

NEWSLETTER No. 8

1. Editorial

The last issue of the Newsletter was published in July 2001. Since then, the workload of the Agreement Secretariat has increased tremendously due to the upcoming second session of the Meeting of the Parties (MOP2), which will take place from 25-27 September 2002 in Bonn, Germany. The Secretariat is fully occupied with making the necessary logistical arrangements for MOP2 and with the preparation of a substantial number of documents. Although exchange of information is one of the priorities of the Agreement, the Secretariat was not in a position to work on, for example, drafting a new issue of the AEWa Newsletter. Luckily a number of temporary staff could be contracted over the last few months, which increased the capacity of the Secretariat. Thus, we were able to compile this Newsletter. Again, the Secretariat is very grateful for the information that was forwarded for inclusion in the Newsletter by: Just Ecology (UK), BirdLife International, UNEP/ CMS Secretariat, Wetlands International, the Tour-du-Valat Biological Station (France), the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USA), Dr Rafael Mateo (Spain), Dr Bernd U. Meyburg (Germany), the Ramsar Convention Bureau, IUCN and the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat.

Secretariat News

The Second Session of the Meeting of the Parties

At its first Session (November 1999, South Africa), the Meeting of the Parties accepted with appreciation the offer, from the Federal Republic of Germany, to host the second session of the Meeting of the Parties, which will take place from 25-27 September 2002 in Bonn. MOP2 will be organised back to back with the Seventh Conference of the Parties (COP7) to the Convention on Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)

After MOP1, a representative of the German Government made contact with the UNEP/ CMS Secretariat and the UNEP/ AEWa Secretariat to discuss logistical arrangements. At an early stage, the former parliament building, the 'Bundeshaus', was booked to be the venue. Since then, meetings have been taking place regularly to discuss the needs of each Secretariat so that they will be able to run their respective meetings properly. So far, good progress has been made, and our German hosts will be sure to arrange everything 'grundlich', thus the Agreement Secretariat does not have to worry about this at all.

However, there are of course many questions to be answered by the Secretariat concerning the logistical arrangements in order to be able to provide the host with additional information.

In close co-operation with the UNEP/ CMS Secretariat, the Secretariat contracted MKI Conference and Travel services, based in Canada, to make all necessary travel arrangements for the funded delegates. Although some funds have been allocated in the Agreement's budget, it turned out that this was not enough to invite one official delegate from eligible countries. These delegates should represent their Government preferably, when applicable, during COP7 as well as during MOP2 to gain some economies of scale. Recently, an agreement was reached with the Government of Germany to provide additional funding to cover travel and subsistence costs of funded delegates. Because of this generous offer, the Secretariats are now in a position to invite all the delegates that were on our list.

Besides logistical arrangements, the Secretariat is fully occupied with the substantial preparations of MOP2. At the moment (end of July) most of the documents have been drafted and have been sent to the translators to translate into French. As usual, the translation of documents is a bit problematic due to the lack of freelance translators that are currently available. The Secretariat has done its utmost to solve these problems. In due course and if there are no hitches, all documents, in English as well as in French, will be ready around the second half of August and will be distributed on time to all delegates that have been registered.

Meanwhile, there are a lot of other matters linked to MOP2 that require the attention of the Secretariat. However, the Secretariat is looking forward to a fruitful and successful second session of the Meeting of the Parties. The latest news, including documents, can be found at the Agreements Website: <http://www.unep-wcmc.org/AEWA/eng/info.htm> .

2. Secretariat News

TEMPORARY STAFF

In order to increase the capacity of the Secretariat, it was decided to recruit some temporary staff on a consultancy basis early in 2002.

Ms. Nienke Beintema, from the Netherlands, was recruited from 15 February to 15 June 2002. To increase activities on the raising of awareness on non-toxic shot, Ms Beintema drafted a number of articles on this issue and, moreover, a special edition for the AEWA Newsletter on non-toxic shot.

On 15 March, Ms Heike Grelka started as Information Assistant for the AEWA Secretariat on a six-month contract. Her tasks include drafting a regular issue of the AEWA Newsletter, updating the Agreement's Website, developing other information material, e.g. the information panel, and supporting the assistant to the Executive Secretary, Ms Mirna Maya, with reproduction, formatting and mailing documents, whenever necessary.

In close co-operation (with whom? See report) and under special terms, it was also decided to contract Dr Chris Baker, the co-ordinator of the African-Eurasian Flyway GEF project at Wetlands International, the Netherlands. Dr Baker will draft a special edition for the AEWA Newsletter on the Global Environment Facility (GEF) project. He is also drafting the International Implementation Plan AEWA 2003-2007 and, as a native speaker of English, he provides linguistical support for our MOP2 documents.

INTERNS

From 7 November to 21 December 2001, Ms Jennifer Freychet from France joined the Secretariat as an intern. At that time she was studying at the Lycee Paul Cezanne in Aix en Provence, France in a two-year-programme to become a multilingual Assistant/ Secretary. Ms Freychet was a great help to the Secretariat. In addition to supporting the Assistant/Secretary with the day-to-day work, her language skills were very useful for translating letters from English into French.

Ms Aicha Zergani from Morocco started an internship with AEWA on 1 March 2002. Ms Zergani is studying for a Master's degree in Environmental Law at the University of Bremen, Germany. During the internship, Ms Zergani participated in meetings and drafted letters for the member states. Moreover, she was involved in a desk study on national legislation for Migratory Waterbird Conservation. At the Environmental Law Centre (IUCN), Ms Zergani reviewed the national legislation of a number of French-speaking countries in Africa.

3. Action Plan

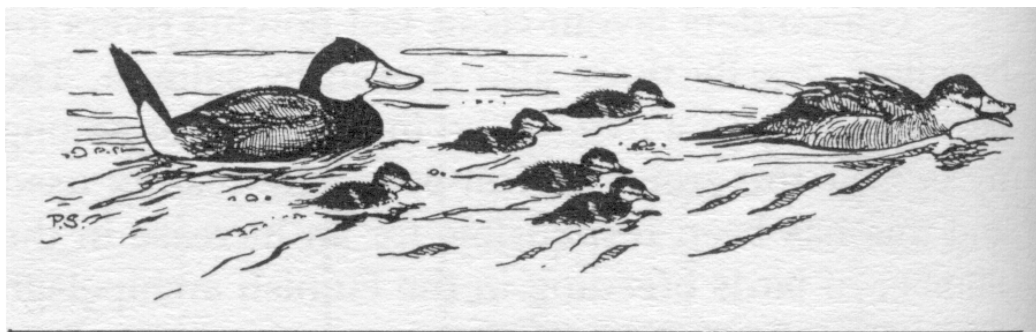
a) Species Conservation

NEW GUIDELINE ON INTRODUCED WATERBIRDS COMMISSIONED

As part of the ongoing process of drawing up conservation guidelines to back up the AEWA Action Plan, the Secretariat has commissioned a new guideline, covering the introduction and control of non-native species in the Agreement area.

The guideline will highlight the potential problems posed by invasive introduced species to native wildlife and biodiversity, giving examples of how some species introduced have already caused problems in parts of the range. They will present suggestions as to how problem species may be controlled, emphasising the need for public awareness and education programmes informing interest groups and the public at large, of the importance of maintaining biodiversity and the need for control or eradication programmes.

A draft of the guideline will be available for the Meeting of Parties (MOP2) to be held in Bonn in September, the final version will be available in 2003. A brochure is to be produced on the subject for wide circulation, which will provide advice for responsible authorities on ways of avoiding problems with alien species and, should they occur, ways of dealing with them. The group that is carrying out the work is Just Ecology Environmental Consultancy (UK).



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FIRST COMPREHENSIVE SITE LIST FOR SLENDER-BILLED CURLEW

The experts of the Slender-billed Curlew Working Group met in Kiev, the Ukraine, between 1-2 April 2001 to review the level of knowledge on the Slender-billed Curlew and the priority actions for the conservation of this species. The working group was established under the auspices of the Convention on the conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) to facilitate co-operation and collaboration among scientific experts and decision-makers working on the conservation of the globally threatened Slender-billed Curlew *Numenius tenuirostris*.

For the first time, a comprehensive list of sites where the species have been positively recorded was produced and discussed during the meeting. A further subjectmatter were two surveys on the Slender-billed Curlew carried out in Iran by a Dutch-Russian-Iranian and a French-Iranian team in early 2000. However, both expeditions did not find the species, but confirmed the existence of large, apparently suitable areas for the species. Of the 22 potential breeding areas for the Slender-billed Curlew in the Russian Federation, which were identified in 1996, at least six are suffering from habitat alteration and loss caused by overgrazing, drainage and uncontrolled fire. Unfortunately though, no Slender-billed Curlews have been sighted in the breeding areas so far.

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b.) Habitat Conservation

c.) Research and Monitoring

THREE-YEAR FUNDING FOR EAST AFRICAN REGIONAL MONITORING SCHEME

In early March 2002, information was recorded that the bid for funding a regional monitoring scheme in East Africa by the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (WWT) had been successful. The Darwin Initiative for the Survival of Species granted £ 174,000 for conservation work in East Africa for over three years. The work will mainly include the establishment of a regional monitoring scheme in East Africa. The first phase of the project is already ongoing. In May, it started developing training material and a database, compatible with the system of the African Waterbird Census (AWC), which is overseen by Wetlands International.

The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat strongly endorsed this project and its aims, which are to build and to maintain regional capacity in monitoring of waterbird and wetlands biodiversity.

In the seventh issue of the AEWA Newsletter on page 7, you will find further information on the need for a regional monitoring scheme

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d.) Information and Education

e.) Implementation

DRAFT ACTION PLAN FOR WATERBIRDS AND WETLANDS IN CENTRAL ASIAN-INDIAN FLYWAY

From 18-19 August 2001, an international workshop on the Central Asian-Indian Flyway (CAIF) took place in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

The workshop, hosted by the Government of Uzbekistan with financial support from the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, CMS and Wetlands International, focused on the conservation of Migratory Waterbirds on Wetlands in the CAIF. It aimed at developing co-ordination and collaboration of research, protection and conservation of migratory waterbirds and their habitats among the Central and South Asian and Trans-Caucasus States. Another goal was to examine the current conservation status of migratory waterbirds and wetlands in the CAIF as well as to propose a new initiative in the region. Finally, to review a draft Action Plan for the conservation of migratory waterbirds and wetlands in CAIF and to come up with recommendations for a follow-up approach.

During the workshop, a draft action plan was developed and after discussion, the following three options for the framework under which the Action Plan could be furthered were conceived:

- Place the Action plan under the Asian Pacific Waterbird Conservation Strategy (APWCS)
- Develop and conclude a new Agreement under CMS
- Extend the area of AEWA and include the CAIF Action Plan.

The Indian government volunteered to take the lead in the further development of the Action Plan. It is anticipated that an informal meeting on the draft Action Plan will take place during the 7th Conference of the Parties to CMS (COP7) in September in Bonn, Germany.

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WHITE-HEADED DUCK CENSUS IN PAKISTAN

(By Dr. Abdul Aleem Chaudhry)

In February 2002, Wetlands International's project "Status Overview and Recommendations for the White-headed Duck (*Oxyura leucocephala*) Central Asian Population" started. The project was recommended during the 10th meeting of the CMS Scientific Council in Edinburgh from May 1-4 2001 and it was finally approved in January 2001.

In order to provide information on the current status of the White-headed duck, at first a census was undertaken in Pakistan in February 2002. The outcome of this census shows a dramatic decline of wintering population: from a maximum of 1,005 species in 1967 and 734 in 1983, only 5 ducks were sighted in 2001. Experts agree that this result is due to a continuing deterioration of wetlands, which are suffering from a decline in rainfall since 1990.

A status report and recommendations for the White-headed Duck in the Central Asian countries is currently being compiled by Wetlands International with support from the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS). This report will be published by the end of the year.

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4. Projects

MAURITANIA: HIGH MORTALITY OF AFRICAN SPOONBILLS

During the breeding seasons of 2000-2001, an extraordinary mortality of African Spoonbills *Platalea leucorodia balsaci* was recorded in Parc National du Banc d'Arguin (PNBA), Mauritania. In January 2001, 132 nests contained dead young and more than 250 nests with dirty and broken eggs were detected on the island of Cheddid, the largest spoonbill colony in the PNBA. Besides, also other species such as cormorants, egrets and tern and gull species were found dead. The cause of the numerous deaths of so many birds in that area is still unknown. PNBA is not only an important breeding site for the African spoonbill, but also an important wintering site of the Eurasian spoon *Platalea leucorodia leucorodia*. The breeding population of the latter has just increased from 400 breeding-pairs in 1987 to up to 1100 breeding-pairs in 2000. Experts fear that whatever causes mortality of several species of waterbirds might also have an impact on the Eurasian spoonbill population. Therefore, a small grant was requested from the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat. After consultation with the Technical Committee it was decided to grant US \$ 5.644. This grant will allow the Working Group International Waterbird and Wetland Research (WIWO) to sent an expedition to collect information and samples related to environmental toxicological possibilities, to collect tissue and intestinal samples for cytological, histopathological, parasitological, microbiological, virological and toxicological evaluation in May 2002. The AEWA grant will cover 50 % of the total costs. Remaining funds will be received from Vereniging Natuurmonumenten and Werkgroep Lepelaar (The Netherlands).

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NL-3700 AX ZEIST
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CORSICA: REINTRODUCTION PROJECT OF WHITE-HEADED DUCKS CONTINUES

In April 2002, the Tour du Valet Biological Station started to continue the reintroduction project of White-headed ducks that were part of a habitat examination in the Biguglia lagoon, Corsica. The Biguglia lagoon, a designated Ramsar site, is a habitat for several breeding and wintering waterbirds and famous for extensive fishing and grazing. After 35 years of extirpation, however, the Bibuglia lagoon was probably no longer a suitable wintering area for the White-headed duck. Therefore, the reintroduction project started first with a test release of five male White-headed ducks in Spring 2001. At the end of July 2001, three of the five male ducks were still present and had apparently adapted well to local conditions. By the end of September, however, one bird was found dead by a fisherman, it is not known whether it drowned in fishing nets. The Nature Reserve staff lost track of the two remaining males in the midst of the thousands of other wintering ducks and coots in the following winter. Now, a targeted search and monitoring of the remaining ducks has started.

Although the EU-funded reintroduction project was terminated in late 2001, before the effective reintroduction itself was carried out, the operation is likely to continue with local authorities support and funding. Since the Spanish Breeding Centre in Donana is having difficulties in once more breeding enough birds in captivity to supply the programme with, the Italian Centre may possibly be invited to join the project in Corsica.

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AEWA Projects

Project 1: Rehabilitation of important sites for migratory waterbirds, which have been degraded by invasive aquatic weeds

A large number of wetlands, particularly in tropical Africa, have been degraded by invasions of species of aquatic weeds. Such weed infestations greatly affect the ecological character of these wetlands, many of which are of international importance to migratory waterbirds. The impact on migratory waterbirds may occur either through the direct removal or alteration of their habitats, or by effects on the food chain.

This year, an agreement was reached with the Government of the United Kingdom and the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat to allocate funds for the project "Rehabilitation of important sites for migratory waterbirds" as part of the International Implementation Priorities AEWA 2000-2004. In March 2001, IUCN (Environmental Law Centre) was contracted by the AEWA Secretariat to review, in close co-operation with their regional offices, the extent of the problem in each area and assess the likely impacts of the problem on migratory waterbirds. A final report and recommendations are due in December 2003.

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:
UNEP / AEWA SECRETARIAT

Project 2: Exchange of know-how on traditional approaches to wetland and waterbird management in Africa

Rural communities in several African countries have developed traditional norms, regulations and technologies for the wise use of migratory waterbirds and their wetland habitats. Such approaches offer a valuable insight into options for sustainable development and utilisation of these resources by rural communities, which may be replicated in other countries. These traditional approaches are to be reviewed by the Environmental Law Centre (IUCN) in two or more specified rural communities, to document traditional knowledge and make it available to others in relation to the project entitled "Exchange of know-how on traditional approaches to wetland and waterbird management in Africa". The first phase of the project started in March 2001. It is part of the International Implementation Priorities AEWA 2000-2004 and based on an agreement that was reached between the Government of

the Netherlands and the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat to allocate funds for it. A final report and recommendations are due in December 2003.

*FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:
UNEP / AEWA SECRETARIAT*

Project 3: Development of a Species Action Plan for the Great Snipe

The population of the Great Snipe is not directly threatened at present. However, this species would be classified as "vulnerable" at a global level, if the current decline continues. The AEWA category B1 status for the western population and B2 for the eastern population, indicate that it needs special attention, particularly because the Great Snipe is a habitat specialist demanding open and nutrient areas for breeding areas where conflicts with human activities easily occur.

In 2001, an agreement was reached between the Government of the Netherlands, the Bern Convention Secretariat and the UNEP/ AEWA Secretariat to allocate funds for the development of a Species Action Plan for the Great Snipe (*Gallinago media*). The development of this Action Plan is co-ordinated by BirdLife International in close co-operation with the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat. The first phase of this project started in July 2001.

*FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:
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5. General Information

INTERNATIONAL MIGRATORY BIRD DAY 2002 IN THE USA

On 11 May 2002, both private groups and public institutions joined to celebrate International Migratory Bird Day (IMBD) at hundreds of locations including national wildlife refuges, national parks and forests in the United States. Every year, the IMBD celebrates with a different theme.. This year, groups and individuals focused on special places for migratory waterbirds and offered educational programmes on birds and their habitat.

Since 1992, IMBD is celebrated every second Saturday each May. The idea was conceived by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center and is now co-ordinated by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, and a host of other sponsors.

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SPAIN BANS LEAD SHOT IN PROTECTED WETLANDS

On 1 October 2001, Spain enacted a ban of lead shot on protected Spanish wetlands.

The ban applies to Ramsar sites and other wetlands protected under regional or national legislation, including the great majority of key sites for marbled teal, white-headed duck and wintering waterbirds in general.

You can obtain a copy (in Spanish) of the decree at:

<http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2001-06-15/seccion1.html#00002>.

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ORNITHOLOGY: NEWLY IMPROVED SATELLITE TRANSMITTERS

Satellite telemetry recently provided a new device regarding the use of satellite transmitters. Satellite transmitters used to be rather big and heavy so that only large bird species were tracked down. Today however, technical improvements in satellite transmitters have advanced so rapidly that it is now possible to track even medium-sized birds. There are transmitters with conventional batteries as well as solar-powered transmitters, which only weigh about 20 g. Thus it is feasible to have a permanent and worldwide automatic location of birds over an extended period of time.

As the sensitivity of reception will be increased in the new satellites, which in the coming years will be put into orbit round the earth, and the transmitters further improved, relatively soon fresh data on e.g. migration routes, resting and wintering areas, speed of migration, orientation and dependence on weather conditions can be acquired.

In order to help disseminate information on satellite transmitters among researchers and other interested individuals, a Yahoo Group for Satellite Telemetry in Ornithology was formed.

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<http://www.Raptors-International.de>

AWC 1994-1996 REPORT NOW ONLINE

The Asian Waterbird Census (AWC) is an annually wintering (January) waterbird/wetland monitoring programme, run by a volunteer network in more than 20 countries in Asia. The programme presents its census results in a series of reports.

The most recent AWC report covers the years from 1994 to 1996 and compiles important data on waterbirds and wetlands. It was recently uploaded on the Wetlands International website.

The AWC programme aims to complete a draft of the AWC 1997-2001 report by the end of 2002, while still seeking funds to publish and disseminate the report.

You can view and download the current publication at <http://www.wetlands.org/IWC/awc/96rep/TOC.htm>

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REVIEW OF NATIONAL WETLAND INVENTORY INFORMATION

The Review of European Wetland Inventory Information intends to present a broad-scale and comprehensive review of European wetland inventory reference. It is funded by the Dutch Institute for Inland Water Management and Waste Water Treatment (RIZA). The review can be found at www.wetlands.org/inventory&/pewi/appeal.htm. Here, there is a draft on the web called "country chapters" for valuable input and commentary. The final report will be due later this year.

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6. Conferences – Meetings of Interest

11-17 August, 2002

23rd International Ornithological Congress, Beijing, China.
INFO: IOC 20002, MR LIU FENG
CICCST, 86 XUEYUAN NAN ROAD, BEIJING 100081, CHINA
TEL: +86 10 62174952
FAX: +86 10 62180142
E-MAIL: infocenter@ioc.org.cn (FOR INFORMATION)
E-MAIL: register@ioc.org.cn (FOR REGISTRATION SUBMISSION)
<http://www.ioc.org.cn>

22 August-2 October, 2002 (delete due to deadline of newsletter)

The 9th International Course on Wetland Management, Lelystad, The Netherlands
INFO: WETLAND ADVISORY AND TRAINING CENTRE, WATC, P.O. BOX 17
8200 AA LELYSTAD, THE NETHERLANDS
TEL: +31 320 298346
FAX: +31 320 298339
E-MAIL: watc@riza.rws.minvenw.nl

18-24 September, 2002

7th Conference of the Parties (COP7), Bonn, Germany
INFO: UNEP/CMS SECRETARIAT

25-27 September, 2002

2nd Meeting of the Parties (MOP2), Bonn, Germany
INFO: UNEP / AEWA SECRETARIAT

10-12 October, 2002

Workshop on Invasive Alien Species on European Islands and Evolutionary Isolated Ecosystems and Group of Experts on Invasive Alien Species, Horta, Azores, Portugal

INFO: COUNCIL OF EUROPE

F-67075 STRASBOURG CEDEX, FRANCE

TEL: +33 3 88 41 20 00

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11-14 October, 2002

International Workshop "Ferruginous duck: From Research to Conservation", Bulgaria

INFO: MR NIKOLAI PETKOV, BSPB/BIRDLIFE BULGARIA, PO BOX 50, 1111 SOFIA

FAX: +3592 707579, 003592 722640

E-MAIL: bspb_hq@mb.bia-bg.com

http://www.birdlife.org.uk and www.bspb.org

13-18 October, 2002

EuroMAB workshop "The Role of Wetlands in Biosphere Reserves", Palava Biosphere Reserve, South Moravia, Czech Republic

INFO: EVA JELINKOVA, CZECH MAB NATIONAL COMMITTEE, NARODNI 3, 110 00 PRAGUE 1, CZECH REPUBLIC

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FAX: +420 2 24 24 05 31

E-MAIL: mab@kav.cas.cz

6-10 November, 2002

The first-ever North American Sea Duck Conference and Workshop, Victoria, British Columbia

INFO: MR DAN ESLER, CENTRE FOR WILDLIFE ECOLOGY, SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY, 5421 ROBERTSON ROAD, DELTA,

BC V4K 3N2, CANADA

TEL: + 1 604 940-4652

E-MAIL: desler@sfu.ca

http://seaduckjv.org/conference

14-16 November, 2002

NGO Worldwide Conference on Wetlands "Ramsar, 30 years on", Valencia, Spain

INFO: preramsar@nodo50.org

http://www.nodo50.org/preramsar

18-26 November, 2002

8th Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention (COP 8?), Valencia, Spain

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http://www.ramsar.org/index_cop8.htm

2-5 December, 2002

Meeting of the Standing Committee of the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats, Strasbourg, France

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F-67075 STRASBOURG CEDEX, FRANCE

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8-13 June, 2003

The 24th Annual Meeting of the Society of Wetland Scientists "Wetland Stewardship: Changing Landscapes and Interdisciplinary Challenges", New Orleans, Louisiana, USA

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Early 2003 (tentative)

Workshop on Non-toxic shot, Italy

INFO: UNEP / AEWA SECRETARIAT

Early 2004

An International Conference on "Waterbirds Around the World"- a global review of the conservation, management and research of the world's major flyways for waterbirds and seabirds, Wageningen, The Netherlands

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7. Publications

ESTIMATES AND TRENDS IN EUROPEAN BIRD POPULATIONS

Until the mid-1990s, knowledge of changes in bird populations and their conservation status was based on a few national monitoring schemes with no comprehensive pan-European data available.

In 1994, the BirdLife publication *Birds in Europe*, assessed for the first time the conservation status of all birds in Europe. This publication was followed by the *EBCC Atlas of European Breeding Birds: Their distribution and abundance*, which provided a continent-wide analysis of species' distributions.

European Bird Populations: Estimates and trends serves as annex to both these books, publishing for the first time comprehensive data on population size, population trends and range trends for all species regularly occurring in Europe.

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR

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BIRDS OF ALGERIA

The Society of Ornithological Studies of France (SEOF, Paris) published this book in December 2000. It covers 406 Bird species listed in Algeria in 2000, 115 pictures and 210 maps on the distribution of bird species.

The book is available in English and French.

*FOR MORE INFORMATION OR
TO ORDER A COPY PLEASE CONTACT:
SEOF – MUSEUM NATIONAL D'HISTOIRE NATURELLE
BIBLIOTHEQUE, 55 RUE BUFFON
75005 PARIS, FRANCE*

COMMUNICATING NATURE CONSERVATION

"Communicating Nature Conservation", published by the European Centre for Nature Conservation (ENC) in 2000, is a practical guide to communication and partnership-building for nature conservation. It is designed as a self-study manual and is particularly relevant to the specific conditions and problems facing conservationists in the transition societies in central and Eastern Europe. Moreover, this manual covers topics like basic concepts in communication and presents instruments and methods for developing communication activities. Each topic is illustrated with practical examples, case studies and a checklist of do's and don'ts.

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E-MAIL: hails@ramsar.org
<http://ramsar.org>*

IMPORTANT BIRD AREAS AND POTENTIAL RAMSAR SITES IN EUROPE

During the Ramsar Pan-European Meeting in Bled, Slovenia, October 2001, Birdlife International presented a book called "Important Bird Areas (IBAs) and Potential Ramsar Sites in Europe". The book applies its vast up-to-date holdings on European wetlands to Ramsar's "Criteria for Identifying Wetlands of International Importance" and identifies 2,083 of them as qualifying for Ramsar status. The 126-page report provides concise advice to Contracting Parties of the Ramsar Convention on how next to proceed such as confirming lists of 'candidate sites' to defining Ramsar site boundaries. In addition, there is a chapter with a map for each European country showing IBAs that meet the Ramsar Criteria as well as tabular data on the wetlands.

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THIRD WATERFOWL POPULATION ESTIMATES UNDER WAY

The Waterfowl Populations Estimates (WPE), produced by Wetlands International, is the determination base of any site that holds 1 % or more of a waterbird population and qualifies as a Wetland of international importance designated under the Ramsar Convention. Moreover, the WPE is a vital source for AEWA, since it is used for nearly all estimates and trends for the AEWA Action Plan and the "Report on the Conservation Status of Migratory Waterbirds in the Agreement Area".

The 2nd edition of the WPE is out-of-print, but is available on-line at:
<http://www.wetlands.org/IWC/WPEnote.htm>

The 3rd edition of the WPE is currently being prepared and will be published during 2002.

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

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http://www.wetlands.org

COMPREHENSIVE JOURNAL ON WETLANDS ECOLOGY

"Wetlands Ecology and Management" is an international journal that publishes original articles in the field of wetlands ecology, the science of the structure and functioning of wetlands for their transformation, utilization, preservation and management on a sustainable basis. The journal covers both pure and applied science dealing with biological, physical and chemical aspects of freshwater, brackish and marine coastal wetlands.

The journal aims to encourage the exchange of information between environmental managers, local and national authorities and scientists by providing a forum for papers dealing with scientifically-based management issues around all types of wetlands.

*FOR MORE INFORMATION OR
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E-MAIL: Jill.Visser@wkap.nl
http://www.wkap.nl/journals/wem

SNIPES IN LITHUANIA

Lithuania contains rich wetlands resources supporting large numbers of snipes. Up to now, only a very limited data has been available on the population size, distribution and breeding ecology of Common Snipe, Great Snipe and Jack Snipe in Lithuania.

The first project concerning these secretive and little-known wading birds was performed between 1998-2000. It was a joint project of several Lithuanian organizations and OMPO (Migratory Birds of Western Palearctic). The main outcomes of this survey are new and reliable estimates of Lithuanian breeding population of snipes and elaboration of sustainable management methods of their habitats. "Snipes in Lithuania" covers all the outcomes of this survey in a detailed way. Copies are available in English and French.

*FOR MORE INFORMATION OR
TO ORDER A COPY PLEASE CONTACT:*
OMPO VILNIUS
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LT- 2021 VILNIUS, LITHUANIA

WINGS OVER AFRICA

Wings Over Africa deals with the proceedings of the International Seminar on Bird Migration that took place in Israel from 29 April to 11 May, 2001. It summarizes 34 presentations about bird migration on the global and the national level as well as flight safety. At the end of the book is an action plan created during the seminar.

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IMPORTANT BIRD AREAS IN AFRICA AND ASSOCIATED ISLANDS

Today, birds are the best-known vertebrates in Africa and new species are still being discovered almost annually. Africa's birds do not face an imminent extinction crisis, yet. Conservation is not on the priority list of the African continent, however, environmental ravages of war, unrest and over-exploitation have taken a heavy toll. A renaissance in African conservation is therefore desperately required.

"Important Bird Areas in Africa and Associated Islands" is a major contribution to the understanding of conservation needs and priorities. Being the first pan-African book of its kind, it enables the reader to see easily, for the first time, the places of global importance for bird conservation in Africa.

*FOR MORE INFORMATION OR
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E-MAIL: pisces@naturebureau.co.uk
<http://www.naturebureau.co.uk/pisces>

THE UK SPA NETWORK: ITS SCOPE AND CONTENT

Since 1982, when the first Special Protection Area (SPA) was classified in the UK, designations have progressed and the area now protected is substantial: approaching 1.5 million hectares. In spite of extensive public consultation and information on classified sites, however, it has not been easy to see whether a true network has been created. Therefore, the UK government requested that the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC), acting on behalf of the Country agencies, conduct a review of the UK SPA network in order to gain an understanding of just how extensive the protection given at the species population level really is. The review is in three volumes and describes the approach taken in selecting UK SPAs; presents species accounts with detailed information on distribution and populations; and provides location maps and details of each SPA and the species for which they have been selected. Updated listings of SPAs are available at the website: <http://www.jncc.gov.uk/idx/default.htm>.

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<http://www.nhbs.com>

THE MESOPOTAMIAN MARSHLANDS: DEMISE OF AN ECOSYSTEM

This publication deals with the desiccation of the vast Mesopotamian marshlands, which are part of the Tigris and Euphrates, the largest river system in southwest Asia and known as one of the great 'cradles of civilisation'. Dams and drainage schemes, however, have drastically transformed the landscape and hydrology of the river system. Key wintering and staging sites significant to the intercontinental migration of birds are disappearing, which has placed an estimated forty species of avians at risk and caused reductions in their populations.

It is based on an assessment study on the Mesopotamian marshland, prepared by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in order to raise awareness and stimulate dialogue about the sustainable use of wetland, water and biodiversity resources in West Asia.

The full report is available at <http://www.grid.unep.ch/activities/sustainable/tigris/marshlands/>

*FOR MORE INFORMATION OR
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PROCEEDINGS OF THE INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM "FROM RESEARCH TO ACTION PLANS: CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF MIGRATORY BIRDS IN THE WESTERN PALEARCTIC UP TO YEAR 2000"

An international Symposium "From research to action plans: Conservation and management of migratory birds in the Western Palearctic up to year 2000", organised by UNAVI (National Union of Italian Hunters

Associations), OMPO and The Western Turdidae Group, was held from 15th – 17th of March 1996 in Bologna, Italy.

The symposium consisted of four workshops on the following topics:

1. Needs in Research and Species Management
2. Habitats Conservation and Conflicts of Use
3. Birds Species Action Plans
4. Which International Co-operation?

The 120 participants from 20 countries of the palearctic region considered that the seminar should contribute to a long-term preservation of biological diversity and promote management of these species and their habitats, particularly wetlands, based on the principle of the wise use of natural resources. Furthermore, all participants were anxious to bring their support to the implementation of the provisions of the African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement and the Ramsar Convention on wetlands of international importance especially as waterbird habitats.

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CHANGES OF WINTERING SITES OF WATERFOWL IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

Due to the impact of global climate change on wildlife, important changes of wintering populations of waterfowl have been recorded in Europe throughout the recent decades. In this context, there is considerable qualitative information concerning recent changes of wintering grounds of waterfowl populations in Belarus, the Kaliningrad district of Russia, Lithuania, Poland and the Ukraine. In 1999-2000, these major changes were documented and analysed on a regional scale within a joint programme by several universities, research institutes, governmental and non-governmental organizations of Belarus, the Kaliningrad district of Russia, Lithuania, Poland and the Ukraine. In addition, new field surveys were performed in the key wintering sites of all countries of the region. The results of this international programme, which was co-ordinated and sponsored by OMPO (Migratory Birds of Western Palearctic), are compiled in the publication "Changes of Wintering Sites of Waterfowl in Central and Eastern Europe". It is expected that this book will be an important source of information for further management and conservation of migratory waterfowl populations of the Western Palearctic.

*FOR MORE INFORMATION OR
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ELECTRONIC ACCESS TO GROMS DATABASE

The Global Register of Migratory Species (GROMS) published a book with the full GROMS database on CD. This CD contains an initial list in digital format of 2,880 migratory species and their conservation status according to the International Red List 2000. In addition, digital maps on 545 species were created with the help of a geographic system of information (GIS). This will allow geographic queries and conservation analysis by intersection with other GIS layers (examples can be found on the GROMS CD). The book

contains initial results of a global analysis on threatened species, maps on 90 species as well as a list of migratory mammals, birds and reptiles. A web version of this geo-database is available at www.groms.de.

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REPORT ON CONTAMINANTS IN BIRD EGGS IN THE WADDEN SEA

After the pilot study in 1996 and 1997, the parameter "Contaminants in Bird Eggs" was fully and successfully implemented within the Trilateral Monitoring and Assessment Program (TMAP) in 1998. Since 1999, the entire Wadden Sea from Balgzand in the western Dutch Wadden Sea to Langli in the Danish northern Wadden Sea has been covered by 13 sampling sites to monitor spatial and temporal trends in contamination of coastal birds.

The report "Contaminants in Bird Eggs in the Wadden Sea: Spatial and Temporal Trends 1991 – 2000" is published by the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat and documents the second assessment of the contaminant level of coastal bird eggs in the Wadden Sea carried out in the framework of TMAP. Its main focus is the spatial pattern of the recent contamination in 2000 covering the entire Wadden Sea and the temporal trend during the last decade.

The preparation of the report has been financially supported by the National Institute for Coastal and Marine Management (The Hague), the National Park Administration Lower Saxony (Wilhelmshaven) and the Forest and Nature Agency (Copenhagen).

Electronic copies can be downloaded from the website of the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat in pdf format at <http://cwss.www.de/TMAP/wse11/wse11.html>.

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NEW PERSPECTIVES FOR MONITORING MIGRATORY ANIMALS

The volume "New Perspectives for Monitoring Migratory Animals- Improving Knowledge for Conservation" results from a workshop on the occasion of the 20th anniversary the "Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals", celebrated in Bonn in 1999. These studies illustrate new insights into animal migration that have been revealed by using satellite tracking, genetic analysis and new information technologies. There is a study on satellite telemetry and how this technology can help tracking the Lesser White-fronted Goose, the most threatened arctic goose species of the Palearctic Region. Another case

illustrates how satellite tracking provides important information on the migration pattern and stopover behaviour of White Storks.

This volume was published by the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation.

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FAX: +49 2501/801-351
<http://www.lv-h.de/bfn>*

WETLANDS OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC

The Ramsar Convention was the first among the important international conventions focused on nature conservation which the Czech Republic signed after political changes in 1989.

This publication is a brief abstract of the comprehensive inventory on Wetlands of the Czech Republic. It provides you with a glimpse of the efforts by the Czech Republic to comply with the obligation as a contracting party to the Ramsar Convention and protect all wetland sites on its territory.

You will find information on basic characteristics, protection and human use as well as Flora and Fauna of twelve Wetlands of International Importance of the Czech Republic. At the end is a brief chapter on Wetlands of national, regional and local importance.

*FOR MORE INFORMATION OR
TO ORDER A COPY PLEASE CONTACT:
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379 01 Trebon, Czech Republic*

IUCN RED LIST REVISED

The IUCN Red List is the world's most comprehensive inventory of the global conservation status of plants and animals. It uses a set of criteria to evaluate the extinction risk of thousands of species and subspecies. In the past four years, the IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria underwent a review involving broad consultation with users and conservation organisations from around the world. This has resulted in a clearer, more open, and easy-to-use system and has also refined the effectiveness of the Red List Categories and Criteria as indicators of extinction risk. The revised Categories and Criteria (version 3.1) were adopted by IUCN Council in 2000 and, following further refinement and translation, have been published as a booklet in English, French and Spanish. Electronic copies can be downloaded from the website of the Species Survival Commission (SSC) in pdf format at <http://www.iucn.org/themes/ssc/redlists/Rcategories2000.html>.

*FOR MORE INFORMATION OR
TO ORDER A COPY PLEASE CONTACT:
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FAX: +44 1223 277175
E-MAIL: info@books.iucn.org
<http://www.iucn.org>*

SET OF GUIDELINES FOR IUCN RED LIST IN PREPARATION

In order to provide a greater guidance on the application of the Red List Categories and Criteria, a comprehensive set of guidelines, including many examples and case studies, are being prepared. The first part of these guidelines (in English only) has been prepared by the Red List Standards and Petitions Subcommittee and deals with the assessment of widely distributed species using Criterion A. The guidelines will be finalised this year.

*FOR MORE INFORMATION OR
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THE RED LIST PROGRAMME

E-MAIL: redlist@ssc-uk.org

An electronic version in pdf format can be downloaded at

<http://www.iucn.org/themes/ssc/redlists/RLcats2001booklet.html>.

8. Websites

INTERNET PORTAL FOR BIRDS IN EUROPE II PROJECT

In 1994, BirdLife International published "Birds in Europe: Their Conservation Status", which was the first ever European assessment of bird conservation priorities.

The Birds in Europe II Project will fully update this prioritisation exercise and so help ensure bird conservation efforts across Europe are well informed and based on sound science. In addition, the analysis will be fed into two main global conservation assessments: (1) the 2004 IUCN Red List of Threatened Animals; and (2) the 2004 State of the World's Birds. The latter will be the first of a new series of reports to be launched at the next BirdLife International Global Partnership Meeting in 2004.

In order to improve on-line communication an internet portal for this project has been created at:

http://www.biodiversity.org/simplify/ev.php?URL_ID=1981&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201&reload=1020865579.

Here, an overview of the project, news articles and libraries of key documents can be found.

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BIODIVERSITY

THE ESSENCE OF EDUCATION AND PUBLIC AWARENESS

The results of round one of an International Internet Debate on Biodiversity Education and Public Awareness that is being managed by the IUCN Commission on Education and Communication is now available at <http://www.bepa-online.org>. On this website one can also find links to people who can tell more about good practice in biodiversity education and explore the arguments about what makes effective education.

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WHITE STORKS IN BELGIUM

There is a new website on White Stork (*Ciconia ciconia*) by Mr. Wim Van den Bossche, the White Stork expert from BirdLife Belgium. At www.ooievaars.vlaanderen.be detailed information on White Storks can be found as well as links to distribution, breeding, habitat, food and a stork calendar.

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