

Jonathan Franzen backs call to end illegal bird slaughter in the Mediterranean

Bestselling American author, Jonathan Franzen, has added his voice to BirdLife's campaign to end the illegal killing of birds in the Mediterranean.

In an interview published on Wednesday 9 September in the NGO's newsletter, Mr. Franzen, a keen birdwatcher and a member of the Rare Bird Club, took time out of his busy schedule promoting his new novel *Purity* to comment on the shocking results of BirdLife's study.

BirdLife's review of illegal killing of birds in the Mediterranean, entitled *The Killing*, was released last month.

The report, previewing a scientific paper due to be published this year, estimates around 25 million birds are killed illegally each year in the region.

But Mr. Franzen believes that is a "very conservative" figure.

The Pulitzer Prize finalist is unimpressed with arguments based on 'tradition', which form the basis for many examples of illegal bird killings.

The writer says that although historically there were enough birds to allow widespread killings during migration periods, the situation is now very different and it's no longer sustainable at current levels.

He said: "We need to get the message across: Birding and conservation go hand in hand. You can't do one and not care about the other.

"If you care enough about birds to go out and spend your time watching them, you can't stay silent about the massacre that's happening in the Mediterranean."

The full interview with Jonathan Franzen can be read in September's edition of Birdseye, BirdLife Europe's monthly newsletter, out this morning [Wednesday 9 September].

Jonathan Franzen's latest novel, Purity, is out now.

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The latest edition of Birdseye, BirdLife Europe's monthly newsletter, will be available through this link from Wednesday morning: <http://www.birdlife.org/europe-and-central-asia/media/birdseye-newsletter>

More information on *The Killing* campaign to end illegal killing of birds in the Mediterranean is available here: <http://www.birdlife.org/illegal-killing>

More details on The Rare Bird Club is available here:
<http://www.birdlife.org/worldwide/support-us/rare-bird-club>