

Branch, has donated the sum of £60 to the Malta Ornithological Society in assistance to send a representative to attend the XV World Conference of the International Council for Bird Preservation, which is taking place at De Koog, Texel, Netherlands, between the 6th and 11th September, 1970.

Malta has been a member of the I.C.B.P. since September, 1963. The International Council for Bird Preservation has National Sections in many countries and exercises considerable influence throughout the world in bringing about adequate measures for the protection of wild birds.

Mr. W.E. Grey, Life member of the M.O.S., also made a donation of £10 to assist in this matter.

#### **Italy to ban bird-netting**

After a widespread outcry from European Nature Conservationists at the legalising of bird-netting in Italy last January, the Italian delegation has told the Council of Europe that the Italian Ministry of Agriculture intends soon to introduce a new law to forbid this practice.

Bird netting is still carried on in many parts of Europe and the Italian Authorities hope that other countries will follow suit to put an end to what is everywhere recognised as a severe threat to bird life.

The Council of Europe's Conservation experts paid tribute to the Italian Minister of Agriculture, Lorenzo Natali, for this initiative. Statements from national delegations and International Hunting Council revealed a thriving trade in netting birds between several countries and the experts agreed that only co-ordinated legislation in all parts of Europe against netting and the importation and exportation of birds could solve the problem. The chief species involved are song birds which are caged and other small birds to keep as pets etc.

#### **European Conservation Year Exhibition**

The Malta Committee for E.C.Y. 1970 held an exhibition at the National Museum, Valletta, from 14th to 23rd July. The exhibition was officially opened by a speech from the Hon. Minister of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture, who conveyed a word of praise to the M.O.S. for its activities.

#### **Hats off to the R.S.P.C.A. (Malta Branch)**

The Royal Society for the Protection and Care of Animals (Malta Branch) deserves a word of praise for helping the cause of bird protection. Officers and inspectors of the Society are going round to see that protected birds like the Blue Rock Thrush are not kept in cages.

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### **REGINALD ERNEST MOREAU Hon. M.A. (Oxford) — AN APPRECIATION —**

The man who followed the birds from their breeding quarters in Europe across the Mediterranean to their farthest wintering latitudes of Africa

has died in Hereford General Hospital in June this year on the day after his 73rd birthday.

Reginald Moreau was a well

known ornithologist and a great friend of our Society. He joined the M.O.S. when I met him one fine day in May 1962 at the Edward Grey Institute of Field Ornithology in Oxford.

'Reg', as all his friends knew him, was thrilled when I mentioned to him that an Ornithological Society had just been started in Malta.

This first meeting made me realise that, besides being an ornithologist of great ability, Reg was a gentleman and a great character. Before I left he presented me with several copies of his ornithological papers.

As is known in the bird world Reginald Moreau, was one of the foundation stones of the new science of field ornithology and his theories on Trans-Mediterranean migration have always been the key-stone in our analysis of bird migration over Malta.

Over a period of 45 years, he wrote many authoritative articles and some of them in collaboration with his wife Winifred, who continues to live in Sutton St. Nicholas, Herefordshire.

In 1966, Moreau published "The Bird Faunas of Africa and its Islands", a zoo-geographical synthesis of this continent and a formidable task in itself that makes Moreau an international authority on African birds.

His interest in birds started in 1930 when he went to Egypt, where he spent seven years on the edge of the Sahara in Lower Egypt. He travelled extensively with his wife on camel back across the deserts and in a volume of short stories he describes some of these travels. His bird notes in Egypt appeared in two

issues of the "Ibis" between 1927 and 1928.

In 1928, Moreau moved to Tanzania (then Tanganyika) to become secretary and librarian of the East African Agricultural Research Station at Amani. It was here that he began the extensive field work on African birds. He even discovered several new ones.

When he retired from the Colonial Service in 1946, he was offered responsibility for Animal Behaviour Unit at Cambridge University, but finally moved to Oxford and worked in the Edward Grey Institute of Field Ornithology from 1947 to 1968.

He edited the 'Ibis' - journal of the Ornithologists' Union - from 1947 to 1960 and succeeded in making this journal into the premier scientific ornithological publication in the world. Between 1960 and 1965 Moreau served as President of the B.O.U.

Besides his many authoritative papers published in different scientific journals, his range of publications includes a book of social history on the village of Berrick Salome, near Oxford, where he lived for twenty years, a contribution to "A New Dictionary of Birds", and a book on the Palaearctic Birds Migration System which he had just completed in bed two days before he died.

Notwithstanding his academic career, Moreau had no formal education after the age of 17, when he left Kingston Grammar School, but his academic honours in later years included an honorary M.A. from the University of Oxford in 1955, and the Stamford Raffles Award for Contributions to Zoology presented by the Duke of Edinburgh in 1962 on behalf of the

Zoological Society of London.

Reginald's first connection with Malta was on 27th October 1936 when, together with his wife, their ship stopped for a short call in the Grand Harbour on their way back from London to Tanganyika.

After I met him in 1962, we kept in touch through correspondence and his advice and encouragement in the early days of the M.O.S. were of tremendous help. He also joined the Society as a Life-member.

In the last years of his life, though already ill, Reg continued to travel overseas. In March 1968, he and Winifred spent a fortnight in Gozo where my colleagues of the M.O.S. and I spent an enjoyable time with them either bird-watching or discussing birds and local ornithological problems.

It was a great honour to our

Society when after his visit to Gozo, Moreau sent a contribution to the Quarterly Bulletin which appeared in Vol.1 No.3 - 1968 - regarding two achievements of our bird-ringing scheme.

As Moreau states in one of his early papers, "the sea-crossing of Palaearctic birds moving to and from Africa was still imperfectly documented", and, "the actual migration over the Mediterranean is by no means well documented."

Since he wrote this statement, Moreau succeeded in filling satisfactorily this blank in ornithology. Moreover, he forwarded theories which made a great approach of human understanding in the mystery of bird migration.

Reginald Moreau is survived by his wife, a son and a daughter to whom we offer our condolences.

J.M. Attard.



## ~~ASPECTS OF THE SEPTEMBER 1969 FALL OF MIGRANTS IN MALTA.~~

~~D. Rushforth~~

~~J. Sultana and C. Gauci recorded in the September 1969 quarterly bulletin of the Malta Ornithological Society details of a major fall of trans-Saharan migrants in Malta during the last week of September 1969. Large Spring arrivals of birds that winter south of the Sahara are not unusual in Malta as borne out by historical records of the Society.~~

~~Autumn migration through the island is however generally accepted as being of a minor nature and in most years the daily totals of species primarily involved in this major arrival do not reach double figures so late in the month of September if at any time~~

~~The abundance of species primarily involved in the movement is indicated by the table below.~~