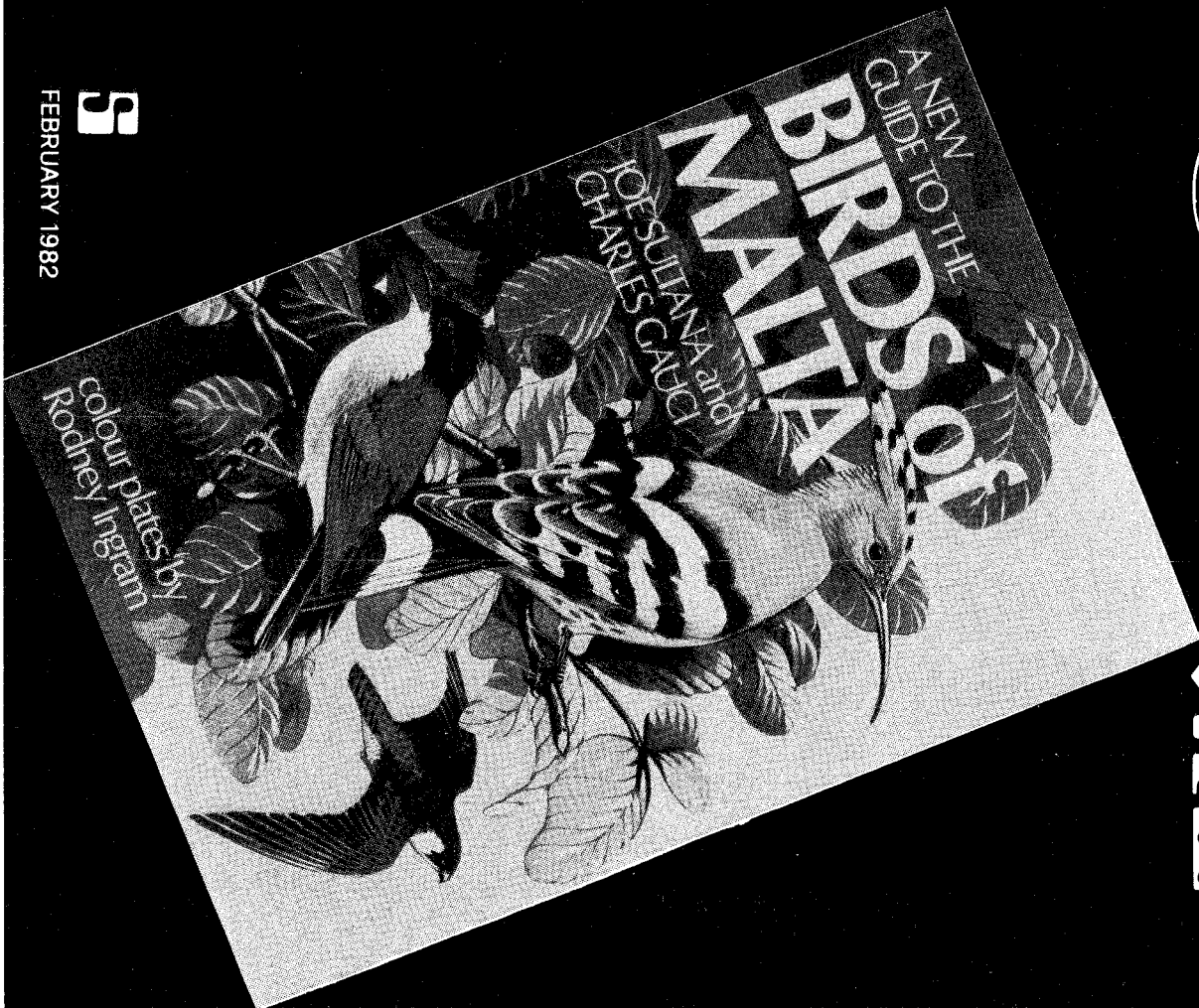


**BIRD'S  
EYE  
VIEW**



**5**  
FEBRUARY 1982



# BIRD'S EYE VIEW

February 1982 Number 5

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

#### *Editorial Board*

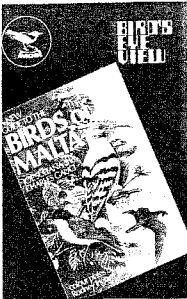
Editor : Joe Sultana

Members : Alfred E. Baldacchino &  
Saviour Balzan

Design & Artwork : Alfred E. Baldacchino

Printed for MOS by Union Press, Malta.

FRONT COVER : The MOS new publication - A New Guide to the Birds of Malta . For further details see page 4.



John Azzopardi

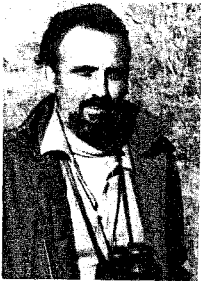


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Treasurer's Report

BACK COVER : The rugged south cliffs of Gozo provide sanctuary to the breeding shearwaters.

## Comment



The new bird laws which all Maltese conservationists had acclaimed with abounding pleasure and fervour last year seemed to be inexistent in their first trial in spring 1981. The irresponsible shooters for whom they were aimed disregarded them totally. We have witnessed the breaking of all the regulations at one time or another by a large number of shooters who are a continuous hazard for bird conservation. Protected birds were not safe from these trigger-happy bullies; protected areas were violated day in day out. We had anticipated something similar, but not to this extent. We understand that one cannot change the mentality and the traditions of a whole country with a stroke of the pen; we understand that the police are quite stretched and have many other problems to solve as well; but WE MUST EMPHASIZE THE NEED NOT TO LET THESE LAWS GO INTO SLUMBER AND OBLIVION. They would then need greater efforts to enforce them than it took to enact them.

The MOS is prepared not to let this happen. Its educational campaign would leave no stone unturned; but MOS is not at present in a position to enforce the law itself. Some cases taken to court on the initiative of MOS members have been dragging for months at the law courts with several whole mornings wasted. If we have to take action for every infringement we spot we would have to put up house at the law courts.

Many law-abiding shooters have also been grumbling about this chaotic, sad state of affairs. But grumbling will get one nowhere. Action is needed. We appeal to them to act, to organize themselves against the many others who are bringing the whole situation in one big chaos of bird destruction.

Joe Sultana  
EDITOR  
February 82

## News & Views

### BIRD TRAPPING HABITS

It seems that a change in one's environment does not make one to change his bad habits. Two Maltese Immigrants were fined £1000 and had all their trapping equipment confiscated when they were caught by police and an RSPCA Inspector trapping finches near Cardiff City's football ground. Many finches, including several Goldfinches and Greenfinches, were released from captivity. Anthony Farrugia and Samuël Sultana (no relation to BEV Editor) found out that the saying 'what's good for the goose is good for the gander' did not apply in finch trapping, which is legal in Malta but illegal in UK.

### MOSY'S NEW OFFICER

Michael Grima, a veteran Council Member, is the new Officer in charge of MOSY (MOS Youths - note the polished change of name from that of Young Members Section). Mike, a dedicated teacher and a staunch conservationist, excels in youth leadership and MOSY will, no doubt, continue to flourish under his care. He has lately been posted Warden at the Education Department's Field Studies Centre (Villa Psaigon - Dingli) where he has the opportunity to spread the conservation gospel to visiting students (and hopefully enrolling more MOSY members)



### NETS TO MOS

Two years ago an agreement regarding the setting up of one bird-ringing scheme in Malta was reached by the MOS and the then Minister of Labour, Culture and Social Welfare, Miss A. Barbara (see BEV No.3). Following this the Minister Himself presented a number of mist-nets to the MOS as a gesture of help. These mist-nets were previously held by the Museum of Natural History and are now used by MOS ringers for ringing purposes. Unless one is a licenced ringer one is legally prohibited to keep and use a mist-net.

### BIRDS OF MALTA

A NEW GUIDE TO THE BIRDS OF MALTA by Joe Sultana & Charles Gauci and illustrated by Rodney Ingram has just been published by the MOS. It contains 208 pages, 12 colour plates, 36 line drawings, 13 black and white photos and 19 maps (17 of which are plotted with recoveries of ringed birds). It also contains a table showing general estimates of birds killed and trapped in Malta annually. The foreword has been written by the renowned ornithologist W. R. P. Bourne. This book updates the previous MOS publication - A Guide to the Birds of Malta and adds a lot of information on the natural history of Malta's breeding birds and the behaviour of various species during their presence in Malta. It also quantifies the destruction of bird-life and presents the facts of where, when and how shooting and trapping are carried out. The results of bird-ringing in Malta are also presented in detail. This book is not an identification guide, for which there would be no justification when much wider publications are available. Its main aim is the presentation of a detailed past and present status of the birds of the Maltese Islands. Outlines of geography, topography, geology, climate, vegetation, avifauna and of the ornithological history and conservation of the islands are given in the Introduction which also includes the new bird protection legislation. The authors and artist have received no payments and will receive no royalties and all proceeds will go to the MOS for use in bird conservation projects in Malta. Copies (Hardbound at £9.90 each and Paperback at £6.90 each) may be ordered directly from the MOS. (see front cover).

# Defying the law

Times 24.9.81

10:45:00 IT-TNEJN, 14 TA' SETTEMBRU, 1981

The blatant, persistent and defiant disregard of the law at a prominent bird sanctuary as Buskett Gardens has become a giving cause for protest by members of bird conservationists.

The authorities must be held responsible for the game because they are

## Indiscriminate shooting

... consequences of the indiscriminate shooting of the many birds and are slowly being encouraged by the authorities.

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THE TIMES, MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 1981

## Increase in number of bird shooters at Buskett

By a Staff Reporter

### Police urged to follow up Buskett swoop

By a Staff Reporter

The Ornithological Society welcomed the news yesterday that the Police had carried out an intensive raid at Buskett and that shotguns and ammunition were seized from those breaking the law at the gardens, a bird sanctuary.

A spokesman urged the Police to follow up their action to ensure that bird shooters would not return. It was suggested that the Police could set up a small squad, even with men from the Dagma Corps, so that control could be constantly enforced over these places.

The society's spokesman said that Thursday's swoop was a good effort by the Police who at

present were stretched due to political meetings and other commitments. The fact that in the raid they apprehended 16 people meant that there were many hunters breaking the law because Thursday was not a day when there were many honey buzzards over Buskett. The spokesman added that the Police should patrol these areas more frequently though it was good on occasions to have a surprise swoop such as that held on Thursday.

Last year the spokesman said, the Police raided Buskett one day in September and caught six people but still 40 honey buzzards were shot down at Buskett the following day. This meant that the Police have to follow up

their action. Many game hunters were against those who break the law by shooting at birds of prey in protected areas but no one spoke out, and this included their association, it was pointed out.

Last Thursday's raid followed correspondence and editorial comment on the subject in the *Times* which pointed out the blatant disregard of the law at this prominent bird sanctuary. The editorial also suggested that a number of wardens could be recruited to help the Police to ensure compliance with the Law.

Earlier this month the ornithological society said that it was very much concerned and disappointed at the way shooters were completely ignoring the law and shooting at protected birds in a bird sanctuary where no one was even permitted to carry a shotgun.

There had also been cases when shooters insulted members of the public who dared to re-

used to the full. Even editors of local dailies lent a hand by protesting in leading articles against the chaos at Buskett and urged the Police to act. So did the MOS using all its lobbying powers. And the Police at last, even though stretched to breaking point due to the political campaign of the General Elections, did act. In the first raid at Buskett on 24th September 17 guns were confiscated. A raid on the 26th produced 5 more guns. And yet a few more were confiscated at later dates. But all is not well yet. We still hear shots ringing in and round Buskett.

## Il-Ligi u l-Ghasafar

TA' KULL SENA f'dawn il-jiem l-ghasafar jibdev lejn in-naha 'l-Isfel ta' l-Ewropa biex il-viżiti ta' l-afar tal-

### Buskett raid

10-10-81 Times  
THREE MEN were arrested in a Police raid on Buskett Gardens yesterday. The men's shotguns and ammunition were seized.

### A GOOD BAG

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The Police swoop on bird  
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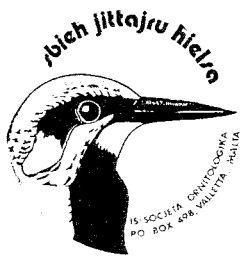
### BIRD CEMETERY

Buskett, from a bird sanctuary, is being turned into a bird cemetery. Surely the Police can do something to stop all those game shooters from persistently breaking the law.

Autumn migration saw a repetition of the same sad spring story regarding respect towards bird laws (see Comment on page 1). Shooters roamed at random, unchecked at Buskett, the only wooded bird sanctuary in the Islands. And when the birds of prey (protected species) arrived in September they were felled down mercilessly to end in glass cases. In just 13 days - from 13th to 26th September - no fewer than 84 Honey Buzzards, 6 Kestrels, 6 Lesser Kestrels, 11 Hobbies, 1 Eleonora's, and about 8 other unidentified falcons and broadwings were shot down in and around Buskett alone. MOS members showed their disapproval and the mass media was

Raymond Galea





'Sbieh jittajru hiela' (Beautiful flying free) is the message carried on a set of colourful stickers depicting a Kingfisher, a Woodchat Shrike and a Ringed Plover, which proved very popular at the MOS stand set up at the 25th Malta International Fair. T-shirts depicting a Golden Oriole on a fig tree branch carrying the same message were just as popular with the public. Those who would like to acquire these stickers (at 10c each) and a T-Shirt (at £M1.25) sizes varying from 26-36 should write to the MOS. Overseas orders should include postage expenses.

## ENVIRONMENTAL COURSE

- Alfred F. Baldacchino



IVF participants planting at Ghadira.

- Upe Sultana



The MOS Youths together with the International Youth Federation organised an international training course on natural environment conservation. 28 youths hailing from 11 European countries attended the course which was held at the Education Department's Field Studies Centre, at Dingli, from 17th - 29th July 1981. Besides discussing the problem of shooting and trapping birds in the Islands, the youths focused their attention also on other environmental problems resulting from Land Use, Tourism, Agriculture and the use of Soft Energy. The course's activities included a visit to Gozo where a night was spent at Ta' Cenc Cliffs above the Cory's Shearwaters colony. The participants also visited the National Nature Reserve at Ghadira where they gave a symbolic helping hand by planting some prickly pear trees. During the course the participants had the chance to exchange ideas and experiences and left the centre with new ideas for their respective youth organisations. During the last session the youths sent a letter to the Director of Education appealing for the introduction of Environmental Education in the schools.

# House martins steal Mosta people's hearts — first breeding record

By A Staff Reporter

The constant busy doings of six sparrow-sized birds around a Mosta balcony did not at first attract anybody's attention except that of school children waiting at a bus stage to board their bus.

But the welfare of four of the

have stayed behind.

The house martin is described as a bluish black bird, with white underside and white rump. The MOS said this was the first breeding record for the bird in Malta. A closely related species, the swallow, has been recorded in Malta seven years ago.

tion" the interest of the public, especially the Mosta people, in this new breeding species. "Many shooters and trappers are also very keen to see that these house martins succeed in their breeding attempt," said the society.

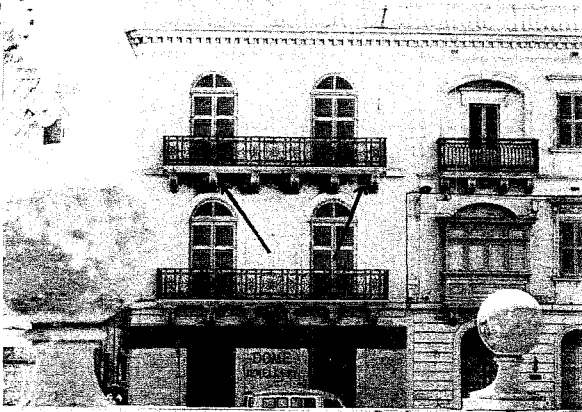
Somewhat optimistically perhaps, the society felt that this showed that the Maltese people too were able to appreciate birds in their natural en-

How refreshing it is to hear of a new breeding species in a country where the destruction of bird life is prevalent. How refreshing it is for the MOS to hear of such an occurrence in Malta when in previous years it had witnessed the extermination of the Jackdaw, a species which is quite common throughout its range. How refreshing it is to hear of such good bird news when the MOS is presently witnessing the extermination of the Barn Owl and the Peregrine from the Maltese Islands.

It all started in June 1981 when 6 House Martins were seen on several days prospecting for nest sites at buildings in the main

busy square of Mosta opposite the famous dome. The House Martin is a spring and autumn migrant in our Islands, and these birds behaving in such a curious manner (they had never been recorded breeding in Malta) attracted the attention of one and all at Mosta - more so when the remaining two pairs started laboriously building their characteristic clay nests. The MOS knew about this but it was most encouraging to receive so many letters and telephone calls reporting this occurrence, even from some shooters and trappers. The Times article rightly reported that the House Martins had stolen Mosta people's hearts. The news was splashed in all the Maltese papers and even

Joe Sultana



Left : The building with arrows pointing at the nest sites.

Below : The two nests with one of the adults feeding the young.





Malta Television found it appropriate to give it full coverage in the main news bulletin. Small groups of people were frequently noted in the square at Mosta looking up amused by the antics of the birds. At least three young were noted in each nest being fed frequently by the adults until all of them disappeared by mid-August. It is hoped that they have migrated safely to the south. The MOS waits eagerly to see whether some of these birds return in 1982.

This occurrence reminds us of a similar instance - this time a pair of Swallows which bred in a house in the village of Mqabba in 1974. The only previous reference to Swallows breeding in Malta was made by Antonio Schembri in 1845 when he stated that a few breed. The only occupant of the house, an old man by the name of Toni Ellul nicknamed Il-Baghdan (The Harrier) ironically used to sell guns and ammunition for a living. Toni left one of the back windows open when he noticed a pair of Swallows entering frequently the house. They eventually built the mud and dry grass nest in the corner by one of the beams in his bedroom. He was thrilled with the birds and spread the word in the village so that no one molests any hirundines. At his age and living alone these birds comforted him. He was afraid to loose them. He is still remembered with tears in his eyes, talking of his Swallows, describing how he used to derive great pleasure watching them flying in and out of his house twittering. They raised four young which fledged in early August. After they migrated Toni asked 'Will they come again next year?' If they did return they must have found the back window closed - Toni was no longer there.

## DUTCH ARTICLE



Joe Sultana



Alfred E. Baldochino

Jan Hopman, a Dutch naturalist/journalist, who is a member of the Editorial Board of GRASDUINEN - a relatively new Dutch nature magazine with a circulation of 32,000 - visited Malta for a fortnight to write an article on the MOS and its bird conservation projects some of which were financed by the European Committee for the Prevention of Mass Destruction of Migratory Birds. The article eventually appeared in the November issue, 1981. Jan was accompanied by Siegfried Woldhek, co-ordinator of the European Committee, who had previously visited Malta twice - first to gather first hand information on the bird situation in Malta (his findings were reported in his publication 'Bird Killing in the Mediterranean' and the second time when he attended the ICBP European Conference which was held in Malta. (Siegfried & Jan).

Toni by the window which he left open for the Swallows. Inset - the Swallows' nest.



Joe Sultana



'Mill-Bejta ta' l-Aghsafar' (From the Birds' Nest) and 'L-Aghsafar' (The Birds) are the titles of fortnightly columns prepared by the MOS for IT-TORCA and IL-MUMENT respectively, the only 2 Maltese Sunday Papers. These newspapers support the views of Malta's two political parties respectively and as such they have a large readership between them. The columns include information on Malta's birds, bird conservation articles and MOS news.

#### COUNCIL OF EUROPE SYMPOSIUM

The European Committee for the conservation of Nature and Natural Resources organised a symposium on Tourism, Environmental Conservation and Environmental Education in Malta from 3-10 October 1981. Interactions between Tourism and Environment are common to all European countries. The Environment of the Maltese Islands, which are small but with a population exceeding 300,000 and with over 700,000 tourists visiting the island in any one year, has been subjected to heavy pressure affecting all its aspects. Furthermore there is very little general awareness of this problem at the local level. The objectives of the symposium were related to this problem. A public meeting and discussion with voluntary environmental groups, including MOS, were also held.

Students watching the exhibition and (right) Charles Gauci describing the model of Ghadira to some of the students.

#### GHADIRA AT NAXXAR

In spring 1981, the main extra curriculum activity at Naxxar Boys Secondary School was a project on Ghadira Nature Reserve. This was organised by Mr C. Gauci (MOS Council Member and Ringing Secretary) and Mr A. Attard, who are both teachers of science and art respectively at the school. 320 students from 16 classes participated in the project. Every student was given an MOS drawing book which they used for their project and for which they contributed 10c each to the MOS. Pictures and notes on the breeding birds of the Ghadira area, as well as on those which are expected to breed in the future were made by the students who also worked on a large model of the nature reserve made of papier-mache and prepared various charts showing the aims of the reserve. An open poster competition with the theme 'Ghadira' was also organised for all the school's students. To top this all a most attractive exhibition of all the students' work was set up and other secondary schools were invited to see the exhibition. Such activities in schools are highly commendable and it would help our conservation cause immensely if other school's copy Naxxar Boys' School's example.

Joe Sultana



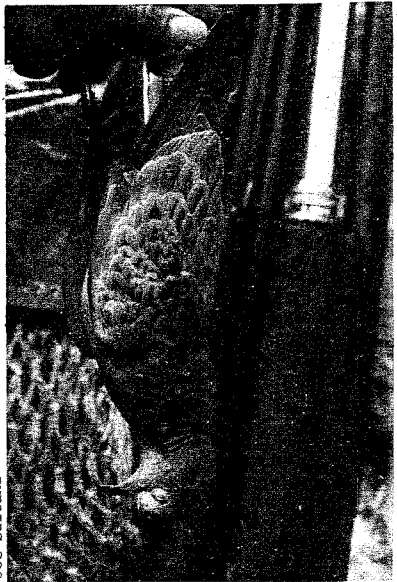
## GUNS & TURTLE DOVES

### THE NUMBER OF GUNS AND.....

While many shooters are continuously grumbling that migrating game (whatever game means to them) is decreasing annually, there were 301 new applications to carry a shotgun for hunting purposes during the first six months of 1981. To date there are 23,612 licensed shotguns (on the Islands) nearly one for every six persons. No wonder migrating 'game' is diminishing on these Islands.

### THE NUMBER OF TURTLE DOVES.

1981 was quite a poor year for the migrating Turtle Dove, the most sought after 'game' bird by the shooters. However a total of 100,000 Turtle Doves killed would be a fair estimate based on 10,000 shooters averaging each 10 Turtle Doves during the peak migration season mid-April to mid-May. If Turtle Doves migrate through our Islands in large numbers as they used to, say 20 or 30 years ago, the number killed would be considerably larger.



Joe Sultana

## M O S SUBSCRIPTION

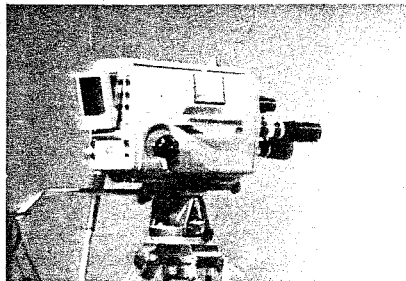
The rise of 50c in membership fee to EM2 was announced at the AGM and members are kindly requested to note and comply. No one is pleased when there is a rise, but this was inevitable. Postage and administration expenses are now relatively high as can be noted in the Treasurer's report. One issue of IL-MERILL costs about EM350 and about EM25 in posting it to local and overseas members, in spite of the fact that a lot of work is carried out by us to keep the cost down. In the case of IL-MERILL, BIRD'S EYE VIEW and now L-GHASFUR U L-AMBJENT NATURAL, the typing and all the setting is done by the MOS and all the material is taken to the press simply to photograph and print. Please help us by sending the membership fee of EM2 for 1982 (if you haven't done so already) at your earliest convenience. Without your help the MOS will not be able to survive.

(Continued on p. 22)

## T V PROGRAMMES

'Mahluq ghall-Ajru' (Born for the Air) was the title of a series of 6 Television programmes which Joe Sultana and Charles Gauci produced and presented on Malta television during the first quarter in 1981. It was based on the MOS Maltese publication 'L-Agh-safar' and the programmes dwelt on subjects such as 'From the egg to the Adult Bird', 'Bird Migration', 'The Structure of Birds', and 'What it takes to fly'. The series which was screened during the peak viewing period was very well received by the general public and was recorded as an excellent production by the Broadcasting Authority's Monitoring Report. Another similar series is presently being prepared.

Getting ready for the recording of one of the programmes.



## GHADIRA *The making of a reserve*

This is the main part of a report to World Wildlife Fund prepared by Herbert Axell MBE, whose plan for the development of Ghadira as our first national nature reserve was submitted to and accepted by the Maltese Government in 1978. Mr Axell began the habitat engineering work at Ghadira on 19 May 1980, a historic date for the MOS and has supervised the second stage of the work during August 1981. He is one of our oldest life members and freely gives his services; travel and accomodation expenses being usually covered by the MOS. A lot of voluntary work was also carried out by MOS members. All this was carried out with the approval of the Head of the Environment Division of the Department of Health.

Early in 1981 a grant of £2,000 stg towards the Ghadira project was made by ICBP's European Committee for the Prevention of Mass Destruction of Migratory Birds. Because of this grant, work on the habitat engineering and other aspects of the 1978 plan was able to be resumed in the period 3-31 August. The grant had been paid direct to the Ornithological Society (MOS) who hired the machines and operators on a daily cost basis.

The grant, less my plane fare and accomodation expenses, would have been expended in about 10 days on the hire of an excavator, a bulldozer and two trucks. Just before the work began, however, the manager of the Danish Holiday Village sited on the south side of the reserve, agreed with the Department of Health and Environment to take all the spoil from Ghadira and use it for the introduction of shrubs and flowers on his rocky surrounds. He paid for the cost of the excavations and transport and many thousands of tons of sandy soil exca-

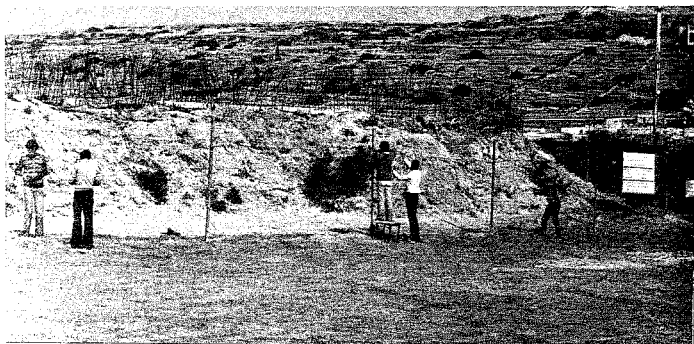
vated from Ghadira were taken to the holiday village during the August 1981 period of work.

With this timely help from the Danes, it was thus possible to create new areas of permanent wetland in high, difficult sections at a much earlier date than had been anticipated and at no cost to the Department of Health & Environment and MOS.

The ICBP grant was largely used on work which did not involve the off-site transport of spoil e.g. the construction of islands and open water in the low-lying section of the old Ghadira; the reinforcement of the perimeter bank; the construction of bank screens at the West Hide and the raising of the height of part of the service road/nature trail to ensure that it will be above winter flood level.

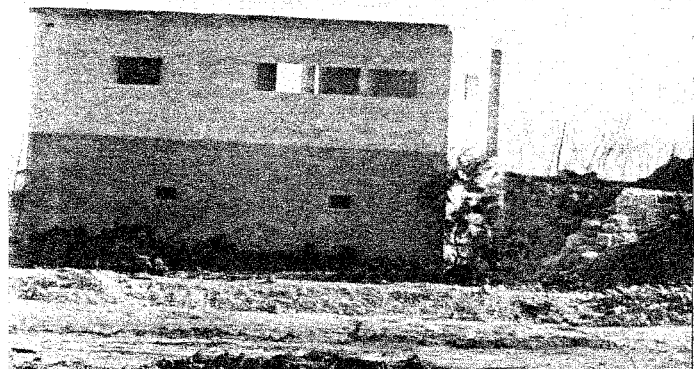
A bench mark, to show the height relative to the sea level in adjacent Mellieha Bay at that time, was made on the wall of the lower half of the visitor centre building by Government surveyors on 27 August 1981. (Average tidal difference here in the central Mediterranean is ca. 25cm only). On the reserve, the difference in height of the level of the exposed water in winter flood and in the driest time in August is ca. 125 cm. Such a large difference requires deep excavation in certain areas, especially in those contrived to shpw, from the hides, open water all the year round. Gentle slopes to islands and shores are also necessary to provide visible water-edge feeding sites for birds at all times.

The amount of exposed water actually achieved so far in the dry season; its relatively low salinity at this time and the aquatic life which has developed - algae, crustaceans, marine and freshwater molluscs insects and fishes are richer than had been



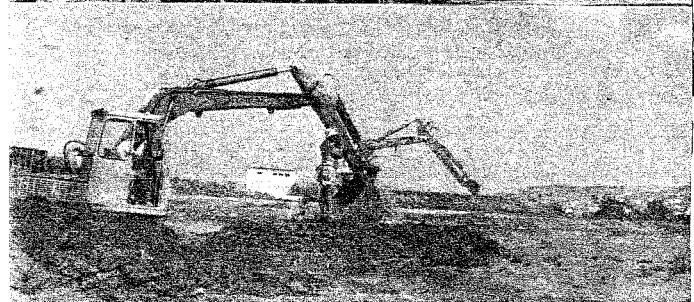
Joe Sultana

Apart from planting trees, MOS members were busy during last winter fencing the front area, fixing gates and doing one hundred and one other jobs.



Raymond Galea

Reception Area under construction : Mid-Med Bank donated the sum of £13000 to the MOS to build the visitor's centre



Joe A. Hardman

Two excavators in action last summer. The one in the foreground ferrying Mr Axell over to the centre island.

anticipated. As indicated in the 1978 Report, although the soil profile to any significant depth was unknown, it was expected that the summer level of the ground water would be maintained by pressure from the sea, despite intense evaporation at this time.

During August when disturbance by men and machines was greatest, some 30 waders of 5-6 species were present daily. Until now, this area of the old salt pans had been dry cracked mud, waterless and without living plants or birds for about three months in summer. Some of these birds were trapped for ringing and retraps showed a weight gain of 30% in a week.

Large new islands and permanent water around them were made in the low area of the old salt pans where, at this driest time of year, the water is held in a thick starting of porous, coarse sand below a top covering of compacted clayey soil 30-50cm thick. These islands are designed not only to provide potential nesting sites but also to remain above water level during winter flooding. Safe feeding and roosting areas will thus be available to birds in winter and early spring where, in all of Malta, there was none before in this period.

Work was also begun on excavating the reservoir at the extreme western end of the reserve. The land here is high, some 150cm above the water table and the richer red soil is about one metre deep. A road and a temporary earth-fill bridge across the perimeter ditch, to facilitate the eventual

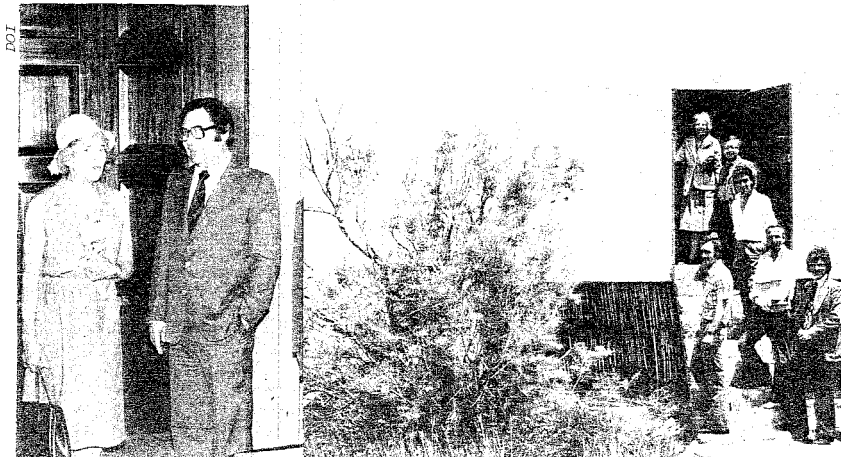
transport of soil to the Danish Holiday Village, were made by the contractor J. Wella at his expense.

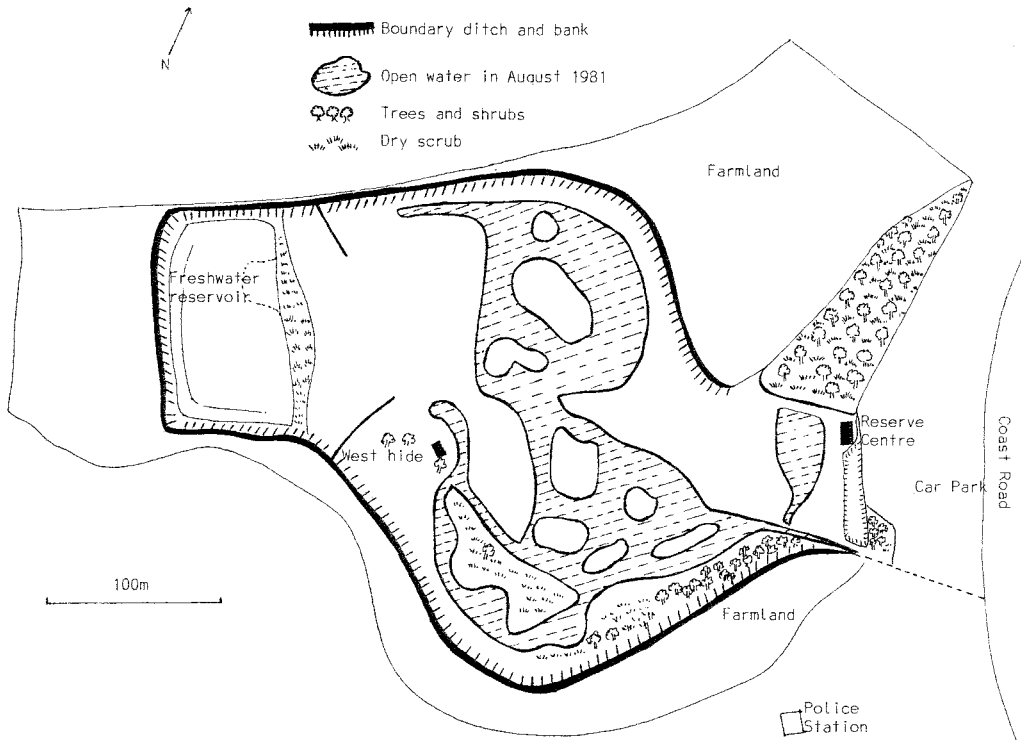
The West Hide, paid for by the Malta Bird Reserves Overseas Committee of UK was completed. It is the first such building in Malta and was an immediate success when water and feeding edges of the scrape complex were brought to within a few metres of its viewing slots. It has resulted in the recruitment of many new members of the MOS and especially of its Young Members Section.

The fabric of the new Visitor Centre was also completed in August. Its exact position at the east end of the reserve was happily dictated by the ability to build it upon a concrete platform already existing in the dunes here and thus save expense. Its position alongside the car park and bus terminus is excellent from the point of view of accessibility and self-advertisement. The size of the building was conditioned by the most welcome donation by Mid-Med Bank of Malta of £M3,000 to the MOS.

The Visitor Centre is above a large garage/workshop and has viewing slots to the new open water only 20m away; much more excavation work remains to be done in this area. Access to the nature trail and hides will be by a short screened bridge on to the new East Bank which now shields the reserve from the car park. This bank, 5m high, has an outer covering of clayey soil 50cm thick which will prevent wind erosion and facilitate the introduction of a screen of bushes improving the aesthetic impact of the reserve's 'front face'.

Mrs E. Coxon with Dr. V. Moran, Hon. Minister of Health & Environment, after presenting him with the key of the Ghadira hide which was donated by MBROC. (Right) Mrs Coxon with officials from the Department of Health & Environment and from the MOS after opening the hide. The latter was also visited in summer by Mr & Mrs J.A. Hardman during their holiday in August 1981. Mr & Mrs Hardman, Committee Member and Treasurer respectively of MBROC, were very impressed with the work which has been carried out in the area. (For information on MBROC see BEV No. 4).





PLAN OF THE NATURE RESERVE AFTER THE SECOND PHASE OF THE ENGINEERING WORK

Good progress was made by MOS members with the planned introductions during the winter of 1980-81. Common Reed *Phragmites communis* began to spread itself usefully into the perimeter ditch and some other areas where the water is already brackish. Also spreading naturally and helping to cover disturbed ground is Golden Samphire *Inula creithmoides*, spiny rush *Juncus acutus* and *Suaeda maritimum*. A large area of the rare Arrow Grass *Triglochin bulbosum* remains and will continue as the principal plant on one island.

Many hundreds of seedlings of the densely-growing bush *Atriplex halimus* were planted on the perimeter bank and developed remarkably well. Bramble was a failure because the wet season began much later than expected and some rushes also failed because they were introduced into areas of water as yet too brackish. The success of a variety of tree seedlings is yet to be seen. All

of the plants were provided by the Department of Agriculture whose co-operation has been readily forthcoming.

Interest and approval of the establishment of Malta's first national nature reserve are growing rapidly. Publicity is readily and frequently given by the media. The desire of the large business concern, the Mid-Med Bank, to be involved in the project by financing the construction of the Visitors Centre, has wide favourable repercussions.

(Mr. Axell's report mentions also that a great deal of work is to be done in the next few years. It ends by giving a detailed summary of instructions for the completion of the basic engineering so that the best results with the least expense are achieved. The MOS hopes to be able to complete the scrape in next summer's dry spell).

# Annual General Meeting

THE 19th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING WAS HELD ON TUESDAY, 24th FEBRUARY 1981, AT THE BRITISH LEGION HEADQUARTERS, MALTA BRANCH, VALLETTA.

## PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In future, 1980 will be referred to and mentioned over and over again. The momentum in the MOS campaign for bird conservation finally broke the ice last year. You have all read and heard several times about Ghadira and about the new bird protection legislation.

These achievements should make us more aware of our future obligations which we should all be prepared to shoulder bravely and proudly. These obligations call for our attention to look beyond the maintenance of what we have achieved because the acute bird problems are still there for all to see. What we have achieved so far boils down to the acquisition of tools with which, coupled with the necessary courage and determination, we should solve the main big problem for birds, that of being unable to coexist peacefully with man on these islands.

Laws by themselves are not enough - they have to be respected; they have to be enforced. We all can help to bring this about. The mass communication media is there for all to use. We should write in the papers; talk to people; inform, educate and persuade the public with all the possible means available...and when necessary take action, as was the case lately with the apprehension of shooters at Ghadira. This and this alone may bring a change in the prevailing poor mentality towards birds.

I would like now to digress on the Ghadira project. The problem here is mainly financial as there is still plenty to be done. Voluntary work from our side has not been lacking and some members have been devoting every weekend there for the past six months. A report of the work which was carried out and the expenses incurred by the MOS has been lately submitted to the Government's Committee which is responsible for the setting up and running of the Reserve at Ghadira. We are determined to see that this project is successful. The future plans for Ghadira have already been made and studied thoroughly and MOS involvement in the project is likely to increase.

The Ghadira Appeal Fund, which has been launched amongst MOS members and supporters a few months ago has brought in well over £M1000. This sum does not include the £700 which MBROC donated towards the building of the first bird-watching hide. It is hoped that the Ghadira Appeal Fund will be launched outside the MOS' sphere in the coming months.

And while we are on the subject of funds I may point out that if we give a glance at the Treasurer's Report we note an increase in the expenses for the running of the Society due to increases in the cost of stationery, postages, etc. Printing costs have gone up too and one issue of IL-MERILL and BIRD'S EYE VIEW together now cost us as much as £M550. And these publications are sent gratis to all our members. The Council has, therefore, felt the need to raise the annual membership fee from £M1.50 to £M2.00, an increase of only 50c. And to be fair with our members this increase will take place as from next year, (1982). In the meantime I appeal to all those who have not yet paid this year's fee to do so as early as possible. Without the members' fees the MOS would not be able to exist.

Making ends meet is always a headache for MOS. But something which is giving us as much pain is the lack of premises. The MOS has grown to such an extent that a decent premises is essential. Please let us know if there is one available somewhere, ideally in the Valletta/Floriana/Hamrun area. We may in future consider purchasing or renting one.

Thankyou for your attention.

Joe Sultana  
President



## SECRETARY'S REPORT

Secretary's Report for the period 28th February 1980 to 23rd February 1981.

### NATIONAL INVOLVEMENT

Four most important events, in which the MOS was deeply involved, happened since the last Annual General Meeting held on 27th February 1980. These, in chronological order, were:

1. The taking in hand of the habitat engineering works which will eventually transform Ghadira Pool into a National Nature Reserve. The MOS has been striving for such a reserve since its inception in 1962. The MOS' dream became a reality when in May 1980, the Government started work on the establishment of such a reserve. Since then the MOS members have been doing voluntary work at the reserve.
2. On 30th May 1980, an Act of Parliament was published establishing a closed season and licences to taxidermists and bird-ringers. This was followed by the publication of the much awaited bird protection regulations on 8th August 1980. The MOS had been pressing for the adequate protection of birds since its inception in 1962. Although these regulations can be considered as a milestone in the history of bird protection in Malta, the MOS feels that there is still room for improvement to bring these regulations in line with modern legislation in the field of bird protection.
3. The XII ICBP European Continental Section Conference was held in Malta at the Ramla Bay Hotel from the 2nd to the 9th November 1980. It was an honour for the bird conservation movement in Malta to host such a conference and still much more of an honour to the MOS in having six members making up the organising Committee responsible for the Conference. The Conference was a success both to the European bird protection movement and also to the local bird protection efforts. All the delegates at the Conference commented favourably on the success and hospitality shown.
4. A set of four stamps depicting birds was issued by the General Post Office on the 20th January 1981. These were issued following a suggestion by the MOS, believing that such a stamp issue would crown a year of good work in the field of bird protection in Malta, something which unfortunately Malta is not very familiar with. The MOS was in constant touch with the authorities till the last moment the set of stamps were issued.

All these events helped to give a better image to the MOS and its efforts in the field of bird conservation. The MOS now has reached an image which can only be retained by constant support coming from each and every member of the Society. The responsibility which the MOS today shoulders can best be borne by the involvement of more members.

### INTERNAL ACTIVITIES

A closer look at the administrative side of the MOS will reveal that the MOS held seven Council meetings since the last Annual General Meeting. Besides, the various MOS Committees held 12 Committee Meetings altogether. Council members took part in 10 programmes on the broadcasting media. 21 indoor/outdoor meetings were organised for MOS members, while 10 illustrated talks were given to other societies. 5 circulars were posted to MOS members, 10 press releases were issued to the press. There were 18 MOS delegations during the year. A detailed list of all MOS activities follows this report.

The following is a breakdown of members on the MOS books as on 31st December 1980.

	1979	1980	+/- over 1979	new during 1980	outstand from 1979	Resigned Deceased during 1980
Ordinary local members	146	136	-10	12	25	3
Ordinary overseas members	65	59	-6	6	11	4
Local life members	13	13	-	-	-	-
Local hon. life members	1	1	-	-	-	-
Overseas life members	30	32	+2	2	-	-
Overseas hon. life members	4	6	+2	2	-	-
Young members (local)	38	70	+32	42	20	-
<b>Totals</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>317</b>	<b>+20</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>7</b>

It must be admitted that the hard work undertaken by those MOS members who are directly involved, though reflecting in the number of new members enrolled during 1980, is unfortunately let down by those whose subscription is still outstanding.

#### PUBLICATIONS

The annual issues of BIRD'S EYE VIEW (No 3) and IL-MERILL (No 20) were published during the year. The YMS published 2 issues of their new newsletter STORM PETREL and the Valletta Ringing Scheme issued four numbers of the ringing newsletter.

The MOS also published a booklet on the new bird protection regulations entitled IL-LIGI DWAR IL-KACCA II L-INSIB and donated 12000 copies of this booklet to the Commissioner of Police for distribution to the local shooters and trappers on renewing their licences. This publication was sponsored by the ICBP European Committee for the Prevention of Mass Destruction of Migratory Birds.

#### OTHER ACTIVITIES

As in previous years the MOS participated in festivals and fairs by setting up an information stand. A stand was set up for 2 days at the annual Fur & Feather Show held at San Anton Gardens. Another stand was set up for 15 days at the Malta International Trade Fair at Naxxar, and another stand was set up at the Festival of Friendship organised by AZAD - the Academy for the Development of a Democratic Environment during 5 days at San Anton Gardens.

Two MOS young members attended a course in Greece sponsored by the International Youth Federation. Another MOS young member attended a 10 day course on the care of injured birds in UK. This was sponsored by the Hawk Trust of UK and by MBROC (The Malta Bird Reserves Overseas Committee) to both of whom, on behalf of the MOS, I would like to show our appreciation. Finally an MOS Council member also attended a teacher's course on environmental education in Italy sponsored by the International Youth Federation.

#### COMMITTEES

The Committees which were set up during the year were :

##### 1. The Young Members Section Committee.

This section had Mr Natalino Fenech as Young Members Officer and Mr Denis Cachia as Young Members Secretary. The Section held seven committee meetings and issued one press release, besides issuing seven circulars to the young members. 14 bird-watching outings, a tree-planting session and a weekend at Villa Fsaigon were organised for the young members. Many young members also helped with manual work at Ghadira National Nature Reserve. 42 new members joined the section.

##### 2. Valletta Bird-Ringing Scheme.

The Valletta Bird-Ringing Scheme is run by a Committee composed of five MOS members and two Government representatives. Mr Joe Sultana was the Ringing Officer, while Mr Charles Gauci was Ringing Secretary. During the year 1980, two ringers left the island, while another two visited Malta occasionally. Three new applications for a ringing licence were submitted to the Committee, two of whom were accepted. This brought the number of MOS ringers to 17. The Valletta Ringing Scheme held two Committee meetings. The MOS held one general meeting for its ringers and trainees. 7481 birds of 88 species were ringed during 1980. Ringers carried out other research projects such as filling nest-record cards, moult cards and daily observation sheets, besides helping with voluntary work at Ghadira National Nature Reserve.

I would like to thank all those MOS members who were somehow or other connected with all the above activities which made last year so successful. However, last year the MOS lost one of its most active Council members, Mr John Azzopardi, who emigrated to Australia. I would like to take this opportunity to thank John for his sterling work and for all the time he dedicated to the MOS, and also for his continuous support he gave me in the execution of my duties. On my behalf, and on behalf of the MOS, I would like to wish John and his wife Carmen, a prosperous future in their new homeland. I would also like to thank the British Legion for letting us use their premises for all our indoor meetings. Thank you

Alfred E. Baldacchino  
Hon. General Secretary

## CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES

### FEBRUARY 1979 TO FEBRUARY 1981

#### FEBRUARY 1979

- 28 - 17th Annual General Meeting.

#### MARCH 1979

- 1 - YMS Committee Meeting.
- 27 - 12th Council Meeting 1978/79.
- 29 - Press Release 3/79 - MOS Clay Pigeon Shooting Competition.

#### APRIL 1979

- 6 - Interview on Cable Radio re bird protected areas (Alfred E. Baldacchino).
- 8 - MOS Clay Pigeon Shooting Competition.
- 10 - Meeting with Principal Assistant Secretary at the Ministry of Labour, Culture & Welfare re bird protection in Malta (A.E.B.).
- 11 - Press Release 4/79 - Results of Clay Pigeon Shooting Competition.
- 18 - ICBP Malta Section meeting (A.E.B./ Joe Sultana).
- 20 - Valletta Ringing Scheme meeting.
- 22 - Camino Outing.

#### MAY 1979

- 3 - Illustrated talk 'Birds of Europe' at Din L-Art Helwa (J.A. Van der Ven).
- 5 - Interview on Cable Radio re bird protection in Malta (J.A.V.V.).
- 6 - Press Release 5/79 - Launching of Barn Owl Sticker.
- 7 - 13th Council Meeting 1978/79.
- 11 - Film - Private Life of the Robin at St. Paul's College Rabat.
- 15 - Film - Private Life of the Robin at Melita Band Club, Msida.
- 18 - Film - Private Life of the Robin at Youth Travel Circle, Valletta.
- 19 - Debate on Cable Radio re bird shooting (J.S.).

#### JUNE 1979

- 2-3 - MOS stand at the 'Fur & Feather Show'.
- 5 - 14th Council Meeting 1978/79.
- 10 - Valletta Ringing Scheme Meeting.
- 14 - Presentation of prizes in the photo competition 'Of Birds & Trees'.

#### JULY 1979

- 1-15 - MOS stand at Malta International Trade Fair.
- 17 - Two young members leave for IYF training in Italy (Natalino Fenech & Malcolm Mallia).
- 19 - MOS delegation meets Minister of Justice, Lands & Parliamentary Affairs (John Azzopardi/A.E.B.).
- 19 - MOS delegation meets Commissioner of Lands (J.A./A.E.B.).
- 22 - Press Release 6/79 - MOS young members on course in Italy.

#### AUGUST 1979

- 28 - MOS Young Members Committee Meeting.

#### SEPTEMBER 1979

- 14 - MOS delegation meets Commissioner of Police re bird protection (J.A./A.E.B., Charles Gauci & J.S.).
- 16 - YMS outing to Buskett.
- 23 - YMS outing to Buskett.
- 30 - YMS outing to Buskett.

#### OCTOBER 1979

- 11 - 15th Council Meeting 1978/79.
- 19 - MOS delegate for 3rd WEBS Conference leaves for UK (Brian K. German).

#### NOVEMBER 1979

- 5 - MOS Young Members Committee Meeting.
- 6 - 16th Council Meeting 1978/79

#### DECEMBER 1979

- 12 - TV introductory talk on conservation (A.E.B.).
- 12 - Illustrated talk at St. Venera Trade School on Malta's Breeding Birds (J.S.).
- 15 - Launching of the MOS publication L-AGHSAFAR.
- 15 - Cable Radio interview re the publication L-Aghsafar (J.S. & R. Ingram).

#### JANUARY 1980

- 14 - 17th Council Meeting 1978/79.
- 23 - Illustrated talk 'Bird Migration at Cap Bon, Tunisia' at the British Legion HQ. (Charles Galea).
- 29 - TV introductory talk on conservation (A.E.B.).

#### FEBRUARY 1980

- 1 - Illustrated talk at British Legion HQ. 'A Foreigner's look at Malta (Dr. Walter Thiede).
- 8 - Illustrated talk 'Birds around us' at the Youth Travel Circle (J.S.).
- 15 - 18th Council Meeting 1978/79.
- 26 - Rarities Committee Meeting.
- 27 - 18th Annual General Meeting.
- 28 - Participation in MTV Programme Prizma re MOS publication L-AGHSAFAR (CG/JS).
- 29 - MOS delegation meets Private Secretary to Prime Minister (AEB).

#### MARCH 1980

- 2 - Council Meeting (1st 1980/81).
- 10 - MOS Press Release No 1 - MOS AGM and appointment of MOS Council.
- 18 - MOS Press Release No.2 - MOS views on bird protection debates.
- 25 - YMS Circular No.1 issued.
- 27 - Introduction to MTV series (AEB).
- 27 - Illustrated talk at the British Legion Valletta - 'A Collection of nature slides' (JA/AEB/RGZ/RT/RS/NF/JS).

APRIL 1980

- 9 - MOS delegation to House of Representatives (AEB/JS).
- 10 - Illustrated talk at the British Legion Valletta to the Geographical Society 'The Breeding Birds of Malta and their Habitats' (JS).
- 11 - MOS delegation to Commissioner of Police (JA/AEB/GB/JS).
- 13 - MOS outing to Comino.
- 14 - MOS delegation to the House of Representatives (AEB/JS).
- 15 - MOS delegation to the House of Representatives (AEB/GB/CG/JS).
- 16 - MOS DELEGATION TO Ministry of Labour Culture & Welfare (AEB/JS).
- 17 - MOS Council Meeting (2nd '980/81).
- 18 - MOS delegation to Postmaster General.
- 20 - YMS Outing to Ghadira.
- 20 - Illustrated talk at San Blas Youth Hostel - 'Some local & Migratory Birds' (JS).
- 22 - Illustrated talk 'Bird Behaviour' at Savio College.
- 30 - YMS Committee meeting (1st 1980).
- 30 - MOS Press Release No.3 - MOS Poster.

MAY 1980

- 1 - YMS Outing to Ghadira.
- 10 - MOS members meet H.E. Axell at Ghadira.
- 11 - MOS Outing to Comino
- 16 - YMS Circular No.2
- 17-18 - Stand at Fur & Feather Show.
- 25 - YMS Outing to Salina.
- 26 - YMS Committee meeting (2nd 1980).
- 29 - MOS delegation meets Principal Environment Officer (JA/JS).
- 29 - Valletta Ringing Scheme Meeting.

JUNE 1980

- 5 - Valletta Ringing Scheme Meeting.
- 19 - MOS Council Meeting (3rd 1980/81).
- 22 - YMS outing to wied il-Luq.
- 30 - MOS Press Release No.4 - 'IL-MERILI 20
- 30 - MOS Press Release No.5 - Clay Pigeon Shooting Competition.

JULY 1980

- 1-15 - MOS Trade Fair Stand.
- 2 - MOS Press Release No.6 - Enforcement of Close Season.
- 20 - MOS Press Release No.7 - MOS young members on IYF Course in Greece.
- 22 - MOS delegation meets Postmaster General (JA/AEB).
- 25 - Illustrated talk and film to the Society for the Study & Conservation of Nature at Evans Lab. - 'The Protection of Birds' & 'Where the Curlew Calls' (AEB).
- 26 - MOS Press Release No. 8 - MOS Council member on IYF Teachers Course.
- 27 - MOS Press Release No.9 - Clay Pigeon Shooting Competition results.

AUGUST 1980

- 5-9 - MOS Stand at AZAD Festival of Friendship at San Anton Gardens.
- 11 - Interview on MTV and Cable Radio on bird protection regulations (AEB).
- 15 - YMS Committee meeting (3rd 1980).
- 16 - Discussion on bird protection regulations on broadcasting media (JS).
- 20 - YMS Circular No. 3.
- 26 - MOS Press Release No.10 - MOS member attends course on injured birds in UK.
- 28 - YMS outing to Ghadira including voluntary work.
- 31 - YMS Newsletter STORM PETREL No.1

SEPTEMBER 1980

- 2 - Interview on Cable Radio re conservation work (AEB).
- 2 - YMS outing to Ghadira including voluntary work.
- 3 - YMS Committee meeting (4th 1980).
- 7 - YMS outing to Ghadira.
- 9 - YMS Press Release No.1 - Birds of Prey at Buskett.
- 11 - YMS Circular No.4.
- 15 - MOS delegation meets Postmaster General (JA/AEB)
- 16 - Council Meeting (4th 1980/81).
- 17 - MOS delegation meets A/Commissioner of Police (AEB/NF/RG/JS).
- 21 - YMS outing to Buskett.
- 23 - ICBP Malta meeting.
- 26 - 28 YMS Camp at Villa Psaigon.

OCTOBER 1980

- 3 - MOS delegation meets Postmaster General (JA).
- 5 - YMS outing to Buskett.
- 16 - MOS delegation meets A/Commissioner of Police accompanied by PRO Ministry of Culture (JS).
- 22 - Indoor meeting at British Legion HQ Valletta - filmshow 'Sea Swallows' followed by discussion on the new bird protection regulations.
- 30 - YMS Committee meeting (5th 1980).

NOVEMBER 1980

- 2-8 X11 ICBP European Conference at Ramla Bay Hotel, Marfa.
- 4 - YMS tree planting activity at Ghadira.
- 23 - MOS delegation meets Commissioner of Police (GB/SB/CG/JS).
- 25 - MOS Council meeting (5th 1980/81).
- 27 - Illustrated talk Birds & Conservation at Corradino Boys Sec. School (JS).
- 30 - MOS general meeting for ringers at Ghadira.

DECEMBER 1980

- 7 - YMS Committee Meeting (6th 1980).
- 11 - YMS ad hoc Committee meeting on IYF camp.
- 13 - MOS Circular No.5.

(Continued on p. 22)

## TREASURER'S REPORT

### INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT AS AT 31 DECEMBER 1980

		note	1980	1980	1979
Subscriptions and Donations			726.088		2897.031
Lotteries & Fund Raising			15.700		30.300
Outings			23.250		12.250
<u>Sales &amp; Other Donations</u>					
Stickers	168.665				143.755
Shirt Transfers	3.150				7.000
Exercise Books	7.640				106.910
Breeding Birds Charts	24.536				---
Bags	4.430				1.850
Leaflets	13.590				---
T-Shirts	15.000				26.000
Posters	107.792				---
Others	<u>1.850</u>		346.653		63.121
<u>Other Income</u>					
L-Aghsafar sales	2384.637				
less cost of goods	<u>1326.010</u>		1058.627		21.650
Interest received			212.134	2382.452	68.382
					<u>3378.249</u>
LESS:-					
<u>Administrative Exp.</u>					
Postages			144.938		113.310
Stationery		1	112.060		133.280
Sundry Expenses			233.240		184.840
<u>Publications etc.</u>					
Young Members Sec.	18.500				---
Leaflets	---				33.400
Bird's Eye View	278.400				---
Il-Merill	260.000				---
Stickers	64.000				58.000
Posters	55.000				---
	<u>675.900</u>				---
-tsf. from Reserves	<u>580.543</u>		95.357		---
<u>Other Expenses</u>					
Profit & Loss on Exchange			29.356		(22.050)
Travelling	165.000	2			---
Ghadira Project Exp.	121.558				---
	<u>286.658</u>				---
-tsf. from Reserves	<u>286.658</u>		---	614.951	---
Excess Income transferred to Appropriation A/C				1767.501	2877.469

#### NOTES ON 1980 ACCOUNTS

Note 1. **SUNDRY EXPENSES.** These include :- Rubber Stamps EM2; Projectionist fees EM4; P.O. Rent EM10; L-Aghsafar complimentaries EM79; Posters EM11; Type writer repairs EM3; Trophies EM20; Photos EM19; Photocopies EM11; Ledger fees EM5; Exhibitions EM3; Rent EM6; Ties EM11; Travelling EM20; Gift to J. Azzopardi EM10; Telephone Calls EM31; Aviary for injured birds EM20; others EM8.24; less EM40 being first prize award for MOS publication L-Aghsafar.

Note 2. **TRAVELLING.** Payment of air fare to Mr H.E. Axell and Mr N. Fenech.

**APPROPRIATION ACCOUNT No. 1**

	note	1980	1980	1979
Balance b/f from Income & Expenditure A/C		1767.501		2877.469
add Binoculars' sales		<u>20.000</u>	1787.501	-----
less depreciation	3		<u>25.000</u>	-----
Balance c/f to Appropriation 2			<u>1762.501</u>	<u>2077.469</u>

**APPROPRIATION ACCOUNT No. 2**

Balance b/f from Appr.1			1762.501	2077.469
less transfer to General reserves	7		<u>912.330</u>	-----
Surplus transferred to Capital A/C			<u>850.171</u>	<u>2054.301</u>

**BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 1980**

<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>	4		200.000	225.000
<b>GROUPS</b>				
Young Members' Section		10.000		3.637
Valetta Bird Ringing Scheme		<u>1000.000</u>	1010.000	1000.000
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>				
Debtors		1.107		-----
Stocks	5	2749.950		4230.924
Prepayments	10	555.300		423.620
Cash		1859.036		1924.558
Ghadira Fund		605.296		-----
Publications Fund		1794.727		-----
Cash Reserve	6	<u>678.000</u>	<u>8243.416</u>	<u>13.133</u>
			<u>9453.416</u>	<u>7820.872</u>
<b>CAPITAL ACCOUNTS</b>				
Balance b/f from 1979	9	2607.440		
add Appropriation A/C Balance		<u>850.171</u>	3457.611	2620.573
<b>GENERAL RESERVES</b>	7		3832.777	2927.656
<b>LOAN A/C</b>	6		2000.000	2000.000
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>				
Advance subscriptions	8	136.500		128.000
Creditors		<u>26.528</u>	<u>163.028</u>	<u>144.643</u>
			<u>9453.416</u>	<u>7820.872</u>

Note 3. DEPRECIATION. Depreciation on projector calculated at EM25 per annum.

Note 4. FIXED ASSETS. This item consists of a projector donated to the Society book valued at EM250 less depreciation to date £50.

Note 5. STOCKS. These consist of the following items valued at cost :- L-Aghsafar EM2628.170; Ties EM10.930; Drawing Books EM110.85.

Note 6. CASH RESERVE EM678. This represents the amount due in January 1981 in respect of the loan for EM2000. This loan is payable from sales of L-Aghsafar.

Note 7. GENERAL RESERVES. Balance b/f from 1979 EM2940.789  
less deductions re 1980 accounts 867.201 2073.588  
add transfers made during 1980 re donations 846.859  
add transfer from appropriation account 912.330  
EM3832.777

*(Continued overleaf)*

## N. F. BIRD HOSPITAL

Since Natalino Fenech, MOS/PRO, has been to England for a brief course on the care of injured birds (see BEV 4 p.21) parts of his parents' house at Attard has on many occasions been used as a bird hospital. The list of casualties/patients included 4 Kestrels, a Hobby, a Little Bittern, a Night Heron, a Green Sandpiper, a Stone Curlew, a Short-eared Owl, a Meadow Pipit, a Fieldfare, a Song Thrush, a Starling and a Spanish Sparrow. Most of these have been found injured by shotgun pellets and some of them no amount of care could help them to survive. In some others Natalino's treatment worked wonders and pride of place goes to the Short-eared Owl and Stone Curlew which were both released successfully. Comino, a bird sanctuary, in April.



Natalino with a Short-eared Owl.

Joe Sultana

(Continued from p. 19)

- 22 - YMS ad hoc Committee meeting on IYF camp.
- 28 - YMS outing to Ghadira.

### JANUARY 1981

- 4 - YMS hike to Ghadira.
- 10 - MOS outing to Ghadira.
- 13 - MOS Council meeting (6th 1980/81).
- 15 - Valletta Ringing Scheme Committee meeting.
- 15 - MTV Programme 'Mahluq ghall-Ajru'(CG/JS).
- 15 - YMS Circular 1/81.
- 27 - Illustrated talk at the British Legion 'Holiday with Birds'.
- 29 - MTV 2nd Programme 'Mahluq ghall-Ajru' (CG/JS).
- 30 - Interview on Cable Radio 'Bird Appreciation' (NF).
- 31 - Illustrated talk at the Seminary 'Bird Appreciation' (NF/RG).

### FEBRUARY 1981

- 4 - YMS Committee meeting (1st 1981).
- 6 - Filmshow at Gzira Primary School 'Where the Curlew Calls' (PP).
- 8 - YMS hike to Mizieb/Ghadira area.
- 9 - YMS Circular to schools.
- 12 - MTV 3rd Programme 'Mahluq ghall-Ajru' (CG/JS).
- 15 - Meeting for MOS ringers at Ghadira.
- 19 - YMS Circular 2/81
- 19 - MOS Council meeting (7th 1980/81).
- 23 - MOS delegation meets Principal Environment Officer (CG/RG).
- 24 - Annual General Meeting (19th).
- 25 - Illustrated talk at St. Augustine Oratory Tarxien 'Bird Appreciation' (NF/RG).
- 25 - YMS outing to Ghadira.
- 28 - MOS delegation meets Minister of Agriculture & Fisheries (AFB/CG/JS/WTh).
- 28 - Interview on Cable Radio 'Bird Protection Regulations' (AEB).

(Continued from p. 21)

- Note 8. ADVANCE SUBSCRIPTIONS. These cover 1981 (EM115,500) and 1982 (EM21,000).
- Note 9. CAPITAL ACCOUNT. The difference of EM13,133 which appears in the balance carried forward from the previous year represents a transfer to general reserves which was omitted when preparing the 1979 accounts. This difference is also reflected in Note 7 above.
- Note 10. PREPAYMENTS. These are made as follows :- Maltese Shooting Laws Leaflet EM5,300; Guide to the Birds of Malta EM200,000; and Ghadira Hide EM350,000.

Brian K. German A.I.B.  
Hon. Treasurer

# MOS Council & Committees

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## MOS COUNCIL for 1980

President : Joe Sultana  
Hon. Gen. Secretary : Alfred E. Baldecchino  
Hon. Treasurer : Brian K. German  
Asst. Secretaries : Denis Cachia & Guido Bonetti  
P.R.O. : Louis Cassar  
Council Members : John Azzopardi, Natalino Fenech, Charles Gauci, Raymond Galea, Michael Grima & Vincent Sammut

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## MOS COUNCIL for 1981

President : Joe Sultana  
Hon. Gen. Secretary : Alfred E. Baldecchino  
Hon. Treasurer : Brian K. German  
Asst. Secretaries : Denis Cachia & Raymond Galea  
P.R.O. : Natalino Fenech  
Council Members : Guido Bonetti, Charles Gauci, Louis Cassar, Michael Grima & Vincent Sammut

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## YOUNG MEMBERS SECTION COMMITTEE for 1980

YMS Officer : Natalino Fenech  
Secretary : D. Cachia  
Members : Saviour Balzan, Albert Caruana P., Raymond Galea, Paul Portelli, Kevin Crisp & John Zarb

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## YOUNG MEMBERS SECTION COMMITTEE for 1981

YMS Officer : Michael Grima  
Secretary : Natalino Fenech  
Members : Saviour Balzan, Albert Caruana P., Raymond Galea, Paul Portelli, Odelon Scerri, John Borg & Mike Zerafa

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## VALLETTA BIRD RINGING SCHEME COMMITTEE

Ringling Officer : Joe Sultana  
Ringling Secretary : Charles Gauci  
Asst. Secretary : Raymond Galea  
Treasurer : Brian K. German  
Member : Alfred E. Baldecchino  
Govt. Representatives : Maruël Schembri & Joe Volla Gaffiero

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## RARITIES COMMITTEE

Chairman : Joe Sultana  
Members : John Azzopardi (1980), Richard Cachia Zammit, Emmanuel Curmi & Charles Gauci



