

Preventing Illegal killing of Birds

Title



Across Europe, birds suffer from a wide range of illegal persecution: illegal poisoning, shooting, trapping, and the theft of chicks for the bird trade are common practices. In some cases it can explain the decline of specific bird populations and therefore it endangers the ecosystems to which these bird species belong. That is why BirdLife Europe made "tackling illegal killing of birds" a mission for our Partnership.

Our experts collect data on the ground in collaboration with our national Partners; they also organise and participate in high level conservation summits to raise other experts' awareness about this issue. In Brussels, our policy team advocates on the issue in the European Institutions and at local level our Partners take palliative measures and evaluate ways of challenging different killing practices and limiting their damaging impacts on biodiversity.

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BirdLife Partners actively campaign and work on the ground to stop illegal killing

- **In Hungary, illegal killing of birds threatens rare majestic birds**
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In Hungary, illegal killing of birds threatens rare majestic birds

Over the last decade in Hungary, more than a thousand protected birds have been poisoned including White-tailed Eagles *Haliaeetus albicilla*, Saker Falcons *Falco cherrug*, and Common Buzzards *Buteo buteo*. More birds have been, and still are, the victims of other illegal practices, such as trapping or shooting. MME (BirdLife in Hungary) coordinates a Life+ project (co-financed by the EU) in cooperation with eight other organisations, aimed at supporting the slow growth of the Eastern Imperial Eagle *Aquila heliaca* population in Hungary, and more widely, at finding methods of controlling illegal hunting of birds.

In Greece and Cyprus, poisoned bait targeting wild animals is killing rare birds

In Greece and Cyprus, poisoning bait against carnivores is a very common practice. However, it causes huge damage to wildlife generally and especially to birds. For example, it has been a key factor in the decline of the Griffon Vulture *Gyps fulvus* population in Cyprus, now on the brink of extinction. BirdLife Cyprus, together with three Partners in Cyprus and Greece, will implement the 'Cross Border Cooperation Programme Greece-Cyprus' (co-funded by the European Commission and Greek national funds), launched in 2011, with the goal of restoring the Griffon Vulture population in Cyprus.

The French fashion of 'chemical treatment campaigns' endangers birds

Despite the alarm sounded by LPO (BirdLife in France) about the damage they cause to wildlife in the French region of Auvergne, ten new French regions have asked the French Ministry of Agriculture to implement, in their territories, chemical treatment campaigns targeting rodents, like the vole, and wild carnivores, such as foxes, ferrets and weasels. LPO is actively advocating for the French government to stop the treatment campaigns and to implement measures ensuring the protection of Red Kite, the main victim of these "treatment campaigns".

In Malta, hunting of endangered birds during the migratory season remains an issue

In Malta, carcasses of protected birds, including Gulls, Ospreys *Pandion haliaetus*, Western Marsh-harriers *Circus aeruginosus*, Common Kestrels *Falco tinnunculus*, Common Swifts *Apus apus* and European Bee-eaters *Merops apiaster*, can be found throughout the island. Illegal hunting of birds is a tradition in the country that is difficult to halt. For several years, BirdLife Malta has been leading a campaign against illegal hunting and trapping activities. Actions include the coordination of two annual conservation camps: Spring Watch in April and Raptor Camp in September.



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