης πουλιών, ακολουθώντας την τάση που έχει παρατηρηθεί στις πρόσφατες ανοιξιότικες περιόδους. Παρόλα αυτά, ο Πτηνολογικός Σύνδεσμος Κύπρου θα παραμείνει επιφυλακτικός μέχρι το ερχόμενο φθινόπωρο, το οποίο είναι η κύρια περίοδος παγίδευσης και αποτελεί πιο αξιόπιστη ένδειξη της συνολικής κατάστασης της παγίδευσης πουλιών στην Κύπρο – οι καταγραφές των επιπέδων παγίδευσης για τις φθινοπωρινές περιόδους του 2012 και 2013 έδειξαν μια πολύ πιο ανησυχητική εικόνα.

Οι προσπάθειες πάταξης από την Υπηρεσία Θήρας & Πανίδας και το Κλιμάκιο Πάταξης Λαθροθηρίας της Αστυνομίας των Βρετανικών Βάσεων ήταν περιορισμένες – σύμφωνα με την πληροφόρηση που είχαμε το Επαρχιακό τμήμα Λάρνακας & Αμμοχώστου της Υπηρεσίας Θήρας δεν είχε καμιά υπόθεση σύλληψης ατόμου για παράνομη παγίδευση πουλιών κατά τη διάρκεια της άνοιξης 2014, ενώ η Αστυνομία των Βρετανικών Βάσεων Δεκέλειας είχε μερικές συλλήψεις παγιδευτών την ίδια περίοδο. Από την άλλη το Κλιμάκιο Πάταξης Λαθροθηρίας της Αστυνομίας Κύπρου, το οποίο είχε στενή συνεργασία με τους ακτιβιστές της οργάνωσης CABS, συνολικά είχε 15 συλλήψεις παγιδευτών.

Οι πρόσφατες δικαστικές αποφάσεις από τα Δικαστήρια των Βρετανικών Βάσεων Δεκέλειας και Ακρωτηρίου είναι πολύ ενθαρρυντικές, οι οποίες καταδίκασαν παγιδευτές σε ποινή φυλάκισης 3 μηνών (Μάιος 2014) και ποινή φυλάκισης 2 μηνών & πρόστιμο €700

(Φεβρουάριος 2014) αντίστοιχα για παραπτώματα σχετικά με την παγίδευση πουλιών. Αυτές οι δικαστικές αποφάσεις αποτελούν αποφάσεις ορόσημα και τα Δικαστήρια των Βρετανικών Βάσεων έχουν κάνει ένα μεγάλο βήμα προς την επιβολή αποτρεπτικών ποινών για σοβαρά εγκλήματα κατά της άγριας ζωής όπως είναι η παράνομη παγίδευση πουλιών. Τώρα είναι σημαντικό να υπάρξει συνέχιση της επιβολής τέτοιων αποτρεπτικών δικαστικών ποινών από τα Δικαστήρια των Βρετανικών Βάσεων, ενώ τα Δικαστήρια στην Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία θα πρέπει να χρησιμοποιήσουν αυτές τις υποθέσεις ορόσημα για να εφαρμόσουν παρόμοιες αποτρεπτικές ποινές.

Ακόμα ένα επιπρόσθετο θετικό αποτέλεσμα ήταν η αθώωση των ακτιβιστών της οργάνωσης CABS σε 2 δικαστικές υποθέσεις (Μάρτιος και Μάιος 2014) από το Επαρχιακό Δικαστήριο Αμμοχώστου. Οι ακτιβιστές της CABS είχαν κατηγορηθεί άδικα για παράνομη είσοδο και πρόκληση υλικών ζημιών σε ιδιωτική περιουσία. Αυτές οι δικαστικές αποφάσεις ουσιαστικά δικαιώνουν τις νόμιμες δραστηριότητες και προσπάθειες που κάνουν οι περιβαλλοντικές οργανώσεις για τερματισμό της παράνομης παγίδευσης πουλιών, και αποτελούν ένα ξεκάθαρο μήνυμα ότι δήθεν κατηγορίες όπως 'παράνομη είσοδος' και 'πρόκληση υλικής ζημιάς σε ιδιωτική περιουσία', τις οποίες συχνά χρησιμοποιούν οι παγιδευτές, δεν υφίστανται σε κανένα νόμιμο δικαστήριο.

Ο Πτηνολογικός συνέχισε την πρωτοβουλία του, η οποία χρηματοδοτείται από το Ίδρυμα MAVA μέσω του BirdLife International, για την υιοθέτηση ενός Στρατηγικού Σχεδίου Δράσης (ΣΣΔ) κατά της παράνομης παγίδευσης πουλιών στην Κύπρο, η οποία ξεκίνησε το 2013 με την εμπλοκή όλων των ενδιαφερόμενων φορέων. Το τελικό κείμενο του ΣΣΔ στάλθηκε σε όλους του κύριους φορείς για υιοθέτηση στο τέλος Απριλίου 2014 και τώρα βρισκόμαστε σε ένα κομβικό σημείο για την επιτυχία αυτής της πρωτοπωριακής πρωτοβουλίας. Ο Πτηνολογικός συνεχίζει την πίεση για την υιοθέτηση της στρατηγικής και καλούμε όλους τους ενδιαφερόμενους φορείς όπως το πράξουν. Η υιοθέτηση του Σχεδίου θα αποτελέσει και το εργαλείο για να ξεκινήσουμε να εργαζόμαστε από κοινού για τον τερματισμό αυτής της οικολογικής καταστροφής. Η υιοθέτηση και η εκτύπωση του Σχεδίου αναμένεται τον Ιούλιο 2014.

Η αναφορά χωρίζεται στα ακόλουθα κεφάλαια:

- Κεφάλαιο 1 παρουσιάζει μια σύνοψη της παγίδευσης πουλιών στην Κύπρο, δίνει κάποια ιστορικά στοιχεία αυτής της δραστηριότητας, κάνει αναφορά στην εθνική νομοθεσία όσον αφορά την προστασία των πτηνών και παρουσιάζει την τρέχουσα κατάσταση,
- Κεφάλαιο 2 παρουσιάζει το πρόγραμμα παρακολούθησης του Πτηνολογικού Συνδέσμου Κύπρου,
- Κεφάλαιο 3 παρουσιάζει τα αποτελέσματα της έρευνας πεδίου και την ανάλυση από το πρόγραμμα TRIM, τα στοιχεία από τις προσπάθειες πάταξης των αρμοδίων αρχών και το πολιτικό και κοινωνικό κλίμα που επικρατεί, και

- Κεφάλαιο 4 είναι η συζήτηση, όπου γίνεται μια σύνοψη της κατάστασης της παράνομης παγίδευσης πουλιών και τονίζεται η σημασία για υιοθέτηση μιας στρατηγικής κατά της παράνομης παγίδευσης πουλιών, συμφωνημένη από όλους.

Τα έξοδα για την εργασία πεδίου του Πτηνολογικού (καύσιμα), καθώς και τα έξοδα των εκάστοτε εθελοντών, καλύπτει η οργάνωση του BirdLife International στη Γερμανία, NABU, καθώς και το Heinz Sielmann Stiftung Foundation, ενώ το RSPB καλύπτει τους μισθούς.

Summary

This report presents the latest findings of the on-going and systematic BirdLife Cyprus surveillance programme on illegal bird trapping, relating to the spring 2014 season, while also providing an overview of the current climate regarding this issue on the island. It is highlighted that this report is mainly aimed at top decision makers and politicians, with the aim of informing, raising awareness and generating momentum for more effective action to tackle this chronic ecological problem, which has grown dramatically in the last few years.

The TRIM analysis of the survey data showed that mist netting activity for spring 2014 decreased by 57% compared to spring 2007, in line with the general pattern of recent years of lower spring trapping levels compared to when the spring monitoring began. However this encouraging low trapping activity for the spring seasons has been observed before, followed by very high trapping activity levels during the main autumn trapping season, as observed in 2012 and 2013. In addition the pattern of recent years of much higher mist netting activity in the SBAs compared to the Republic has been maintained, while the Republic still has the issue of limestick use (over 2,600 limesticks located by environmental NGOs – see ‘Results’ section of the report) and the restaurants illegally serving *ambelopoulia* to deal with.

In conclusion, the spring survey data and the analysis showed relatively low levels of bird trapping activity, following the pattern of recent spring seasons, but BirdLife Cyprus will remain cautious until the next autumn season, which is a far more reliable indicator of the overall bird trapping situation in Cyprus – in autumns 2012 and 2013 the trapping activity levels revealed a far more alarming situation.

The enforcement efforts of the Cyprus Game & Fauna Service and the SBA Police Anti-poaching unit were limited – to our knowledge the Larnaca & Famagusta district office of Cyprus Game & Fauna Service did not have any prosecutions of trappers this spring, while the Dhekelia SBA Police had a few prosecutions during the spring season. As for the Cyprus Police Anti-poaching unit, which was in close cooperation with the CABS activists, it had a total of 15 trappers prosecuted.

A very positive outcome has been the recent court decisions by the SBA courts at Dhekelia and Akroriti, which sentenced two offenders, one to 3 months imprisonment (May 2014) and another to 2 months imprisonment & a fine of €700 (February 2014), for bird trapping crimes. These court decisions are milestone cases and the SBA courts have taken a big step forward in imposing deterrent court penalties against serious wildlife crime offences such as illegal bird trapping. It is now important to have a continuation of such deterrent court decisions within the SBA courts and the Republic courts to make use of these milestone cases in order to impose their own deterrent sanctions.

Furthermore, another encouraging result has been the vindication of the CABS activists in 2 court cases (March and May 2014) at the Famagusta District Court, who were wrongfully accused of trespassing and causing damage to private property. These court decisions essentially give justice to the legal activities and efforts of environmental organisations to put an end to illegal bird trapping, and are a clear message that accusations such as

‘trespassing’ and ‘causing damage to private property’, usually claimed by suspected bird trappers, will not stand in any court of justice.

BirdLife Cyprus continued with its initiative, funded by the MAVA Foundation through BirdLife International, for the implementation of a Strategic Action Plan (StAP) to tackle illegal bird trapping in Cyprus, which started in 2013 and involved all key stakeholders. A final StAP document was sent for adoption to all the key stakeholders at the end of April 2014 and we are now at a critical stage in the success of this pioneer initiative. BirdLife Cyprus has been following up with all the stakeholders for the adoption of the strategy and we are calling upon the various stakeholders to do so. The adoption of the Action Plan will give us the tool to begin working jointly in order to put an end to this ecological disaster. The adoption and publication of the Plan is expected in July 2014.

The report is separated into the following sections:

- Section 1 provides an overview of the bird trapping in Cyprus, gives some historical background to this activity, makes reference to the national legislation regarding bird protection and presents the current situation,
- Section 2 describes the historical outline of the surveillance programme of BirdLife Cyprus, and
- Section 3 presents the survey data from the monitoring programme and the analysis from the TRIM software, summarises the enforcement data of the competent authorities and gives an outline of the political and social attitudes regarding this issue, and
- Section 4 is the discussion, giving an overview of the illegal bird trapping situation and highlighting the importance for the adoption of a strategy against illegal bird trapping, agreed by all.

All the running costs for the field work (fuel), as well as all the volunteer costs were covered by the Partner of BirdLife International in Germany, NABU, together with the Heinz Sielmann Stiftung Foundation, while the RSPB covers salaries.

1. Overview of bird trapping in Cyprus

Bird trapping in Cyprus has been illegal since 1974, when legislation on hunting was introduced with Law 39/74 and non-selective methods such as mist nets, limesticks and traps were prohibited. Moreover, in 1988 Cyprus ratified the 1979 Bern Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats, adopting a long list of birds as protected, including the Blackcap (*Sylvia atricapilla*) (blackcaps are the main target species of illegal bird trapping in Cyprus). With Cyprus joining the EU, EU Birds Directive (2009/147/EC, formerly 79/409/EEC) was transposed into Cyprus Law N. 152(I)/2003, prohibiting anew the use of non-selective methods including mist nets, limesticks and calling devices, as well as the possession of trapping equipment, trapped birds and the trading and eating of trapped birds.

Historically, trapped birds – mostly Blackcaps - were a food supplement for the mostly poor island inhabitants living off the land. The practice of bird trapping in Cyprus has been recorded in historical documents from the Middle Ages and even earlier times. Trapping as practiced in Cyprus today bears no relation to the ‘traditional’ or historical situation.

Nowadays, bird trapping in Cyprus is widespread and extensive, contributing to the large scale killing of hundreds of thousands of migratory and wintering birds, and survey records show that 152 bird species have been found trapped in mist nets or limesticks, of which 78 are listed as threatened by the EU Birds Directive and / or BirdLife International¹. This is a clear indication of the non-selective nature of these methods. This illegal activity has become a profitable business which is controlled to a large extent by the ‘big’ trappers who are also involved in organised crime, and the Cyprus Game & Fauna Service estimated this illegal business to be of the order of millions of euros².

This report presents the latest survey results for spring 2014, when trappers are after migratory birds, with the main target species being blackcaps (*Sylvia atricapilla*) and other migrant songbirds. Trapped birds are either served as expensive *ambelopoulia* delicacies in local restaurants or are used for home consumption.

¹ BirdLife Cyprus ‘List of birds recorded trapped in mist nets and on limesticks’ http://www.birdlifecyprus.org/upload/PDFs/Trapping/Consolidated%20list%20of%20trapped%20birds_EN.pdf

² Game and Fauna Service (17th March 2010), Position paper presented at the Committee of Environment of the Cyprus House of Parliament during a discussion to change the legislation on the protection and management of wild birds and game species

2. Surveillance programme of BirdLife Cyprus

BirdLife Cyprus is a non-profit NGO working for the protection and conservation of birds, their habitats and wider biodiversity, and is the Partner of BirdLife International in Cyprus. With support from the RSPB (BirdLife partner in the UK), BirdLife Cyprus has undertaken a systematic surveillance programme of illegal bird trapping in Cyprus since autumn 2002, providing a long record of trapping activity and giving the NGO a very good measure of expertise on the issue. The surveillance programme follows a 'Bird Trapping Monitoring Protocol' that was developed by BirdLife Cyprus and the RSPB, in consultation with the Cyprus Game & Fauna Service and the British Sovereign Base Area (SBA) police at the start of the programme. Figure 1 shows a map where bird trapping takes place in Cyprus; monitoring is concentrated in two areas (numbered 1 and 2) where extensive trapping takes place:

1. Kokkinochoria area (Eastern Larnaca/Famagusta area) – this area also includes the Dhekelia Eastern Sovereign Base (ESBA) area), and
2. Ayios Theodoros and Maroni area (Western Larnaca).



Figure 1 Map of Cyprus showing the main trapping areas

Although trapping is also an issue in other areas of Cyprus, the survey efforts focus on these two main areas due to resource limitations and because they hold the highest trapping activity.

The monitoring is undertaken by visiting a random selection of sample squares (1 km²) during daytime hours, with a focus on detecting mist netting activity. Limesticks are recorded if they are found while searching for mist nets. The number of squares has been stratified to ensure a representative coverage of areas under SBA administration and the Republic of Cyprus. For more details on the methodology of BirdLife Cyprus read Appendix 2.

The project is undertaken in close co-operation with the competent authorities of the Republic of Cyprus (the Game & Fauna Service and the Cyprus Police Anti-poaching unit) and the SBA Police. When trapping paraphernalia is found, the BirdLife Cyprus team immediately contacts the relevant enforcement authorities. It should be noted that the BirdLife Cyprus observers never confront suspected trappers and never remove trapping paraphernalia.

BirdLife Cyprus would like to note its particular thanks to the RSPB/BirdLife in the UK, for supporting the project financially since the beginning. Furthermore BirdLife Cyprus would like to thank NABU (partner of BirdLife International in Germany) and the Heinz Sielmann Stiftung Foundation for their financial support from 2013 onwards. NABU and the Heinz Sielmann Stiftung Foundation cover the running costs and volunteer costs of the surveillance programme, whereas the RSPB covers salaries.

3. Results

Survey results

Field survey data

The field survey for spring 2014 was carried out in April 2014 following the standard survey protocol. In total 40 squares were surveyed during this period and BirdLife Cyprus reported all trapping finds to the relevant enforcement authorities, either the SBA Police, the Game & Fauna Service or the Cyprus Police Anti-poaching Unit, depending on the location of the finds.

A summary of the field data for spring 2014 is presented in Appendix 1. In total the findings of the survey included 908 metres of active net rides (cleared “runs” in acacia plantations or other habitats e.g. orchards, olive trees, either holding nets or where there was clear evidence of preparation for the setting and/or use of nets) and 7 mist nets found *in situ* (either classified as Active Set Nets or Active Unset Nets³). Opportunistic checks outside the survey squares detected an additional 147 metres of active net rides and 5 mist nets *in situ* (see Appendix 1).

The total length of active mist net rides within the 406 km² survey area (Larnaka - Famagusta and Ayios Theodoros – Maroni areas) can be estimated at nearly 7 km (908 m x 301 / 40)⁴.

In terms of limesticks, BirdLife Cyprus detected a small number (26 limesticks) this past spring. However, it is noted here that BirdLife Cyprus does not focus its field survey on the detection of limesticks, as other organisations do. For example, during the spring 2014 bird protection camp of the Committee Against Bird Slaughter (CABS), conducted between the 6th to 19th April and 28th April to 9th May, a total of 2,256 limesticks, 27 mist nets and 10 electronic decoy devices were located and confiscated⁵. In addition another organisation, Migratory Birds Conservation in Cyprus (MBCC) detected during their 5-week survey a total of 425 limesticks and 2 electronic decoy devices⁶. It is highlighted that nearly all the limesticks detected by CABS and MBCC were in areas controlled by the Republic of Cyprus.

With the trapping finds of BirdLife Cyprus it is estimated that nearly 200,000 birds could have been killed within the survey area and around **265,000 could have been killed across the whole of Cyprus during spring 2014** (see Appendix 3 for details of the estimation).

Trends in spring netting activity using the TRIM software

The TRIM software has been used to undertake the long term trend analysis for the netting activity for the spring seasons. BirdLife Cyprus has been gathering field data in a systematic

³ Active Set Net (ASN) is a net ride where the mist net is *in situ* and is set and ready for catching birds. Active Unset Net (AUN) is a net ride where the mist net is *in situ* but is furled i.e. the mist net is not stretched up for catching birds but lowered down.

⁴ There are 301.1 km² squares in the survey area that are classified as suitable for trapping activity (on the basis of vegetation characteristics) and 40 of these squares were surveyed in spring 2014.

⁵ Survey data provided on 11th June 2014 via email correspondence with CABS representative.

⁶ Survey data provided on 3rd June 2014 via email correspondence with MBCC representative.

manner for over a decade as part of its surveillance programme, particularly for the main autumn trapping season, and it is possible to use such programmes for the analysis (it is noted that the analysis for the spring season starts from 2007 when BirdLife started to undertake full field surveys for this season). BirdLife Cyprus would like to thank the RSPB for their help and guidance in undertaking the TRIM trend analysis.

TRIM (TRends & Indices for Monitoring data) is a program for the analysis of time series of counts with missing observations. The program can be used to estimate indices and trends and to assess the effects of covariates on these indices and trends. TRIM analyses time series of counts, using Poisson regression and produces estimates of yearly indices and trends (Pannekoek & van Strien 2005)⁷. If observations are missing, TRIM estimates the missing values on the basis of changes observed on plots that were monitored.

In other words, TRIM enables us to use the data from all the trapping survey squares ever surveyed under the BirdLife Cyprus surveillance programme during the spring period, in total 104 squares, even though these squares were not all covered each spring season e.g. a stratified random sample of 40 of these squares were surveyed in spring 2014. The programme 'fills in' missing values for squares that were not covered in a particular year on the basis of the general trend derived from the data as a whole. The TRIM software (freely available from <http://www.ebcc.info/trim.html>) is very widely used for analysis of field data from ecological or biological studies. It works as an index, setting the first year of a time series of data the value of 100 (in this case year 2007) and showing subsequent years relative to this value of 100 as increases or decreases.

The trends in spring netting activity from the TRIM analysis are shown in Figure 2. It is noted that the TRIM software analytical tool was used for the first time for the analysis of the autumn 2013 survey data⁸.

⁷ Pannekoek, J. & van Strien, A. 2005. TRIM 3 Manual (TRends & Indices for Monitoring data). Statistics Netherlands

⁸ Autumn 2013 trapping report (January 2014) BirdLife Cyprus.

<http://www.birdlifecyprus.org/backup/user/Autumn%202013%20Trapping%20Report.pdf>

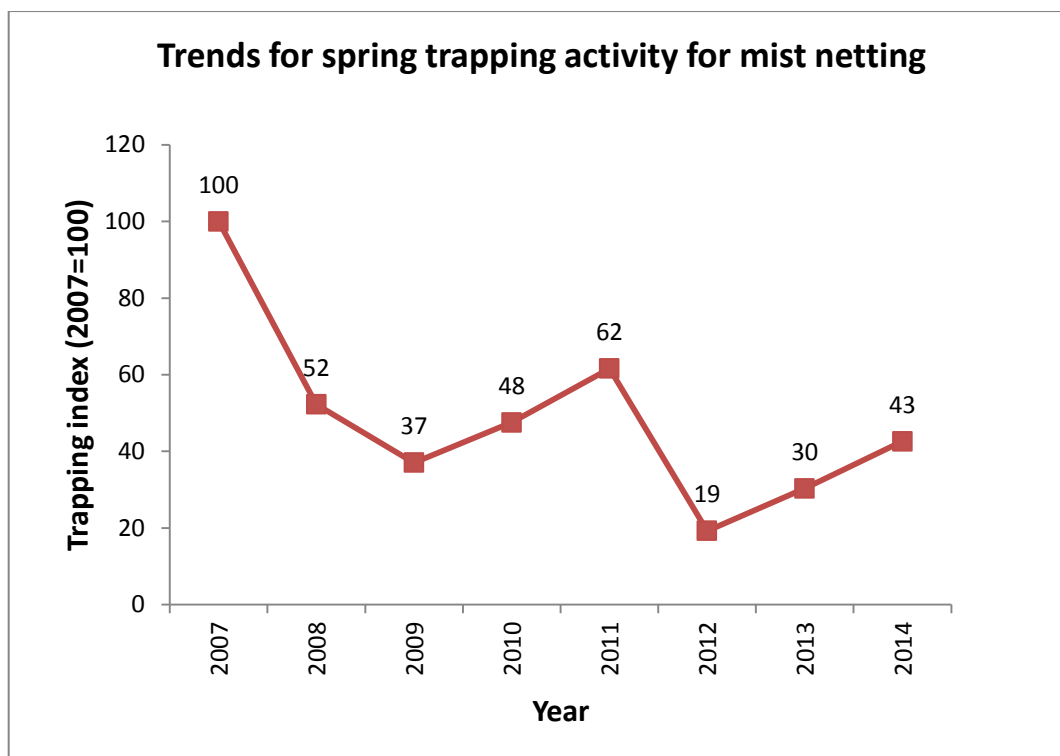


Figure 2 Trends for spring bird trapping activity with the use of mist nets since 2007 across 104 squares – TRIM analysis

As it is shown in the graph above trapping activity for spring 2014 showed relatively low levels of bird trapping activity, following the pattern observed in recent spring seasons. Mist netting activity for spring 2014 decreased by 57% compared to spring 2007 (index value of 100). However in comparison to the findings of last year's spring 2013, trapping activity has increased by 43% (by comparing index points difference from 30 to 43), suggesting a possible resurgence in spring trapping.

It is also highlighted that spring season data can represent a 'false dawn'. Over the last few years spring seasons have shown an encouraging decrease in trapping, only to be followed by very high trapping activity levels for the main autumn trapping season - a similar pattern was recorded for both 2012 and 2013. The spring 2014 results may show a better situation compared to before (i.e. 2007 reference year) but for sure they cannot be taken as a reliable barometer of the trapping situation in Cyprus. We must wait for the autumn 2014 season to reliably assess the state of play. Furthermore the increase shown since 2012 in spring trapping is alarming.

Figure 3 summarises spring mist netting activity under different jurisdictions using the TRIM analytical programme.

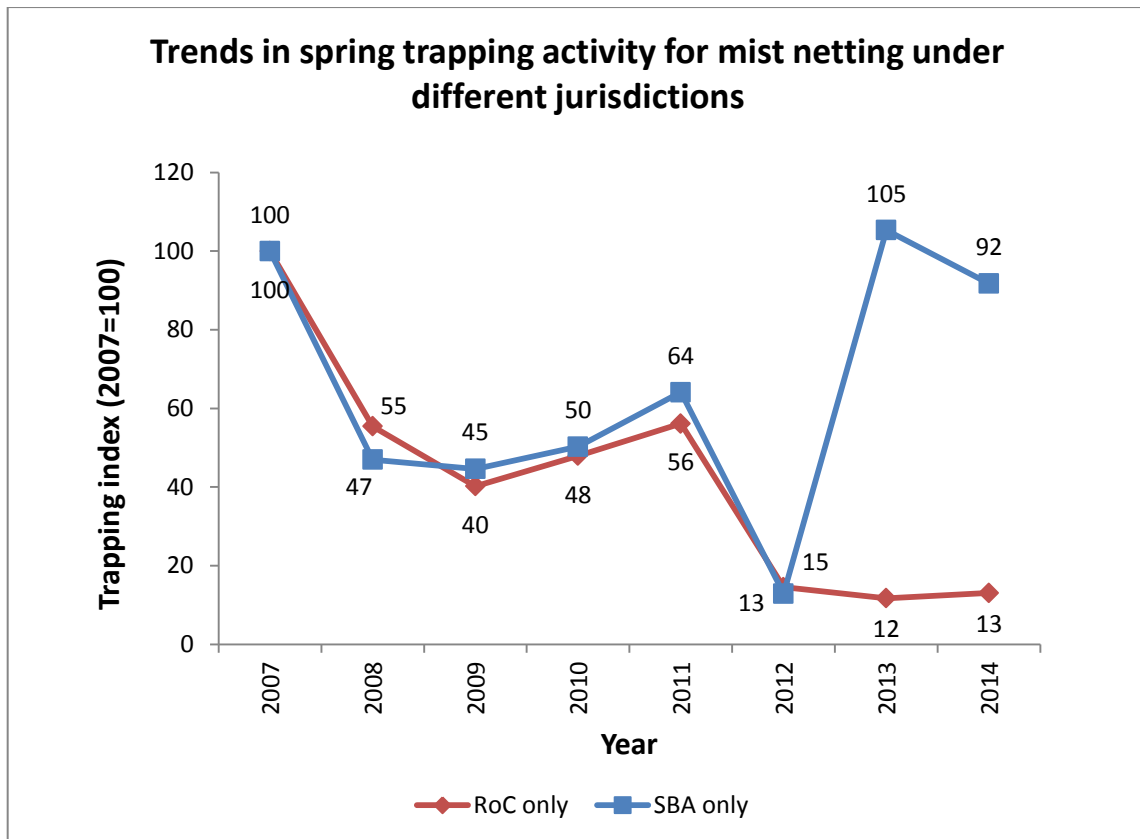


Figure 3 Trends in trapping activity for mist netting within the Republic of Cyprus and within the UK Dhekelia Sovereign Base Area – TRIM analysis

The sample of 104 squares includes 80 squares within the Republic of Cyprus (RoC), 19 within the Dhekelia Sovereign Base Area (SBA) and 5 squares that cover areas in both jurisdictions (referred to as 'Joint' squares). In spring 2014, 28 squares within the Republic of Cyprus, 9 squares within the SBA and 3 'Joint' squares were covered. However, for the analysis and the graph shown above, we have excluded the 5 'Joint' squares that are part of the total sample of 104 squares, in order not to skew the account for neither the RoC nor the SBAs, i.e. any mist netting activity found in 'Joint' squares has not been included.

- For the Republic areas, spring 2014 mist netting activity showed a slight increase of 8% compared to spring 2013 (by comparing index points difference from 12 to 13 values). **In comparison to 2002 there has been a significant decrease of 87% for spring 2014.**
- For the SBA areas, spring 2014 mist netting activity showed a decrease of 12% compared to spring 2013 (by comparing index points difference from 105 to 92 values). **In comparison to 2002 there has been a small decrease of 8% for spring 2014.**
- Overall it is clear from Figure 3 that mist netting activity has decreased significantly since 2007 in the RoC areas, particularly during the last few years. However the opposite has been recorded within the SBAs areas, with a decrease up to 2012 and a dramatic increase in mist netting activity since then, reaching the trapping levels of

the 2007 (reference year). This pattern of much higher mist netting activity in the SBAs compared to the Republic has held in recent years, primarily due to the mist netting hotspot of Cape Pyla and the surrounding areas, and is something that the SBA Administration should address urgently.

With regards to the Republic there is still an issue with limestick use, as shown by the survey data of environmental NGOs (CABS and MBCC) which located over 2,600 limesticks during spring 2014.

Enforcement

There are 3 competent authorities that are responsible for enforcement against illegal bird trapping in Cyprus: the Game & Fauna Service and the Cyprus Police Anti-Poaching unit that are responsible for areas controlled under the Republic of Cyprus, and the SBA Police Anti-Poaching unit responsible for areas within the UK sovereign base areas. The resources of the above-mentioned enforcement bodies are as follows:

- Game & Fauna Service, the responsible body for the implementation of the Birds Directive, has about 90 wardens in total across the whole of island. The Larnaca & Famagusta district, where most of the bird trapping takes place in Cyprus and where the survey area of BirdLife Cyprus is focused, has in total 20 game wardens.
- Cyprus Police Anti-Poaching Unit has 5 officers (used to be 10 police officers in 2011-2012 but resources have been reallocated)
- SBA Police Anti-Poaching Unit is a team of 4 officers to cover the Eastern Dhekelia Sovereign Base Area.

Table 1 summarises the number of reports that BirdLife Cyprus provided to the competent authorities regarding active trapping sites and the overall feedback given by the competent authorities. It is noted that the information presented in the table below refers to active trapping sites as recorded by the survey team (this includes all net codes, P, ANN, AUN and ASN – see Appendix 2 for net classification - and sites where limesticks were found) and were reported to the competent authorities for further action.

Table 1 Summary of trapping reports provided to competent authorities from BirdLife Cyprus during Spring 2014

	Game and Fauna Service – Larnaca & Famagusta	SBA Anti-Poaching Police Unit	Cyprus Police Anti-Poaching Unit
Number of reports	16	19	None reported to this competent authority
Prosecutions / Arrests	No feedback provided	None	N/A

Confiscations	No feedback provided	None	N/A
Nothing found ¹	No feedback provided	19	N/A

Note 1: 'Nothing found' refers to cases where the competent authority checked the trapping location but reported it inactive (no nets or limesticks in situ) upon its visit, therefore no prosecution or confiscation has taken place or no feedback was provided.

Note 2: N/A – Not Applicable

With regards to the Game and Fauna Service (Larnaca & Famagusta district), in total 16 trapping locations were reported, but no feedback has been provided to BirdLife Cyprus to this date and it is therefore assumed that no prosecutions or confiscations took place. If this is so, it's a very disappointing outcome on behalf of the Game and Fauna Service (Larnaca & Famagusta district) and BirdLife Cyprus hopes to see much more active engagement during the autumn season.

With regards to the Dhekelia SBA Police Anti-poaching unit, in total 19 trapping locations were reported but no confiscations or prosecutions were made. In many cases the SBA Police checked the location 1 month or more later, and the feedback included mainly the clearing of trapping paraphernalia such as pole bases and poles or that no activity was found. BirdLife Cyprus believes that there must be a much quicker response time i.e. within a day or so (except in circumstances when a big operation may be planned for a big trapping site), in order for enforcement to act as a deterrent to this activity and to start implementing a 'zero tolerance' approach on the ground.

As for the Cyprus Police Anti-poaching police unit, this season it was working very closely with the CABS activists and hence BirdLife Cyprus did not report any trapping locations directly to them. The cooperation of this unit with the CABS activists was quite effective as a total of 15 trappers were caught red-handed and were prosecuted during spring 2014⁹, including in one case a trapper who was arrested with 6 mist nets, 291 limesticks, and a calling device found in his possession¹⁰.

Social and political attitudes

Illegal bird trapping was covered quite extensively by the media in the last few months, both at an international and national level. At the international level the issue of trapping was covered in newspaper articles in the Daily Mail and The Times, two very popular and widely read newspapers in the UK. In particular the former one with title '*Stop the barbaric*

⁹ Press Release of CABS & Foundation Pro Biodiversity (SPA), 13th June 2014.

¹⁰ Press Release of the Cyprus Police dated 17/4/2014 with title 'Poaching – Law for the protection and management of wild birds'

<http://www.police.gov.cy/police/police.nsf/All/58844C9B9E6D4329C2257CBD005D46D0?OpenDocument>

slaughter' made reference also to the letters that Prince Charles sent to both the Sovereign Base Area Administration and the President of Republic of Cyprus, where the Prince was asking for effective measures to be taken in order to stop this large scale, illegal and profitable activity. This ecological problem was also covered by a journalist at the Agence France-Presse (AFP), an international news agency, giving worldwide exposure to this issue. Appendix 4 provides a list of selected international articles.

At the national level bird trapping was covered in newspaper articles, radios and TV programmes. Although most of the coverage was supportive of the anti-trapping effort, highlighting the large scale killing of birds and the non-selective nature of this activity, there was also pro trapping coverage. During the programme 'Anoixti Grammi' at Sigma TV channel on the 16th May 2014, the President of the so called 'Association of Traditional and Sustainable Hunting Methods' (previously called 'Association of the Friends of Limesticks'), Mr Stavros Neophytou, claimed that the data of environmental NGOs with regards to the large scale and non-selective killing of migratory birds in Cyprus are unsubstantiated and wrong, and an attempt to mislead the general public. During the show the Mayor of Paralimni, Mr Theodoros Pyrilli, and a Member of the Cyprus Parliament, Dr Kyriakos Xadjigiannis, spoke on air and supported the continuation of illegal bird trapping and that it is a traditional, small scale practice. In a very bold manner the Mayor of Paralimni also admitted that money made from illegal bird trapping funded his university studies, a clear indication of the large scale, money making business that bird trapping has become. BirdLife Cyprus prepared a Press Release dismissing all the misleading and unsubstantiated claims made by the pro trapping lobby during the show¹¹.

More encouragingly, there has been a big step forward towards the adoption of a 'zero tolerance' approach within the courts regarding illegal bird trapping. More specifically, on two separate occasions SBA Courts sentenced bird trappers to imprisonment:

- Early February 2014: The Episkopi SBA court sentenced a bird trapper to 2 months imprisonment and a fine of €700 for trapping wild birds with the use of mist nets and live birds as decoys for the purpose of illegal trade as cage birds. This was the first time that a bird trapper was put in prison for a bird trapping offence¹².
- 20th May 2014: The Dhekelia SBA court sentenced a trapper to 3 months in prison for the illegal possession of wild birds and other game and illegal hunting. This is the first ever time that someone is imprisoned for illegal bird trapping and killing in the Dhekelia SBA, which in recent years has become a mist netting hotspot, giving a clear message that bird trapping is a serious wildlife crime and that a 'zero tolerance' will be implemented¹³.

¹¹ 'Illegal bird trapping in Cyprus – BirdLife Cyprus dismisses the claims of pro trapping supporters and welcomes the recent court decision for a 3 month imprisonment of a trapper'. 20/5/2014.

http://www.birdlifecyprus.org/upload/2014_05_20_Birdtrapping_MythsvsReality_Final.pdf

¹² <http://incyprus.philenews.com/en-gb/Showbiz/4118/39799/man-jailed-for-bird-c>

¹³ 'Three months imprisonment for poaching, 20/5/2014 (article in Greek)

<http://www.newzup.com/index.php?id=18669>

'Three months in the prison of the British Bases for poaching, 20/5/2014 (article in Greek)

<http://www.ant1iwo.com/kypros/2014/05/20/treis-mhnes-stis-fylakes-twn-nretanikwn/>

These SBA Court decisions are truly milestone cases where deterrent court penalties have been imposed for the first time on illegal bird trapping offences. Such penalties are in line with the Larnaca Declaration¹⁴ for a 'zero tolerance' approach against illegal bird killing and trapping, which is a serious wildlife crime, and BirdLife Cyprus is hoping to see more deterrent court penalties for such offences from now on, both in the SBAs and in the Republic.

Furthermore, recent court decisions in the Republic of Cyprus Courts vindicated the CABS activists, who on 2 occasions were wrongfully accused of trespassing and causing damage to private property:

- 5th March 2014: The Famagusta District Court decided to dismiss the accusations against the CABS activists for causing damage to property, as claimed by two trappers from the Famagusta area, and ordered one of the trappers to pay a €500 fine for the illegal possession of limesticks. Notably at the same court case and as part of an 'out of Court' settlement, the activists received a compensation of €7,000 by the prosecuted man for causing them body injuries.
- 9th May 2014: The Famagusta District Court dismissed again the charges against the CABS activists of 'trespassing' on private property 'with intent of committing a criminal offence and malicious damage'.

BirdLife Cyprus prepared a Press Release for both court cases, welcoming the outcome of these court decisions¹⁵. These court decisions are particularly encouraging as they give justice to the legal activities and efforts of environmental organisations to put an end to illegal bird trapping, and give a clear message to the illegal trappers that unsubstantiated accusations of 'trespassing' and 'causing damage to private property' are not to be accepted by any court of justice.

¹⁴ Larnaca Declaration under the Bern Convention (July 2011)

<https://wcd.coe.int/com.instranet.InstraServlet?command=com.instranet.CmdBlobGet&InstranetImage=1960735&SecMode=1&DocId=1806244&Usage=2>

¹⁵ Press Release of BirdLife Cyprus 'Recent Court decisions vindicate anti-trapping organisations' (14/5/2014). http://birdlifecyprus.org/upload/2014_05_14_Antitrappingactivists_Courtcase_.pdf
Press Release of BirdLife Cyprus 'BirdLife Cyprus welcomes Court decision vindicating anti-trapping activists' (7/3/2014).

http://birdlifecyprus.org/upload/2014_03_07_Antitrappingactivists_Courtcase_EN_Final.pdf.

4. Discussion

Illegal bird trapping activity with the use of mist nets and limesticks continued during spring 2014, as shown by the survey data from the systematic surveillance programme of BirdLife Cyprus and other data sources (enforcement data from competent authorities, survey data of other environmental NGOs). The overall pattern of spring monitoring in recent years has shown illegal bird trapping activity levels to be lower than in the past – in spring 2014 a 57% decrease was recorded in mist netting activity compared to spring 2007. However spring seasons can represent a ‘false down’ and have been followed by very high trapping activity levels during the main autumn trapping season, as observed both in 2012 and 2013. Additionally it is alarming that since 2012 spring mist netting activity is on the rise, especially within the SBA jurisdiction, and measures should be taken to reverse this pattern, while the RoC still has the issue of limestick use and the restaurants illegally serving birds to deal with. BirdLife Cyprus will remain cautious until the next autumn season, which will provide a far better picture of the overall trapping situation in Cyprus.

Media interest on the trapping issue was quite high in the last few months, both at a national and international level, including newspaper articles, radio references and TV shows. Most of the coverage was anti-trapping, highlighting the true extent of illegal bird trapping in Cyprus and that it contributes to large scale killing of wild birds and that it is non-selective. However there was also TV coverage of the pro trapping lobby group, which claimed that trapping is small scale and that it does not contribute to large scale killing, in an attempt to mislead and to confuse the general public. BirdLife Cyprus responded with a Press Release, dismissing all the unsubstantiated claims of the pro trapping supporters¹¹. It is clear that a long term awareness campaign is needed to make the general public aware of the real ecological impact of bird trapping.

It is also very encouraging to see that courts are starting to consider bird offences as a serious wildlife crime. At the end of May 2014 the Dhekelia SBA court sentenced a trapper to 3 months in prison for the illegal possession of wild birds and other game and illegal hunting – this was the first ever time that someone was imprisoned for illegal bird trapping and killing in Cyprus, giving a clear ‘zero tolerance’ message. A few months earlier the Episkopi SBA court had sentenced another bird trapper to 2 months imprisonment and a fine of €700 for trapping wild birds with the use of mist nets and live birds as decoys, for the purpose of illegal trade as cage birds. Both court decisions are milestone cases and the SBA courts have taken a big step forward in imposing deterrent court penalties. BirdLife Cyprus would like to see now a continuation of such deterrent court decisions at the SBA courts and the Republic courts to make use of these milestone cases in order to impose deterrent court sanctions as well.

Apart from the imposition of deterrent court sanctions for bird trapping offences, another positive outcome has been the vindication of the activists of the Committee Against Bird Slaughter (CABS) on 2 court cases (March and May 2014), who were wrongfully accused of trespassing and causing damage to private property. More importantly, in the former case the trappers were also ordered to pay a €500 fine for the illegal possession of limesticks by the Court, and as part of an ‘out of the Court’ settlement an additional compensation of

€7,000 to the activists for causing them body injuries. These court decisions give justice to the legal activities and efforts of environmental organisations to put an end to illegal bird trapping, and give a clear message that accusations of ‘trespassing’ and ‘causing damage to private property’, usually claimed by suspected bird trappers, will not stand in any court of justice.

BirdLife Cyprus continued with its initiative funded by the MAVA Foundation, through BirdLife International, to develop a Strategic Action Plan (StAP) to tackle illegal bird trapping in Cyprus. The effort begun in 2013 with the organization of 2 workshops and a consultation process was undertaken to receive comments and feedback from all key stakeholders. From the discussions at the workshops the stakeholders identified 7 key areas of action to be included in this strategy: enforcement, courts, policy, awareness raising, habitat management, economic consequences and monitoring & coordination. A final StAP document was sent for adoption to all the key stakeholders at the end of April 2014 and we are now at a critical stage in this pioneering initiative. BirdLife Cyprus has been following up with all the stakeholders for the adoption of the Plan and we are calling upon the various stakeholders to do so. The adoption of the Action Plan will give us the tool to begin working jointly in order to put an end to this ecological disaster and its adoption and publication of is expected in July 2014.

Appendix 1

Survey data for spring 2014

Evidence of illegal bird trapping activity within survey squares

Confidential data – provided upon request

Evidence of illegal bird trapping activity outside survey squares

Confidential data – provided upon request

Appendix 2

Methodology of the trapping surveillance programme

Survey area and sampling strategy

The surveillance project began in 2002 with the coverage of 60 sample squares (each 1x1 km) chosen at random from within a 261 km² study area, which covered most of the Famagusta/Eastern Larnaca area and the Ayios Theodoros – Maroni area.

In 2005, the monitoring became more targeted, focusing on habitat suitable for trapping. Each 1 km square within the study area was classified as either a 'possible bird trapping area' or 'unlikely bird trapping area' based solely on the presence or absence of vegetation suitable for setting limesticks or nets. Surveillance subsequently took place in 'possible' squares only. Some 44 of the original 60 sample squares were 'possible bird trapping area' squares under the new classification. These 44 squares were kept, with another 16 new squares chosen randomly to bring the total sample to 60 again.

Then, in 2007, the survey area was expanded to cover 295 km² for Famagusta/Eastern Larnaca area and 111 km² for Ayios Theodoros – Maroni area, bringing the total survey area to 406 km². This was done after preliminary surveys in autumn 2006 found evidence of extensive trapping on the margins of the original (261 km²) survey area. The sample size was expanded to 100 squares (40 new squares were randomly chosen) to allow for this extension of the survey area. Out of the 406 1 km² squares of the expanded survey area, 301 have been classified as 'possible bird trapping area' squares.

The random selection of sample squares is stratified to ensure representative coverage of areas under SBA, Republic of Cyprus and "Joint" jurisdiction (squares where the two jurisdictions meet). In terms of the analysis of the survey data BirdLife Cyprus is using the TRIM (Trends & Indices for Monitoring data) programme, which enables the analysis of time series of counts with missing observations. The program can be used to estimate indices and trends and to assess the effects of covariates on these indices and trends. TRIM analyses time series of counts, using Poisson regression and produces estimates of yearly indices and trends (Pannekoek & van Strien 2005)¹⁶. If observations are missing, TRIM estimates the missing values on the basis of changes observed on plots that were monitored.

In other words, TRIM enables us to use the data from all the trapping survey squares ever surveyed under the BirdLife Cyprus surveillance programme during the autumn period, in total 104 squares, even though these squares were not all covered each autumn season. The programme 'fills in' missing values for squares that were not covered in a particular year on the basis of the general trend derived from the data as a whole. The TRIM software (freely available from <http://www.ebcc.info/trim.html>) is very widely used for analysis of field data from ecological or biological studies. It works as an index, setting the first year of a time series of data the value of 100 (in this case year 2002) and showing up or down changes in subsequent years relative to this value of 100

Surveying for trapping activity

Surveying consists of a two-man team systematically searching for evidence of illegal trapping activity in the randomly selected one by one kilometre squares. The time taken to

¹⁶ Pannekoek, J. & van Strien, A. 2005. TRIM 3 Manual (Trends & Indices for Monitoring data). Statistics Netherlands

survey each square is recorded, as are weather patterns and the presence or absence of large numbers of migrant birds.

For safety reasons (avoidance of possible confrontation with trappers) the BC observers do not go out in the field at dawn, which is the main period of trapping activity, but carry out surveys between 09:00 and 17:00. Each sample square is surveyed only once each season, partly for safety reasons (minimising the risk of the observers becoming known to trappers) and partly because repeat sampling of each square has no particular value when it comes to analysis of the collected data. Opportunistic observations are also made in the surroundings of squares where mist netting is suspected. Trapping activity includes:

- mist netting activity, which is the main focus of the surveillance programme of BirdLife Cyprus. This is calculated using the total length of active net rides recorded within the survey area; and
- limesticks, using the total number of active limesticks found within the survey area.

Mist nets

The two observers carry out a thorough search of all habitat patches suitable for the setting of mist nets (i.e. all areas with bushes and/or trees) within each sample square. The observers record all direct and indirect evidence of mist net and tape lure use and of net ride preparation and use (e.g. cleared corridors within vegetation for putting up nets, presence of pole bases). The codes used for the various categories of mist netting activity and tape lure use are given below, as are the codes used for recording the type of habitat where trapping activity is detected. The surveyors note cases where they come across enclosed (fenced) areas that they cannot see into at all, or cannot see into well enough to survey fully.

Box 1 Key to survey codes used for the field		
<u>Net code</u>	<u>Habitat code</u>	<u>Tape lure code</u>
O – old ride	A – acacia	P – tale lure present, playing
P – ride recently prepared	C – citrus	L – loudspeakers present
ANN – active no nets present	E – eucalyptus	Y – tape lure present, not playing
AUN – active unset net present	F – fig	U – unknown
ASN – active set net present	J – mulberry	W – electrical wires associated with tape lures
IUN – inactive unset net present	O – olive	B – car battery present
	M – maquis	
	P – pomegranate	
	K – carob	
	Cy – cypress	
	L – lentisk	
	S – syrian plum	

The main net classifications are described below:

- Prepared (P): A net ride that is clearly ready to be used but there is no evidence e.g. bird feathers, blood stains, thrown pebbles, to suggest illegal activity was taking place the previous night / morning (see Figure 4),

- Active No Net (ANN): A net ride that from the evidence found e.g. bird feathers, blood stains, thrown pebbles, indicates that illegal activity was taking place the previous night / morning but no net is present (see Figure 5),
- Active Unset Net present (AUN): A net ride where the trapper has left the mist net on the poles but it is furled i.e. the mist net is not stretched up for catching birds but lowered down (or the net is placed e.g. under a tree) (see Figure 6), and
- Active Set Net present (ASN): A net ride where the trapper has left the mist net set on the poles and it is ready for catching birds (see Figure 7).



Figure 4: Prepared (P) net ride



Figure 5: Active No Net ride (ANN) with blood stains found next to pole bases



Figure 6: Active Unset Net present (AUN) in acacia plantations managed extensively for mist netting



Figure 7: Active Set Net present (ASN) –corridors in orchards are often used for mist netting

Limesticks

While the main effort of the observers is to locate evidence of mist netting, all evidence of limestick activity is also recorded. Limesticks are much harder to locate in the field than mist nets and are often set in a different habitat to mist nets. In addition, incidental evidence for limestick use is hard to detect (though trees pruned to hold limesticks are readily identifiable). It is impractical to search entire 1 km² sample squares for limesticks due to the time consuming nature of the task. The protocol is therefore for the observers to look out for limesticks while concentrating on surveying for mist netting activity.

Appendix 3

Estimation of numbers of birds caught during spring 2014

The following key assumptions are applied for the estimation of the birds killed:

- 12 metres is the assumed average length for a mist net
- 20 birds are caught per 12-m net per day (Magnin, 1986)
- 0.5 birds are caught per limestick per day
- 60 days is the duration of the trapping period for spring and autumn seasons
- 50% scaling factor – applied for springs to account for a lower number of migrating birds passing via Cyprus compared to the autumn
- 301 are the possible bird trapping squares within the survey area as identified from the surveillance programme in 2007 (the random sample of squares surveyed by BirdLife Cyprus is taken from these 301 squares)
- 75% of illegal trapping activity for all of Cyprus takes place within the survey area (based on input from enforcement authorities and other experts)
- For P (prepared) nets it is assumed that they are active every other day while for ANN (Active No Nets), ASN (Active Set Nets) and AUN (Active Unset Nets) nets it is assumed that they are active every day during the trapping season

Using the above assumptions the bird death toll is estimated as follows for autumn:

For nets = [(Total length of P category net rides/2) + (Total length of ANN+AUN+ASN rides)] / (average length of a net) x (20 birds per net per day) x (total number of 'possible bird trapping area' squares / number of squares surveyed) x (length of trapping season in days) x (50% scaling factor – for lower no of birds in spring)

$$= [(778/2) + 0 + 30 + 100] / (12) \times (20) \times (301/40) \times (60) \times (50\%)$$

= **195,274 birds** could have been caught within the survey area in **mist nets**.

For limesticks = (Total number of limesticks found) x (0.5 birds per limestick per day) x (total number of 'possible bird trapping area' squares / number of squares surveyed) x (length of trapping season in days) x (50% scaling factor – for lower no of birds in spring)

$$= 26 \times 0.5 \times (301/40) \times 60 \times (50\%)$$

= **2,935 birds** caught within the survey area on limesticks

In total 198,209 could have been killed in mist nets and limesticks within the survey area during spring 2014. Assuming that the survey area accounts for 75% of the trapping activity in Cyprus, the bird death toll across Cyprus is:

= 198,209 / 75%

= **264,278** could have been killed in nets and limesticks across all Cyprus during spring 2014.

Appendix 4

List of media coverage on illegal bird trapping in 2014

Shortlist of international media articles

- 'Wo Vogelschlächter unbehelligt ihr Unwesen treiben'. Welt, 26/5/2014.
<http://www.welt.de/wissenschaft/umwelt/article128420550/Wo-Vogelschlaechter-unbehelligt-ihr-Unwesen-treiben.html>
- 'Wo Vogelschlächter unbehelligt ihr Unwesen treiben'. MorgenPost, 26/5/2014.
<http://www.morgenpost.de/web-wissen/article128420550/Wo-Vogelschlaechter-unbehelligt-ihr-Unwesen-treiben.html>
- 'Migrating birds end up in cooking pots in Cyprus'. The Rakyat Post, 25/5/2014.
<http://www.therakyatpost.com/features/2014/05/25/migrating-birds-end-cooking-pots-cyprus/>
- 'Poaching in Cyprus reaches 'industrial scale''. The Malay Mail Online, 24/5/2014.
<http://www.themalaymailonline.com/features/article/poaching-in-cyprus-reaches-industrial-scale>
- 'Chypre : 2 millions d'oiseaux migrants tués en 2013'. Sciencesetavenir, 22/5/2014. <http://www.sciencesetavenir.fr/nature-environnement/20140522.OBS8165/chypre-2-millions-d-oiseaux-migrateurs-tues-en-2013.html>
- 'Migrating birds stop off in Cyprus at their peril'. The New Age, 20/5/2014
http://thenewage.co.za/126002-1021-53-Migrating_birds_stop_off_in_Cyprus_at_their_peril
- 'Migrating birds stop off in Cyprus at their peril'. Daily News, 20/5/2014.
<http://www.dailynewsen.com/science/migrating-birds-stop-off-in-cyprus-at-their-peril-h2496680.html>
- 'Migrating birds stop off in Cyprus at their peril'. 20/5/2014.
<http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/afp/140520/migrating-birds-stop-cyprus-at-their-peril> .
- 'Cyprus a 'disaster zone' for birds'. News24, 20/5/2014.
<http://www.news24.com/Green/News/Cyprus-a-disaster-zone-for-birds-20140520>.
- 'Chypre: 2 millions d'oiseaux migrants tués, les écologistes mobilisés'. 20 minutes.fr, 19/5/2014. <http://www.20minutes.fr/planete/1379421-20140519-chypre-2-millions-d-oiseaux-migrateurs-tues-ecologistes-mobilises>.
- 'Who killed cock robin? The Russian mafia did it'. The Times, 10/5/2014.
<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/opinion/columnists/article4085868.ece>
- 'Stop the 'barbaric slaughter' of British songbirds: Prince Charles demands in private letter to head of Army base in Cyprus'. Main on Sunday, 23/3/2014,
<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2586928/Stop-barbaric-slaughter-British-songbirds-Prince-Charles-demands-private-letter-head-Army-base-Cyprus.html>.