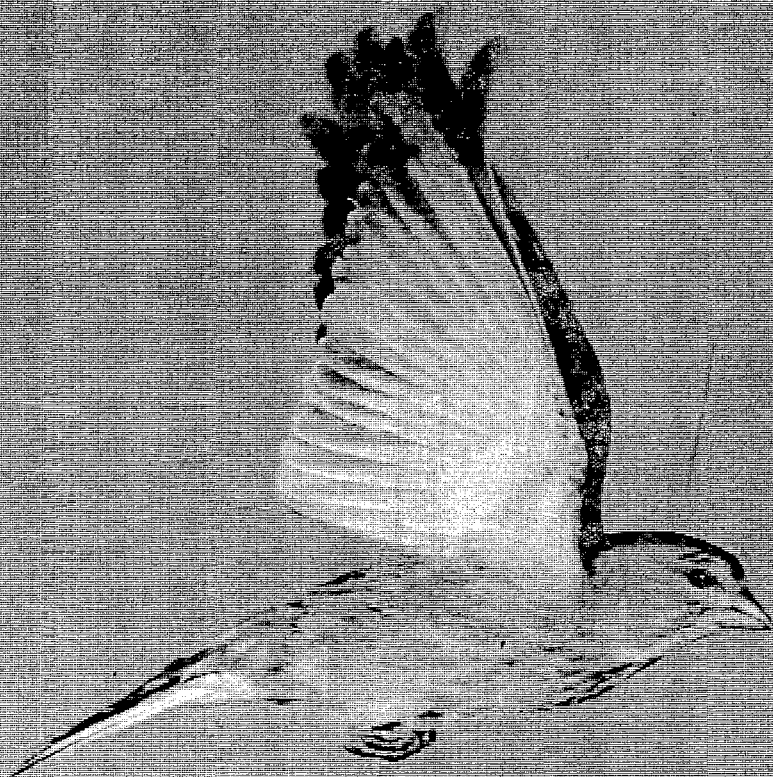


IL-MERILL

MALTA ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

BULLETIN OF THE MALTA ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

No. 2 August 1970



MALTA ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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Cover picture: Linnet (*Acanthis cannabina*) by E. Hosking. This dainty finch is a very common autumn migrant and a common winter resident. A few birds breed regularly in Gozo. Unfortunately it is one of the most trapped finches in Malta.

IL-MERILL

The title of the Society's Bulletin, IL-MERILL, is the Maltese name for the Blue Rock Thrush, *Monticola solitarius*, which is one of the few resident species of the Islands. It was chosen as the National Bird of Malta by the local National Section of the International Council for Bird Preservation and has been the emblem of the Malta Ornithological Society since the latter's inception.

Bulletin of the Malta Ornithological Society No. 2 August 1970

EDITORIAL

We have great pleasure in presenting the second issue of the new Bulletin, Il Merill, the organ of the Ornithological Society. The chief aim of this publication is to seek support in our continuous effort to protect bird life, especially in Malta, but also in other countries. Single efforts often achieve little but united, international ones do eventually make their mark. It is some consolation to know that after hundreds of thousands of protests to the Italian Ministry of Agriculture over the renewed annual massacre of millions of small birds, there has been a definite promise of a revoking of the permission to net birds during the migration periods. Pollution of the national heritage of land, forest, air and water is fortunately being brought home to the public by means of the Press, radio and TV, but closely connected with this is the wanton destruction of increasing numbers of species of wild life throughout the world. DDT and other chemicals are now being banned in many countries and

they are the great enemies of wild life, especially birds. But man the hunter does his share of destruction also and we hope gradually to bring this home to the public. It is always a question of education and that can only come about through instruction of the adult population and the children in the schools. It would do Malta no harm to take a leaf from the teachings of Buddha and to realise that life in all its forms is sacred. Man is now the master of nature but he has no right to the wanton destruction of any form of life.

Malta is being represented at the Autumn Convention of the International Council for Bird Preservation in Texel, Holland by Mr. J. Sultana, our hard-working secretary. We are pleased to be able to send him there through the generosity of THE FRIENDS OF MALTA who kindly came to our aid. Mr. J. Sultana is most up-to-date in field work and various aspects of bird preservation in Malta and he will, no doubt, tell us of his experiences in our next issue.