

BIRD'S EYE VIEW



AN MOS PUBLICATION

2
JULY 1978



An MOS publication to give members a bird's eye view of what happened, what is happening, and what will be happening within the Malta Ornithological Society, the Maltese national society for the study and protection of birds.

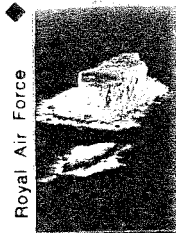
Editor: John Azzopardi
Design: Alfred E. Baldacchino
Printed for the MOS by Union Press

Filila is a 5-acre islet three miles south of Malta. It has been used as a bombing target for more than a century; however this practice was stopped in 1971.

Filila is the breeding station of a very large colony of Storm Petrel (*Hydrobates pelagicus*), as well as of smaller colonies of Cory's Shearwater (*Calonectris diomedea*), Manx Shearwater (*Puffinus puffinus*) and Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*).

In 1970 the Malta Ornithological Society published a booklet "Bird Studies on Filila" by J. Sultana and C. Gauci, which was intended to show the national importance of the islet as well as to appeal for its conservation. Since its inception in 1962, the MOS has more than once requested the authorities to consider the conservation of Filila and its breeding sea-birds. Lately, we have been made to understand that this request may be granted soon.

Since 1968 the MOS Ringing Scheme has organised annual expeditions to study the sea-birds on Filila and it is hoped that these findings will be published in a future MOS publication.



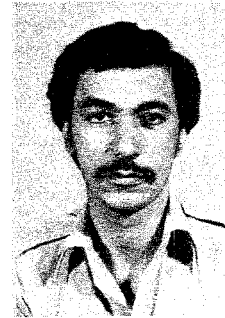
Royal Air Force



A. E. Baldacchino

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The Cory's Shearwater, which is one of the few species of birds which breed in Malta, is to be found in colonies around the coast of Malta and Gozo as well as on Filila. Unfortunately, it is not infrequent for men to go out in boats during the breeding season to shoot these birds, which are not game-birds. In this way, most of the young never manage to leave the nest because their parents are shot at sea. The MOS has issued a car-sticker calling for the protection of the Cory's Shearwater to counteract this senseless slaughter.



It is with great satisfaction that we note that the 1st issue of "BIRD'S EYE VIEW" has been very well received by our members as well as by ornithological institutions abroad. It is, therefore, our pleasure to present to you this 2nd issue, which we hope will give you a clear picture of what the Malta Ornithological Society is doing to spread the gospel of bird conservation in Malta.

Within the past few months, members of the MOS Council have attended two international ornithological conferences in Europe, about which you will read further in this issue. Before the end of the year, two other attendances are being planned. We have learned from experience that such international meetings are very important and healthy for societies such as the MOS. They help to bring together various representatives of the world conservation movement and to establish and strengthen contacts between ornithological organizations.

This eventually leads to the pooling of individual efforts by conservation societies, resulting in better co-ordination of the bird conservation work as well as formulating effective educational programmes.

The discussions at such conferences also help to pinpoint areas where the most urgent conservation measures are needed, and every participating society has the opportunity to show the rest of the world what they are doing to solve the bird conservation problems in their country. Such mutual discussions sometimes help to persuade some of the richer and more conservation-conscious countries to finance projects to help bird protection in poorer countries.

An important official function of international conferences is to help draw the attention of various Governments, through resolutions or conventions, to assure adequate protection for birds where it does not exist.

Thus, the ultimate result of such international meetings is better and more effective conservation measures for migratory birds which are an international heritage in that they do not recognize any political frontiers.

In today's world, bird conservation has become a way of life and it is vital for conservation societies to keep in touch with the rest of the conservation world to fulfil their aims and educational projects in a better way. Attending the more important international conferences is one way of achieving this and the MOS hopes to be able to do this when the occasion arises, depending on benefactors' generosity, which we are sure will be forthcoming as in the past.

John Azzopardi
June '78

Annual General Meeting

Secretary's report for period February 1977 to December, 1977 read at the 16th Annual General meeting held on Thursday, 12th January, 1978.

President's address at the 16th Annual General Meeting held on Thursday, 12th January 1978, at the British Council, Valletta.

Ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the Council I welcome you to the 16th Annual General Meeting. The MOS is a growing body which strives for a better future for birds, however, today we have met to look at the past, to examine what we have done during 1977. We do this not to be applauded but to try and do better in the year ahead.

It has been no secret that the Government has been contemplating new legislation to control excessive bird shooting and trapping. This resulted into a rally being called for shooters and trappers, whose leaders did not only make it clear that they want the present *status quo*, they did not only oppose strongly any new amendments, but tried to justify their claims by attacking and insulting the onerous role of the MOS and stated, amongst other things, that our sole aim is to harm their interests. Anonymous letters phone calls, insults and threats followed.

The MOS unflinching aims and interests have always been the study and the protection of birds. If our requests for the full protection of Malta's breeding birds and of migrating birds of prey are harmful to the interests of shooters and trappers; if our recommendation for the introduction of close and open seasons to control excessive shooting and trapping is harmful to the shooters and trappers; if our condemnation of the shooting of birds which cannot be considered as game and of the trapping of birds other than finches is harmful to the interests of shooters and trappers we can only state that we are dedicated to safeguard Malta's natural heritage ... and we do this not for personal ego, but for our nation, for everybody to enjoy and not to destroy, for all of us and future generations.

The MOS policy is mainly 'Conservation through Education'. We have to be practical. It is not easy for those who have been indulging in what seemed legitimate for them for many years to cease their activities abruptly. It is for this reason that the MOS has embarked on an educational programme — spelling out continually the need for con-

servation, pointing out which birds may be shot or trapped, pointing out which birds must be spared. All media have been used relentlessly within the limits of the MOS capabilities and financial resources. We have reached the stage where an appreciative section of the public, if not directly supporting us, agree with our views. However, the need for education on conservation does not eliminate the necessity of adequate legislation. In fact we shall be putting in front of you a resolution to this effect for your approval.

The outgoing Council members apart from organizing the various activities as will be noted in the General Secretary's Report, have also paved the way for the main activities for the next twelve months. These include exhibitions, 2 posters (one on Birds of Prey and the other on the Robin), a Shearwater's car sticker, a set of children's bird copybooks, information leaflets and the MOS publications "Il-Merill" and "Bird's Eye View". MOS will also be introducing a new printed publication for young members "L-Ghasfur" (The Bird) and has already embarked on an MOS illustrated publication on birds.

We would not have embarked on so many projects were it not for the generosity of many, a list of whom will appear in the next issue of "Bird's Eye View". To these and all MOS members and supporters I, on behalf of the Council, say thank you. My personal thanks go to every Council member who worked unflinchingly with a special mention to Alfred Baldacchino, one of MOS main pillars, to John Azzopardi for his work with the Young Members Section, to Charles Gauci for devoting most of his time to the MOS Ringing Scheme's log-books and to Vincent Sammut known affectionately amongst the Council members as 'the handy-man'.

Thank you very much for your attention.

Joe Sultana,

President,

MALTA ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

1977 has been a most busy year again for the Malta Ornithological Society, but we're glad to say that 1977 was also quite a successful year.

The year 1977, ended with 384 members on the MOS books. These were made up of 163 ordinary local members, 12 local life members, 43 overseas ordinary members; 31 overseas life members; 135 young members (49 of which had been given a free subscription for having participated in the MOS poster-cum-slogan competition). The number of full member shows an increase of 53 members, though 17 members from 1976 still have got to pay their 1977 subscription. The Young members also show an increase of 41 young members to the 45 from the previous year.

The MOS Council elected at the 14th Annual General Meeting for a two year term of office (1976/78) had some changes during 1977. Messrs. Victor Cilia and Tony Meli had to resign because of pressure of personal work. Messrs. Guido Bonetti and Mario V. Gauci were nominated in their places. Mr. Dominic Cutajar who was also nominated to sit on the MOS council on 11th April, 1976 resigned his post on 12th September, 1977.

Dr. Charles Galea B.Ch.D. became the new editor of 'Il-Merill' in lieu of Mr. Cutajar who also resigned from the editorship of 'Il-Merill'.

The MOS were committed in the following activities during 1977: 11 Council meetings; 6 other committee meetings; 23 indoor lectures/filmshows/talks/demonstrations; 6 MOS delegations (1 of them overseas) 14 outings; 15 interviews; 11 programmes on Cable Radio/Television; 3 tree planting outings; 2 debates on the broadcasting media; 4 exhibitions/stands; 4 other commitments and a Bird Week.

Publications

7 circulars were sent to MOS members during the year. 18 press releases and 3 letters to the press were issued by the MOS Public Relations Officer. One issue of 'Il-Merill' (Number 18) was published. A new MOS publication "Bird's Eye View" number 1 was also published in October 1977. A car sticker appealing for the better appreciation of the Honey Buzzard was launched during the bird week.

The Malta Ornithological Society also published its first exercise book depicting a Robin in full colour and carrying a small message on the robin on its back cover. This was made possible through the help from Sveriges Ornitologiska Forening, and also from Mr. Roger Arnhem of Belgium.

The publication, editing, designing and

layout of the ICBP Malta Publication "Why Conserve Nature", a booklet intended for teachers and youth leaders, was also the main responsibility of the MOS. The distribution of this publication to teachers and others, connected with the education of youngsters is also being seen to by the MOS.

Committees

The Committees which were set up or reconstituted during the past year were:

1) The Ringing and Research Committee under the Ringing Officer Joe Sultana and Ringing and Research Secretary Charles Gauci. Following the launching of MOS addressed rings in 1976 the MOS launched another ring size with its address, and the third ring size with MOS address will soon be used by MOS ringers.

With regards to birds ringed, 1977 was a record year — over 13,000 birds of 88 species were ringed, with the Chiffchaff topping the list with about 2,500 ringed.

Because of stormy weather and rough seas Filfla was only visited once this year.

Only 8 records were reported of foreign ringed birds.

13 qualified ringers and 6 trainees were registered with the MOS. 3 foreign ringers also increased this number during their stay on the island.

One general meeting was held by the Ringing and Research Group for the MOS registered ringers and trainees.

The Ringing and Research Secretary issued newsletters at two or three monthly intervals.

Mr. J. Sultana, MOS President and MOS Ringing Officer attended the Euring Meeting at Gdansk Poland where the MOS Ringing Scheme was accepted as full Euring members.

2) The Young Members Section was also reconstituted with Mr. John Azzopardi as Officer and Mr. Silvio Scicluna as Secretary. This Committee held four committee meetings, 17 outings, and took part in 2 radio/TV interviews.

A poster-cum slogan competition was successfully organized by the Young Members Section in all Secondary Schools.

The Young Members Section also doubled its members during the year.

3) The Gozo Committee had as its chairman Mrs. Veronica Grech. This committee held four indoor meetings, and also took part in an interview on cable radio regarding the exhibition in Gozo of the posters submitted in the poster-cum-slogan competition.

4) The Rarities Committee was also reconstituted under the Chairmanship of Mr. Charles Gauci, with Mr. Martin Thake B.Sc. as Secretary. 2 meetings were held

during which 106 records were examined.

I would like to thank all MOS members for their cooperation and their help which they gladly gave whenever called for. I would also like to thank the MOS Council members for sharing the burden of running the Society.

My thanks also go to the MOS President Mr. Joe Sultana for his never failing help. Of particular mention is John Azzopardi, the assistant secretary, on whose support I must at times have leaned most heavily.

Alfred E. Baldacchino
General Secretary

MALTA ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

CALENDAR OF MOS ACTIVITIES — FEBRUARY 1977 TO DECEMBER 1977

FEBRUARY

- 2 — Interview on Cable Radio regarding poster-cum-slogan competition (John Azzopardi).
- 9 — Lecture at Adults Friendship Group, Floriana (Joe Sultana).
- 11 — Meeting with Secretary, Ministry of Education, regarding "Why Conserve Nature" (Joe Sultana).
- 13 — YMS outing to Ghadira.
- 14 — Interview on Cable Radio (Alfred E. Baldacchino).
- 14-16 Young members collect posters for poster-cum-slogan competition.
- 17 — Annual General Meeting.
- 18 — Interview on Cable Radio (Joe Sultana).
- 18 — Young members take part in a short film on field study at Ghadira for Malta Television.
- 20 — MOS ringers meeting.
- 21 — MOS Council meeting (21st 1976/78).
- 26 — MOS Circular no 3/77.
- 27 — YMS outing to Hal Far.
- 28 — MOS Council meeting (22nd 1976/78).

MARCH

- 2 — MOS programme on MTV "L-Ghasafar fl-Ambjent Naturali Malti" (Joe Sultana).
- 7 — Lecture at Libyan Cultural Institute "L-Ghasafar fl-Ambjent Naturali Malti" (Joe Sultana).
- 8 — Interview on Cable Radio regarding "Bird Week" (Alfred E. Baldacchino).
- 9 — Lecture at Cultural Institute "12 years of bird-ringing" (Charles Gauci).
- 9 — YMS exhibition of posters at Cultural Institute, Floriana.
- 10 — YMS prize giving ceremony at Cultural Institute, Floriana.
- 10 — Interview on Cable Radio "L-Ghasafar u l-Bniedem" (Joe Sultana).
- 10 — Launching of car sticker small sticker,

- 11 — poster and T-shirt transfer.
- 11 — Lecture at British Council "Birds of prey over Malta" (Martin Thake).
- 12 — YMS tree planting at Ghadira.
- 12 — Opening of exhibition at Hotel Phoenicia "Audubon Folio" by President of the Republic, Dr. A. Buttigieg.
- 13 — MOS Circular no. 4/77.
- 13-16 Exhibition.
- 23 — MOS Council meeting (23rd 1976/78).
- 24 — MOS prize winners of poster-cum-slogan competition on MTV.
- 24 — Illustrated talk at l-Ambjent Restaurant "Migratory Birds" to British Resident's Association (Joe Sultana).
- 25 — Ringing demonstration to RAF Luqa Ornithological Society (Charles Gauci and Michael Grima).
- 26 — Film "Hidden World" and "Birds of the Grey Wind" at Boys' Scouts HQ Victoria, Gozo.
- 29 — Illustrated talks at Bigli Secondary School on "Breeding Birds" (Joe Sultana).
- 30-31 Film at Victoria Girls' Secondary School Gozo, "Hidden World" and "Birds of the Grey Wind".
- 31 — Illustrated talk "Birds in the Maltese Environment" at Stella Maris College (Joe Sultana).

APRIL

- 4 — Lecture at British Council "Conservation around the World (Herbert E. Axell).
- 9 — Debate on Cable Radio "Is there a need for a close Season in Malta" (Alfred E. Baldacchino).
- 17 — MOS Comino outing.
- 23 — Debate on cable radio (Joe Sultana).
- 27 — MOS Council meeting (24th 1976/78).
- 28 — YMS meeting.

MAY

- 8 — YMS day outing to Gozo.
- 9 — Official opening of poster-cum-slogan competition exhibition at Lyceum Guzo (open for a week).
- 15 — YMS outing to Ghadira.
- 20 — Interview on Cable Radio regarding the exhibition of YMS poster-cum-slogan competition in Gozo (Joe Sultana).
- 28 — MOS stand at Fur and Feather Show at San Anton.
- 28 — Illustrated talk "Bird life in Gozo" at Xaghra Cultural Centre (Joe Sultana/ Joe Attard).
- 29 — MOS stand at Fur and Feather Show at San Anton.

JUNE

- 1 — MOS Council meeting (25th 1976/78).
- 7 — Programme (1st) on Cable Radio "Ghasafar li jbejtu f'Malta" (Alfred E. Baldacchino/Joe Sultana).
- 7 — Interview on Cable Radio (Louis Cassar/Dennis Cachia).
- 9 — MOS Rarities Committee meeting.

- 14 — Programme (2nd) on Cable Radio "L-Ghasafar li jbejtu f'Malta" (Alfred E. Baldacchino/Joe Sultana).
- 21 — Programme (3rd) on Cable Radio "Ghasafar li jbejtu f'Malta" (Alfred E. Baldacchino/Joe Sultana).
- 22 — Interview on British Forces Broadcasting Station on "Why Conserve Nature" (Alfred E. Baldacchino).
- 27 — MOS Council meeting (26th 1976/78).
- 28 — Programme (4th) on Cable Radio "Ghasafar li jbejtu f'Malta" (Alfred E. Baldacchino/Joe Sultana).
- 28 — Meeting with Secretary, Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Culture (Alfred E. Baldacchino/Joe Sultana).

JULY

- 2 — Programme (5th) on Cable Radio on "Ghasafar li jbejtu f'Malta" (Alfred E. Baldacchino/Joe Sultana).
- 12 — Programme (6th) on Cable Radio "Ghasafar li jbejtu f'Malta" (Alfred E. Baldacchino/Joe Sultana).
- 19 — Programme (7th) on Cable Radio "Ghasafar li jbejtu f'Malta" (Alfred E. Baldacchino/Joe Sultana).
- 26 — Programme (8th) on Cable Radio "Ghasafar li jbejtu f'Malta" (Alfred E. Baldacchino/Joe Sultana).
- 27 — MOS Council meeting (27th 1976/78).

AUGUST

- 3 — Interview on Cable Radio (English) and Radio Malta (Maltese) regarding Fan-tailed Warbler Record (Alfred E. Baldacchino).
- 11 — YMS Committee meeting.
- 22 — Interview on Bird Ringing in Malta (Joe Hardman).
- 28 — YMS outing to Selmun with a ringing demonstration.

SEPTEMBER

- 11 — YMS outing to Buskett watching birds of prey.
- 16 — MOS Council meeting (28th 1976/78).
- 18 — YMS outing to Buskett watching birds of prey.
- 24 — MOS Circular 5/77.
- 25 — YMS outing to Buskett watching birds of prey.
- 30 — MOS Council meeting (29th 1976/78).

OCTOBER

- 2 — YMS outing to Buskett watching birds of prey.
- 7 — Interview on Cable Radio on injured birds (Charles Gauci).
- 9 — YMS outing to Buskett watching birds of prey.
- 11 — Film at British Council "Flight for Survival/The migration of birds".
- 11 — MOS meeting with Malta Photographic Society (John Azzopardi/Alfred E. Baldacchino).
- 18 — Film "Flight for Survival/The Migration

- of Birds" at Victoria Girls Secondary School, Gozo.
- 19 — Film "Flight or Survival/The Migration of Birds" at Lyceum Gozo.
- 20 — Film "Flight for Survival/The Migration of Birds" at Boys Scouts HQ Victoria, Gozo.
- 21 — MOS delegate leaves for Euring Conference at Gdansk, Poland (Joe Sultana).
- 28 — MOS delegate returns from Euring Conference at Gdansk, Poland.
- 29 — MOS Circular no. 6/77.
- 29 — YMS outing to Ghadira; fixing of gate.
- 31 — Interview on Cable Radio regarding Euring Conference (Joe Sultana).

NOVEMBER

- 1 — Interview on Cable Radio regarding the protection of the Robin (Louis Cassar).
- 2 — Interview on Cable Radio on MOS Euring membership (Alfred E. Baldacchino).
- 4 — "Bird's Eye View" published.
- 7 — MOS Council meeting (30th 1976/78).
- 9 — Interview on Cable Radio on "Bird's Eye View" (Alfred E. Baldacchino).
- 10 — Lecture at British Council "Bird Watching in Tunisia" (Joe Sultana).
- 12 — YMS tree planting and cleaning of debris at Ghadira.
- 14 — Interview on British Forces Broadcasting Station on "Bird's Eye View" (John Azzopardi).
- 15 — Bird Ringing demonstration to Corradino Boys Secondary School during field course (John Azzopardi/Guido Bonetti/Joe Sultana).
- 16 — YMS Committee meeting.
- 17 — Lecture at Malta Photographic Society "An Hour with a Nature Photographer" (Alfred E. Baldacchino/Joe Sultana).
- 19 — MOS outing to Miziep.
- 24 — Interview on Cable Radio (English) regarding "Bird's Eye View" (Alfred E. Baldacchino).
- 26 — Tree planting at Ghadira by the Young Members.
- 29 — Illustrated talk "Filifa and its Birds" at Hamrun Boys Secondary School (Joe Sultana).

DECEMBER

- 2 — MOS Circular no. 7/77.
- 8 — MOS Council meeting (31st 1976/78).
- 11 — YMS outing to Selmun.
- 12 — MOS Rarities Committee meeting.
- 13 — MOS participation in Republic Day defile.
- 16 — MOS delegation meets Assistant Commissioner of Police (Joe Attard/Alfred E. Baldacchino/Joe Sultana).
- 17 — Distribution of "Why Conserve Nature" in private schools.
- 21 — Lecture at British Council "New Raptor Migration Route in North Eastern Turkey" (Mark Beaman).

**MALTA ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT AS AT 31 DECEMBER 1977**

	£M c m		£M c m
Sundry Expenses (1)	218.10,7	Subscriptions and Donations	514.04,8
Stationery	128.03,7	Interest Received	31.41,4
Postages	143.67,7	Il-Merill Sales	1.10,0
Loss on Exchange	14.28,0	Guide Sales	221.99,0
Il-Merill		Outings	20.77,0
Cost	£95.00,0	Stickers	51.93,1
— Reserve	£95.00,0	Lotteries	112.10,0
		Prints	134.00,0
Stickers		Exercise Books	163.99,0
Cost	£90.50,0		
— Reserve	£50.00,0		
	40.50,0		
Subsidies	15.08,9		
Shirt Transfers	29.17,0		
L-Għasfur	3.13,5		
Trip			
Cost	£213.75,5		
Reserve	£75.15,0		
	138.60,5		
Birds Eye View			
Cost	£97.34,0		
— Donation	£30.00,0		
	67.34,0		
Excess of Income c/f	453.40,3		
	1251.34,3		1251.34,3

APPROPRIATION ACCOUNT NO. 1

Depreciation	9.08,3	Income and Expenditure	
Balance c/f App. No. 2	444.32,0	B/c. b/f	453.40,3
	453.40,3		453.40,3

APPROPRIATION ACCOUNT NO. 2

To General Reserve:			
Birds Eye View	£100		
Trip	£50		
Il-Merill	£45		
Exercise Books	£200	395.00,0	
To Capital A/C	49.32,0	Appropriation No. 1 b/f	444.32,0
	444.32,0		444.32,0

NOTES ON 1977 ACCOUNTS

NOTE 1. SUNDRY EXPENSES £218.10,7

Made up of the following items (amounts to nearest £M):-

Bird Week £6; Exhibitions £39; Advert £5; Telephone Expenses £14; Donations £22; Gate at Ghadira £35*; P.O. Rent £10; Entertainment £20; Bank Charges £5; Photocopies £20; Projectionist Fees £7; Other expenses below £5 £35.

* Gate at Ghadira £35:-

This amount should have been refunded by ICBP (Malta Section). No funds were received by the Society as at date of compilation of this report.

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 1977

	£M c m		£M c m
CAPITAL		FIXED ASSETS	(7) 27.25,1
Balance b/f	£407.65,8	GROUPS	
Appr. a/c	49.32,0	Young Members	£6.82,2
	456.97,8	Gozo Section	£3.52,0
GENERAL RESERVES	(2) 819.60,8	Ringling Group	£466.40,3 (6) 476.74,5
CURRENT LIABILITIES		CURRENT ASSETS	
Advance Sub-		Encleared Items	£4.42,0 (5)
scriptions	£104.45,0 (3)	Stickers prepaid	£81.60,0
New MOS publication	£300.00,0 (4) 404.45,0	Cash	£780.42,0
		Debtors	£6.60,0
		New MOS publication	£300.00,0 (4)
		Lotteries prepaid	£4.00,0
			1177.04,0
			1681.03,6
			1681.03,6

NOTES ON 1977 ACCOUNTS CONTINUED

NOTE 2. GENERAL RESERVES £819.60,8

Made up as follows:

Ringling Group	£209.60,8		
Il-Merill	90.00,0		
Poster	50.00,0		
Young Members	120.00,0		
Trip	50.00,0		
Birds Eye View	100.00,0		
Exercise Books	200.00,0	£819.60,8	

NOTE 3. SUBSCRIPTIONS IN ADVANCE £104.45,0

Made up as follows:-

1978	£58.85,0		
1979	23.60,0		
1980	15.00,0		
1981	7.00,0	£104.45,0	

NOTE 4. NEW MOS PUBLICATION £300 — (Debit/Credit)

The Society will be issuing a new publication during 1978. The final cost is expected to be £2000. The £300 under current liabilities represent the amount due for printing the colour plates, which item is represented on the assets side.

NOTE 5. UNCLEARED ITEM £4.42,0

Cheque for Stq £6.00p not cashed by bank as cover not yet received.

NOTE 6. RINGING GROUP £466.40,3

Made up as follows:-

Rings	£367.43,8		
Equipment	14.25,0		
Debtors	117.51,8	£499.20,6	
less creditors	32.80,3	£466.40,3	

NOTE 7. FIXED ASSETS £27.25,1

ITEM	COST	DEPRECIATION (25 - Cost)	BOOK VALUE
4 Binoculars	20.00,0	5.00,0	15.00,0
Tripod	16.33,4	4.08,3	12.25,1
	36.33,4	9.08,3	27.25,1

B.K. German
Hon. Treasurer
MALTA ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

RESOLUTIONS TAKEN AT THE MOS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON JANUARY 12, 1978

CONSIDERING the lack of appreciation by the general public towards Malta's natural heritage;

BEING AWARE of the indiscriminate shooting of birds which do not provide game;

This Malta Ornithological Society's Annual General Meeting recommends the authorities:

1. To legislate adequate laws which would provide protection,
 - a. for all migratory birds of prey
 - b. for the breeding birds of the Maltese islands
 - c. for rare European migrant species
 - d. for those species which cannot be considered as game.
2. To give the pool and its surrounding area at Ghadira on trust to a National Committee to manage it as a nature reserve and to use it as an educational medium towards the appreciation of Maltese natural heritage.
3. To declare Ghadira, Filfla and other localities of natural importance as nature reserves where all the fauna and flora will be strictly protected.

This meeting further passes a vote of thanks to the following Government departments for their cooperation in the MOS educational projects:

- a. The Department of Education.
- b. The Department of Agriculture.
- c. The Police Department.

Copies of these resolutions were sent to:

- The President
- The Prime Minister
- The Minister of Justice
- The Minister of Education
- The Minister of Agriculture
- The Minister of Health and Environment
- The Minister of Labour, Welfare and Culture
- The Commissioner of Police
- The Advocate General
- The Director of Education
- The Director of Agriculture

MOS FIXES GATE AT GHADIRA



R. Galea

MOS members fixing one of the signs on the Ghadira gate.

Ghadira, in the northern part of Malta, which for many years has been the MOS target for a bird reserve, during recent years has become increasingly popular as a weekend picnic area.

This unfortunately, constituted a potential hazard to this unique ecological niche, and a great deal of harm was being done to the natural environment by irresponsible people who would park their cars or put up their tents haphazardly inside the area.

So the MOS took the initiative to order an iron gate to close the main entrance, thus minimizing the damage by keeping cars out. The gate was fixed in place by MOS members during an outing on 29th October 1977. The activity was made possible through the co-operation of the Department of Agriculture, who also gave their consent to MOS to fix notices at Ghadira calling for the appreciation of trees and prohibiting the parking of cars and camping within the area.

Financial assistance for this project was received from the Netherlands Committee for the Protection of Migratory Birds.

BIRDS OF PREY LEAFLET

The Malta Ornithological Society has just issued a small illustrated pamphlet about Birds of Prey, which is the first in a series of educational leaflets projected for future publication. The leaflet is mainly directed to teachers and other educators to whom it supplies useful information on birds of prey, their adaptation for hunting, their status in Malta, their ecological importance and the dangers facing these birds.

The text has been prepared by Joe Sultana and Charles Gauci while the layout has been designed by Alfred Baldacchino. The leaflet is well illustrated with line drawings by Rodney Ingram and Joe Sultana.

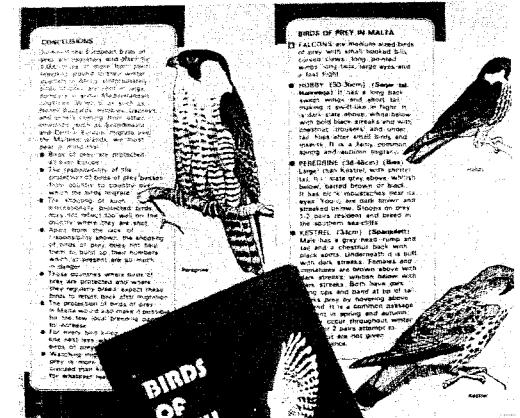
Copies of the leaflet have already been distributed to various schools and individuals. Anyone wishing to obtain a copy may contact the General Secretary.

BIRD OF PREY POSTER

Last March, the MOS launched a new poster calling for the protection of birds of prey. The poster has been kindly made available by the Fond d'Intervention Pour Les Rapaces of France. The slogan "It-Tajr tal-Priza Mhux Kacca ... Jehlieg inharsuh" means: Birds of Prey are not game birds ... they need our protection.

Thanks are due to Mr. M. Terrasse through whose efforts this project was made possible.

J Azzopardi



Baldacchino

STUFFED BIRDS IN SCHOOLS

In February 1978 the Education Department issued a circular to all Heads of Government schools encouraging them to do their utmost "to make pupils appreciate the importance, beauty and necessity of the natural environment".

The circular further deplored exhibitions and collections of stuffed birds because they "encourage the shooting of large numbers of rare, endangered birds and even protected birds".

Consequently, heads of schools where such collections existed were asked to make the necessary arrangements for their disposal, and all schools were prohibited from keeping stuffed bird collections. Heads of schools were further advised to get in touch with the Malta Ornithological Society for any material on bird appreciation for teaching programmes and exhibitions.

The MOS would like to publicly thank Dr F. Chetcuti Director of Education for his initiative, as the removal of stuffed birds from schools is a major step towards the appreciation of birds in their natural wild state.

MALTA EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION

Television Malta screens various programmes for school children during mornings in the Malta Educational Television series. One such programme which was screened last January, had the study and appreciation of birds as its subject and it was written, prepared and presented by Joe Sultana, President of the Malta Ornithological Society.

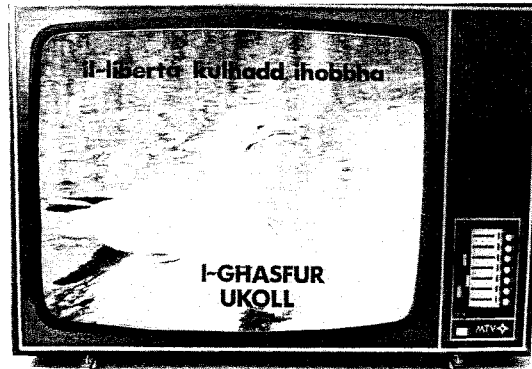
The programme covered various aspects of ornithology such as the place birds have in the animal kingdom; their anatomical structure as developed for an aerial life; migration and the various species visiting Malta; breeding and the breeding species of the Maltese Islands.

Children were also shown why bird watching is preferable to bird catching as a means of showing interest in birds. By watching birds one can observe them behave naturally and they are thus left to fulfil their duties in the balance of nature as well as for the enjoyment of others. The programme also showed children how bird-ringing is used as a tool for the scientific study of birds, and explained to them the results thus obtained and how they are utilized for the protection of birds.

Some information about the MOS was also given, and children were invited to join the MOS and participate in its activities.

The programme ended by showing children how to attract birds in order to study them at close quarters. They were taught how to construct bird-tables and nest boxes and how to record the variety of birds that visit these and the type of food they prefer to eat from the bird-table.

Involving children with nature and making sure they understand what they are doing is one way of assuring a life-long association with nature which leads to better appreciation and protection of all the living creatures of the natural environment.



B



C

EDUCATIONAL CAPTION CARDS

The above caption cards are few of several which have been prepared for Television Malta by the Malta Ornithological Society. These are frequently screened during intervals between programmes. In this way Television Malta is playing an important role in educating the public in the appreciation of birds.

The slogans on the caption cards read as follows:—

- The free bird embellishes the environment.
- Everybody loves freedom . . . Birds as well.
- The Robin is protected by law (the words on the MOS/CCFO sticker read: I have come, I made you happy, let me free).
- He who is beneficial — let him live (This slogan is super-imposed on a photograph by the famous Eric Hosking.)



D

YOUTH LEADERSHIP COURSE

Mr Louis Cassar, 18-year-old Officer-in-Charge of the Young Members' Section of the Malta Ornithological Society attended a youth leadership course organized by the International Youth Federation for Environmental Studies. The course was held in Daverdisse, Belgium between 15 and 28 July 1978, and it was attended by various young delegates from many different countries.

The course covered various aspects concerning youth leadership in environmental studies mainly dealing with ecology.

Among the projects undertaken there were field studies dealing with the natural habitat, such as vegetation analysis and other studies related to different biotopes. Talks on reserve management and the problems facing the countryside due to human interference were given by guest speakers.

In the next issue of "Bird's Eye View" we hope to be able to give a more detailed account of the course.

MOS CLAY PIGEON TROPHY

A new venture in the local conservation campaign was the sponsoring of a trophy by the Malta Ornithological Society for a clay pigeon shooting contest organized by the B'Kara Shooting Association. The contest, which was open to all shooters, was held at the Qrejten Shooting Range on Sunday, 28th May 1978. In the contest, which was won by Silvio Bonello, twenty-nine competitors took part. The press and television were invited for the occasion.

The MOS Clay Pigeon Trophy is going to be an annual event organized by the two bodies. The MOS has also donated a miniature cup which will be kept by the winner. The aim behind this new MOS activity is to help encourage clay-pigeon shooting as a substitute to shooting wild birds.

NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

The Malta Ornithological Society is always on the lookout to exploit every possible means of publicizing the principles of bird conservation, as in that way people may come to realize the need to protect birds.

The MOS, the Malta Photographic Society and the Men of the Trees (Malta) have come to an agreement to hold a joint photographic competition for the public around next February. The competition will be about nature, with a special emphasis on birds and trees. There will be colour and monochrome sections, the prizes for each section being offered jointly by the MOS and Men of the Trees, while the organization proper will be left to the expertise of the Malta Photographic Society members.

The aim behind this activity is to encourage the photography of nature, especially birds, flowers and trees as a means of appreciation and as a substitute for the collecting of specimens which harms and denudes the natural environment.

A.E. Baldacchino



Mr. Joe Sultana, MOS President, presenting the MOS Clay Pigeon Trophy to the winner.

NEW BIRD LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

During the past few months Council members of the Malta Ornithological Society had various meetings with Government authorities regarding new bird protection legislation which, it is hoped, will soon come into force.

This should be a major step forward as the laws will provide for the establishment of closed and open seasons for bird hunting and trapping. The law will protect all migratory birds of prey; all the breeding birds of the Maltese Islands; as well as all those species of birds which do not provide game. Under the new legislation Ghadira and Filfla (which may hold the largest breeding colony of Storm Petrels in the Mediterranean) will become bird sanctuaries.

In preparation for the new bird protection regulations, during the first week of July 1978, Dr J. Cassar B.A., LL.D., Minister of Justice, Housing, Lands and Parliamentary Affairs, moved a Bill to amend the Code of Police Laws meant to increase the penalties in the case of offences by bird-shooters. Dr Cassar said that the Bill was in line with regulations which would be issued in the future on bird shooting. These had been discussed by the Police with the 'Ghaqda tal-Kaċċaturi u Nassaba' (National Association of Shooters & Trappers) and with the Malta Ornithological Society both of whom agreed with the regulations in substance.

We hope that by the time the next issue of "Bird's Eye View" is published, the new legislation would have been enacted, and we would be able to reproduce the full text of the laws.

POLICE SURVEILLANCE DURING MIGRATION SEASON

During autumn 1977 and spring 1978, the Mobile Squad and Traffic Division of the Malta Police have carried out patrols at areas where bird shooting and trapping are prohibited. At Buskett and Kennedy Grove, which are usually heavily frequented by shooters the Police apprehended a number of shooters who were breaking the law. These were brought to Court and their guns confiscated. The Police also took away robin traps from people who were caught trapping robins, which are protected under Maltese law. In such cases, the robins which were found inside the traps were liberated in public gardens by the Police and the culprits brought to Court.

The Police also issued frequent notices warning shooters to stay away from protected areas and to carry the shooting license with them because the Police Mobile Squad would take away guns from shooters not producing the license on request.

The Malta Police should be congratulated on such actions which help to ensure respect for the law as well as to save a lot of migratory birds from an otherwise inevitable fate.

THE HONEY BUZZARD AFFAIR

In September 1977 a Honey Buzzard was found injured in the vicinity of Buskett after it had been brought down by shooters. After examination it was found to require specialized treatment before it could be returned to the wild. As X-rays and specialized veterinary services are not available locally, it was decided to keep the bird until proper arrangements for it had been made. The Hawk Trust in Great Britain was therefore asked about the possibility of sending the Honey Buzzard for the necessary treatment.

The Hawk Trust runs its own aviaries where injured birds are nursed back to normal before being released into the wild. Birds which would be unable to survive in the wild are kept for breeding purposes and their offspring are released to replenish the wild stock.

The RSPCA (Malta), in co-operation with the Malta Ornithological Society, volunteered to keep the bird in one of their aviaries until instructions were received from the Hawk Trust.

In the meantime the necessary permits and arrangements were nearly finalised for the Honey Buzzard to be flown to the Hawk Trust. Unfortunately, during the night before the Honey Buzzard was due to be flown out, it was stolen from the RSPCA aviary in Floriana. The Police were immediately informed and a formal report submitted.

Under the circumstances, the Hawk Trust, who were expecting the arrival of the Honey Buzzard at any moment, had to be informed of the bird's mishap.



The design which appeared weekly at the head of a column in the "Times of Malta" contributed by the Malta Ornithological Society and the Natural History Society of Malta. The MOS was responsible for collecting and forwarding the 131 articles which appeared in the series.

NEW POSTER

Next October the MOS will be launching another new poster to coincide with the arrival of the robins in Malta. The poster with the slogan "Din Mhix Daru" (This is not its Home), was designed by young Joseph Micallef a student of Naxxar Secondary School, and it was one of the winning posters in the "Poster-cum-Slogan Competition" organized by the Young Members' Section of the MOS in secondary schools. The printing of the poster was kindly seen to by the proprietors of the Ramla Bay Hotel.

Presenting the Robin poster to the Ramla Bay Hotel proprietors who sponsored the printing of the poster. L to R: Mr. A.E. Baldacchino (MOS Gen. Sec.), Mrs. Holland (Ramla Bay Hotel), Mr. Joseph Micallef (designer of the poster), Mr. Joe Sultana (MOS President).

J. Azzopardi

MOS DISPLAY IN SHOP-WINDOWS

A number of bookshops in Valletta have agreed to help the Malta Ornithological Society spread the gospel of bird conservation by putting up displays of MOS posters, publications and other educational material in their shop-windows.

The first firm to do so is Giov. Muscat & Co. Ltd. who have decorated their shop-window with an attractive medley of ornithological and natural history books and MOS publicity material.

The MOS display will be moved from one bookshop to another in different streets of Valletta, thus hoping to attract the men-in-the-street who do not bother to read the various articles about bird conservation which are periodically carried in the press.



SOCIETA
ORNITOLOGICA
MALTANA



The MOS has again been invited to take part in the Annual Fur and Feather Show in June 1978. The MOS put up a display of posters, stickers and other publications, which attracted quite a number of people. Members of the YMS helped to sell various MOS publicity items, and the new T-shirts were very much in demand.

NEW ICBP MALTA CHAIRMAN

Last March, Mr. John Azzopardi was elected new Chairman of the Malta Section of the International Council for Bird Preservation. The societies which constitute ICBP Malta are the Malta Ornithological Society, the Natural History Society of Malta, the Malta Geographical Society, the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Malta), and the Teens and Twenties Talent Trust. These societies are represented by Messrs. J. Sultana and A.E. Baldacchino, G. Lanfranco, E. Lanfranco, Frank Fenech and G. Bonett, respectively.

The aim of ICBP Malta — which was set up in 1963 — is to stimulate interest for a more adequate protection of wild bird-life in accordance with the Declaration of Principles of the International Council for Bird Preservation.

MOS T-SHIRT

A new three-colour printed T-shirt has just been issued by MOS. It displays a full colour hoopoe in flight and carries the message: "Watch it with the MOS". They are available in sizes 26, 28, 30, 34 and 36 at £M1.25c0 each plus postage. Supplies are running out fast, so if you want to acquire one, hurry!

Young Ruth and Mark (MOS President's children) sporting the new MOS T-shirt.

A.E. Baldacchino



J. Azzopardi

A novelty which the MOS has recently launched is a plastic bag bearing a print of the Blue Rock Thrush, which is the national bird of Malta as well as the emblem of the MOS. The bags are suitable for picnics, hikes, outings, travel, etc.

"THE SEA MUST LIVE"

The Italian Navy School Ship "Amerigo Vespucci" was in Malta between 29th April and 2nd May 1978, carrying on board a scientific and didactic exhibition on sea protection organized by the World Wildlife Fund Italian National Appeal.

Several lectures, scientific initiatives and informative programmes were held on board the ship which were open to the general public and school children. The "Amerigo Vespucci" visited 16 main ports in the Mediterranean, stopping for a few days at each port. The aim behind this exhibition was to make the people of the Mediterranean aware of the problem of sea pollution and the need to protect the sea and its living resources.

The Malta Ornithological Society was invited for the official opening of the exhibition and later a visit was especially organised for MOS members. Some MOS propaganda material was also displayed on board the ship, with the kind permission of the Captain and WWF officials. MOS young members also lent a helping hand during the visiting hours, directing people around the exhibition.

MEETING WITH ICBP AND WWF

OFFICIALS

In May 1978, John Azzopardi, Chairman of the Malta Section of the International Council for Bird Preservation, while in London on a private visit paid a courtesy call on Miss Phyllis Barclay-Smith, then Secretary-General of the ICBP, at the British Museum of Natural History, and on Miss Janet Barber, of the WWF British National Appeal. During both meetings the bird conservation movement in Malta and the problems facing it were discussed at some length.

European Committee for the Prevention of Mass Destruction of Migratory Birds at the special meeting of the ICBP European Continental Section. This committee will be responsible to initiate fund-raising activities in various northern European countries and to allocate the money thus collected for financing bird protection projects in Mediterranean countries.

During the meeting of the Executive Board on June 13, Miss Phyllis Barclay-Smith who, for a long time served as General Secretary of ICBP, was unanimously elected Vice-President. Mr. R.D. Chancellor was re-elected Secretary and Mr. Mats Segnestam of Sweden, who was proposed for election, was also elected Secretary of ICBP.

The report from the Chairman of ICBP Malta was very well received and it was favourably commented upon during a general session by Prof. S. Dillon Ripley, President ICBP.

The delegates from Malta made quite an impact with their hand-outs and educational material which was distributed. The education policy being employed by ICBP Malta and MOS was acclaimed by all delegates present. They also established contacts with various delegates from different countries and discussed ways of better co-operation and exchange of information and publications.

ICBP XVII WORLD CONFERENCE

Between the 13th and 18th June 1978, John Azzopardi, Chairman of ICBP Malta and Alired E. Baldacchino, General Secretary of the Malta Ornithological Society were in Yugoslavia for the XVII World Conference of the International Council for Bird Preservation.

The Conference was held in fantastic setting at the Hotel Desaret, Pestani, on the very shores of Lake Ohrid in Macedonia. Present for the Conference there were over 60 delegates from over 20 countries throughout the world. There were also representatives from various international organizations such as World Wildlife Fund; International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources; United Nations Environment Programme; International Waterfowl Research Bureau; International Union of Biological Sciences; International Association of Falconry and Conservation of Birds of Prey; and World Pheasant Association. The opening session of the Conference was televised by the Yugoslav broadcasting authorities.

Various topics of great importance were discussed by the Conference, including the co-ordination of activities of bird preservation organizations and national and international hunting organizations; the preservation of island ecosystems; international trade in birds; endangered species of birds and the Red Data Book; sea and inland water pollution; the use of toxic chemicals; and so on.

Of great importance to Mediterranean countries was the setting up of the ICBP

The ICBP Chairman and MOS delegate also had special meetings with Prof. M.F. Morzer-Bruyns (Chairman of the European Continental Section); with Dr. S. Woldhek and Mr. C. de Bruin (Netherlands Committee for the Protection of Migratory Birds); Mr. Ian Prestt and Mr. A. Gammel (RSPB and ICBP Great Britain); and Mr. Mats Segnestam (ICBP Sweden and IUCN) regarding various matters peculiar to ICBP Malta.

During the week spent in Ohrid, the various delegates were also taken on conducted tours to places of historical interest in Ohrid as well as to the Natural History Museum. Evenings of Yugoslav folk dancing were also held in a very friendly atmosphere, delegates being invited to join in the dancing. The Conference closed with a final banquet on Sunday 18th June. ICBP Malta and MOS would like to take the opportunity to thank Dr. Ognjanka Popovska-Stankovitch, President of the Yugoslav Organizing Board, as well as all members of the board, for their warm hospitality.

It is certain that the scope for which the Maltese delegates attended the Conference has been fulfilled. They showed the other delegates what ICBP Malta and MOS are doing to help bird conservation in Malta. They brought with them pledges of support and co-operation from various representatives, especially of northern European countries, some of which have already started to materialize. They have also established and strengthened various contacts which are vital for societies in a small country like Malta.



THE 5TH EURING CONFERENCE

EURING (The European Union for Bird Ringing) is an association of autonomous ringing centres and its aim is to develop and promote the use of bird ringing as an ornithological research technique. EURING holds regular conferences; normally every four years.

The 5th Conference was held in Sopot, Gdansk in Poland between 23rd and 25th October 1977. It was organized by the Ornithological Station of the Institute of Zoology of the Polish Academy of Sciences. Joe Sultana, MOS President and Ringing Scheme Officer, attended the conference on behalf of the MOS Ringing Scheme. Twenty-six other delegates — including Dr G. Zink, President, and Mr R. Spencer, General Secretary — represented sixteen other ringing centres. Prof. Dr W. Ryzewski, editor of 'The Ring' also attended and welcomed the conference members on behalf of the Gdansk Ornithological Station. The countries, whose ringing schemes were represented included Holland, Belgium, Hungary, Finland, West & East Germany, Denmark, USSR, Czechoslovakia, Switzerland, Poland, Sweden, Norway, UK and Malta.

The Conference was opened by the President's address followed by a detailed report by the General Secretary. Joe Sultana reported on the bird ringing situation in Malta and later the MOS Ringing Scheme was accepted unanimously as a full member of EURING. Various discussions to promote the progress of bird-ringing as a tool of scientific research were held during the con-

ference meetings as well as in a leisurely way in the evenings. Dr A. Perdeck (of Arnhem) reported on the stage of development in EURING methodology reached by each country while Mr B.J. Speek (also of Arnhem), the manager of EURING Data Bank, also made a report on the number of recoveries in the Bank and the number of workers using data supplied by the Bank.

The following were elected to serve until the next conference:

President: Dr G. Zink (Radotzell)
 Vice President: Dr M. Gromadski (Gdansk)
 General Secretary: Mr R. Spencer (Tring)
 Board Members: Dr A.C. Perdeck (Arnhem)
 Dr N.O. Preuss (Copenhagen)
 Dr P. Saurola (Helsinki)

On his return to Malta, Joe Sultana reported that he was struck by the warmth and kindness with which he was treated by the Polish colleagues. The MOS Council would like to thank all the members of the Organizing Committee with a special mention of Dr Maciej Gromadski, Dr Przemyslaw Busse, Jadwiga Gromadska, Awa Surdyk and Maria Wieloch.

Some of the delegates of the Euring Conference before going out for an excursion: Dr. G. Zink (President) front row, 3rd from left; Mr. R. Spencer (General Secretary) last row, middle; Prof. Ryzewski (Editor, The Ring) front row, extreme right.



MALTA IN FOREIGN PUBLICATIONS

The 'Pro Avibus', Year 12, No. 5, September-October 1977, the official bulletin of the "Lega Italiana per la Protezione degli Uccelli" carried an article by Joe Sultana, MOS President, entitled "Situazione Ornitologica dell'Arcipelago Maltese" (Ornithological Situation of the Maltese Archipelago).

The article outlines briefly the situation in Malta regarding bird shooting and trapping. It also describes bird migration through the Maltese Islands, as well as the species of birds which breed in Malta.

The article contains some useful information about the Malta Ornithological Society, its aims and principles, its activities and its publications. There is also a reference to bird-ringing and the research work carried out by the MOS.

The article is illustrated with photographs depicting bird-ringing, MOS publications and a Cory's Shearwater on the nest on Filfla.

DUTCH "ACCENT" . . .

The Dutch magazine "Accent", no. 26 of 25 June 1977 carried an article by the ornithologist Jaap Taapken about bird shooting and trapping in the Maltese Islands. The author also mentioned the efforts of the MOS in educating the general public to appreciate birds and to realize the need for their protection.

. . . BELGIAN STYLE

A similar article by the same author appeared in "L'Homme et l'Oiseau" no. 4, Oct-Dec 1977, the official publication of the Comité de Coordination pour la Protection des Oiseaux of Belgium. Both articles are illustrated with photographs by Jaap Taapken taken during his visit in Malta in April 1977.

MALTA IN 'TREKVOGELS'

'Trekvogels' is the title of a profusely illustrated book written by Jaap Taapken and D.A.C. Van der Hoorn about bird migration in Europe and the hazards, both natural and artificial, which migrating birds face.

The book includes some information and photographs about Malta.

IBIS'S BIRD'S EYE VIEW

"Bird's Eye View" No. 1 has been reviewed/mentioned in the journal of the British Ornithologists' Union, 'IBIS' of April 1978 and in 'The Ring' 93/1977 of the Polish Natural History Museum.

BIRD-WATCHING IN TUNISIA

In July 1976 three members from the Malta Ornithological Society Council (Vincent Sammut, Joe Sultana and John Azoparoi) went on a personal bird-watching visit to Tunisia. The main places visited were Hades, Le Kei, Kairouan and Gafsa. The visit was quite rewarding and produced a few 'firsts' for the visitors such as Palm Dove, Long-legged Buzzard, Little Swift, Black Wneatear, Moussier's Reostart and House Bunting.

The following year, again in July, Joe Sultana led a party of MOS young members for a short visit of ten days. The main areas visited were Lake Ichkeul, the salt-pans at Hades, the mountainous area (at Reg el Harruoa and at Sidi Mansur) near Le Kei and Lake Sebha Keldia near Kairouan.

A total of 109 species of birds were recorded during the visit. The young members were fascinated with wonderful views of birds of prey including Short-toed Eagle, Booted Eagle, Black Kite, Egyptian Vulture, Long-legged Buzzard, as well as glimpses of a Lanner Falcon. Hours were spent watching Lesser Kestrels hunting and feeding their fully fledged young at Sidi Mansur (Le Kei), and a large flock of flamingoes feeding in the salt-pans at Hades, where Little Terns, Black Terns, Slender-billed Gulls, families of Black-winged Stilts, Avocets, Kentish Plovers and many other wader species were observed.

J. Sultana



Some of the young members bird-watching at Sebha Keldia near Kairouan, Tunisia.

Rufous Bushchats, Bee-eaters, Rollers, Hoopoes, Great Grey Shrikes, Woodchat Shrikes and Barbary Partridges were observed in various localities. Other interesting birds included 'firsts' such as Rock Sparrow and Black-bellied Sandgrouse. Pratincoles were common on Lake Ichkeul where they still had flightless young. A Cream-coloured Courser family stole the scene at Lake Sebha Kelbia, where Lesser Short-toed, Calandra and Crested/Thekla Larks were present. It is quite difficult to distinguish between Crested and Thekla Larks which are widespread species.

While at Rades, the group made contact with members of the Tunisian Bird Ringing Centre and Joe Sultana had a long discussion with Thierry Gauthier, head of the Centre, on ways and means of strengthening the already existing co-operation between them and the MOS. On behalf of the MOS, Joe Sultana presented Mr Brahim Ferjani with a pair of binoculars for use by the Tunisian Ringing Centre. Binoculars are very expensive in Tunisia and this gesture was very well received. The binoculars will be used for observing wildfowl during winter counts.

ORNITHOLOGISTS IN MALTA

During the past months Malta has played host to several distinguished ornithologists.

In August 1977 we were visited by Mr & Mrs Joe A. Hardman and their daughter Sarah Jane, Mr Haroman who is an agricultural scientist as well as regional representative of the British Trust for Ornithology or Warwickshire, has been to Malta on several occasions before. He came to Malta for the first time in 1965 to train MOS members in bird-ringing. This eventually saw the establishment of the MOS Bird-Ringing Scheme. During his stay in Malta, Mr Hardman met several members of the MOS Council as well as MOS ringers and young members.

In an interview with the Maltese daily 'l-orizzont', Mr Hardman praised the MOS for its efforts towards the protection of birds. He said that in a country like Malta the close-season was a big problem when it came to law enforcement, especially when the majority of the people were against it. "However," he continued, "more important and more practical than a close-season is education. Education is vital in order to teach the younger generation to appreciate and preserve birds, which are a national heritage".

Before he left Malta, Mr Hardman donated to the MOS Ringing and Research Committee 10 Kg of nets to be used for bird-ringing.

Mr Paul Herroelen, who is a member of the Ornithological Society of Belgium, paid a short visit to Malta in September 1977. During his stay he met various MOS officials with whom he had discussions regarding the bird situation in Malta, as well as on ways of furthering the co-operation between Ornithological Society and MOS. Mr Herroelen was shown around some places of ornithological interest. Before he left, Mr Herroelen donated £M10 to the MOS on behalf of Ornithological Society of Belgium.

During October 1977, we had the great honour to welcome amongst us Dr & Mrs J.D. Summers-Smith. Dr Summers-Smith, who has travelled widely in search of birds is famous for his monograph "The House Sparrow" which was first published by Collins in 1963 and reprinted in 1967.

Dr Summers-Smith was kind enough to give a very interesting talk to MOS members about his experiences with sparrows, with special emphasis on the House Sparrow. He said that in Malta we are fortunate that the Spanish Sparrow is so tame and easily observed, as it presents us with excellent opportunities to carry out detailed studies about it. Although the Spanish Sparrow is a common bird where it occurs, very little is known about its life history.

In an interview with 'The Times of Malta' Dr Summers-Smith said that he was very upset at the amount of indiscriminate shooting taking place in Malta. However, he said he was "encouraged by the efforts of the MOS to arouse a public conscience in favour of bird protection".

After an absence of some years, Mr Mark Beaman revisited Malta in December 1977, accompanied by his wife Maire. Mr Beaman, co-author of the MOS publication "A Guide to the Birds of Malta" as well as author of several ornithological papers, is at present doing biological research on seabirds at the University of Aberdeen in Scotland. In the past years, together with a group of ornithologists, he had been conducting studies of migrating raptors in north-eastern Turkey, which led to the discovery of a new raptor migration route in Asia Minor. These studies were the topic of a very interesting illustrated talk which Mr Beaman gave to MOS members during his stay in Malta.

In an interview with 'The Times of Malta' Mr Beaman said that "the MOS had been a major influence in making the Maltese public more aware of the need for bird preservation". Mr Beaman said that although it is not easy to abolish bird-trapping because of age-old traditions, it is very important to educate the public so that legislation may be accepted. He stressed the fact that a nature reserve in Malta would go a long way in making the public acquire a greater awareness of birds and the need for their protection.

Before their departure, Mr and Mrs

Beaman had the opportunity to meet various MOS members and friends.

In April 1978, Arch. Fulco Pratesi, President of the "Lega Italiana per la Protezione degli Uccelli", was in Malta for the occasion of the World Wildlife Fund exhibition on board the Italian school ship "Amerigo Vespucci". Officials of the Malta Ornithological Society and ICBP Malta met Sig. Pratesi on board the ship, where they discussed various matters regarding bird protection and legislation as well as future co-operation between LIPU, MOS and ICBP Malta.

Also in April we had the pleasure to welcome to Malta Dr Siegfried Woldhek, representative of the Netherlands Committee for the Protection of Migratory Birds. Dr Woldhek visited Malta as part of his tour of various Mediterranean countries to collect information on the bird situation in Southern Europe and North Africa. His findings were eventually published in a report which was presented to the XVII ICBP World Conference in Yugoslavia in June 1978. During his stay in Malta, Dr Woldhek met various members of the MOS and of the other ICBP Malta constituent societies.

During his stay Dr Woldhek visited Ghadira, Buskett and other places of ornithological interest as well as Gozo.

During the XVII ICBP World Conference in Yugoslavia, Dr Woldhek was appointed Co-ordinating Secretary of the European Committee for the Prevention of Mass Destruction of Migratory Birds, which is a committee responsible for the financing of bird conservation projects in Mediterranean countries.

Between 24-27 June 1978 Mr C. de Bruin Treasurer of the Netherlands Committee for the Protection of Migratory Birds was in Malta for talks with ICBP Malta officials regarding the financing of certain ICBP Malta projects.

On behalf of the Netherlands Committee for the Protection of Migratory Birds, Mr de Bruin gave to the Malta Ornithological Society a set of colour slides and bird recordings to be used in giving illustrated talks to members. He also gave MOS a set of bird posters as a token of further co-operation between the two societies.

BIRD ARTIST OF THE MOS

Rodney Ingram, of Northampton, England, may be considered as the bird artist of the MOS. An interior designer by profession, Rodney is a keen bird-watcher, who together with his wife Sheila and two children Louise and Matthew has been visiting Malta annually for well-earned holidays for the past five years. Rodney has kindly prepared, free of any charge, numerous line drawings of various bird species for the MOS and these have embellished MOS publications such as "A Guide to the Birds of Malta", Birds of Prey Educational pamphlet, as well as "Why Conserve Nature", an ICBP Malta's publication.

However, his greatest contribution to the MOS is a set of eight delightful colour plates depicting about 100 species which occur in Malta. It is hoped that these will appear in a future MOS publication which is in preparation.

Ingram

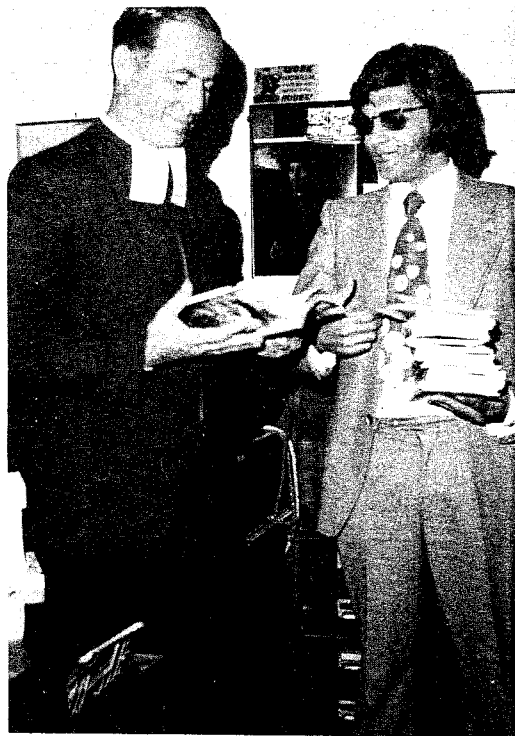


Rodney Ingram at his working desk in his office at Northampton.

DONATIONS

We wish to record the help we received from the following individuals, firms and associations in the form of financial donations and equipment. It should be noted that only donations of £10 or over are being listed. However, we are equally appreciative and grateful to all those other benefactors who have helped the Malta Ornithological Society financially or otherwise and whose names due to lack of printing space, could not be reproduced.

1. Simonds-Farsons-Cisk Ltd who donated £M15 towards expenses incurred in sending a delegate to the Euring Conference in Poland and towards bird-ringing expenses.
2. The Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, Malta Branch who donated £M10 towards the Euring Conference expenses.
3. The Malta Bird Reserves Overseas Committee (MBROC) who donated £M50 towards the Euring Conference expenses.
4. The International Council for Bird Preservation, through the initiative of MBROC, for the donation of £125 sterling towards an MOS publication.
5. The British High Commission for the donation of £250 sterling worth of Malta-addressed bird rings to the MOS Ringing Scheme.
6. The Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland (Cairn Branch), through the initiative of Mrs. H.E. Brown, for the donation of £31.56 sterling.
7. Mrs. W.W. McKinlay who donated a pair of 7X50 Zeiss binoculars.
8. Miss Joan Patterson for the donation of £20.
9. Mrs. E.O. Scovell who donated £M100 to the Young Members' Section.
10. Mrs V.M. Greer who donated £M10.
11. The anonymous donor who, through a request by Mr. J. Anton of Ross et Chrolnarty, Scotland, donated £M40.
12. Mrs. K.K. Sage of the Education Committee of the Amos W. Butler Chapter of the National Audobon Society, Indianapolis, USA for the donation of \$25.
13. The Friends of Malta for the donation of £100 sterling to the MOS Ringing Scheme for the purchase of Malta-addressed rings.
14. Dr. Joe Micallef Stafrace B.A. LL.D., who on several occasions has given gratis to the MOS Council, invaluable legal advice.



J. Azzopardi

Mr. A.E. Baldacchino, MOS General Secretary and ICBP Malta Secretary presenting the ICBP Malta publication "Why Conserve Nature" to Bro. Emanuel, Headmaster of Stella Maris College. The booklet was distributed free to various schools for use by science and civics teachers.

THE EDITOR GETS MARRIED

The Editor of "Bird's Eye View" — Mr John Azzopardi — who is also Chairman of ICBP Malta and Assistant Secretary of the MOS, was married to Miss Carmen Mizzi on the 7th May 1978. MOS Council members and friends attended for the wedding lunch which was held at the Buskett Forest Restaurant, Rabat.

The couple with MOS Council members and friends.

L to R: V. Cilia, G. Bonett (PRO), B.K. German (Treasurer), A.E. Baldacchino (Gen. Sec.), J. Sultana (President), J. Attard (Hon. President), Dr. S. Woldhek (Netherlands Committee for the Protection of Migratory Birds), C. Gauci (Ringing Secretary), S. Scicluna (YMS Secretary), V. Sammut, M. Grima, and L. Cassar (YMS Officer).

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C. Mitsud

