

Annual Report 2023

Palestine Institute
for Biodiversity and
Sustainability at
Bethlehem University



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A scenic view of a botanical garden in Bethlehem, Palestine. In the foreground, a wooden walkway with a metal railing leads down a hillside. To the left, a colorful wooden structure with a staircase is decorated with many small, colorful circular objects. The background shows a view of the city of Bethlehem and the surrounding hills under a clear blue sky.

Welcome!

PIBS and its surrounding botanical garden is an oasis for people and wildlife in Bethlehem, Palestine: a place of conflict and rapid transformation. It is a place of learning and rejuvenation for Palestinians and international visitors.

Preface

The Palestine Institute for Biodiversity and Sustainability (PIBS) at Bethlehem University was initiated in 2014 by Prof. Mazin Qumsiyeh, Jessie Chang Qumsiyeh, dozens of supporters, selfless volunteers, and generous donors. **Our vision** is sustainable human and natural communities. **Our mission** is research, education, and conservation of our environment, culture and heritage. **Our motto** is respect: for ourselves, for others, and for nature. As we look to 2024, our 10th year of operations, we proudly present our 2023 Annual Report describing our continued progress despite significant challenges.

In 2023, there were increased restrictions on movement, settler and soldier attacks on Palestinians throughout the occupied territories, combined with the ongoing siege and strangulation of the Gaza strip, under Israel's extreme right-wing government. This led to the Gaza ghetto uprising that started 7 October 2023. The Israeli regime's ongoing response is a genocidal campaign in Gaza. In 100 days, 30,000 civilians were brutally killed, 58,700 were injured (72% women and children), and nearly 2 million displaced. Thousands more still lay under the rubble. An immense amount – nearly two-thirds – of Gaza's infrastructure was destroyed, including 70% of residential buildings, hospitals, schools, universities, and government buildings. Israel also imposed a total blockade of, among other things, fuel, food, water, and medicine. This fits the definition

of genocide per international law. Israel also attacked the West Bank, killing hundreds of Palestinians in 2023, destroyed homes and infrastructure (especially in refugee camps), arrested thousands of innocent civilians, and ethnically cleansed communities in Area C. Many of these marginalized communities were those that worked with us on issues of biodiversity and sustainability. Guided by our vision of sustainable human and natural communities, our institution responded to the increased needs for education, community service, and protection of land and environment.

Thousands still managed to visit our institution or hear from us directly.

We were leaders in disseminating information and ideas to challenge propaganda spread about Palestine. We published 17 scientific articles on areas like environmental justice, protected areas, national parks, fauna, and flora. Our team gave over 210 talks locally, online, and abroad, and over 200 interviews (radio and TV). We produced statements responding to attacks on institutions of higher education, natural areas, and cultural heritage. We published research on the environmental impact of war, on Israel's weaponization of "Nature Reserves" and "National Parks," and on a vision for peace based on justice and sustainability. Thousands still managed to visit our institution or hear from us directly.

Ultimately, we worked to transform 2023's challenges into opportunities. This document presents an assortment of our achievements in areas of research, education, conservation, and community service. We are very proud of this, and look towards even bigger achievements in 2024. To this aim, we restructured our growing operations, expanded our university relations, and even successfully added a new Bachelor's degree program in Biodiversity and Sustainability, approved by the Ministry of Higher Education. Our building renovation and expansion project is 30% complete and 70% funded. We are optimistic that we can find the 30% funding shortfall to finish the new Palestine Museum of Natural History – the first of its kind in the Arab world. With our human resources, expanding infrastructure, and your support, we are able to do much more to serve natural and human communities.

We are grateful to our team members, volunteers, donors, and supporters locally and around the world for standing with Palestine's nature and people.

2023 IN REVIEW

10,588 volunteer hours

\$106,000 unrestricted funding

78 educational activities

45 AT SCHOOLS, 28 WITH CHILDREN, 5 WITH WOMEN

9,000+ beneficiaries

210 seminars and talks

17 manuscripts produced

53 volunteers

29 FEMALE, 24 MALE

20 field trips



Environmental Education & Awareness

Unity and Diversity in Nature and Society

In March 2023, we successfully concluded our three-year project titled “Unity and Diversity in Nature and Society.” The primary aim of this project was improving **sustainability of human and natural systems** by leveraging actions to enhance agricultural, human, and natural diversity.

Our project outcomes exceeded expectations, benefiting a total of **11,632 direct stakeholders** (6,877 women and 4,755 men) and an additional **40,000 indirect beneficiaries**, including students from schools and universities, volunteers, researchers, scholars, educators, teachers, hikers, and local and international visitors.

This project exemplifies our capacity to make a substantial impact on the local community while at the same time ensuring enduring effects beyond the project conclusion via the centers and systems developed within the project. Throughout that project’s 39-month period, we accomplished the following:



Established

- The Biodiversity Center at PIBS
- The Education Center at the Galilee Society
- The Human Diversity Center at the Palestinian Center for Rapprochement between People
- The Mobile Educational Unit

Produced

- 19 research grant reports
- 44 research publications
- 17 educational modules
- 2 educational manuals
- 3 brochures

Conducted

- 3 global conferences
- 124 educational activities
- 52 workshops & capacity building activities
- 46 public lectures

Biodiversity and Sustainability Bachelor's Program

As part of our mission to research, educate about, and conserve our natural world, culture and heritage, as well as promote responsible human interactions with our environment, we worked to design and establish **a new bachelor degree program** "Biodiversity and Sustainability" within the Faculty of Applied Sciences, Technology and Engineering at Bethlehem University. The program was accredited in May 2023 by the Ministry of Higher Education and Research, and will focus on biodiversity, geology, geography, habitats, and agriculture in ways that lead to sustainability. Our aspiration is to **graduate students equipped with the knowledge and desire to conserve our environment.**

Environmental Education

In 2023, our commitment to environmental education continued through the **children's environmental program**, which was initiated at PIBS in January of 2021 by funds from the generous Ms. Elena Probst. This nature-themed program creates an engaging space for children to explore and learn. Through interactive games developed in-house at PIBS, such as the Food Web game, agricultural-themed trivia, crafts, and cooking activities, we provided a hands-on experience that connects children with nature. We also organized tailored activities to celebrate significant environmental occasions such as Earth Day, World Wildlife Day, and World Migration Bird Day. The aim of these activities is to increase awareness



This year alone, over 500 children benefited from this program.

and engagement in environmental issues, foster an understanding of biodiversity and hopefully ignite students' interest in the natural world. These activities are open to the public and are free of charge. This year alone, over 500 children benefited from this program. Ms. Probst has also graciously extended her support into 2024.

This year, our **Mobile Educational Unit (MEU)**, which is the first of its kind in Palestine, continued its tour and visited 39 marginalized schools across the West Bank, benefitting 4,124 students. The MEU will continue touring the Occupied Palestinian Territories to ensure we reach all communities that are unable to visit us here in Bethlehem.

Our ongoing partnership with the **Salesians of Don Bosco at Cremisan Monastery**, which began in 2021, continued this year with new elements. For children's activities, we organized eight trips to Cremisan, benefitting 180 children. During these full-day visits, we nurtured children's connection with the natural world by exploring diverse flora and fauna, cooking with fresh produce, completing nature-themed games and crafts, and more. We will expand our collaboration with Cremisan to hold ten additional children's activities in 2024. This year, we also provided content for the creation of a family-friendly booklet and a mobile application to familiarize Cremisan visitors with the significant flora and fauna in the reserve.

To promote agricultural development, **we established an organic garden at Cremisan** and provided the Monastery with a gardening plan for its upkeep. Moreover, we trained 10 farmers in sustainable agricultural methods and techniques to further support eco-friendly practices in the area.



SCAN AND SEE THE MOBILE
EDUCATIONAL UNIT IN ACTION

At PIBS, we also continue developing **informative educational modules** for our visitors. This year we developed educational posters for our Botanical Garden, including on topics of Birds of Palestine, Bees, and PIBS' Ex-Situ Conservation Unit for Irises and Orchids.

We also expanded on our commitment to **empowering women** by signing a memorandum of understanding with the Women of the Sun institute as our way to emphasize women's role in conserving the environment. We held five educational activities which benefitted 124 women, celebrating them especially on Women's Day and during Women's month.

As part of our yearly charitable initiatives, we visited the **Hogar Niño Dios organization for disabled orphans** and brought our collections of taxidermied animals, pinned insects, and mounted plants to share with the children. We engaged in interactive activities, dancing, playing, and learning about biodiversity. It was truly a day to remember. Additionally, we participated in the international solidarity with Gaza (August 26) through the **"Swim with Gaza"** campaign, by organizing a swimming event at Husan village, educating children about the significance of the Husan Spring and the biodiversity of the area.



LEARN MORE ABOUT IRISES,
ORCHIDS, AND OUR EX-SITU
CONSERVATION POSTER



SWIM
إسبحوا تضامنا
WITH
مع غزة
GAZA

SWIM
WITH
GAZA

SWIM
WITH
GAZA
إسبحوا تضامنا
مع غزة



Capacity Building

Our team actively sought to expand their knowledge through attending diverse training sessions. A total of twenty-one sessions took place this year, including:

Erasmus Program

Two team members traveled to Greece, through an Erasmus program, to learn about the principles of ecological agriculture and coexistence with nature (emphasizing the ecosystem services that nature provides to humans). The training benefited 20 participants from the countries of Palestine, Bulgaria, Italy, Greece, and France.

Museology

Two team members traveled to Ireland and the UK to develop skills in museology.

Botanical Garden of the University of Valencia

One team member participated in an online conference hosted at the Botanical Garden of the University of Valencia. The conference covered a diverse range of topics, including the ex-situ conservation of Mediterranean threatened and rare species, conservation priorities for the Mediterranean flora and habitats, alien and invasive species, environmental education, and citizen science projects. This participation enriched their knowledge and provided valuable insights into current trends and challenges in plant conservation within the Mediterranean region.

World Heritage Sites

One team member attended an online training session on World Heritage Sites in collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism. This training provided valuable insights into the preservation and management of significant cultural and natural heritage sites, enhancing knowledge and contributing to our commitment to sustainable tourism practices.

Other Workshops

Other workshops attended include: The Asian Leadership Essentials Training Program, a comprehensive series of workshops covering various aspects of agriculture, taxidermy workshops, cytogenetics training, and digital strategy training.





Botanical & Community Gardens

As a result of our continuous field trips and conservation measures, our Botanical Garden continues to develop. So far, we have **cultivated 412 plant species** in our garden which belong to 80 families, including 79 rare species, three parasitic species, and seven invasive species (which are being combatted). We continue to care for our ex-situ conservation program which includes six iris species and 19 orchid species. As part of our commitment to education, we have developed a poster to inform visitors about this program, and introduce them to the beautiful iris and orchid flowers in our garden.

At PIBS, **we value food sovereignty** and feel it is one of the best (and delicious) forms of sustainable living. This goes hand in hand with our mission in promoting responsible human interactions with our environment. As such, we source as much produce from our abundant community gardens, greenhouse, fruit trees and wild plants as possible. We've even started selling our produce, aiming to inspire locals to cultivate their own food.

Below is a summary of our production in 2023.



Production

- 2.5 kilograms of **honey**
- 78 kilograms of **olive oil**
- 622 **organic eggs** (2,830 since March, 2019)
- 41 kilograms of **tilapia** (from our aquaponics system)

More than 250 kilograms of vegetables, herbs and fruits, including:

Tomatoes, peppers, lettuce, fava beans, broccoli, fennel, cauliflower, onions, radishes, chard, spinach, eggplants, peas, chickpeas, thyme, sage, rosemary, mint, lemon verbena, turmeric, passionfruit, apricots, lemons, clementines, grapes, ground cherries, raspberries, pecans, almonds, peaches, guavas, bananas, figs, pomegranates, loquats, prickly pear, strawberries, and hawthorns.

Beyond food production, we've initiated the cultivation of ornamental plants for marketing purposes, **planting over 600 seedlings.**

To encourage locals to grow their own food within the city, we offer 30 individual one square meter plots which can be used at no cost in our Community Garden. We also use some beds cultivated by PIBS staff and volunteers as an educational module in some of our weekly environmental educational events and walking tours of the facility. We continued our practice of recycling all food and water waste. Food waste collected at PIBS was sorted into two full compost systems and a worm compost, which produced nutrient-rich fertilizers used in our gardens. Bread scraps were also conserved for our biogas digester, which turns this food waste into methane gas which powers a cooking stove.

Water is a precious resource [especially given that Israel takes over 87% of the West Bank's water resources and imposes regular shutoffs on Palestinian water pipes]. Gray water from staff and volunteer kitchens is collected and used to water trees throughout PIBS-PMNH. We also continued cultivating flowers, herbs, and succulents in our **vertical garden** which is made of repurposed plastic bottles and reuses water across multiple plants.

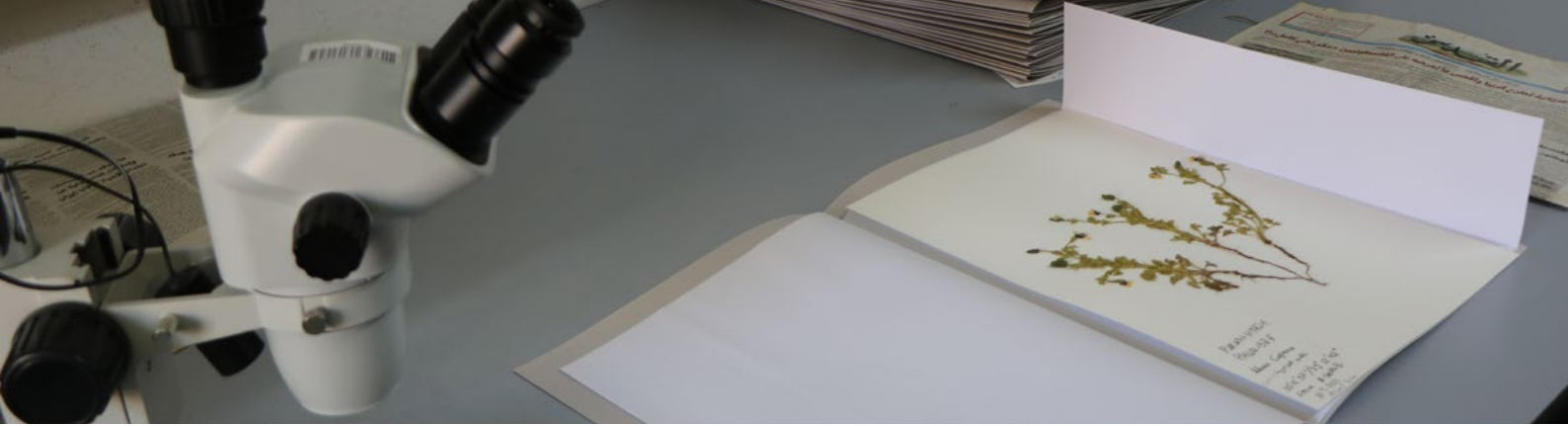
Our compost toilet further contributed to our efforts to conserve water and waste, while also surprising guests and visitors with its beautiful views over the Bethlehem hills.







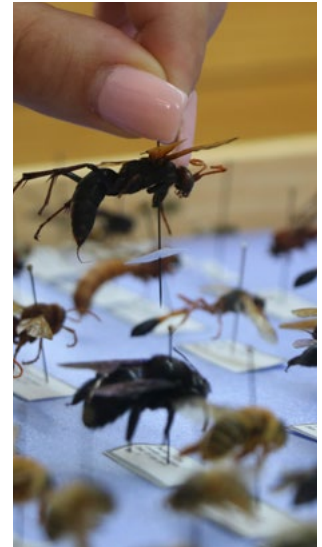
Collections



We work on our **flora and fauna collections** all year long, starting from planning field trips to gathering and preserving the specimens. We are constantly increasing our collections, as well as our team's capacity for curating specimens. Specimens are used as records for research and educational purposes.

Flora specimens are preserved in our Herbarium unit. This unit is a dedicated botanical research facility focused on preserving, documenting, and analyzing plant specimens. So far, we have **1625 curated herbarium specimens**, which represent 837 different species that belong to the 90 plant families of which 177 species are rare or endangered species.

Within our faunal unit, we now house over **10,000 invertebrate specimens** and more than **500 vertebrate specimens**.





Animal Rehabilitation Unit

Since its establishment in 2019, our ARU has **rescued numerous threatened animals**, including mammals like foxes, hyenas, European badgers, mongooses (Martins), bats, and various birds such as golden eagles, eagle owls, black kites, crows, and reptiles like snakes.

This year, our ARU received a badger, a fox, a dove and five hyena cubs. The hyena cubs were confiscated by the Environmental Police for being illegally traded in Hebron. The Environmental Quality Authority, in collaboration with the Palestine Society for Environment and Sustainable Development, delivered the cubs to our rehabilitation unit.

Unable to locate their mother, we have no choice but to nurture the cubs in our rehabilitation unit. For six months, we provided the necessary medical care for the cubs, adhered to strict feeding schedules, minimized human interactions, and taught them essential survival skills.

Despite our efforts, it became evident that these cubs would not safely adapt to the wild. Therefore we decided to transfer three of the five cubs to Qalqilya Zoo to serve educational purposes and **increase awareness about this vulnerable species**. Meanwhile, our unit continues to care for the remaining two cubs.



WATCH THE YOUNG
HYENAS PLAY



Research & Publications

Our institute undertook **20 field trips across the West Bank**. Our primary focus was on areas with limited data collection and significant biodiversity. The purpose of these trips was to gather specimens for research while also expanding our collections, particularly our herbarium and exhibit collections.

This year, **we received two grants** that significantly shaped our fieldwork. The first grant came from the Global Genome Initiative for Gardens (GGI-Gardens), Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI), and the United States Botanic Garden (USBG). Our institute was among the ten grantees selected globally. With this support, we've collected over 600 species, preserving their plant material in our freezer for genomic analysis as well as being available to serve research purposes internationally for interested researchers. The second grant was from The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) in collaboration with the Donors' Initiative for Mediterranean Freshwater Ecosystems (DIMFE). Our project, titled "Science-Based Conservation of Wetlands in two KBAs in the State of Palestine," focuses on evaluating two protected areas within two Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs): the Jordan Valley and the Northern Dead Sea Region. These areas encompass marshland and spring wetlands.

Our institute hosted Prof. Alfried Vogler from the Natural History Museum, London for a week in March. During his visit, we conducted several field trips, particularly focusing on gathering water samples for our ongoing Environmental DNA research project.

Prof. Mazin Qumsiyeh supervised four these projects by students—three master's and one bachelor's— on environmental issues as below:

- A re-examination of the taxonomy of Orchidaceae in Palestine through molecular analysis
- Molecular systematics of beetles native to Palestine
- Assessment of ecosystem services in the Dead Sea Protected Area in the West Bank with recommendations for the management plan
- Desert Tourism in Palestine

In 2023, **the Institute produced 17 manuscripts** on environmental justice, protected areas, national parks, fauna, flora, and more. Given the current political situation in Palestine, we also published research on the environmental impact of war, on Israel's weaponization of "Nature Reserves" and "National Parks," and on a vision for peace based on justice and sustainability.

In addition, we published at least 12 other articles (not in peer-reviewed journals) which cover diverse areas, all related to our stated mission and goals. Visit palestinature.org/research to download these publications.

*Accepted and published in 2023 but listed as submitted in 2022

*Qumsiyeh, M.B., R. Bassous-Ghattas, E.N. Handal, M. Abusarhan, M.H. Najajreh, I.M. Albaradeyeh. **Biodiversity conservation of a new protected area 'Al-Arqoub', South Jerusalem Hills, Palestine.** PARKS, 29:33-42.

Qumsiyeh, MB. **Developing institutions that serve national goals: Case study of the Palestine Institute for Biodiversity and Sustainability.** Al-Quds Journal for Natural Sciences, 1(3):6-10

*Qumsiyeh, MB and B. Al-Sheikh. **Flora and conservation issues in two Protected Areas in Palestine: Wadi Al-Zarqa Al-Ulwi and Wadi Qana.** Diversity 15, no. 2: 142. part of the Special Issue "Ecology, Conservation and Restoration of Plant Species".

Amr, Zuhair, Elias N. Handal, Mohammad Abu Serhan, Mazin B. Qumsiyeh, Rihan Bani Hani, and David A. Warrell. 2023 **Epidemiology of scorpion stings in the West Bank, Occupied Palestinian Territory.** Eastern Mediterranean Health Journal. 29(12):937-943.

Qumsiyeh, M.B., D. Husein, N. Boulad, I.M. Albaradeya, M. Mahasnah, M. Abusirhan, M. Najajrah, Banan Al-Shaikh, Elias N. Handal, and Zuhair S. Amr. **Updating and Enhancing the Protected Areas Network of the State of Palestine: A step Towards Biodiversity Conservation.** PARKS, 29: 107-118.

Qumsiyeh, MB. **Environmental Injustice in the West Bank (Occupied Palestine).** Land Research Center, 262 pp.

*Qumsiyeh, MB. **Settling Nature: The Conservation Regime in Palestine-Israel By Irus Braverman,** University of Minnesota Press, 2023, paperback, 362 pp. MEB \$35. Middle East Books Review, Washington Report on Middle East Affairs, May 2023, pp. 65-66

Qumsiyeh and Haidee Clauer. **Weaponizing "Israeli National Parks" as a Tool of Ethnic Cleansing.** Palestine Israel Journal. Vol. 28 No. 3&4 <https://www.pij.org/articles/2276/weaponizing-israeli-national-parks-as-a-tool-of-ethnic-cleansing>

Hassouna, S., **Cultivating biodiverse futures at the (postcolonial) botanical garden.** Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers. 2023;00:1-16. <https://rgs-ibg.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdf/10.1111/tran.12639>

Adawi, S., Handal, E., Romdhane, M. and Hmida, L. **Contribution to the Occurrence of the Blackfly (Diptera:Simuliidae) in the Palestinian Territories, West Bank.** International Journal of Tropical Disease & Health, 44(17): 20-26.

Handal, E.N., Adawi, S., Gedeon, J., and Amr, Z. **Notes on The Current Status of Freshwater Snails Fauna of The Palestinian Territories (West Bank).** Folia Malacologica, 31(2): 92-99

Handal, E.N., Al-Shomali, S.L. and Amr, Z.S. **Trade in exotic birds in the West Bank, Palestinian Territories.** Sandgrouse 45: 196-204.

*Benyei, P., A. Skarlatidou, D. Argyriou, R. Hall, I. Theilade, N. Turreira-García, D.F. Latreche, A. Albert, D.N. Berger, M. Cartró-Sabaté, J. H. Chang et al. **Challenges, Strategies and Impacts of doing Citizen Science with Marginalised and Indigenous Communities: reflections from project coordinators.** Citizen Science: Theory and Practice 8(1): 21, pp. 1-15

Khalifeh C. and MB Qumsiyeh. **How the colonizers are also mentally colonized: An Israeli-Palestinian Example.** Palestine Israel Journal, Submitted.

Gideon, J.G. and MB Qumsiyeh. **New Floral Records in the Area of South Jerusalem Hills, Palestine.** Jordan Journal of Natural History. In press

Allombert, Charlotte and Mazin B. Qumsiyeh. **Israeli designation of “Nature Reserves”: A tool of colonization.** IADL International Review on Contemporary Law. In press

Qumsiyeh, M.B. And Z.S.Amr. **Northern Great Rift Valley: deserts and other biomes.** Chapter 28 (in Global Biome Conservation and Global Warming: Impacts on Ecology and Biodiversity, Elsevier Publishers, in press

Here is an example of non-peer reviewed articles:

Qumsiyeh MB & A. Alameddine. **Anticipating Israel's Counter-Attack: Make the ‘One Democratic State’ Solution Mainstream Again** by <https://www.palestinechronicle.com/anticipating-israels-counter-attack-make-the-one-democratic-state-solution-mainstream-again/>



Conservation &
Community Service



Wetland in the Jordan Valley

A primary goal of our work is in conservation of natural and human communities. Towards this and in 2023 we achieved:

- **Science based reformulation of Protected Area Network (PAN)** and management plans for 4 areas. Approved by the council of ministers and incorporated into the spatial plan of the State of Palestine.
- **The National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (NBSAP)**. The process of formulation itself built capacity and implementation routes.
- A database of **Environmental Impact of Israeli Colonization**.
- Collaboration with other institutions on **small scale conservation efforts**. For example with Wonder Cabinet and our neighbors on an environmentally friendly and visually appealing neighborhood.
- Started **the first project in Palestine focused on conservation of wetlands**. This included designating conservation status of key wetland species, developing management plans (in collaboration with stakeholders), educational initiatives, and efforts to bridge the gap between science, policy, and practice.
- We continued to **serve and empower marginalized communities** (those in area C, women, and children) for sustainability.
- Our clinical and research laboratories focusing on cytogenetics processed close to **300 patient samples this year**. These include patients with congenital abnormalities, infertility, those with spontaneous abortions, and cancer. Nominal fees were collected from patients to cover costs but we also offered discounts or waivers to those who could not afford the tests.



Media & Visibility

Our website (palestinature.org) and social media channels (e.g. [facebook.com/PIBS.PMNH](https://www.facebook.com/PIBS.PMNH), [instagram.com/palestinemnh](https://www.instagram.com/palestinemnh)) developed and are well utilized. We also created a Youtube Channel ([youtube.com/@PIBS-BU-2017](https://www.youtube.com/@PIBS-BU-2017)) for the institute. Facebook is our most active platform, with **15,842 followers**, and is used for timely updates on events and news regarding the Institute. It allows us to interact with our followers from all over the world.

We continued to hold our **monthly virtual volunteer/staff meet-up**. This meeting presents a powerpoint presentation by the PIBS team that shows our supporters (previous volunteers and donors) our achievements and accomplishments of each month. This has become a tradition that connects us with friends around the world.



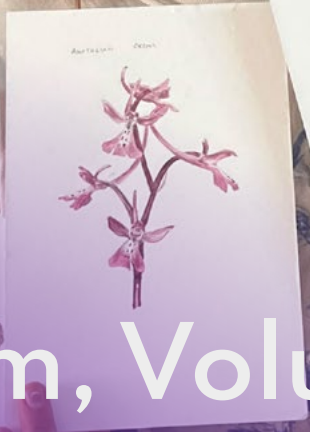
Besides keeping our supporters up-to-date on our progress, the meet-up is also a great place to strengthen relationships and network with new people. Thus far, we have held 42 of these meetings. Those interested in joining these meetings can send an email to: info@palestinature.org.

Beginning November 18, 2023, we started holding a **weekly virtual meeting on Human Rights (on Gaza and beyond)** to provide our supporters with additional information and analysis not available on the mainstream media.

Professor Qumsiyeh and Mrs. Qumsiyeh traveled to the UK, Ireland, USA, UAE, Qatar in 2023, **gave over 150 talks** related to Palestine and our institute and to network. Prof. Qumsiyeh also **gave more than 170 talks virtually** over the year to audiences globally and locally, covering issues like environmental justice, human rights, and the important work of the Institution.



PIBS Team, Volunteers, & Donors





PIBS has radically updated its internal and external system of oversight and administration and built its capacity. As part of this **restructuring**, two new positions were established and filled by existing staff members. Rami Abu Sa'ad has taken on the role of Deputy Director for the Administration Section, while Mohammad Najajreh now serves as Deputy Director for the Museum and Garden Section. The achievements highlighted in this annual report were made possible by our dedicated team, consisting of nine members – seven staff members and two full-time volunteers, Prof. Mazin Qumsiyeh and Mrs. Jessie Qumsiyeh.

Alongside our staff, we appreciate the valuable contributions of **53 local, international, and remote volunteers**. The number of this year's volunteers was less

than the previous year due to travel restrictions caused by the war. Despite this, we were able to achieve great things in a short period of time. Volunteers helped with writing grant proposals, research, manuscript writing and editing, graphic design and visualization of educational materials, planting, weeding, feeding animals, watering, harvesting and much more.

Volunteering at PIBS provides the opportunity to learn new skills, make a valuable contribution to the environment, meet new people, and learn about Palestinian culture. Visit our website to learn more: <https://www.palestinature.org/volunteer/>

Our team expresses our deepest gratitude to 232 donors in 2023.



SEE THE DESIGN OF OUR
NEW MUSEUM FACILITIES

Our 2024 Focus

- Dealing with threats, especially colonization activities and climate change
- Expanding our work in conservation in and around protected areas
- Increasing regional and global collaboration
- Expanding our children's programs focused on environmental awareness and empowerment
- Renovation and expansion of our facilities — increasing exhibit space significantly and adding a children's room, gift shop, and cafeteria. The total cost is \$1.6 million and we secured \$1.1 million. We hope with your support we can get the rest to open all facilities in early 2025.
- Publicizing the new bachelor program in biodiversity and sustainability. You can help by sponsoring tuition for needy students (roughly \$7,000/year).
- Pending availability of funds: expanding our animal rehabilitation unit
- Celebrating our 10-year anniversary



A Final Word

At PIBS, we welcome visiting researchers, interns, and all who want to join us to be students of knowledge and contributors to a more livable world. You can be a supporter of this project in many ways: volunteering, donating books and specimens, donating money, visiting us, joining our activities, following us on social media, as well as sharing the works of this Institute.



“For it is in giving that we receive.” - Francis of Assisi

VOLUNTEER



DONATE



Our Vision

Sustainable human and natural communities: Empower responsible human interactions with all components of our environment to promote a sustainable ecosystem.

Our Mission

Research, educate about, and conserve our natural world, culture and heritage and promote responsible human interactions with our environment.

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