

# ISRAEL JOURNAL OF VETERINARY MEDICINE

Formerly: Refuah Veterinarith

Published Quarterly:

Volume 75 • No. 4 • December 2020

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Printed in Israel by E. Oren Publisher Ltd.  
Email: oren.print@gmail.com

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## Front Cover: **COMMON CRANE** (*Grus grus*)

The common crane, also known as the Eurasian crane is a medium-sized bird weighing between 3 to 6 kg. After draining the swamps of the Hula valley, the valley became an important stopping point for cranes and other birds migrating from Europe to Africa, from October to March. Tens of thousands of cranes often visit the lake during the migrating season, which is maintained through the "Crane Project". The goal of the project is to protect local agriculture from cranes that land in Israel during the winter, without doing any harm to the birds. Wildlife experts identified a tricky task: How to allow the cranes to land in Israel so they can rest and recuperate, without encouraging them to stay permanently. The project achieves its goal by initially providing the birds with a food source. Afterwards in the winter months the peanuts and corn that the birds eat are rationed and then the cranes continue on to Ethiopia and Sudan. With special feeding stations set up to accommodate the cranes, the process begins at the end of the summer harvest and stretches into the winter months.