***"Inspiring birds, inspiring people"***

# "Migratory Birds for People" - NEWSLETTER no. 35 (November, 2019)

*"Inspiring birds, inspiring people"*

**NEWSLETTER no. 35 (November, 2019)**

# Introduction:

Dear colleagues,
After a very successful and enjoyable 10th Annual Meeting in Slimbridge (UK), we now send you the MBP-newsletter with a -short- report of this meeting.
We also welcome a new member in our network The Camargue National Nature Reserve in Southern France.
You will find a special request from our partner-organisation EUROSITE on page **26.**
And as always: stories from a number of wetland centres in our MBP-network.

Please, don't hesitate to contact your colleagues with your questions or advise. This is one of the essential things in a network!
An updated list of partners in the MBP-network will be sent separately to the members in the MBP-network.

Enjoy reading!

On behalf of the core-group "Migratory Birds for People"-network,

***Paule Gaudouin and Roelof Heringa (editor team)***

*Check also our website:* ***www.migratorybirdsforpeople.org***

*MBP is also on FACEBOOK :* ***www.facebook.com/migratorybirdsforpeople***

*Our MISSION can also be found on:* ***www.facebook.com/migratorybirdsforpeople***

*P.S.: your feedback is always welcome!*

**Index**

**In order to make this newsletter more accessible, we have put in 'hyperlinks' for your convenience. Look in the index below for the underlined item you want to read and search for the item in the document by clicking "Ctrl + Click left"**

# INDEX:


**Page:**

- **News from the "Migratory Birds for People"- core group** **2**
  - MBP-Annual Meeting 2019 Short report
  - MBP- Whats app group and Instagram
- **Other Flyway news : Artic Geese back later, trend?** **6**
- **News from the network** **8**
  **With contributions from:**
  - Finland, Liminka Bay; Russia,BfN St. Petersburg; NL Terschelling; NL Oostvaardersplassen; NL Biesbosch NP; Luxembourg, Remerschen; UK Welney; France,Grand lac de Lieu; France, Réserve nat. de Camargue, Spain Las Salinas; Morocco Sidi Moussa Oualidia
- **Other MBP-network news** **26**
  - **Eurosite : kind request**
  - **MBP-certificate**
  - **MBP- T-shirt + Mug**

*"Inspiring birds, inspiring people"*

**NEWSLETTER no. 35 (November, 2019)**

# News from the "Migratory Birds for People"- core group

## REPORT of the ANNUAL MEETING "Migratory Birds for People"
## 14th to the 17th October, 2019

**Theme**: **"Communicating science at wetland centres"**

Venue: WWT Slimbridge, Bowditch, Gloucestershire, UK

## What we did

The 2019 annual meeting went well, hosted by Chris Rostron, Connor Walsh, and Adil Boulahia at WWT Slimbridge.
In total we had twenty delegates representing eight centres, ten organisations, two independents, and nine countries. Two external speakers also presented and over a dozen WWT staff joined-in at different times.
We reviewed the activities of individual members and the network; we planned for 2020; and we looked at thematic content on communicating research at wetland centres, and at travelling wetland art exhibitions. We unveiled and workshopped the educational flyway map, which some participants were able to take away with them. And we marked the ten years of MBP, with cake!

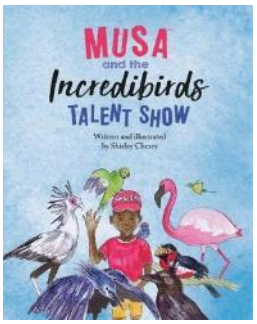
We also started a new **WhatsApp group** for sharing news between members. You are welcome to join by contacting Connor by email, Facebook, sms etc. and he will add you.

## Presentations

We saw summaries and updates from Biodiversum Remerschen, Baltic Fund for Nature, WWT, Biesbosch, Lake Tåkern, and Terschelling.

## External participation

Florian Keil of the Africa Eurasian Waterbirds Agreement (AEWA) could not attend but gave us a warm welcome message by Skype, supporting and celebrating the ten years of MBP.
Sacha Dench presented about her new expedition, Flight of the Osprey, and her new NGO Conservation Without Borders. In 2020 she will follow osprey migration routes, flying by paramotor from Scotland south to West Africa. She and MBP members will work together to facilitate the journey and maximise the public engagement opportunities.




Local writer and artist Shirley Cherry introduced her **books for children**, about a little boy developing a love for birds.

## Flyway Map

We got our first touch of the large educational maps, and planned how to develop a guidebook for their use.
Chris and Connor will develop this into the final guide over the next month or so.

## Communicating science at wetland centres

We looked at a WWT exhibit, called Arctic Adventure, where WWT swan researchers informed the creative team to build a replica of a research station in the Russian tundra. WWT's Senior Interpretation Designer Amanda Bradbury and Visitor Experience Officer Sarah Lorton explained the process. The exhibit builds on heritage—diary entries of WWT's founder, the late Peter Scott—and contemporary input from staff researchers today. Children who take part can also have their face painted to match the Bewick's swans' bill patterns; or wear a leg ring that matches that of a bird of their choice.

## Newsletter, website, webinar

We discussed the MBP website and this newsletter. WWT Digital offered to make a standalone MBP website,

with migratorybirdsforpeople.org linking to mbp.wwt.org.uk.
For the newsletter, we decided to search for a new newsletter template in the English-language newsletter. Roelof will continue as editor, but with an eye to succession, a rotating editorship was suggested as our preferred approach, when Roelof wishes to step aside. He will continue to produce three to four issues a year, with one dedicated to a theme. The suggested first theme is **'how to reach schools'**. We could also use the monthly Skype calls as an opportunity to collect stories, by including it as an agenda item.
We committed to producing one **webinar** in 2020 to help members with specific skills. The theme may be the same as the thematic newsletter; Connor will ask for suggestions during the year.

## Membership

The membership has grown, with two more members in Nigeria helping address the imbalance between Europe and Africa; the ratio is still very biased in favour of Europe.

## World Wetlands Day, World Migratory Bird Day

We committed to putting more effort into collating members' activities to mark World Wetlands Day, to help establish what sort of events work well.
The 2019 Birds and Schools activity was popular with children and parents, in both the Francophone and Anglophone video calls. Existing participants are interested in taking part again in 2020. To help it run better, Connor will share questions and consent forms sooner; and during the calls we will ask inactive participants to switch off their cameras so that the active speaker appears larger on-screen. New participants: Het Zwin is busy with school groups so would take convincing—this could be helped by materials from Ibrahim! Denmark might be a possibility.

## Site visit

We had two visits around Slimbridge wetland centre and reserve. The first was guided by Slimbridge Learning Manager Sue Belej and Learning Officer Sarah Hitchcock and replicated some of the activated they provide for children, **including pond dipping with identification charts**, hand-feeding greylag geese and visiting a hide. They pointed out that the captive flamingos are very popular with visitors.

The second visit replicated those of more determined bird watchers, usually without children. We visited hides and the 'summer walkway', and unpaved path alongside the seawall. We had a preview of a new three-storey hide, which was still being finished; with entry on the ground floor, stairs and a lift to the first floor with large windows, and the open-air roof-top observation area.

You can download a more complete report and links to the member presentations on www.migratorybirdsforpeople.org

## New!: INSTAGRAM ADDRESS FOR MBP:

https://www.instagram.com/migratory_birds_for_people

We have created a **WhatsApp group**, as another way to quickly share your news with your peers across the network. Possible uses include sending your short text, photos, videos, or requests for information.

Any MBP member is welcome to join: contact Connor by email, Facebook, sms etc. and he will add you.

# Other Flyway news

## Arctic geese back later, a new trend?

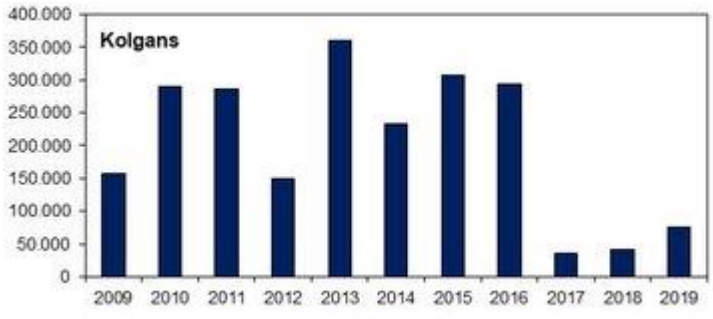
*From Sovon Bird research Netherlands*

## Again slow start winter season geese

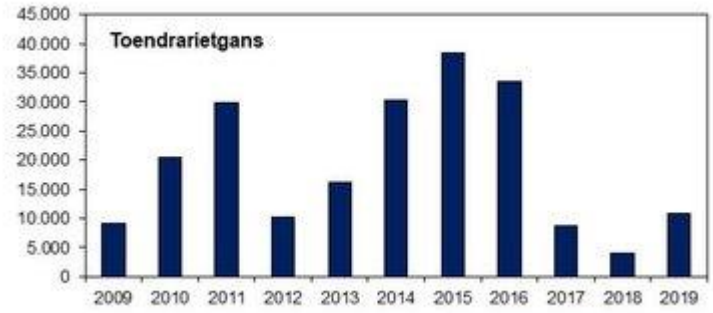
For the third year in a row smaller numbers of White-fronted Geese and Tundra-bean Geese in October in the Dutch national water bird count.

## Fewer geese in October

During the national water bird count in mid-October, the birds of Tundra bean Goose and White-fronted Goose in particular were counted much less than a number of years ago. In the case of the White-fronted Goose, less than a third of the number was recorded during the count than was customary until 2016; in the case of the Tundra-bean Goose, it was just half that number (see figure 1). The counting results of October confirm a tendency that was already apparent in October 2017-2018. In those two years, the numbers present were even smaller than they are today. Until recently, there was an ongoing trend for both species to arrive earlier and earlier in the autumn (sometimes as early as the end of September), which led, among other things, to an increase in the total number of goose visits to the Netherlands in the winter half-year.




White-fronted Goose




Tundra bean Goose

Figure 1. Numbers of White-fronted Goose and Tundra-bean goose during national water bird counts in October. The numbers shown relate to a sample of census areas that were counted over all years and are therefore comparable on a 1:1 basis. (Source: Kees Koffijberg).

## Alternating display for other species

The Pink Footed Geese have shown that feeding conditions can lead geese to adjust their migration strategy and have traditionally been seen in large numbers in ZW-Friesland (NL) since the end of September. They were even counted in record low numbers in the last October count. Most Pink Footed Geese have continued to plaster in Denmark for the past five years, benefiting from an extensive supply of corn stubble.

For the other species of geese, the counts in mid-October did not differ much from those of the past few years; for Grayleg Goose and Canada Goose, the counts were even slightly higher. For these species, a large part of the birds present in our country in October will consist of their own breeding birds, which according to the BMP figures are still on the rise.

*By courtesy of Kees Koffijberg (SOVON)*
*Text: Kees Koffijberg, Sovon Bird research Netherlands*
*Photo above: Rudmer Zwerver, Saxifraga*

*Published on Sovon.nl (https://www.sovon.nl)*

# News from the network:

## Finland : Liminka Bay Visitor Center

### The autumn at Liminka Bay Visitor Center was full of geese!

The hunting of the declining Bean Goose (*Anser fabalis*) has been completely forbidden in Northern Finland for six years now and also the waterfowl have learned to find the hunting restricted area of Liminka Bay.
Autumn hunting of Bean Goose was allowed only in those few southern municipalities were majority of migrating Bean Geese are more abundant Tundra Bean Geese (*Anser fabalis rossicus*).

When birds left the rest of Finland at the beginning of the autumn hunting season, nearly 6000 geese were gathered for resting at the Liminka Bay. Mostly Taiga Bean Geese (*Anser fabalis fabalis*) but also some Tundra Bean Geese, Pink-footed Geese (*Anser brachyrhynchus*), Greater White-fronted Geese (*Anser albifrons*) and Barnacle Geese (*Branta leucopsis*).
Also two critically endangered Red-breasted Geese (*Branta ruficollis*) stayed at the Liminka Bay.
It was a happy autumn!

*Heli Suurkuukkaa* *Picture: Ulla Matturi/ Parks & Wildlife Finland*

**Norway: Fetsund Lenser, Nordre Øyeren wetland centre**

## Russia: CEPA-team St.Petersburg

# NWB, Baltic Fund for Nature
# Opening of the Pavlovsk Park Nature Trail

After five months of preparation, BFN opened a new nature trail along the Slavianka river valley in Pavlovsk State Reserve & Museum.
The Nature trail is about 2km long, it was developed during the Baltic-Barents Nature and People Programme, a great nature conservation initiative across NW Russia supported by Swedish International Development Agency.

Pavlovsk is one of the Royal Residences around St.Petersburg and a popular tourist destination.
An interesting point about the trail is that its route was developed by Pavlovsk Park landscape managers during the seminar arranged by BFN on wildlife-friendly solutions for urban areas and nature reserves. Keeping this idea in mind, we made a route with four main information points showing the local biodiversity particularly water birds, flowers at grasslands and lawns, reed bed vegetation and also presenting the geological and human-mediated history of the river valley.
All the river trail exhibits, signs were developed by Baltic Fund for Nature outreach and education team and volunteers with the great help and involvement of Pavlovsk Park landscape managers. One of the most impressive elements of the outdoor exhibit is the ancient pine wood slice presenting the rich history of the park and also wildlife associated with the decaying wood.
When you only come to the park entrance, you can see the nature trail information pole decorated with the models of dragonfly, snail, bug and caterpillar - species that visitors generally don't expect to watch or in a historic park, but very important for the whole park ecosystem.

Contact: *Eugene Genelt-Yanovskiy and Yulia Danilova*

**Sweden: Naturum Lake Tåkern**

**Sweden: Naturum Getterön**

*Sweden: Naturum Hornborgasjön*

*Denmark: Amager, Copenhagen*

*Denmark: Vadehavscentret, Ribe*

*Germany : Nationalpark - Haus Husum*

## Netherlands: Terschelling

## Terschelling curlew seeks out the Spanish sun

Sovon Vogelonderzoek Nederland

25-OCT-2019 - An adult curlew male that was ringed last spring near Oosterend on Terschelling is now in Spain. This is quite unique, because Dutch curlews do not usually come that far south.

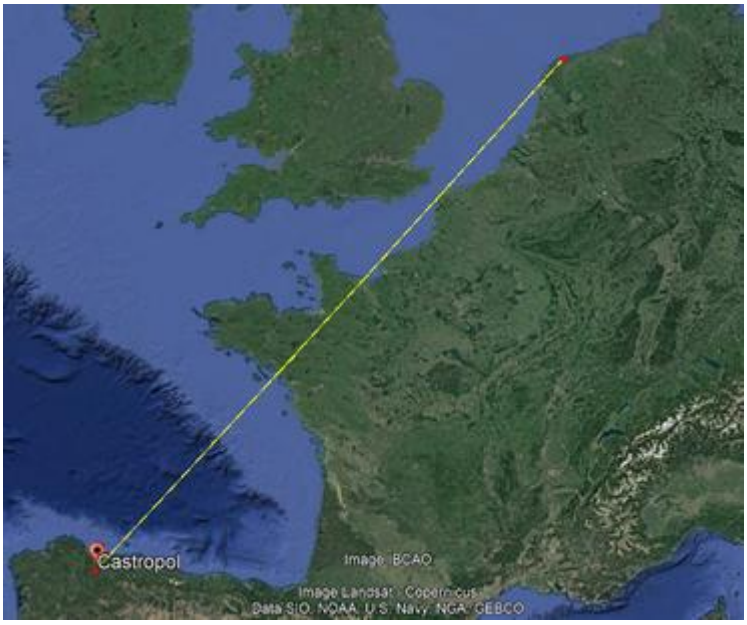
*Curlew H51 at Ria del Eo Castropol Asturias, on 14 October 2019 (Source: Gilberto S. Jardón).*

In the **Year of Curlew**, student Sascha Kuiper researched the breeding success and chick survival of curlews on the island of Terschelling on behalf of the Forestry Commission and Sovon. She followed ten nests this spring. The eggs hatched at eight of them. The number of young that flew out with certainty was only three, which is of course far too little to maintain the population.

## Small curlews

Peter de Boer ringing some young and adult curlews. The adult birds, five in total, were all males who were also given a colour ring with an inscription that curlew researcher Gerrit Gerritsen made available. One of the males (Curlew H51) has now been seen at a distance of almost 1500 kilometres in northern Spain: on 14 October he was on a salt marsh southeast of Ribadeo (Castropol). That is very special.

## Very southern




The distance from the ring spot on Terschelling to the place where the curlew was seen in Spain is almost 1500 kilometres (Source: Sovon).

Feedbacks of ringed Dutch curlews from abroad usually come from France and Great Britain.

If you look at www.Vogeltrekatlas.nl , you will see that Dutch curlews that have been ringed as nestlings sometimes visit the coasts of northern Spain and Portugal. From the fifteen feedback reports from autumn and winter of nesting young curlews on the Iberian Peninsula, only one is from after the turn of the century. Most observations (twelve) are from before 1970, while during the eighties and early nineties significantly more nestlings were ringed in the Netherlands. This seems to indicate that the birds have been migrating less southwards for some time now than before.

For adult Dutch curlews there are no feedback reports from Spain (and Portugal) at all. The southernmost one comes from the Bordeaux area. Lucky for Curlew H51 that hunting in France has been forbidden, otherwise this Terschelling male might never have seen the Spanish sun.

*By courtesy of Romke Kleefstra*
*Text: Romke Kleefstra & Peter de Boer, Sovon,*

*With thanks to Gerrit Gerritsen, Vogelbescherming*
*Photo's: Sascha Kuiper (leadfoto: Wulp 51, Terschelling, 15 mei 2019); Gilberto S. Jardón*
*Kaart: Sovon*

Contact: Feline Zwaan & Wanda Bakker

## Netherlands: Buitencentrum "Oostvaardersplassen"

### Swamp reset provides large numbers of white-tailed eagles in the Oostvaardersplassen

In the new N2000 management plan for the Oostvaardersplassen, the so-called wetland reset is one of the most important measures. By temporarily lowering the water level, the intention is to create new zones with reed marshes, which will give an impulse to marsh birds such as marsh harrier, bittern, bearded reedling and all kinds of other reed songbirds. The water level management will be carried out in phases so that about half of the area can continue to function as a fall-back area for birds, the bat, the otter and the beaver. A start was made on the management measure in the summer of 2018.

The dry summer of 2019 caused the water level to fall faster than expected. Shallows were created, making a large area of foraging area available for concentrations of waterfowl and waders. Due to the lower water levels, many large carp were easier to reach. In addition, the supply of consumable carp had increased as a result of the mortality that occurred. Both waterfowl and carp attracted up to 10-12 white-tailed eagles from August onwards.

The 'resetting' of the marsh part of the Oostvaardersplassen is a good example of a measure that, by imitating natural dynamics, gives a 'boost' to nature values in which, in addition to white-tailed eagles, many other bird species benefit. The eagles are mainly young and immature birds that often operate in groups. Bird watching huts are packed with nature photographers who use the situation to make beautiful images. The 3,600 ha swamp apparently currently functions as a catchment area for young birds due to a large food supply, including waterfowl and fish, as a result of low and subsiding water levels.

Check out the locations of the white-tailed eagles in the Netherlands here:
https://portal.werkgroepzeearend.nl/

Source: Osprey Working Group.

Pictures:

1. Since October there are high numbers of white-tailed eagles in the area. This fox went into battle, but eventually was forced to leave the scene.
2. Bald eagle WN14 (young from Spijk-Bremerberg) on 2 October in the Oostvaardersplassen.

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## Netherlands: Biesbosch

### Young White-tailed eagles (Haliaeetus albicilla) equiped with a radio transmitter

For the first time in The Netherlands, 4 young White-tailed eagles have been equipped with a radio transmitter.
One of these impressive birds of prey was born in the Biesbosch National Park, a fresh water tidal area in the south-western parts of The Netherlands.
In fact it is a glorious comeback from these dashing birds.

In 2019 nearly 15 breeding pairs were active in the whole of The Netherlands.
White-tailed eagles are breeding in The Biesbosch NP since 2012.
On the 27th May 2019 a young female was ringed and released with a radio transmitter. Since then it is possible to track and trace

this bird. In the beginning the juvenile bird stayed in the vicinity of the huge nest.
After a few weeks she made a trip to Namur, Charlerois and **Paris**.

She returned and spend the night on the "Hoge Platen" in the Westerschelde, a river in the province Zeeland. After that she flew to Rotterdam and returned eventually to the nest in The Biesbosch NP. During her trip, the average speed was 80 to 90 kilometres per hour.

In 2020 the aim is to equip another six juvenile White-tailed eagles in the Netherlands with radio transmitters. The main goal of this project is to monitor the impact of wind turbines on big birds like White-tailed eagles.

*Jacques van der Neut, Ranger, Staatsbosbeheer Biesbosch NP*

Would you like to watch how a young Osprey was measured and ringed:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uawnGSGdtPE

## Luxembourg: Biodiversum Remerschen

### Royal Visit at Biodiversum

Their Royal Highnesses the King and Queen of the Belgians were on a state visit to the Grand Duchy Luxembourg from Tuesday 15 October to Thursday 17 October 2019.

By invitation of Their Royal Highness the Grand Duke Henri and the Grand Duchess of Luxembourg, the Belgian monarchs King Philippe and Queen Mathilde visited Biodiversum nature center on October 17.

Several Ministers from the two countries, Ambassadors and a delegation of 200 people accompanied them. Mrs. Carole Dieschbourg, Luxembourg's Minister of Environment, Climate and Sustainable Development welcomed Their Highnesses at Biodiversum nature center and lead though the exhibition.

Their Highnesses attended a joint symposium about the future of construction with a focus on sustainable development: Biodiversum was the perfect place for this symposium, where 20 companies introduced their work.
This final day of the visit comprised a trip on the tourist-ship Marie-Astrid down the Moselle River.

Patric Lorgé

Photo credits: pressphoto.rt.lu

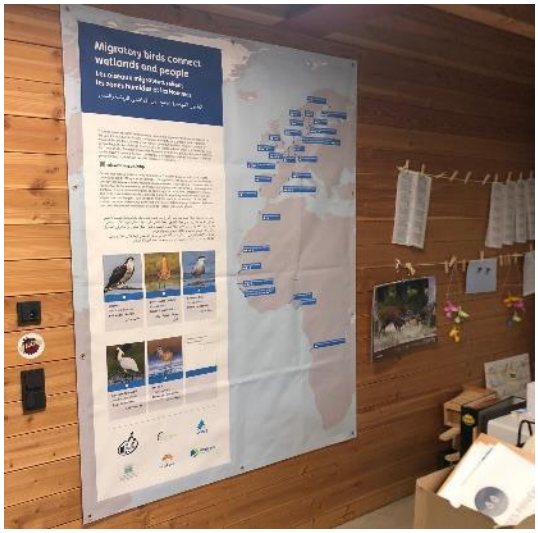


*Photo right: The new MBP-educational map in Remerschen*

**Belgium: Nature centre "het Zwin"**

**Belgium: Informatiecentrum Uitkerkse Polder**

**United Kingdom : Slimbridge**

## United Kingdom, Welney

### Good news for Godwits

Hundreds of school children from across the Fens have been inspired to get involved with Project Godwit. More than 500 "Godwit Guardians" have signed up to an innovative scheme, which allows them to pick a godwit and then follow its progress as it makes its home on the Fens and heads off each year on its migration across Europe and Africa. Project staff and volunteers are also visiting local schools and community groups so that these conservation champions of the future, can hear first hand about these amazing birds and their wetland homes in the Fens.

### Breeding success

And thanks to Project Godwit, the breeding population of godwits in the Ouse

Washes area has increased from three to 12 pairs, the highest number this century. Across the Fens, 45 pairs have been recorded, up from 38 last year.

Most of the UK's godwit population breeds in the Fens at the Nene and Ouse Washes. In the 1980s and 1990s, numbers at the Ouse Washes declined dramatically as nests were lost to increased flooding. By 2000, the population had almost vanished. So WWT and the RSPB created wet grassland habitat adjacent to the washes to support pairs displaced from their breeding grounds. One such site, WWT Welney's Lady Fen, has been a lifeline for the remaining birds.

Creating suitable habitat is only part of our recovery plan. After the Ouse populations had remained at around three pairs for a number of years, we realised that even with good breeding success, recovery might take decades. So we decided to give them a boost.

In 2017, Project Godwit started helping young godwits through the most vulnerable stage of their development by rearing and releasing them. In 2017 and 2018, 49 birds were released at Lady Fen and 15 at the RSPB's Nene Washes.

*The headstarted godwits approaching graduation day. Here they are learning to catch earthworms.*

This year, a fantastic 21 of those young birds returned to the breeding grounds in the Fens. Around 25% of the 45 pairs that bred in the Fens this year included one or more of the young birds we helped. Twelve of these pairs nested at the Ouse Washes sites, up from eight in 2018. And this year another 48 headstarted birds were released.

## Wild birds struggling

But it isn't all good news. The breeding success of wild pairs at the Ouse and Nene Washes was low this year, with few chicks surviving to fledge. Project Godwit is monitoring these pairs to determine why they failed to raise their chicks, and testing ways we can increase their success.

The long term future of the UK's godwits and all ground-nesting waders depends not only on the quality and management of their breeding sites, but also on the presence of a healthy network of wetlands supporting the birds throughout their annual cycle.

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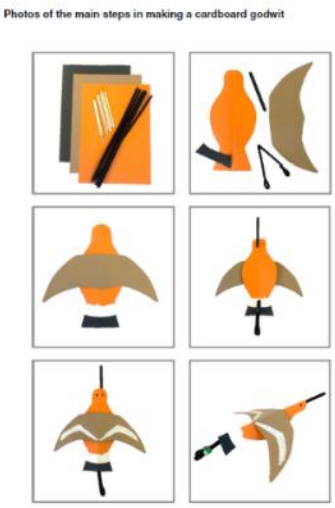
Whilst the headstarted black-tailed godwits are away at their wintering grounds, the staff that work on Project Godwit can catch up on important office time completing reports, planning for the next headstarting season, and for the engagement team – making new education resources.
We are about to produce our **Education Pack** that will be promoted throughout the remaining two years of the project. A resource for teachers and educators to use as an aid to help them bring the topic of wetlands into the classroom. Our teaching pack aspires to showcase wetlands and the Fens as a focus for teaching primary subjects and to connect children to the wildlife and landscape around them. We want to bring excitement, pride and a sense of ownership and real-life relevance to young people. The teaching pack contains:

- **Background information** for teachers covering the wetlands and wetland wildlife of the Fens, including Sustainable Development Goals chart and thematic curriculum ideas
- Example **curriculum maps** using wetlands as a term topic
- **Lesson plans** for Key Stages 1 and 2 in Maths, English, Science, Geography and Art & design
- In-school **activity ideas** for Key Stages 1 and 2
- Ideas for classroom **wall displays**
- **Supporting materials** including worksheets, colouring sheets and printable animal cards and posters

We hope that this will be used by classes that take part in our free **Project Godwit Outreach** sessions.



We have also been busy speaking about the Project at many events. This year our WWT Project Manager Rebecca Lee and Conservation Breeding Officer Nicky Hiscock gave a talk at the International Wader Study Groups conference in Cumbria and Engagement Officer Jess Owen gave a talk at Wader Quests AGM and will be visiting the David Attenborough Building in Cambridge to talk about the project with one of our funders "*Back from the Brink"*.

We are also working on new classroom workshops that we will deliver to some of our Godwit Guardians next year, looking more closely into migration and the science behind conservation including leg ringing and tracking birds. Some of our Education Pack is already available to download for free on our website here https://projectgodwit.org.uk/get-involved/schools/materials We would love to hear if you have used any of the resources or found them useful and would also love to hear if you have seen any of our colour ringed headstarted godwits!

**www.projectgodwit.org.uk**

**Please take note of the date, time and location where you saw the bird, along with its colour ring combination.**

***Project Godwit*** *is a partnership between WWT and the RSPB with major funding from the EU LIFE Nature Programme, the HSBC 150th Anniversary Fund, Natural England, the Heritage Lottery Fund through the Back from the Brink programme and the Montague-Panton Animal Welfare Trust.*

Jess Owen (WWT, project leader Godwit project)

**France: Baie de Somme**

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## France: La Maison du Grand Lac de Lieu

# Spoonbills connecting wetland centres with …
# Four spoonbills born in Grand-lieu lake spent summer holidays in Zwin Natuur Park!

**This information** came to us from the Zwin Natuur Park Centre (thank you Leo!).
This demonstrates the value of networking within Migratory Bird for People.
Indeed, thanks to the networking, we have news from birds born and ringed in Grand-lieu lake and by this way, it is possible to have their lifestories around the world!

A spoonbill ringed in Grand-lieu lake presents four coloured rings without stripes, flag or code. It's just coloured rings. So… take your binoculars and let us know when you observe a spoonbill which has spent his childhood in Grand-lieu lake!

By the way, we are thinking about using the giant map in the centre, to represent the travels of Grand-lieu lake spoonbills in the other centres… A good opportunity for us to use the giant (educational) map!

**Contact:** Paule Gaudouin email : p.gaudouin@maisondulacdegrandlieu.com

## France : Réserve naturelle nationale de Camargue

# We welcome our new partner in the MBP-network in France !

The Camargue National Nature Reserve (RNN22) is a national nature reserve located in Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur. Created in 1927 and classified in 1975, it covers an area of 13,117.5 hectares. Managed by the SNPN, it is part of the Camargue Regional Natural Park.

The territory of the nature reserve is in the department of Bouches-du-Rhône, in the municipalities of Arles and Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer. It is located in the interior of the Rhône delta and includes the pond of Vaccarès as well as the lower ponds to the sea (the Imperial ponds have not been part of it since 1959-1960), Amphise and Salin de Badon. Its surface area is more than 13,000 hectares2, making it one of the largest in Europe.

La "Réserve zoologique et botanique de Camargue"[3], créée en 1927 par la Société d'Acclimatation, renommée Société nationale de protection de la nature, et toujours gérée par celle-ci, a été classée sous le titre de "Réserve nationale de Camargue"[4], le 24 avril 1975.

On 1 December 1986, the Camargue was recognized as a **Ramsar site.**

*Source: Wikipedia: https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/R%C3%A9serve_naturelle_nationale_de_Camargue*

**Contact**:

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**Spain: Urdaibai Bird Center**

**Spain: Aiguamolls de l'Emporda**

## Spain: las Salinas y Arenales de San Pedro del Pinatar

### Gull-billed Tern ringed in the salt flats of San Pedro (Murcia) and recovered ten years later in Sardinia (Italy)

Last June, the LIFE SALINAS project team was visiting the island of Sardinia. The objective of the trip was to visit the Molentargius salt flats where during the LIFE MC-SALT project several very similar actions were carried out to those that are now being carried out in San Pedro del Pinatar with LIFE SALINAS.
It coincided that on those days, local banders from the Anthus group and members of the monitoring team of the "Istituto Superiore per la Protezione e la Ricerca Ambientale" (ISPRA) were also there to capture terns and mark them with remote monitoring devices.

The surprise came when they saw that one of the captured specimens was wearing a ring with Spanish remite. This is already quite special because it was the third Spanish recovery of this species in Italy. Our immediate reaction was to ask them to number the ring to check in our database if it was one of the terns banded in San Pedro.

And indeed, it was an individual banded as a chick 10 years earlier in the Salinas de San Pedro, being the second recapture outside Murcia for this species since they began banding in 1999. If it is already very special that one of the birds that rings is recovered in another locality, it is even more special to be able to live that moment "in situ", a chance that rarely occurs in life.

Photo: Carla Zucca
Contact: angel.sallent@um.es
More information: https://lifesalinas.es/en/biodiversity/

# NEW WATERFOWL FAMILIES

The breeding season in the **Salinas de San Pedro Regional Park** has ended and, thanks to the waterfowl censuses carried out within the framework of the LIFE-SALINAS Project, very valuable numbers have been obtained:
In 2019, 2,024 pairs of nesting aquatic birds of 15 different species were counted.
These data confirms the positive evolution that has taken place in the Regional Park in the last 30 years, as can be seen in table 1.

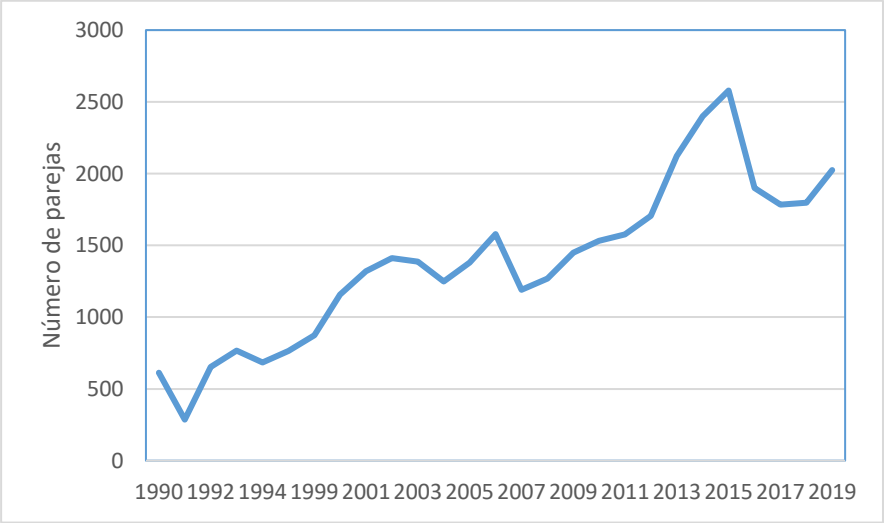


*Table 1. Evolution of the number of pairs of nesting waterfowl in the Parque Regional de las Salinas y Arenales de San Pedro del Pinatar.*

In addition, it should be noted that the nesting populations of the tern and Audouin's gull have doubled. On the other hand, the population of black-legged terns has been reduced by almost half.
As a curiosity, a pink tern has been observed for the first time in the Salinas de San Pedro. It is one of the few citations of the Spanish Mediterranean coast and it is believed that it has been able to breed with another species of its Family, the black-footed tern.

*Charrán rosado (Sterna dougallii). Foto: Manolo Salas*

## THE PINK PAINTING OF THE FLAMINGOS

The pink colour of the flamingos is explained by the carotenoid pigments they obtain from their diet, made up mainly of small aquatic invertebrates such as Artemia sp. But this tiny crustacean, like flamingos, is not capable of producing these pink pigments.

They are made by the microscopic bacteria and algae that live in the pinkest ponds; they need them to protect themselves from the harsh conditions of salt ponds: sunstroke, high salinity and lack of oxygen.
Thus, "pink paint" travels from the microscopic world to the flamingos, which with the help of their liver, extract it from food and disperse it to the beak, legs and wings.

*Source for these articles: Revista Naturalmente Conectados, otoño 2019*

**Portugal: Tagus Estuary Birdwatching and Conservation Area**

## Morrocco, Sidi Moussa Oualidia

### Walidia Ecological Information Centre

Located in the small town of Oualidia, near an Atlantic lagoon with the same name.

The mission of the Oualidia Ecological Information Centre is to raise public awareness, particularly in schools, of the importance of wetlands, while focusing on the Sidi Moussa-Oualidia Ramsar Site, a complex of wetlands occupying a coastal groove more than 30 km long.

This centre is managed by GREPOM/BirdLife Morocco within the framework of a tripartite partnership agreement, established between: (1) the Commune of Oualidia (owner of the land); (2) the High Commission for Water and Forests and the Fight against Desertification (responsible for the building and its basic equipment); (3) GREPOM (responsible for the presentation of the centre and the development of its educational tools).

Indeed, the centre makes it possible to play an important role in informing the public about the Kingdom's Wetlands, and even about its nature. This role is determined by the objectives set for the Centre, namely;

- **Raise public awareness** of the heritage and socio-economic importance of Moroccan wetlands in general and those of the Doukkala in particular.
- **Provide educational institutions** with tools to illustrate Life and Earth Sciences courses.
- These objectives consist of providing visitors with an exhibition, audio-visual presentations and a field visit.
- Similarly, **guided tours** of Oualidia's Wetlands are regularly scheduled, the purpose of which is to
- **Guided observation** of ecosystem components and functioning
- Identification of components of heritage and socio-economic value
- Identification of threats to the identified values
- Group discussion on various aspects of the visit

Oualidia Ecological Information Centre (GREPOM/BirdLife Morocco)/
**Contact:** Fahmi Abdelhak, member of GREPOM/ BirdLife Morocco and manager (and/or facilitator of the centre).

**Banc d'Arguin, Mauritania**

**Parc National Djoudj, Senegal**

## Sénégal, Centre d'Education de Kalissaye

# The culture of the Karones peoples as a factor for the sustainable management of Kalissaye

The Diola Karone is traditionally a people very concerned about the sustainable conservation of its environment. Aware of the advantages of nature, they advocate management and measures to maintain and preserve his environment.

It is in this wake that all the villages along the banks of the Kalissaye Ornithological Reserve have set up sacred forests. Indeed, being a site of initiation diola, the sacred wood is an intangible cultural heritage, an incredible richness and asset of these localities. There are one or more fetishes that can belong either to a group of villages, a neighbourhood, a family, women or men. Thus, each fetish has its own purpose and rules, i.e. a well-defined conduct of prohibitions and well-defined sanctions.

Therefore, each rule depends on its owner. Violation of these rules is synonymous with a simple death penalty. To avoid the worst, the offender is obliged to pay for palm wine. Also, this sanction can be accompanied by a beast for some fetishes. It is therefore strictly forbidden to clear, cut wood and put fire in the sacred wood.

The cutting of wood may be authorized by the owners and the fruit may be picked and eaten on site but must not be taken out except for family members.
In addition to sacred wood, the totem pole is a very important element for the different ethnic groups, especially among the Diola Karone, since it represents an individual's soul. The death of a totem animal is synonymous with the death of a family member.

That's why they are well protected against any aggressor. Indeed, "In the bolong kalissaye in front of the sandbank where there are birds, there are totems from a Bakassouck family. In this area, the execution of any activity is very dangerous because you can lose your equipment or your life.

Places of memory are important in all the peripheral villages of the ROK. They bear witness to the history of these populations because they are related to their tradition. It is in this context that a place of memory has been identified in the village of Boune.
This place was used as a gathering place for the local populations in the event of danger (invasion of settlers), misfortune, meetings, etc.

Contact: Maj. PATHE BALDE, R.O.K. Conservative, cnebaldepathe@gmail.com

# Other MBP- network news

## News from our MBP-partner EUROSITE:

Please see below a request from a fellow Eurosite Member French Biodiversity Agency (AFB) to fill in a **questionnaire about the events organised in different countries to experience biodiversity.** See email below for some more info and a link to the survey.
Please note that the **deadline has now been extended to 11 December 2019**.
On behalf of AFB we thank you for your cooperation.

Kind regards

Kristijan Čivić
Network Development Manager
Eurosite

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Dear colleagues,

On behalf of one of our (AFB*) partner, I would like to ask you if you could **send among your network,** the following questionnaire on **"Fête de la nature"** by asking your members to fill in:

**https://fetedelanature.com/fil-d-infos/international-survey**

Introduced in France in 2007 by the IUCN French comity, the Fête de la Nature (Nature days) is the annual event during which all the stakeholders – people and organizations – engaged for nature swing into action.
Almost 1 500 stakeholders have been involved during the 13th occasion of the Fête de la Nature in 2019 and offered more than 5 000 nature activities all over France.

This celebration is now structured and organized regularly in France, Switzerland, the Netherlands and Quebec (Canada). **Within the scope of this international vision**, our AFB's partner is **seeking to establish an inventory of international events** based on the discovery or the experience of biodiversity that exist through the world. New knowledge on these existing events will be gathered by answering **quickly (before the 1st December)** to this short questionnaire.

Very best regards, Naïk

* AFB: French Biodiversity Agency

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*"Inspiring birds, inspiring people"*

**NEWSLETTER no. 35 (November, 2019)**

## "Migratory Birds for People" certificate

The core group has a certificate available by which the participating visitor centre can show that they are a member of the Migratory Birds for People network.
**This certificate can be obtained for free**.

Just write an email to **r.b.heringa@gmail.com**
and we will send you a certificate.

## Migratory Birds for People T-shirt and Mug can still be ordered!

We have created our own MBP-t-shirt. (price: approx.. € 10,= / excl. mailing costs)

**Please let me know** if you are interested and send me your details about **number and size** .

You could also obtain your **own MBP-mug**.
The price of this item is: approx.. € 7,= (excl. mailing costs)
Send your message to: **r.b.heringa@gmail.com**