

Dear reader,

Welcome to the Asian Waterbird Census (AWC) Newsletter of December 2012.

In this issue, we present an annual update of the AWC programme and share some news highlights and activities from the past year from our partners and Wetlands International.

As you may be aware, regional coordination of the Asian Waterbird Census has been undergoing some changes with the departure of Dr Bharat Jethva from our South Asia office in India last year. We are grateful to Bharat in helping to move this programme along. Ms Usha Dangwal based in our Delhi office has been collating your count information through 2012 into the regional database, with technical support from our Headquarters office. We are in the process of identifying/ appointing a new AWC regional coordinator and for the interim I am the main liaison point for national coordinators.

This year has seen a few changes in AWC coordinators; for mainland China Mr Zhu Bingrun takes over from Mr Xu Qiang and in Indonesia Mr Yus Rusila Noor steps in for Mr Ferry Hasudungan who has started his Masters studies. We thank the coordinators for their efforts at promoting the programme and wish them all success in the future.

Through this year, we have been collating count information for the period 2008-2012 and provide a summary of the counts received by Wetlands International from national coordinators and participants. We are still missing counts from several countries and would appreciate receiving your information at the earliest.

To streamline all AWC-related information and to ensure that we receive your mail, we have created one email address awc@wetlands.org. All email sent to this address is automatically forwarded to Ms Usha, Dangwal, Mr Tom Langendoen (who provides technical assistance on the AWC database at our HQ) and myself; thus you can expect timely responses to your mail.

The AWC web pages have been revamped and updated, click [here](#) to access it. The AWC National Coordinators pages have been updated, click [here](#) to access it. We welcome your suggestions to improve these pages. We depend on you to provide us with news and other updates to inform the network of your achievements, so please keep this coming. The global International Waterbird Census website also provides further background information on the AWC, click [here](#) to access it.

Enjoy reading!

Happy holidays and best wishes for 2013 to you and your family.

Taej Mundkur

Flyway Programme Manager, Wetlands International

Important upcoming dates

Count dates: January 2013 Please note the recommended dates for the AWC counts in 2013 are: January 12 Saturday to 27 Sunday, covering 2 weeks and three weekends, when we should encourage your network to count waterbirds. These dates are for guidance only and counts from any date in January are very welcome. We kindly ask National Coordinators to submit data in the standard manner recommended by Wetlands International, using the same site names and site codes as previous years, and providing details of any changes in or additions to the sites visited.

Annual AWC Count Totals - 2008-2012

Summarised below is the count information received by Wetlands International from national coordinators over the last years. We greatly appreciate the efforts of national coordinators collating and sending us this information. We would like to also extend our gratitude to the many thousands of counters across the region who have dedicated their time and expertise, often on a voluntary basis, to produce these counts.

Overview of sites reported to Wetlands International for the Asian Waterbird Census, 2008-2012

Country	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Bangladesh	38	36			
Bhutan					
India	7	31	14	132	3
Maldives					
Nepal	12	11	15	15	16
Pakistan			66	58	69
Sri Lanka	45	40	51		
South Asia	102	118	146	205	88
Brunei Darussalam	14	6	8	16	16
Cambodia	4	9	8	8	13
Indonesia	38	11	29	11	9
Lao PDR					
Malaysia	16	44			
Myanmar	17	17	15		
Philippines	159	171	190	193	169
Singapore					
Thailand		47	53		
Timor Leste		1			
Vietnam				2	1
Southeast Asia	248	306	303	230	208
China	2				
Mainland					
- Hong Kong	1	1	1	1	1
- Macau					
- Taiwan			31		
Japan	125	178	151	186	163
DPR Korea					
Republic of Korea					
Mongolia		11			
Eastern Russia	2	1	2	2	
East Asia	130	191	185	189	164
Australia	175	148			
New Zealand					
Papua New Guinea					
Australasia	175	148	0	0	0
Total sites	655	763	634	624	460

Notes: Information for Japan refers to counts of Anatidae and shorebirds. Additional counts from Australia, Singapore and the Republic of Korea are expected.

If National Coordinators and counters have shared count information with us but do not see it in the table below, please contact us. For the future, please remember that only counts sent to us before September 15th each year can be guaranteed to be included in the report.

Recent AWC linked Activities

Capacity building workshop, Nepal



Photo by Hathan Chaudhary

The Nepal Government successfully organised a national training course on waterbird monitoring entitled "Capacity Strengthening of Field Ornithologists for Water Bird Count" between 21–24 September at Sauraha, Chitwan, at the Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve and its Buffer Zone in the eastern part of Nepal, also the country's first Ramsar site.

This training is expected to assist in implementing the annual waterbird census through provision of training to a group of young volunteers.

Information from Dr Hem Baral, AWC National Coordinator, Nepal.

WPE5 & interactive tool launched at Ramsar COP11



Ms. Elizabeth Roberts, Manager, Conservation Partnerships and Programs, Environment Canada is presented the first copy from Mr Yoshihiro Natori, Supervisory Council Member of Wetlands International.

The 5th edition of the **Waterbird Population Estimates (WPE) series** was launched at the 11th Meeting of the Parties of Ramsar Convention (COP11) in Bucharest, Romania, in July 2012.

This edition collates all the latest information on distribution, status and population trends of 2,304 populations of 871 species of waterbird from 32 families. Additionally, WPE5 is the authoritative and approved source of up-to-date '1% population thresholds' used by governments worldwide for the identification and designation of Wetlands of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention.

Ms Roberts was very pleased to have supported Wetlands International and remarked *We recognize the value of this publication as an authoritative and approved source of waterbird population estimates. The information contained in it is very important to Environment Canada and its partners as it helps inform and prioritize the actions of our conservation programs.*



The summary report is available [here](#).

The International Waterbird Census community has provided crucial information and insights for this review, together with the Waterbird Specialist Group network convened by Wetlands International jointly with [the IUCN Species Survival Commission](#). This edition has been produced with technical input from BirdLife International and the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership in North America and EAAF respectively.

This edition has been developed with the support of Environment Canada and the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands.

The Waterbird Population Estimates fifth edition is released in our **new user-friendly interactive online database** (wpe.wetlands.org). This tool provides:

Year	Estimate	Minimum	Maximum	Estimate range	Notes	References	Notes
WPE 1	1997	1997	1	10,000			
WPE 2	1999	1999	1	10,000			
WPE 3	1999	1999	2,000	10,000			
WPE 4	2001	2001	2,000	10,000			
WPE 5	2003	2003	2,000	10,000	See breeding range		

- ✧ Open & universal access to all five Waterbird Population Estimates editions as well as the 3rd and 4th Conservation Status Review editions produced for [the African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement](#).
- ✧ Search functions to find species or populations by taxonomy, Ramsar or biogeographic/flyway region, conservation frameworks or Red List category.
- ✧ Full population information, including breeding & non-breeding range
- ✧ Complete references and detailed notes
- ✧ Options to export or print search results

This tool has been developed with the support of Environment Canada & the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands. We are currently reviewing the first released version of this tool. If you have any comments or suggestions, please contact taej.mundkur@wetlands.org.

Jeju IUCN Congress reaffirms importance of the International Waterbird Census

The IUCN World Conservation Congress Jeju 2012 held between 6-15 September on Jeju Island, South Korea, unanimously passed a resolution #26 entitled “*International cooperation for waterbird monitoring to support sound management*” that reaffirms the importance of the International Waterbird Census and called for greater support for monitoring of waterbirds worldwide.

In the final plenary session, the resolution was passed with 100% of 148 government members and 100% of 455 non-government members voting on the resolution supporting it.

The submission was sponsored by the Korean Association for Conservation of Nature and co-sponsored by the following IUCN Members (including AWC national coordinators): Nature Policy Division, Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Korea, Wetlands International, BirdLife International, The Ecological Society of Korea, Korean Wetlands Society, Korean Society of Environment and Ecology, Nature Society, Singapore, Wildlife Trust Bangladesh, Bombay Natural History Society and Malaysian Nature Society.



Photo by Taej Mundkur

Interest and support for the resolution was generated through a well-attended workshop organised on 8 September at which a series of presentations were given by Mr Spike Millington of the EAAF Partnership Secretariat, Mr Simba Chan of BirdLife Asia, Dr Taej Mundkur of Wetlands International and Dr Kim Jin Han, AWC Coordinator, Republic of Korea.

The Resolution calls for the following:

1. ENCOURAGES the IUCN membership and others to ensure that waterbird populations worldwide are covered by international monitoring schemes that are appropriate both in their scope and methods to produce reliable international population size and trend estimates;
2. REQUESTS IUCN Members and others to provide a global platform to strengthen development and implementation of appropriate regional flyway schemes/structures to secure the necessary resources required to implement coordinated waterbird monitoring programmes;

3. SUPPORTS the enhancement of national and regional networks' capacities to undertake field monitoring of waterbirds on an on-going and long-term basis;
4. STRENGTHENS existing mechanisms for enhanced and timely reporting on the status of waterbird populations to support conservation measures, including management of wetlands;
5. ENCOURAGES IUCN Members to provide financial resources for waterbird monitoring and to participate in the monitoring programs within their flyways;
6. INVITES relevant global and regional organizations including the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), Ramsar Convention, the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership, Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds and Western Hemisphere Migratory Species Initiative to support strengthening of existing schemes within their flyways; and
7. REQUESTS the Director General, within available resources, to provide technical assistance to support national and regional activities, and to report on progress in this regard to the next IUCN World Conservation Congress.

Building on resolutions of the Ramsar Convention and the Convention on Migratory Species on the importance of the International Waterbird Census and need for support for the programme, this latest resolution provides additional recognition and it hoped that the governments will be more willing to expand their support of this on-going work. AWC national coordinators and local networks are encouraged to make use this resolution to explore opportunities to secure recognition and support for their efforts. The resolution can be [viewed](#) here.

The Congress also passed a number of other resolutions and recommendations that relate directly to the conservation of waterbird habitat in the region, particularly on Poyang Lake ([recommendation 153](#)) and waterbirds and intertidal wetlands of the Yellow Sea and East Asian-Australasian flyway ([resolution 28](#)).

Technical development of the International Waterbird Census in the African-Eurasian region

As part of a project on Strengthening the International Waterbird Census in the Africa-Eurasian flyway region supported by the MAVA Foundation and the Swiss Federal Office for the Environment, Wetlands International has embarked on developing two tools to improve data flow from observers to national coordinators and from national coordinators into the international database in order to improve the timeliness and policy relevance of the waterbird status assessments.

One element of this will be the development of an on-line IWC database by SOVON, the Dutch Centre for Field Ornithology, to facilitate the collection of IWC data for regional and international analyses.

The other component is the adaptation of existing on-line data collection tools to the needs of the IWC in order to help national coordinators collect data from their observers. The test case for this tool is now available for review (see <http://iwc-nigeria.observado.org/gebied/view/137827?sp=70483>) as is an instruction video on using the tool (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NreOC3qpdX0>).

This tool aims to make it as easy as possible for observers to report their counts and for National Coordinators to collect counts. After logging, in an observer only needs to follow a few steps to report their observations. If the observer has counted a new site, they can add the site information to the system. Observers are also prompted to draw the boundaries of the site they counted, to compare to past counts and for future reference. Observers can also comment on other observations from other users or to add photographs and comments to their own observations. This can help improve identification and spot mistakes in data entry. If a count is sensitive, the observer can also choose to hide their observations from the general public. It is available in many languages, including Arabic, French, German, English, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish.

An observer can add counts anywhere at anytime, but National Coordinators can determine which sites are IWC sites or only of local interest. National Coordinators can also choose which species are included in the list provided to observers and restrict submissions to registered users. Finally, a National Coordinator can download all IWC counts to a single spreadsheet. This spreadsheet is in the standardised format for data submission to the database but can of course be easily used for national analyses and reports as well.

These data entry and database developments in the African-Eurasian region are expected to be available in 2013-2014 for adaptation and use in Asia and other regions as well.

Waterbird monitoring guidance now available in Arabic, English, French and Russian

A field protocol and guide for waterbird counting under the International Waterbird Census is now available on our website in Arabic, English, French and Russian. This document is a good starting point to learn how, when and where to count waterbirds. It also provides a lot of background information on the IWC and the programmes links with other waterbird monitoring activities.

The original manual was produced by Simon Delany and translated by Laith El-Moghrabi, Associate Expert of Tour du Valat (Arabic), Olivier Devineau & Anne-Laure Brochet from Tour du Valat (French) and our colleagues from the Wetlands International Black Sea Office (Russian). Please feel free to view and share the document with your network.

The document is available [here](#).

News from the network

World Migratory Bird Day 2012 Breaks All Records – Most Successful Global Campaign Yet!

Over 250 events in a record 78 countries celebrated and raised awareness about migratory birds for World Migratory Bird Day on 12-13 May 2012 making it the most successful campaign since its inception in 2006. Under the theme “*Migratory birds and people – together through time*”, events focused on the historical, social, economic and environmental connections that people around the world have with migratory birds.

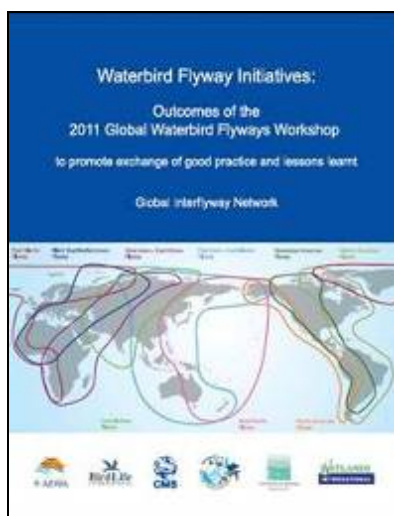


World Migratory Bird Day events were held on six continents in a great diversity of ways. From bird watching in Argentina and photo exhibitions in India to the City of Vancouver’s World Migratory Bird Day declaration and education seminars in Mongolia, the amazing diversity of World Migratory Bird Day events almost matches that of the birds themselves. Such a wide variety of activities shows how people can come together in different ways to celebrate migratory birds and highlight the need for their protection.

The World Migratory Bird Day Team would like to thank all the event organizers, bird conservation organizations, birding and concerned citizen groups, governments and finally the thousands of dedicated individuals that made 2012 our most successful campaign ever. Without the devoted work and passion from individuals and organizations such as you, World Migratory Bird Day would not be possible.

Please visit the [World Migratory Bird Day website](#) for more.

Global Interflyway Network: Korea Workshop 2011



An international workshop organised in Seosan City, Republic of Korea, 17-20 October 2011 brought together experts from various flyway initiatives worldwide and provided an ideal opportunity to promote exchange of good practice and lessons learnt from these flyway initiatives. These proceedings summarize the main outcomes of the meeting and identify priorities for the future.

Download the proceedings [here](#).

This meeting has led to the establishment of the Global Interflyway Network. The network plans to meet periodically in different regions to share information.

Sixth Meeting of Partners (MoP6) of EAAFP

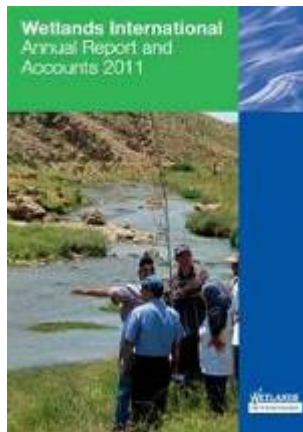


On 19-22 March 2012, the Sixth Meeting of Partners (MoP6) of the East Asian – Australasian Flyway Partnership was successfully held in Palembang, South Sumatra, with 70 international and 30 domestic participants. The meeting was attended by 26 Partners out of 27, three potential governmental Partners, 30 technical advisors and domestic experts.

The new Implementation Strategy 2012-16 was approved by all Partners. It identifies the Asian Waterbird Census as a basis to achieving scientifically sound information being made available on the flyway-wide status and trends of waterbird populations and their habitats.

For more information on the meeting click [here](#)

Wetlands International Annual Report and Accounts 2011



In Wetlands International's Annual Report and Accounts 2011 we describe our entire organisations achievements over the year. There are many achievements detailed relating to waterbirds but also to our other work all around the world, demonstrating the vital importance of wetlands and the interlinkages between our organisation's major themes: sustainable livelihoods, biodiversity, water, climate and greening the economy.

The report is available [here](#).

Recommendations from the Global Flyway Network Conference, Oman

In November 2011, the Global Flyway Network Conference was held in Oman and the recommendations from this meeting are now available on our [Waterbird Forum](#). This document outlines the importance of Oman as a non-breeding and stopover location for migratory shorebirds along the East Asia-East African flyway. In particular, the wetland Barr al Hikman holds a huge diversity and large numbers of wader species. The recommendations include ensuring the conservation of these key wetland sites, strengthening monitoring activities in Oman, developing communication and coordination of activities in the Middle East.

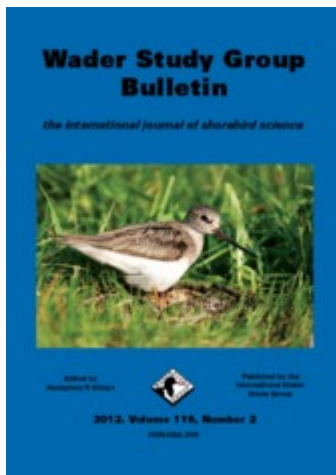
Sarovar : Newsletter of Wetlands International - South Asia



Wetlands International - South Asia launches **Sarovar** - a newsletter aimed at providing a platform to wetland managers and field practitioners for discussing issues related to wetland management in South Asia.

Download the inaugural issue ([Vol-1, June, 2012](#)) focused on wetlands of India. Contributions to future editions are welcomed.

Wader Study Group Bulletin Vol. 119 No. 2

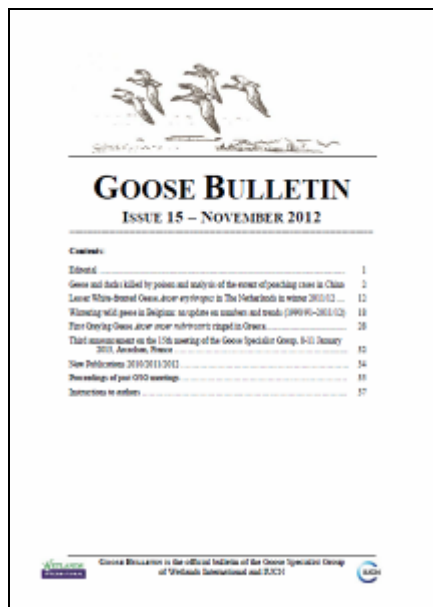


The latest "Wader Study Group bulletin: the international journal of shorebird science" is now available. This regular bulletin presents some of the latest wader research from around the world, as well as book reviews, news items and updates from the International Wader Study Group. The Group serves as the Shorebird Specialist Group of Wetlands International and IUCN-Species Survival Commission.

The latest publications are available to members for download here: www.waderstudygroup.org/pubs/wsgbull/content.php. Older publications are also available to the public at the same link.

For more information on the International Wader Study Group or to become a member, please visit: www.waderstudygroup.org

Goose Bulletin Issue 15, November 2012



GOOSE BULLETIN is the official bulletin of the Goose Specialist Group of Wetlands International and IUCN-Species Survival Commission. Of particular interest to readers in this latest issue will be the article entitled, *Geese and ducks killed by poison and analysis of the extent of poaching cases in China*.

For the 16th issue of the GOOSE BULLETIN manuscripts are still welcomed. Please send contributions to the editor-in-chief [Johan Mooij](mailto:Johan.Mooij@winterscience.nl)!

This issue and previous issues can be downloaded from the Bulletin [website](http://www.goosebulletin.org).

Latest EAAFP newsletter now available!



The latest edition of the East Asian Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP) is now available on the EAAFP website, download [here](http://www.eaaflyway.net)

You can subscribe to the newsletter by contacting Ms Minseon Kim, Public Information Officer, email: minseon.kim@eaaflyway.net

Integration of water and wetlands underpin success in achieving Aichi Targets

Governments that are party to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) have agreed on the *Aichi Biodiversity Targets 2020* in 2010 that provides an overall framework to promote and achieve conservation of biodiversity, including waterbirds.

At the latest meeting of Parties in October 2012, in Hyderabad, India, a side event on 'Water, Wetlands and Aichi Targets' was organized by Wetlands International – South Asia where the participants concluded that the success of achieving Aichi targets 2011-2020 was critically dependent on effective integration of wetlands within water management to achieve biodiversity and ecosystem services outcomes.

For more information on the meeting [click here](#).



New Management Planning Framework of Chilika released

The Chilika Lake in Odisha state in eastern India is the most important waterbird site in the country, supporting over half a million waterbirds.

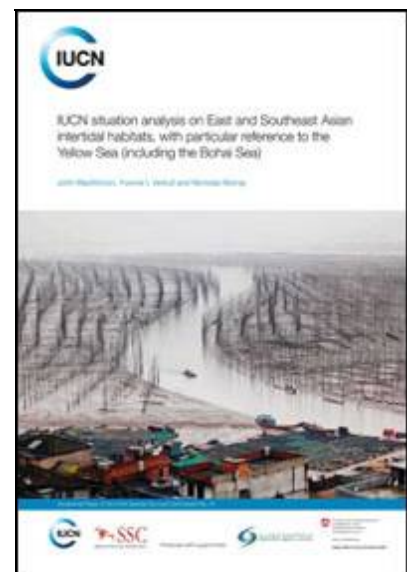
A new management planning framework was recently developed by Wetlands International – South Asia in partnership with Chilika Development Authority as an overarching framework to guide strategies and actions for conservation and wise use of Chilika. The document builds on a comprehensive analysis of ecological, hydrological, socio-economic and institutional features of the wetland system used to describe the ecological character of the site and identify threats that need to be addressed through management.

Financial support for formulation of the framework was provided by Ramsar Convention Secretariat and International Development Research Center. For more information [click here](#).

IUCN situation analysis on East and Southeast Asian intertidal habitats, with particular reference to the Yellow Sea (including the Bohai Sea)

The IUCN Species Survival Commission and IUCN Asia Regional Office commissioned this independent report to assess the state and condition of intertidal habitats along the East Asian-Australasian Flyway (EAAF), in response to growing concerns expressed by IUCN members over observed declines in biodiversity, the loss of ecological services, and an increase in ecological disasters. This report is a situation analysis, and it seeks to gather in one place the relevant data and analyses, and to present as clear a picture of the status of the intertidal zone in the EAAF as the data allow. By intention, this report makes no recommendations, but it should serve as a resource for those stakeholders empowered to make or influence decisions and policies in the region.

Download [here](#). Also available in separate Chinese and Korean language versions.



Upcoming Events

15th meeting of the Goose Specialist Group

The next meeting of the WI IUCN SSC Goose Specialist Group takes place between 8-11 January 2013, in Arcachon, France. More information is available [here](#).

The 31st Congress of the IUGB

The 31st Congress of the International Union of Game Biologists (IUGB) will take place in Brussels, Belgium between 27-29 August 2013.

Wildlife management around the world can vary widely in its objectives. In different places, the same species may be considered as a pest, as game or classified as strictly protected. To achieve the same goal for the same species, a diverse array of tools are used all over the world. Whatever the objectives, scientists use various techniques to count, track, monitor, describe and analyse species; and managers use various ways to protect, control, care for or increase the population of a species.

The IUGB 2013 congress aims to examine this variation and to search for the underlying reasons - many existing and new topics will be reviewed giving the various tools full attention.

There will be a special meeting about the reestablishment of the Wetlands International Waterbird Harvest Specialist Group at the Conference. Visit the website for more information: www.iugb2013.be.



7th Meeting of Partners of the East Asian – Australasian Flyway Partnership



The 7th Meeting of the East Asian – Australasian Flyway Partnership will be organised in Anchorage, Alaska, between 10-14 June 2013.

Alaska forms the northeastern most part of the flyway and is an important breeding area for several shorebirds, ducks and geese and terns that migrate into East Asia.

For more information on the meeting, [click here](#).

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Greylag Goose *Anser anser* and Greater White-fronted Geese *Anser albifrons* in maize field.

Picture by Taej Mundkur