

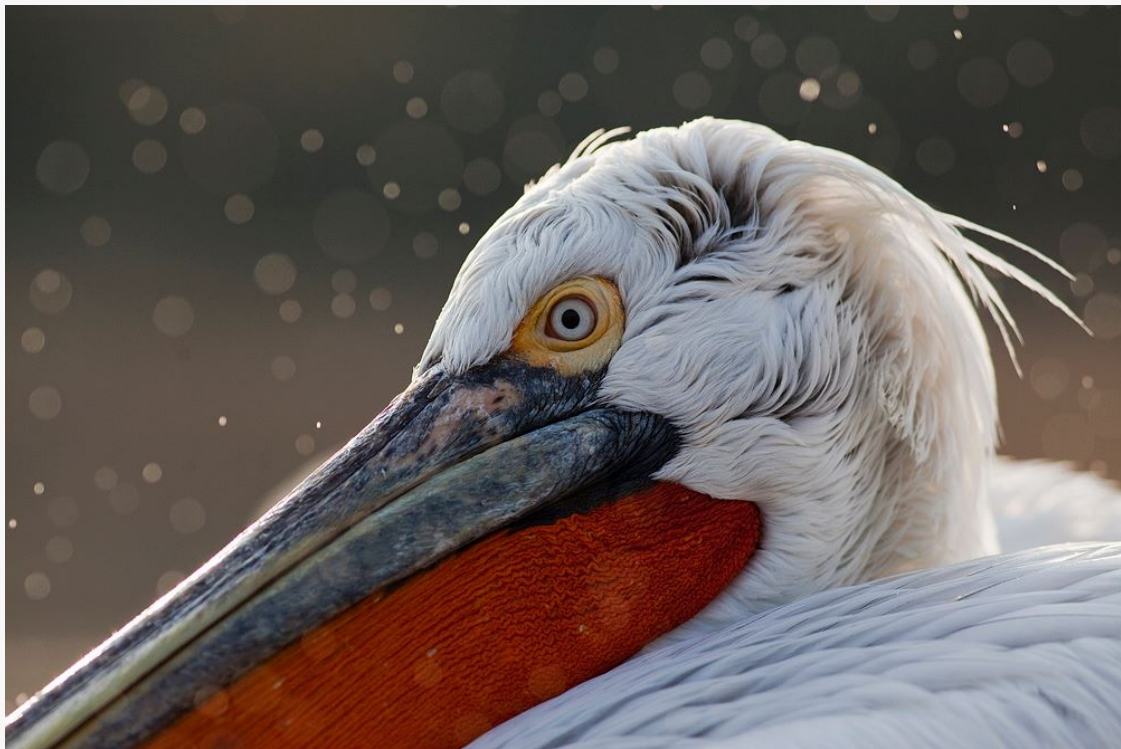


Wildlife Crime Newsletter

March, 2022

BirdLife's bi-monthly newsletter: keeping you up-to-date with what's happening in the fight against the illegal killing of wild birds and other forms of bird persecutions in the African-Eurasian Flyway. Please, send us your feedback to wildlifecrime@birdlife.org.

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Featured news

Malta wants to open spring hunting on Turtle doves and Quails



While most member states and the European Commission is working on to coordinate the resurrection of the collapsed European Turtle Dove population - hunters from France, Spain, Portugal already imposed a hunting moratorium to try to give this vulnerable species a chance - the hunters in Malta lobbied to hunt them migrating to the breeding grounds. Read BirdLife Malta's [post](#).

Events and campaigns

Flight for Survival new campaign

We want to showcase success stories in the fight to tackle wildlife crime! Our work shows that when crime is acknowledged and taken seriously, results can be achieved in a surprisingly short time. Do you have good examples to share? If so, let us know! Follow our social media posts with [#FlightForSurvival](#).



Invisible threat to the Egyptian Vulture

The "Egyptian Vulture New LIFE" is the largest joint vulture conservation initiative, carried out by 15 organizations in more than 14 countries. Poisonous baits, bad practices associated with the use of pesticides in agriculture and also veterinary products that are dangerous to vultures, cause declines for Egyptian vultures and other species of birds of prey. BSPB/BirdLife Bulgaria created an informative [short film](#) (with English subtitles).

Rome Strategic Plan updates

The next Joint Meeting of the Bern Convention Network of Special Focal Points on Eradication of Illegal Killing, Trapping and Trade in Wild Birds (IKB) and the CMS Intergovernmental Task Force on IKB in the Mediterranean (MIKT) is planned between **7-10 June, 2022** in Valencia, Spain. The 5th MIKT workshop continues to aim to facilitate international cooperation as well as the implementation of the guidelines and action plans to tackle IKB.

More news

BirdLife Cyprus measured a spike in migratory bird killings

BirdLife Cyprus has been systematically monitoring bird trapping levels for the last 20 years in trapping areas located in the Republic and the Dhekelia SBA. [Fieldwork analysis for autumn 2021](#) showed worrying signs of increase (132%) in trapping levels with mistnets within the survey areas compared to 2020. These recorded trapping levels amount to just over 600,000 birds that might have been illegally trapped and killed in autumn of 2021 within the survey areas. Read [more](#).



Raptor count monitoring programme in Galala, Egypt

Over 1.5 million birds migrate over Galala Mountains in Egypt every spring and autumn between Eurasia and Africa. Previous surveys ([Megalli & Hilgerloh 2013](#)) revealed that over 1,100 Egyptian vultures migrate over this bottleneck site in spring (see also [Buechley et al 2018](#)), together with large numbers of many other migratory raptors, such as Steppe Buzzards (>116,000 individuals), Black Kites (>10,000 individuals), Steppe Eagles (>8,000 individuals), etc. [Nature Conservation Egypt](#), together with [BirdLife International Middle East](#), [the Bulgarian Society for the Protection of Birds/BirdLife Bulgaria](#), [RSPB](#), [BirdLife International Africa](#) is now launching a raptor monitoring programme in Galala. See [news](#) for more details.

Mass illegal bird killing events

Devastating illegal bird killing events have continued to appear in the news in this recent period. In February, in [Northern Serbia](#) 64 corpses of protected birds were found: 34 Common Buzzards, 21 Great White Egrets, 7 Grey Herons and 2 Great Cormorants. In March, a poisoning case was discovered, this time at the [Eastern boarder of Serbia](#): 9 Common Buzzards and a magpie were the victims of the long-time banned pesticide (carbophuran). Also in



February, in the [Czech Republic](#), 3 poisoned Common Buzzards were discovered along with a couple of foxes in the Klatovy region. In mid-March, the Cinereous Vulture population suffered a big blow [in Bulgaria](#): not less than 4 Cinereous Vultures, a Common Buzzard, 2 shepherd dogs and 2 jackals were found dead.



"Trapped in the desert"

[OSME](#) Council member, Tomas Haraldsson has been in contact with a freelance journalist who regularly writes about nature and environment in the independent media outlet "Syria Direct". As a result, the following [article](#) has been published about the rampant illegal bird trade in Syria.

BirdLife Malta is looking for Spring Watch Volunteers

The spring hunting season is controversial, and Malta is the only EU country that still has a hunting season at this time of the year. Birds are injured or killed during their journey to their breeding grounds in northern Europe. BirdLife Malta is on the lookout for volunteers to assist with the annual Spring Watch operations, and join the campaign to abolish spring hunting. For more information [click here](#).



European Rollers thief nailed by DNA

Proving the illegal activities through compulsive evidence for bird poaching can be very challenging, even if the investigation yields a strong suspicion. DNA markers - just like in other type of crimes - can aid the identification, not only for humans but also for birds. Read [more](#).

Wild birds belong in Nature

The [Hellenic Ornithological Society \(HOS\)](#), receives complaints from bird lovers all over the country about illegal trade of protected songbirds. With the help of its volunteers HOS investigates these reports – as it happened last months at the [Schisto bazaar](#). Responsible authorities were immediately notified and seized hundreds of small birds from the vendors. You can learn more about HOS campaign on illegal pet trade [here](#).



Research & Publications



Assessing African vultures as biomonitors and umbrella species

A [recent study](#) used a systematic approach to evaluate the potential of African vultures as umbrella species and avian biomonitors. Learn more about the study [here](#).

Please, help our new Wildlife Crime e-newsletter to reach its audience by sharing it with colleagues and stakeholders, who may be interested in this topic.



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This newsletter is a joint initiative of BirdLife International's African Eurasian flyway team: Stichting

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