



PRESS RELEASE

Nicosia, 18 April 2016

Successful BirdLife Cyprus event '153 birds' which marked the launch of drawing competition

The BirdLife Cyprus event titled '**153 birds**' took place yesterday with **great success** at the Famagusta Gate Moat. Over 200 people of all ages joined us to listen to fairy tales and songs about birds and to draw.

At the event young and old learnt about some of the many bird species found in Cyprus, such as the Barn Swallow, the Nightingale, the Bee-eater and the Hoopoe. The migratory birds have already started their long and difficult journey towards the areas where they will nest in spring. During the day and with a bit of attention, one could easily hear or see Barn Swallows that came to Cyprus to nest, as well as Great Tits and Collared Doves that can be found in Cyprus all year. These are a small example of the different bird species one can see in the cities.

Yesterday's event also marked the **launch of the drawing competition '153 birds'**, for which many children and adults have already submitted their drawings. We hope you will share our fascination for our feathered friends and that they will inspire you to draw them. The drawing competition is open to everyone, young and old, with prizes for the winners in 3 categories (adults category, children and teens category and 'people's choice' category). **The deadline for submissions is 17 June 2016.**

Did you know that the Robin and the Blackcap are among the few birds that sing in winter? Or that the Bluethroat can imitate the sounds of other species, and even mimic the sound of reindeer bells? Or that the Cyprus Warbler, an endemic species to Cyprus meaning it nests only in Cyprus and nowhere else, was pictured on the Cyprus 10 pound banknote? Or that male Chaffinches compete on how many times they can sing in an hour? Or that the male Pallid Harrier does acrobatic areal displays during courtship? This information and much more can be found at www.birdlifecyprus.org/153birds which provides all necessary information about the competition, as well as photographs and information for the birds to inspire you to start drawing!

Coming autumn, when the birds will be migrating towards their wintering grounds, we will award the winners and present the drawings we will have collected from you.

A big thank you to everyone who has already submitted their impressive and creative artworks for the competition! We can't wait to receive everyone's drawings!

For more information www.birdlifecyprus.org/153birds and 22455072.

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

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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 the Rules and Regulations of the competition and the Participation forms: www.birdlifecyprus.org/153birds
- 3) **Why 153?** In Cyprus about 400 different bird species have been recorded. Through the campaign '153 birds' BirdLife Cyprus presents some of the 153 species affected by 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 up to 2.5 million birds were killed. With this in mind, we hope that this campaign will bring everyone closer to the world of birds and help activate them for the need of their protection.