# **A Rocha Lebanon**

# January 2024





Rainy January



The Bekaa valley is a quite challenging climate for raising trees: in winter, water flows down from the slopes of the mountain creating temporary marshes; but in summer, heat and drought are the rule. The challenge is then to drain the water in winter and retain it in late spring to stock it during the summer. Rainy January was a festival of double rainbows









Drains are planted with poplars as windcuts, and ledges plantes with clover.

Our gratitude goes to Hilal who invited us to take cuttings from his alley of poplars



#### Mowing solutions with grazing animals

No drill and no mow gardening is challenging for grass control. After months of experimentation, we fund three efficient solutions:

1° Large plots grazed by big herds of sheep (200 individuals) by <u>night</u> to keep them focus on the ground (and not eat the shrubs): it results in a perfect lawn.

2° Small plot with seedlings and shrubs grazed by geese in a mobile pen: the plot is entirely clean out and full of manure.

3° Fields grazed a cow which cleans between the lines of beans or onions.

For more details, read our blog:

Mowing solutions for no-drill gardening



The pine forest after a grazing night by 200 sheep



Geese in their mobile pen moved every day in the edible forest for grass control and manuring



Na'nu'a, our new gardener, cleans the grass between the beans of the forest garden plot





Construction of a stable for the cow









Omar and Hamzeh





Latest plantations

We are grateful to Hana Khoury & Bro Company for their support in planting the edge with 40 additional trees







Saplings are planted in large holes filled up with organic matter (straw) and old manure to facilitate root spreading and water retain.



Path planted with hundreds of rosemary, lavender and Damascus roses



## **News from Qabb Elias**



Gardening day with the friends of Qabb Elias Educational Garden: weeding and pruning



# **Biodiversity**



We were happy to find a **Gunther's Cylindrical Skink** (*Chalcides guentheri*), which is legless lizard.

You can read details on Wildlebanon.org's page on lizards. <u>https://wildlebanon.org/en/animals/reptiles/lizards/</u>



#### **Under the rock: study of a micro-habitat**

A large part of the living beings become discreet in winter: deciduous trees lose their leaves, and numerous animals hibernate, or disappear in the soil. The first shelter is under the rocks. What can be find under this heavy roof?





## Crickets

### Woodlouse





## Myriapods

#### Queen ants





#### Anecic earthworms

(large earthworms forming vertical, unbranching burrows down to 2 meters into the soil but feeding on fresh surface litter)



See you next month