



31 October 2011

Live-Capturing Open Season for the Song Thrush

Government has today announced the opening of the live-capture season for the song thrush as from tomorrow. This comes after weeks of unnecessary waiting for action that should have been taken over the past two years.

This eleventh hour announcement further indicates Government's limited knowledge on the practical side of live-capturing that requires a lot of preparation on the trapping site which includes hard physical work and purchase of necessary expensive equipment that is essentially prepared months prior to the actual opening of the season.

The media release also warned trappers about the 30mm sq minimum net mesh size that is permissible as indicated on the 'Carnet de Chasse' booklet. The same booklet also indicates that the trapping licence holder can live-capture the turtle dove, quail and golden plover besides the song thrush. However, Government has arbitrarily and with no scientific basis issued a policy document wherein it is stated that live-capture of the turtle dove and quail cannot be permitted. As for the golden plover, Government is now saying that it needs more studies.

The Federation for Hunting & Conservation – Malta (FKNK) has supplied both Government and the Malta Ornis Committee with all the necessary Studies, scientific Works, Papers, etc. that contain enough detail to satisfy Government's requirements to be in a position to apply a derogation correctly. The FKNK consequently fails to understand Government's hesitation in declaring open the season for the trapping of the golden plover that is only serving to unnecessarily deprive legal trappers of more precious hours/days from their normal legal season.

It has to be repeated that the Malta Ornis Committee had recommended an open live-capturing season for the turtle dove and the quail from 1st September to 31st October, and an open live-capturing season for the golden plover and the song thrush from 20th October to 10th January. Meanwhile, as from the 1st of September, the shooting season is open for all four species in a manner that these can be shot up to the end of January but, except for the song thrush, cannot be captured alive.

Finally the FKNK again appeals to government to imminently declare open a live-capturing season for the golden plover in everyone's best interest and in the interest of what is fair and just.

Lino Farrugia
Secretary General