

<b>Date:</b>	Mon, 03 Dec 2007 14:16:37 +0100
<b>From:</b>	"Dr. Andre Raine"
<b>To:</b>	ktes2008@yahoo.com
<b>Subject:</b>	Birds of prey: Malta

1. **What is your name?** Dr Andre Raine
2. **If you have a job title, what is it?** Conservation Manager, BirdLife Malta
3. **What is the name of your organization and country?** BirdLife Malta, Malta
4. **Based on numbers, what would you say are the top 5 raptors in your area?** It depends on the time of the year, but for example the top 5 migratory raptors in autumn are Honey-Buzzard, Marsh Harrier, Common Kestrel, Lesser Kestrel and Eurasian Hobby.
5. **Are there any endangered raptors in your area? If so, which ones are they and why are they endangered?** Raptors in Malta are unfortunately the target of widespread illegal persecution from hunters. This is the main reason why species such as Peregrine Falcon, Common Kestrel and Barn Owl no longer breed on the island - breeding pairs were eventually all wiped out by poachers. The same is true of our migratory raptors, which are often the target of illegal hunters as they pass over Malta in spring and autumn. Rare and endangered species that are found in Malta during migration include Pallid Harrier, Short-toed Eagle, Lesser-spotted Eagle, Peregrine Falcon, Lesser Kestrel and Eleanora's Falcon.
6. **Are there any programs in your area that help to protect raptors? If yes, briefly tell us what they are.** BirdLife Malta runs a Raptor Camp in spring and autumn to collect data on migratory raptors and to help protect them against illegal hunting. The camp is run in co-operation with the local wildlife crime unit of the police, the ALE. For information on our Raptor Camp, and to see the report from our most recent camp, check out the following link :  
[http://www.birdlifemalta.org/conservation/other\\_projects/raptor\\_camp/](http://www.birdlifemalta.org/conservation/other_projects/raptor_camp/)
7. **Is your organization funded by the government or private donations? If neither, from what source is funding received?** We are a non-profit conservation organisation that receives funding through membership fees and external funders such as the RSPB and the European Union LIFE projects.
8. **Does your government recognize the importance of maintaining/improving the status of birds of prey? If so, in what way do they support it?** Recently the government appears to have started to recognise the importance of protecting birds of prey (and other protected species) from widespread illegal hunting, but the police unit responsible for dealing with wildlife crime (the

ALE) is still very under-resourced and under-staffed. Much more needs to be done on behalf of the government if the threats to birds of prey are to be properly brought under control.

9. Do you have programs to educate the public? If yes, what kinds or please give examples. We have a very successful education programme in local schools called Dinja Wahda. This programme aims to provide environmental education to children to help them appreciate the environment they live in. For more info on this programme, check out the following link : [http://www.birdlifemalta.org/teachers/dinja\\_wahda/](http://www.birdlifemalta.org/teachers/dinja_wahda/)

10. Is there anything else that you would like to share or comment on about raptors in your area? Malta is on one of the main European-African migratory flyways for birds of prey in the Mediterranean. As such, it plays a vital role in providing these birds with an area to rest overnight and to restore lost energy reserves during their lengthy migrations. The illegal hunting of these species is an international problem and not just one limited to Malta. For example, birds of prey shot in Malta are known through band recoveries to come from countries throughout Europe including Germany, Sweden, Finland, Estonia, Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic, France, Italy and the United Kingdom. Therefore illegal hunting here directly impacts on breeding populations throughout Europe. If illegal hunting were to stop in Malta, not only would these European migrants have a safe passage over Malta, but species like the Peregrine Falcon and Common Kestrel may once again grace our island as breeding species.

11. May we have permission to print this email interview on our website? YES.