

Annual Meeting Migratory Birds for People September 25–27
September 2018,
Grand Lieu Lake Centre, Bouaye, France

Introduction:

The MBP Annual Meeting 2018 was hosted at the Maison du Lac de Grand Lieu, Bouaye, in North West France, a wetland centre based around France's largest shallow lake (in winter), which has been used historically for wild fowling, fishing and research, and now also provides recreation, education and leisure opportunities for local, national and international visitors. The centre employs eight to ten staff, and is open all year, running education and awareness-raising activities, cultural events and scientific and research activities.

Aim and overview

The aim of the meeting was to bring together key colleagues from across the MBP network to review work over the past year, develop ideas and project plans for the coming year, strengthen individual relations between partners, and share experience. We also had the opportunity to explore a new wetland centre, and learn from their exhibits, site and activities.

20 members of the MBP network attended (see annexe II), including from West Africa and also welcomed a new network partner from the East Atlantic Flyway Initiative, run by the RSPB, UK. Colleagues arrived on the 24th September, with two days meetings, field trips and other activities during the 25th and 26th, leaving on the 27th. See annex I for the timetable.

Details of activities:

Day 1:

Introduction to the centre from Olivier Hubert and Audrey Cadou and the team.

Chris Rostron – introduction and review

CR gave a brief background to MBP, and an overview of the past year's activities. Key points included ongoing communications through Roelof's newsletter, regular core group meetings, active MBP Africa network, new International Engagement Officer at WWT (welcome Connor) and positive activities at sites based around World Migratory Birds Day. CR and colleagues also going to the Ramsar COP13, and will use MBP as a showcase of how Ramsar's CEPA programme is being delivered on the ground.

What had not gone so well was the website development, and the presence of MBP Africa members at the meeting (only one out of three, but Ibrahima Thiam most welcome!).

Edorta Unmuno – Urdaibai Bird Centre Project, Basque Country

The Urdaibai bird centre is created from an old fish canning factory. After it was shut down, local people and birdwatchers started to use it informally, then joined together to seek funding to develop it into a visitor centre, based around the bird airport theme. Use a lot of new technology and innovation. Tourism a major driver, although 90% of visitors don't know about birds when they arrive. Key areas of work included a huge project to remove invasive plant species, an osprey reintroduction project and much work with local schools, communities and national / international tourism. Good use of social media has also led to

high profile media opportunities, e.g. through National Geographic and the BBC. Funding is a mix of local government, entrance fees and national funders. Annual budget around €250k, of which €100k comes from regional administration. Private companies also provide funding.

Wanda Bakker and Feline Zwaan, Terschelling, Netherlands

Terschelling is a small island in the Waddensee Region, off the Dutch coast. The population is relatively small, but increases enormously through tourism during the summer. The small team have involved local schools and people to help manage the site for migratory birds. A small wetland centre is also located on the site. Annual programme where six schools spend six days and six nights out on the island. Have 174 kids, with teachers and parents, so all kids get to spend one night out on the reserve itself.

Visit of the centre, to take part in an interactive floor game, based on dice and 'snakes and ladders'. Participants also had the chance to look at the displays on threatened species, as well as the permanent audiovisual and interactive displays in the centre.

Joanne Newbury – WWT Washington, UK

WWT has nine wetland centres across the UK (plus one new wetland restoration site) and runs many engagement and learning activities through its learning teams. JN is a learning manager at WWT's Washington site in the North East of England, an urban site. The learning programme is run nationally, but delivered by our learning teams at each of the sites.

Carles Carboneras – East Atlantic Flyway Initiative, RSPB, UK

Has two key focuses: shorebirds and waterfowl (90m birds on the flyway); and land birds, (2.1bn on the flyway). Also considering working in raptors in the future. Partnership is regional. In Europe, between Dutch Vogelbescherming and RSPB; in Africa with the Ghana Wildlife Society, Amis des Oiseaux in Tunisia and South Africa.

Key species include the black tailed godwit, Eurasian curlew, lesser kestrel. WCMC, World Conservation Monitoring Centre. EAFI aiming at conservation flyway and posters in Europe, in Africa looking at exchange opportunities, newsletters, support and need money and resources.

Sandra Paiva, EVOA, Portugal, 'Conservation and Tourism challenges and opportunities'

EVOA has capacity to welcome 20,000 visitors per year, but currently only eight thousand visit per year. Only 5% of visitors come from overseas. >50% are school visits.

Eugene Genelt-Yanovskiy, Yulia Danilova, BFN, Russia

Set up a wetland display at Zakaznik, but with no staff. Training provided for eco-tourism companies, to ensure guides are able to deliver projects around bird identification. Owls of the white night – citizen science project monitoring owls in and around St Petersburg. New topic every month, and an event at the zoo at the end of the series encourages volunteers to stay involved.

Day 2

Ibrahima Thiam, Wetlands International Africa, Senegal

WI active in the coordination of the MBP Africa network Parc National du Banc d'Arguin was set up in 1996, also works with the Centre de Cap Blanc, Chami and Manghar.

Bijagos, Cap Verde, runs micro projects and awareness-raising programmes. Also local production of food and handicrafts. Djoudj, set up in 1971 over 16,000ha. Reserve Ornithologique de Kalissaye. Training run for eco-guards and volunteers, as well as school awareness raising programmes.

Challenges: 1. Lack of equipment; 2. Need for capacity building; 3. Loss of habitat; 4. Week implementation; 5. Lack of engagement with the authorities.

Opportunities: Maison des parcs, working with schools to involve teachers and students; collaborative actions and exchanges; raise visibility of park activities; expand to include Diawling park; optical equipment for the region;

Also, possible opportunity to get Portugal, Guinea Bissau and Angola working closer together given the language link.

Morocco – contact to see if they would become a core member of the group. Visit of MBP representative to the Africa regional meeting of WI would be useful. Aim to hold the MBP annual meeting in Senegal in 2020, which would not only highlight the work in the region, but also get government representatives and decision-makers more involved.

Nathanael, Marquenterre, France

Welcomes over 160,000 visitors per year, including 15,000 students per year. On the big holiday weekends, can see 3,000 visitors in a day. Entry fee is €10.50 which goes to running the park and gives it some autonomy. The site has a tidal mudflat area where the birds feed, and then they fly onto the reserve to rest. The same staff do the conservation, visitor engagement and education work. Several hides and a visitor centre on site. Seasonal staff also receive a university diploma at the end of the year.

CR led sessions on:

- World Migratory Bird Day activities, review and planning

Short film, research on sites, birds in common start the process early (this year!), get the right permissions from staff and parents.

For 2019: Strengthen the links between pupils and teachers after the video conference; find funds to support travel of the Africa partners; teachers share newsletter; University of the Basque Country is interested in sharing this with teachers; Create a resource afterwards; certificate of involvement afterwards.

- Plans for 2019 (see workplan, annexe III)

Poster / resource to celebrate the 10 year anniversary of MBP. Magnetic poster with birds? Focus on our key species. Game or video game? App to engage younger audiences. Flyway map. 10 year photobook from across the MBP activities. Create an exhibition template that allows everyone to put on the exhibition at their own centres.

Overall outcomes of the meeting:

Aim to hold meeting in West Africa in 2020.

Intention to hold 2019 meeting at Slimbridge, UK.

Plan to develop and finalise the Social Media Guidelines.

World Migratory Bird Day video links to continue.

CR and RH to follow up LIFE programme funding opportunities. Work with Natuurpunt; contact MBP partners again to identify potential support.

Annexe I – Timetable of meeting

	24th September - Monday
	Arrival at Nantes or Bouaye; Plinguetière Castle
20.00	Dinner and socializing (at the Centre)
	25th September - Tuesday
8.00	Breakfast at the Plinguetière Castle
	<i>Annual Meeting, Session 1: introduction and interpretation</i>
9.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome from Nantes officials (20 minutes) • Introduction on MBP progress and aims of meeting (Chris Rostron, 20 minutes and Roelof Heringa) • Case studies from members: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Edorta Unamuno, Urdaibai Bird Center, Basque Country, ‘Urdaibai Bird Center project’ ▪ Wanda Bakker and Feline Zwaan, Terschelling, Netherlands; • Presentation Grand-Lieu Lake Centre (tour of the centre, 1.5 hours)
12.30-13.30	Lunch at the Grand-Lieu Lake Centre
	<i>Session 2: Benefits of wetlands</i>
13.30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case studies from members (2 hours, maximum 20 minutes each) – around key MBP strategic themes of: Public participation/communication; capacity building for staff; network development; habitat and species management: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Joanne Newbury WWT Washington, UK; ▪ Carles Carboneras, BirdLife, UK, ‘BirdLife East Atlantic Flyway Initiative’; ▪ Sandra Paiva, EVOA, Portugal, ‘Conservation and Tourism challenges and opportunities’ ▪ Eugene and Yulia, BFN, ‘Our waders, our owls: citizen science in conservation projects to protect wildlife in coastal wetlands and royal parks around St.Petersburg’
16.00-18.00	<i>Grand-Lieu Lake tour</i>
20.00	Dinner offered by The Grand-Lieu Lake Centre / BBQ (fish and the red swamp crayfish <i>Procambrus clarkii</i>)
	26th September – Wednesday
8.00	Breakfast at the Plinguetière Castle
	<i>Annual Meeting, Session 3:</i>
8.45 – 10.45	- Assessment of MBP’s activities to date (Chris R)

	- Feedback on MBP Africa activities External partner <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ibrahima Thiam, Wetlands International Africa, Senegal;
10.45 – 11.00	Coffee break
11.10	- World Migratory Bird Day activities, review and planning - Review of website - Plans for 2019
13.00	Lunch at the Grand-Lieu Lake Centre
13.45-16.15	Canoe trip
16.30 – 18.30	Continue with plans and activities for 2019
Flexible, 20.00	Dinner and Euro-Cocktail event (at the Grand-Lieu Lake Centre)
	27th September – Thursday
7.00	Breakfast at Plinguetière Castle
8.30	Donges ringing station discovery , the most important French site on the Loire estuary. Hosting and ringing with ACROLA. http://www.acrola.fr/camp_baguage.html 
12.00	Lunch
13.30-14.00	Departure

Annexe II - Participants list:

MBP annual meeting 24th - 27th September 2018			
Participants			
First name	Last name	Organisation	Country
Olivier	Hubert	Maison du Lac de Grand Lieu	France
Audrey	Cadou	Maison du Lac de Grand Lieu	France
Roelof	Heringa	Independent	Netherlands
Yulia	Danilova	Baltic Fund for Nature	Russia
Eugene	Genelty-Yanovskiy	Baltic Fund for Nature	Russia
Chris	Rostron	WWT / WLI	UK
Joanne	Newbury	WWT Washington	UK
Connor	Walsh	WWT / WLI	UK

Patric	Lorgé	Biodiversum Remershen	Luxembourg
Isabelle	Zwick	Biodiversum Remershen	Luxembourg
Edorta	Unamuno	Urdaibai	Basque Country
Wanda	Bakker	Terschelling	NL
Feline	Zwaan	Terschelling	NL
Ibrahima	Thiam		Senegal
Sandra	Paiva	EVOA	Portugal
Leo	de Clerq	Het Zwin	Belgium
Nathanael	Herrmann	Baie de Somme/Marquenterre	France
Olivier	Morin	Maison du Lac de Grand Lieu	France
Maude	Verwer	Oostvaardersplassen	NL
Carles	Carboneras	RSPB	UK

Annexe III

Workplan

Work area	Activities	Who?	By when?
Fund-raising	Maintain contact with LIFE team. Work with Natuurpunt and contact MBP partners again to identify potential support	CR and RH	Ongoing
Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Monthly skype planning meetings- Annual meeting in 2019 to be at WWT Slimbridge, UK (identify date)	CR	Ongoing
Website	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Work to make it more relevant to MBP with sub-site- Ensure that google translate works effectively- Ensure resources are uploaded and shared effectively	CR and CW	End 2018
World Migratory Bird Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Plan and deliver site visit with schools and centres – plan in advance and get permissions- Keep group of sites, but in some cases 1:1 e.g. Portuguese speakers- Flexibility on producing a film, ppt or other and use these separately to the skype discussion- Maison du Lac de Grand Lieu to lead on the Francophone version, EVOA Portuguese, BFN Russian	CR / CW and MLGL	May 2019

Africa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Plan for MBP meeting in Senegal in 2020 - Optics – option for delivering optics during annual meeting - Possible network meeting in 2019 for partners in the region (maybe with a guest from EU) - Morocco as core member. Angola? 	CR, GA, MLGL	Ongoing
Newsletters	Two separate newsletters, Europe in English, and West Africa in French	CR and RH	Ongoing
Poster resource	Produce a resource that can be used by partners for teaching and awareness raising, based on map and migratory species. Link to journal?	CR, CW and JB	End 2018
Partnerships	Continue regular contact with Gerold Luersson and Anya from Waddensee. East Atlantic Flyway Initiative, develop opportunities with Carles Carboneras	GL, AS and CC	Mid 2019
MBP annual meet 2018	Produce short report and list of actions; Produce short film based on interviews and footage from the meeting.	CR; CW	November 2018