



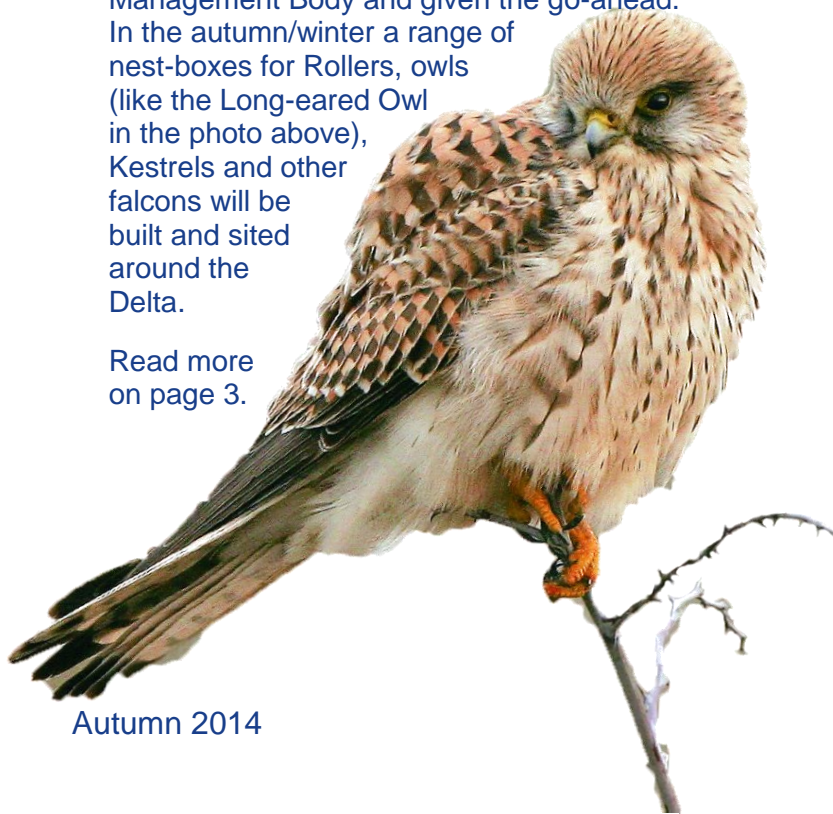
[www.birdwing.eu](http://www.birdwing.eu)

## Birdwing Nest-box Project



We're delighted to announce a new Birdwing project that has been approved at the Evros Delta. Proposals for a nest-box programme funded by Birdwing were submitted to the Management Body and given the go-ahead. In the autumn/winter a range of nest-boxes for Rollers, owls (like the Long-eared Owl in the photo above), Kestrels and other falcons will be built and sited around the Delta.

Read more on page 3.



Autumn 2014

## New to Birdwing?

It's often at this time of year that we meet new friends who have yet to experience the wonders of birdlife found in Northern Greece. Whether meeting you at the British Birdfair, through our guiding with Greenwings or elsewhere, we welcome you.



Read what international bird guide expert **Dave Gosney** had to say about the region and our site guide after a recent trip...

*'Northern Greece was just FANTASTIC for birds. I'd forgotten just how good it was.'*

Read more of his comments on page 2.

## Birdwing at Birdfair

This summer, representatives from **six** of the National Parks of Northern Greece travelled to the UK for the British Birdfair at Rutland Water, together with Nikos, from the Limneo Hotel at Kerkini and tour guides George Spiridakis and Efstathia Sideri. The event attracts thousands of people to find out about all things related to birds and birdwatching around the world. It was great for everyone to spend time together and to meet up with friends from Greenwings, Easybirder and the hundreds of others who love birdwatching in Greece.

Read about the event on page 5.



Birdwing News – 1

## Birds of Greece Playing Cards

The popularity of the Birdwing playing cards helped to raise over €1000 within the first few weeks of being made.



Together with the free **downloadable activity pack** (produced in both English and Greek), the cards have also helped to encourage and develop children's interest in the birds of Greece. Following the strong demand for the cards we are aiming to produce a second pack with other Greek birds over the winter and supporter Alex Wirth has also written a Top Trumps type game which we hope to develop in the future.

Sets of pack 1 can be purchased via our website [www.birdwing.eu](http://www.birdwing.eu) and the activity packs and related sound-tracks can also be downloaded free from there.

## New Birdwing app in development!

Using the images and information shown on the Birdwing playing cards (taken by Steve Mills) a new mobile and tablet 'app' is currently being developed by Greek company 'Jupitee' ([www.jupitee.com](http://www.jupitee.com)).

This has come about as a result of the generous assistance of Birdwing supporter Charles Outhier, from the US, to whom we are very grateful. The app is being created to help children, young people and newcomers to birdwatching to learn to recognise Greek birds. The app will be developed in Greek and English initially, with German and Dutch as future expansions.

We will be financing the project using crowd-funding and through donations as we want this to be a *free* app. If you can support us in this please click here and donate via our website.



[Donate](#)



## Dave Gosney in Greece

Many UK birdwatchers and those from around the world will know of Dave Gosney, [easybirder.com](http://easybirder.com) who produces guides and DVDs about birdwatching sites around the world. Dave has recently visited Northern Greece and was delighted with his trip.

Of the Birdwing site guide 'Birdwatching in Northern Greece, by Steve Mills, he said:



*I found this book to be really useful on my last trip to northern Greece. It's an area I'd already visited many times but this book introduced me to several new and fantastic sites, described in the sort of idiot-proof detail that I also apply to my own titles.*

*Without it I would have missed out on several really good birds.*

*Oh, and by the way, northern Greece was just FANTASTIC for birds. I'd forgotten just how good it was. So many great sites.*

For someone who has so much experience of birdwatching around the world that is great to hear!

You can buy the site-guide at [www.birdwing.eu/Birdwing-Books](http://www.birdwing.eu/Birdwing-Books)

## Bird-list including Dutch names - free download!

Following our last newsletter we have now updated and included Dutch names in our free bird-list download. Available on our website, the list contains bird names in 5 languages - Greek, English, German, Dutch and Latin.

Thanks to Leo Tukker for updating this list and adding the Dutch names! Go to the Resources page of our website to download it. Autumn 2014



# Birdwing nest-box programme

*Creating nesting opportunities for birds in Northern Greece*



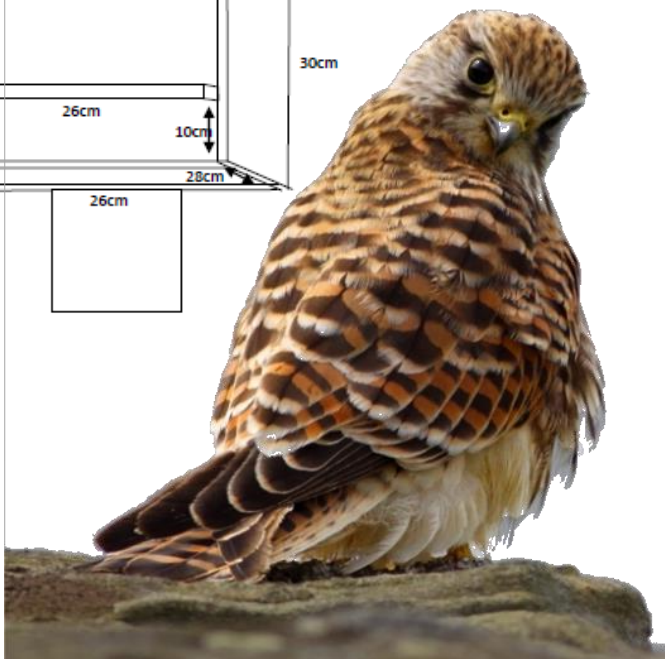
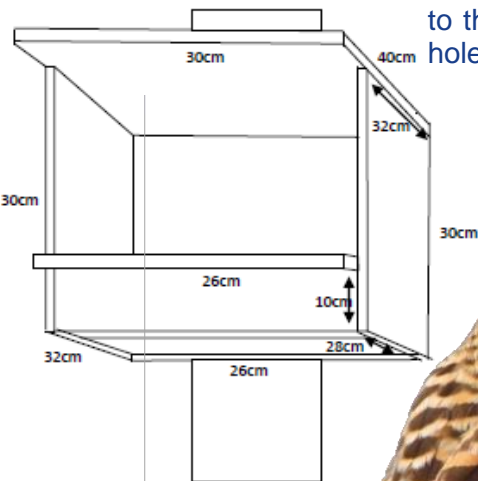
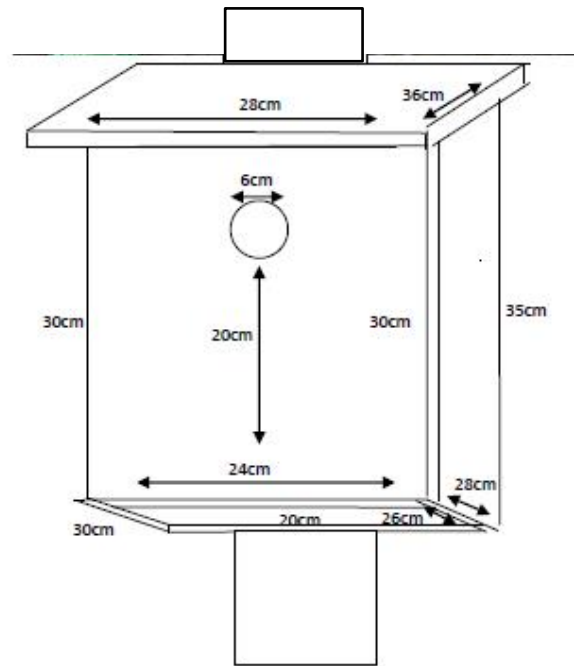
The new Birdwing nest-box programme will begin in the autumn when boxes will be made and positioned ready for next spring.

All around the Evros Delta nest-boxes for Kestrels (*Falco tinnunculus*) and Rollers (*Coracias garrulus*) will be positioned and there will also be the possibility that the Kestrel boxes might be also used by other birds, including Long-eared Owls (*Asio otus*).



Kestrels have been shown to readily accept nest-boxes in other parts of Europe and there seems to be plenty of good feeding habitat at the Evros Delta for them but the opportunities for nesting are limited due to the lack of trees with holes.

Similarly opportunities for Rollers to nest at the Evros Delta are limited because of the lack of suitable holes. They prefer boxes with a smaller hole rather than the open box preferred by Kestrels. In a natural environment Rollers do not create their own holes but depend on other species to make them. The lack of trees on the delta limits the number of holes made by woodpeckers, for example, that Rollers could then use.



The programme is also being extended to other regions of Northern Greece, firstly to the Nestos-Vistonida-Ismarida region where boxes for Rollers will be made and sited. Proposals for various nest-boxes to be put up in National Parks of Axios-Aliakmon-Loudias and at Kerkini are also under discussion.





## Examples of habitat improvement in Northern Greece

Birdwing and the management bodies of the National Parks, together with other NGOs, including SPP, WWF Greece and EPO, have undertaken and are undertaking a range of different habitat improvement projects. Tern rafts have been built and positioned in four sites (1, 2, 3 and 4) for Common Terns to nest on. The pelican platforms at Lake Kerkini (site 1) have resulted in over 200 Dalmatian Pelican chicks successfully fledging this year. Birdwing has recently funded the building of a breeding platform at the Evros Delta (site 5). Also at the Evros (site 5) a new Birdwing project has recently been approved for a programme of building and positioning nest-boxes for Kestrels, Owls and Rollers around the delta. Roller boxes are also to be put up in the Porto Lagos area (site 4). The Society for the Protection of Prespa ([SPP.gr](http://SPP.gr)) is an NGO that has undertaken habitat improvements in the North West of the country (site 6) including work on restoring wet meadows and other habitats to improve the breeding chances of birds such as Glossy Ibis and both White and Dalmatian Pelicans. WWF Greece work in the Dadia region (site 7) where there is a Vulture feeding station and collaboration with projects run by Return of the Neophron to help Egyptian Vultures. The Management Body of the National Park at Lake Kerkini (site 1) is beginning a project to build three new islands in the lake to help with the restoration of the drowned forest and to provide further nesting sites for pelicans and other water birds.



One of Birdwing's main aims is to fund and facilitate habitat improvement projects in Northern Greece. Through raising money and awareness we hope to increase further the number of projects undertaken. Please donate to ensure this can continue to happen.



Donate





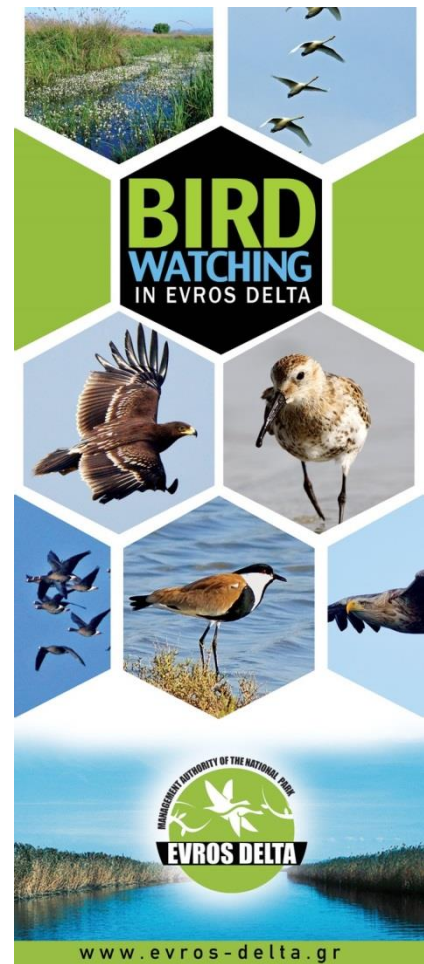
# Northern Greece widely represented at Birdfair

Every year, in August, representatives from the National Parks of Lake Kerkiní, Axios-Aliakmon-Loudias and Koronia/Volvi visit the British Birdfair. This year they were joined by those from the Evros Delta, Dadia-Lefkimi-Soufli Forest and Nestos-Vistonidis-Ismarida National Parks.

It is great to have so many representatives there from the National Parks of the region and we know that many birdwatchers have found out about the wonders of Greek nature and now plan to visit Greece as a result.

Also we at Birdwing met with our friends from Greenwings, Nikos from the Limneo Hotel in Chrysohorafa and George Spiridakis and Efstathia Sideri, promoting their new company 'Pelicans-eye' (see page 8).

The event allowed us opportunity to discuss ideas for new habitat projects with staff from the management bodies and to forge stronger links between everyone.





## Birdnews roundup

May is always a special time at **Lake Kerkini** but this year it was even more so because of the invasion of up to a thousand Rosy Starlings which began on the 18th, with the arrival of a few individuals. The 19th brought more and, by the 20th, it seemed like every mulberry tree was alive with their movement and chatter. Many of the males were in full song between berry-gorging sessions.



Cuckoos were present in very good numbers and all four shrikes were in evidence, including good numbers of Masked.



The extremely heavy spring rains brought the lake to full capacity very quickly, causing the nesting attempts of the Great Crested Grebes to be twice washed out. The high water level also removed much habitat for waders which were thin on the ground.

Of better news, over 200 Dalmatian Pelican chicks have hatched on the platforms but, fortunately with few birds still present, one of the platforms later partially collapsed during a summer storm.

Several pairs of both Glossy Ibis and Cattle Egret have bred in the drowned forest.



Of concern is the seemingly low number of large raptors, particularly Lesser Spotted, Short-toed and Booted Eagles, a phenomenon that seems not to be restricted to Kerkini.



As usual in spring the Anthia marshes on the **Evros Delta** were spectacular with lots of marsh terns, hundreds of Glossy Ibis, Ruff and Spotted Redshank. Loutros hill, as well as providing panoramic views of the delta also hosted Golden and White-Tailed Eagles, Masked Shrike, Eagle Owl along with several sightings of Black and Griffon Vultures.

On the delta itself a flock of 60 Broad-Billed Sandpipers were a very pleasant find amongst the usual spring waders. Moving into the summer period return passage was already underway at the Evros Delta in July with sightings of, amongst other things, 690 Glossy Ibis, 2000+ Spotted Redshank, 420 Marsh Sandpiper, 430 Greenshank, 650 Black-tailed Godwit and 465 Black-winged Stilt. Over 3200 Flamingo were on the delta as were 120 Night Heron and 320 Spoonbill. The best total, however, was of 85 Spur-winged Plover which, even though it's a post-breeding number, is the highest on the delta for some time.

At the **Axios** complex near Thessaloniki July totals included 90 Grey and 6 Purple Heron, 48 Spoonbill, 754 Flamingo, 7 Marsh Harrier, 66 Avocet, 114 Black-winged Stilt, 12 Collared Pratincole, 2 Stone Curlew and 188 Ruff.

Thanks to the Management bodies of Evros, Kerkini and Axios for sending data.

## Guiding with Greenwings

This spring Birdwing had another successful collaboration with the tour company Greenwings Wildlife Holidays ([www.greenwings.co](http://www.greenwings.co)). We spent several days guiding and showing visitors the birds of Lake Kerkini, raising several hundred pounds for Birdwing in the process. Greenwings generously donates a percentage of their profits and we donate our fee to Birdwing. Also many of the guests on the tour made donations for which we are very grateful. We will let you know when trip reports become available.



## Last issue's quiz!

Answers to the mystery birds from last issue. Picture A is a Common Sandpiper (*Actitis hypoleucos*) and picture B a juvenile Hobby (*Falco subbuteo*).

Can identify the two birds in this issue's quiz?



## This issue's quiz!

Can you identify Bird A or Bird B or both? Let us know your ideas.

Bird A



Bird B



Email your entries to [quiz@birdwing.eu](mailto:quiz@birdwing.eu)

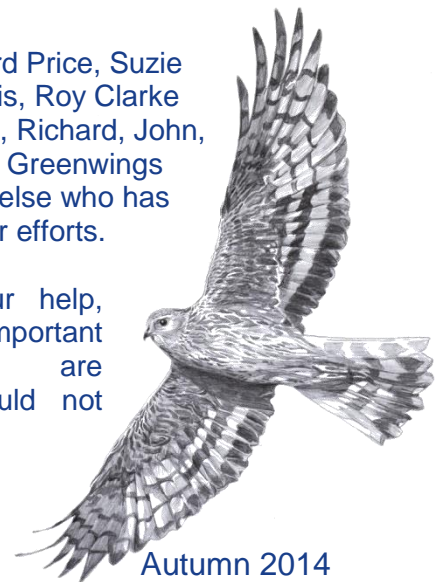
## Donation thanks!

We are very grateful to the large number of people who have recently donated to Birdwing, some of whom which to remain anonymous.

Thanks to Richard Price, Suzie and Terry, Yiannis, Roy Clarke Peter, Phil, Chris, Richard, John, Helen and Chris, Greenwings and to everyone else who has contributed to our efforts.

Without all your help, many of the important projects we are undertaking would not be possible.

Many thanks!







## Pelican's eye



Many of you will know George Spiridakis and Efstathia Sideri (often known as Effie!), a couple who have studied ecology and the environment, based at Lake Kerkini.

They have recently received funding to start a company called Pelican's eye. Their organisation will offer guiding, tours, workshops and activities to promote awareness and interest in birds and the nature of Lake Kerkini. They are developing a new website [Pelicans-eye.gr](http://Pelicans-eye.gr), [Facebook page](#) and have already started to run activities for children to encourage a lifelong interest in birds.

George, who some Birdwing supporters will know from his guiding, was born in Cyprus and has strong links with Birdlife Cyprus. They will be offering tours there, at Lake Kerkini, Evros Delta and also Mount Olympus. We, at Birdwing, wish them every success and will support them in their outreach work aimed at children and the local community.

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## Hotel Limneo film

If you've never been to Lake Kerkini before or have not had the pleasure of staying at Nikos Gallios' excellent Hotel Limneo then this film could be for you.

Well-known wildlife filmmaker, Malcolm Rymer, from England has put together a 20 minute film for the hotel about Lake Kerkini which is available on DVD or via YouTube.



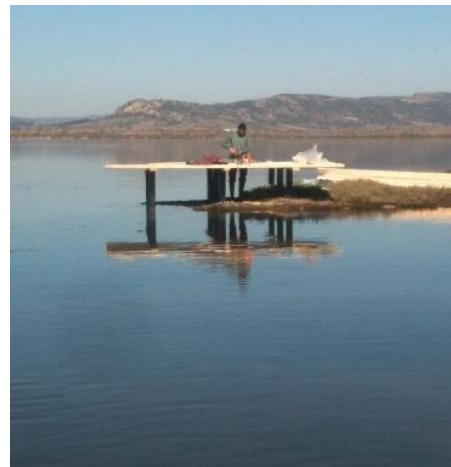
For more information contact Nikos Gallios by email [info@limneokerkini.gr](mailto:info@limneokerkini.gr) or go to his website [www.limneokerkini.gr](http://www.limneokerkini.gr)

Or contact us at [info@birdwing.eu](mailto:info@birdwing.eu)

Autumn 2014

## Pelican platform

When our pelican platform was built and sited at the Evros Delta it was expected that it would take some time for pelicans to show an interest in it and to become used to it, before breeding could and would take place. The platform, funded by Birdwing, aims to encourage Dalmatian Pelicans to breed once more at the delta. It was known that this could be some years before this might happen and the platform is regularly monitored by the staff of the National Park.



We are pleased to report therefore that recently, following the breeding period, a large number of pelicans have been spending their time on and around the platform. This is good news as, together with winter sightings of birds in the area, it is hoped that this is a positive indicator. In the winter, newly cut reeds will again be placed on the platform to encourage the birds and to supplement a limited supply of such nesting material nearby.

We will keep you informed!

Thanks ...



Thanks to **Lia Papadranga**, **Eva Katrana**, **Christos Panagiotidis** from Axios, **Angeliki Dimaki**, **Kostas Papadopoulos**, **Theodoros Naziridis** at Kerkini, **Eleni Makrigianni** and **Ioannidis Panagiotis** at the Evros Delta, **Vasilis Terzis** and **Sasa** from Porto Lagos, **George Spiridakis**, **Efstathia Sideri** from Pelican's eye, **Alexander Wirth**, **Nikos Gallios**, **Malcolm Rymer** and all the staff members at the Centres across Northern Greece who have provided us with information. And, as always, thanks to anyone else we have failed to mention.

Birdwing News – 8