

# Review of the illegal killing and taking of birds in the Mediterranean



Poisoned Spanish Imperial Eagle © Fernando Saura

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Raptors MoU MoS2

# Background

- **Illegal killing and taking of birds is a growing issue of concern, especially across the Mediterranean region**
- **Many countries struggling to tackle the issue**
- **Little quantitative information available** on which species might be most affected, which countries are facing the most serious problems, and which are the worst locations
- **Aid priority-setting and provide baseline**



Nets on Egyptian Mediterranean coast © Dr Holger Schulz

# Project objectives

- **Assess the scale, scope and impact of illegal killing and taking** by compiling information on the species, numbers of individuals, blackspots and illegal practices
- **Undertake review of national legislation** on hunting, trapping and trading of birds
- **Develop best-practice techniques and protocols for systematic monitoring** of the different type of illegal activities
- **Raise awareness** of the issue through communications and advocacy
- Contribute results of the review to **support prioritisation** re: action of BirdLife Partnership, and in support of broader international efforts to prioritise action on this issue

26 participating Mediterranean countries

# Review of national legislation

- Define what is legal/ illegal at national level
- All 26 countries/territories assessed, except Libya, have **hunting/taking regulations**
- Identification of **gaps where legislation fails to comply with international conventions**
  - Legislation not often sufficiently detailed
  - Hunting season coinciding with migration and breeding seasons
  - Species of conservation concern hutable
- Factsheets will be made available on Birdlife website and in final project report

## Summary of National Hunting Regulations: Cyprus



Updated in August 2014

### HUNTING AND TRAPPING LEGISLATION/ RESOURCES

**Name of main legislation:** Law 152(I)/2003 regarding 'Protection and Management of Wild Birds and Game Species'.

**Year of publication:** 2003

**Supporting legislation:** Law 153(I)/2003 regarding 'Protection and Management of Nature and Wildlife'. Law 2002 regarding 'Dogs'. Law 2004 regarding 'Shooting and non-shooting weapons'.

**Legislation updates:** Latest update on Law 152(I)/2003 was in 2012

**Hunting legislation (web link):** Law 152(I)/2003 and updates  
[http://www.moi.gov.cy/moi/wildlife/wildlife\\_new.nsf/web18\\_gr/web18\\_gr?OpenDocument](http://www.moi.gov.cy/moi/wildlife/wildlife_new.nsf/web18_gr/web18_gr?OpenDocument)

**Authority in charge of controlling hunting (web link):** Cyprus Game and Fauna Service

**Major inconsistencies or loopholes detected (if yes please describe):** None.

**Derogations (on EU Birds Directive and/or Bern Convention):** Crow hunting (during summer, as a pest control measure).

### HUNTING AND TRAPPING: METHODS AND RESTRICTIONS

	Legal methods/restrictions	Notes
Hunting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Licensed hunting is permitted in certain seasons and for certain species (see below).</li> <li>- Only rifles are permitted in Cyprus. All other hunting methods included in the Birds Directive are forbidden including use of calling devices or live decoys, shooting from a moving vehicle of any sort, falconry.</li> <li>- Restrictions include: no hunting at night, no hunting out of season, no hunting in Wildlife Conservation Areas</li> <li>- It is prohibited to hunt within 500 metres from built up / residential areas, 200 metres from isolated housing, 300 metres from military barracks / installations and 150 metres from fenced areas.</li> </ul>	
Trapping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Trapping is completely illegal in Cyprus</li> <li>- Possession of non-selective methods such as mist nets, limesticks and calling devices is illegal in Cyprus.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It is illegal to possess, sell or eat trapped birds</li> <li>- No establishment in Cyprus has to date been licensed to serve game – so even legally shot game such as chukar, partridges or hares cannot currently be served in a restaurant.</li> </ul>

*Disclaimer: The information found in these factsheets prepared by the BirdLife Partnership was updated in August 2014. Every reasonable effort has been made to ensure that the information presented is current and accurate at this time, but recent legislative changes may not be reflected. The content of these factsheets is for information only and is not intended as legal advice. If official legal documentation of national legislation is required it should be sought from the relevant national government authority.*

# Assessing scale, scope and impact of illegal killing and taking

*Illegal killing and taking of birds = any form of deliberate action that results in the death/removal from the wild of an individual of a bird species that is prohibited under national or regional legislation*

## Approach to estimates

**Our approach:** estimates with credible min and max bands given the level of uncertainty

- ✓ Templates and guidance provided – input from CMS family and others
- ✓ Min and max limits of the estimate could be very wide (e.g. 100-10,000)
- ✓ Justification notes explaining how estimates have been derived, so the logic and audit trail is transparent
- ✓ Caveats and confidence limits highlighted in any outputs produced using these data

# Estimating numbers

- **Extrapolations from existing data**
  - On illegal killing at individual sites
  - Rehabilitation centres
  - Violation (police) records
  - Mist-net capture rates from ringing studies
  - Proportion of population size
- **Expert opinion**

Estimates for European Turtle-dove in Greece:  
**Min-Max** = 4-15 birds per day \* 4-7 'good' days \* 1,5 hunters per shooting hide \* 500-800 hides  
 = **12,000-126,000 ind/year** (interviews with poachers)

Estimates for Barbary Partridge in Tunisia:  
**Min** = on average 80 adults poached per year (monitoring in one site) \* 20 governorates = **1,600 ind/year**  
**Max** = on average 500 nests poached per year (observation from the field), 2 clutches with 10 eggs poached on average (20 eggs per nest), about 75% of nests poached eggs = 7,500 ind \* 3 areas = 22,500 + 1,600 adults poached = **24,100 ind/year**

## Estimates for Shrikes in Syria:

**Min-Max** =  
 5,000-10,000  
 Shrikes estimated  
 to be killed in  
 Syria/year

Species	Relative abundance	Min – Max estimate
Red-backed Shrike	50%	2,500 – 5,000
Masked Shrike	20%	1,000 – 2,000
Lesser Grey Shrike	10%	500 – 1,000
Woodchat Shrike	10%	500 – 1,000
Rufous-tailed Shrike	5%	250 – 500
Great Grey Shrike	5%	250 – 500

## Estimates for Ducks and Geese in Italy:

**Min** = Guestimate  
**Max** = 10% of the wintering population



# Data collation

## Information by species by species

Common name	Is the species illegally killed in your country?	If YES (or likely)											Approximate total number of individuals killed illegally per year		Explanation	Confidence	Trend of the illegal killing over last 10 years	Comments		
		Reasons for killing/capture						Types of illegality												
		Predator control	Sport / recreation	Food	Taxidermy	Cagebird / pet / live decoy	Other	Protected species	Within a protected area	Outside legal open season	Illegal method			Other					Min	Max
Common Quail	Yes (or likely)		1	1		2				1		2	1	1	700,000	1,470,000	Method 1	3	Moderate increase (<25%)	Use of calling machines
Greater White-fronted Goose	Yes but numbers killed are likely to be insignificant																			
Marbled Teal	No (or unlikely)																			
<b>Ferruginous Duck</b>	Yes (or likely)		1	2			1						1		2	4	Accidental information	1	Moderate increase (<25%)	
All species for which illegal killing is insignificant															1,400	3,600				
Total															2,169,980	4,278,050				



# Data collation

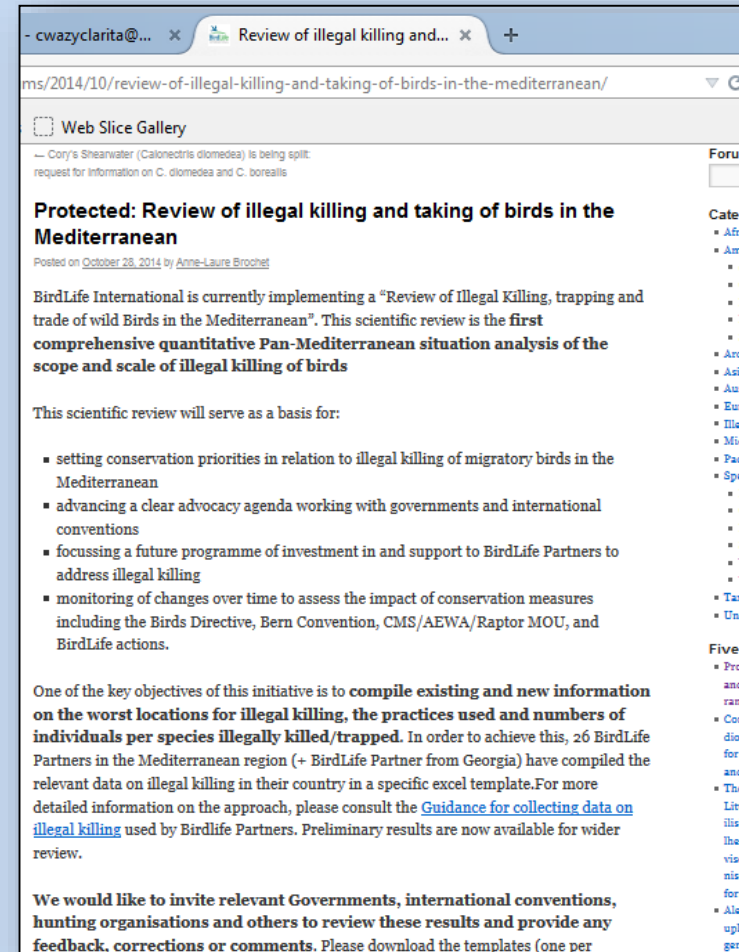
## Information on worst locations

Site/area/region name	Administrative region	Coordinates (in WGS84 decimal degrees)		Approximate % of birds killed illegally each year in your country at this site/area/region		Protected area(s) (name any overlapping site/area)	IBA(s) (name any overlapping site/area)
		Latitude	Longitude	Min	Max		
Famagusta area	Famagusta district	35.019029	33.981021	25	35		Akhna Dam - 12001 Paralimni Lake - 12007 Cape Greco - 12031
Dhekelia Eastern Sovereign Base Area	Larnaca district	35.001704	33.799714	25	25		Oroklini lake - 12006 Koshi-Pallourokampos and Troulloi Plain - 12018
Ayios Theodoros / Maroni areas (Pentashoinos River valley)	Larnaca district, western	34.797723	33.391378	15	15		Pentashoinos River - 12024
Kiti, Mazotos villages	Larnaca district, western	34.837885	33.533741	5	5		Panagia Stazousa River - 12021 Larnaca Salt Lakes - 12004



# Data review

- Datasets available online for **review by external experts** from scientific/ technical bodies and/or national focal points of relevant international conventions including Raptors MoU, conservation and ornithological organisations, hunting associations
- Aim: to ensure that the **estimates were as accurate as possible and integrated all relevant information**
- Any feedback was then used by the national experts to **revise the data**



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the following content:

- Browser tabs: cwazyclarita@... | Review of illegal killing and...
- Address bar: ms/2014/10/review-of-illegal-killing-and-taking-of-birds-in-the-mediterranean/
- Page title: Protected: Review of illegal killing and taking of birds in the Mediterranean
- Author: Posted on October 28, 2014 by Anne-Laure Brochet
- Text: BirdLife International is currently implementing a "Review of Illegal Killing, trapping and trade of wild Birds in the Mediterranean". This scientific review is the **first comprehensive quantitative Pan-Mediterranean situation analysis of the scope and scale of illegal killing of birds**
- Text: This scientific review will serve as a basis for:
  - setting conservation priorities in relation to illegal killing of migratory birds in the Mediterranean
  - advancing a clear advocacy agenda working with governments and international conventions
  - focussing a future programme of investment in and support to BirdLife Partners to address illegal killing
  - monitoring of changes over time to assess the impact of conservation measures including the Birds Directive, Bern Convention, CMS/AEWA/Raptor MOU, and BirdLife actions.
- Text: One of the key objectives of this initiative is to **compile existing and new information on the worst locations for illegal killing, the practices used and numbers of individuals per species illegally killed/trapped**. In order to achieve this, 26 BirdLife Partners in the Mediterranean region (+ BirdLife Partner from Georgia) have compiled the relevant data on illegal killing in their country in a specific excel template. For more detailed information on the approach, please consult the [Guidance for collecting data on illegal killing](#) used by Birdlife Partners. Preliminary results are now available for wider review.
- Text: **We would like to invite relevant Governments, international conventions, hunting organisations and others to review these results and provide any feedback, corrections or comments. Please download the templates (one per**

# Overview

- **First comprehensive quantitative Pan-Mediterranean situation** of the scope and scale of illegal killing of birds –good baseline
- Providing **useful indications of the overall magnitude** of the issue
- **Paucity of data on illegal killing/taking of birds, with most estimates having wide intervals**
- **Monitoring schemes which use systematic sampling protocols** are needed

# Products from the review and future plans

- **Short communications publication ‘the killing’** for publicity purposes
- **Scientific paper hopefully published soon** – review comments from CMS family appreciated
- **Full report** soon available with national annexes
- **Guidelines on monitoring** illegal killing – more on that in the side event



# Key next steps

- **Launch of the results and coordination of communications campaign nationally and internationally** - to increase public and political support against illegal killing of birds
- **Pilot use of the illegal killing monitoring guidelines** by Mediterranean Partners in collaboration with others
- **Conservation action by Mediterranean Partners** to address illegal killing at worst sites in collaboration
- **Ensure BirdLife work well joined up with that of policy instruments** - **CMS Family** (especially initially the CMS Task Force on illegal killing, taking and trade of birds in the Mediterranean), Bern, EU and others
- **Similar data are needed in Central and Northern Europe, the Arabian Peninsula, sub-Saharan Africa and Central Asia**, in order to provide a flyway-scale picture

# Addressing illegal killing

- Requires action at local, national and international scales
- Variety of stakeholders, from local and national law enforcement agencies, to the judiciary, hunting groups to national government authorities, NGOs to international policy instruments.
- National or regional action plans beneficial to agree and guide multi-stakeholder action on illegal killing eg/ Egypt and Libya and Cyprus
- Overall, some key general areas for action would be:
  - improvements to the legislation itself
  - improving compliance with existing legislation
  - improving and scaling-up enforcement of existing legislation
  - applying consistently more effective penalties
  - implementing systematic monitoring of illegal killing
  - Policy instruments - collating/ analysing results internationally – flyway scale impacts, sharing experience, supporting national efforts

# Acknowledgments

*Thank you to national experts who worked hard to contribute national information to the review of illegal killing and taking of birds and the organisations that supported them to work on this issue. Thanks too to the experts including from the CMS family who helped to review the guidance/ methodology, national data and the draft paper*

*This review was funded by an anonymous BirdLife donor.*



# SIDE EVENT – Thursday at 1.15pm

## Quantifying, monitoring and tackling illegal killing of birds in the Mediterranean and beyond

Chair: Dr Saleem Hamadeh – Lebanon

- CMS – Taskforce on illegal killing
- Lebanon
- Hungary
- International Association of Falconry
- BirdLife International