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The JBO was established and is funded with the assistance of many supporters who have seen the potential and importance of this project, among them:

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Concept and writing: Shai Abramson Strategic Consulting Ltd.
Design: www.ga-brand.co.il
Bird illustrations and photographs: Amir Balaban

Bonding Man and Nature

The Jerusalem Bird Observatory is the first of dozens of planned urban wildlife centers being established by the Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel (SPNI). The JBO integrates field research, educational programming and management of wild habitats and biodiversity in the city.

Nestled between Israel's Supreme Court and the Knesset, hidden among the terebinth, olive and buckthorn trees, stands Israel's first community urban wildlife site, the Jerusalem Bird Observatory. If you close your eyes and listen carefully, you will hear the tumbling stream, bees abuzz and even the call of a European Robin or the thrush nightingale. Open your eyes and watch the reeds bowing this way and that, frogs leaping and turtles sunning in the wetlands. One thing you most certainly will witness is the children's joy and wonder.

Israel has one of the world's fastest growth rates. This rapid growth is quickly depleting natural open space reserves, surrounding them with high-density urban development. The proximity of open spaces to urban centers creates many conflicts on the one hand, but provides a unique

opportunity for city dwellers to become familiar with and learn from local natural resources, on the other.

In addition to being densely populated, Israel has a rich multicultural fabric with a wide variety of social, ethnic and religious groups which often come into conflict with one another. One of the strongest characteristics of the Society for the Protection of Nature's activities in Jerusalem is the ability to recruit supporters from different backgrounds around a common, unifying cause, the environment.

Using the environment as a platform for dialogue, tolerance and understanding.



The Beracha Bird Hide

The Beracha Bird Hide serves researchers and community alike as an observation point to the different habitats in the site. Open year round to the public, it has become an integral part of the park system on Capitol Hill and used extensively by the public.



The Gutman Visitor Center

The Gutman Visitor Center is Jerusalem's first living building. The center includes a variety of experimental habitats on the roof and walls. The building serves as a living example for architects, urban planners, and landscape architects, demonstrating the various tools available for sustaining wildlife and biodiversity in a developing urban surrounding. The center hosts functions and lectures focusing on urban wildlife, living buildings and wildlife art.

Igniting the Spark



The Society for the Protection of Nature understands that if we want to safeguard the environment the critical first step is educating our children. Taking kids into nature, showing them the wonder and beauty, sparking their imagination - this is how we are creating a generation that cares for the environment and will pass down these values to their children.

In Hebrew there is an apt phrase for our educational approach, we call it "derech haraglayim." Loosely translated, it means that the most effective way to learn something is by getting out and doing it. With the JBO serving as our base, we lead children on day hikes and night treks through the valleys and hills in and around Jerusalem. We explore the wadis and natural springs, teaching along the way about birds, animals, flora and fauna.

The JBO's central location enables thousands of school children and visitors from across the city to visit the center for a unique encounter with wildlife researchers and guides.

Zeroing in on children's natural curiosity and unlimited levels of creativity, the JBO has created an educational approach that relies heavily on the arts as a means to foster appreciation for the environment. At the Gail Rubin Gallery, Israel's first wildlife art gallery, children are exposed to world-class nature photography, paintings and sculptures. Hands-on and experiential, the JBO encourages children to observe and internalize the beauty of nature through drawing classes, nature photography workshops and lectures on birds in literature. Moreover, the children are actively involved in bird ringing and are lead on guided bird and wildlife tours to round out the experience.



Touch the Heart



From Eurasia to Africa and Back



Israel stands at the crossroads of Europe, Asia and Africa. For avid birdwatchers that means only one thing: the mass migration of millions of birds, with hundreds of species, in a show that is unparalleled elsewhere in the world.

Israel's land bridge serves as one of the main routes for migrating birds both in autumn and in spring. Moreover, Israel's location on the edge of the Western Palearctic brings exotic species to the region and the Jerusalem Bird Observatory. More than 200 species have been observed at the JBO. Over 10,000 birds are ringed every year in the Ariel Ringing and Research Station and released to continue their migration. Birds carrying rings from many European countries have been found using the site, demonstrating its importance for European bird populations. The most common migrants are warblers, small and agile song birds. The blackcap and the lesser white throat are the most abundant passage migrants. Birdwatchers from around the world visit the JBO to watch some of the rare migrants that are special to site: The olive tree warbler, a rare and secretive bird that uses

the JBO as a refueling site. Hawfinches are rare in the country yet at the JBO they are regularly observed, bating and feeding on wild fruit and seeds.

At the JBO, we want to inspire and teach the children about birding. We offer a wide-breadth of activities ranging from classes on the Birds of Spring, bird ringing sessions, bird sketching and lectures on birds and mythology.

Founded in 1994, the Jerusalem Bird Observatory (JBO) was as the first community-based urban wildlife site in Jerusalem. The site, which today is operated and maintained by a staff of SPNI researchers, educators and volunteers, was established by community activists. Activities involve areas of research, education and recreation, all with the goal of involving as many residents as possible in a variety of urban wildlife issues.

The Ariel Wiseman Ringing Station

The Wiseman Ringing Station, founded in 1994, is Israel's first urban ringing station. The station monitors local and migratory birds, their movements and the ways they use this unique site. The station is operated by professional bird ringers and volunteers, many of the children and teens from Jerusalem. The information gathered in the JBO provides information on how best to design habitats for birds and wildlife in an urban surrounding throughout the country.

The JBO serves as the national ringing center, coordinating ringing activity for a network of six nationwide ringing stations from Eilat in the south to Hula in the North. The ringing activity attracts over 50,000 visitors a year, peaking during autumn and spring migration.



Hear
the Call



National Urban Wildlife Center



The growing impact of urban areas on biodiversity has created a situation that demands a pro-active approach to mitigating global and local habitat loss and degradation.

With this in mind, the National Urban Wildlife Center (NUWC), headquartered at the JBO, works hand-in-hand with ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability, Birdlife International and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) to coordinate and conduct nationwide urban wildlife surveys for the Local Action for Biodiversity (LAB) global urban biodiversity initiative.

With the goal of finding pragmatic solutions to our most pressing environment and development challenges, the NUWC, in cooperation with the Ministry of the Environment and local government authorities, researches and develops urban master plans that foster biodiversity in the cities. By mapping out the urban wildlife infrastructure in Israel and making it accessible to planners and communities, we hope to gradually mitigate urban habitat degradation and enhance the use and of wild habitats in urban areas throughout the country.

The NUWC is currently conducting a survey to map all urban wildlife sites in Israel. When complete, the resulting database will help aid and direct urban development and management plans, serving as an important tool for preserving unique habitats and biodiversity in urban areas. The local information gathered will also be used to promote the preservation and development of a community-based urban wildlife web for each city, identifying future sites that will serve the communities and biodiversity.

The NUWC staff includes a unit manager, GIS personal, professional surveyors and volunteers that help carry out this critical field work. Much of the ground work is community-based, involving local youth, naturalists and activists.

The Nyman Pond

The Nyman Pond is the largest man-made wetland. It serves thousands of birds daily and a large array of vertebrates: fish; amphibians, reptiles and mammals. The Pond is managed by the JBO team and volunteers for the benefit of all park users.

Discover
the Secrets



Community and Education



The backbone of JBO is a growing volunteer corps that is involved in research, education and managing wild habitats and protecting biodiversity in Jerusalem.

This group of devoted volunteers includes young and old who are passionate for nature and dedicated to our cause. All maintenance of the JBO and wildlife site in Jerusalem is based on community involvement, in cooperation with the Jerusalem Municipality.

The JBO invests significant time and effort with special needs children, involving them in the running and operation of the different facilities on site, habitat management, and activities with the general public.

A unique educational facility, the JBO combines research, hands-on outdoor skills, and arts to enhance the public's environmental awareness. Thousands of visitors, from kindergarten to college, from Israel and abroad, visit the JBO to learn about the environmental challenges facing Jerusalem's biodiversity and take active part as partners in our conservation efforts. During recent years, birthright groups have taken a growing interest in conservation and many of those visiting Jerusalem regularly take part in JBO activities.



Wildlife ART



Since its inception, the JBO has promoted wildlife art. Many JBO staff and volunteers are involved in the arts, from painting to photography to film making.

The Gail Rubin Art Gallery is Israel's first wildlife art gallery promoting the understanding and appreciation of nature through observation and the arts. The JBO regularly holds workshops focusing on different art forms depicting nature such as wildlife sketching in the field and photography.

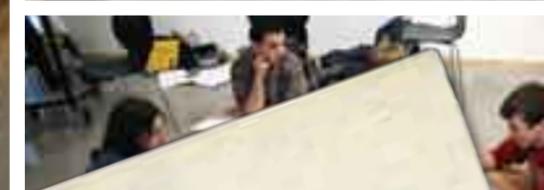
Most of these workshops are aimed at the children who are eager to learn and experience working in the field evoked by nature.

The Gail Rubin Art Gallery is designed to exhibit the work of local and international wildlife artists and their work.

Gail Rubin

Gail Rubin was born in New York City on April 12th, 1938. She graduated from the Dalton School in 1956, went to the University of Michigan, and graduated from Finch College in New York in 1960. She then entered the publishing field where she worked in an editorial capacity for Viking Press and New Directions before becoming managing editor of Delacorte Books.

In June 1969 she went to Israel for a three-week vacation and was so taken by the country that she decided to stay on for a year. Her stay lengthened into almost nine years, when she was shot down by terrorists on March 11, 1978 in Maagan Michael. Gail Rubin's nature photography greatly influenced an entire generation of Israel's wildlife photographers. With the support of her family, JBO created Israel's first wildlife art gallery in her honor.



Naming and Sponsorship Opportunities:

Research

Scholarships for young researchers studying bird migration, urban wildlife, urban planning and architecture for biodiversity

Community and Society

Sponsorship of activities for special needs children, youth-at-risk, Arabs and Jews

National Urban Wildlife Center

Advancing urban wildlife surveys, planning and promoting local and national initiatives

Arts

Underwriting projects that integrate arts and nature conservation such as exhibitions, workshops and printed materials

Major Naming Opportunities

The Jerusalem Bird Observatory Complex and the National Urban Wildlife Center



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