North Cyprus Birds

With an area three times the size of Cornwall, North Cyprus constitutes over a third of Cyprus’s land mass, contains more than half of its coastline and, owing to its diverse geology, some of the island’s most important habitats. For example the Five Finger Mountain range, the Karpaz Peninsula and the Mesaoria Plain.

Situated in the middle of the Eastern Mediterranean flyway, with two endemic breeding birds, and many other regionally important breeders, many of which are under threat, North Cyprus is of huge importance for birds.

Conservation

Due to the partitioning of Cyprus and the political isolation of the Turkish Cypriot community, North Cyprus receives no support from the Birdlife Partnership. Politics continue to pose a great obstacle which has impacted our ability to build capacity in the North.

Although economic development of North Cyprus has been hindered by embargos, which is in part why habitats in North Cyprus are relatively well preserved, recent years development is increasing in an uncontrolled and poorly planned way.

Trapping and illegal hunting are widespread and are not monitored or illegal use of poisons against foxes and stray dogs in agriculture continue to inflict a heavy toll on our breeding and immigrant raptors. Environmental education is also lacking.

There is therefore an urgent requirement for better establishment of conservation among Turkish Cypriots through KUŞKOR. This is difficult to achieve since our organisation relies entirely on volunteers with little outside support.

KUŞKOR’s Projects and Campaigns

KUŞKOR was founded in the late 1980s as a non-governmental organisation registered in the Turkish Cypriot community of North Cyprus. The organisation’s basic aim is to protect birds and their habitats in North Cyprus.

Our recent projects and activities:
- All island IBA Project, 2010-2012 - Funding secured from EU.
- Protection for Audouin’s Gulls, 2014 - Volunteer based.
- Kuşla Wetlands, 2014-2016 - Funding secured from EU.
- Nest Boxes for Roller, 2015 - Funding secured from DGME. Volunteer based.
- Monitoring, 2010-2015 - Monitoring wetlands, habitats, bird numbers and phenology through our members and the KUŞKOR Yahoo Group and Facebook Pages.
- Awareness raising, 2010 – 2016 - Continued awareness raising campaigns on hunting, trapping, poisoning and on our projects implemented, through press releases and social media. Presentations in schools. Field trips providing binoculars to kids. Monthly birdwatching trips to gather and train members in identification, generate interest and increase monitoring effort. Manning stalls locally and at international fairs.
- Advising - TRNC authorities and EU on birds and habitats.
- Fund raising - Merchandise sales, annual calendar and membership.