

BIRD TRAPPING IN SOUTH-EASTERN CYPRUS: CABS & SPA ANNUAL REPORT 2018



Cover photo: Song thrushes caught in a mist net found during Winter 2018-2019 Bird Camp in Cyprus (Photo: CABS)

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SUMMARY

In 2018, Committee Against Bird Slaughter (CABS), with the support of Foundation Pro Biodiversity (Stiftung Pro Artenvielfalt (SPA)), carried out extensive field investigations in the south-eastern part of Cyprus: Famagusta and Larnaca Districts within the Republic of Cyprus and in the British overseas territory on Cyprus, the Eastern Sovereign Base Area (ESBA), to monitor and to act against bird trapping activity. Field investigations covered the three main bird trapping seasons: winter, spring and autumn season and were carried out in all months in 2018 except for June and July.

Investigations revealed 265 active trapping sites; 104 trapping sites were found to be active in the winter season, 28 in spring and 131 in autumn season. Trapping activity was highest in the autumn trapping season, when field investigations revealed trapping activity at 131 trapping sites. Field investigations included the visiting of 120 trapping sites, where trappers had been arrested for bird trapping in previous years and 43 of them were found to be active again in 2018.

Trapping trend, calculated from the results of bird protection camps in years 2015-2018 shows that trapping in south-eastern Cyprus has been declining since 2016. In 2017 trapping declined by 51,3 % in comparison to 2016, and in 2018 by 48,5 % in comparison to 2017.

A total of 266 mist nets, 3500 limesticks and 133 electronic callers were removed from trapping sites, found to be active in 2018 by enforcement officers and CABS activists.

CABS activists reported 351 cases of illegal bird trapping to the enforcement agencies in 2018 and 247 of these cases were investigated by enforcement officers. At 28 reported cases, individuals, involved in trapping were caught and prosecuted by enforcement officers. Traps were seized at 196 reported cases.

Altogether, 1377 birds were rescued from traps, found by CABS activists in 2018. We estimate that around 100 000 birds were trapped and killed on the trapping sites, found to be active by CABS activists in 2018.

1 INTRODUCTION

Cyprus lies on one of the key migratory routes that birds use during their journey between Europe and Africa, with around 100-150 million birds visiting the island every spring and autumn (Lederer 2016). Cyprus is also an important overwintering area for birds which migrate to Cyprus in tens of millions to avoid the harsh winter conditions in continental Europe.

Cyprus is one of the main hotspots of illegal bird killings in the Mediterranean. In 2017, activists from Committee Against Bird Slaughter (CABS) located 472 active trapping sites in the south-eastern part of the island. It is estimated that several hundred thousand birds were trapped and killed on these sites. Trapping is affecting more than 150 species of wild birds, of which 78 are threatened and listed on Annex 1 of the Birds Directive or listed in one of SPEC (Species of European Conservation Concern) categories (BirdLife Cyprus).

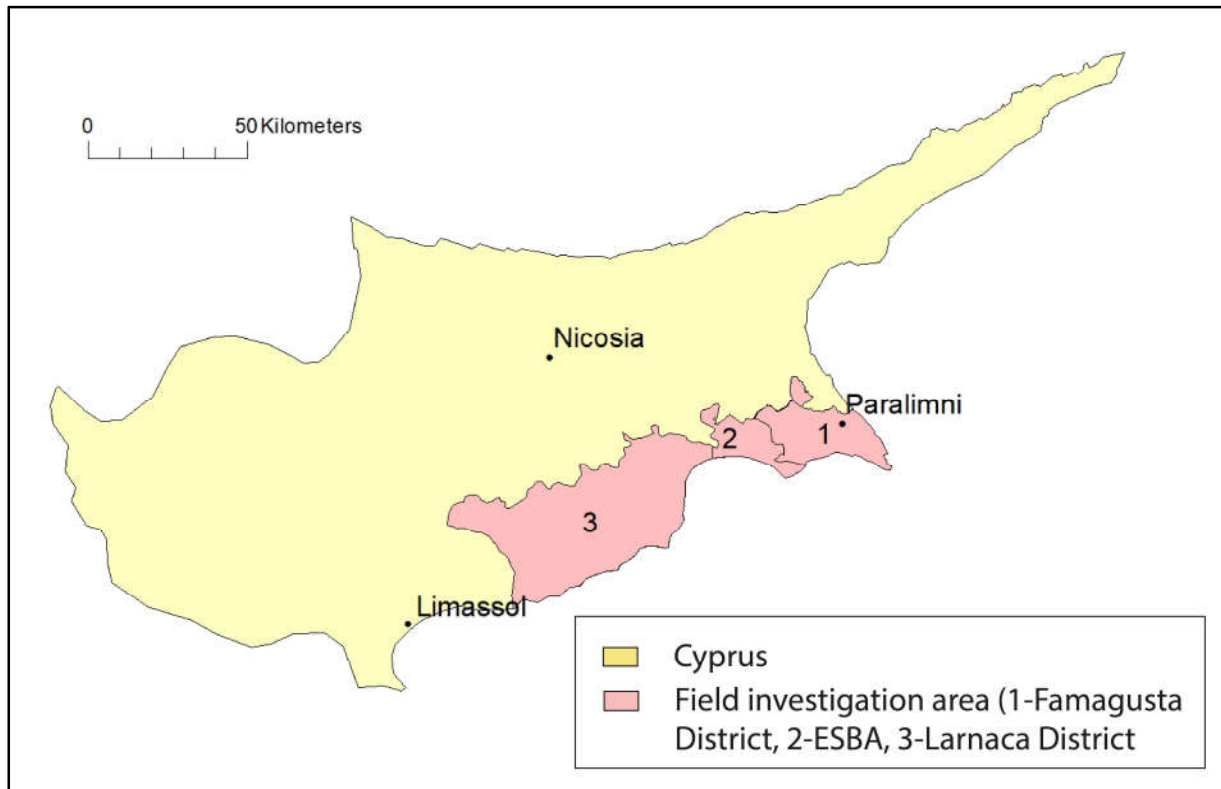
CABS, with the support of Foundation Pro Biodiversity (SPA- Stiftung Pro Artenvielfalt), organises extensive field operations, called Bird Protection Camps, to prevent illegal, non-selective and large-scale trapping, killing and trade of migratory birds passing through Cyprus.

This report compiles the results of CABS & SPA Bird Protection Camps carried out in the Republic of Cyprus and in the British Eastern Sovereign Base Area on Cyprus in 2018.

2 WORKING METHODS

2.1 FIELD INVESTIGATIONS AREA

In 2018 CABS activists investigated bird trapping activity in south-eastern part of Cyprus: in Famagusta and Larnaca Districts within the Republic of Cyprus and in the Eastern Sovereign Base Area (ESBA), the British overseas territory on Cyprus (picture 1).



Picture 1: The area of bird trapping field investigations carried out during CABS & SPA Bird Protection Camps in 2018

2.2 FIELD INVESTIGATIONS METHODS

Bird trapping field investigations were carried out during four large scale illegal bird killing investigation and prevention operations, called Bird Protection Camps. They were organised by CABS and SPA and carried out from 7 January to 28th February, from 1st March to 13th May, 29th August to 11th November and from 4th to 31st December, running in total for 210 days. A total of 56 activists participated at the camps in 2018 (table 1).

Table 1: Duration and number of participants at Bird Protection Camps, organised by CABS & SPA in Cyprus in year 2018

Bird Protection Camp	January, February 2018	Spring 2018	Autumn 2018	December 2018	Total 2018
Period of field investigations	7.1.- 28.2.	1.3.- 13.5.	29.8.- 11.11.	4.12.- 31.12.	
Duration of field investigations (days)	39	69	75	27	210
No. of participants	11	12	29	4	56

Field investigations were carried out mostly in the nights and in the mornings, when trapping activity is the highest. Priority among investigated areas was given to the areas with the highest trapping activity recorded in previous years. These records are stored in the database that contains results of field investigations of all bird protection camps organised since 2009. Trapping activity, detected during field investigations, was reported immediately to the enforcement officers on duty to ensure that illegal bird killings were stopped in shortest possible time.

CABS activists were careful to not be seen by trappers during field investigations, both to avoid confrontations with trappers and to ensure successful operations of the enforcement officers to whom they reported trapping sites found to be active.

Active trapping sites are defined as those with set traps, which can either be limesticks or mist nets. Furthermore, trapping sites without set traps but with signs of recent trapping activity are also considered as active: feathers on the ground at trapping locations or remnants of glue on branches indicate that the location was recently active. Also trapping sites with electronic bird callers playing at them, even if there are no traps set out at the time of visiting, are counted as active. These callers are sometimes used solely in the night to attract birds to the trapping site and the trappers set their traps at them in the early morning.

2.3 ESTIMATIONS USED TO CALCULATE NUMBER OF RESCUED AND NUMBER OF KILLED BIRDS ON TRAPPING SITES FOUND TO BE ACTIVE

To calculate number of birds that have been trapped and killed on trapping sites, found to be active by CABS activists, following estimations were used:

- length of spring trapping season is 90 days (beginning of March until end of May), length of autumn trapping season is 75 days (middle of August until end of October) and the length of winter trapping season is 120 days (beginning of November until end of February)

- on average, 20 birds are caught per net and 0.5 birds per limestick and per day in autumn trapping season. Due to less intensive migration of birds in spring and winter time, we estimate that the average catch rate in these two seasons is half of the catch rate in autumn season, meaning that estimated 10 birds are caught per net and 0.25 birds per limestick and per day in spring and winter trapping season

- CABS field investigations revealed that trapping sites are not active every day in the trapping seasons, even when trapping activity is not disturbed by anti-trapping actions. If trapping activity is disturbed by actions of CABS activists or actions made by enforcements officers (confiscations of traps and trapping paraphernalia, arrests of trappers...), the trapping activity is usually interrupted at these sites, either for short time, longer period or the site is permanently abandoned and not used for trapping anymore. If trapping sites are not disturbed by anti-trapping actions, we estimate the following average durations of trapping activity on them:

- 20 days for spring trapping season
- 40 days for autumn trapping season
- 40 days for winter trapping season

As anti-trapping actions were made at majority of trapping sites, found to be active by CABS activists in 2018, we have considered the effect of disturbance when estimating the average duration of trapping activity on them. Considering the effect of disturbance, the different lengths and different intensity of trapping activity of each trapping season, the estimated average duration of trapping activity on trapping sites, found to be active in 2018 was:

- 10 days for spring trapping season
- 20 days for autumn trapping season
- 20 days for winter trapping season

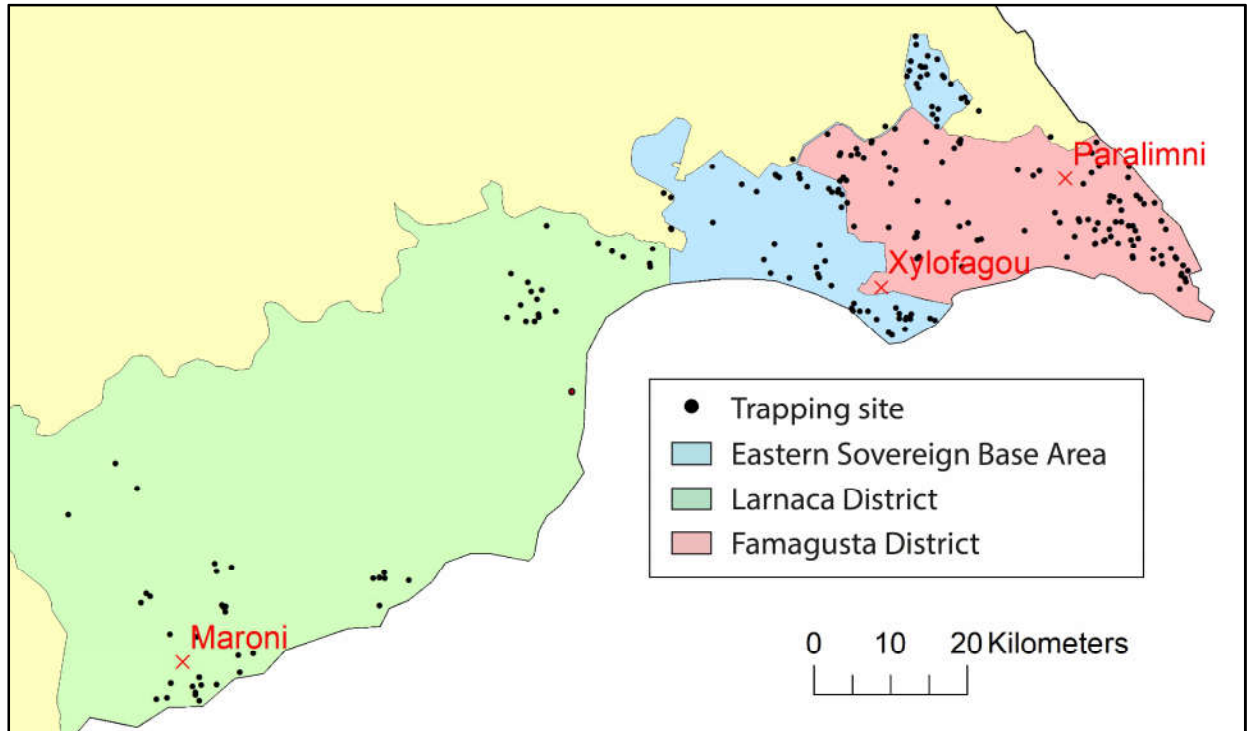
3 RESULTS OF FIELD INVESTIGATIONS AND ACTIONS AGAINST BIRD TRAPPING IN SOUTH-EASTERN CYPRUS IN 2018

3.1 TRAPPING ACTIVITY

CABS activists located altogether 265 active trapping sites in south-eastern Cyprus at Bird Protection Camps, carried out in 2018. Trapping activity on trapping sites, found to be active, was detected 467 times or 1.8 times per trapping site (table 2, picture 2).

Table 2: Trapping sites, found to be active by CABS activists in south-eastern Cyprus in year 2018

Bird Protection Camp	January, February 2018	Spring 2018	Autumn 2018	December 2018	Total
No. of trapping sites found to be active	66	28	131	40	265
No. of times trapping sites were found to be active	99	38	267	63	467



Picture 2: Distribution of trapping sites, found to be active during Bird Protection Camps in south-eastern Cyprus in 2018

3.1.1 TRAPPING ACTIVITY IN FAMAGUSTA AND LARNACA DISTRICTS

In 2018, CABS activists found 189 active trapping sites in the Famagusta and Larnaca Districts (table 3).

Table 3: Trapping sites, found to be active in Famagusta and Larnaca Districts in 2018

Bird Protection Camp	January, February 2018	Spring 2018	Autumn 2018	December 2018	Total 2018
No. of active sites found	29	26	106	28	189
No. of times trapping sites were found active	41	33	218	44	336



Picture 3: Active trapping site with set net found in Famagusta District during Autumn 2018 Bird Protection Camp (Photo: CABS)

3.1.2 TRAPPING ACTIVITY IN THE BRITISH EASTERN SOVEREIGN BASE AREA ON CYPRUS

In 2018, CABS activists found 72 active trapping sites in the ESBA (table 4).

Table 4: Trapping sites, found to be active in the British Eastern Sovereign Base Area on Cyprus in year 2018

Bird Protection Camp	January, February 2018	Spring 2018	Autumn 2018	December 2018	Total
No. of trapping sites found to be active	35	2	23	12	72
No. of times trapping sites were found to be active	57	4	48	19	128

3.1.3 ACTIVITY OF THE TRAPPING SITES WITH PREVIOUS PROSECUTIONS

During field investigations in 2018, CABS activists checked 120 trapping sites in south-eastern Cyprus, where trappers were caught and arrested in previous years. 43 sites with previous arrests (35.8% of all checked sites) were found active again in 2018 (table 5).

Table 5: Reactivation of trapping sites with previous prosecutions in south-eastern Cyprus in 2018

Bird protection Camp	January, February 2018	Spring 2018	Autumn 2018	December 2018	Total 2018
No. of sites with previous prosecutions checked	10	47	61	2	120
No. of reactivated sites with previous prosecutions	2	7	32	2	43

More than one third of checked sites with previous prosecutions (43 out of 120) have been found active again in 2018. That shows that the enforcement and court actions and penalties for persons prosecuted for bird trapping at sites with previous prosecutions were inadequate and have not deterred approximately one third of them from continuing trapping. Although new, higher penalties for trapping offences were introduced in 2017, many trappers continue to trap after they have been caught as trapping is highly profitable activity.

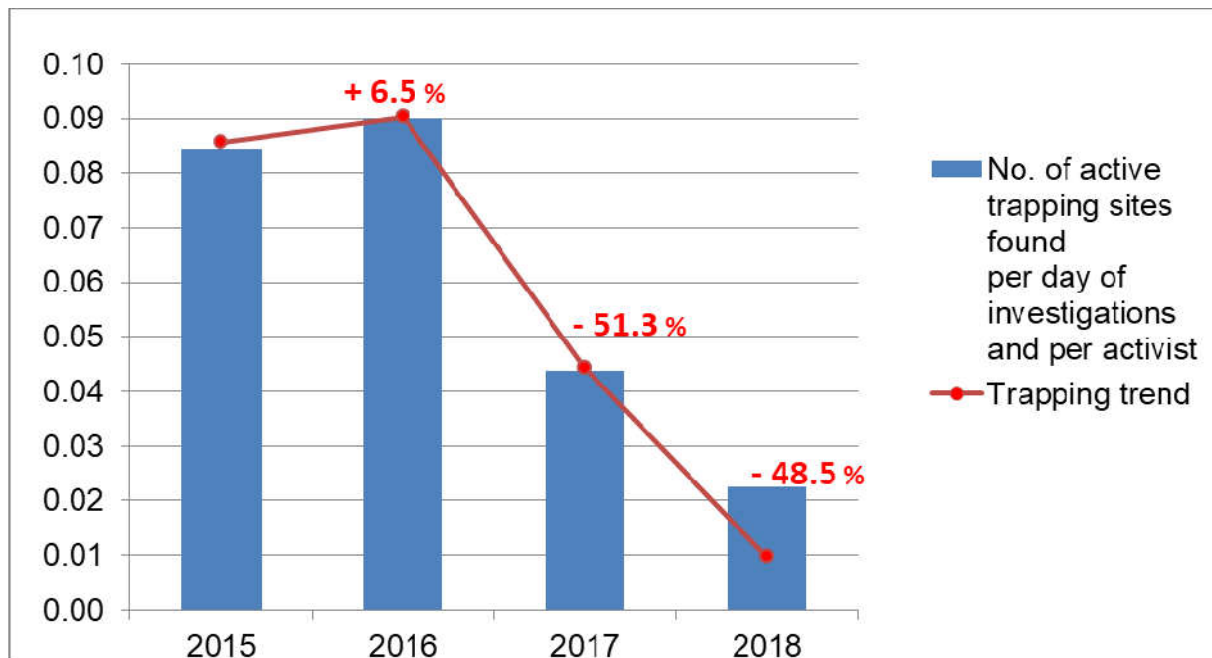
3.1.4 TRAPPING TREND IN SOUTH-EASTERN CYPRUS FOR THE PERIOD 2015-2018

To evaluate trapping trend in south-eastern Cyprus, we have compared results of trapping activity investigations, carried out during Bird Protection Camps in years 2015-2018. As the length of field investigations and number of activists participating at camps was different for each year in this period, number of active sites found per year cannot be compared directly to evaluate trapping trend. Instead of directly comparing number of active trapping sites, we have compared number of active trapping sites found per day of field investigations and per activist to calculate the trapping trend.

To present the trapping trend, number of active trapping sites, found per day of field investigations and per activist for each year is divided with number of active trapping sites, found per day of field investigations and per activist for previous year. The result of division, presented in percents, is the trapping trend (table 6, picture 3).

Table 6: Trapping trend in south-eastern Cyprus for the period 2015-2018, calculated from results of field investigations carried out at Bird Protection Camps

	2015	2016	2017	2018
Total duration of field investigations (days)	82	112	154	210
No. of CABS activists carrying out field investigations	43	51	70	56
No. of active sites found	298	514	472	265
No. of active trapping sites found per day of investigations and per activist	0,085	0,090	0,044	0,023
Trend		+ 6,5 %	- 51,3 %	- 48,5 %



Picture 3: Number of active trapping sites found per day of field investigations and trapping trend in south-eastern Cyprus for the period 2015-2018, calculated from results of field investigations, carried out at Bird Protection Camps

Trapping activity, detected at Bird Protection Camps in years 2015-2018, is decreasing since 2016. In 2017 we observed strong decline of trapping in south-eastern Cyprus with 51,3% less active trapping sites, found per day of field investigation and per activist, as in 2016. The trend continued in 2018 as we again observed strong decline of trapping in 2018 with 48,5 % less active trapping sites, found per day of field investigation and per activist, as in 2017.

3.1.3.1 TRAPPING TREND IN FAMAGUSTA AND LARNACA DISTRICTS

Table 7: Trapping trend in Famagusta and Larnaca Districts for the period 2015-2018, calculated from results of field investigations carried out at Bird Protection Camps

	2015	2016	2017	2018
Total duration of field investigations at Bird Protection Camps (days)	82	112	154	210
No. of CABS activists carrying out field investigations	43	51	70	56
No. of active trapping sites found	209	368	243	189

No. of active trapping sites found per day of investigations and per activist	0,059	0,064	0,023	0,016
Trapping trend		+ 6,7 %	- 65,0 %	- 28,7 %

Trapping trend for Famagusta and Larnaca Districts in the years 2015-2018 shows strong decline of trapping in year 2017 with 65,0 % less active trapping sites, found per day of field investigation and per activist, as in 2016. The decline in 2018 was smaller as in 2017 with 28,7 % less active trapping sites, found per day of field investigation and per activist, as in 2017.

3.1.3.2 TRAPPING TREND IN THE EASTERN SOVEREIGN BASE AREA ON CYPRUS

Table 8: Trapping trend in the British Sovereign Base Area on Cyprus for the period 2015-2018, calculated from results of field investigations carried out at Bird Protection Camps

	2015	2016	2017	2018
Total duration of field investigations at Bird Protection Camps (days)	82	112	154	210
No. of CABS activists carrying out field investigations	43	51	70	56
No. of active trapping sites found	89	146	226	72
No. of active trapping sites found per day of investigations and per activist	0,025	0,026	0,021	0,006
Trapping trend		+ 1,3 %	- 18,0 %	- 70,8 %

Trapping trend in the ESBA for years 2015-2018 shows sharp decline of trapping in year 2018 with 70,8 % less active trapping sites, found per day of field investigation and per activist, as in 2017.

3.2 SEIZED TRAPPING PARAPHERNALIA

At 164 out of 265 trapping sites, found to be active by CABS activists in south-eastern Cyprus in 2018, set traps were found during field investigations. In total, 266 mist nets, 3500 limesticks and 133 electronic callers were removed from them by enforcement

officers and CABS activists (table 9). At the remaining 101 sites, found to be active in 2018, the number of set traps was not possible to be determined for various reasons. Either we couldn't approach the sites because of safety reasons, electronic bird callers were playing from them but the traps were not set out at the time of investigation or only signs of recent trapping, like feathers on the ground, were detected.

Table 9: Characteristics of trapping sites found to be active by CABS activists in south-eastern Cyprus and trapping paraphernalia seized from them in 2018

No. of all active trapping sites found	265
No. of trapping sites with active electronic callers found	159
No. of trapping sites with set traps found	164
No. of trapping sites with set limesticks found	74
No. of trapping sites with set mist nets found	89
No. of trapping sites with set limesticks and set nets found	1
Average number of limesticks used per trapping site	33,4
Average number of nets used per trapping site	2,4
No. of limesticks seized	3500
No. of mist nets seized	266
No. of electronic callers seized	133

3.2.1 TRAPPING PARAPHERNALIA SEIZED FROM TRAPPING SITES, FOUND TO BE ACTIVE IN FAMAGUSTA AND LARNACA DISTRICTS

At 114 out of 189 trapping sites, found to be active by CABS activists in Famagusta and Larnaca Districts of Republic of Cyprus in 2018, set traps were found during field investigations. Altogether 3464 limesticks, 106 mist nets and 83 electronic callers were seized from them (table 10).

Table 10: Characteristics of trapping sites found to be active by CABS activists in Famagusta and Larnaca Districts and trapping paraphernalia seized from them in 2018

No. of all active trapping sites found	189
No. of trapping sites with set traps found	114
No. of trapping sites with set limesticks found	72
No. of trapping sites with set mist nets found	41

No. of trapping sites with set limesticks and set nets found	1
No. of trapping sites with electronic callers used on them	93
No. of limesticks seized	3464
No. of mist nets seized	106
No. of electronic callers seized	83

Like also observed in previous years, trapping in Famagusta and Larnaca Districts in 2018 was mostly done with use of limesticks, traditional method of trapping in Cyprus. Limesticks were used at 63,2%, nets were used at 36,0% while both nets and limesticks were used at 0,8% of trapping sites at which set traps were found during bird protection camps in 2018.

3.2.2 TRAPPING PARAPHERNALIA SEIZED FROM TRAPPING SITES, FOUND TO BE ACTIVE IN THE BRITISH SOVEREIGN BASE AREA

At 49 out of 72 trapping sites, found to be active by CABS activists in the ESBA in 2018, set traps were found during field investigations. At all almost all sites, 47 out of 49, nets were used for trapping (table 11).

Table 11: Characteristics of trapping sites found to be active by CABS activists in the ESBA and trapping paraphernalia seized from them in 2018

No. of all active trapping sites found	72
No. of trapping sites with set traps found	49
No. of trapping sites with set limesticks found	2
No. of trapping sites with set mist nets found	47
No. of trapping sites with set limesticks and set nets found	0
No. of trapping sites with electronic callers used on them	64
No. of limesticks seized	36
No. of mist nets seized	160
No. of electronic callers seized	50

Similar as we observed in previous years, trapping in the ESBA was done almost exclusively with nets and electronic callers in 2018. Such trapping allows huge catch

rates and consequently big profits on the black market. It can only be described as industrial or professional trapping and has nothing in common with traditional methods of trapping used in past in Cyprus.

3.3 RESULTS OF COOPERATION WITH ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

During Bird Protection Camps in Cyprus, carried out in 2018, CABS activists closely cooperated with enforcement agencies, responsible to tackle illegal bird killings in the Republic of Cyprus: Game and Fauna Service (GFS) and Cyprus Police and with the enforcement agency operating in the British Eastern Sovereign Base Area: Sovereign Base Area (SBA) Police.

In total we reported 351 cases of bird trapping to the enforcement officers and 247 of reported cases were investigated by them. 28 investigations ended with catching and prosecuting individuals involved in illegal bird trapping (table 12). Prosecutions for trapping were made only at 8 % of all cases, reported by CABS activists, while at the remaining 92 % of reported cases, trappers got away unpunished.

Table 12: Results of cooperation between CABS activists and enforcement agencies during Bird Protection Camps in Cyprus in 2018 (APS- Anti Poaching Squad, SBA- Sovereign Base Area)

	Game and Fauna Service	Cyprus Police APS	Cyprus Police regular units	SBA Police	All
No. of active tr. sites reported by CABS activists	134	29	13	175	351
No. of active trapping sites investigated by officers	86	19	7	135	247
Percentage of investigated sites	64,2	65,5	53,8	77,1	70,4
No. of sites with prosecution of trappers	11	5	1	11	28
No. of sites with confiscation of trapping paraphernalia only	62	7	4	95	168

No. of sites where nothing was found by enforcement officers	13	5	2	28	48
Seized trapping paraphernalia					
Limesticks	1722	138	74	1450	3384
Mist nets	37	22	9	161	229
Electronic callers	35	9	4	73	121

3.3.1 RESULTS OF COOPERATION WITH GAME AND FAUNA SERVICE

In total we have reported 134 cases of bird trapping to the Game and Fauna Service officers (game wardens) and 86 cases were investigated by them. 11 investigations ended with catching and prosecuting individuals involved in illegal bird trapping (table 13).

Table 13: Results of cooperation between CABS activists and Game and Fauna Service officers during Bird Protection Camps in Cyprus in 2018

Bird Protection Camp	January, February 2018	Spring 2018	Autumn 2018	December 2018	Year 2018
No. of active tr. sites reported by CABS activists	14	14	92	14	134
No. of active trapping sites investigated by officers	13	9	62	2	86
Percentage of investigated sites	92,9	64,3	67,4	14,3	64,2
No. of sites with prosecution of trappers	2	3	6	0	11
No. of sites with confiscation of trapping paraphernalia only	8	6	46	2	62
No. of sites where nothing was found by enforcement officers	3	0	10	0	13
Seized trapping paraphernalia					
Limesticks	211	232	1279	0	1722
Mist nets	14	1	18	4	37

Electronic callers	4	1	29	1	35
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Picture 4: CABS activist and game warden removing limesticks from trapping site, found active during Autumn 2018 Bird Protection Camp (Photo: CABS)

Game and Fauna Service is the main authority which tackles bird trapping in Republic of Cyprus. In 2018, the majority of the trapping sites, found to be active by CABS activists in the Republic of Cyprus, were reported to them.

Unfortunately game wardens were often not available to investigate the cases of bird trapping CABS activists have reported to them. Lack of support from game wardens was especially evident during the two main trapping seasons in 2018: the autumn and winter trapping season, as game wardens were unable to investigate 42 cases of bird trapping, reported by CABS activists in that period.

According to the information, received from Game and Fauna Service officials, one of the main reasons for unavailability of game wardens in autumn and winter 2018 were the other duties they had to attend at that time: especially the feeding and caring for game birds in autumn and investigations of illegal hare killings in December.

3.3.2 RESULTS OF COOPERATION WITH CYPRUS POLICE

In total CABS activists reported 42 cases of bird trapping to the Cyprus Police officers in 2018 and 26 cases were investigated by them. 6 investigations ended with catching and prosecuting individuals involved in illegal bird trapping (table 14).

Table 14: Results of cooperation between CABS activists and Cyprus Police officers during Bird Protection Camps in Cyprus in 2018

Bird Protection Camp	January, February 2018	Spring 2018	Autumn 2018	December 2018	Year 2018
No. of active tr. sites reported by CABS activists	7	2	20	13	42
No. of active trapping sites investigated by officers	6	1	13	6	26
Percentage of investigated sites	85,7	50,0	65,0	46,2	61,9
No. of sites with prosecution of trappers	0	1	4	1	6
No. of sites with confiscation of trapping paraphernalia only	6	0	2	3	11
No. of sites where nothing was found by enforcement officers	0	0	5	2	7
Seized trapping paraphernalia					
Limesticks	0	41	173	0	214
Mist nets	10	0	11	10	31
Electronic callers	6	0	3	4	13

3.3.3 RESULTS OF COOPERATION WITH SBA POLICE

In total CABS activists reported 91 cases of bird trapping to the SBA Police officers and 87 cases were investigated by them. Five investigations ended with catching and prosecuting individuals involved in illegal bird trapping (table 15).

Table 15: Results of cooperation between CABS activists and SBA Police officers during Bird Protection Camps in Cyprus in 2018

Bird Protection Camp	January, February 2018	Spring 2018	Autumn 2018	December 2018	Year 2018
No. of active tr. sites reported by CABS activists	42	5	28	16	91
No. of active trapping sites investigated by officers	39	5	27	16	87
Percentage of investigated sites	92,9	100,0	96,4	100,0	95,6
No. of sites with prosecution of trappers	0	0	4	1	5
No. of sites with confiscation of trapping paraphernalia only	29	4	5	14	52
No. of sites where nothing was found by enforcement officers	10	1	18	2	31
Seized trapping paraphernalia					
Limesticks	0	0	36	0	36
Mist nets	88	9	13	35	145
Electronic callers	24	3	4	14	45

SBA Police stands out among the enforcement agencies with very high percentage of investigations for cases reported by CABS activists. 87 out of 91 cases reported by CABS activists were investigated by SBA Police in year 2018.

On the other side, the percentage of cases ending with prosecution of trappers is the lowest among the enforcement agencies. Only 5,5 % of all cases, reported by CABS

activists, ended with prosecution of individuals responsible for trapping, while at the remaining 94,5 % of reported cases, trappers got away unpunished.

3.4 TRAPPED BIRDS

3.4.1 RESCUED BIRDS AND BIRDS, FOUND DEAD IN THE TRAPS

In total, 1377 wild birds belonging to 31 different species were rescued from traps and further 129 wild birds were found dead in traps during Bird Protections Camps in year 2018 (table 16).

Table 16: Rescued birds and birds, found dead in the traps, found during Bird Protection Camps in Cyprus in 2018

		No. of birds rescued from traps	No. of birds found dead in traps
1	Song thrush (<i>Turdus philomelos</i>)	591	33
2	Blackcap (<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>)	411	71
3	Robin (<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>)	16	
4	Blackbird (<i>Turdus merula</i>)	14	
5	Black redstart (<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>)	10	
6	Red-backed shrike (<i>Lanius collurio</i>)	6	
7	Reed warbler (<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>)	6	
8	Chiffchaff (<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>)	6	1
9	Lesser whitethroat (<i>Sylvia curruca</i>)	6	1
10	Willow warbler (<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>)	5	1
11	House sparrow (<i>Passer domesticus</i>)	5	2
12	Cyprus warbler (<i>Sylvia melanothorax</i>)	4	
13	Sardinian warbler (<i>Sylvia melanocephala</i>)	4	
14	Chaffinch (<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>)	4	6
15	Masked shrike (<i>Lanius nubicus</i>)	2	1
16	Spanish sparrow (<i>Passer hispaniolensis</i>)	2	2
17	Stonechat (<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>)	2	
18	Wryneck (<i>Jynx torquilla</i>)	2	
19	Common redstart (<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>)	2	1

20	Spectacled warbler (<i>Sylvia conspicillata</i>)	2	
21	Starling (<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>)	2	
22	Eastern bonelli warbler (<i>Phylloscopus orientalis</i>)	2	
23	Common Nightingale (<i>Luscinia megarhynchos</i>)	1	
24	Greenfinch (<i>Chloris chloris</i>)	1	
25	Great tit (<i>Parus major</i>)	1	1
26	Collared dove (<i>Streptopelia decaocta</i>)	1	
27	Hoopoe (<i>Upupa epops</i>)	1	
28	Great reed warbler (<i>Acrocephalus arundinaceus</i>)	1	
29	Sedge warbler (<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>)	1	
30	Golden oriole (<i>Oriolus oriolus</i>)	1	
31	Meadow pipit (<i>Anthus pratensis</i>)		2
	Unidentified	265	7
	Total	1377	129



Picture 5: Willow warbler rescued from limestick during Autumn 2018 Bird Protection Camp (Photo: CABS)

3.4.2 ESTIMATED NUMBER OF BIRDS RESCUED WITH ANTI-TRAPPING ACTIONS

Beside birds, rescued from traps, also other anti-trapping actions made by CABS activists and enforcement officers on trapping sites, found to be active during Bird Protection Camps in 2018, indirectly rescued birds from getting trapped and killed. Removing set traps and other trapping paraphernalia and catching and prosecuting people involved in trapping, are among such actions. As these actions interrupted or even completely stopped trapping activity on these sites, birds that would otherwise get trapped and killed on these sites, were rescued.

Considering results of field investigations (columns A,B,C,D,E,F and G in table 17), considering the estimated number of days, trapping activity was shortened on trapping sites, found to be active because of anti-trapping actions (column H) and considering the estimated average number of birds killed with 1 limestick and 1 net per day in autumn season (columns I and J), we estimate that approximately 100 000 birds were saved from trapping sites, found to be active in south-eastern Cyprus in 2018 with anti-trapping actions made on these sites.

Table 17: Characteristics of trapping sites, found to be active by CABS activists in south-eastern Cyprus in 2018 and estimated total number of birds saved on them with anti-trapping actions

	Bird Protection Camp	January, February 2018	Spring 2018	Autumn 2018	December 2018	Total 2018
A	No. of active sites found	58	29	141	39	267
B	No. of active trapping sites with limesticks used on them	11	26	67	8	112
C	No. of active trapping sites with mist nets used on them	47	3	64	31	145
D	Average number of limesticks used per trapping site	35,7	24,3	35,9	26,5	
E	Average number of mist nets used per trapping site	2,7	2,2	1,8	2,7	

F	Total number of limesticks used on all active sites (F=B*D)	392	631	2622	212	3858
G	Total number of nets used on active sites (G=C*E)	125	7	125	83	340
H	Estimated number of days trapping activity was shortened because of anti-trapping actions made on active sites	10	10	20	10	
I	Estimated number of birds killed per limestick per day	0,25	0,25	0,5	0,25	
J	Estimated number of birds killed per mist net per day	10	10	20	10	
K	Estimated no. of birds rescued on active trapping sites with anti-trapping actions (K = F*H*I+G*H*J)	13483	2229	76270	8869	100851

3.4.3 ESTIMATED NUMBER OF BIRDS KILLED ON TRAPPING SITES, FOUND TO BE ACTIVE

Even if anti-trapping actions interrupted or completely stopped trapping activity on trapping sites, found to be active by CABS activists, these sites were active before the actions were made and many continued to be active also after the anti-trapping actions were made on them. As a result, many birds were trapped and killed on them despite our effort to prevent the killings.

Considering results of field investigations (columns A,B in table 18), considering the estimated number of days trapping sites were active per trapping season (column C) and considering estimated average number of birds killed with 1 limestick and 1 net per day in autumn season (columns D and E), we estimate that approximately 100 000 birds were trapped and killed on trapping sites, found to be active in south-eastern Cyprus in 2018.

Table 18: Characteristics of trapping sites, found to be active by CABS activists in south-eastern Cyprus in 2018 and estimated total number of trapped and killed birds on them

	Bird Protection Camp	January, February 2018	Spring 2018	Autumn 2018	December 2018	Total 2018
A	Total number of limesticks used on all active sites	392	631	2622	212	3858
B	Total number of nets used on active sites	125	7	125	83	340
C	Estimated duration of trapping activity on active sites (days)	10	10	20	10	
D	Estimated number of birds killed per limestick per day	0,25	0,25	0,5	0,25	
E	Estimated number of birds killed per mist net per day	10	10	20	10	
F	Estimated no. of trapped birds on active trapping sites ($K = F \cdot H \cdot I + G \cdot H \cdot J$)	13483	2229	76270	8869	100851

4 CONCLUSIONS

Number of trapping sites, found to be active in south-eastern Cyprus in 2018, was the lowest in the period 2015-2018. For the second year in a row, CABS activists observed strong decline trapping activity in south-eastern Cyprus. In 2017 51,3 % less active trapping sites were found per day of field investigation and per activist, as they were found in 2016. The trend continued in 2018 as we again observed strong decline of trapping in 2018 with 48,5 % less active trapping sites found per day of field investigation and per activist in comparison with 2017.

The greatest improvement was observed on the British territory on Cyprus, the ESBA, where in 2018 over 70 percent less active trapping sites were found per day of field investigations and per activist in comparison with 2017. SBA Police chiefs and officers responsible to tackle bird trapping continued in 2018 with resolute actions, first shown in 2017, to stop bird trapping in the ESBA. This is evident also from the response of SBA

Police officers as they investigated almost all cases of bird trapping reported by CABS activists in 2018. The change is greatly welcomed as the ESBA was the most notorious trapping area in the whole Mediterranean only a few years ago. In 2016 CABS activists located more than 50 active trapping sites in the ESBA in a single night by hearing loud electronic callers calling from them. In 2018 we have found 72 active trapping locations in the ESBA in the whole year.

Huge progress was made in the ESBA but still a lot has to be done. Many of the trapping sites, found to be active in 2018, belong to organised groups of trappers, trapping professionally and catching hundreds of birds per day by using many large nets and loud electronic callers.

Also in the Republic of Cyprus we observed decrease of trapping in 2018 as 28,7 % less active trapping sites was found per day of field investigations and per activist in 2018 in comparison with 2017.

The decrease of trapping activity observed in the Republic in 2018 is not as strong as it is in the ESBA. Smaller decrease can be explained with the lack of availability of enforcement officers to investigate and act against bird trapping in the Republic of Cyprus. In 2018 CABS activists reported 176 cases of bird trapping to the enforcement agencies responsible to tackle bird trapping in the Republic and only 112 reported cases were investigated by the officers. The remaining cases were not investigated because the officers were either far away or they were not working at the time when we found active trapping sites. Often there was not a single officer available to investigate trapping sites, found active by our teams. This was especially true for December 2018 when we got the enforcement support just for 8 out of 27 reported cases in that month.

Field investigations and actions against trapping, made by CABS activists in south-eastern Cyprus in 2018, have saved many birds migrating over Cyprus. 1377 birds were directly saved. They were found entangled in the traps and were freed by CABS activists and enforcement officers. Beside them, estimated 100 000 birds were saved because of the anti-trapping actions, that were made on the trapping sites, found to be active. Sadly, many birds were trapped and killed in Cyprus in 2018; we estimate that around 100 000 were killed on trapping sites, found to be active by CABS activists in 2018. Many more birds were trapped and killed also in other parts of Cyprus.

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