



UKOTCF

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World Seabird Twitter Conference

This year's World Seabird Twitter Conference (#WSTC3) will be held from 12-14th April 2017. The conference is a low carbon, free science communication event held on Twitter. Seabird researchers, conservationists and NGOs from all over the world will share their work in 6 tweets. Last year's conference was a huge success with a reach of more than 2 million people. This year's event will feature new additions including invited plenary speakers and expert panel Q&As. Anyone interested in seabirds that would like to join the conference and discussion can do so by following the hashtag #WSTC3 on Twitter. Further details can be found at <http://seabirds.net>



World Seabird Twitter Conference : this year's conference will be the third in the series organised by the World Seabird Union. Photo: World Seabird Union

New Bat Species for Alderney

A new species of bat has been found in Alderney, the second in a period of 6 months. Jersey Bat Group discovered a Natterer's bat (*Myotis nattereri*) hibernating in a cave on the island during a visit in February. This follows the discovery of another new species, a Whiskered bat, in November last year. Although Natterer's bats are present on



Natterer's bat hibernating in the Essex caves, Alderney. Photo: Jersey Bat Group

Jersey and Guernsey, they are woodland specialists, so its discovery in Alderney – an island with few trees - is unexpected. Hear more about its discovery on BBC Radio Jersey:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p04pn849#play>. More information about Jersey Bat Group can be found here: <http://www.jerseybatgroup.org>.

Cyprus SBA Authorities' Efforts to Remove Acacia Continue



Acacia clearance in Cape Pyla. Photo: Guy Shorrocks, RSPB

Since November 2014 more than 54 acres of acacia have been removed by the SBA authorities as part of efforts to curb bird poaching in Cyprus SBAs. Plans are in place to remove the remaining 90 acres over the next few years. *Acacia saligna* is a fast-growing invasive species which is difficult to control; saplings are planted by illegal bird poachers to conceal mist nets. The environment department has tested various methodologies for its removal, including working with the MOD's forestry department and chemical control of stumps. In October, it was announced that SBA authorities were doubling the number of officers involved in the targeting of illegal bird trapping activities, to tackle the problem of songbird poaching in the SBAs.

Gibraltar Hosts Environmental Meeting in UK

In October, Dr John Cortes, HM Government of Gibraltar's Minister for the Environment, hosted a meeting of representatives of some of the largest environmental organisations in the UK. Part of an initiative to exchange information on challenges shared by Gibraltar and the UK, the meeting focused on means of ensuring that environmental protection and biodiversity are not affected post-Brexit. Dr Liesl Mesilio Torres, Chief Executive for the Department of the Environment, provided representatives from UK Overseas Territories Conservation Forum, National Trust, the Wildlife Trusts, Amphibian & Reptile Conservation, and others, with a comprehensive overview of Gibraltar's current situation, which was followed by helpful discussions. It is anticipated that further meetings will follow.



Representatives met at Gibraltar House in London to discuss issues surrounding environmental protection post-Brexit. Photo: Dr Mike Pienkowski

Akrotiri Marsh Management Works Completed

A major milestone has been reached in the Darwin Initiative funded project to restore Akrotiri marsh. After



*Management works at Akrotiri Marsh.
Photo: Akrotiri Marsh Project.*



*Habitat creation work at Akrotiri.
Photo: Akrotiri Marsh Project.*

weeks of detailed work, creation of suitable habitat for target bird species was successfully completed in November. The works included the creation of seven pools to attract breeding Ferruginous ducks, as well as creation of a scrape, ditch dredging and the installation of water control structures. The project has already made significant improvements to infrastructure, including the erection of cattle fencing and sheds, creation of walkways, and car park resurfacing. More information can be found on the project website:

<http://www.akrotirimarsh.org>.

Birds on the Edge Project Update

Jersey's Birds on the Edge project continues its work to restore habitat along the island's coastal heathland and grassland. The project works closely with the farming community to establish sacrificial crops and supplementary feeding over the winter. The project's *Winter Bird Crop Report* for the 2015-2016 year shows just how important these crops are for threatened local and migrant species, with an increase in bird numbers at the crops of almost 40% (birds/hectare). The majority of birds feeding at the crops were the targeted species: farmland birds such as chaffinch, linnet, reed bunting, meadow pipit, goldfinch and starling. The planting of winter crops in Jersey has been funded by local charity Action For Wildlife, the States of Jersey's Countryside Enhancement Scheme as well as private donations.



Winter Bird Crops. Photo: Birds on the Edge

The *Winter Bird Crop Report* can be found at:

<http://www.birdsontheedge.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/2015-16-Winter-bird-crops-report.pdf>

More information on the project's other activities, including a chough update, can be found on their website:

<http://www.birdsontheedge.org/>