



Dear WLI Colleague,

Welcome to this edition of WLI World, full of issues that you have sent in about your wetland centres and their work. It's a great opportunity to take a look at what's happening across the network, to share stories about activities that are likely to be of interest across many WLI partners.

From a WLI global perspective we have been working with our partners at ERF (Environmental Ecosystem Research Foundation, the nonprofit conservation organization based in Seoul, R.O.Korea), the Ramsar Secretariat and many wetland centres to support their

development of a new handbook on best practice for Wetland Education Centres. This handbook is the result of the International Workshop on Best Practices of Operation and Management of Wetland Education Centres which was held in Seosan city, R.O.Korea in November, 2014 and WLI was one of supporters. This will be a great new resource for anyone developing or running a wetland centre and will be launched soon.

We've also been actively working regionally to plan for the forthcoming WLI Asia regional conference which will take place in China in early 2015, held a webinar in North America for colleagues working in wetland centres there, and we are working with our Chilean colleagues to plan for a conference later in the year for the Neotropics region.

The WLI Russia network is active too, finalising the CEPA action plan and looking towards an event hosted at Smolensk Wetland Park, which will celebrate their newly refurbished centre, and at the same time their commitment to taking a lead on the WLI Russia network.



WLI and WWT hosted the Ramsar CEPA oversight panel (right) in December last year, at our London Wetland Centre. The panel worked on the draft resolution for CEPA which will be discussed at the next Ramsar conference in 2015 in Uruguay. As well as making good progress on the resolution, the participants enjoyed being based at our wetland centre enormously!

For the WLI annual report, please click [here](#), showing what the WLI network achieved during 2013.

Best regards,

Chris Rostron
Head of WLI

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World Wetlands Day 2014 – Wetlands and Agriculture



The World Wetland Day theme this year was Wetlands and Agriculture – Partners for Growth, celebrating the link between wetlands and growing food, and the need to think about how this can be done sustainably. Many centres celebrated the day, taking the opportunity either to talk

about wetlands and Ramsar generally, or to specifically give messages about their links to wetlands and agriculture. Our WWT Welney centre reflected a very

wet winter for the whole of the UK, and despite being mostly underwater, still carried out activities, such as the swan feed, see right.

We are also reminding colleagues in the far North that if it's too cold to hold activities in February, you can still hold events later in the year. For example, North American Wetlands Month is in May, promoting events that are linked to wetlands and serving a similar purpose to World Wetlands Day.

For more information, please see the [WLI website](#), or check out the [Ramsar site](#).

American Paddlefish project, and a new name for the Caddo Lake Wetlands Centre, US



In March, Caddo Lake Institute and partners in the area released 47 American paddlefish into Caddo Lake and Big Cypress Bayou. Each fish has an implanted

radio transmitter. Since the radio signals are unique, each tagged fish can be tracked by towers placed along the bayou. As part of the experiment, students and other interested parties can follow paddlefish movements on the Caddo Lake Institute [website](#).

Managed by CLI's partner, the Collins Academy, students, teachers and educational groups are conducting their own age appropriate, standards aligned, environmental testing and investigations expanding on the work project scientists are doing. The paddlefish release and tracking data are providing opportunities for schools to become heavily engaged in ecological studies and environmental education.

Results of this experiment will determine whether restoration of flow regimes from the dam upstream of Caddo Lake, as well as channel substrate, will provide a favorable enough habitat for paddlefish restoration. If

successful, the experiment will lead to a watershed-wide reintroduction of up to 10,000 juvenile paddlefish.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has named the area including the Harrison Bayou watershed on the Caddo Lake National Wildlife Refuge, part of the Caddo Lake Ramsar wetlands, after the late Dwight K. Shellman Jr. (1945 to 2012) to honor his tireless conservation work. The Shellman Unit of the Refuge was dedicated during a ceremony on April 5th.

Designation of portions of Caddo Lake as "Wetlands of International Importance" and creation of the Caddo Lake National Wildlife Refuge arose in large measure from the efforts of Dwight K. Shellman, Jr., former President of the Caddo Lake Institute. Although many people worked to ensure Caddo Lake and its associated forests and wetlands are protected for future generations, Dwight's commitment and tenacity were essential to the effort.

Please contact Dawn at the e-mail below.
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Creston Valley Wildlife Management Area – Wildlife Interpretation Centre Update, Canada

Well, spring is upon us and our Wildlife Centre in the beautiful Creston Valley is preparing for the coming operating season. As always with the beginning of a new year, we are starting things off with a bang!

This year's opening day of Saturday May 10th 2014 once again coincides with the 2nd Annual Creston Valley Bird Fest. This volunteer organized event will be bringing attention to the Creston Valley particularly in regards to where the birds are. The Creston Valley Wildlife Management Area (CVWMA) is located along the interior British Columbia portion of the Pacific Flyway, and as such is a very active place around International Migratory Bird Day! Events participants can sign up for include a children's



ample opportunities for bird sightings.



“Winged Investigation” activity, numerous field based bird watching tours with expert birders, and presentations. Many of the events take place within the CVWMA, as the wetlands provide

In addition to Bird Fest the CVWMA will be offering special events and general interest presentations. These programs are added as the season progresses so it is important to stay tuned by following our website, signing up for E-News, or staying plugged in with our Facebook Page.

As the season starts we will be welcoming students of all ages into our interpretive programs, in addition to the tourists that happen upon this wetland gem. Then as spring turns into summer,

the focus will turn to tours, summer camps and wetland interpretation! As always over 30 km of flat-topped dyke trails await an adventurous step. Benches as well as two viewing towers welcome the curious to stay while the sights, sounds, and mysteries of the wetland unfold.

We are looking forward to a great year indeed! For more information on the Creston Valley Wildlife Management Area and associated happenings check out our website www.crestonwildlife.ca. See you in the wetland!

Please contact Carla Ahearn at the e-mail below.
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World Wetlands Day celebrated at Ingula, South Africa

On Saturday, 1 February 2014, the Ingula Partnership hosted its fifth Wetlands Walk. The walk took place in a small section of the lower



Wilge River wetlands in Eskom's care in the Free State and KwaZulu-Natal. Ingula is Eskom's third hydro pumped storage

scheme under construction, scheduled for completion in 2015.

At Ingula, Eskom manages about fourteen thousand hectares of expansive mountainous grassland, including around one thousand hectares of sensitive wetland. To increase awareness of its wetlands, and the Ingula Nature Reserve, an annual wetlands programme is rolled out, giving participants a rare opportunity to experience wetlands first hand.

The highlight of the programme is the Wetlands Walk launched in 2010 by the Ingula Visitors

Centre and Conservation Team. This year proved to be a particularly wet walk with one hundred and fifty participants splashing through the wetlands following two different routes.

Amongst the participants were members of the Ingula Partnership made up of Eskom, and prominent conservation NGO's, BirdLife South Africa and Middelpunt Wetlands Trust. A group of fifteen children from a wildlife club in Van Reenen, under the leadership of emerging bird guide, Bonginkosi Khumalo, also participated.

The wetlands programme includes an annual photographic competition. This year's entries were

exceptional and will be used in a conservation calendar for 2015. A separate programme involving five local schools was rolled out during February to stimulate and educate the next generation of wetland managers.



Please contact Fifi Meyer at the e-mail below.
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Salinas y arenas de San Pedro, Spain – managing site access for breeding birds



For years, the northern salt hillock reserve has been used by pedestrians and cyclists, even though it is not a formal path. In late 2013 the Park management began work to limit access to walkers and cyclists to this designated Reserve and Conservation Area, through the fencing, mulching and reforestation of the hillock and the installation of information posters.

These actions seek to improve conditions for up to 18 protected species of birds that breed in the salt

hillocks, and to conserve the internationally protected plant communities of the dunes and salt marshes, which form part of the Natura 2000 network. This led to the northern salt hillock park being excluded from the Nature Trails Network.

Among the activities, 50 local students were involved in planting date palms, made possible thanks to sponsorship from a local company "Churros y Chocolate Victor".

Unfortunately, both the reforestation and the other actions carried out have not been respected; less than 24 hours afterwards, the fence was destroyed and many of the palm trees uprooted. In the following days we worked to restore the damaged fencing and signs.

The Salinas y Arenas de San Pedro Regional Park still has several trails where authorized users can enjoy nature and landscape, reducing inconvenience to the fauna and flora. See the map for more information, showing the area of conservation activity, and the designated Protected Area trails.

For more information please contact Teresa Lopez Aledo, or see their website.

Sungei Buloh's colourful visitors

In Singapore, Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve staff have been conducting a bird ringing programme since 1990, with between about 500 – 1000 birds ringed annually. It has been part of the International Shorebird Colour flagging programme since 2003. Green-over-white flags were used to distinguish birds caught in the Reserve, to help birdwatchers

public about the amazing journeys that these birds make, and the role of the wetland in supporting their journey. The posters included species such as the Whimbrel, Pacific Golden Plover and the Common Redshank.

On January 2011, a Common Redshank was recaptured during a shorebird ringing session. The bird was first ringed at Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve in November 1990, the first ever bird ringing session at the Reserve. This common Redshank had actually lived more than 20 years possibly one of the longest-living of its species on record in the whole East Asian-Australasian Flyway.

On 29th Jan 2014, a Whimbrel was recaptured 19.5 years after it was ringed here. Repeat capture of the same individual bird is rare, but when it does happen, it allows us to study the migration patterns and the longevity of different species.

These posters are a great way to engage visitors, and world Migratory Bird Day a perfect opportunity to launch them. For more information, contact [Mohamad Azlin Sani](#), Manager / Conservation Outreach, at

monitor the movement of these birds without having to catch them. This year, SBWR has produced a set of posters (see example, right) aimed at telling the visiting

WLI future plans

It will be World Migratory Bird Day, held annually on the second weekend of May. You can find out more at their [website](#), and this year's theme has a focus on ecotourism and birds, Destination Flyways: Migratory Birds and Tourism. You can download posters, and find out more about the 'Destination Flyways' project, which focuses on eight specific wetland sites promoting best practice in sustainable tourism.

We are keen to continue work on evaluation of wetland centre activities. In the next edition, we would like to feature some work on evaluation of activities at wetland centres. It is a perennial challenge to demonstrate

changes in behaviour and actions after people visit wetland centres, so if you have good ideas or case studies, we'd love to hear from you. As part of our Migratory Birds for People project, we produced an audit for wetland centres, which could also help – see the [link](#) for more.

Finally, if you have any stories for the next issue, to be produced in September, we would welcome your input. Normally around 200 – 300 words and some pictures of your work.

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