

WORDS ARE SO INADEQUATE

I am writing this just two days after the terrible events in America and it is so hard to find the right words to describe what we all feel. The mood is sombre and it feels that nothing else can have any real significance at the present time.

Nevertheless, this copy of the English Digest of the Ali Notizie aims to keep you informed of the successes and challenges being achieved and faced by LIPU in Italy.

As LIPU has matured it has followed a similar path, in some ways, to that of our national organisation, the RSPB, and inevitably that involves politics. You will read of the entirely peaceful attendance of a LIPU delegation at Genoa, the venue of the G8 summit, which was wrecked by the violent minority.

Political involvement is a practical necessity these days for any group wishing to see reform and we wish LIPU well in this field. However, this work has to be done by our friends in Italy and LIPU-UK will continue to do what we have always done - campaign in support of projects directly involved in protection and conservation of birds.

I shall be meeting Nino Martino and other members of the management team in November to discuss just those projects and will be able to describe the projects we have agreed to support in the first newsletter of next year.



FROM THE PRESIDENT OF LIPU

Danilo Mainardi

WE HAVE AN APPOINTMENT

1st and 2nd December

On the 1st and 2nd of December we will have stalls in many town squares distributing panettoni and pandori cakes, as a small gesture of our commitment to help nature. At one of the stalls in Rome you can meet our director Nino Martino, while I will be behind a stall in Milan. It would be nice to meet you.

Members can also order panettoni and pandori by post. There are several novel features in "operation panettoni". We decided in addition to our classical panettoni to include that excellent Christmas cake, pandoro. We have changed the wrapping to something ecologically friendly, recycled and recyclable paper and the design is so attractive that our panettoni and pandori would make excellent Christmas presents.

Funds collected will go towards a new project that is connected with globalisation: the creation of an observatory of biodiversity, in Italy. This LIPU organisation will involve experts and voluntary activists who will monitor and also publicise the state of our environment. It will be an ever present, open eye on our Natural History - a vigil against abuses and law breaking, as well as laws and policies that cannot be supported. There will be sections on parks and protected areas, fauna and animal welfare, habitat, agriculture, environmental policies and environmental information. It will collate and publicise our work.

"Operation panettoni" will give rise to good ideas and important projects, which more and more, are

going to put LIPU in the spotlight, for its commitment to environmental well-being.

It will be just great for us to meet up in so many Italian piazzas and exchange Christmas greetings.

WHY WE WERE AT GENOA

LIPU is committed by its constitution and as a matter of public duty, to a more equal and more united world

by Nino Martino



There is no one better suited than an environmentalist to grasp the value of global commitment. After all, birds migrate from the east to the west and from the south to the north. We have only one Earth, we know it, we speak out for it and

we struggle because not everyone, whether they be the rich, the poor, the powerful or the young of Mankind, appears to be aware of it.

This is the thing we have in common, men and women, of whatever profession or religion, believe in LIPU because it defends the complexity of life, of which birds are very important ecological indicators, as well as being powerful cultural symbols.

The environmentalist movement was born in Italy, as it was elsewhere in the world, to protect these values and to stand up for the right of all species and beings to a life worth living, in which everyone and everything is important. Tiny insects, butterflies and anemones, crabs and eagles, rocks and whales, men and women, all have their place in that fascinating web which is Life.

It is this life which we now defend every day, which is the mission of LIPU; caring daily for injured birds, protecting threatened habitats, attempting to construct a small piece of a better world. For these reasons we have joined in the

cultural debate and the popular movement springing up around the themes thrown up by globalisation.

Is globalisation a bad thing? Overall, the answer is no. As with all human endeavours, it can be as good as it can be bad. An ethical world should have no fear of globalisation. A world governed by the wise, not open to the influence of purely economic power remains, however, a dream. In the world of today, things are not like that.

Do we want to carry on living in a world governed only by force and economic interest? LIPU is committed by its constitution and as a matter of public duty, to a fairer, more united world. This is why, together with the Lilliput network of organisations, we went to Genoa to sing and dance with banners and balloons and with our proposals, all of which fall well within the bounds set by traditional western cultural values. Above all we went in solidarity with all people and to point out that "another world is possible".

There were lots of us there, happy and peaceful. Then, everything happened. It really was a traumatic experience, perhaps being near violent people who stood for nothing other than violence, perhaps by witnessing some unpleasant episodes in which the forces of order played an active part.

Were we right to have taken part? I think so. It is not possible to give up on our own ideas just because of the violence of a few. Many historical figures have taught that bearing witness as individuals, without violence but with determination, is a terrible necessity. This is why we were at Genoa and this is why we should return to Genoa. The value of the evidence for the protection of the cleanliness of the air and of the water around us, for the safety of the birds and of the parks, for that of the whales and of our children, for the southern hemisphere, is integral to our strength, to our courage and to our ideals. We would like to suggest the same in all humility to those who value nothing but violence and so fill the emptiness of their hearts.

THINK GLOBAL

by Danilo Selvaggi

LIPU belongs to a global conglomerate.

What is a principle? It is a primary consideration which should guide our actions, direct our programmes, and by reference to which our actions and projects are formed. But how many principles, relevant to the environment, to nature, to sustainable development, have been firmly established up till now? How many statements of principle? How many laws? Actually, a great number, right from when the international community got together in Stockholm, to tell the world officially that the environment has a problem, and that that problem is serious. That was in 1972, at the beginning of a season that was to become the rebirth of the "official" environmentalist movement.

Since that time the state of the natural environment has been debated: in Rachel Carson's "Silent Spring", in the writings of Aldo Leopold, the first serious thinkers about the environment, scientific ecologists. But since 1972 something different has come into being: the world community has made the gravity of the situation official, through its official institutions. So a new hope has appeared on the horizon.

The "Global" Problem.

The recent, dramatic events in Genoa have unfortunately pushed out of the forefront the implications of a subject (that of globalisation) which is closely tied to questions about the environment: the ratification of the Kyoto protocol and other agreements, the guidelines to reducing damage to the world around us, the defence of the earth and its biodiversity, and the clear run given to the multinationals. The agreed principle, in the accords that have been launched on "globalisation" is very

simple: commerce comes first. To give priority to commerce means to promote development and therefore the well-being of society and nature.

However, reality says otherwise: new speculations are violating the world, new risks menace the earth, the air, its resources, its biodiversity. Examples are innumerable and unpredictable.

A better world.

All the same, in some ways globalisation has a great merit: it makes us recognise that the world is a single, varied yet unified, disjointed yet organic, whole. So globalisation is the direction that progress must take, and is already extensively taking.

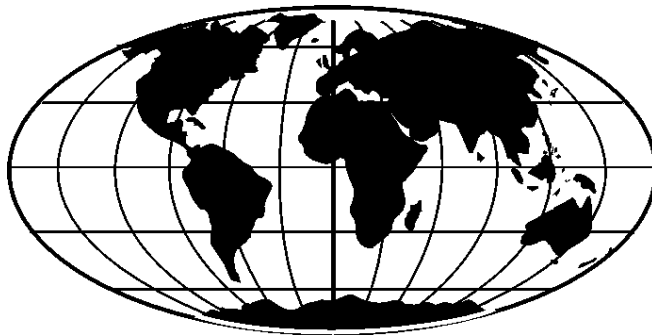
The globalisation of human rights, of the management of resources, of respect for the environment. And that is what the associations of the whole world seek: to correct an attitude which today puts commerce before everything else, including health, the environment, human rights and social

justice. And that is what LIPU seeks, with its proposals for a better world: respect for international conventions on the environment, ratification and improvement of agreements on the climate, a sensible and just approach to agriculture, caution in the application of biotechnology, the cancellation of third-world debt. It is this, moreover, that LIPU seeks to achieve by its own actions: to defend nature and support the network of life, biological and cultural diversity.

That is the direction therefore of LIPU's investment in a new project, the creation of an Observatory of Biodiversity in Italy, which will study and manage the state of health of the environment.

Think Global

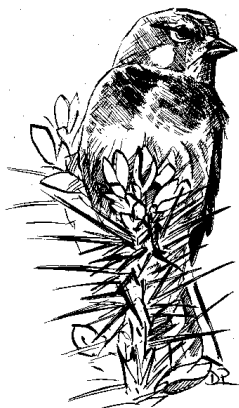
To think globally, however, means to study and interpret the problems for what they are; situations



totally interrelated, complex, connected. Already we know that it is impossible to protect the environment without paying attention to other issues. Nature is a network that ties animals to their territory, to water-sources, to the economy, to resources, to society. And so we must conserve all to conserve any one part. It is a difficult task that awaits us.

The grand goal we are all aiming for, therefore, is a complex one; that of good globalisation, of thorough ecological understanding and of integration: when ornithologists will really talk with economists, journalists with biologists, scientists with artists and the North of this world with the South, then we shall indeed have taken a decisive step. We shall have established the most important principle of all: that the web of life is there for everything; that we are all knots in that web, and lucky to be so.

I shall end as I began, with a principle, clause 25 of the Rio Declaration: Peace, progress and the protection of the environment are interdependent and indivisible."



A MANIFESTO FOR A BETTER WORLD.

Here are some salient passages from the manifesto "LIPU for a better world" that was approved by the National Council of LIPU.

We are committed to the protection, locally and globally, of biodiversity, of ecosystems, of birds, of animals and plants in their kinds; to the choice

of modes of life that are sustainable and respectful of others; to the winning over of each new generation and the whole of society to an ecologically sympathetic way of thinking, to the understanding that nature is our home, the home we all share, and culture is the way to live in it worthily. This is the past, present and future pledge of LIPU.

We are conscious, in line with each principle of the Convention on Biodiversity, that biodiversity is itself of great value as well as being the source of a subsequent and irreducible plurality of values. To destroy biodiversity means to destroy the world.

We are also conscious of the crisis, which, at both local and global levels, attacks biodiversity. This crisis, destined to deepen, makes necessary a serious commitment, collective and immediate. Citizens, governments, institutions, associations, public and private bodies, and the media, must act, each according to its own means and ability, to this end.

We consider that current global movements, the invasive use of genetically modified organisms, intensive and chemical agriculture, the failure to ratify accords on climate, are mistaken movements, unjust and destructive of globalisation, and which exacerbate our planet's crisis, and risk making it irreversible.

We have therefore decided to make our pledge to work for a better world, for a different globalisation, that of nature, of culture, of justice, in the profound conviction that a better world is indispensable, proper and possible.

SHOOT FIRST

With the reopening of the hunting season, the serious damage to our wild birds is renewed.

by *Marco Gustin*

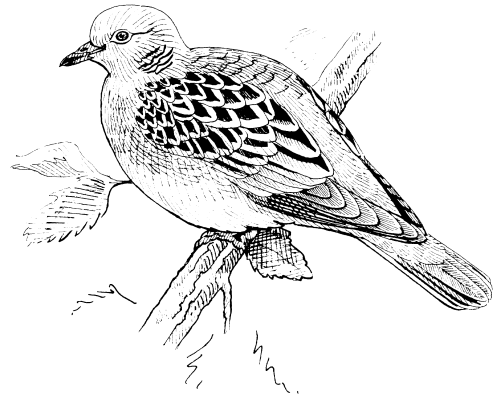
According to the law 157/92, concerning hunting activities, the hunting season begins on the third Sunday in September. However, due to a typical Italian loophole, many regions can alter certain

criteria. In this way, a sort of 'pre-opening' has become legalised, that allows the destruction of wild birds and animals in the most sensitive period of the year for the survival of the young.

Most of the animal population is characterised by a peak in their population, normally immediately following reproduction, when total numbers increase due to the presence of the young. This is also the period of greatest mortality amongst the young and it is on this that we should concentrate our efforts. But there is a problem. For many huntable species, like the Turtle Dove, Quail, Blackbird and Skylark, it is impossible quickly to recognise the young from the adults. If the effect of hunting were to be as great as this on the adults the population would suffer a severe drop.



The number of huntable species in this 'pre-opening' period ranges from 15-35 (43% of the total). Checking the regional hunting calendar 2000-2001, it can be seen that 65% of the total area of Italy allows the 'pre-opening' hunting period for a varied number of species, from 1 in Sardinia to 20 in Molise. For 7 regions the official opening of hunting activities even actually coincides with the date of this pre-opening. It is usually the first Saturday or Sunday in September, anticipating by a good 3 weeks, the national date. Amongst the species hunted in this period, are some of the species in European decline, such as the Turtle Dove, Quail and Garganey.



LIPU delegates are doing as much as possible to improve this situation, particularly in those regions with the largest number of days that species can be hunted before the official opening. These range from 4 days before the opening and 18 species that can be hunted in Le Marche, to Molise with 8 days and 20 species and Umbria with 3 days and 10 species.

PETITION

The petition is continuing, aimed at saving 11 bird species that are in serious decline and are still hunted. 10,000 signatures have already been collected.

Protest petitions can also be sent by e-mail by accessing the LIPU web site at www.lipu.it.

The collection of signatures will continue until 31 December 2001, with the aim of presenting our requests to the Ministry of the Environment on 30 January 2002, the day the hunting season closes.

There is a lot to do, as the more signatures that are collected, the stronger we will be in January to defend Skylarks, Pintail, Garganey, Gadwall, Rock Partridge, Barbary Partridge, Quail, Jack Snipe, Woodcock and Turtle Dove.

A WORLD WITHOUT TOADS

Many species of amphibian are in decline, a disturbing sign for the health of the whole planet.

by Marco Gustin

Considerable alarm is spreading among scientists and reporters: amphibians are disappearing.

Serious journals like Nature or the annual report of the World Watch Institute (which takes a

reckoning on the health of the planet each year) draw attention to the decline of these animals, a loss which does not involve just one region but proves to be general throughout the world.

Good environmental indicators

About 5,000 species of amphibians are known today; half of these are concentrated in the rain forests of Central and South America and the Caribbean. 50 to 70 new species are discovered each year, but many others probably disappear forever before being recognised.

These animals are among the best indicators of the health of the planet as they appear to be more sensitive than others to environmental changes due to their special nature, part aquatic, part terrestrial, which doubles their vulnerability to alterations in the climate.



But what are the causes of the decline? Loss of habitat, pollution, exposure to ultraviolet rays, introduction of exotic species, disease and variations in climate are destroying amphibians all over the world, factors which often interact, making it difficult to understand which are the most important. So we do know that the decline is a general phenomenon, but we are not yet in a position to understand its significance.

The situation in Italy

What is happening at home? Unfortunately in Italy too the situation mirrors the worrying situation at world level. Here, as well, amphibians are decreasing in numbers. Of 37 known species, 16 (43%) are included in the Red Data Book of species at risk. Many species and subspecies endemic to our country are in danger or are threatened, species with a very restricted geographical range and

limited to particular geographical or environmental situations.

However the future of amphibians is bound to rest mainly on man's capacity to address complex environmental issues, like climate change, the destruction of forests and control of the human population. The loss of amphibians can therefore be considered a fundamental reflection of our way of life. Will we be capable of confronting it consistently in the next few years?

A PLAN TO SAVE THEM

LIPU has set up a Centre for Amphibians in Bologna Province

Within a LIFE Nature project set up by the Province of Bologna, a Centre for rare and threatened species of amphibians was established at Pianoro (Bologna) in 1998.

The general aim of the LIFE project called "Pilgrim", was the conservation of priority habitats and species, and as regards amphibians the conservation and increase of the existing population. Much has happened, including the establishment of the Centre for Amphibians and the creation of pools, and schemes to show what can be done, such as underpasses on busy roads. The main activities involve the breeding of threatened species, the study of their biology and of the main factors threatening them, the conservation of wild breeding sites by improving the habitat, and relocation to the Centre of eggs and larvae at risk, as well as the creation of a data bank on amphibians in the Province, and finally information, awareness, and education.

Conservation and education

So far 50 classes have been held for a total of about 1,000 children.

The management of the Centre for Amphibians was entrusted to the Agricultural and Environmental Centre, but the organising force and hands on management was built up by the Pianoro branch of LIPU. Professionals and experts act as volunteers,

who do so much here, such as feeding the animals in the aquariums, cleaning in and around the tanks and assessing and monitoring new natural breeding sites. Finally, one of the main activities of the Centre, teaching, is entirely entrusted to LIPU volunteers, with video presentations.

None of this would have been possible without dedicated staff and LIPU volunteers at Pianoro. Theirs is the drive behind this wonderful work for nature and the protection of the amphibians. To them go heartfelt thanks for their long-term commitment to this work, past and future.

CETACEAN SANCTUARY

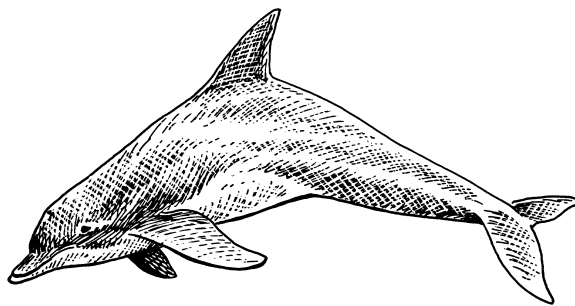
by Nino Martino

Summer is almost over, the birds are getting ready to leave for Africa, and for us nature lovers here is the chance to devote ourselves to observing wildlife without having to resist the pull of parasols and bathing beaches. In these warm autumn days we can rediscover our sea. Cradle of life and prospect of poets and seafarers, and yet scene of disasters and contamination, the sea is also the dustbin for every modern, disposable, industrial or agricultural "empty".

But something is stirring. It is thanks to pressure from environmentalists, to the influence of the many European tourists who pour on to the coasts of our fair country every year, thanks to our tireless work in LIPU, that the first moves of positive protection are emerging in our much abused Mediterranean. Following the establishment of marine reserves and of the first national parks bordering the sea, Italy, with France and Monaco, has been promoting the international reserve for cetaceans. This is to be a large expanse of sea where certain fishing practices and dangerous offshore races would be banned. Nets, lines and hooks cause the deaths of thousands of dolphins, whales, shearwaters and albatrosses. It would be a sanctuary for cetaceans, to preserve the living conditions and protect the population of sperm whales, minke

whales, fin whales, dolphins, striped dolphins, bottlenosed dolphins and pilot whales.

It is a dream that is becoming reality, a project springing from the promises of politicians and the



pledges of diplomats which should become active and positive protection. A commitment which awaits the new Minister of the Environment, Mr Matteoli, who has already stated that he wants to make it effective. We are eagerly looking forward to the chance to dive into the water without hydrofoils bearing down on us, without tankers washing their holds in the open sea, and without poachers, but engulfed in fish, admiring the skimming flight of the shearwater or the graceful movements of a friendly dolphin.

THANKS TO YOU

CURRENT PROJECTS

Anti-poaching

TWO SUCCESSES

The unlawful trade in wild animals in Campania represents a significant source of income and involves collectors, dealers, egg and nest thieves, and illegal markets and shops where thousands of birds belonging to protected species are sold. In the province of Salerno, the mobile Carabinieri unit of Nocera Inferiore and LIPU's anti-hunting guards discovered a collector of birds of prey and other protected birds. Nets and traps were confiscated and 50 animals were seized then set free, including Goldfinches, Serins, Greenfinches, 3 Magpie fledglings, 2 Moorhens, a juvenile Long

Eared Owl and a Kestrel fledgling. Our thanks go to the Carabinieri unit for the professional way in which they co-ordinated and successfully completed the operation.

In July there was another blitz involving the special environmental protection Commando unit of the Carabinieri together with LIPU guards, this time near Naples. Two hundred protected birds were confiscated from an illegal market, including Goldfinches, Chaffinches, Serins, Greenfinches and a Crossbill, as well as 7 turtles. Seven people were arrested. Most of the animals were released from their cages by children in Naples' Capodimonte Park, as part of a summer fair held there.

The Carabinieri and State Forest Rangers play a large part in helping to stop this illegal trade. Their activities will shortly be under regional as opposed to national control. LIPU hopes this change will not limit their activities.

The Purple Gallinule

THEY'VE ARRIVED!

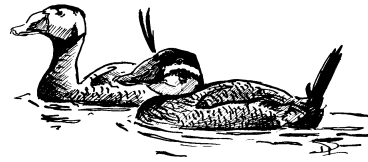
Work continues to reintroduce this splendid bird back to the Sicilian marshes. On the 12th June a second consignment of 22 Purple Gallinules arrived in Sicily from Spain. They were released in the Natural Reserve of the Simeto near Catania, and at Biviere di Gela, which was the site of the first release in October 2000. The next arrivals are expected this autumn. Unfortunately, one of the birds freed in October was run over by a car while it was crossing a road. It was taken to a recovery centre with a fractured leg, which is healing well and is awaiting re-release. Last winter, also at Biviere di Gela, another Purple Gallinule was the victim of a land predator, possibly a fox.

White-headed Duck

NEW-BORNS

Good news from the White-headed Duck project. At the beginning of July the first 5 chicks were born in the aviary at Daunia Risi (Gargano

National Park). This demonstrates how well the birds from the Racconigi Centre have adapted to their new habitat in Puglia.



An international workshop on the conservation of the White-headed Duck in Europe was held at Pugnochiuso (23rd to 24th May), including news of its reintroduction in Puglia. There were 22 experts present, representing 13 organisations and 4 countries, who together drew up a document implementing future strategies to be undertaken for the protection of this species.

Griffon Vulture

NEBRODI PARK

The Griffon Vulture project is also going well, with the release of the first group on the 21st May in the Nebrodi Park. Not long afterwards, an individual which had previously been released in the Madonie Park and given up for lost since November, joined the new group of 8 vultures. The 'new-comers' should benefit from the presence of an established vulture, which has already adapted to life in the wild and has undoubtedly fully explored vast sections of Sicily.

NATURE RESERVES AND LIPU CENTRES

A CONVERTED ROADMAN'S HOUSE

by Angela Damiano

The new LIPU rehabilitation centre in Molise, which was opened this summer, used to be a roadman's house on the outskirts of Casacalenda in the province of Campobasso. The province financed the renovation and management of these new LIPU facilities.

The building, with its typical red colour, has been transformed into a recovery and treatment centre for wild animals. There is also a section for education and information about wildlife and the environment, which is an integral part of the work at LIPU rehabilitation centres.

For healing and educating

Birds, hedgehogs and tortoises drawn by children welcome whoever enters this attractive visitor centre. The firewood store is now a classroom where local secondary schoolchildren have helped to create a display of animal tracks. The children attended practical and theory lessons here for 5 months, then made information panels on bird and mammal tracks and the adaptation of wildlife to their environment. On the windows they drew the animals' habitats and also painted animals onto wooden panels that will be attached to the outside walls of the visitor centre. The old bedrooms have become an operating theatre, with X-ray facilities, and a surgery and recovery room with housing for animals and birds undergoing treatment.

Behind the centre, four aviaries of varying size have been constructed in which birds of different species will be rehabilitated, the longest one measuring 15 metres. The construction of other birdhouses is also planned. A smaller building on the property will be developed into temporary accommodation for mammals. About 200 people attended the inauguration of the new centre held on the 3rd June.

LIPU IS PART OF THE FAMILY

A nature reserve and a LIPU centre in a town of 2700 inhabitants! This is a remarkable achievement for a small but thriving town in Molise.

Its relationship with LIPU began in 1990 when the Mayor of Casacalenda, Giovanni Tozzi, first contacted our association. Steady and consistent effort led to the opening of the first reserve in Molise in 1994, leading to far reaching repercussions for such a small and sparsely populated region. The Commune's commitment also extended to some far-sighted and ambitious initiatives such as the

annual modern art exhibition 'Kalenarte' in September, helping to set up small businesses and co-operatives for the production and distribution of local products and promoting the growth of organic farming.

Not least is the encouragement given to developing sustainable tourism, respecting nature and traditional culture, enhanced by the beauty of the area and the LIPU facilities, which local residents support and follow with interest. Recently the Cultural group 'The Misirizzi' organised a theatre festival, proceeds of which were donated to the LIPU rehabilitation centre.

Casacalenda's challenge is to continue along this path, moving towards the sustainable achievement of its original mission: to offer everyone a better quality of life in a way that makes it stand out from other towns. For further information, visit the website: web.tiscali.it/lipumolise

WORLD BIRDWATCH

A WORLDWIDE EVENT

by Silvia Ferrario

On 6th and 7th October, millions of people throughout the world will lift their eyes and their binoculars to the skies. The occasion will be World Birdwatch, the biggest event in the BirdLife International calendar, a weekend when naturalists, enthusiasts and ordinary people of the world will devote themselves to birding, and the collection of data and observations for collation by BirdLife International in Finland.

Two days devoted to nature, which this year will be placed in a broader context, that of the launching of a month-long Festival of Birds, with



activities involving people of many countries. It will end on the first weekend of November with the Taiwan Bird Fair, which more than 60,000 people attend every year.

Nature and culture

The theme of the Festival will be 'The Inspiration of Birds', that is, the inspiration that the extraordinary world of birds has given to artists of every kind and to people at large. Flight, the extraordinary phenomenon of migration, the colours and the song of birds are all things that down the ages have stimulated both curiosity and deeper study, as well as artists of every kind and the common man. To find out what events will be taking place in various countries one only has to call up the BirdLife International website at www.birdlife.net, where a section will be dedicated to the Festival. There will also be messages from and images by well-known personalities, who have been asked to write or display something indicative of the significance of birds to them.

And in Italy?

This and every year, LIPU will be an enthusiastic supporter of World Birdwatch. In many LIPU centres and reserves there will be celebrations, walks, tours and educational activities, in order to see at close quarters the beauty and individuality of birds and nature. There will also be the added feeling of being a participant in a worldwide event, which will gather in an exceptionally short time important data on the abundance and movements of many species of birds.

AROUND THE WORLD

Portugal - IBAs threatened

The controversial Alqueva Dam project has been given free passage by the EC, which will give half the funding of the works. The dam will submerge 400 square kilometres, destroying a million trees, and turning parts of the Mourao, Moura and Barancons IBAs into a lake, creating the largest artificial water body in Europe. This area is where 10%

of Portugal's Black Storks nest, and which forms the most important European wintering ground for the Common Crane. Particularly threatened is the population of Iberian Lynx, the world's rarest wild feline. As a representative of BirdLife for Portugal has said, it is an outrage that the EC should have recognised the importance of the area under the Birds Directive and then fund its partial destruction.

Sri Lanka - new owl

On January 23 2001 Sri Lankan ornithologist Deepal Warakagoda discovered a new species of owl. Over the last few years Deepal has spent many nights in the forest, trying to record an unfamiliar call, which he suspected came from an as yet unknown species, and this year at last succeeded in observing the bird, and to have it photographed by a friend. Pam Rasmussen, a great expert on Asiatic avifauna, having listened to the recordings, and studied the photographs and Warakagoda's detailed descriptions, confirmed that it was a new species of the Scops Owl family. A notable find: the birds of Sri Lanka have been studied in depth, and it is the first discovery of a new species for 132 years.

Falklands - albatross in decline

A recent study by Falklands Conservation has shown a dramatic decline in the population of Black-browed Albatross nesting on the islands, the world stronghold of the species. In 1995 there were 468,000 pairs nesting; today there are 382,000, a fall of 86,000, a loss of two birds per hour for five years! These exceptional losses can be explained by increased mortality due to the destructive technique of longline fishing, which has been estimated to kill 16,500 seabirds per year in these waters, of which 10,400 are Black-browed Albatross. To alleviate the effects of the fishery, the Governor of the Falklands has decreed that every boat practising longlining within their territorial waters should have on board an observer to oversee safety measures for the protection of seabirds.

Cape Verde Islands - nature at risk

The Cape Verde Islands, off the West African coast, hold important bird populations, many of

which occur only there. Many indeed are threatened with extinction, particularly the aquatic species, of which the Fea's Petrel is emblematic, being threatened also in Europe, where there is only a tiny colony of 200 pairs on the islet of Bugio, off Madeira.

The Cape Verde population of Fea's Petrels is of 500-1.000 pairs, which nest only on the highest rocks of the islands. As the birds are valued for food and medicinal use by the islanders, they are subject to human predation. Luckily, the relative isolation of the nest sites limits the take to some extent.

So too the Cape Verde Shearwater is also being hunted for food. Endemic to Cape Verde, the world population of this bird is only 10,000 individuals, but every year 500 nestlings are taken and sold in local markets.

There is an urgent need then for the development of strategies for the sustainable use of the natural resources of the islands. In 1991, the government declared the islands of Santa Luzia, Branco, Raso, Cima, Curra Velho and Baluarte to be nature reserves. In theory, this should protect many of the populations of seabirds, but human activities go on unregulated and unsupervised. In order to stop these populations from going into terminal decline, conservation measures must be put in place, with the institution of a more comprehensive network of protected areas, adequately supervised.

THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME

It is a time of taking stock, not only of the structure of our association

by Nino Martino, Director General of LIPU

A year of great change is almost over. The tenancies of the White House and the Chigio Palace have both changed, and who knows what tomorrow will bring?

Neither has it been one year like the rest, least not for nature. To name only one, let us note the

difficulties faced by Britain, with one of the wettest years on record. While die-hard sceptics still maintain that this is nothing to do with Man, and that the ozone hole and the loss of the world's forest cover are of no significance, we environmentalists will continue to struggle to convince all of the need to do something to halt the as yet reversible decline in the life of the Earth. Why are we still optimistic? Because there are still positive things happening, day by day.

Who would have thought only ten years ago that 10% of Italy would be protected by parks and reserves, or that LIPU would have brought back the Purple Gallinule and Griffon Vulture to Sicily, or the White-headed Duck to Puglia? Or that in Seattle, at a meeting of all the powerful, thousands would demonstrate for a world, not only the preserve of the great and the good, but with a little space for all?

For this, LIPU has kept to the small scale, continuing to work for the protection of birds and their habitat, but also for healthy agriculture, for a better quality of life and respect for legality, because the world is profoundly interconnected, and what happens in Ushuaia has consequences in Capraia, sooner or later.

For this reason we must strengthen the society, with new groups wherever possible, increasing membership, our sole guarantee of freedom, to add new blood, and to have the courage to carry forward the debate, because to think globally, yet act locally is the motto of the whole environmental movement. We are therefore moving ahead on federal lines, attempting to reorganise LIPU on a decentralised plan, with regional bases, but also through multiple centres to give voice to all, wherever they are, whether from the academic standpoint or that of personal experience.



A Return to News from LIPU-UK

In the last Ali Notizie I promised to tell you more about Nino Martino the new Director General of LIPU and here is a translation of a short pen picture which appears in the Italian edition...

NINO MARTINO - THE NEW DIRECTOR GENERAL OF LIPU.

Nino Martino joined his first environmental organisation at the age of 15, the same age as he started work.

Originally from Puglia in the south of Italy, Nino describes himself as having an inexhaustible curiosity to know, understand and see everything!

His first major conservation position was for WWF in Rome, after which he collaborated with the Ministry of the Environment where he formed part of a group of passionate environmentalists, dedicated to protecting natural areas.

He became Director of the Dolomiti Bellunesi National Park for 2 years and then moved to the Archipelago Toscana National Park. He spent much of his time fighting constant battles, not only for conservation, but also against the lack of publicity for LIPU. For him, the biggest problem, was to create an organised system of protected areas in Italy.

He then moved to Elba for a further three and a half years at which point, he was asked to direct LIPU. He accepted, attracted by the desire to continue his personal struggle for the conservation of the natural environment and the birds and animals that live there.

He is very aware both of the immense work in front of him to reorganise the association, and also the enormous potential and strength of LIPU. He has ambitious plans for growth and collaboration with other environmental organisations. As he says, "To achieve results, it only needs one thing -

to be ever stronger, because tomorrow is never far away".

Translation of this issue was by:

Gary French, Bryan Lewis, Deirdre Nicholas, Peter Rafferty, Anne Taylor, Pamela Tew, John Walder and Brian Horkley. *Thank you all*

AND FINALLY...

Marco Gustin told us of the petition to the Italian government to enforce the national laws on hunting and, as this is a chance to help in a practical way, I am enclosing copies of the petition form. If you would like to help by collecting signatures please copy the signature side of the page and send them to me before the end of the year. Eight pages of A4 should not exceed the 19 pence postage rate and every signature helps!

Thank you again for your support throughout this year - I hope we may soon look forward to peace in the world so that we can concentrate on preserving what we have for future generations and that the next copy of our newsletter can be produced in a less subdued manner.

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