

# Atlas of Anatidae Populations in Africa and Western Eurasia

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based on a project initiated by

Marc W.J. van Roomen and Gerard C. Boere

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Smew *Mergellus albellus*. MARK HULME.  
Bewick's Swan *Cygnus columbianus bewickii*. MARK HULME.  
Greater White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons*. MARK HULME.

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Garganey *Anas querquedula* and White-faced Whistling-ducks *Dendrocygna viduata* at Lac Debo, Inner Niger Delta. JAN VAN DE KAM.

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# Foreword

For centuries, migratory birds have been in the forefront of the interest of man in nature. In the past, their disappearance and return were not understood and the most fantastic stories have been published to account for it. Knowledge about the movements of migratory birds have increased enormously since about 100 years ago when the Danish teacher Mortensen started to put numbered rings on birds' feet.

Bird-ringing has been of utmost importance in understanding the timing and routes of migratory birds and in identifying the areas used for staging and wintering on their flyways. In recent years, modern tracking techniques using satellites have provided revealing information on the behaviour of bird species, in particular geese, swans and cranes.

Migratory birds are not aware of national boundaries and obviously their wise management and conservation is a responsibility of all states on the flyways. With its large number of wetlands of international importance and millions of waterbirds passing through or wintering here, the Netherlands has a special responsibility. Against this background, it is not surprising that our country, in close cooperation with the Secretariat of the Bonn Convention and Wetlands International, has been instrumental in concluding the African Eurasian Waterbird Agreement.

Comprehensive and reliable data is a key asset for international nature conservation and the management of populations. This book brings together a wealth of data to support the implementation of the African Eurasian Waterbird Agreement, both on the flyway as a whole and on the states on its route. At the same time, it shows that large gaps in information still exist, in particular with respect to Africa. The book is also an important tool for all Range States to achieve the main objectives of the African Eurasian Waterbird Agreement – which is the conservation of wetland habitats and the conservation and sustainable management of waterbird populations.

I will definitely continue to support these objectives, including the collection of data that are not plentifully available, such as on the Arctic breeding areas and in West Africa, and I look forward to join forces with other countries to realize the objectives of the African Eurasian Waterbird Agreement in full.



*Jozias J. van Aartsen*  
*Minister of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries*

# African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement

The African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement (AEWA) is an Agreement under the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals commonly referred to as the Bonn Convention. AEWA aims to create a legal basis for a concerted conservation and management policy by the Range States for migratory waterbird species.

It covers the entire continent of Africa and Europe, as well as parts of Asia and a few Arctic islands of North-eastern Canada encompassing about 120 Range States and it covers 170 species.

AEWA has an Action Plan, which specifies actions Parties shall undertake in relation to priority species and issues, under the following headings:

- a) species conservation;
- b) habitat conservation;
- c) management of human activities;
- d) research and monitoring;
- e) education and information and;
- f) implementation.

The present Action Plan is restricted to geese, swans, ducks, spoonbills, ibises and storks.

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The authors would like to thank the specialist group coordinators, national coordinators and species experts that responded to our requests for assistance so enthusiastically, willingly and with outstanding technical quality.

The specialist group coordinators were Jeff Kirby (Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (WWT)) for the Duck Specialist Group, Jesper Madsen (NERI) for the Goose Specialist Group, Eileen Rees (WWT) for the Swan Specialist Group and Andy Green and Janet Hunter (WWT) for the Threatened Waterfowl Specialist Group.

All national coordinators of the monitoring schemes that supply information as part of the International Waterfowl Census are also essential to the production of international overviews like this. Many work as volunteers, undertaking tremendous amounts of work under the most difficult of conditions. Their efforts and those of the thousands of volunteer waterfowl counters they coordinate are very greatly appreciated.

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The disappearance of Dylan Aspinwall during the course of compiling this publication was a great loss to wetland and waterbird conservation. His enthusiasm and expertise will be sorely missed by all who worked with him.



*Conserving wetlands for people and wildlife*

Wetlands International, the world's leading non-profit wetland conservation organisation, was created in 1996 by the integration of the Asian Wetland Bureau, the International Waterfowl and Wetlands Research Bureau, and Wetlands for the Americas. The achievements of the founding organisations date back 40 years, and include the launch of (and support to) the Ramsar Convention, major regional surveys and conservation programmes for wetlands and wetland species, and the development of international programmes for migratory waterbird conservation in particular technical support to the Bonn Convention's Agreement on the Conservation of African/Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds.

Sound technical information is the basis for Wetlands International's work, which includes: coordinating conservation, management and assessment projects at international level; providing technical and fundraising support to national and local projects, and helping to build the capacity of relevant agencies. Wetlands International produces a wide range of publications and awareness materials, and organises numerous workshops, training courses and conferences each year.

The global network of Wetlands International provides rapid access to specialists on wetland conservation throughout the world. These are supported by 13 regional and project offices on five continents, providing a unique force for supporting wetland conservation activities. Partnership is at the heart of Wetlands International, and strong links exist with other international conservation agencies such as IUCN, WWF and BirdLife International, and the secretariats of the Ramsar and Bonn Conventions. Global and regional programmes are supported by over 120 government agencies, NGOs, foundations, development agencies and private sector groups.

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