



## **“Restoration and Management of Voroklini Lake” (LIFE10NATCY716)**

### ***Bringing back the biodiversity richness of an important wetland***

This groundbreaking project, co-funded by the European Union (LIFE+) started in January 2012 to restore and manage Voroklini Lake. The lake is an important wetland as it is a Special Protection Area (SPA) under the EU Birds Directive, and a Site of Community Importance (SCI) under the EU Habitats Directive. The 3-year project’s beneficiaries are the Game Fund as lead beneficiary, Bird Life Cyprus as coordinator, the Environment Department, the Department of Forests and the Voroklini Community Council.

The LIFE Voroklini project consists of both conservation and awareness-raising actions that will tackle the pressures threatening this important wetland. Conservation actions include fencing of the lake to prevent disturbance from motor vehicles and motorcycles that enter the lake during dry seasons, removal of invasive alien plant species, planting of native shrubs and trees, water management and restoration of the area where a flea market used to operate illegally. The project, will implement many actions proposed in the Management Plan of Voroklini Lake.

However, the environment is not the only one benefiting from this project, as many communication actions are also planned during the implementation of the LIFE Voroklini project. Public awareness actions for the significance of the lake include installation of notice boards at the site, construction of a visitor information point with a hide for nature watching, a photo competition for the production of a photo album, volunteer-based ‘Clean Voroklini Day’ and information material for schools and the wider public. In this way, the project will play a significant role on raising public awareness for the wetland, and, by the completion of the project we expect that Voroklini Lake will attract many visitors that wish to enjoy nature.

Voroklini Lake is a Natura 2000 site and is especially important for the two qualifying bird species, Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus Himantopus* (Voroklini Lake is the best nesting site in Cyprus for this species) and Spur-winged Plover *Vanellus spinosus* that nest there. It is worth noting that Cyprus holds more than 50% of the EU’s breeding population of the Spur-winged Plover and on a local scale, Voroklini Lake is one of the top 5 areas in Cyprus for the reproduction of this species. In total 190 bird species have been recorded at the site. The site is also classified as a SCI under the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) for its halophytic marsh vegetation.

The benefits from this project are many. An important wetland will be restored and this project can be the model for future projects, the project will help to raise public awareness in the area, and also the lake could be used for environmental education among pupils. At the same time, the project will help in managing the water level of the lake. Moreover, the involvement of these five beneficiaries, provided by the project, will play a great role in the project's success in restoring and managing Voroklini Lake and for building support in the community for this important site. News and activities of the project will be published in the project's website which will be available soon.



**TITLE:**

«Restoration and Management of Voroklini Lake SPA (CY6000010) in Larnaca, Cyprus» / LIFE10 NAT CY 000716

**BUDGET:**

Total: € 797.070

50% co-funded by EU (€ 398.535)

**PROJECT DURATION:** 01/01/2012 - 31/12/2014

**BENEFICIARIES:**

**Coordinating Beneficiary:** Game Fund

**Associated Beneficiaries:** Bird Life Cyprus, Environment Department, Department of Forests, Voroklini Community Council