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Presented during the Israel National Conference on Animal Welfare
held at the Cohen Auditorium at the Faculty of Agriculture,
Beit Dagan, Israel, Between the 19 to 21 October 2021**

Front Cover: GREAT WHITE PELICAN (*Pelecanus onocrotalus*)

The great white pelican (GWP) is a huge bird: it measures 140 to 180 cm in length with a 28.9 to 47.1 cm enormous pink and yellow bill. The wingspan measures 226 to 360 cm. These measurements make the GWP the largest among extant flying animals outside of the great albatross. During migration, more than 75,000 have been observed in Israel and, in winter, over 45,000 may stay in Pakistan. In all, its colonies combined, 75,000 pairs are estimated to nest in Africa.

GWP's usually prefer shallow warm fresh water. They are highly sociable and often forms large flocks. They are well adapted for aquatic life and mainly eat fish. They leave their roost to feed early in the morning and may fly over 100 km in search of food, needing from 0.9 to 1.4 kg of fish every day. A group of 6 to 8 great GWP gather in a horseshoe formation in water to feed together.

The female lays from 1 to 4 eggs in a clutch. Incubation takes 29 to 36 days.

The GWP has a special relationship with Israel. Like their ancient ancestors, the pelicans pass through Israel during their fall migration. Thousands of them are seen in our skies and many land to feed in order to gain the energy required for the rest of their long journey. On their first journey, young pelicans with gray feathers join the adults, who are distinguished by bright white feathers and black flight feathers. The large flock protects the inexperienced young. With thanks to Tal Waner for the very impressive cover photos.