

Setting the boundaries of the Almyros Wetland: The first step is finally made...

After many years of neglect, the first step towards the sustainable management of this unique and valuable wetland was finally made. It resulted from many long - term efforts from a number of volunteers and from the hard work of many who participated actively on the day of the event.

The Ecological Movement of Mirabello, would like to thank and congratulate everyone who participated in the event, among others the Scouts, the Hospital for Chronic Diseases, the orphanage Paidopoli in Neapoli and the Organization of Parents and Guardians of Agios Nikolaos, all of which helped in planting, erecting the information signs, placing the wooden pegs and ropes and cleaning the beach.

We would also like to thank the Municipal S.A. of Agios Nikolaos and the head of the company for their interest in providing the pegs and ropes, the Municipal Community of the town, the organizing committee of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Children's Festival which is about to take place on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> of June, the store of Mr. Tzotzi for the machine used to place the pegs, the graphic design company IDEOGRAMMA, the Coast Guard, the Rescue Team, Flowers of Crete for providing sand dune seeds and plants, Mr. Filippaki for providing trees for planting, the newspaper ANATOLI, the Radio Stations 104,4 FM, LATO 103,3 FM, Dizzy FM 96,9, PLANET 90,6 FM. We would also like to give many special thanks to the people from WWF, as they are the ones who advise us in our every move made to protect the natural environment.

The expenses incurred in order for this event to take place were not enormous, but nevertheless significant, and for this reason we are asking for contributions from our supporters. A General Meeting will take place soon, the date and location of which will be announced shortly, where people can support the efforts of our team in protecting our natural resources in any way they feel that they can.

The ecological Movement of Mirabello has handed in its proposals regarding future sustainable protection and management of Almyros wetland, both publicly and to the public services. It must be made clear that we do not intend to replace the public services but rather remind them of their responsibilities and to encourage them in their efforts.

An urgent step that must be taken is to provide sustainable management of this important wetland **through the generation and implementation of an integrated plan**. Through this plan, co-ordination of those public services

responsible will take place and actions and activities will be undertaken in order to protect it.

Factors that must be included are firstly the forthcoming law regarding the delimitation of small wetlands throughout Greece. This must be seriously considered by the Municipality. Secondly, contact should be made with the landowners on the southern side of the wetland near the river to insist that their boundaries are returned to their previous legal limits, enabling the old path to be restored. Thirdly, a search must be undertaken to find available resources for wetland infrastructure that will aid its maintenance (small paths etc), and protection and to promote education (such as a bird observatory, plant species lists etc)

It is the responsibility of the Municipality, of the Region, and of the Land Service Office amongst others, to delineate and protect this and every other wetland on our island. **We will support fully support each and every effort made.**

And so the fight for the protection of the natural environment continues...

Ecological Movement of Mirabello

<http://ecomirabello.blogspot.com/>

*The wetlands of Almyros provide a precious environment on Crete's north coast to the east of the town of Aghios Nikolaos. Over the years it has suffered from encroaching tourist development, tourist activities, and planting of non-native species. The Ecological Movement of Mirabello is a group of people (mostly Greek) committed to preserving this unique habitat.*