

WILD FOR NATURE

'Wild for nature' competition Code of practice for competition participants

The Code of practice sets the interests of birds and wildlife first, and promotes **respect towards nature**.

Basic rules:

1. Avoid the disturbance of birds and other wildlife – their needs must always come first

Avoid getting too close to birds or other wild animals and disturbing their natural environment. If a bird flies away or makes a repeated alarm call, then you are too close. If it leaves, then you will not be able to see it well. Disturbance can keep birds away from their nests, leaving their young hungry or giving predators the opportunity to take the eggs or hatchlings. During cold weather or after a long migratory journey the birds are exhausted and any disturbance can lead to the birds' death. Stay on roads and paths, where they exist, and avoid habitat disturbance. The intentional disturbance of birds or their nests during breeding season is illegal, as is the use of a calling device. Disturbance can be caused among others, by noise, the use of flash photography when it's dark... Make it your aim to pass as unnoticed as you possibly can: "take only memories, leave nothing but footprints".

2. Respect the countryside

Access to the countryside is open in Cyprus, but make sure you respect local residents and landowners and that you do not enter private property, unless it is open to the public. Take a bag with you, for your own rubbish, and other things you may find during your visit – if you wish you can devote 2 minutes before you leave, collecting rubbish left by other less sensitized visitors and leave the area looking better than you found it.

3. Be an ambassador of nature protection

Think about your behaviour, so that both you and others can enjoy nature and birds. Respond positively to questions from interested passers-by: your enthusiasm for nature can ignite their interest and greater appreciation of wildlife and its preservation.

4. Report incidents of interventions in nature to BirdLife Cyprus

Report any incidents of the destruction of nature, such as removal of wild plants, interventions at beaches and river ecosystems, fires, sports in protected areas (motocross, rally), training of hunting dogs in protected areas during the bird breeding season, road construction in protected

areas, destruction of natural habitats through quarrying, agricultural activities etc., poaching with guns, limesticks or mist nets, to BirdLife Cyprus.

Poaching and illegal trapping remain a serious problem in Cyprus. Avoid confrontation with poachers or trappers, as this may put you at risk. A useful tool for reporting illegal trapping and poaching is the free application (app) 'Feathered Journeys' (available for both Android and iOS) which allows the user to report these incidents to BirdLife Cyprus. The information we receive from the reports by the public are sent to the competent authorities, safeguarding the anonymity of the person that made the report. For more information on the BirdLife Cyprus campaign against illegal bird trapping: <https://www.birdlifecyprus.org/campaign-against-illegal-bird-trapping>. For more information on legal hunting: <https://www.birdlifecyprus.org/hunting>

We hope you will have beautiful experiences of exploration and discovery in nature! The experience becomes even more rewarding when you start recognizing different species of wildlife, such as birds, which is the most visible animal group in our island!

All information on the competition is available at: wildfornature.birdlifecyprus.org

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