

was confirmed, when one chick close to an adult bird was observed in a pond. No searches were carried out to find the nest due to the inaccessibility of the site. The chick could be heard chirping from a few metres away and was also seen swimming.

The pond is situated near a small dam surrounded by high rocks. A lot of thick vegetation is present along with dense reeds. The pond never dries up, not even in the summer months. The pond is not easily accessible and human disturbance is minimal.

The site was re-visited in 2010, and breeding was again confirmed on the 16th April when five newly hatched chicks and an adult were found swimming in the pond. Two visits were made on the 20th and 29th April and 3 chicks were present. On 2nd May two chicks were noted and on another two visits on 12th and 15th May, one young bird was present.

The Moorhen is a legally hunted species in Malta and during the winter it is heavily targeted by local hunters. It is also shot illegally in spring and summer months when birds are trying to breed. This heavy persecution has probably restricted the range of the species in Malta. There are no documented records of Moorhens breeding at Wied Qir-da prior to 2009 although this may be due to the lack of observations made at this site.

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Steve Zammit Lupi - 35, Bishop Caruana Street, BG-1908, Haz-Zebbug, Malta. ezl@maltanet.net

Yellow-legged Gull *Larus michahellis* preying on Maltese Wall Lizards *Podarcis filfolensis filfolensis* on Filfla Island

The scavenging behaviour by gulls is well documented (Cramp 1978) and the Yellow-legged Gull *Larus michahellis* is no exception. Diet analysis on the Filfla colony have been carried out and apart from birds, which form a large portion of the gull's diet (Borg & Cachia-Zammit 1987, Borg *et al.* 1995) other organisms have been recorded; including, rats, rabbits, various marine organisms and inorganic objects such as plastics (Borg *et al.* 1995, and pers. obs.).

On 19 May 2006, the authors visited the top part of the island to ring the chicks of the Yellow-legged Gulls as part of a long-term research project. While searching for the young gulls in the herbage, a male specimen of the Maltese Wall Lizard *Podarcis filfolensis filfolensis* was found dead on the rocks. It had been eaten and regurgitated. On the same occasion while handling a young gull for ringing, the young bird regurgitated a freshly taken male lizard. The tail was missing from the rest of the lizard's body which had an overall length of 8cm.

This is the first time since 1968, when Filfla was first visited by BirdLife Malta bird ringers, that lizards have been recorded as being predated by the Yellow-legged Gull.

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John J. Borg* & Joe Sultana**

* National Museum of Natural History, Vilhena Palace. Mdina, Malta. john.j.borg@gov.mt

** Dar ta' Gajdoru/3, Gajdoru Street, Xaghra, Gozo, XRA 2503, Malta. joesultana@maltanet.net