



Dear friends,

Greetings to you all from Lebanon on a glorious autumn day. We are back together again after a long summer of travels by various team members. The program ahead for the autumn is a busy one, with the bird migration to monitor, the ringing program to continue, and educational visits to organize and lead. We look forward to keeping you informed of it all in due course. In the meantime, here is our latest news.

New Important Bird Areas in Lebanon



Helen in Ramlieh

Earlier this year A Rocha Lebanon, in partnership with SPNL (the Society for the Protection of Nature in Lebanon) completed a three year project to find new areas in Lebanon that should be designated as Important Bird Areas (IBAs). The results of the surveys were assessed against the criteria set by BirdLife International and the best sites were submitted to BirdLife, who have to make the final decisions on their designation. Before 2005 there were only four IBAs in Lebanon. This has now been increased to 14. The ten new sites,

out of 31 surveyed thoroughly during the three years of the project, are scattered all over the country and include wetland, woodland, high mountain and desert habitats.

In the final year three new IBAs were designated. These were "the Upper Mountains of Akkar-Donnieh" in the north (comprising four sites which were surveyed by the staff of SPNL), "Bentael Reserved Area" near Jbail and Ramlieh Valley in the Chouf. Ramlieh and Bentael are most important for the soaring birds which migrate over them in Spring and Fall, while Akkar-Donnieh is home to a large population of Syrian Serins. It also has many other interesting breeding species and good numbers of soaring birds on migration.



White Storks migrating

A Rocha website in ARABIC:

Starting from today and after lots of hard work, you can now read A Rocha's web pages in Arabic. Just go to www.arochoa.org and choose Arabic as the language from the top.

Thanks for reading to the end. Don't forget to visit our website: www.arochoa.org

Best wishes, The A Rocha Lebanon Team lebanon@arochoa.org

A Rocha Lebanon newsletters are available in 2 languages!!!

If you are reading this newsletter in English but would prefer to have it in Arabic, email us and we will send you your preferred version.



A ROCHA

Together, caring for God's creation

Aana Village Summer Activities

This summer turned out to be a peaceful one, thanks be to God. This created opportunities for A Rocha Lebanon to partner with the Aana village Church and do some environmental activities for the local children. During the week of activities, there were approximately 35-45 children present on a daily basis, ranging from ages 8 to 13 years. The children were attending a summer camp led by their local priest Father Albert Skaff. Father Albert is keen on environmental awareness and really concerned about Lebanon's future. He is very enthusiastic about including environmental content in the children's curriculum and requested our help in order to maximize their experience. The activities included mountain hiking, a field trip to nature reserves including Arz El Chouf, spiritual/environmental church activities, a tour of the Ammiq Wetland and finally a painting competition.



During the tour, the children had the chance to experience the wetland first-hand as they were taught about conservation, environmental awareness and the biodiversity of their precious local area. Afterwards, they watched an interactive PowerPoint presentation in the church and then headed to the church hall to start the painting competition. The children happily applied what they experienced to

paper, and before we knew it, wonderful creations were appearing on every table! When the paintings were completed, the children had a chance to vote for the paintings themselves. After this, a small team of judges chose 1 painting from each age group and awarded prizes to the winners. Out of the 5 winning paintings, 2 were chosen to represent Lebanon at the RAMSAR children's picture exhibition at Changwon 2008 in South Korea. The theme of this year's exhibition is "Healthy wetlands, healthy people".



A Rocha Lebanon and the Bible Society

Have you seen this anywhere in Beirut streets??? The *Neglect Ruins Creation* poster is an outcome of our work with the Bible Society of Lebanon, to read more please go to:



Thanks for reading to the end. Don't forget to visit our website: www.arocha.org

Best wishes, The A Rocha Lebanon Team lebanon@arocha.org

A Rocha Lebanon newsletters are available in 2 languages!!!

If you are reading this newsletter in English but would prefer to have it in Arabic, email us and we will send you your preferred version.



A ROCHA

Together, caring for God's creation