

A SUMMARY OF MY OBSERVATIONS OF NECTAR FEEDING IN MALTA

The observations are best reported in Tabular form.

Species of flowering plant	Sardinian Warbler	Blackcap	Chiffchaff	Spanish sparrow
<i>Antholyza aethiopica</i>	1(C) 3(C) 4(C) 5 7(C) 8	1(R) 3(C) 4(C) 7(R)	1(C) 2 6 7(R) 9	
<i>Prunus domestica ssp italica</i>	3(R)	3(C)		
<i>Citrus sinensis</i>	1(R)	2(R)		1(C) 2(R)
<i>Erythrina indica</i>		1(R)		1(C)
<i>Euphorbia pulcherrima</i>			2	
<i>Prunus dulcis</i>	4(R)			
<i>Grovillea robusta</i>	1(R)			

Locality code

- 1 San Anton Gardens
- 2 Fleur de lys (Private garden)
- 3 The Seminary, Tal Virtu, (Private grounds)
- 4 Maghtab (Farm)
- 5 Tal Balal (Farm)
- 6 Balzan (Private garden)
- 7 St. Aloysius College, B'Kara (Private grounds)
- 8 Guardian Angel School, Hamrun (Private grounds)
- 9 Station Gardens, B'Kara

Frequency code

- (C) Following a number, indicates that observations at that locality were regular and that more than 10 instances of nectar feeding were recorded.
- (R) Following a number, indicates that observations at that locality were regular, and that less than 10 instances of nectar feeding were recorded.
- A number which is not followed by a letter in brackets, indicates that observations at that locality were infrequent.
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The species of plant are listed in the Table in the order of their importance in nectar feeding locally. *Antholyza aethiopica*, which was formerly identified incorrectly as *Lapeyrouisia cruenta* and listed as such in two earlier papers (Thake, 1980 and 1986) is the most important nectar provider locally. It is becoming commoner around farmhouses, and observations of nectar feeding are likely to become more frequent in the future.

Of all the species of plant listed, only *Prunus dulcis* is native to the Mediterranean region. Thus, the nectar feeding observed in Malta can be interpreted as being the result of exploitation of introduced plant species which are rich in nectar.

References

- Thake, M. A., 1980. Nectar a supplementary food source for wintering Chiffchaffs *Phylloscopus collybita*. *Riv. Ital. Orn.* 50: 167-168.
- Thake, M. A. 1986. Nectar feeding by Chiffchaffs. *Il-Merill* 24: 16-18.

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~~CHIFFCHAFFS PHYLLOSCOPUS COLLYBITA FEEDING IN A SMALL GROUP ON A LOCAL CONCENTRATION OF EMERGING MOTH FLIES (INSECTA; DIPTERA; PSYCHODIDAE)~~

~~In the Maltese islands, Chiffchaffs wintering in suburban areas usually forage singly during the day and then gather in the late afternoon in small groups consisting of from six to ten individuals to roost in one of the more sheltered gardens. This is what happens at San Anton Gardens where Chiffchaffs are usually seen foraging singly. At times however, small groups of Chiffchaffs are seen, usually feeding at a large and plentiful source of food. This happened at San Anton Gardens this year, where between mid-January and late February 1991, a small group of Chiffchaffs could be seen feeding close to a stone irrigation canal in the centre of the gardens. Moth flies were emerging in large numbers from the sludge at the bottom of the stone canal and as many as 10 per 100cm² of canal could be counted. The Chiffchaffs spent most of their time about 2 to 5 metres from the canal, visiting the canal periodically to take one or more moth flies. The table shown below gives the number of Chiffchaffs seen in an area of about 10 x 10m near the canal on days when observations were made.~~