



PRESS RELEASE

World Migratory Bird Day on 9 October Celebrates Birds and Nature

Hundreds of events to mark the day demonstrate strong global support for bird and nature conservation ahead of the UN Biodiversity Summit in Kunming, China.

Bonn, 7 October 2021 – On Saturday, 9 October people all over the world will be celebrating [World Migratory Bird Day](#), a global campaign that aims to raise awareness of migratory birds and the need for international cooperation to conserve them.

The UN-backed campaign is organized by a collaborative partnership among two environmental treaties - the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals ([CMS](#)) and the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement ([AEWA](#)), and the non-profit organization, Environment for the Americas ([EFTA](#)).

This year's theme "**Sing, Fly, Soar – Like A Bird!**" focuses on the phenomena of "bird song" and "bird flight" as a way to inspire and connect people of all ages around the globe in their shared desire to protect and celebrate migratory birds. Hundreds of events in all corners of the world have been [registered on the website](#) to mark the day. People will also use their creativity and the universal language of singing and dancing to express and share their appreciation for birds through social media.

"Migratory birds bear witness to and are impacted by the triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution. Making progress on reigning in climate change and ending biodiversity loss is critical to the survival of migratory birds. The journey of a migratory bird knows no borders and therefore, neither should our response to the planetary crisis. I call on us all to step up action, action and action to protect the future of all species on this planet." says Inger Andersen, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Director of the UN Environment Programme.

World Migratory Bird Day is celebrated on two peak days each year (second Saturday in May and in October) in recognition of the cyclical nature of bird migration and the different peak times of migration along the world's flyways. The October peak day, which generally falls in the post-breeding migration period, comes amidst a wave of headline news, from the recent IUCN Red List warning that 14 per cent

of bird species worldwide are threatened with extinction, to the U.S. Government declaring numerous bird species extinct.

“World Migratory Bird Day is an opportunity for people everywhere to learn about migratory birds and about the many challenges they face. This year the focus is on their unique songs and flights, and we invite people to reconnect with nature by actively listening to and watching birds – wherever they are,” said Amy Fraenkel, Executive Secretary of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS).

Migratory birds the world over are threatened by habitat loss and illegal hunting as well as from poisoning, pollution and collision with man-made objects, such as glass-covered buildings and powerlines.

Climate change is adding additional pressure on migratory birds by adversely affecting habitats they need for breeding, resting and refuelling along the way. The changing climate is also impacting the annual cycles of birds, affecting the timing of migration and reproduction and causing mismatches in food availability.

Another emerging threat to migratory birds is light pollution, which disorients birds who are flying at night, leading them to collide with buildings – the likely cause behind the mass mortality event involving hundreds of migratory birds in New York City last month.

Approximately 2000 of the world’s 11,000 bird species migrate, some covering enormous distances, like the Arctic Tern or the Bar-tailed Godwit, which flies distances up to 11,680 kilometres non-stop between Alaska and New Zealand.

On their journeys across the planet, migratory birds use broad migration corridors or pathways known as flyways. Soaring birds such as storks or eagles are currently gathering by the thousands at some of the major flyway bottlenecks like the Strait of Gibraltar, the Hula valley or along the Appalachians Mountains gliding and soaring to save energy during their long journeys. These flyways span multiple countries and include the main routes the birds follow, generally in a north-south and south-north direction twice each year.

Hundreds of events are scheduled in countries along the flyways to mark the day. An impressive line-up of events and free online programming on a range of topics related to migratory birds, their migration, and international efforts to conserve them are also being offered by some of the leading bird conservation and nature education organisations in the world.

“World Migratory Bird Day champions bird conservation across the flyways,” says Susan Bonfield, Executive Director of Environment for the Americas (EFTA) which organizes World Migratory Bird Day in the Americas, bringing people and communities together in celebration of migratory birds from Canada to Argentina and the Caribbean. “Our programs are helping to unify our voices for migratory birds and serve as a call to action to protect them. In this difficult and unusual time, birds have brought us renewed joy in nature and have fostered a shared passion for these long-distance travellers that is echoed across the world.”

The October peak day of World Migratory Bird Day falls three days before world leaders will be attending both virtually and in person the opening of the UN Biodiversity Conference (CBD COP15), taking place in the Chinese city of Kunming. The meeting, which will conclude next year, is expected to adopt a new global biodiversity framework for the decade. It is hoped that the conference will be a tipping point in global action for nature and help restore a positive relationship between nature and people.

“Birds and especially their songs have been a real source of comfort for many people around the world during the COVID-19 pandemic, reconnecting us with nature,” says Jacques Trouvilliez, Executive

Secretary of the African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement (AEWA). “Yet we must not forget that birds and in particular migratory birds the world over are constantly under threat and that tackling these will require not only continued close cooperation between countries along the flyways, but also actions in every garden, village or city which can help create safe havens for many species of birds,” he added.

World Migratory Bird Day was first launched by CMS and AEWA in Kenya in 2006 and has grown in popularity each year. Statements received in support of World Migratory Bird Day and this year’s theme “Sing, Fly, Soar – Like a Bird!” can be found [here](#).

End

Note to Editors

About the ARTWORK

The World Migratory Bird Day artwork used for the 2021 campaign was created by Sara Wolman from Alaska, U.S.A. and depicts a small selection of the migratory birds which travel along three of the major flyway systems found in the world: **The Americas Flyway**, the **African-Eurasian Flyway** and the **East-Asian Australasian Flyway**.

“Birds are a universal language. They connect us. Every single one of us has a story of our personal experience with birds to share. In these challenging times birds are a reminder of how connected we are as they travel the world,” says Sara Wolman, Visual Media Specialist at the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the creator of the artwork of this year’s World Migratory Bird Day campaign.

The artwork and more information about the species depicted on the three flyway posters can be found [here](#).

Website:

www.worldmigratorybirdday.org

SOCIAL MEDIA

Pack: <https://bit.ly/3cFWF5H>

@WMBD

#WorldMigratoryBirdDay

#WMBD2021

#SingFlySoar #LikeABird #ForNature

GLOBAL HIGHLIGHTS

World Migratory Bird Day events taking place around the world are registered on the World Migratory Bird Day Website and made visible on the [Global Events Map](#). Statements in support of World Migratory Bird Day are also published on the [Statements Page](#).

Below is a selection of some of the major global highlights happening to mark the second peak day of World Migratory Bird Day on (or around) 9 October 2021:

SING and DANCE #LikeABird Challenge

People around the world are being encouraged to use their creativity and the universal language of singing and dancing to express and share their appreciation for birds in the spirit of this year's World Migratory Bird Day theme: "Sing, Fly, Soar - Like a Bird!" Participants will be uploading their videos to social media platforms using the hashtags #LikeABird and #WMBD2021. To learn more about the [SING and DANCE #LikeABird Challenge](#) please click [here](#).

African-Eurasian Flyway

One of the highlights along the African-Eurasian Flyway will be the so-called "[Zugvogeltage](#)" (or Migratory Bird Days) being held in the German Wadden Sea National Park of Lower Saxony, which is part of the trilateral UNESCO Wadden Sea World Heritage Site. The nine-days event will kick off on World Migratory Bird Day (9 October) and will include over 250 individual events, including bird-observation points, excursions, talks, activities for children with a special focus on migratory birds. Each year, more than 10 million migratory birds take advantage of the Wadden Sea to rest and refuel making it one of the key sites for migratory birds in the African-Eurasian Flyway. The event aims to highlight the importance of the Wadden Sea as a key stop-over site for migratory birds along the [East Atlantic Flyway](#) – which is part of the broader African-Eurasian Flyway and an important migration route for up to 90 million birds annually stretching from the Arctic breeding grounds to wintering grounds along the eastern coast of Europe and Africa.

Americas Flyway

Environment for the Americas ([EFTA](#)) and partners will be marking the October peak day of World Migratory Bird Day by hosting a live online event, or series of events from October 7 to 9, entitled "[World Migratory Bird Day Live](#)." The website will be featuring a series of online webinars on topics relating to bird conservation, including a webinar on the Lesser Yellowlegs, a shorebird that is undergoing an alarming decline. Friday, October 8 will be a special day reserved for youth and schools and EFTA is hosting a bird costume party and competition for children up to 12 years old as well as a Bird Song Contest. Working closely with [Birds Caribbean](#) and others the creative arts – including a "sing like a bird" competition, videos, and art demonstrations, will play a role this year, besides informational speakers and workshops.

BirdLife Webinars

[BirdLife International](#) will use the upcoming World Migratory Bird Day to highlight the work the BirdLife partnership is doing to protect migratory birds along the East Atlantic Flyway as well as highlight the importance of working across borders to conserve migratory birds and their habitats worldwide. For the October edition of World Migratory Bird Day 2021, BirdLife International is hosting a [series of engaging live webinars](#) to help people around the world understand what bird migration is about. BirdLife International will also be sharing information and quizzes through social media to help people around the world learn about what they can do to help migrating birds.

East Asian-Australasian Flyway

The East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership ([EAAFP](#)) is preparing a number of webinars to mark the October celebration of World Migratory Bird Day. [On 7th October](#), you can learn how birdwatchers can contribute to migratory waterbird research and join the #legflagchallenge campaign. On the [8th of October](#), two researchers will bring you to Russia and Indonesia to share their latest findings. On 9th October, Birdlife Productions will host a puppet show called "[The Boy with the Wings](#)".

World Migratory Bird Day Virtual Choir

To mark World Migratory Bird Day 2021, a [World Migratory Bird Day Virtual Choir](#) has been organized by the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership and the Bowerbird Collective, inviting people around the world to record themselves singing "like a bird" along a newly created song. The video featuring the global song submissions was launched during the first peak day of World Migratory Bird Day on 8 May and is available on the [EAAFP website](#).

October Big Day + Global Bird Weekend

To celebrate World Migratory Bird Day 2021, thousands of birdwatchers will be recording their bird sightings along all the major flyways of the world by joining [October Big Day](#) on 9 October 2021. This high-profile global citizen science event brings the world's birders together to record sightings via the [eBird](#) app and could again set a new world record for the greatest number of birds recorded on a single day. Global Big Day will be part of [Global Bird Weekend](#) which will take place 8-10 October 2021 and aims to inspire birdwatchers to come together as a global community to celebrate birds. The event is being organized by Global Birding created by Tim Appleton MBE and Swarovski Optik, who will also be hosting a Global Bird Weekend [Birding Live On Location event](#) on Facebook.

ABOUT

World Migratory Bird Day

World Migratory Bird Day is celebrated on two peak days each year (the second Saturdays of May and October) to highlight the need for international collaboration to ensure the conservation of migratory birds and their habitats globally. Registered events to mark World Migratory Bird Day 2021 will include bird festivals, education programmes, media events, quizzes, competitions, and film screenings.

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www.worldmigratorybirdday.org

Convention on Migratory Species (CMS)

The Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) aims to conserve terrestrial, aquatic, and avian migratory species throughout their range. It is an intergovernmental UN treaty concerned with the conservation of wildlife and habitats on a global scale. Since the Convention's entry into force in 1979, its membership has grown steadily to include 132 Parties from Africa, Central and South America, Asia, Europe and Oceania.

www.cms.int @bonnconvention

African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement (AEWA)

The Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA) is an intergovernmental treaty dedicated to the conservation of migratory waterbirds that migrate along the African-Eurasian Flyway. The Agreement covers 255 species of bird ecologically dependent on wetlands for at least part of their annual cycle. The treaty covers 119 Range States from Europe, Africa, the Middle East and parts of Asia and Canada. 81 countries and the European Union have become a Contracting Party to the agreement.

www.unep-aewa.org @UNEP_AEWA

Environment for the Americas (EFTA)

EFTA is a Colorado-based non-profit organization that provides bilingual educational materials and information about birds and bird conservation to raise awareness of migratory birds and to promote actions that protect migratory birds throughout the Americas. <https://www.environmentamericas.org/>

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