



*"Inspiring birds, inspiring people"*

**NEWSLETTER no. 14 ( November 2012 )**



*“Inspiring birds, inspiring people”*

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**Introduction:**

Dear colleagues,

In this newsletter you receive news from the network and progress made during the meetings in September (Skype) and 24<sup>th</sup> of October in Genk in Belgium. (Side meeting during the Eurosite / Europarc Annual Conference).

The "Migratory Birds for People"-network is developing well and we have now started engaging also the 'scientific world' to the network-program (*see page: 13*). And what is happening right now in West-Africa? (*see page 12*)

In Newsletter nr. 13 (June 2012) we published: **“Cooperation through enthusiasm and opportunity”**. Once again we ask you all to take action. For instance: call or email your colleague(s) in the network and start working together.

Please, let us know what kind of action would fit you best and we will be there to support you !

See, for instance

Enjoy reading !

On behalf of the core group,

Roelof Heringa (NEW Email: [rheringa@eurosite.org](mailto:rheringa@eurosite.org) )

*P.S. there might have been some confusion because of my retirement from Staatsbosbeheer , BUT I intend to remain active in our prosperous “Migratory Birds for People”-network !*

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**News from the network:**



**Finland : Liminganlahti conservation area:**

No message received.



**Sweden: Naturum Lake Tåkern**

**Naturum Lake Tåkern is booming!**

After the opening of the new wetland centre at Lake Tåkern in May this year (see newsletter nr.13) the number of visitors has exceeded all expectations. By the middle of Sept. 60.000 visitors had come to the centre, twice the number that was expected!

We hope to let the participants in the MBP-network to enjoy and experience this centre and its magnificent surroundings next year during the annual MBP-workshop in June. You will be informed about that at a later stage.



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The local NGO called Tåkern Field station received a nice offer recently. See also : the Field station website <http://www.takern.se>

The two researchers **Adriaan "Adjan" de Jong** from SLU in Umeå and **Thomas Heinicke** expert from Rügen, Tyskland offered to come and hold a lecture about the bean goose and its migration. The lecture will be held at the visitors centre naturum Tåkern on October 20. After the lecture, an excursion to look at live geese and maybe identify both taiga and tundra varieties.



Newly ringed bean goose with gps. Photo by Thomas Heinicke

The researchers de Jong and Heinicke are both involved in the International Bean Goose project.



If your visitors centre would like to add this interesting subject to your program next year, try contacting Adriaan de Jong Tel. +46-70-6403092 or looking for people involved in the project in your country!

**Ellen Hultman**  
Naturumföreståndare/Manager of visitor centre  
Naturvårdsenheten



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**Sweden: Naturum Getterön**

During this autumn a high amount of birds has been observed at Getterön. Good numbers of ducks, geese and waders is using the wetland as a resting place to feed. It seems to have been a good breeding year for many bird species in Sweden.

The 340<sup>th</sup> bird species for Getterön was a **Common Nightingale** that was ringed in the end of September.



*Common Nightingale*



*The café with the beautiful view of the reserve*

Come visit us and watch all the birds and try our new café. During October and November we have some very interesting bird lectures during Wednesday evenings on the schedule What about listening to trips about birding in China, New Zealand and Mongolia?

Welcome to Naturum Getterön!

Visit our website at [www.naturumgetteron.se](http://www.naturumgetteron.se) for more information.

*Christopher Gullander, naturvård*



**Estonia: Matsalu Nature Centre**

The core group is in contact with Matsalu Nature Centre in Estonia. We hope that they will join the Migratory Birds for People -network. This remains uncertain right now, but discussion is continued. (R.H.)

**Matsalu National Park** (previously **Matsalu Nature Reserve**, Estonian: *Matsalu rahvuspark*, often just **Matsalu**) is a nature reserve and national park situated in Lääne County, Estonia. Matsalu National Park spans an area of 486.1 km<sup>2</sup> (187.7 sq mi), comprising Matsalu Bay, the Kasari River delta, and surrounding areas.

Matsalu Bay (Estonian: *Matsalu laht*) is one of the most important wetland bird areas in Europe, due to its prime position on the East Atlantic Flyway. Large numbers of migratory birds use Matsalu as a staging area. Every spring over two million waterfowl pass Matsalu, of which around 1.6 million are Long-tailed Ducks.

Matsalu National Park is a home for a number of endangered species, many of which are listed in the Estonian IUCN Red List, including the White-tailed Eagle of the highest conservation category, a lot of bird species of the second and third protection categories, 22 strongly protected plant species, the Natterjack Toad, and ten species of mammals of the second conservation category.

(source: WIKIPEDIA)



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Matsalu Nature Centre is open (13.04 - 01.10):  
Mo-Fri 9.00 - 17.00  
Sat-Sun 10.00 - 18.00  
From October 2nd - April 12th the centre is closed on  
Saturday and Sunday.

*Additional information:*

Contact: Marju Pajumets  
Tel: +372 472 4236  
E-mail: [Marju.Pajumets@rmk.ee](mailto:Marju.Pajumets@rmk.ee)  
Webpage: [www.rmk.ee](http://www.rmk.ee)  
Estonia



**Lithuania: Nemunas Delta**

**Contact:** Saulius Svazav [Institute of Ecology of Vilnius University]

Still pending; No message received.



**Russia: CEPA , St. Petersburg**

No message received.

*Evgeny Genelt-Yanovskiy and Yulia Danilova  
Baltic Fund for Nature Of St.Petersburg Naturalists Society  
Universitetskaya emb. 7/9-11  
Saint-Petersburg*



**Baltic Fund for Nature**

was established in 1995

as a structural unit of  
**St.Petersburg Naturalists Society** -  
one of the oldest environmental and scientific  
NGOs in Russia,  
founded in 1868  
at St.Petersburg University.

Partner to **WWF Baltic Program** since 1995  
Member of **Coastal Union - EUCC** since 1998  
Member of **IUCN** since 2000



**Denmark: Nature Centre Vestamager**

No message received.

Contact: *Stella Blichfeldt*



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**Germany : Nationalpark - Haus Husum**

Nationalpark-Haus Husum:

WWF Germany with its Wadden Sea Office in the Nationalpark-Haus Husum has published a comprehensive teaching material (in German language) on migratory birds in the Wadden Sea under the title: "Pause im Wattenmeer - Zugvögel zwischen Arktis und Afrika". It aims at school classes from 7th to 10th grade (Level 2) and is structured in three lessons with numerous ready-to copy worksheets. Pupils discover the Wadden Sea’s essential role as stopping-place for migratory birds. Suitable for classroom teaching as well as for Wadden Sea education in visitor centres. Developed and published by WWF Germany as IWSS-cooperation product.

Din A4, 64 pages, available as download or printed copies at [husum@wwf.de](mailto:husum@wwf.de).

More information (de):

<http://www.wwf.de/aktiv-werden/bildungsarbeit-lehrerservice/lehrerservice/lehrmittel/pause-am-wattenmeer>

Kind regards,  
Hans-Ulrich

*Dr. Hans-Ulrich Rösner*  
*Head of Wadden Sea Office, WWF Germany*



**United Kingdom: Slimbridge**

On the morning of October 27th, the first Bewick’s swan arrived at Slimbridge. After careful analysis of its bill markings, the bird was recognised as 3 year old Humbugs.

There have been up to eight seen so far, including the first family of the year (Lucius, Aoki, and their Cygnet). At Slimbridge we continue to look out for any new arrivals over the coming weeks., hopefully having around 300 by mid December.



*Photo credit: WWT, Rob Werran*



*Credit: WWT*

In 2011, in north eastern Russia, we took the first steps towards starting a conservation breeding program for the Spoon-billed Sandpiper. The first year of the program gave us 17 chicks, and this year we are rearing a further 11, giving us a total of 28 birds. This may sound like a small number of birds, but for the Spoon-billed Sandpiper it is a shocking 10% of its entire population. If we can reach our target of having at least 10 females, then by 2015 we can return as many as 40 eggs a year to Russia, where they’d be hatched and reared in their breeding grounds.

*Contribution by Rob Warren, Slimbridge*



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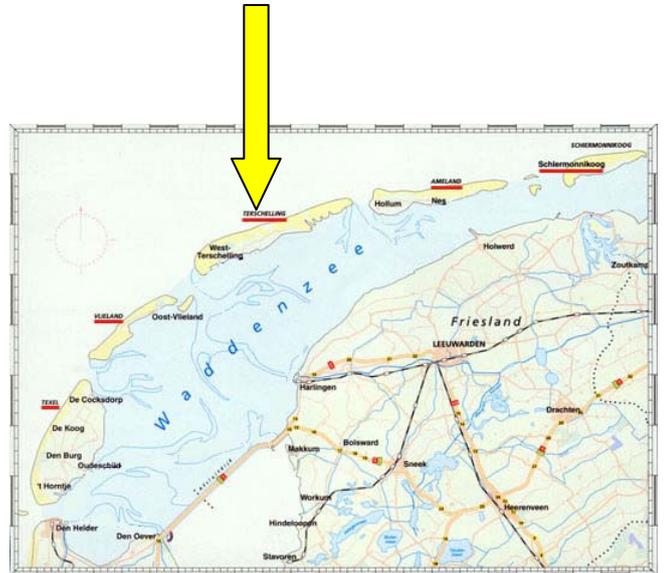


**the Netherlands: Terschelling (Waddensee)**

During the last summer months we have explored the idea that it would be good to include also the Dutch part of the Waddensea area in the ‘Migratory Birds for People’-program. The Waddensea is one of the main ‘stop-overs’ on the East Atlantic Flyway. It was also considered that a lot of initiatives are running in this area, which makes it even more interesting to include this area.

After discussions with the management of Staatsbosbeheer it was decided that the information centre on the isle of Terschelling would be the central contact for ‘Migratory Birds for People’ in this area. The contact person is: Freek Zwart. (Staatsbosbeheer)

*(Roelof Heringa)*



**the Netherlands : Oostvaardersplassen**

Oostvaardersplassen will meet a new and more positive era. The new government wants to restore some of old policies. Although not certain, is is promising! Means natural, ecological and landscape values will increase and thus –also- the need for a new centre.

In the meantime we prepare for the general public! Next year an HD movie on Oostvaardersplassen will be ready. A very special registration. It will interest and bring much more people to nature. Thus we are challenged to create provisions to properly guide this interest. Therefore, a hard work is being carried out to build a **temporary shelter**. Simultaneously, we take one step after another to create our final centre.



*Temporary shelter ?  
Solution for Oostvaardersplassen?*

**By the way, does anyone know a way to get a visitor centre to operate without governmental subsidies?** This is currently the key to which we are looking. I like to hearing from you!

Observers have spotted thousands Great Tits over the last few days, coming to our country. Reportedly because of a bad season in beech nuts. They are very welcome!



*Theo de Bruin , project manager Staatsbosbeheer. (8 nov. 2012)*

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= Natuurpunt : visitor centre 'Uitkerkse Polder'.

News from the Uitkerkse Polder, autumn 2012

During summer, the number of inhabitants of Blankenberge - the closest town to the Uitkerkse Polder – raises from 17.000 to sometimes over 250.000. Unnecessary to say that this has implications for the nature reserve: traffic is the main challenge. The other one is how to reach these hundreds of thousands of beach and shopping tourists with our story about birds and salty meadows in the polders.



Each summer, Natuurpunt launches its 'Summer campaign' in an effort to attract tourist to our nature reserves. With great success: each summer, thousands of people learn to know the value of 'the land that is behind the dunes'. Unfortunately, last July was windy and rainy, so rather calm. August then again, was warm and sunny.

For the first time in many years, the numbers of breeding meadow birds didn't reach another all time high, but of course, there's no such thing as unlimited growth, neither in the economy, nor in nature! The main species did quite well, so there are no immediate worries, although groundwater levels are to be monitored closely.

For the last few weeks, a dozen nature guides are taking a course on agriculture and nature conservation. They learn about the existing practices and about how things have to and can change towards a more sustainable agriculture (organic farming, agro-forestry, permaculture \*) For a nature guide, it remains a permanent effort to broaden your view on the main actors in the field.

Very admirable was the effort of two of our female volunteers. They made a pilgrimage to Compostella in an effort to raise funds for a water mill, that is to help raise water levels in parts of the nature reserve. You can check there blog on:

[http://www.bloggen.be/doris\\_dette2012/](http://www.bloggen.be/doris_dette2012/)

Very inspiring! (*this blog is in Dutch language...*)

*Bob Vandendriessche,  
Wetland centre 'Uitkerkse Polder'.*



*\*) Permaculture is a branch of ecological design, ecological engineering, and environmental design which develops sustainable architecture/human settlements and self-maintained agricultural systems modeled from natural ecosystems.*

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= Visitor centre “het Zwin”



*The Zwin - a bird airport*

We received information that wetland centre “het Zwin” will include two new contacts: Leo Declercq and Kris Struyf. Leo is education officer and Kris is manager (‘conservator’) of the wetland centre “Het Zwin”. *(their contact details are in the participants list)*

Wim de Roo will remain active as project leader for the “Natura People”-project - at least till the end of 2013.

*(Roelof Heringa)*

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France: Baie de Somme

No message received.

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France: Camargue Gardoise / Centre de découverte du Scamandre,

No message received.

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Spain: Aiguamolls de l’Emporda

In Aiguamolls Natural Park, during last breeding season, the management of the wetland has focused on



aquatic birds, as well as trying to keep water levels in the best conditions for watching wildlife next to the public access areas. Breeding season has not been but, with more than 30 pairs of Purple Heron, up to 59 pairs of white stork or more than 25 pairs of Roller, nice numbers of



**Moustached Warbler** (1) (*Acrocephalus melanopogon*), and the first pair ever of **Baillon’s Crake** (2) (*Porzana pusilla*) with chicks grown in Aiguamolls. However, species such as Marsh Harrier, Purple Gallinule or Black-necked Stilt have decreased the number of breeding pairs.

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*Matà marshes and Gallinera ricefields during the first part of summer, before it dries out.*



*Rogera Lagoon and Llaunes lagoons, next to the Mediterranean Sea*

On the other hand, Aiguamolls Natural Park managers have worked hard in arranging water channels, ponds and marshes, with new tools to regulate the main water levels. That management is important for birds, as well as fishes, so they are able to penetrate inside some areas such as Massona Lagoon from Sirvent channel.



*New system for pumping up water inside Matà Marshes*

*Juvenile flamingos, shelduck, egrets and horses grazing in Pericos Lagoon*

*Ponç Feliu,  
Aiguamolls de l'Empordà June 2012*



Spain: Ebro Delta

MónNatura Delta – a new visitor centre in the Ebro Delta by Fundació CatalunyaCaixa



We are very pleased to inform the MBP-network of the inauguration of the new visitor centre in the Ebro Delta “Món Natura Delta”. This new centre is located in the old buildings of a fish farm next to la Tancada lagoon now owned by our Foundation. This infrastructure is actually next to one of the areas restored through the LIFE+ Project 09/NAT/ES 000520 “Habitat restoration and management in two coastal lagoons of the Ebro Delta”... actually we’re very proud of the restoration process and invite you all to come and visit it with us.

We already have Pied avocets (*Recurvirostra avocetta*), Little terns (*Sternula albifrons*) and Kentish plovers (*Charadrius alexandrinus*) nesting next to the visitor centre only one month after finishing the restoration works!

MónNatura Delta is targeted to schools during weekdays and families and ornithologists over the weekends. The most valued assets of the centre according to the first thousand of visitors are: the recreation of the old salt pans (“salines”) to understand how salt is extracted from seawater.



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*The lookout on top of the old offices building (Mirador 360°) and the video about the 4 seasons at the Delta in the museum building.*



*View from the building*

We hope to welcome you at Món Natura Delta soon!!!

You can find more info on the centre at : [www.monnaturadelta.com](http://www.monnaturadelta.com) [You can download a PDF about the centre here ! also in English...]

And more about the life project at: <http://lifedeltalagoon.eu>

Contact person for the Network:

Xavier Escuté

[Xavier.escute.fos@catalunyacaixa.com](mailto:Xavier.escute.fos@catalunyacaixa.com)



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**Spain: las Salinas y Arenales de San Pedro del Pinatar**

*No message received*

### West-African Centres



- **Mauretania**
- **Senegal**
- **Guinea Bissau**

### Great opportunities for the West African centres under Migratory Bird for People (MBP)

From Arctic to Africa: Migratory birds connecting wetlands and people also known as the Arcadia Project is a new initiative, which will use a people-connecting approach, which involves local stakeholders in conservation planning. “The project aims to build new bridges of cooperation at the sites and a strong network across the flyway through sharing of expertise and experience and to raise the awareness and capacity of local authorities to wisely manage their wetland resources”.

The project which is focused in the East Atlantic flyways has also strong linkages between the key centres within West Africa through the “Migratory Bird for People” -program. The three (3) centres: Djoudj (Senegal); Bang d’Arguin (Mauritania) and Bubaque (Guinea Bissau), even far from each other, will be connecting through waterbird monitoring and capacity building of the staff and volunteers involved in the different centres. This project came at the right time and it will be managed at the Hub of the MBP (Wetlands International Africa office) in Dakar, Senegal.

Other ongoing projects (Strengthening networks for the conservation of migratory birds and their habitats along the west coast of Africa; the Wadden Sea flyway initiative) implemented on ground are also supporting the centre activities.

In the framework of monitoring migratory waterbirds along the coast of West Africa and capacity building for the implementation of the regional Monitoring Strategy adopted in June 2012 in Dakar, Senegal, the Diawling National Park in collaboration with Nature Mauritania, BirdLife international, Wetlands International and the Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative (WSFI) are holding a training course on “monitoring waterbirds and their habitats along the West African coast” in December 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> 2012 in Diawling National Park in Mauritania. The course will take place at the next door of the Djoudj centre where most transboundary activities are carried out.



The workshop aims to provide future trainers with monitoring tools and reminded them about best practices in counting and monitoring waterbirds and site conditions, as well as the importance of planning and organization for successful monitoring at the site level. This is an important start to bring the key people of the different centres to share important tools.

#### For more information contact:

Mr. Abdoulaye Ndiaye Email: [andiaye@wetlands-africa.org](mailto:andiaye@wetlands-africa.org);  
Ibrahima Diop: [ibraadiop@yahoo.fr](mailto:ibraadiop@yahoo.fr)

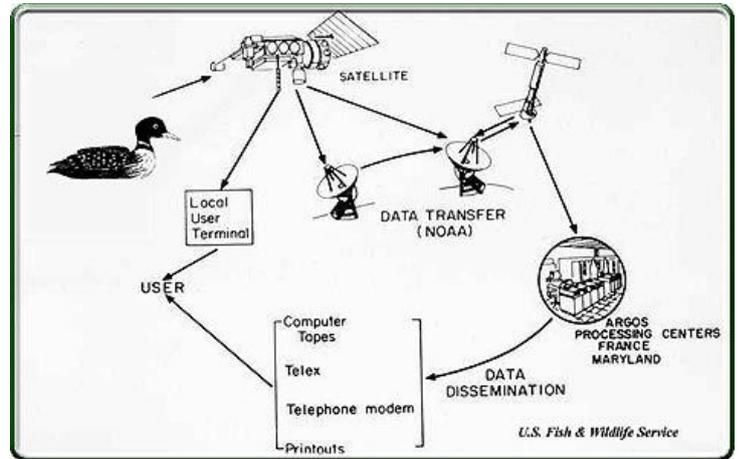
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**Other network news**

➤ **New phase in "Migratory Birds for People" program: linking scientific research to the MBP-network.**

It is essential for the program to connect the scientific research on bird migration to the network. Therefore we decided that it was time now to make initial steps to build relationships with researchers in this field.



- The 5<sup>th</sup> of November Roelof Heringa and Theo de Bruin have discussed the MBP-program with Dr. Jeroen Reneerkens (State University of Groningen). He works closely together with Prof. Dr. Theunis Piersma (RUG). After explaining "Migratory Birds for People" and its goals, we stressed the benefits for both parties to work together in future. Working with our network would give new projects a broader support and therefore better funding-opportunities. Our suggestions will be discussed in the research group. (to be continued)
- Of course there are other research programs running in other universities: for instance Lund (Sweden), Amsterdam etc. We intend to initiate also contacts there.  
Dear colleagues: should you be aware of possible contacts, please inform either Taej Mundkur or Roelof Heringa. They will take it from there.

➤ **Kind request for footage.** (repeated request)

Wetlands International is planning to make a film on migratory birds and wetlands, which could also form a resource for each wetland centre as a movie in digital format with images that could be used for a "Migratory Birds for People"- presentation. We hope for your positive response and will of course discuss with you the conditions under which you would be willing to share this material with us. Please send in your material to :

[rheringa@euosite.org](mailto:rheringa@euosite.org)



➤ **"Migratory Birds for People" certificate**

The core group decided to develop a certificate by which the participating visitor centre can show that they are a member of the Migratory Birds for People- network.

During the MBP-workshop 2011 in Belgium a number of certificates were signed by Chris Rostron and received by the participants.

This certificate can still be obtained for free.

Just write an email to [rheringa@euosite.org](mailto:rheringa@euosite.org) and we will send you a certificate.





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## Darwin Scholarship 2013

The Field Studies Council (UK) is offering places for those interested in doing their course on monitoring and communicating biodiversity, due to take place in the UK from the 20th to the 30th of August 2013. They have 25 places, and some scholarships available for a limited number of attendees. For more information, please click on the [Annual Darwin Scholarship Programme 2013](#).



**Ramsar COP11**  
6-13 July 2012  
Bucharest, Romania

The Ramsar COP happens every 3 years and is an opportunity for the contracting parties (governments) of the Ramsar Convention to come together and review progress and set new targets for the convention. It took place in Bucharest, Romania, from the 6<sup>th</sup> to the 12<sup>th</sup> of July. This year they looked at resolutions including whether to move the hosting organisation (it has stayed with IUCN), new formats for reporting on Ramsar Sites, wetlands and health, and wetlands and tourism, the key theme of the COP.



Taej Mundkur and Chris Rostron attended the COP, along with 2,000 other people, and MBP-information was included on the WLI information stand. Taej and Chris also asked for inclusion of ‘wetland centres and flyways’ in the resolution in the Resolution on tourism.

In addition, we held a ‘wetland centres and flyways’ side event with representatives from all the major flyway initiatives present at the COP, and used it as an opportunity to discuss how wetland centres could work with



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flyways to better deliver messages about migratory birds to local people, as well as use local information and survey work to provide better data.

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**WLI information sheets**

As a new tool for those working at wetland centres, WLI is producing a series of information sheets on issues that are likely to be of interest to those involved in wetland centres and education. The format is a ‘two sides of A4’, offering an introduction to the topic, with further links and resources.

The first topic is on constructed wetlands as water treatment systems, and this will be followed by ‘wetland centre development’, ‘evaluation of wetland visitor groups’, and ‘engaging the public in bird breeding programmes’. You can see the first one at the [WLI website](#)



**WLI information sheet No. 1:  
Wetland treatment Systems  
(Constructed Wetlands)**





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## News from the Core group

### **Migratory Birds for People – Project planning meeting Skype Wednesday, 19<sup>th</sup> September, 2012, 10.00-11.00 CET**

#### **Attendees:**

Chris Rostron, WLI, WWT  
Roelof Heringa, Eurosite  
Taej Mundkur, Wetlands International, Netherlands  
Theo de Bruin, Staatsbosbeheer  
Ellen Hultman, Lake Tåkern (+46-13196561)  
Abdoulaye Ndiaye, WI West Africa

#### **Apologies:**

Liesbet Cleynhens, Natuurpunt  
Aida, Friends of Aiguamolls  
Szabolcs Nagy, WI  
Bob van den Driessche, Natuurpunt  
Neil McIntosh, Eurosite  
Benoit Marsall, Baie de Somme  
Ponç Feliu, Aiguamolls

#### **1. Updates from partners (including the new WI project 'From the Arctic to Africa: migratory birds connecting wetlands and people' that includes twinning and capacity building work with sites on the East Atlantic Flyway)**

- Roelof is talking with partners from the Waddensee Initiative and Staatsbosbeheer, region North in the Netherlands to get closer contacts.
- Roelof and Theo are planning to visit Husum (G) and Vestamager (DK) in Autumn to meet and discuss opportunities.
- Theo – A film being produced about Oostvaardersplassen. A meeting is also planned soon to decide if the Oostvaardersplassen- wetland centre will be delivered.
- Taej - Wetlands International have been successful with funding from Arcadia, developing the East Atlantic flyway concept, and focusing on the Nenetsky Oblast in Russia (a major area for waterbirds such as the Bewick swan). Looking at the Pachora Delta and an area of gas/oil development linking with the Wetland International - Shell partnership. Naynmar Museum will be the focus of capacity building work with local people. Also organizing regional training for managers of Ramsar sites and protected areas.  
The southern site is at Djoudj, Senegal, carrying out similar training for site managers, including monitoring and capacity building. Mark van Romany is the project officer.  
At the same time, the MAVA funded project continues, and joint work will complement the two projects. Some work taking place over the border in Mauritania. Planning some exchange visits between managers in Europe and Africa, so will also complement the MBP / WLI work. Frank Hoffman is the project manager for the Arcadia project.
- Ellen – has had 60,000 visitors in the first three months, 4 times what was expected! Local people are very impressed, and many say they are proud to be associated with the centre. Some technical problems, but being resolved. Also the Tåkern Fund is celebrating its anniversary, and will hopefully be the source of funding for the June meeting.
- Chris – WLI held a side event at the Recent Ramsar COP (conference of parties), looking at links between wetland centres and flyway networks. Also had information booth at the COP with material from MBP.

#### **2. EACEA bid – start work on updating this for February 1<sup>st</sup> 2013 submission**

Most of the bid is still viable, but we could put in the Tåkern Field Station people (possible € 2,500 match funding through Tåkern Fund), as well as look at what Wetlands International might be able to provide (in return for some outputs for them too). CR to check the Camargue CSO link.

CR to produce a summary of the project for circulation, and to talk to Robert Kieft of the Dutch support agency to ensure that the deadline / guidance is the same. To be finalized at the Genk meeting, and submitted shortly after. CR to check what kind of role Governmental Organisations can have (cover travel and accommodation, for instance?)



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**3. Core group meeting in Genk?**

RH has already been invited to the Eurosite / Europarc meeting. The main issue on the agenda will be proposals to merge the two organisations. Neil McIntosh has offered a side room for an MBP meeting, afternoon of the 24<sup>th</sup> of October. RH, TdB, TM, CR possible attendees, and maybe LC who is not too far away.

**4. Plan for next MBP meeting – Tåkern? June 2013?**

EH confirmed that June is the best time to have a meeting (earlier is too cold and the migratory birds have not yet arrived). The Tåkern Fund is a likely source of support. June 10<sup>th</sup>? Planning meeting in Genk will have some of the core group.

**5. MBP Africa**

Abdoulaye is not present, so no update.

**6. Date of next meeting and AOB: 24<sup>th</sup> October, Genk, Belgium.**

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**Migratory Birds for People – Project planning meeting  
Eurosite meeting, Genk, Belgium  
Wednesday, 24<sup>th</sup> October, 2012, 14.00-17.00 CET**

**Attendees:**

Chris Rostron, WLI, WWT  
Liesbet Cleynhens, Natuurpunt, Belgium  
Freek Zwart, Staatsbosbeheer, Terschelling, The Netherlands  
Roelof Heringa, Eurosite  
Taej Mundkur, Wetlands International, Netherlands  
Theo de Bruin, Staatsbosbeheer, Netherlands

**Apologies:**

Ellen Hultman

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**1. Re-visit work-plan and aspirations for the project, including role of WLI and support from WWT**

Introduction from Freek Zwart – works for Staatsbosbeheer based on the Friesian / Wadden Islands Vlieland & Terschelling, but also looking after international affairs and communications for Staatsbosbeheer. Works closely with the visitor centres too, including some that are under non-Staatsbosbeheer management, so has good understanding and contact.

**1. General situation of partners:**

All partners facing similar financial and resource difficulties. For WWT, 2012 has seen a combination of lower visitation, economic downturn and the Olympics – all mean that WWT now focusing energies on internal development rather than external, which mean less support available to project such as MBP. However there is still commitment to the WLI initiative.

- Wetlands International is also feeling the impacts of the wider economic situation, and is currently going through a restructure, with increase vigilance on time spent on development activities such as MBP.
- Staatsbosbeheer has decided not to build a centre at Oostvaardersplassen – yet! But are putting resources into preparing the area for a possible future construction project, so it can be considered ‘on-hold’. A film is being made of Oostvaardersplassen, which will be on general release in September next year. This is expected to generate more visitors and then the pressure for a new centre is likely to increase too. Plans for a ‘temporary’ structure in the meantime are now considered. Theo de Bruin is writing a new tourism programme for the Waddensea area. Options exist for inter-reg and other funds. Staatsbosbeheer is planning to sell some land for summer house development, which it is hoped will generate money for socio-economic and cultural projects. This could be complemented by

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Wadden Sea development money, if interesting projects are put forward. Useful to think about how MBP can involve the Wadden Sea initiative more. FZ showed a project on satellite tracking of spoon bills, could fit nicely with MBP.

- Natuurpunt – Bob is only part time and does not have time to cover MBP work, so this is falling to Liesbet. Natuurpunt running many projects currently, and so staff time is stretched.
- RH has been in contact with Estonia (Mrs. Kaja Lotman) and will send her contacts. Also has a contact in Latvia with someone that is involved in wetland networks.

**2. Workplan**

On re-examination, the workplan is well put-together, clear and with achievable objectives. Many of the actions for the lead group have been achieved, but we still need to make progress with actions at partner centres. Without more funding, this could be difficult, so some of the outcomes may remain on the ‘to do’ list for a while, but useful to have in the plan.

**Communications** is going well thanks to Roelof’s newsletter and development of new WLI website. More action needed on communication at centre level. Need core group to push some of these e.g. an inventory of some basic details such as visitor numbers, list of resource etc. **CR to produce a draft.** Drop box mentioned as communication tool – but need to decide if we use the Website or Dropbox for sharing documents – **CR to check options for ‘private members’ area and for discussion forum.** Still need to communicate with ‘managers and decision-makers’ within organizations – although we have a good selection of wetland centre staff, it would be useful to have the management on board too. **CR to prepare a letter for use by staff, and ask Ramsar Secretariat staff to sign it.**



*“Migratory Birds for People”-poster at the Annual General Meeting of Europarc / Eurosite in Genk*

Languages came up as an issue. EAAFP provide their documentation in 7 languages, often translated by the relevant host country. We have at least 10 languages along MBP, and should focus on having at least English / French / Spanish for most documentation, and one key document (Roelof’s poster) in the 10 languages. Ask the partners to provide translations. WLI Website already in Fr/En/Es.

**Capacity-building for staff.** Through annual international meetings, works well. But otherwise? EACEA bid could provide this, but needs work. Could be building resource bank through the WLI website (discuss later). Options for ‘online’ training via skype or other? Could be easy to organize, low cost and minimal travel time, sharing best practice amongst partners. **CR to send link to online lectures produced for Pakistan.**

TM mentioned POWPA (programme of work for protected areas) of CBD. Online training produced for this through IUCN, **TM to send the link.**



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**Network development:**

MBP highlighted at various international meetings including Ramsar, MedWet meeting, (AEWA planned but didn't happen), Eurosite/Europarc etc. Also active recruitment of partners is happening through existing members.

Have stronger links now with the 3 West Africa centres (although not much active communication directly with them).

Suggestion that we all produce documentation to share, which could either be sent as hard copy or put on the website in digital form.

**Fund-raising:**

So far unsuccessful. Willingness to put in Euro-bids, but not achieved, despite investment of time and money (Staatsbosbeheer) into development. Darwin bid unsuccessful for West Africa (but still possible in the future). Barriers to bid success:

- Difficulty in finding lead partner to submit bid.
- Lack of suitable match-funding.
- Lack of clarity between communication/engagement and biodiversity.
- Diverse geographical area. For instance, Africa and Russia are not easily fundable through EU funding streams.

How can this be more successful??

- Be more imaginative in terms of match-funding and how MBP fits with planned / existing projects to deliver its objectives.
- Build MBP into planned projects – use it to bring in funding for migratory bird-related projects.
- Identify partners that are prepared to lead on a major EU bid.
- Be clear about whether we are working on communications/engagement or delivery of biodiversity outputs. This can vary according to the element of MBP we are working on, which funder we are targeting.
- Find funding sources that cover Europe / Africa / Russia. Look at funders that just cover Africa / Russia and fit with EU element. E.g. WI Russia Matra bid.

**2. EACEA bid – continue work on updating this for February 1<sup>st</sup> 2013 submission**

- Identify lead partners.

Natuurpunt is in principle happy to lead on this, depending on the amount of work. However, discussions with the Belgian advisor seemed to imply that the ‘town twinning’ funding would be better. On inspection of the EACEA website, it did not seem an easy fit, so likely to stick to our first option. Other partners should include largely NGOs, but can also involve GOs or other groups as long as they are not acting as ‘official’ partners. FZ offered some support, but this would need to be spent within a short timescale.

- Confirm activities and outputs

Existing structure of the bid was supported. To be put into format suitable for Natuurpunt. Three visits between Takern / Camargue / Natuurpunt. Detail for LC to discuss.

- Work out eligible match funding and costs

Options for us to use match-funding from external sources. Increasing the travel and subsistence funding would lower the current percentage on staff time.

**3. Future planning for funding and development opportunities**

RH/FZ/TdB mentioned the University of Grawlingen (sp?) which conducts detailed work on bird-tracking, but want to publicise / popularize its work. MBP could offer ways of helping with this.



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FZ also mentioned the Eurosite working group on spoonbill tracking – could offer some additional interest for MBP.

**4. WLI website opportunities for MBP**

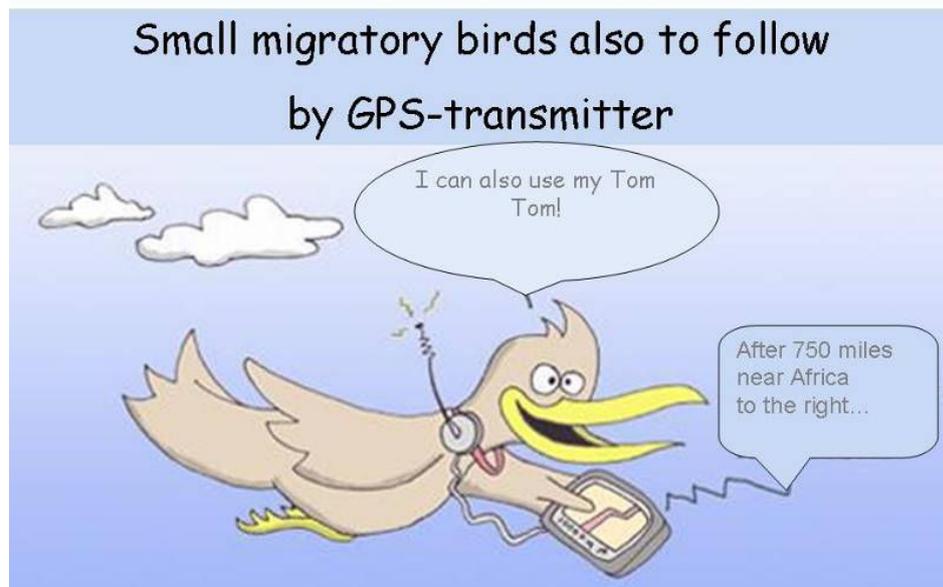
CR showed the new WLI website, which include regional pages, and specific pages on MBP. The group would like MBP to be easier to find on the site – maybe a front page link to ‘regional projects’? This could also solve the issue of ‘inter-regional’ projects, as the site is currently structured by continent, which can be quite limiting. CR and RH to discuss giving RH administration training for the site.

**5. Plan for next MBP meeting – Takern? June 2013?**

There are ideas to organize the next international workshop in Naturum Lake Tåkern. To be discussed with Ellen.

**6. Date of next meeting and AOB** To be confirmed.

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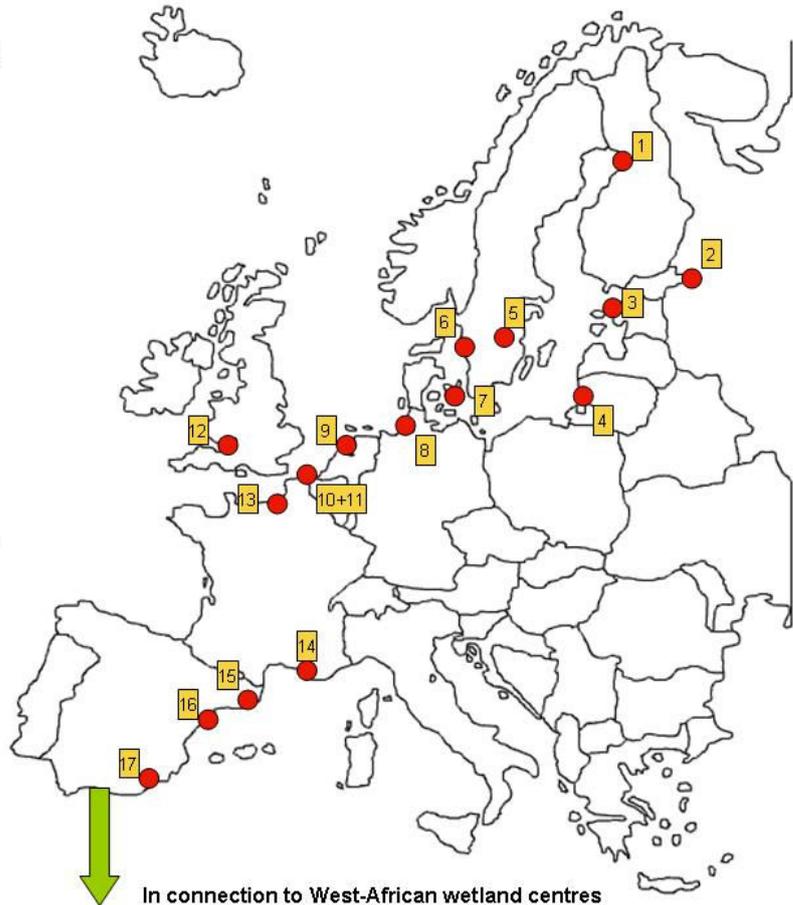


**SUPPLEMENT: List of participants in Europe and West-Africa**

**Participating visitor centres (Europe)**

**(June 2012)**

1. Finland: Liminganlahti
2. Russia : St. Petersburg [CEPA-team]
3. Estonia: Matsalu (proposed)
4. Lithuania: Nemunas Delta (proposed)
5. Sweden: Lake Tåkern
6. Sweden: Getterön
7. Denmark: Vestmager
8. Germany: Husum
9. Netherlands: Oostvaardersland
10. Belgium: Het Zwin
11. Belgium: Uitkerkse Polder
12. United Kingdom: WWT, HQ, Slimbridge
13. France: Baie de Somme
14. France: Camargue Gardoise
15. Spain: Aiguamolls de L'Emporda
16. Spain: Ebro Delta
17. Spain: Las Salinas de San Pedro



**Finland :**

**Liminganlahti conservation area**

**Contact:** Sari Airas, Programme manager Metsähallitus

Jukupolku 5, 85100 Kalajoki

Mob: +358-40-5016127

Email : [sari.airas@metsa.fi](mailto:sari.airas@metsa.fi)

Website : [www.wwt.org.uk/wli/regional-partners/.../liminganlahti](http://www.wwt.org.uk/wli/regional-partners/.../liminganlahti)



**Sweden:**

**1. Naturum Lake Tåkern**

**Contact:** Ellen Hultman

Naturvårdsenheten Länsstyrelsen Östergötland

Östgötagatan 3, 581 86 Linköping

Tel: +46-13-196561

Mob : +46-703-776599.

Email: [ellen.hultman@lansstyrelsen.se](mailto:ellen.hultman@lansstyrelsen.se)

Website: <http://www.lansstyrelsen.se/OSTERGOTLAND/SV/DJUR-OCH-NATUR/FRILUFTSLIV/NATURUM-TAKERN/Pages/index.aspx>



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**Sweden:**

**2. Getteröns Naturcentrum, Avosetta AB**

Lassavägen 1, 432 93 Varberg

**contact:** Linda Eklund

Tel: +46-340 - 87510

Office +46-340 - 10189

Mob. +46 - 703 - 925389

Fax +46-340 - 150 54

[Linda.eklund@lansstyrelsen.se](mailto:Linda.eklund@lansstyrelsen.se)

Website: [www.naturumgetteron.se](http://www.naturumgetteron.se)

**Contact:** Christopher Gullander, Naturumvärd

Tel: +46-340-101 89,

Mob.: +46- 72-713 22 47

Länsstyrelsen i Hallands län

301 86 Halmstad

E-post: [christopher.gullander@lansstyrelsen.se](mailto:christopher.gullander@lansstyrelsen.se)

[www.naturumgetteron.se](http://www.naturumgetteron.se)

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**Russia:**

**CEPA- St.Petersburg**

**Contact:** Dr. Evgeny Genelt-Yanovskiy

Baltic Fund for Nature Of St.Petersburg Naturalists Society

Universitetskaya emb. 7/9-11

Saint-Petersburg

199034 Russia

Phone: +7(812) 328 96 20

Email: [eugene@bfn.org.ru](mailto:eugene@bfn.org.ru)

Websites : [http://www.wwf.org.uk/wli/regional-](http://www.wwf.org.uk/wli/regional-partners/europe/nature-watch-baltic)

[partners/europe/nature-watch-baltic](http://www.wwf.org.uk/wli/regional-partners/europe/nature-watch-baltic)

<http://web.me.com/naturewatch>.

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**Estonia:**

**PROPOSED: Matsalu visitor centre**

**Contact:** Marju Pajumets (Visitor manager)

State Forest Management Centre

West-Estonia region

Matsalu Information Centre, Penijõe, 90305 Lihula, Läänemaa, Estonia

Tel: (+372) 472 4236

Email: [marju.pajumets@rmk.ee](mailto:marju.pajumets@rmk.ee)

Website: <http://www.europarc-nb.org/protected-areas/estonia/matsalu-national-park>

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**Lithuania:**

**PROPOSED: NEMUNAS DELTA REGIONAL PARK**

**Contact:** Saulius Svazav [Institute of Ecology of Vilnius University]

phone: +370-441 75050

website: [www.nemunodelta.lt](http://www.nemunodelta.lt)

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**Denmark:**

**Nature Centre Vestamager,**

Granatvej 3-9,

2770 Kastrup

**Contact:** Stella Blichfeldt

Naturvejleder

Naturstyrelsen, Hovedstaden

Dir tlf.: (+45) 72543159

Mobile: (+45) 23730260

Email: [stb@nst.dk](mailto:stb@nst.dk)

Website: [www.udinaturen.dk](http://www.udinaturen.dk)

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**Germany :**

**Nationalpark - Haus Husum,**

Hafenstraße 3,  
25813 – DE Husum

**Contact:** Dr. Hans-Ulrich Rösner

Tel : +49-4841-6685-51

Email: [roesner@wwf.de](mailto:roesner@wwf.de)

[info@nationalparkhaus-husum.de](mailto:info@nationalparkhaus-husum.de)

Website: [www.nationalparkhaus-husum.de](http://www.nationalparkhaus-husum.de)

[www.wwf.de/wattenmeer](http://www.wwf.de/wattenmeer)

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**Netherlands:**

**Infocentrum West-Terschelling**

**Contact:** Freek Zwart , manager

Longway 28, 8881 CM West-Terschelling

Tel: +31-562-446494

Mob.: +31-653340052

Email: [freek.zwart@staatsbosbeheer.nl](mailto:freek.zwart@staatsbosbeheer.nl)

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**Netherlands:**

**Infocentrum “Oostvaardersplassen”**

**Contact:** Heleen Visser; (*manager Wetland centre (a.i.)*)

Kitsweg 1, 8218 AA Lelystad

Tel: +31-320-254585

Mob: +31-621266684

Email [heleen.visser@staatsbosbeheer.nl](mailto:heleen.visser@staatsbosbeheer.nl)

Website: [www.staatsbosbeheer.nl](http://www.staatsbosbeheer.nl)

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**Belgium:**

**Bezoekerscentrum Uitkerkse Polder**

**Contact:** Bob Vandendriessche

Kuiperscheeweg 20, 8370 Uitkerke

Tel.:+32-50 42 90 40

Mob.: +32- 477757491

E-mail: [bob.vandendriessche@natuurpunt.be](mailto:bob.vandendriessche@natuurpunt.be)

Website [www.natuurpunt.be/blankenberge](http://www.natuurpunt.be/blankenberge)

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**Belgium:**

**Bezoekerscentrum Het Zwin**

**Contact:** Wim de Roo,

*Project coördinator REECZ en Natura People*

dienst MiNaWA, sectie NME, bureau 3.19

Provincie West-Vlaanderen

Koning Leopold III-laan 41

8200 Sint-Andries

T +32-50 403 596

F +32-50 403 403

G +32-497435509

**Contact:** Leo de Clercq:+32-50403311

**Contact:** Kris Struyf: +32-50619342

Address: Graaf Leon Lippensdreef 8,  
8300 Knokke-Heist, Belgium

E [Wim.DeRoo@west-vlaanderen.be](mailto:Wim.DeRoo@west-vlaanderen.be)

[leo.declercq@west-vlaanderen.be](mailto:leo.declercq@west-vlaanderen.be)

[kris.struyf@west-vlaanderen.be](mailto:kris.struyf@west-vlaanderen.be)

W [www.west-vlaanderen.be](http://www.west-vlaanderen.be)

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**United Kingdom:**

**WWT Head quarters, Slimbridge**

**Chris Rostron** (Head of Wetland Link International)

Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust (WWT)

Slimbridge, Glos GL2 7BT, UK

T +44 (0)1453 891214

F +44 (0)1453 890827

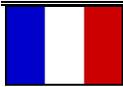
M +44 (0)7906 564 641

Skype: Chris.Rostron1

E [chris.rostron@wwt.org.uk](mailto:chris.rostron@wwt.org.uk)

W [wli.org.uk](http://wli.org.uk)

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**France:**

- **Baie de Somme**

**contact:** Patrick Triplet

Syndicat Mixte Baie de Somme

1, place de l'Amiral Courbet

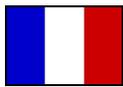
F 80 100 Abbeville

Tel :+33 (0)6 86 67 97 92

email: [patrick.triplet1@orange.fr](mailto:patrick.triplet1@orange.fr)

website: [www.baiedesomme.fr](http://www.baiedesomme.fr)

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**France:**

- **Camargue Gardoise / Centre de découverte du Scamandre**, Syndicat Mixte pour la protection et la gestion de la Camargue Gardoise

**1st contact :** Cécile Mundler

Registered office : SMCG - Hôtel du Département - rue

Guillemette - 30044 NIMES cedex 9

téléphone : +33-4 66 76 78 55

Visitor centre : +Centre de découverte du Scamandre – Gallicia  
– 30600 VAUVERT

Tel:+33-4 66 73 52 05

email : [mundler@camaruegardoise.com](mailto:mundler@camaruegardoise.com)

**2<sup>nd</sup> contact: Jérémiah PETIT**

Conservateur RNR du Scamandre

Responsable gestion-aménagement des domaines

Départementaux

\*Centre de découverte du Scamandre

Route des Iscles – Gallician, 30600 Vauvert

Tel :+33-4 66 73 52 05

email : [petit@camaruegardoise.com](mailto:petit@camaruegardoise.com)

website : [www.camaruegardoise.com](http://www.camaruegardoise.com)

---



**Spain:**

**1. Aiguamolls de l'Empordà Natural Parc**

**Contact:** Ponç Feliu and Sergio Romero

Information Centre : El Cortalet, Castelló d'Empúries (road to Sant Pere Pescador).

Tel.: +34-972 454 222.

email : [pfeliu@serpa.cat](mailto:pfeliu@serpa.cat) and [sromero@gencat.cat](mailto:sromero@gencat.cat)

website: [www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aiguamolls\\_de\\_l'Empordà](http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aiguamolls_de_l'Empordà)

[www.iberianature.com](http://www.iberianature.com)

---



**Spain:**

**2. Ebro Delta**

**Contact:** Xavier Escuté i Gasulla

Àrea de Territori i Paisatge

Fundació Caixa Catalunya

Provença, 261-265, 2n 2a / 08008 Barcelona

Tel: +34 93 484 70 08

Mob.: +34-661402678

[xavier.escute.fos@catalunyacaixa.com](mailto:xavier.escute.fos@catalunyacaixa.com)

website: [www.monnaturadelta.com](http://www.monnaturadelta.com)



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Spain:

### 3. Parque Regional Salinas y Arenales de San Pedro del Pinatar

- **Contact : Alfredo González Rincón**  
Área de Conservación de Espacios Naturales del Litoral de la Región de Murcia  
Dirección General de Medio Ambiente.  
Consejería de Presidencia.  
C/Catedrático Eugenio Úbeda, nº 3,  
4ª Planta; Despacho 438,  
C.P. 30008 Murcia\_  
Teléfono: +34-968.22.84.49  
[pr-salinasdesanpedro@listas.carm.es](mailto:pr-salinasdesanpedro@listas.carm.es)

- **Teresa López Aledo & Ana Navarro Sequero**  
Dirección General de Medio Ambiente  
Consejería de Presidencia de la Región de Murcia  
C/ Catedrático Eugenio Úbeda, 3 - 4ª planta. Despacho 438  
30.008 Murcia

-----  
Teléfono: +34-968.17.81.39

Móvil: +34-648 540 987

Fax: +34-968 22 89 03

Email: [teresa.lopez@lagenerala.com](mailto:teresa.lopez@lagenerala.com)

Website: [http://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Salinas\\_y\\_Arenales\\_de\\_San\\_Pedro\\_del\\_Pinatar](http://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Salinas_y_Arenales_de_San_Pedro_del_Pinatar)

## Participants in West-Africa

The wetlands in West Africa are: the **Banc D'Arguin** in Mauritania, the **Djoudj** in Northern Senegal and the **Bijagós Archipelago** in Guinea Bissau.



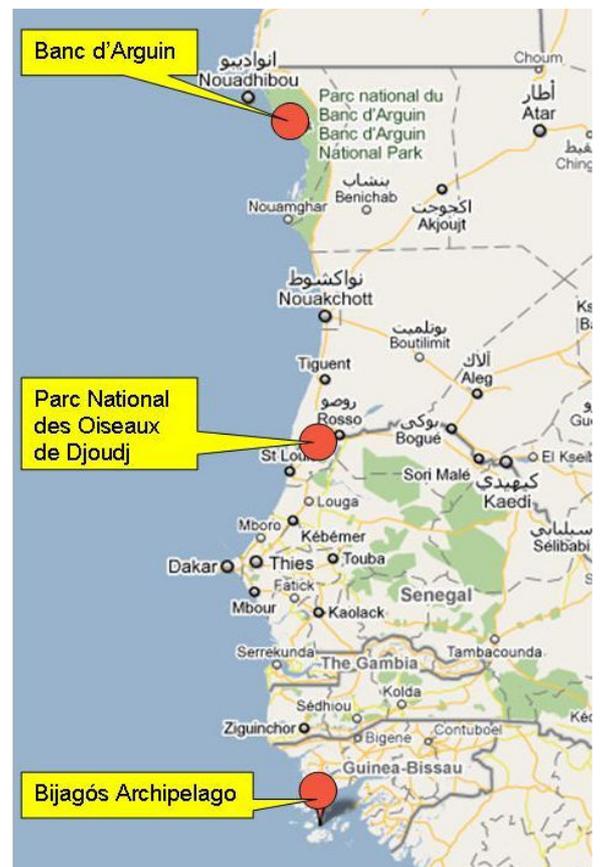
**Banc d'Arguin, Mauretania**

**Contact:** Mr Yelli Diawara  
Centre de Chami / PNBA Bp 5355  
AV Gamal Abdel Nasser du Nouakchott  
Mauritanie;  
téléphone: +222 45258541  
Email: [yelli-pnba@mauritania.mr](mailto:yelli-pnba@mauritania.mr)



**Parc National Djoudj, Senegal**

**Contact:** Colonel Ibrahima Diop  
Conservateur du Parc National des oiseaux du Djoudj  
BP 80 Saint-Louis Dakar-Senegal  
Tel : + 221 77 656 70 38  
Email : [ibraadiop@yahoo.fr](mailto:ibraadiop@yahoo.fr)





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**Bijagós Archipelago**, Guinea Bissau  
**Contact:** Mr Meio Dia qu'a coordinateur  
Reserva da Biosfera do Arquipélago de Bolama Bijagós  
Avenida Dom Settimio Arturo Ferrazzetta  
Caixar Postal 70 Bissau, Guiné-Bissau  
Tel. (245) 320 71 06/07  
Email: [oscini2000@hotmail.com](mailto:oscini2000@hotmail.com)  
Skype: [meiodiasepa2005@yahoo.com.br](mailto:meiodiasepa2005@yahoo.com.br)

In our previous newsletters we highlighted briefly Bijagós Archipelago, Banc d'Arguin and Parc National des Oiseaux du Djoudj)

Our contact person for this region is:  
**Abdoulaye Ndiaye**,  
Capacity Building Manager  
Wetlands International Africa  
BP 25581 Dakar, Fann Sénégal ;  
Tel: +221 33 869 16 81 ;  
E-mail: [andiaye@wetlands-africa.org](mailto:andiaye@wetlands-africa.org)





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**Contact details Core group:**

**Chris Rostron** (Head of Wetland Link International)  
Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust (WWT)  
Slimbridge, Glos GL2 7BT, UK  
T +44 (0)1453 891214  
F +44 (0)1453 890827  
M +44 (0)7906 564 641  
Skype: Chris.Rostron1  
E [chris.rostron@wwt.org.uk](mailto:chris.rostron@wwt.org.uk)  
W [wli.org.uk](http://wli.org.uk)



**Taej Mundkur** (Programme Manager - Flyways, Wetlands International Headquarters),  
Visiting address: Horapark 9 (2nd floor), 6717 LZ Ede, THE NETHERLANDS  
Postal address: Postbox 471, 6700 AL, Wageningen, (NL)  
Office Tel: +31 318 660910, Cell: +31- 614987324  
E-mail: [taj.mundkur@wetlands.org](mailto:taj.mundkur@wetlands.org)  
Skype: taejmundkur  
Website: [www.wetlands.org](http://www.wetlands.org)



**Abdoulaye Ndiaye**,  
Capacity Building Manager,  
Wetlands International Africa.  
Rue 111, villa 39B-Zone B  
BP:25581 DAKAR-FANN, Sénégal  
T : +221-338691681  
E: ([andiaye@wetlands-africa.org](mailto:andiaye@wetlands-africa.org) )



**Liesbet Cleynhens** (Coordinator visitor centres for Natuurpunt.)  
Coxiestraat 11, 2800 Mechelen , Belgium  
Tel: +32-15-29 72 20  
Mob: +32-479839287  
Email: [liesbet.cleynhens@natuurpunt.be](mailto:liesbet.cleynhens@natuurpunt.be)



**Ellen Hultman**  
Manager Naturum Lake Tåkern,  
Naturvårdsenheten Länsstyrelsen Östergötland, Sweden  
Östgötagatan 3, 581 86 Linköping  
Tel: +46-(0)13-196561  
Mob : +46-703-776599.  
Email: [ellen.hultman@lansstyrelsen.se](mailto:ellen.hultman@lansstyrelsen.se)



**Theo de Bruin** (Projectleader visitor centre, Oostvaardersland Staatsbosbeheer)  
Staatsbosbeheer , Regional office Region East  
Postbus 6, 7400 AA Deventer (NL)  
T.+31-570747100  
M: +31-655854323  
E-mail: [th.bruin@staatsbosbeheer.nl](mailto:th.bruin@staatsbosbeheer.nl)



**Roelof Heringa** (Eurosite Twinning Coordinator).  
Nieuweweg 28,  
7241 EV Lochem  
Mob: +31-655306276  
Skype: Roelof.Heringa1  
**NEW !** :E-mail: [rheringa@eurosite.org](mailto:rheringa@eurosite.org)