il-Ħuttafa

Numru 159
Lulju - Awwissu 2020

Fras-servjent

€2 għal min mhux membru

BirdLife MALTA
Il-magażin ta' Klabb Ħuttaf
Klabb Ħuttaf

Victor Falzon

Parti żgħira minn għiba kbira ta' ħut irqiq. Il-koħol huma **inċova** (blue anchovy), iċ-ċari aktarx tip ta' **kurunella** (sand-smelt). Iż-żewġ speċi huma komuni madwar ix-xtut tagħna.

Ħbieb Ħuttaf . . .

mill-editur

Żmien twil ilu meta kont għadni *teenager* bdejt indur ma' Malta u Għawdex infittex u nosserva n-natura. Kont naqra kull ħaġa li nsib dwar l-annimali u l-pjanti ħalli nitgħallem fuq il-flora u l-fawna ta' Malta. U x'imkien qrajt li fl-antik il-fkieren tal-baħar kienu jbejtu f'pajjiżna imma kienu ilhom li waqfu xi mitt sena. U kont ngħid "X'ħasra m'għadhomx ibejtu!"

Imbagħad bdejt nara lukandi ġodda, ristoranti, dwal, storbju u żvilupp jiżdiedu max-xatt bl-addoċċ, bla pjan u bla ħsieb, u iktar kont naqta' qalbi li xi darba l-fekruna terġa' tbejjet f'pajjiżna.

Barra minn hekk, dak iż-żmien is-sajjieda kienu jaqbdu ħafna fkieren u jbigħuhom għall-brodu! Niftakarna nduru l-vannijiet tal-ħut, nixtru l-fkieren li jkunu għadhom ħajjin u mmorru niġru nħarrbuhom fil-baħar.

U llum għandna erba' bejtiet tal-fkieren!

U kif taqraw f'paġna 2 waħda minnhom diġà faqqset 84 fkejruna. Affarijiet li jien kont noħlom u nixxennaq għalihom.

Allura x'ġara? Neħħejna l-lukandi? Dallamna x-xtut? Waqqafna l-istorbju? Għalaqna r-ramliet għall-publiku? Xejn minn dan, anzi l-bini kompla żdied. Allura kif f'daqqa waħda fl-2012, fl-2016, fl-2018 u fl-2020 bejtulna l-fkieren?

Ħadd ma jaf, imma tajjeb insemmu li fl-1992 il-fkieren tal-baħar saru protetti f'Malta. Bis-saħħa t'hekk aktarx li llum jgħixu iktar fkieren fil-baħar madwarna.

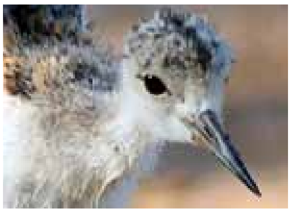
Raġuni oħra tista' tkun li minħabba l-pandemija Covid-19 f'dawn l-aħħar xhur kien hemm inqas traffiku fil-baħar, inqas vapuri, damdim u tniġġis. Forsi għalhekk das-sajf iktar fkieren issugraw jersqu lejn ir-ramliet tagħna.

Li hu sabiħ hu li daż-żmien meta titlgħalna fekruna l-art, in-nies li jsibuha ma joqtluhiex (kif kienu jagħmlu dari) imma jċemplu għall-għajnuna ħalli jiżguraw li l-bejta ma jiġrilha xejn.

Kellna bżonn nuru dan ir-rispett u mħabba lejn l-annimali kollha, fosthom l-għasafar, il-ħut u l-insetti. Forsi erġajt qed noħlom...

Victor

Victor Falzon L-Editur


Ritratt ta' Aron Tanti

FUQ QUDDIEM

Fras-servjent

Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*

Il-fras-servjent jolqot l-għajn mhux biss għax twil u eleganti imma għax għandu saqajh ħomor u twal esaġerat. Mill-2011 'l hawn dan l-għasfur bejjet fir-riserva tal-Għadira kważi kull sena. Fir-ritratt jidher ferħ frisk ta' din is-sena. Għalkemm għadu ma jistax itir, minn kmieni jibda jħaddem il-muskoli tat-titjir li tant se jiġi bżonnhom f'ħajtu!

Klabb Ħuttaf · Dinja Waħda · BirdLife Malta

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Kitbu f'dil-ħarġa

Thais Amaral (National Aquarium), Desirée Falzon, Victor Falzon, Marie Vella (BOV)

club

Klabb Ħuttaf is the junior section of BirdLife Malta. Members can attend activities, including walks, visits to nature reserves, boat trips and environmental work. Members receive by post the bi-monthly magazine *Il-Ħuttafa*. Families too can become members, and will also receive the quarterly magazine *Bird's Eye View*. Subscription is €10 per annum for Klabb Ħuttaf and €29 for Family.

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Ħawwief Għawdxi

Aron Tanti

Il-**ħawwiefa** (house martin) narawha komuni fil-passa tar-rebbiegħa u tal-ħarifa imma f'Malta ma tbejjitx kull sena. Jekk tiftakru s-sena l-oħra (f'*Il-Ħuttafa* 153) konna ġibna li bejtet fil-Belt Valletta. Dis-sena bejtu żewġ pari, it-tnejn f'Santa Luċija, raħal żgħir f'Għawdex.

Mill-ewwel bejta tajru mill-inqas żewġt ifrieħ (jidhru fir-ritratt), imma b'xorti ħażina t-tieni bejta nstabet imwaqqgħa. Jew ma nbnietx soda biżżejjed jew xi ħadd tefgħalha ġebla u faqagħha. Kien x'kien, il-frieħ li kellha fiha mietu.

Qabel dis-sena, il-ħawwiefa darba biss nafu li bejtet f'Għawdex. Kien fin-Nadur fl-2002... tmintax-il sena ilu.

Jekk ilkom membri ħafna snin, konna ġibnieha f'*Il-Ħuttafa* 51!

Ħajd Ġdida fis-Salina

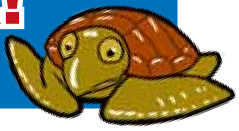
Aron Tanti

Dawn in-nies tal-BirdLife qed jibnu ħajd ġdida fir-riserva naturali tas-Salina. Jekk qatt żortu r-riservi tal-Għadira jew is-Simar, tafu żgur x'inhi ħajd. Tkun kamra żgħira b'ħafna twieqi mibnija fil-qalba tan-natura. Din qiegħda biex inti tidħol fiha u fil-kwiet, bil-moħbi, fil-kenn u bil-kumdità tosserva l-għasafar bla ma huma jarawk. B'hekk tgawdihom bla ma tfixkilhom. Għalhekk ħajd (minn *hide* = tistaħba).

Din kienet it-tielet ħajd li nbniet fis-Salina. Bħat-tnejn l-oħra, tagħti dritt għal fuq is-salini, fejn spiss jinġabru ħafna għasafar. Prosit guys, u grazzi.

Wieħed... tnejn... tlieta... ERBGĦA!

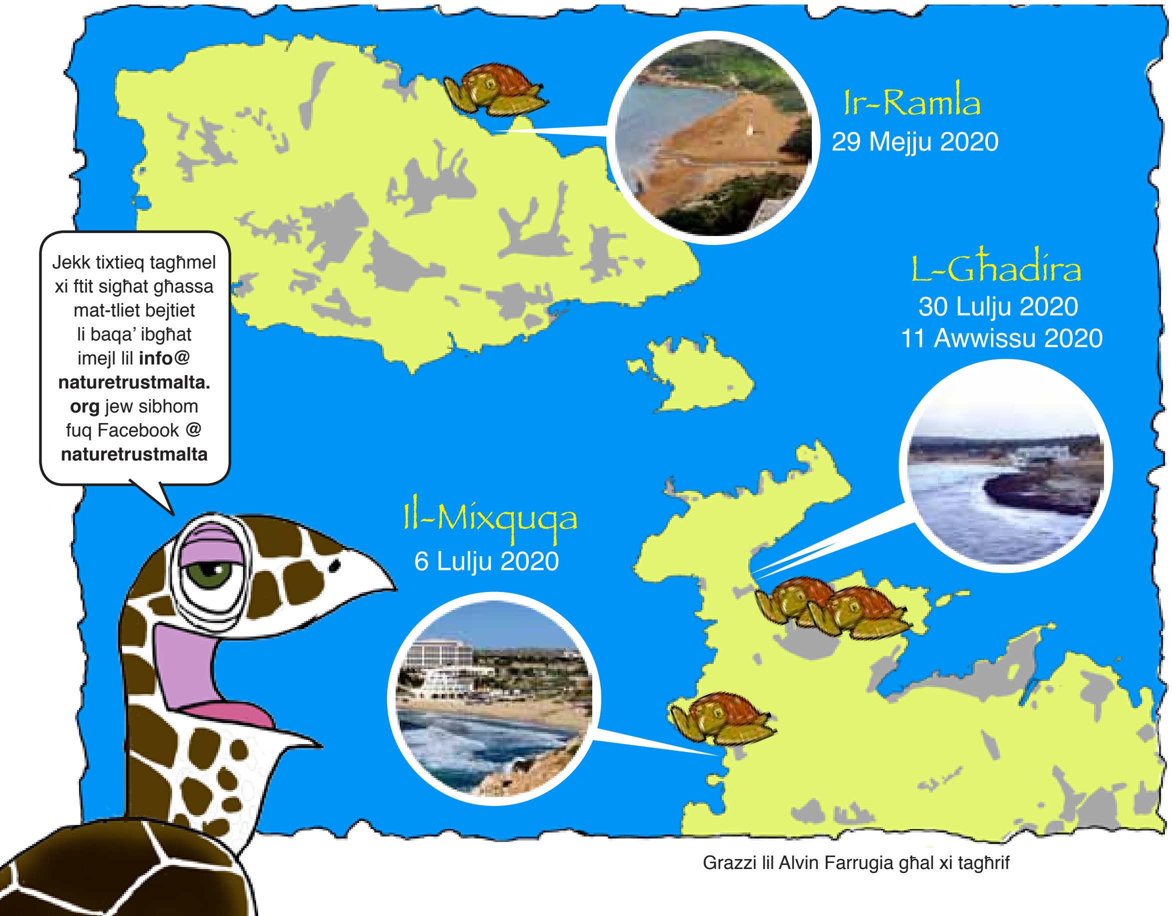
Erba' bejtiet tal-fkieren tal-baħar!



Rekord assolut

Kif żgur tafu, das-sajf biedu erba' fkieren tal-baħar f'pajjiżna. L-ewwel waħda fir-Ramla l-Ħamra, f'Għawdex (kif qrajtu fl-aħħar *Il-Ħuttafa*), imbagħad waħda kmieni f'Lulju fir-Ramla tal-Mixquqa, u t-tielet u r-raba' ftit ġimgħat wara fir-Ramla tal-Għadira.

Meta biedet it-tieni fekruna kien diġà rekord għal Malta f'dawn l-aħħar mitt sena, aħseb u ara erba' bejtiet! Kemm hi ħaġa sabiħa li rettili tal-baħar bħall-fekruna titla' l-art, u titħalla tbid fir-ramel bla ma jfixkilha ħadd. Mhux biss, imma ssib nies li lesti jgħaddu l-ħin ħieles tagħhom jindukraw lejl u nhar il-post tal-bejta sakemm il-bajd ifaqqas u l-fkejruni joħorġu jiġru lejn il-baħar. U kif żgur tafu wkoll, dan diġà ġara!



Grazzi lil Alvin Farrugia għal xi tagħrif

Faqqsu b'suċċess

Hekk hu, l-ewwel bejta (tar-Ramla) kienet suċċess. Fil-bidu t'Awwissu faqqsu 84 fkejruna (minn tqegħida ta' 105 bajda) u lkoll ġrew lejn il-baħar.

Prosit u grazzi lill-voluntiera li qagħdu għassa mal-bejta għal xahrejn sħaħ, u prosit lil Nature Trust u lil ERA li qed jorganizzaw l-għassa.

F'*Il-Ħuttafa* li jmiss nittamaw li jkollna iktar aħbarijiet sbieħ hekk kif ifaqqsu l-bejtiet l-oħrajn!

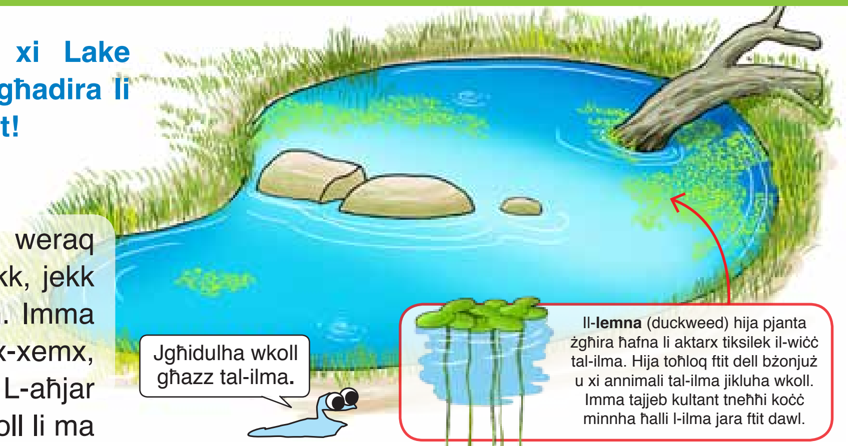
Ġnien għan-Natura

*Kitba u ritratti **Desirée Falzon***
*Tpinġija **Victor Falzon***

Kif tiġbed in-natura lejn il-ġnien tiegħek

Fejn hemm l-ilma hemm il-ħajja! F'Malta ftit għandna ħabitati bl-ilma ħelu, imma anke l-ftit li għandna għandhom il-flora u l-fawna tagħhom. Uħud minn dawn nistgħu nħajruhom iżuru l-ġnien tagħna... billi nagħmlulhom għadira!

Meta ngħidu għadira m'aħniex infissru xi Lake District. Anke f'metru wisa' tista' tagħmel għadira li żżidlek in-natura fil-ġnien. Jien hekk għamilt!



Il-**lemna** (duckweed) hija pjanta żgħira ħafna li aktarx tiksilek il-wiċċ tal-ilma. Hija toħloq ftit dell bżonjuż u xi annimali tal-ilma jikluha wkoll. Imma tajjeb kultant tneħħi koċċ minnha ħalli l-ilma jara ftit dawl.

Fejn l-aħjar?

Tagħmilx l-għadira taħt siġra għax timtlielek weraq niexef li biż-żmien jifga l-ilma. Barra minn hekk, jekk tħaffer taħt siġra aktarx li ssib xi għerq oħxon. Imma lanqas m'għandek tagħmilha għal kollox fix-xemx, għax fis-sajf l-ilma jisħon u l-għadira tinxiflek. L-aħjar li ssib post li jieħu ftit dell u ftit xemx. Tajjeb ukoll li ma tkunx moħbija wisq ħalli l-insetti li jtiru jarawha.

Nixtriha lesta jew nibniha jien?

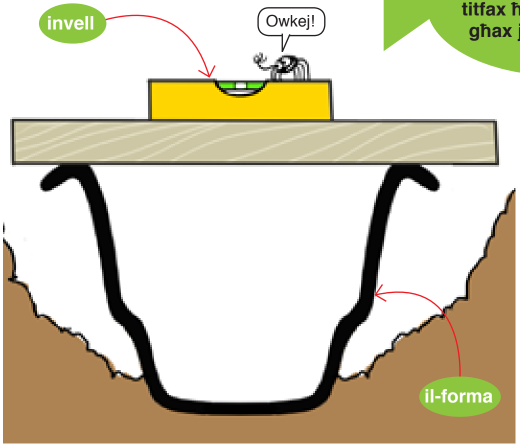
Jekk se tixtriha lesta...

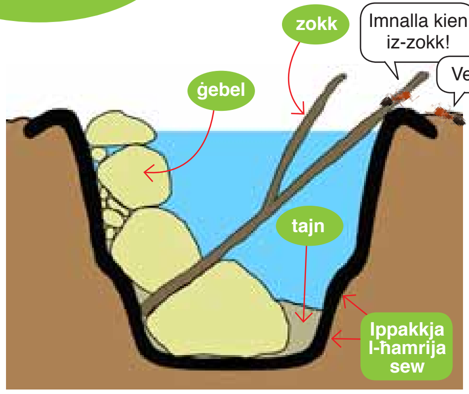
Għadira tista' tagħmilha int jew tixtri l-forma lesta. Il-lesti jkunu s-soltu ta' plastik oħxon iswed f'diversi daqsijiet u forom u ssib tixtrihom minn ħwienet tal-ġonna. Agħżel waħda b'forma irregolari ħalli tkun tidher kemm jista' jkun naturali. Ħaffer ħofra fil-ħamrija, neħħi ġebel iniggeż (li jista' jtaqqabhielek) u qis li l-ġnub ikunu livell. Ippakkja l-ħamrija sew madwar il-forma, tħallix spazji inkella biż-żmien il-forma tiżżaqqaqlek.

Dawn il-vaski ġeneralment ikollhom il-ġnub weqfin, għalhekk wara li tarmahom qiegħed xi ġebel u tajn biex iżżerżaq imqar ġenb minnhom. B'hekk jekk jaqa' fih gremxul jew insetti jkunu jistgħu joħorġu bla tbatija. Inkella msieken jegħrqu.

Din hija għadira tal-forma, li għandi fil-ġnien. Jidher xi ġebel fiha, tajn fil-qiegħ u zokk mimdud fuq il-ġenb ħalli annimali li jaqgħu fl-ilma jiggranfaw miegħu u jsalvaw mill-għarqa. Fir-ritratt l-għadira għadha mhix lesta minn kollox, baqa' xi ħamrija biex tittella' mal-ġnub.

Jekk trid fawna naturali fl-għadira titfax ħut tal-ilma ħelu għax jikollok kollox!





Għanqbuta tal-brimb qalb il-friegħi ta' biżbula tal-ilma

Qiegħ tal-plastik

Jekk se tibniha inti...

Jekk tibni l-għadira inti tista' tagħmilha l-forma eżatt kif tridha, u aktarx tiġik tidher iktar naturali. Però sintendi tieħu ftit iktar xogħol u ħin.

Ħaffer ħofra fil-ħamrija u tiha forma naturali (mhux tonda jew kwadra), bil-ġnub jinżlu bil-mod lejn il-qiegħ. Tagħmilx il-fond kullimkien l-istess biex annimali u pjanti differenti jsibu l-fond li jħobbu jgħixu fih. Tagħmilhiex baxxa wisq inkella l-ilma jisħon ħafna fis-sajf u l-ħajja tmut. Tajjeb ikollok parti fonda xi 60ċm.

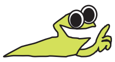
Il-qiegħ jista' jkun tal-plastik (ara l-istampa ta' fuq) jew tas-siment (ara r-ritratti fuq il-lemin). Bis-siment tiġik iktar b'saħħitha u tkun tiflaħ għas-sħana tax-xemx. Jekk għandek xi ħadd id-dar jaf iħallat is-siment u r-ramel u japplikah bil-kazzola, ġenninhom biex jgħinuk :).

Meta jinxef u timlieh l-ewwel darba bl-ilma ħalli l-ilma joqgħod ġurnata imbagħad battal l-għadira u xxxuttaha. B'hekk teħles minn kimiċi li joħorġu mis-siment. Imbagħad erġa' imla.

Qiegħ tas-siment

Għadira li bnejna bis-siment fil-Ġnien Dinja Waħda tal-iskola sekondarja tal-Imrieħel. Fir-ritratt jidher seħibna Charles Gauci jifrex xibka tal-fildiferru li fuqha mbagħad ta kisja siment. Bix-xibka s-siment jissaħħaħ u inqas jixxaqqaq. Fil-qiegħ taħt ix-xibka u s-siment frixna wkoll il-plastik, biex f'każ ta' xquq fis-siment l-ilma xorta ma jintilifx fil-ħamrija.

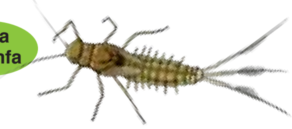
X'natura jkolli?



Pjanti

Hawn ħafna pjanti tal-ilma ħelu u dawn tista' tieħu ż-żerriegħa tagħhom minn post bħal Wied il-Qlejgħa. Il-**biżbula tal-ilma** tagħmel ħafna fjuri u ddum ħafna twarrad. Iz-zkuk joffru ħabitat għall-brimb, u l-ħafna zkuk ħerġin mill-ilma tajbin biex jitilgħu magħhom il-frieħ tal-mazzarelli li jkunu waslu biex jinbidlu f'adulti.

Pjanti oħrajn tajbin huma l-**litrum tal-ilma**, il-**ħass tal-ilma** u l-**karfus tal-ilma**.

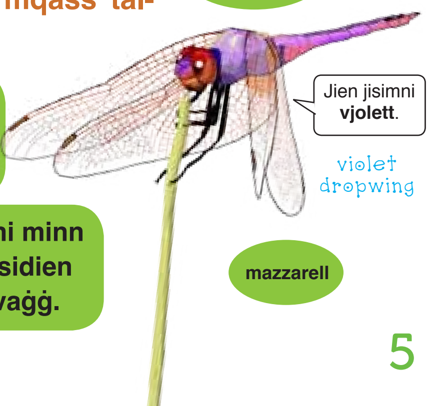


Annimali

Ftit ftit jibdew jitfaċċaw l-annimali waħedhom: **mazzarelli** (dragonflies), **damiġelli** (damselflies) u **ninfi** (mayflies) jinżlu jbidu fl-ilma u ż-żgħar tagħhom jgħixu fl-għadira għal żmien twil sa ma joħorġu biex isiru adulti. Forsi jitfaċċalek xi **żring** ukoll, bħalma tfaċċa fl-għadira tal-ġnien tiegħi! Jekk taf xi ħadd li għamel għadira naturali itolbu ftit tajn u ftit mill-ilma. Fih jaf ikun hemm bajd ta' diversi ħlejjaq, fosthom **bebbux tal-ilma ħelu** u **mqass tal-ilma** (backswimmer).

Qatt taqbad annimali mis-selvaġġ għax tkun qed tfaqqar lin-natura.

Qatt tixtri annimali indiġeni minn *pet shop* għax tħajjar lis-sidien ikomplu jaqbdu mis-selvaġġ.



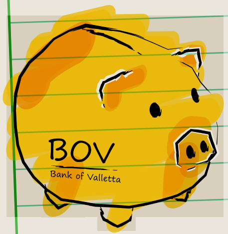
AMY'S DIARY

Heyyy Ħuttafers,

Amy here!

Finally back out of the house and spending time with nanna Michelle at the beach! I love the beach, and I love the sea and its creatures. This year I had enough money in my piggy bank LILY to buy a pair of goggles!

Now I can snorkel around and enjoy the beautiful Maltese seabed. Just need to get my hands on enough money to get a pair of flippers too…



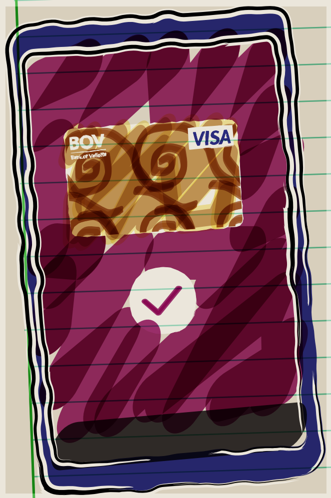
LILY
(spending money)

I'll help more around the house, and earn some extra money by helping Mum wash our new double glazed windows. It may not sound like anything special, but our house is so much cooler this summer and we save on electricity too! Mum said we got them quicker because Bank of Valletta lends money so people can buy environment-friendly stuff! Hurray for BOV, HaHa!

Which reminds me… We finally got to celebrate Nannu Joe's birthday. We went to his favourite restaurant, and we had a fantastic time all together at last!

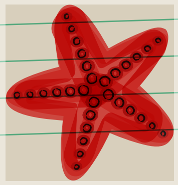
I had pizza (because let's face it, pizza is the best…) and a humongous piece of birthday cake (chocolate).

Then, sneaked out with Dad so he could pay the bill before Nanna did.



When we got to the cashier, Dad went slightly white… His wallet wasn't in his pocket! For a second we thought he lost it on the way, but then he remembered he never took it out from the beach bag…

I ran back for Mum's wallet, but by the time I got back, Dad had already whipped out his Mobile and paid the bill with the BOV Pay app! It's so Cool, Fast & Secure and also saves the day.



Peace Out

Amy

BOV
Bank of Valletta

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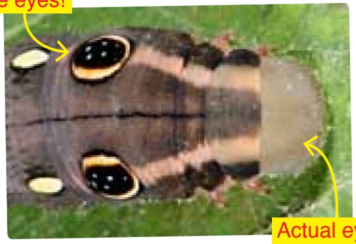
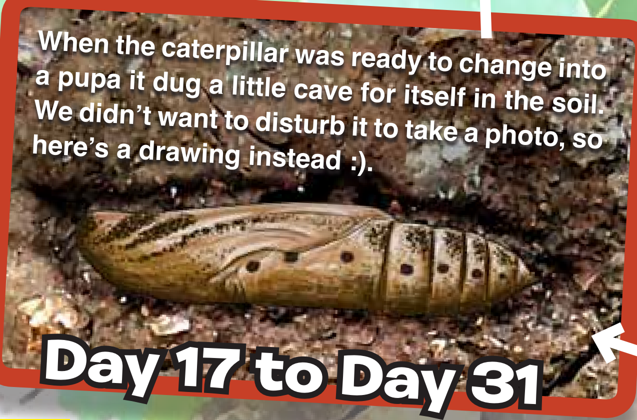
Story of Stripey!

On 27 June 2020 a mummy silver-striped hawk moth laid an egg on the leaf of a vine tree. Here's the story of what happened to that egg...

The big spots on the caterpillar's body are called eye spots. They are not really eyes but a pattern to scare off predators like birds and wasps.



When the caterpillar was ready to change into a pupa it dug a little cave for itself in the soil. We didn't want to disturb it to take a photo, so here's a drawing instead :).



The Maltese name for this wonderful creature is **Bahrija tad-Dwieli**

Photographs by Desirée Falzon and Victor Falzon

Gawwija Prima

Yellow-legged Gull *Larus michahellis*

Ritratt ta' Aron Tanti – meħud fl-inħawi ta' Ġebel Ċantar

#onthe move
enjoy care protect
BirdLife
MALTA

MEDITERRANEAN KILLIFISH

WE ARE SO LUCKY! Lucky that in Malta we share our lives with so many different types of plants and animals, some of which have been crowned as National Species. In this issue we are featuring the Mediterranean Killifish (*Aphanius fasciatus*), the National Fish, popularly known as *il-bużaqq*.

WHERE IS IT FOUND ?

In Malta, this endangered fish is found in saline marshlands. This is the only true brackish-water fish in the Maltese Islands.

IS IT PROTECTED ?

The Mediterranean Killifish has been legally protected since 1999.* ERA gave it additional protection as a National Species in 2018.**

WHAT DOES IT EAT ?

This endangered species feeds on small invertebrates and aquatic plants, which inhabit saline marshlands.

Photos:
Breeding pair in aquarium
© Raymond Caruana - Killifish Conservation Project (KCP)

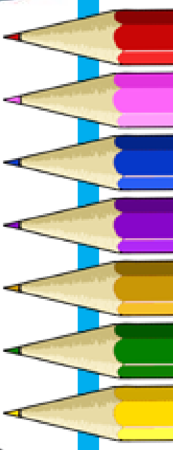
* S.L. 549.44
** S.L. 549.120

LOOK OUT FOR THE SANDARAC GUM TREE IN THE NEXT ISSUE!

ERA
Environment & Resources Authority

Agħtiha l-kulur...

Victor Falzon



Budakkra Żebbuġija

Il-budakkra żebbuġija (peacock blenny) hija ħuta żgħira u komuni. Tgħix f'ilma baxx ħafna max-xatt speċjalment fejn hemm iċ-ċagħaq. Jekk ikollok biċċa ħobż żgħira malajr tagħmel ħbieb ma' dil-ħuta ħelwa għax tispiċċa tiġi tiekol minn idek!

#onthe move

enjoy care protect

Raymond Galea

L-istorbjuż!

Il-werżieq ta' binhar (cicada) huwa wieħed mill-iktar annimali storbjużi fid-dinja! Dak il-ħoss qawwi jagħmlu r-raġel biex jiġbed lejh xi werżieqa, biex forsi tieħu grazzja miegħu :)

Victor Falzon

Minbarra **werżieq ta' binhar**, jgħidulu wkoll **żarżur**, **żerżur**, **ċikada** u **għażżiela**. Żerżur huwa wkoll l-isem ta' tip ta' baħrija.

Veru li l-ħoss tiegħu jġenġillek widnejk, imma kemm hu isbaħ mill-ħsejjes tat-traffiku, murtali bil-bomba, tiri tas-snieter, ajruplani fil-baxx...

Flamingo Emergency?

Has a flamingo just landed near you and looks lost? Don't worry, the bird's probably just tired but it needs specialist help. Here's what to do.

- Call BirdLife on **79255697** or **21347646**.
- If it's in danger from people or traffic, stand in its way so it doesn't wander further.
- Don't touch or handle the bird – the flamingo's neck and legs are very delicate, and wrong handling can cause it permanent injury.
- Don't offer the bird food or liquids. Flamingoes are specialised filter-feeders with a delicate digestive system.
- Stay with the bird until BirdLife people turn up.

Thanks!

Victor Falzon

ir-rundun

Maħluq għall-ajru!

Victor Falzon

Isem xjentifiku *Apus apus*
Isem bl-Ingliż Common Swift
Daqs 16ċm **Medda** 40ċm
Piż 38g
Ikel Nemus, insetti żgħar
Ħabitat Beraħ, raba', bwar, bliet, irdum
Status Komuni fil-passa, xi pari jbejtu

Jekk trid titgħallem iktar fuq l-għasafar li jbejtu f'Malta **The Breeding Birds of Malta** huwa l-ktieb għalik. Għall-bejgħ mill-BirdLife u xi ħwienet tal-kotba.

Mario V. Gauci

Ir-rundun ma jbejjitx fis-siġar imma fi xquq kennija fejn ikollu saqaf fuq rasu. Il-mara s-soltu tbid żewġ bajdiet, li jfaqqsu wara xi tliet ġimgħat. Il-bejta fir-ritratt kienet f'rokna kennija f'bini antik fl-Imdina.

Id-daqs proprju ta' bajda tar-rundun

Victor Falzon

Tim Micallef

Dawn il-ventilaturi dojoq ta' dar fi triq fl-Imsida wkoll sabhom komdi r-rundun.

Wieħed mill-ewwel postijiet li beda jbejjet fihom kienu dawn ix-xquq fil-bini tal-knisja tal-Mellieħa

Raymond Galea

Ir-rundun huma ikbar mill-għasafar tal-bejt u spiss ikeċċuhom mix-xquq biex ibejtu fihom huma flokhom!

Fin-natura r-rundun ibejjet fi xquq fis-sisien weqfin. Ibejjet ukoll fl-għerien, bħal dan l-għar mal-baħar fl-inħawi tax-Xlendi f'Għawdex.

Joe Sultana

Fl-antik ir-rundun kien ibejjet regolari f'Malta imma wara l-1909 waqaf ibejjet għal kważi seklu sħiħ[1]! Mill-2007 'il quddiem reġa' beda jbejjet kull sena f'numri żgħar f'xi nħawi bħall-Mellieħa, Tas-Sliema u l-Mosta. Illum ibejtu xi 40-50 par kull sena u n-numru aktarx li bil-mod qiegħed jiżdied.

[1]Bejjet ukoll darba fl-1996.

PLASTIC IN THE OCEAN:

HOW CAN WE CHANGE IT?

MALTA NATIONAL AQUARIUM

You have probably heard about straws and plastic bags affecting turtles, but they are not the only ones! Unfortunately, all types of plastic materials can harm all types of ocean creatures.

HOW CAN PLASTIC AFFECT MARINE LIFE?

- **INGESTION:** animals can eat plastic and think they are full, but there are no nutrients in plastic! Also, depending on the material, animals can choke or get injured by things like sharp objects.
- **ENTANGLEMENT:** fishing nets can get stuck on animals' bodies and hamper reproduction, swimming and even migration... how sad!
- **THIS IS A WEIRD ONE: SPREAD OF INVASIVE SPECIES!** This means that sea creatures can get attached to something like a plastic bottle and then hitch a hike across different areas of the globe, then cause some damage in the new area where they arrive and do not belong to!
- **HABITAT DAMAGE:** imagine a tyre being thrown on a coral reef and damaging the coral and all animals that live on it... what a sad result!

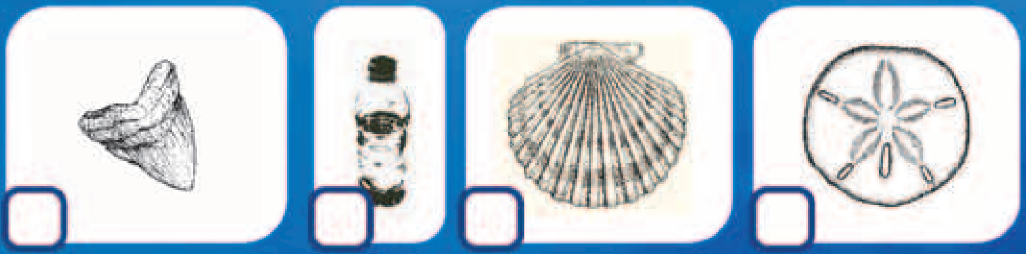
PLASTIC NEVER GOES AWAY!

Some types can be recycled but not indefinitely, and they will eventually become microplastics, which are tiny and even more easily ingested by animals.

HOW CAN WE CHANGE THIS?

Recycling is important, but reducing and reusing are key for tackling the issue in an effective way. Bring your own bags, refuse single-use plastics and spread the word! Any further ideas on how we can save the oceans? Let us know and write to: education@aquarium.com.mt

WHICH ONE OF THESE HAVE YOU EVER SEEN ON THE BEACH?



Smiley and Grumpy

Good news and bad news from around the world

Wild beavers back in England

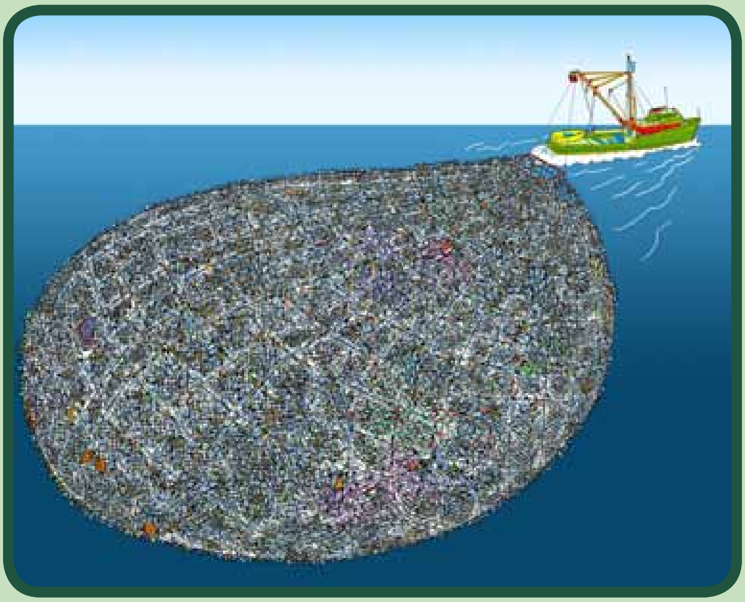
Some years ago a small group of beavers started a family on the River Otter in Devon, England. Nobody knows how they got there but many people were happy with the news because beavers had been extinct in England for 400 hundred years. The government caught the beavers to check if they were healthy (they were!) and if they were the European species (they were!). So the beavers were set free and a bunch of naturalists and biologists began a project to study them. Now the government said it's okay for the beavers to stay on the River Otter. Welcome back beavers! Big Smiley!

Rich forest or dirty coal

The government of India wants to chop up a huge forest in the state of Chhattisgarh because there's lots of coal in the ground under it. The forest is home to tigers and elephants but the politicians want to cut down the forest and dig 40 big coalfields – they only care about the money they'll get when they sell the coal to other countries. But no country will probably buy this coal because it's the very dirty kind that makes lots of air pollution. So India will end up burning the coal at home and polluting their beautiful country. India should spend less money on coal and more money on wind and solar power. It's clean, it's cheap and it's forever. And the forest, the elephants and the tigers get to stay alive. But politicians don't think like that!

Ten billion tree tsunami!

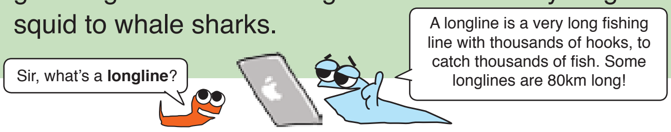
Two years ago Pakistan began a great project to plant ten billion trees – that's more than there are people on earth. Trees will help fight climate change because they suck carbon dioxide from the air, a gas that's causing all the global warming. Now there are many workers who have lost their jobs because of the Covid-19 pandemic, so the government is giving them a new job... to plant trees instead! In the past, Pakistan lost lots of forest because of deforestation, bad farming and animal grazing. Now they want to turn the clock back and make the country green again, by planting lots of poplars. Go Pakistan!



Victor Falzon

Megafishing

The Galapagos Islands are a paradise for wildlife, with lots of rare plants and animals. The sea around the islands is also very rich in fish and corals and all sorts of wonderful life. It's one giant nature reserve, so fishing is not allowed there. But now there's a big fleet of more than 200 Chinese fishing ships parked around the Galapagos protected area and they're catching all the fish in huge nets and longlines many kilometres long. The fish are then put in huge freezer ships so the fishing boats can throw their nets again. This is against international fishing laws but they do it because nobody's looking. They light up the sea at night too so the fish come to the surface and get caught too. The fishing boats catch everything from squid to whale sharks.



Tim Micallef

Wied fil-bżonn!

Appell għal Għajn Riħana

Għajn Riħana huwa wied twil (xi 4km) u sabiħ bejn il-Mosta u Burmarrad. Għal diversi xhur tas-sena dan il-wied iżomm l-ilma u joħloq ambjent naturali rari f'pajjiżna. Fih bejjet kemm-il darba l-gallozz iswed (moorhen) u dis-sena anke l-bufula tal-qasab (reed warbler). Fl-inħawi ntlemħu wkoll għasafar rari bħall-gallozz tal-faxxi (Baillon's crake) u l-bekkaċċ ta' Mejju (great snipe), u fl-ilma jbidu diversi speċi ta' mazzarelli. Fost il-flora tal-wied jikber iċ-ċfolloq tal-ilma (sanicle-leaved water crowfoot), ġojjell ta' fjura.

B'xorti ħażina dal-wied għadu mhux imħares. Spiss jinżlu kaċċaturi jisparaw fuq għasafar protetti. Isir ukoll ħafna rimi ta' skart u parkeġġ bl-addoċċ. Wied Għajn Riħana jixraqlu ħarsien u kura xierqa, jekk mhux kollu mqar parti minnu.

Nieħdu ħafna art min-natura għall-iżvilupp. Xieraq kultant nagħtuha xi ħaġa lura!

Grazzi lil Edward Bonavia, Christopher Carbone, Stephen Cilia u Aron Tanti għal xi tagħrif.