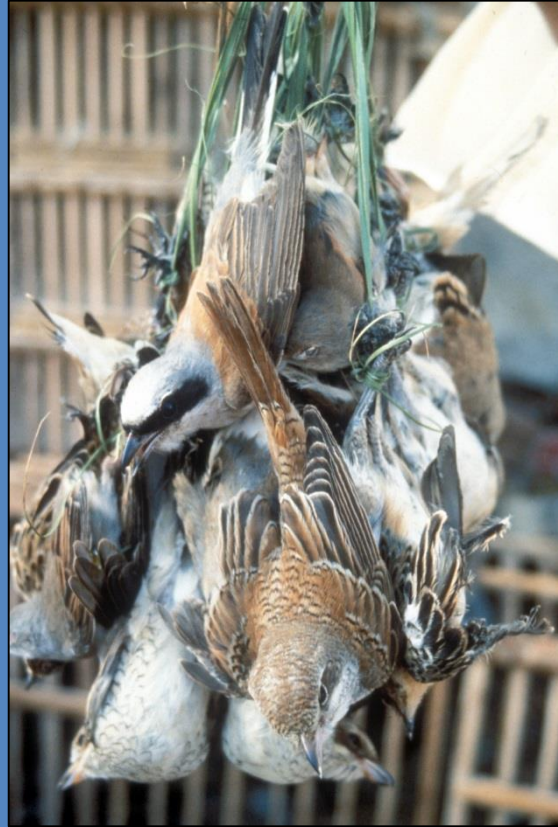


# Monitoring illegal killing and taking of birds



Nicola Crockford – BirdLife International

# Background

- 25 million birds estimated to be illegally killed in Mediterranean countries each year
- Useful baseline from Mediterranean review, but good to repeat at intervals
- Need more accurate data, collected in systematic way to monitor this issue
- Very little monitoring of illegal killing underway in the Mediterranean
- Want to support BirdLife partners and others to improve this and help with tools

**Doc. 7 to this meeting**

**A best practice guide for monitoring  
illegal killing and taking of birds**



Partnership for  
**nature** and **people**

<http://www.birdlife.org/campaign/stop-illegal-bird-killing>

# Monitoring illegal killing and taking of birds

- **Process**

- Collect info **on protocols** currently implemented, on **challenges** and **best-practices** and on **law enforcement**
- **Drafted guidelines** for monitoring illegal killing and taking of birds in the Med
- **Workshop in 2015** to discuss guidelines bringing together BirdLife partners, with:

CMS

AEWA

FACE

IMPEL

EuroNatur



Participants to the IKB monitoring workshop © Dimitar Gradinarov

# Making use of the monitoring guidelines

- The BirdLife illegal killing monitoring guidelines available as **Doc 7** were originally conceived to support the work of Birdlife partners, but could have **considerable relevance to other stakeholders** and indeed other regions
- BirdLife is already **piloting the use of the guidelines with BirdLife partners** in the Mediterranean, including with Nature Conservation Egypt, who you will hear more from tomorrow
- If some or all of the content is considered by the Task Force to be potentially useful to Mediterranean governments and other stakeholders, we would be very happy to **offer it for adoption or adaptation by this Task Force**

# Best Practice Guide

- Builds on the experiences of Mediterranean BirdLife Partners and other stakeholders
- Facilitate expansion of monitoring, increase the robustness of existing schemes, and support the development of a more coordinated approach
- Encourages systematic monitoring, results comparable between years and areas
- Principle elements of each aspect of a monitoring scheme illustrated by a series of case studies

# Overview

The Guide:

1. Provides a **checklist of the minimum steps** that should be considered in monitoring the illegal killing and taking of birds.
2. Presents relevant **sampling design and survey method considerations**.
3. Presents **overarching considerations** related to monitoring of illegal killing and taking of birds.
4. Describes **recommended methods** and **detailed case studies with examples of protocols** currently implemented by BirdLife Partners.
5. Provides **information on how to train, enthuse and communicate with a network of surveyors**.
6. Highlights some of the opportunities and considerations for using the monitoring data for **advocacy and communication**
7. Lists some of the **key references and relevant sources of additional information**.

# Contents of best practice guide

## Contents

Executive Summary .....	2
Citation .....	2
Acknowledgements .....	4
1. Introduction.....	7
1.1. Aim of the Best Practice Guide.....	7
1.2. Defining illegal killing and taking of birds and the need for monitoring.....	7
1.3. Overarching considerations for schemes that monitor the illegal killing and taking of birds	8
2. Survey design.....	11
2.1. Monitoring goal and objectives.....	12
2.2. Direct or indirect measures? .....	12
2.3. Survey boundaries .....	13
2.4. Census or sample?.....	13
2.5. Sampling strategy .....	13
2.6. Field methods.....	16
2.7. Reliability: accuracy, precision and bias.....	18
2.8. Analysis.....	18

Continued.....



# Contents of best practice guide

3.	Implementation on the ground.....	20
3.1.	Recruiting surveyors and maintaining involvement.....	20
3.2.	Training surveyors .....	21
3.3.	Security.....	22
3.4.	Supporting materials .....	23
4.	Collecting data on illegal killing and taking of birds.....	26
4.1.	Direct or indirect measures?.....	26
4.2.	'Visible' or 'undercover' monitoring .....	27
4.3.	Monitoring illegal shooting of birds .....	27
4.4.	Monitoring illegal trapping of birds.....	32
4.5.	Monitoring illegal poisoning of birds .....	35
4.6.	Monitoring the illegal bird market trade .....	39
4.7.	Monitoring illegal activities through socioeconomic study .....	41
4.8.	Recording casual data on illegal killing from different sources .....	46
5.	Analysing and managing information on illegal killing and taking of birds.....	48
5.1.	Data management.....	48
5.2.	Data analysis.....	50

Continued.....



# Contents of best practice guide

6.	Communicating results of monitoring illegal killing and taking of birds.....	55
6.1.	Communication challenges and opportunities .....	55
6.2.	National, regional and global fora where illegal killing monitoring data are useful.....	56
7.	Suggested reading and further sources of information .....	58
7.1.	Guidelines for bird monitoring schemes, survey design, fieldwork methods and analysis..	58
7.2.	Literature on illegal killing and taking of birds .....	58
7.3.	Relevant contacts within the BirdLife Partnership.....	61

# Case studies

## Case study: Monitoring illegal mist-nets in Cyprus

*Tassos Shialis (BirdLife Cyprus)*

### Survey area and sampling strategy

Trapping surveillance occurs in two areas identified as the worst for illegal trapping in Cyprus: Famagusta/Eastern Lamaca and Ayios Theodoros-Maroni area. The total survey area is 406 km<sup>2</sup> and each grid square is classified as either a 'possible bird trapping area' or 'unlikely bird trapping area', based solely on the presence or absence of vegetation suitable for setting lime-sticks or mist-nets. Monitoring is undertaken in the 'possible' squares only (301 squares). Each autumn (since 2002) and spring (since 2004), a sample of squares are surveyed. The random sample is stratified to ensure representative coverage of areas under the jurisdiction of the Republic of Cyprus and British Sovereign Base Area, as well as 'joint' squares where the two jurisdictions meet.

Monitoring is undertaken by a two-man team that systematically searches for evidence of illegal trapping activity in the survey squares. The time taken to survey each square is recorded, as are weather patterns.

For safety reasons, the surveyors do not go out in the field at dawn, which is the main period of trapping activity, but carry out surveys between 09:00 and 17:00. Each sample square is surveyed only once each season.

### Mist-netting activity monitoring

The survey team carries out a thorough search of all habitat patches that are suitable for the setting of mist-nets (i.e. all areas with bushes and/or trees) within each survey square. The surveyors record all direct and indirect evidence of mist-net and tape-lure use and of net-ride preparation and use (e.g. cleared corridors within vegetation for putting up nets, presence of pole bases) and calculate the total length of active net rides recorded within the survey area. The codes used for the various categories of mist-netting activity and tape-lure use are given in Table 4.2, as are the codes used for recording the type of habitat where trapping activity is detected. Net rides can be missed when set within fenced compounds to which surveyor access is not possible, however trapping activity can still be monitored in these compounds. The survey team make every effort to check for trapping activity within enclosed (fenced-off) areas, even though they never enter such areas. The surveyors note cases where they come across enclosed (fenced) areas that they cannot see into at all, or cannot see into well enough to survey fully. All the active trapping sites are reported to the competent authorities with GPS locations to take further action.

*Table 4.2 Survey codes used for the field*

Net code	Habitat code	Tape-lure code
O – old ride	A – acacia	P – tape-lure present,
P – ride recently prepared <sup>1</sup>	C – citrus	playing
ANN – active no nets present <sup>2</sup>	E – eucalyptus	L – loudspeakers present
AUN – active unset net present <sup>3</sup>	F – fig	Y – tape-lure present, not playing
ASN – active set net present <sup>4</sup>	J – mulberry	U – unknown
IUN – inactive unset net present	O – olive	W – electrical wires associated with tape-lures
	M – maquis	B – car battery present
	P – pomegranate	
	K – carob	
	Cy – cypress	
	L – lentisk	
	S – syrian plum	

<sup>1</sup> A net ride that is recently prepared and ready to be used (including vegetation clearing from ground, trimming of vegetation along net ride, laying of carpets).

<sup>2</sup> A net ride that from the evidence found e.g. bird feathers, blood stains, thrown pebbles, indicates that illegal activity was taking place the previous night / morning but no net is present. When recording a ride as 'active no nets' (ANN) instead of a 'prepared' (P) one, the survey team makes a note explaining their reasoning for doing so, in particular by cataloguing the evidence found that led them to make this classification.

<sup>3</sup> A net ride where the trapper has left the mist-net on the poles but it is furled i.e. the mist-net is not stretched up for catching birds but lowered down (or the net is placed e.g. under a tree).

<sup>4</sup> A net ride where the trapper has left the mist-net set on the poles and it is ready for catching birds.

# Glossary of trap types



Horsehair snares  
used in Ardennes  
(France) © LPO  
Champagne-  
Ardennes



Stone crush trap in Dalmatia  
(Croatia) © BIOM



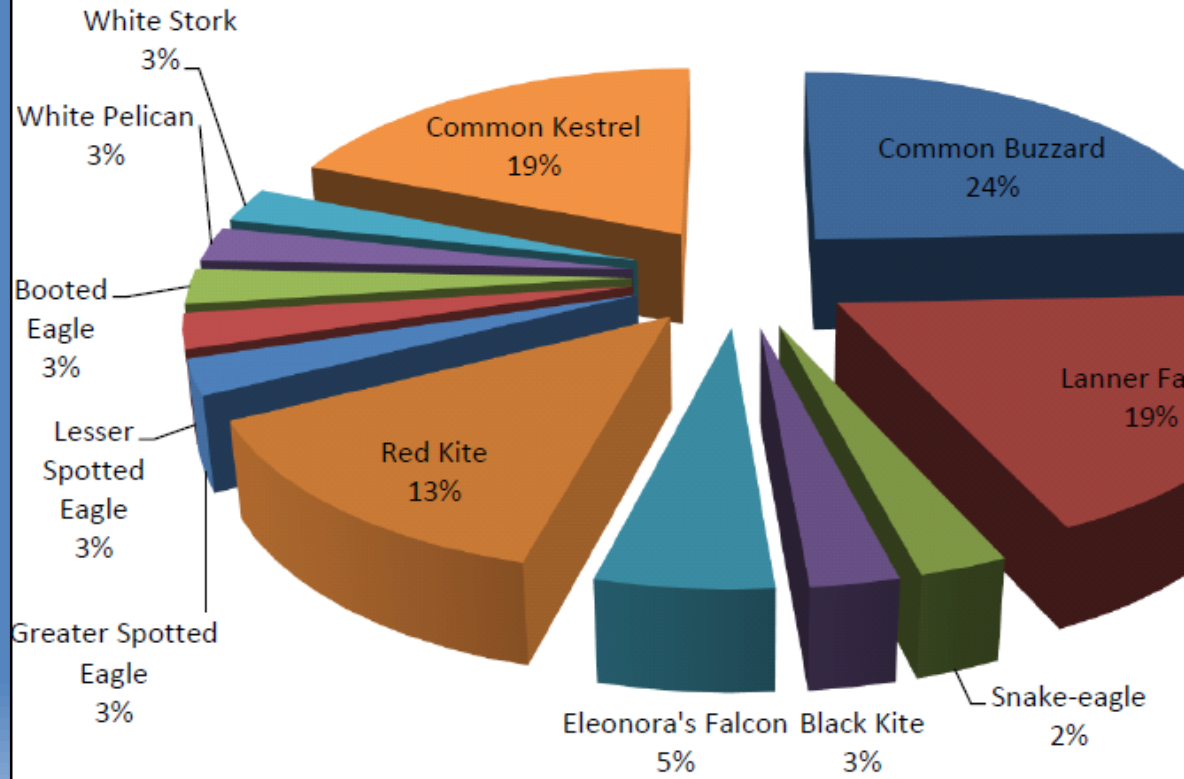
Snap trap used in Brescia region  
(Italy) © LIPU



# Useful experience and case studies could be gathered from members of this Task Force



## Sold MSB in the Lebanese Market between September and March 2013/2014



Thanks to Dr. Saleem Hamadeh from Ministry of Environment, Lebanon

# Developing a strategy to monitor illegal killing and taking of birds in Egypt

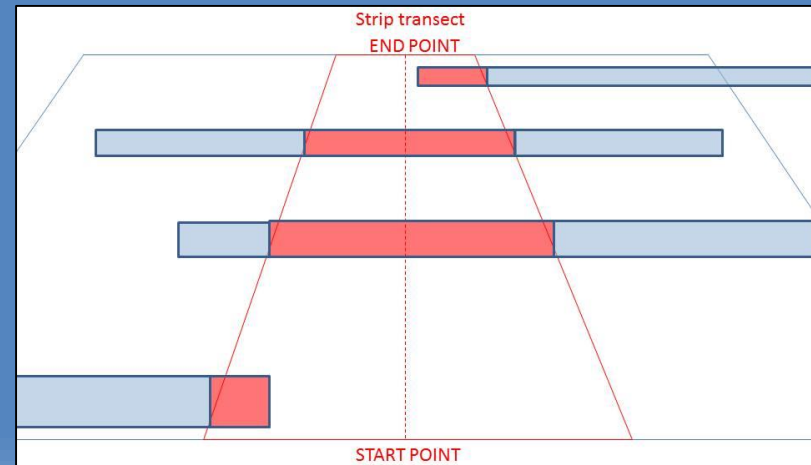
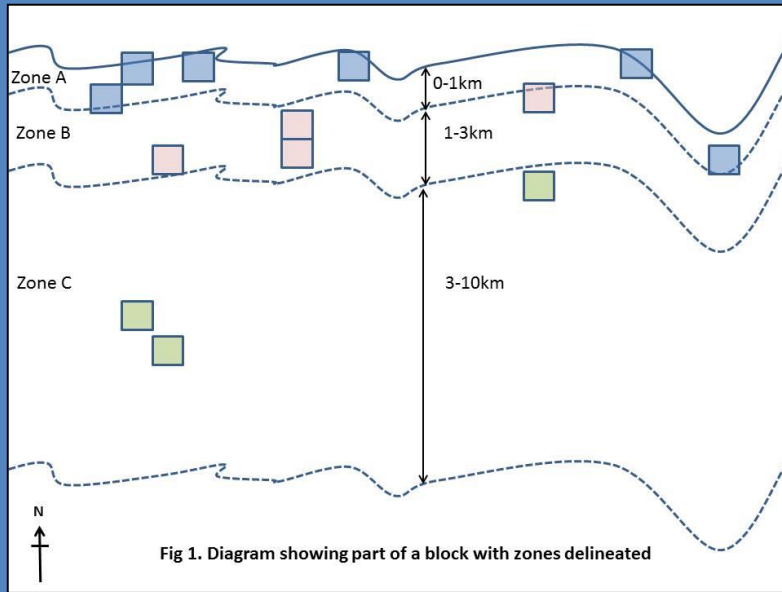


Diagram of a strip transect in 3D showing in red the area of each net encountered that should be measured and recorded

Whichever of these nets is selected as a focal net will have a number of variables measured **in addition**, but this basic info on the area of net falling within the transect is crucial to measure for all nets falling within the transect **including focal nets**

# Evolution of the guidance and pooling monitoring results

- Over time the guidance could be improved by incorporating new case studies as new monitoring schemes become operational, ensuring that everyone has the chance to learn from one another.
- Effective monitoring will be vital to test whether our efforts to address illegal killing, (at site, national or regional level) are being effective and which approaches are proving the most effective where.
- Pooling data from an increasing number of robust national monitoring schemes across the Mediterranean would mean that any review of illegal killing repeated in 5 or 10 years time should be able to draw on an increasingly accurate picture of illegal killing in the region.



# Acknowledgments

*Thank you to all of the national experts who contributed to this. Thanks too to the international experts including from the CMS family who helped add their experience to this guide.*

*This review was funded by an anonymous BirdLife donor.*



European Bee-eater © BirdLife Cyprus