

GREY HERON *ARDEA CINEREA* MOBBED BY STARLINGS *STURNUS VULGARIS*

An unusual mobbing behaviour was witnessed while birdwatching at Ghadira Nature Reserve on 29th November 1987.

A Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*, which was present in the reserve, took flight presumably frightened by the sound of gun shot in the vicinity. It rose slowly, but eventually tried to resettle on one of the islands in the reserve. A flock of about 50 Starlings *Sturnus vulgaris*, which were flying about and feeding in the area, lightened and dived close to the Heron, preventing it from settling down. This mobbing behaviour repeated itself for about six minutes until the heron had reached a good height. Then the Starlings retreated and the Grey Heron, after circling for a few minutes, settled down again in the reserve.

Vassallo (1980) recorded a flock of 13 Grey Herons being chased by the Yellow-legged Gulls *Larus cacchianus* breeding there when trying to alight on Filfla.

Reference

Vassallo, A. 1990. Herring Gulls chasing Grey Herons. *Il-Merill* 21:25.

Mark Anthony Falzon

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PARTIAL ALBINO SUBALPINE WARBLER

On 29 March 1989 at ca. 1530 hrs a partial albino Subalpine Warbler *Sylvia cantillans* was trapped for ringing at Dwejra, Gozo. On that day there was a small influx of Subalpine Warblers and some typical birds were trapped for comparison.

The bird had all wing and tail feathers of the normal type, but all the rest of the body was pure white except for some grey behind the eyes and also on the mantle and back. Some pinish-brown feathers on the breast suggested that it was a male bird. The scapulars were also white admixed with some grey feathers. The bill, iris and tarsi were of the typical type.

Raymond Galea

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The partially albino bird and a typical male Subalpine Warbler.