

Message from the Editor

These days, few issues carry as much relevance in our lives as the ongoing pandemic, while self-interest and calculation, rather than compassion or even the acknowledgment of responsibility, tend to guide vaccine distribution. The situation in Gaza is dire. The UN Food and Agriculture Organization warns that acute hunger may affect 20 countries, including not only Yemen but also Lebanon and Syria. Still, we tend to neglect the fact that our daily habits cause the destruction of nature, creating the conditions that facilitate the emergence and spread of viruses in the first place. Only 4 percent of mammals on earth are wild animals, 36 percent are humans, and 60 percent are domestic animals that we raise mainly for some form of consumption!*

This month's issue highlights the beauty of Palestine's environment and draws attention to challenges that Palestine must tackle to preserve this treasure and protect the country's flora and fauna. We wish to thank our authors Zayne Abudaka and Hammam Othman, the directors of research and operations, respectively, at Momentum Labs; Dr. Mazin B. Qumsiyeh, director of the Palestine Museum of Natural History and the Palestine Institute for Biodiversity and Sustainability, and Dr. Issa Musa Albaradeiya, director general of the Environmental Resources Directorate at the Palestinian Environment Quality Authority (EQA); anthropologist Dr. Ali Qleibo; Akram Halayqa, director of the Coastal and Marine Environment Department at the EQA; Hadeel Hisham Ikhmais, who works in the EQA's climate change section; Mohammad Mahassneh, the EQA's director of biodiversity; Dr. Shaddad Attili, an adviser-ranking minister at the Negotiation Department and former water minister at the Palestinian Authority; Roubina Bassous/Ghattas, founder and director general of Pioneer Consultancy Center for Sustainable Development; Majed Ghannam, a program manager at UNDP/PAPP specialized in water resource and integrated water management; journalist Amira Gabarin; Imad Atrash, executive director of the Palestine Wildlife Society, and biology student and volunteer Maha Abu Gharbieh; Dr. Anton Khalilieh, executive director of Nature Palestine Society, and Dr. Yara Dahdal, a project manager at the society specialized in water desalination and wastewater treatment; and Simon Awad, executive director of the Environmental Education Center of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land, and Bashar Jarayseh, an active research volunteer at the center.

Our Personality of the Month is head of the EQA Jameel Mtour, Artist of the Month is Mohammed Alhaj, and Book of the Month is *Checklist and Ecological Database of Wild Plants in the West Bank* by Banan Al Sheikh. TWiP Kitchen presents a recipe for *qatayef*, and Ahlan Palestine Postcard takes you to Kifl Haris where you can learn to make *maftoul*. Enjoy the few listed events.

The entire team at TWiP wishes a happy Easter and a blessed Ramadan to all who are celebrating religious holidays this month. We hope that everyone will emerge from this pandemic healthy and well!

*<https://www.livekindly.co/60-of-all-mammals-on-earth-are-livestock-says-new-study/>.

Sincerely,

Tina Basem

