

- **The third AEWA Newsletter**

## **EDITORIAL**

Nearly two years after the Interim Secretariat was established by the Government of the Netherlands, the Secretary is receiving more and more requests for information on the African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement. This indicates that the AEWA is becoming a familiar conservation tool for the conservation of migratory species of waterbirds. At the same time the process of acceding to AEWA by the Range States is going smoothly but not very fast. National procedures for signing require a lot of effort and are very time consuming. Eleven Range States have already signed AEWA of which five did not request ratification. More Range States are expected to sign in the near future.

Since the first improvised Newsletter was published in August 1996, the Interim Secretariat has aimed to print a Newsletter twice a year. The response to the second issue (April 1997), in which the new logo was incorporated in the lay-out, was generally enthusiastic and positive. The response shows that there is a need for an exchange of information between AEWA partners. The aim of the Newsletter is to disseminate general and specific information on on-going projects, species action plans, research and monitoring, information and education activities, etc. The exchange of information can help realise a concerted conservation and management policy in the Range States and is one of the reasons for establishing a co-operation between Range States. The Interim Secretariat is therefore pleased with the growing number of contributors and increased information in this third Newsletter. Contributors to this Newsletter are: Mr. Stefan Phil (Denmark), Mr Roeland Huilmand (Netherlands), Mr. Yoshi Leshem/ Ms. Miri Rosenboim (Israel), Mr Güven Eken (Turkey), Mr Abdoulaye Ndiaye (Senegal), Ms. Wendy D. Borello (Botswana), Mr. Peter Mundy (Zimbabwe), Mr. Alexander L. Mischenko (Russia). Also, information was provided by the following international non-governmental organisations: European Union for Coastal Conservation (EUCC), Fédération des Associations de Chasseurs de l'UE (FACE), Wildfowl & Wetland Trust (WWT), Wetlands International and World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF).

Unfortunately, information from the African region, the Middle East and the Asian Republics is scarce. The Interim Secretariat especially invites members in these regions to send information for the next Newsletter. The fourth issue will be published in May 1998.

Send your news to:

**AEWA Interim Secretariat (Room 3500), P.O. Box 20401, 2500 EK The Hague, The Netherlands  
Tel.: (+31) 70 3792982, Fax.: (+31) 70 3793751, E-mail: b.lenten@n.agro.nl**

## **SECRETARIAT NEWS**

In the period 1 January to 30 September 1997 several activities were undertaken by the Interim Secretariat to promote AEWA. Oral and/or poster presentations were held at the following meetings: Workshop international flyway management plan for Dark-bellied Brent geese, The Netherlands (Mr. Bert Lenten), Meeting of Africa Desk Officers in Convention Secretariats & Ramsar Partner Organisations, Switzerland (Mr. Bert Lenten), West Africa Sub Regional Meeting, Senegal (Mr. Bert Lenten), COP5 of the Bonn Convention, Switzerland (Mr. Gerard Boere and Mr. Bert Lenten), Wader Study Group, Denmark (Mr. Gerard Boere), Great Cormorant Workshop, Denmark (Mr Gerard Boere), Arctic Biodiversity Workshop, Denmark (Mr Gerard Boere), Seminar "Migrating Birds Know No Boundaries", Israel (Mr. Bert Lenten) and Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna, Greenland (Mr. Gerard Boere). In addition, an oral presentation during the plenary session of the Fifth Conference of the Parties of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (Bonn Convention), a special reception and a meeting were organised by the Interim Secretariat (Mr. Gerard Boere and Mr. Bert Lenten). The aim of the meeting was to inform the delegates about the progress made on AEWA and to discuss a draft proposal for the establishment of the Technical Committee.

This special evening session was attended by more than fifty participants and the discussion was very fruitful.

AEWA was promoted at many more meetings and in bilateral contacts through comments made in discussions and distributing information material.

The Interim has noticed that the procedure for accession to AEWA needs clarification. Therefore a letter has been sent to all the responsible ministers in the 116 Range States to inform them about the formal procedure. A summary of this letter can be found in this newsletter.

### **First Meeting of the Parties; preparations**

In addition to the above-mentioned presentations, the Interim Secretariat started a second "phone call round" in mid-June. By making contact with all the focal points, the Secretary tried to get a good overview of the progress on AEWA in the Range States. Based on the information thus collected, it is expected that AEWA will take effect by the end of 1998. According to the Agreement, the Depository shall convene the first Meeting of the Parties (MOP1) no later than one year after the date of coming in force. This Meeting is planned for late 1999 and will probably be held in South Africa. The idea is to organise the MOP1 back to back with the Sixth Conference of the Parties of the Bonn Convention for efficiency reasons and from a point of view of saving our limited budgets. The preparatory work started immediately after COP5 and will consume a large part of the Interim Secretariat's time in the next two years.

Aside from logistic arrangements, preparations include the drafting of several documents. To gain an impression of what is expected from the Interim Secretariat, Wetlands International has been asked to identify all activities based on Final Act, Agreement or Action Plan. Further on in this Newsletter you will find more details about this so called "Implementation Plan AEWA 1997-1999". Realising that not all Range States are able to support this Implementation Plan, it was decided to send the Plan to all AEWA focal points. Thus everybody has received the information.

### **Explorative paper for AEWA WEB SITE**

At present information on AEWA is available via the Bonn Convention Web Site. This site can be found at: <http://www.wcmc.org.uk/cms>.

In March 1997 the Interim Secretariat visited WCMC in Cambridge and discussed the possibility of creating a Web Site for AEWA. Internet is an attractive provider of information. Web Sites are becoming more and more important for the dissemination of information. The Interim Secretariat has written an explorative paper stating the AEWA target groups, the information the Interim Secretariat wants to disseminate, etc. The discussion on this paper is still on-going, but hopefully WCMC can be contacted at the end of 1997/ beginning 1998 to create an AEWA Web Site in close co-operation with the Bonn Convention Secretariat and Wetlands International.

### **Seminar "Birds Know No Boundaries"**

The Interim Secretariat attended the Seminar "Birds Know No Boundaries" (31 August to 6 September 1997, Israel) to promote AEWA. The three objectives of the meeting were:

1. Presentation and discussion of the latest findings on the migration of the White Stork which should be the basis for better and more targeted conservation measures along the whole flyway.
2. Initiation of co-ordinated research and conservation measures in the Middle East which requires particular attention due to its bottleneck character.
3. Demonstration of and teaching Israeli computer assisted environmental activities.

The presentations on the latest findings on the migration of White Stork based on the use of satellite transmitters were very interesting. Satellite transmitters provide detailed information about migration route and pattern. This technique also shows, for example, that White Storks congregate before crossing a large watershed like the Bosphorus (Turkey). Despite all the benefits of this modern technology, one of the researchers showed that following transmitted birds during their migration is still a valuable tool. By following Black Storks by car he gathered detailed information about where this species roosts, important sites, etc. Thus he discovered that these birds use a small pool in Morocco to drink before crossing the Sahara Desert. Pools like this, not obviously important for nature conservationists, appear to be crucial for the survival of the species during migration.

Participants' attention was also drawn to the Internet programme on White Stork Migration; more information can be found in the section Education and Information in this Newsletter.

For more information, please contact:

Dr. Yoshi Leshem, Tel Aviv University, George S. Wise Faculty of Life Sciences, Department of Zoology, Tel Aviv 69978, Israel, Tel (+972) 3 6407963, Fax: (+972) 3 6406010, E-mail: yleshem@post.tau.ac.il

## **A Waterbird Oversight**

Dr. Peter Mundy (Zimbabwe) sent an article titled "A Waterbird Oversight". He writes that neither the African Skimmer (*Rynchops flavirostris*) nor the Rock (White-collared) Pratincole (*Glareola nuchalis*) are listed in an appendix of the Bonn Convention or in the African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement. The author thinks this is surely an oversight and therefore the following explanation is given:

Both species are well-known intra-African (Afrotropical) migrants, at least in the Southern African region. In Zimbabwe, the African Skimmer is "present between April and December" and Rock Pratincoles "appear in July...departing again at the end of December or early January".

In southern Africa, the two species are very much birds of the Zambezi river, with the Skimmer nesting on sandbars and the Pratincole nesting on rocks in the river. Both require a 'predictable' river level that neither floods out of season nor drops so much that the birds are exposed to terrestrial predators. In addition, the Skimmer is very vulnerable for tourists' activities.

The author considers that both species have an unfavourable conservation status due to the dam activity in the Zambezi basin, and the need for unseasonal river flow for the production of hydro-electricity. Thus sandbars are no longer safe from floods, rocks emerge too much out of the river and banks are undercut by unseasonable flow (and also by speed-boat activity).

Quite comprehensive counts of the Skimmer and the Pratincole along the Zambezi River result in estimates of 1428 birds and 1938 birds respectively. Unfortunately, these counts do not include Mozambique territory.

In his article Peter Mundy indicates that the Carmine Bee-eater suffers from the same problems as the Skimmer and Pratincole. All these species are "ecologically dependent on wetlands" (actually rivers) as defined in the Agreement.

### Remarks by the Interim Secretariat

According to article X of the African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement, the Agreement may be amended in any ordinary or extraordinary session of the Meeting of the Parties. The Interim Secretariat therefore suggests to correct the omission of these species in a proposal for amendment at the first Meeting of the Parties in 1999.

## **AEWA Logo/ Seal**

All Range States are encouraged to provide relevant publications on migratory waterbirds with an AEWA seal either by using the text logo and/ or adding a small text announcing that the report, publication, event is conducted in the framework of the implementation of the African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement. Contact the Interim Secretariat for further support.

## **CONFERENCES - MEETINGS OF INTEREST**

January 7-11 1998

**9<sup>th</sup> North American Arctic Goose Conference/ Workshop, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada.**  
INFO: SEAN BOYD, PACIFIC WILDLIFE RESEARCH CENTER, CANADIAN WILDLIFE SERVICE-ENVIRONMENT CANADA, RR1-5421 ROBERTSON RD., DELTA, B.C., CANADA, V4K 3N2, TEL: (+1) 604 940 4682, FAX: (+1) 604 946 7022, E-mail: sean.boyd@ec.gc.ca, Web site: <http://www.biol.sfu.ca/naag98>

March 23-31 1998

**14<sup>th</sup> International Conference of the European Bird Census Council (EBCC), Cottbus, Germany**

Info: Bird Numbers C/O Prof. Dr. Gerhard Wiegleb, Brandenburg Technical University, Faculty of Environmental Sciences and Process Engineering, Karl-Marx-Str. 17, D-03044 Cottbus, Germany  
Tel: (+49) 335 69 2291, fax: (+49) 335 69 2291, E-mail: wiegleb@umwelt.tu-cottbus.de

March-April 1998

**Siberian Crane Meeting, Iran**

Info: UNEP/CMS Secretariat, UN Premises, Martin Luther King Str. 8, D-53175 Bonn, Germany, Tel: (+49) 228 915 2401, Fax: (+49) 228 915 2449

May 3-5 1998

**Fifth Workshop of the Woodcock and Snipe Specialist Group, Czempin, Poland**

Info: Dr Herby Kalcheuter (co-ordinator of the WSSG), EWI, D-79848 Bonndorf-Glashütte, Germany, Tel: (+49) 7653 1891, Fax: (+49) 7653 9269

May (tentative)

**Regional Ramsar Convention Meeting and Workshop "Central Asian Flyway", Kazakstan**

Info: Ramsar Bureau, Mauverney 28, 1196 Gland, Switzerland, Tel: (+41) 22 9990170, Fax: (+41) 22 9990169

August 12-15 1998

**International Wader Study Group Meeting, Langebaan, South Africa**

Info: Mr Les Underhill, Avian Demography Unit, University of Cape Town, Rondebosch 7700, South Africa, Tel: (+27) 21 6503227, Fax: (+27) 21 6897578, E-mail: lgu@maths.uct.ac.za, web: <http://www.uct.ac.za/depts/stats/adu>.

August 16-22 1998

**22<sup>ND</sup> International Ornithological Congress, Durban, South Africa**

Info: Turners Conferences and Conventions (Pty) Ltd, 22 IOC, P.o. Box 1935, Durban 4000, South Africa, Tel: (+27) 31 332 1451, Fax: (+27) 31 37 9993, E-mail: nolram@iafrica.com, web: <http://www.ioc.org.za>

September 29-October 3 1998

**5<sup>th</sup> Pan Mediterranean Seabird Symposium, Malta**

INFO: SECRETARIAT OF MEDMARAVIS, P.O. BOX 2, 83470 SAINT-MAXIMIM, FRANCE, TEL: (+33) 4 94594069, FAX: (+33) 4 94594738, E-mail: medmaraxm@aix.pacwan.net  
Web site: <http://monoweb.pacwan.net/monoweb/medmaraxm.default.html>

**September 1998**

**5<sup>th</sup> Pan-Mediterranean Marine Wildlife Conference: Biogeographical distribution of birds and mammals, Malta.**

Info: Medmaravis. Fax:(+33) 494594738, E-mail: medmaraxm@aix.pacwan.net

October 1998

**Annual meeting of the International Wader Study Group, Hungary**

Info: Ms Petra de Goeij, c/o NIOZ, P.O. Box 59, 1790 AB Den Burgh, The Netherlands, Tel: (+31) 222 369 350, Fax: (+31) 222 319 674

November 8-14 1998

**2<sup>nd</sup> International Conference on Wetlands & Development, INCLUDING A WORKSHOP ON TECHNICAL PREPARATIONS FOR THE FIRST MEETING OF THE PARTIES OF THE AFRICAN-EURASIAN WATERBIRD AGREEMENT, Dakar, Senegal**

Info: Wetlands International, Marijkeweg 11, P.O. Box 7002, 6700 AC Wageningen, The Netherlands, Tel: (+31) 317 474711, Fax: (+31) 317 474712, E-mail: post@wetlands.agro.nl

## PROJECTS

### **Wader Flyway Atlas**

One of the activities mentioned in the Implementation Plan AEWA 1997-1999 is the making of an atlas of wader populations in Africa and West Eurasia. This atlas, similar to the recently published Atlas on Anatidae and containing detailed information on geographical limits of each population and migration routes, population size, conservation status and trend etc., will contribute to an effective implementation of the Agreement and its Action Plan. The total budget needed to make the atlas is approximately \$ 320,000. The Netherlands' government is willing to donate \$ 50,000 in 1998 and a further contribution is expected in 1999. Co-funding is needed to start the project.

For more information contact:

Dr Nick Davidson, Wetlands International, P.O. Box 7002, 6700 AA Wageningen, The Netherlands, Tel: (+31) 317 474712, Fax: (+31) 317 474712, E-mail: [post@wetlands.agro.nl](mailto:post@wetlands.agro.nl)

## **SPECIES ACTION PLANS**

### **An Action Plan for the Steller's Eider**

An Expert group chaired by Wetlands International Seaduck Specialist Group is compiling an action Plan for the Steller's Eider, a globally threatened seaduck species which regularly winters in Europe. The expert group is funded by the European Union and includes the involvement of such organisations as the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, BirdLife International and Wetlands International.

The basis of the Action Plan was a workshop for the expert group in Estonia in November 1996 attended by researchers and managers of all European Range States in which the species occurs, as well as scientists from eastern Asia and the United States.

The wintering population of the Steller's Eider, which breed in Siberia, is currently estimated at 40,000 birds. The population has increased over the last 30 years. The Pacific wintering population, however, has decreased and the scarce available data suggest that this population has halved over the last 40 years to the current level of 180,000.

The Action Plan recommends increased international co-operation in research and protection of the Steller's Eider and the drawing up of a global action plan. Research in adult survival rates, breeding biology, including interactions with predators, and the impact of human activities on mortality is essential to assess "bottlenecks" in the annual cycle. Finally, the action plan recommends conservation activities in the European Range States.

(Source WWF Arctic Bulletin 13, No 2.97)

**For more information contact:**

**Stefan Pihl, the Coordinator of the Wetlands International Seaduck Specialist Group**

**E-mail: [sp@dmu.dk](mailto:sp@dmu.dk)**

### **Circumpolar Eider Conservation Strategy and Action Plan**

Eiders are sea ducks that breed, moult and winter in Arctic regions particularly. There are four species of eiders: common (*Somateria mollissima*), king (*S. spectabilis*), spectacled (*S. fischeri*) and Steller's (*Polysticta stelleri*). Many populations of Eiders have declined by more than 50 % and some have vanished completely. Because eiders are a circumpolar resource, the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF) has developed a Circumpolar Eider Conservation Strategy and Action Plan. The goal of the Strategy is to facilitate circumpolar efforts to conserve, protect and restore eider populations.

For more information contact:

CAFF International Secretariat, Hafnarstraeti 97, 600 Akureyri, Iceland, tel: (+354) 462 3350, Fax: (+354) 462 3390, E-mail: [CAFF@nattfs.is](mailto:CAFF@nattfs.is), Internet: <http://www.grida.no/caff>

## **Group of Experts on the Conservation of Birds**

In the framework of the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention), a meeting of experts on the conservation of birds was held 5-8 May 1997 in Izmir, Turkey. The meeting was attended by representatives of 20 Range States and various NGOs.

The task of this expert group is to review current problems on bird conservation in Europe and to suggest appropriate actions. The Group shall, in particular, follow up on the implementation of Recommendation No. 48 (1996) of the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention on the conservation of globally threatened European birds and inform the Committee on the progress in the implementation of the Action Plans referred to in that recommendation. The group may suggest other species requiring Action Plans and propose measures that may be appropriate for the conservation of threatened birds.

The most important outcome of this meeting for AEWA species, such as Pygmy Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax pygmeus*), Dalmatian Pelican (*Pelicanus crispus*), Lesser White-fronted Goose (*Anser erythropus*), Red-breasted Goose (*Branta ruficollis*), Marbled Teal (*Marmaronetta angustirostris*) and White-headed Duck (*Oxyura leucocephala*), is a draft recommendation on the implementation of Action Plans for Globally Threatened Birds in Europe. This recommendation has been submitted to the Standing Committee for examination and possible adoption. The recommendation furthermore invites AEWA to collaborate with the Standing Committee and the concerned states, as appropriate, in the promotion, review and implementation of the Action Plans. The Interim Secretariat accepts this invitation and hopes that the draft recommendation will be adopted.

### **For more information contact:**

**Mr Eladio Fernández-Galiano, Council of Europe, Environment Conservation and Magement Division, 67075 Strasbourg Cedex, France, Tel: (+33) 388 412259, Fax: (+33) 388 413751/ 2784, E-mail: eladio.galiano@delacoe.fr**

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **Procedure for accession to AEWA**

Talks with focal points in and outside Europe have revealed that the procedure for accession to AEWA is not very clear, particularly concerning the signing of the Final Act of the Negotiation Meeting to adopt AEWA (12-16 June 1995). It is widely believed that accession is a fact as soon as the Final Act is signed. The formal procedure, however, is different. In order to become a Party to the Agreement the original document, which is deposited at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Hague, the Netherlands, must be signed. In practice, the ambassador of the country concerned is often given a mandate to sign on behalf of his or her country.

When the document is signed a distinction is made between:

1. a signature without reservations with respect to ratification, acceptance or approval; or
2. a signature with reservations with respect to ratification, acceptance or approval.

The latter option is the most common. It means that once an ambassador has signed, the signature is to be ratified by Parliament and the country concerned does not become a Party to the Agreement until ratification has taken place.

On 10 September 1997 a letter was sent to all the responsible Ministers in the 116 Range States to explain the formal procedure.

### **For more information contact:**

**The Treaties Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, P.O. Box 20061, 2500 EB The Hague, The Netherlands, Tel: (+31) 70 348 4918, Fax: (+31) 70 348 6000**

## **5<sup>TH</sup> COP OF THE BONN CONVENTION**

The Fifth Session of the Conference of the Parties of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS/ Bonn Convention), was attended by 43 Parties and 39 observing

states, plus observers from 20 non-governmental and inter-governmental organisations. Some 170 delegates and experts participated.

During this Conference, from 10-16 April 1997, the Governments pledged international protection for 40 migratory species. Twenty species with the most immediate risk of extinction were listed in Appendix 1 of the Convention. Among them are species listed in Appendix 2 of the African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement, namely: Lesser White-fronted Goose (*Anser erythropus*), Red-breasted Goose (*Branta ruficollis*), Marbled Teal (*Marmaronetta angustirostris*), Ferruginous Duck (*Aythya nyroca*), Steller's Eider (*Polysticta stelleri*) and Sociable Plover (*Chettusia gregaria*). In accordance with articles II and III, Parties of the Convention that are Range States for these species shall thus endeavour to provide immediate protection for these migratory species.

For more information contact:

**UNEP/ CMS SECRETARIAT, Martin Luther King Str. 8, 53175 Bonn, Germany, Tel: (+49) 228 815 2401/2, fax: (+49) 228 815 2449.**

### **CAFF Discussion Paper**

In August 1997 a (draft) report "Global Overview of the Conservation of Migratory Arctic Breeding Birds outside the Arctic" was published. Wetlands International, under contract with the Netherlands Government and in consultation with Russian experts, prepared this report. The contents of the report have been discussed during the CAFF Meeting in Greenland in September 1997.

The author of the report, Derek A. Scott, investigated those international mechanisms (conventions, agreements, programmes and action plans), both legally binding and voluntary, which are relevant to the conservation of migratory Arctic breeding birds and their habitats throughout their non-breeding ranges.

AEWA is mentioned in this report as an extremely valuable tool for the conservation of Arctic migratory waterbirds since it pertains to a large number of species, sixty-nine of the Arctic birds. One of the conclusions is that AEWA has the potential to fill in one of the major gaps in legally binding agreements for the protection of shorebirds. One of the principal recommendations of this study is that countries should be encouraged to join the Bonn Convention (CMS) and/or its Agreements like AEWA and that more flyway agreements such as AEWA could provide the necessary protection world-wide. The report has now been finalised and is distributed more widely; a complete Russian translation will also be provided.

For more information contact:

**Wetlands International, P.O. Box 7002, 6700 AA Wageningen, The Netherlands, Tel: (+31) 317 474711, fax: (+31) 317 474712, E-mail: post@wetlands.agro.nl**

### **Workshop on Slender-billed Curlew**

A workshop on Slender-billed Curlew (SbC) was held on August 10 1997 during the Wader Study Group Conference in Vester Vedsted (Denmark). Mr Gerard Boere (the Netherlands) chaired the workshop in which the latest scientific and conservation aspects were discussed.

The general conclusion of the workshop is that the implementation of the Action Plan for this species should be realised as soon as possible. More specific intentions were also made: to continue the filed surveys in wintering and breeding grounds, to update the (BirdLife) databank, to establish an International Working Group under the Bonn Convention, to develop a radio tracking project and to organise a meeting of SbC MoU countries in the near future.

For more information contact:

**Dr Gerard C. Boere, Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries, Department of Nature Management, P.O. Box 20401, 2500 The Hague, The Netherlands, Tel: (+31) 70 379 3591, Fax: (+31) 70 379 3751, E-mail: g.c.boere@n.agro.nl**

## Arctic Bird Library

On 24 September 1997, the first phase of an Arctic Bird Library was launched on Internet. This Library aims to provide comprehensive information on Arctic Birds and focuses on 137 waterbirds and waders which breed in the Arctic as defined by CAFF (Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna). The Library provides information on some of these species, the habitat, conservation status and population size, and includes range maps from the WCMC Biodiversity Map Library, photos and sound recordings.

The Library can be found under <http://www/wcmc.org.uk/arctic/data/birds>

## Diana-FACE Award 1997

Jointly instituted in 1995 by FACE and Diana Hunting Travel (Denmark), the Diana Conservation Award (DCA), valued at about US \$ 5450, rewards achievements, ideas, initiatives or projects that give the general public a clear picture of the role sustainable hunting plays as a pragmatic nature conservation tool.

The Diana Conservation Award was presented to the 1997 winner on Friday 19 September, following the General Assembly (and the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary!) of the Federation of Field Sports Associations of the EU (FACE).

The Hunters Federation of the French *Landes* Department had the winning project which consists of various conservation, management and restoration activities in a wetlands regions of over 1,200 hectares. These activities have been undertaken since 1977 in this region of southwestern France and include information campaigns aimed at the general public and schools.

### For more information contact:

FACE secretariat, rue F. Pelletier 82, 1030 Brussels, Belgium, Tel: (+32) 2 732 6900, Fax: (+32) 2 732 7072.

## THREATENED WILDFOWL SPECIALIST GROUP NEWS

For those interested in threatened wildfowl (Anseriformes) conservation, the latest edition of the biannual bulletin of the IUCN/ Wetlands International Threatened Waterfowl Specialist Group (TWSG News 10) can be accessed on the web at:

<http://www.greenchannel.org/wwt/twsg/contents.htm>

This bulletin includes news and articles on a wide variety of threatened ducks, geese and swans all over the world. For the West Palearctic Flyway, this bulletin contains some news and several articles of interest; AEWA species are also included.

For more information contact:

Mr Des Callaghan, The Wildfowl & Wetland Trust (WWT), Slimbridge, Gloucestershire GL2 7BT, United Kingdom, Tel: (+44) 1453 890 33 (ext 230), fax: (+44) 1453 890 827, E-mail [Des.Callaghan@wwt.org.uk](mailto:Des.Callaghan@wwt.org.uk)

## Buy a stamp....and save a wetland

Launched in 1995, the European Habitat Conservation Stamp Programme is a joint venture between Duck Unlimited Inc., Wetlands International and the European Hunters Federation FACE. It aims to raise funds for the conservation of wildlife habitats, in particular wetlands along the Western Palearctic flyway.

Funds are raised through the sale of a First of Nation Stamp and of limited edition artwork based on the stamps - released each year in a different European country. Potential buyers include wetland and waterbird users (hunters, birdwatchers) but also philatelists and wildlife art collectors, etc.

This year, Ireland - in this case the National Association of regional game Councils (NARGC) - which was selected to produce the "wildlife" stamp and the corresponding limited edition prints. In previous years, stamps have been brought out by Sweden and Denmark.

Also this year, the first conservation projects - identified and supervised by Wetlands International - could be financed by the Programme. These projects are the management of a semi-natural ecosystem in the Ropka-Thaste floodplain (Estonia), the construction of a bird-watching tower near Lake Engure (Latvia) and a training course for wetland managers in Algeria.

For more information contact:

Programme Secretariat, Rue F. Pelletier 82, 1030 Brussels, Belgium, Tel: (+32) 2 732 6900, Fax: (+32) 2 732 70 72

## INFORMATION AND EDUCATION

### Stork migration on Internet

During the Seminar "Birds Know No Boundaries" participants were introduced to the Internet Programme on migratory birds. This educational Internet programme on the migration of White Storks is developed in Israel and is very impressive. Via this programme, schoolchildren are able to follow, in real time, migrating storks through Internet in a network linked to children in different schools in the Middle East, Europe and Africa. Modern communication techniques like Internet inform youths in their own "language" of the necessity of nature conservation. The Interim Secretariat expects that Internet will become a valuable tool for raising awareness, especially for target groups like schoolchildren. Internet programmes may therefore be interesting to more countries along the Western Palearctic Flyway. For the time being, this programme is available only in Hebrew but will be available in English by the end of this year (see <http://www.birds.org.il>).

For more information contact :

Dr Miri Rosenboim, The Kibbutzim State Teachers College, 147 Namir Road, Tel Aviv, Israel, tel: (+972) 3 6902324, fax: (+972) 3 9330924, E-mail: [romi@netvision.net.il](mailto:romi@netvision.net.il)

### GREEN ISLANDS DAYS 1997

The first Green Islands Days were held 13-20 September 1997 in the Netherlands and St. Petersburg (Russia) by the European Union for Coastal Conservation. The theme for this week of activities was migrating birds from Russia. Migrating birds clearly illustrate the need for both local and international protection of important ecological sites along the European coast. The birds depend on relatively undisturbed areas to rest and feed during their long trek south. If such stopovers disappear because of increased environmental degradation, fewer birds will survive the trek.

A drawing competition for children and a quiz about migrating birds was organised in both countries. Schoolchildren from Russia and the Netherlands engaged in an Internet exchange about their own experiences with bird watching and nature conservation. For adults, there were bird watching excursions, lectures and a Green Islands exhibition. In St. Petersburg, schoolchildren helped collect trash and build a nature trail in the Yuntolovski nature reserve close to the city.

EUCC aims to protect important coastal areas with projects in Russia, Lithuania, Poland and the Ukraine. The Green Islands Days will be held every six months, involving different countries and themes each time.

For more information contact:

EUCC Green Islands team, P.O. Box 11232, 2301 EE Leiden, The Netherlands, tel: +31 71 512 2900; fax: +31 71 512 4096; e-mail: [green.islands@eucc.nl](mailto:green.islands@eucc.nl)

## RESEARCH AND MONITORING

### **LAKES Research Project**

A project proposal for a research project on Long-distance dispersal in Aquatic Key Species (LAKES) and a request to accept a position as a "user organisation" has been received by the Interim Secretariat. The research project is described as follows:

Environmental changes such as pollution, eutrophication and wetland loss are disrupting both the diversity of aquatic ecosystems and the migratory patterns of waterfowl. LAKES aims to predict the effects of waterfowl migration on the dispersal of aquatic plants and invertebrates. Aquatic habitats are typical fragmented ecosystems and transport by migratory waterfowl is the most significant factor of between-catchment dispersal for aquatic organisms. As a result, bird-mediated transport is responsible for the population maintenance of widely distributed aquatic organisms, and at the same time, it also influences their genetic diversity and the overall biodiversity. It is therefore important to evaluate the interrelationship of these groups of organisms, and particularly the effect of changes in migratory patterns on the biodiversity of aquatic ecosystems. Predictive spatially-explicit metapopulation models incorporating these processes must be developed to provide tools which can be used in the conservation and management of aquatic biodiversity.

Fundamental research will hopefully give more details about habitat loss, increasing rates of population decline of migrants and the effects on dispersal of aquatic plants and invertebrates. If this is the case then this study will (in)directly emphasise the importance of the conservation of migratory waterbirds. Therefore the Interim Secretariat accepted a position as "a user organisation".

It is expected that the European Commission, Directorate General XII ( Science, Research and Development) will give financial support to this research project.

For more information contact:

Mr Roy Sanderson, Centre for Land Use and Water Resources Research, Porter Building, University of Newcastle, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 7 RU, United Kingdom, tel: (+44) 191 222 7789, Fax: (+44) 191 222 6563

### **Conservation of Globally threatened Bird species in Russia**

Conservation of Globally threatened Bird species is one of the highest protection priorities in Russia. Four special projects on research and protection of globally threatened species as listed in the guidelines of Action Plans are carried out in Russia, for: Slender-billed Curlew (*Numenius tenuirostris*), Imperial Eagle (*Aquila heliaca*), Corn Crake (*Crex crex*) and Aquatic Warbler (*Acrocephalus paludicola*). The project on the last species finished in 1996. All projects are carried out by the non-governmental organisation Russian Bird Conservation Union (RBCU) with the support of international non-governmental organisations.

The project on the Slender-Billed Curlew (SbC) started in 1996 by testing Dr. Victor Belik's hypothesis about the possibility of SbC breeding in wet habitats in the steppe zone. This project is financed by Vogelbescherming Nederland (BirdLife partner). Large steppe areas between the rivers Volga and Ural were surveyed in 1996. In 1997, searches were carried out on the vast territory between the river Volga and North Kazakstan. Until now the breeding ground of this species has not been found (see also next issue).

For more information contact::

Mr. Alexander Mischenko, Russian Bird Conservation Union, office 110, Kibalchicha Str. 6, building 5, RUS-Moscow 129 278 Russia, Tel: (+7) 095 283 1202, Fax: (+7) 095 283 1202, E-mail: [almos@redro.msk.ru](mailto:almos@redro.msk.ru)

### **IN SEARCH OF THE SLENDER-BILLED CURLEW (NUMENIUS TENUIROSTRIS)**

Dr. Sasha K. Yurlov (Russian Federation) and Dr. Gerard C. Boere (Netherlands) were on an expedition to the Barabas and Karacuk Steppe in Central West Siberia from 17 May- 22 June 1997 to search for the Slender-billed Curlew (SbC). This expedition was based on the study "Looking for the recent breeding grounds of Slender-billed Curlew; a habitat-based approach" by Alla K. Danilenko, Gerard C. Boere and Elena A. Lebedeva (Wader Study Group Bulletin 81: 71-78). The study

suggested that the SbC might be a breeding bird in wet areas of steppe and steppe-forest zone rather than the extensive raised bogs areas in the taiga, which are generally assumed to be the breeding range of the SbC. The analysis made in the study resulted in the selection of about 20 areas which had an above average chance of being the current breeding areas for SbC. Of the 20 selected areas, about 11 are found in the Novosibirsk region and the expedition decided to focus on these areas. Unfortunately this latest attempt to localise the breeding area of the SbC was not successful. During the six week expedition many rare species were sighted, including many Russian Red Data Book Species, but no SbC.

A minor Bonn Convention Workshop, November 1997 in Moscow, will analyse the expedition results of the last three years and advise on new areas to be surveyed. In the near future, new expeditions will be organised in search of the SbC.

For more information contact:

Dr. Gerard C. Boere, Ministry of Agriculture Nature Management and Fisheries, P.O. Box 20401, 2500 EK The Hague, The Netherlands, Tel: (+31) 70 379 3591, Fax: (+31) 70 3793751, E-mail: g.c.boere@n.agro.nl

### **Request for help: Movements of Marbled Teal**Error! Bookmark not defined.

In order to design effective conservation plans for Marbled Teal (*Marmaronetta angustirostris*), it is essential our understanding of the biology of this species is increased.

With this opening sentence in TWSG News No 10, June 1997, Mr. Andy Green of the Biological Station of Doñana (Spain) drew our attention to the fact that Marbled Teals are marked in El Hondo, Alicante and other sites in Spain. Since 1994, this species has been marked with coloured rings. These birds carry a yellow PVC ring on the left leg or a white ring, two coloured rings, light-blue ring with letters and numbers or a black ring with letters and numbers on the right leg. All birds also have a metal leg ring on the other leg. In addition, in 1996 birds carrying the light-blue rings were also fitted with white plastic wing tags.

These birds may be seen in any of the following countries: Spain, Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, France, Chad, Mali and Nigeria. Mr. Andy Green would like to receive the full details of any observations, i.e. date, location, time, total number of Marbled Teal sighted, colour and position of mark, letter-number code (if this was legible), comments on the behaviour of the marked bird (was the mark causing any problems? Was it mixed with unmarked birds?) and the legibility of the tag.

For more information or to send information on sightings contact:

Mr Andy Green, Estación Biológica de Doñana, Avda Marja Luisa Pabellón del Perú, 41013 Sevilla, Spain. E-mail: and@edb03.ebd.csic.es

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

### **Implementation Plan AEWA 1997-1999**

to develop necessary administrative procedures and substantive background documents.

At the end of the Negotiation Meeting to adopt AEWA (June 1995), the Interim Secretariat was asked to prepare, as well as possible, several proposals and documents for submission to the Meeting of the Parties at its first session. In addition, the Agreement text and Action Plan also called for some (international) actions.

To gain an indication of the total budget needed for the above activities the Netherlands, in co-operation with the Interim Secretariat, asked Wetlands International to identify all those actions called for in the Final Act, Agreement text and Action Plan. These are brought together in Wetland International's report "Implementation Plan AEWA 1997-1999". A total of 10 urgent activities have been identified and the indicative budget needed for these activities is estimated at \$ 750,000.

\$ 150,000 of the total budget has already been covered by the Netherlands. On 21 August 1997 a letter (including Implementation Plan 1997-1999) was sent to all the national focal points of the 116 Range States. The Interim Secretariat kindly requested AEWA Parties and Range States to consider sponsoring the activities. Besides financial support, it is also possible for one or more activities to be undertaken by experts of Parties or Range States in close co-operation with the Interim Secretariat and expert organisations.

So far, positive reactions have been received. In the next Newsletter you will be informed about the progress that has been made since then.

For more information please contact;

Mr Bert Lenten, Interim Secretariat of the African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement, Room 3500, P.O. Box 20401, 2500 The Hague, The Netherlands, Tel: (+31) 70 3792982, fax: (+31) 70 3793751, E-mail: b.lenten@n.agro.nl

### Small grants

The Dutch Agriculture Counsellors of the embassies in Nairobi (Kenya) and Pretoria (South Africa) have a budget for small grants for concrete projects; wetlands and waterbirds have a high priority. AEWA Range States in this region can contact the Counsellors for further information.

For more information contact:

Mr Hein van Asperen, c/o Royal Netherlands Embassy, Uchumi House, 6<sup>th</sup> floor, Nkrumah Lane, P.O. Box 41537, Nairobi, Kenya, Tel: (+254) 2 24093, Fax: (+254) 2 227697

Mr Philip de Jong, c/o Royal Netherlands Embassy, 825 Arcadiastreet, P.O. Box 117, Pretoria 0001, South Africa, Tel: (+27) 12 3443910/5, Fax: (+27) 12 3439950, E-mail: nlpreagr@iafrica.com

## PUBLICATION

### Freshwater Ecosystems in the Africa & Madagascar Region

In September 1997, WWF published its "Strategy to Conserve Freshwater Ecosystems in the Africa & Madagascar Region".

As the "kidneys of the planet", freshwater ecosystems are essential for the well-being and survival of both humans and nature. By the year 2000, many African countries, together with about 250 million people, are predicted to suffer severe water stress. In the 1990s, WWF has increasingly turned to community-based conservation initiatives. Thus the overall programme purpose is that "selected freshwater ecosystems are conserved for the benefit of people and nature". One of the eight specific objectives is that conservation plans are developed and implemented for species of special concern. Table 1 of the Strategy lists those species that would be most threatened if freshwater ecosystems were to be further degraded or destroyed in the above mentioned region. Implementation of this ambitious WWF programme will contribute to the conservation of the following waterbird species: Slaty Egret (*Egretta vinaceigula*), Bald Ibis (*Geonticus eremita*), Ferruginous Duck (*Aythya nyroca*), Marbled Teal (*Marmaronetta angustirostris*), White-headed Duck (*Oxyura leucocephala*), Blue Crane (*Grus paradisea*) and Wattled Crane (*Grus carunculatus*). These species are not only indicated in Table 1 of the Strategy but also in Annex 2 of the African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement.

For more information contact:

Ms Meg Gawler, Programme Officer Africa & Madagascar of WWF, Avenue Mont Blanc, 1196 Gland, Switzerland, Tel: (+41) 22 364 9327, Fax: (+41) 22 364 4238, E-mail: mgawler@wwfnet.org

## **Breeding Waders at Medusa Bay, Western Taymir, in 1996**

(WiWO report 57)

During a Dutch expedition to western Taymir in June-July 1996, the breeding biology of various waders was studied, all included in AEWA. This report summarises data on breeding densities, breeding success, biometrics and energetics of incubation of waders. Additional information was gathered on the availability of anthropods, weather variables, vegetation types, lemming occurrence and all other breeding birds. Special attention was given to the energetics of incubation in Little Stints. The team was based at the Russian-Dutch Arctic field station "Willem Barentsz".

Authors: Ingrid Tulp, Leo Bruinzeel, Joop Jukema and Olga Stepanova

A small Russian team visited the same area in 1997 to continue monitoring these AEWA species.

### **For More Information contact**

**WIWO, Ir. van Stuivenbergweg 4, 6644 AB Ewijk, The Netherlands, Tel: (+31) 8872 2462**

## **Habitats for Birds In Europe**

Recently BirdLife International published a new book *Habitats for birds in Europe: a conservation strategy for the Wider Environment*. With this publication, Phase II of the Dispersed Species Project of BirdLife International came to an end. Phase I started in 1990 and resulted in the publication of *Birds In Europe: their conservation status* in 1994. One of its main conclusions was that approximately 40 % of all birds species in Europe have an unfavourable conservation status. Phase II of the project studied the eight major habitat types that are important for these species and developed continent-wide strategies for each of them. Although these strategies are based on the analysis of the ecological needs of and threats to priority bird species, the conclusions have a much wider implication for the conservation of other fauna and flora. Therefore, this book is important for workers in environmental protection and habitats conservation in Europe in the broadest sense.

### **For more information or to order a copy contact:**

**Natural History Book Service, 2-3 Wills Road, Totnes, Devon TQ9 5XN, United Kingdom, Tel: (+44) 1803 865 913, Fax: (+44) 1803 865 280**

## **Birds of Botswana, an annotated working bibliography, 1835-1995.**

This bibliography, compiled by Wendy D. Borello and Remigio M. Borello, attempts to cover world literature on birds in Botswana. It is chiefly a bibliography of periodical literature and unpublished material. Books are not included, with a few exceptions. There are 1895 entries. The bibliography (398 pages) is arranged alphabetically by author and citations are indexed by author, country, broad species category and subject. Every article mentioning waterbirds can thus be found using the keyword "waterbirds". Specific species like Maccoa Duck, Black Duck, Garganey, but also pelicans and flamingo are also indexed. The content of each paper is summarised and a brief overview of early ornithological work is presented.

This comprehensive and up-to-date bibliography aims to meet the needs of the professional scientist and amateur ornithologist. The citations are not necessarily restricted to Botswana and may also be relevant to other southern African countries.

A copy of this bibliography (ISBN 1-875091-09-2) can be ordered for the price of R75 (SA), •13 (UK), \$20 (USA & rest of the world. Postage is not included.

### **For more information or to order a copy contact:**

**Russel Friedman Books CC, P.O. Box 73, Halfway House 1685, South Africa, Tel: (+27) 11 702 2300/1, Fax: (+27) 11 702 1403, E-mail address: rvulture@iafrica.com**

## **Numbers and Distribution of Waterbirds in Denmark 1987-1989**

The Ministry of Environment and Energy, National Environmental Research Institute, Department of Coastal Zone Ecology has recently published the Danish Review of Game Biology Volume 15 No 1 "Number and Distribution of Waterbirds in Denmark 1987-1989". This paper presents the numbers and distributions of waterbirds registered in aerial as well as ship surveys in Danish waters in the period 1987-1989. The results are compared to the results of aerial surveys conducted in 1968-1973, and the results of ship surveys carried out during 1979-1986. One of the conclusions is that the numbers of waterbirds in coastal areas have generally changed very little since aerial surveys in 1968-1973. Per species there were changes in total numbers but these changes were not dramatic.

### **For more information contact**

Mr Stefan Phil, Ministry of Environment, National Environmental Research Institute, department of Coastal Zone Ecology, Genåvej 12, 8410 Rønne, Denmark, Tel: (+45) 89201700, Fax: (+45) 89201514, E-mail: [dmu@dmu.dk](mailto:dmu@dmu.dk)

## **Irish Wetland Bird Survey Report 1995-1996**

The Irish Wetland Bird Survey Report 1995-1996 was published by BirdWatch Ireland in June 1997. This, the second annual report of the Irish Wetland Bird Survey (I-WeBS), summarises winter waterfowl counts at 634 sites in the Republic of Ireland, conducted between September 1995 and March 1996. I-WeBS report 1995-1996 includes summarised UK WeBS results for Northern Ireland.

The I-WeBS scheme is still in its early stages, however the scheme consolidated the achievements of the first and confirmed the value of large-scale, long-term monitoring of Irish waterfowl populations. The significance of many findings of the second season of the counts will only become apparent as data from more seasons accumulate.

Although considerable caution is required when interpreting and comparing just two winters' counts, the 1995-1996 result suggested several changes had occurred in the status of sites and species since the 1994-1995 counts and since the survey organised in the mid 1980s by Sheppard. Most unexpected was the big increase in Red-breasted Merganser and the large decline in Curlew.

For more information please contact:

BirdWatch Ireland, Ruttledge House, 8 Longford Place, Monkstown, Co. Dublin, Ireland, Tel: (+353) 1 2804322/ 2808237, Fax: (+353) 1 2844407, E-mail: [bird@indigo.ie](mailto:bird@indigo.ie)

## **Seabird numbers and breeding success in Britain and Ireland ,1996**

by

**K.R. Thompson, E. Brindley & M. Heubeck**

This report presents the results of monitoring of seabird populations and breeding success throughout Britain and Ireland in 1996 and makes comparisons with previous years. The report is produced annually as part of JNCC's Seabird Monitoring Programme, in collaboration with the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and the Shetland Oil Terminal Environmental Advisory Group.

The 1996 breeding season was generally later than normal, leading to some difficulties in interpreting population data. Despite the late start, most species had an average to good breeding season.

The report was published by the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (UK Nature Conservation, No 21).

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:**

**Publications Branch, JNCC  
Monkstone House  
City Road  
Peterborough PE 11 1JY  
UNITED KINGDOM**

## COLOPHON

THE AFRICAN-EURASIAN WATERBIRD AGREEMENT (AEWA) IS AN AGREEMENT UNDER THE CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF MIGRATORY SPECIES OF WILD ANIMALS, COMMONLY REFERRED TO AS THE BONN CONVENTION, AEWA AIMS TO CREATE A LEGAL BASIS FOR CONCERTED CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT POLICY BY RANGE STATES FOR MIGRATORY WATERBIRD SPECIES.

AEWA HAS AN ACTION PLAN, WHICH SPECIFIES ACTIONS PARTIES SHALL UNDERTAKE IN RELATION TO PRIORITY SPECIES AND ISSUES.

THE NEWSLETTER INFORMS OF THE LATEST NEWS ON AEWA. THE NEXT NEWSLETTER WILL BE PUBLISHED IN APRIL 1998.

THIS NEWSLETTER IS ALSO AVAILABLE IN FRENCH.

### **The Newsletter was published by the:**

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## AGREEMENT UPDATE

Since August 15 1996 the African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement (AEWA) has been open for signing at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in The Hague (the Netherlands). At present the following Range States have signed the Agreement with reservations with respect to ratification: Ireland (27-9-'96), the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland (23-9-'96), Germany (15-8-'96), Egypt (20-8-'97) the European Community (1-9-'97) and Mali (25-9-'97). Guinea, Switzerland (15-19-'96), Sudan (31-12-'96), Jordan (12-3-'97) and the Netherlands (15-8-'96) signed without needing ratification.

During the Conference of the Parties to the Convention of the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), held from 10-16 April 1997 in Geneva, Switzerland, nearly all the delegates of Range States present at that time, mentioned in their opening statement that their country is willing to sign AEWA.

Combining this information and the information that has been received from the second "phone call-round", the Interim Secretariat expects that AEWA will come into force in late 1998. For the time being, the first Meeting of the Parties is planned in October 1999. The Meeting will be organised back to back with the Sixth Conference of the Parties of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) and probably will take place in South Africa.

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### • African Waterfowl Census 1997

The results of the African Waterfowl Census 1996 (AfWC) were published in late 1996 by Wetlands International. This census will provide major support for the Ramsar Convention and AEWA. In total,

25 countries participated in this census, including Benin, Mozambique and Togo who participated for the first time. During a review and development meeting devoted to AfWC, held in Senegal in February 1996, one important recommendation was the formation of a co-ordinating committee for the census. Wetlands International hopes to launch this committee in 1997. Within the framework of the new West-Africa project supported by the Dutch Government, the committee will be responsible for guiding the future direction of the census, increasing co-operation and defining priorities, amongst other activities.

For more information, contact:

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**Tim Dodman**  
**P.O. Box 7002**  
**6700 CA Wageningen, The Netherlands**  
**Tel: (+31) 317 474711, Fax: (+31) 317 474712**  
**E-mail: [post@wetlands.agro.nl](mailto:post@wetlands.agro.nl)**

- **Flamingo Workshop**