

On the Occasion of the 50th Anniversary of Wetlands International

The only global NGO dedicated solely to the conservation and wise use of wetlands, Wetlands International aims to conserve wetlands for the benefit of biodiversity and people. A science-based organisation, Wetlands International:

- supports and informs relevant policies and government agreements required to achieve wetlands conservation;
- provides expert advice on key issues affecting wetlands and priority actions for their conservation and wise use, drawing on scientific analyses and experience;
- responds to the needs expressed by Governments, industry sectors, local communities and other stakeholders;
- acts as a catalyst for inter-sectoral cooperation, partnership and network development;
- builds capacity of local NGO's and Governments; and
- demonstrates innovative solutions to wetland management problems.

Wetlands International is an independent, not-for-profit organisation. It is supported by Government members from all continents of the world, extensive specialist networks and volunteers. It currently works through 17 country and project offices throughout the world.

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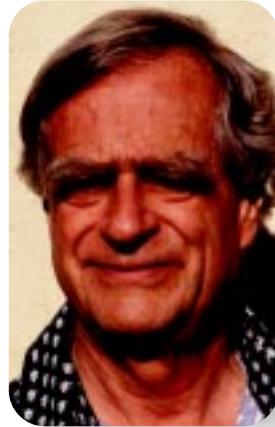
The first triennial **Luc Hoffmann Medal** For Excellence in Wetland Science and Conservation



Awarded to
Theunis Piersma
25 November 2004

Luc Hoffmann

The *Luc Hoffmann Medal for Wetland Science and Conservation* is an award with multiple purposes. It will be awarded every triennium to honour Dr Luc Hoffmann, one of the inspirational and far-sighted founders of Wetlands International. Luc has personally been a source of inspiration and support to those who share his passion for wetlands. He has provided opportunity and motivation to an entire generation of wetland scientists and conservationists. The award echoes Luc's belief that effective nature conservation activities must build on good science, and recognises his own outstanding achievements.



Luc founded the Station Biologique de la Tour du Valat (Camargue, France), where he and fellow researchers pioneered long-term population studies of waterbirds, wetlands ecology, conservation and management. He continues to be instrumental in conserving key wetlands throughout Europe and West Africa, including Coto Doñana and the Guadalquivir marshes of Southern Spain, Prespa Lakes in the Balkans and the Banc d'Arguin coastal wetlands in Mauritania. Along with Sir Peter Scott, he was among the founders of WWF, serving for many years as a Director and now as Vice President Emeritus. He has promoted numerous wetland conservation projects and policy initiatives, including the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands adopted in 1971.

Luc has truly made a difference to wetland science and conservation. He has been the worthy recipient of numerous awards, has authored more than sixty papers and published several books on wetlands, waterbirds and conservation. On the occasion of his 80th birthday, Oxford University created the "Luc Hoffmann Professorship in Ornithology".

Wetlands International is particularly grateful to Luc for his many accomplishments on behalf of the world's wetlands. We are proud to honour Luc through the naming of this award and especially pleased that he is here to make the inaugural presentation.

Theunis Piersma

Theunis Piersma is a world-class scientist, a networker extraordinaire and an inspiring team leader. His work has been of fundamental importance to the conservation of wetland habitats. He has helped to unravel the ecological and physiological mysteries of wader migrations, and has been instrumental in justifying and promoting the conservation of key wetland 'stepping stones' on which these migrants depend.



Research partnerships have been a hallmark of Theunis's research. He is a founding member of WIWO (The Netherlands Working Group for International Wader and Waterfowl Research), and has long been a leading light in the International Wader Study Group.

Theunis's research contributions are best known from his studies on the Red Knot along its many flyways. He has pursued this incredible bird through West Africa, north-west Europe, northern Australia and throughout the Americas, and the pursuit is not over.

Theunis is committed to bringing the implications of his work to the widest possible audiences. An example is his work in the Dutch Wadden Sea, where his collaborative research has highlighted the negative ecological consequences of dredging for cockles. The details of these impacts, documented in reputable research publications, were submitted as evidence to the European Court of Justice in a recent legal case. The findings of the Court ended mechanical cockle dredging in the Dutch Wadden Sea. The implications of this case throughout the European Union and the world will be enormous – a clear case where scientific knowledge has contributed to a landmark conservation decision.