

# **A SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS OF THE ILLIGAL KILLING OF BIRDS STUDY IN LEBANON**

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## **Most Important Sites for Illegal Killing of Birds in Lebanon:**

Examining the data collected from over 70 hot hunting sites, 5 sites appeared to be the most important (Black spots) for illegal killing of birds in Lebanon. From north to south, they are:

- 1) Andqit/Mounjez
- 2) Fakiha
- 3) Dalboun
- 4) Qaraoun
- 5) Roum/Jzzine

## **Targeted Birds by Illegal Killing in Lebanon:**

There are 400 bird species in Lebanon. By eliminating the occasional (vagrant and very rare species), 291 remained to be the target of our study and analyses. Whether rare or not, the globally threatened species are not eliminated. Of the analyzed species:

- 159 are non-passerines. They include among others:
  - 32 raptors.
  - 18 globally threatened species, including 2 species of falcons, 2 vultures, 1 harrier and 2 eagles.
  - 25 soaring species.

- 132 are passerines. They include: 2 globally threatened species (Syrian Serin and Cinereous Bunting).

Out of the 25 globally threatened (CR, EN, VU, NT) bird species of Lebanon, 20 have been targeted by shooters.

### **Reasons of killing birds in Lebanon (from most to less important):**

- 1) Recreation/Sport/Love of killing
- 2) Food
- 3) Cage birds
- 4) Taxidermy
- 5) Predator control

### **Tool used for mass illegal killing of birds in Lebanon**

- 1) Calling machines
- 2) Mist-nets
- 3) Flashlights

### **Most illegally killed birds in Lebanon:**

- 1) **Common Quails:** an estimate of 685000 birds per year
- 2) **Calandra Lark:** c.726000 individuals
- 3) **Blackcap:** c.597000 individuals
- 4) **Domestic Sparrow:** c.97000 individuals
- 5) **Eurasian Chaffinch:** c.96000 individuals
- 6) **Starling:** c.51000 individuals

These are followed by warblers and finches that are showing an estimate of 9000 individuals per each species illegally killed annually.

## **Rank of Lebanon in the illegal killing at the level of the Mediterranean:**

The most important countries in the Mediterranean for illegal killing of birds are:

- 1) Egypt with 5.7 million illegally killed birds per year
- 2) Italy with 5.6 million illegally killed birds per year
- 3) Syria with 3.9 million illegally killed birds per year
- 4) **Lebanon with 2.6 million illegally killed birds per year**
- 5) Cyprus with 2.3 million illegally killed birds per year
- 6) Greece with 0.7 million illegally killed birds per year
- 7) France with 0.6 million illegally killed birds per year
- 8) Libya with 0.5 million illegally killed birds per year
- 9) Croatia with 0.5 million illegally killed birds per year
- 10) Albania with 0.3 million illegally killed birds per year
- 11) Others with 2.3 million illegally killed birds per year

The total number of illegally killed birds in the Mediterranean is 25 million. Of them, Lebanon's share is 10.5%.

On average, more than 248 birds are illegally killed in Lebanon each year for every square kilometer.

Presently, 291 species of bird regularly occur in Lebanon, with 100% of species being killed illegally in significant numbers.

The estimated mean number of individual birds killed illegally is 44 individuals for every 100 people.

## Size of the Illegal killing of game birds of Lebanon

	Minimum - Maximum	
1) Mallard	3640	- 6410
2) Garganey	640	- 1560
3) Teal	770	- 1650
4) Mistle Thrush	2790	- 6200
5) Song Thrush	1560	- 4200
6) Fieldfare	48	- 144
7) Turtle Dove	3600	- 7056
8) Woodpigeon	1134	- 2430
9) Stock Dove	1100	- 2464
10) Quail	409500	- 962000
11) Chukar	5460	- 9450
12) Woodcock	1560	- 3600
13) Calandra Lark	528000	- 924000
14) Chaffinch	58500	- 135000

From the table above, the most illegally killed game birds are quails, Calandra Larks and Chaffinch. The least killed but desired is the Fieldfare due to its rarity and limited distribution to high altitude.

Irresponsible illegal killing and trapping in Lebanon is thought to be one of the main factors behind the decline of many migratory bird species in Lebanon. It is worthy to note that of the game birds, the Turtle doves have rapidly declined by 30% throughout Europe since the start of the millennium and in some countries by as much as 90% in the same period. Such decline affects the breeding and the migratory populations of the Turtle Dove in Lebanon. Hence the need to reduce its bag limit from 10 to 5 per hunter in Lebanon.

