

Bird-talk



Is-Simar - Work in progress

Work at *Is-Simar* Nature reserve has begun. Workers from the Department of Agriculture have already removed several trees to provide space for open water. The trees removed were exotic species of *Acacia* (from Africa) and *Eucalyptus* (from Australia). The Eucalypts were draining the land as they can take up 360 litres of water a day. Native Maltese trees such as tamarisk and olive will remain and more shall be planted over the next few years. MOS is going to reintroduce rushes into the area (*Is-Simar* is Maltese for rush). Rushes have been extinct at *Is-Simar* for some years.

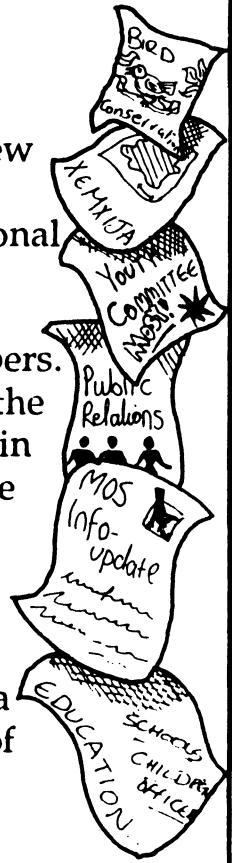


When trees are planted, the area will begin to settle, birds and mammals will move in...in short it will look like a proper nature reserve. A line of tree-covered islands through the middle of the reserve will effectively divide the reserve into two areas. Each area will have an observation hide, while a large information centre will be put up at the entrance to the reserve.

The first stage of the project is being carried out by machinery. When the machines move out people move in. After the rains a large number of people will be needed to plant trees. If you would like to help, please contact MOS. With your help we are making a difference.

Working Together

MOS has changed considerably over the past few years. From a small society run entirely by volunteers, MOS has developed into a professional society with three full-time employees. These changes were discussed in a meeting attended by council, committee and staff members. During the meeting, members were briefed on the MOS strategy for upcoming years, the changes in MOS structure as well as the work on the nature reserve at *Is-Simar*. The chairperson of each committee gave a brief talk about the work and aims of their committee. MOS remains the same in its dedication to bird protection; these changes will help make MOS a stronger, more powerful organisation capable of protecting birds better than ever before.



Fundraisers Wanted!

Do you have some free time that you would like to spend fruitfully? How about helping raise funds for MOS' campaigns and projects? A group of people are already giving a much needed helping hand, but we need your help too. For information write

to:
MOS POBox498
Valletta CMR01
tel: 230684

Editor's Box

Summer is upon us yet again. Summer with its sweltering heat by day and fiery festas by night. Apparently summer also brings out fiery tempers.

MOS recently met Xemxija residents to discuss the work at Is-Simar. This supposedly informative meeting rapidly deteriorated as people posing as residents started shouting. The opposition was instigated by some hunters who did not even allow MOS officials to get a word in edgeways.

During informal meetings held afterwards, genuine residents agreed with the idea of the reserve and offered to help out.

Local farmers are more than happy with the reserve, confirming their statement in January in which they said they are in favour of the reserve as it will prevent the fields from flooding and reduce the damage caused by weekend visitors.

Finally don't miss out on the great barbecue buffet to be held on the 14th August... See you there!

Joseph
The Editor

News



The phenomenal sum of LM6000 has been given to the Hunters and Trappers Association. Couldn't this money have been spent enforcing bird protection laws?

MOS will be holding a bazaar in December. To help us make it a success, we are asking members to take old books, toys, second-hand clothes or groceries to the MOS Nature Shop, 64 St. Lucia Str Valletta.

Swifts are one of the few birds that continue migrating during summer. Despite the fact that these species are protected by law and that summer is closed season, hundreds of swifts are being shot as they pass over our islands. MOS condemns this and asks when bird protection laws are going to be enforced.

On a brighter note, moorhens (a recent addition to the list of birds breeding in Malta) have had a successful breeding season this year, having raised broods both in Malta and Gozo. The breeding birds were all on land where protection was afforded by the landowners.

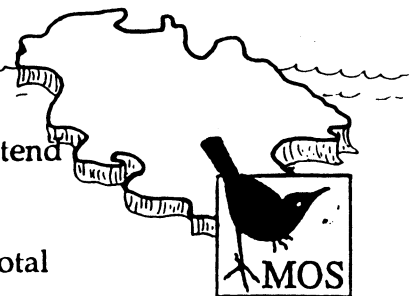
Reaching Out

The environmental organisations in Malta have always found it hard to extend their campaigns and increase their membership in Gozo. The problem has always been the same, lack of people to organise.

The number of Gozitan members currently number around 125 - out of a total Gozitan population of 25,000. There is much potential for increase in MOS membership in Gozo. It's up to you, the present members, to increase our membership in Gozo... By increasing membership you will also be increasing environmental awareness.

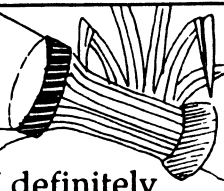
The threats to the natural environment have never been as great as they are today. To mention but a few problems, escalating numbers of slaughtered birds, extensive and haphazard urbanisation and the uncontrolled use of pesticides. Yet opportunities to change have never been as great as they are now: we must act as catalysts to bring about the changes.

There is much work to be done. To start with, you can encourage more people to join MOS. For the more voracious environmentalists there is a great deal of organising to do. Those who are interested in helping out can contact Victor Borg on 557620.



The person who sponsored this page wishes to remain anonymous, but he says:
"Well done, MOS! Keep on fighting!"

Young at Heart



Hi birdfans!

Hope you're enjoying your summer. We at MOSY definitely are, so why don't you join us for our next activity? We are going on a night hike, which will take us from Rabat, through Mgarr up to Golden Sands, where we can all have a swim. Don't forget to get a torch, some goodies to eat and of course your swimsuit. By the way you don't have to bring along your suntan lotion! We will be meeting at Rabat near the bus terminus at 9.00pm. Oh, the date is 21st August.

Have you decided where you're going abroad this summer? Well if you're looking for a holiday trip with a difference, you should consider the **Birdwatching Tour to Bulgaria** being organised by MOSY. This is a chance in a lifetime to see birds which you will never see in Malta, since one of the major migratory routes passes over eastern Bulgaria. The dates are from 8th to 15th September. If you're interested, contact Raymond Galea on 445663 as soon as possible. Only a limited number of people can be accepted.

Ruth

We need adult volunteers to help us out with MOS Youth activities. Anyone interested please phone Desiree Falzon on 434703

MOS Grand Buffet

Do not miss out on a spectacular evening of food, drink and music! MOS is organising a BBQ Buffet at the Bugibba Holiday Complex on the 14th August. The evening will consist of dinner, an exciting "Desert Auction" and - for those who wish - dancing.

The menu will be as follows:

- Welcome drink and canape` on arrival
- Barbecued fish, chicken or steak and a large variety of salads
- Fresh fruit salad or cheese
- Half a bottle of wine per person

Please book as soon as possible: the closing date for the application is the 10th August.

Date: Friday 14th August 1992
 Time: 8.30pm
 Venue: Bugibba Holiday Complex
 Price: Lm4.25c

I would like to come to the MOS Buffet.

I require _____ tickets. Enclosed find Lm _____

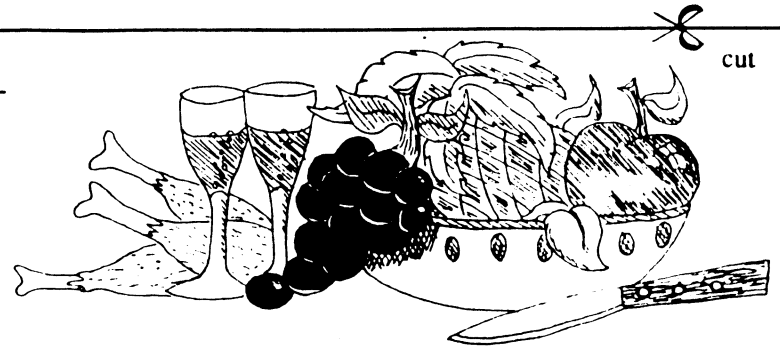
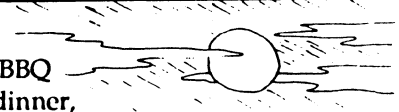
Name: _____

Address: _____

Letter to the Editor

AF Burke, an MOS member, sent in the following anecdote:

My son asked me to help him with a bird project. I rang a bird sanctuary for help. We were told to go over that afternoon to see the reserve and get help for the project. "It sounds great" I said, then without thinking added: "I can kill two birds with one stone that way." After a meaningful silence, the naturalist replied; "We try not to say that around here!"



Spot the Difference

To win this month's prize - a set of bird prints - mark the ten differences in picture B. Don't give up hope, they are all there! As usual, the prize goes to the first correct answer that we receive. If anyone would like to send in puzzles of their own, we would be extremely grateful and will send a set of prints to the sender of any puzzle that we use.

